

PIONEER BIOGRAPHY

Omund Ashland

By Lief Aalgard

I have chosen to write the biography of a pioneer whose parents were also pioneers of North Dakota, namely Mr. Ashland of Cooperstown.

Mr. Ashland is Norwegian descent. His father Aadne Ashland and his mother Dorthea Ashland of Stavanger, Norway.

Mr. Omund Ashland was born on July 20, 1868 at Stavanger, Norway. He lived with his mother and stepfather there until he was twelve years of age. It was then decided that they move to a better home. They chose to go to America and made preparations to go.

The family of six children, mother and father, sailed from Stavanger to Christiansan on a sailboat. While on the Skager Rack water a storm arose and the pioneer family's lives were endangered. The small vessel was tossed about, the masts dipping down into the water. After a few terrible hours they reached their port and boarded the liner Thingvalla for America. The Thingvalla was must nicely started when the engine broke. They sailed to Copenhagen in Denmark for repairs. After a weeks delay they started to cross the Atlantic. During the fourteen days from Denmark to America the pioneer's mother contracted a severe case of rheumatic fever. This made the voyage very bad, the children ranging from six months to twelve years were forced to care for one another as best they could. Their leaving the ship and entering Castle Garden, New York must have been quite a picture. The mother being helpless was carried on the father's back and a group of small children frightened and weary with the voyage came trooping behind. Next day they left New York for St. Paul. There they rested in an immigrant house for three days. This house was a very unsanitary place. There were filthy men, women and children sitting about on the floor all smoking or chewing tobacco or using vulgar language. From there they struck out for their new home. It was late spring when they reach Yellow Medicine County in Minnesota where the pioneer family lived only a short time. It seemed to the pioneer family they were moving from worse to worse. Conditions in Yellow Medicine were deplorable. The houses were overrun with rats. Work was as scarce here it appeared as it was in Norway. Mrs. Ashland's condition was serious and the baby, not a year old yet, was not thriving. For a time the pioneer believed they made a foolish move for the hard times in Norway weren't nearly as bad as the position they were in now. Mrs. Omund Ashland, nor thirteen years old, set out to a farmer some miles from his home where he was obliged to do a man's work. One day while at work a horse kicked him, cracking his skull just between the eyes. His employer seemed to think nothing of the bruise but poured alcohol into the wound to take out the poison he said. Being only a boy he wanted to go home to his mother. He walked all the way leaving a trail of blood behind him. A week later he went back but the farmer refused to hire anyone who couldn't work for a wee little scratch. Not discouraged at this he walked to the next farm where he found work. He and another boy were sent out twenty miles from the farm to herd a large herd of cattle. They were to stay a month. After two weeks they had a terrific thunder storm. This frightened the cattle and they broke away. The boys worked for hours and finally corralled them. In another two weeks the cattle were herded home again. It was night when they came to the farm but the boy being anxious to get home started off. He intended to surprise his mother mother and crept quitely into the house, while feeling his way through the entry he came across his baby sister who had died that day.

Just a year passed and the Ashlands decided to move to the Dakota Territory. They had heard of the free land and the great opportunities there and they also had some relatives living in the east central part of what is now North Dakota. Preparations were made for the long journey which was to be made in covered wagons with oxen to draw them. The drive was a hard and tedious trip. The roads were poor and there were very few bridges in those days. Often times all the loads had to be carried across the streams article by article for the water was high and the wagons were low. One team of oxen became lame. They stopped at a farm house where a man trimmed the oxen's feet. This protected and the the lameness was soon gone and the pioneers were once more on the way. The pioneer family met with few obstacles after that and in less than three weeks they had reached their destination, then called Gallatin Post Office on the Sheyenne River nine miles southeast of Cooperstown. They stayed for a short time with relatives.

In the spring of 1883 the pioneer and his father planned to take a claim. This was done by squatting as it was then called, or settling on a section of this land. Each settler was entitled to the section they lived on. They chose the north half of section 10, range 59, township 145.

The pioneers built a sod house and barn. The sod house was fourteen feet square. Most sod houses at this time were all sod and trees but Ashland's put a good floor in their home. The walls were two feet deep at the base and grew narrower at the top. The roof was made of branches, twigs and brush piled on three large poles across the top. To fill in the small openings they filled them with hay. This structure had one window and one door. In 1884 the pioneers's father made an addition to the hut. This part was fourteen by ten and gave them a good sized room. The pioneer's parents were busy at all things in itself. The father made the family's shoes and all the furniture and even some of the dishes used were carved out of wood, while the mother spun and wove and knitted for the family. The beds were a wooden frame with straw for mattresses, chairs and tables were made from logs brought from the Sheyenne. Aside from those things furniture was scarce. The Froiland's were the most fortunate people in the community for they owned a sewing machine.

Gurina Froiland, an aunt of the pioneer, was the businest body in the household during the summer of 1885. She was staying with the pioneer family preparing her wedding outfit.

Meeting were held in the house of the different people. It happened that the folks met at the Froiland homestead on one particular day. While there a terrific blizzard arose and the people were obliged to stay at the hut for three days, for blizzards always lasted three days. The house was so full and so small that they had to take turns sleeping.

The pioneer family's possessions were gradually increasing, especially their stock. This required a better and larger barn so they set to work and built a barn twenty six feet wide and forty feet long. The barn was built on the same principles as the house.

Griggs County was a large level prairie with no trees for miles and miles about the Froiland homestead. The Fort Totten Road coming from Fort Totten ran just west of the sod stable. It was a common thing to see small bands of Indians traveling this road. They often stopped at the pioneer home to buy food or feed for their horses.

In the early eighties the nearest town was Valley City, which close as it seems now that we have automobiles, was a great distance for ox teams and even horses. Mr. Ashland drove to Valley City to have

his wheat ground to flour and brought back other provisions. This trip took him several days. Late in 1883 the branch line of the Northern Pacific was built to Cooperstown. The railroad built up Cooperstown and brought many conveniences for the pioneers.

The Froiland's first neighbors were the Fred Williams family to the north, T. T. Fuglestad and Jens Bull families to the south and Jorgen Soma, an uncle of the Pioneer, to the east.

The first implement used by the pioneer was the walking plow drawn by ox teams. The oxen were very hard to control as reins were not used. They were managed by words such as "haw" and "gee" to turn to left or right. Toward noon the oxen would hear no command but would deliberately turn home. Oftentimes when the oxen saw a slough or a green meadow they would walk from the field to drink or graze.

The early crops Mr. Ashland raised were mainly wheat. The first he broke seven acres of land and had a very good yield.

For fuel Mr. Ashland had to go to the Sheyenne River for wood and it was green wood so they had to dry it in the oven in the stove and it smoked so that it made the house full of smoke.

The pioneer family had at all times a good supply of food and a good shelter. Their main hardships were the storms and prairie fires.

The fire of the fall of 1885 burned up nearly all the settlers grain and hay. The pioneer's father was lucky not to lose any grain and hay. The pioneer saw the fire come $\frac{1}{2}$ mile off, he hitched up the three oxen and plowed a few furrows which killed the fire. The pioneer saved all the buildings of neighbors. The flames were higher than a house, when the fire was ten rods away it lit the tops of the hay stacks. The children and wife stayed in the sod buildings because it could not burn and they were saved. The fire traveled to the Sheyenne River. It sent through all of North Dakota.

Mr. Ashland walked to the neighbors once and while he was there a storm arose and the neighbors did not want him to leave because they thought he would get lost, but he said his mother would worry for him so he left and faced the storm. When he got home his face was all covered with ice. The storm became so bad that no one could move outside.

In the spring Mr. Ashland drove the stock to Fort Atchison and they grazed there all summer. He had to pay one dollar per head.

Mr. And Mrs. Ashland had eight children. They are Mr. Arnold Ashland, Cooperstown, N. Dak., Mrs. L. Lier, Mose North Dakota, Mr. Jens B. Ashland, Cooperstown, N. Dak. Mr. Oscar Ashland, Hannaford, N. Dak., Mr. Albert Ashland, Cooperstown, N. Dak., Mr. Henry Ashland, Silverton, Oregon, Mr. Roy Ashland, Cooperstown, N. Dak., Mr. Walter Ashland, Cooperstown, N. Dak.

The present home of Mr. Ashland is Section 9, Township 145, and range 59, just west of old Fort Totten road. Sibley Fort pope 1 mile north west of Mr. Ashland.

--Leif Aalgaard

PIONEER BIOGRAPHY

Omund Ashland

I have chosen to write the biography of a pioneer whose parents were also pioneers of North Dakota, namely Mr. Ashland of Cooperstown, North Dakota.

Mr. Ashland is of Norwegian descent. His father Aadne Ashland and his mother Dortha Ashland of Stavanger, Norway.

Mr. Omund Ashland was born on July 20, 1868 at Stavanger, Norway. He lived with his mother and stepfather there until he was twelve years of age. It was then decided that they move to a better home. They chose to go to America and made preparations to go.

The family of six children, mother and father, sailed from Stavanger to Christiansan on a sailboat. While on the Skager Rack water a storm arose and the pioneer family's lives were endangered. The small vessel was tossed about the masts dipping down into the water. After a few terrible hours they reached their port and boarded the liner Thingvalla for America. The Thingvalla was most nicely started when the engine broke. They sailed to Copenhagen in Denmark for repairs. After a weeks delay they started to cross the Atlantic. During the fourteen days from Denmark to America the pioneer's mother contracted a severe case of rheumatic fever. This made the voyage very hard, the children ranging from six months to twelve years were forced to care for one another as best they could. Their leaving the ship and entering Castle Garden, New York must have been quite a picture. The mother being helpless was carried on the father's back and a group of small children frightened and weary with the voyage came trooping behind. Next day they left New York for St. Paul. There they rested in an immigrant house for three days. This house was a very unsanitary place. There were filthy men, women and children sitting about on the floor all smoking or chewing tobacco and using vulgar language. From there they struck out for their new home. It was late spring when they reached Yellow Medicine County in Minnesota where the pioneer family lived only for a short time. It seemed to the pioneer family they were moving from worse to worse. Conditions in Yellow Medicine were deplorable. The houses were overrun with rats. Work was as scarce here it appeared as it was in Norway. Mrs. Ashland's condition was serious and the baby, not a year old yet, was not thriving. For a time the pioneer believed they had made a foolish move for the hard times in Norway weren't nearly as bad as the position they were in now. Mr. Omund Ashland, now thirteen years old, set out to a farmer some miles from his home where he was obliged to do a man's work. One day while at work a horse kicked him cracking his skull just between the eyes. His employer seemed to think nothing of the bruise but poured alcohol into the wound to take out the poison he said. Being only a boy he wanted to go home to his mother. He walked all the way leaving a trail of blood behind him. A week later he went back but the farmer refused to hire anyone who couldn't work for a wee little scratch. Not discouraged at this he walked to the next farm where he found work. He and another boy were sent out twenty miles from the farm to herd a large herd of cattle. They were to stay a month. After two weeks they had a terrific thunder storm. This frightened the cattle and they broke away. The boys worked for hours and finally corralled them. In another two weeks the cattle were herd-

Omund Ashland (continued)

ed home again. It was night when they came to the farm but the boy being anxious to get home started off. He intended to surprise his mother and crept quietly into the house, while feeling his way through the entry he came across his baby sister who had died that day. Just a year passed and the Ashland's decided to move to the Dakota Territory. They had heard of the free land and the great opportunities there and they also had some relatives living in the east central part of what is now North Dakota. Preparations were made for the long journey which was to be made in covered wagons with oxen to draw them. The drive was a hard and tedious trip. The roads were poor and there were very few bridges in those days. Often times all the loads had to be carried across the streams article by article for the water was high and the wagons were low. One team of oxen became lame. They stopped at a farm house where a man trimmed the oxen's hoofs but he clipped them so close that their feet were worse than ever, so the farmer made heavy felt boots and bound them on the oxen's feet. This protected and the lameness was soon gone and the pioneers were once more on the way. The pioneer family met with few obstacles after that and in less than three weeks they had reached their destinations, then called the Gallatin Post Office on the Sheyenne River nine miles southeast of Cooperstown. They stayed for a short time with relatives.

In the spring of 1883 the pioneer and his father planned to take a claim. This was done by squatting as it was then called, or settling on a section of this land. Each settler was entitled to the section they lived on. They chose the north half of section ten, range 59, township 145.

The pioneers built a sod house and barn. The sod house was fourteen feet square. Most sod houses at this time were all sod and trees but the Ashland's put a good floor in their home. The walls were two feet deep at the base and grew narrower at the top. The roof was made of branches, twigs and brush piled on three large poles across the top. To fill in the small open spaces they filled them with hay. This structure had one window and one door. In 1884 the pioneer's father made an addition to the hut. This part was fourteen by ten and gave them good sized room. The pioneer's parents were busy at all things in itself. The father made the family's shoes and all the furniture and even some of the dishes used were carved out of wood, while the mother spun and wove and knitted for the family. The beds were a wooden frame with straw for mattresses, chairs and tables were made from the logs brought from the Sheyenne. Aside from those things furniture was scarce. The Froiland's were the most fortunate people in the community for they owned a sewing machine.

Gurina Froiland, an aunt of the pioneer, was the busiest body in the household during the summer 1885. She was staying with the pioneer family preparing her wedding outfit.

Meetings were held in the house of the different people. It happened that the folks met at the Froiland homestead on one particular day. While there a terrific blizzard arose and the people were obliged to stay at the hut for three days, for blizzards always lasted three days. The house was so full and so small that they had to take turns sleeping.

The pioneer family's possessions were gradually increasing, especially their stock. This required a better and larger barn so

Omund Ashland (continued)

they set to work and built a barn twenty six feet wide and forty feet long. The barn was built on the same principles as the house.

Griggs County was a large level prairie with no trees for miles and miles about the Froiland homestead. The Fort Totten Road coming from Fort Totten ran just west of the sod stable. It was a common thing to see small bands of Indians traveling this road. They often stopped at the pioneer home to buy food or feed for their horses.

In the early eighties the nearest town was Valley City, which close as it seems now that we have automobiles, was a great distance for ox teams and even horses. Mr. Ashland drove to Valley City to have his wheat ground to flour and brought back other provisions. This trip took him several days. Late in 1883 the branch line of the Northern Pacific was built to Cooperstown. The railroad built up Cooperstown and brought many conveniences for the pioneers. The Froiland's first neighbors were the Fred Williams family to the north, T. T. Fuglestad and Jens Bull families to the south and Jorgen Soma, an uncle of the pioneer, to the east.

The first implement used by the pioneer was the walking plow drawn by ox teams. The oxen were very hard to control as reins were not used. They were managed by words such as "haw" and "gee" to turn to left or right. Toward noon the oxen would hear no commands but would deliberately turn home. Often times when the oxen saw a slough or a green meadow they would walk from the field to drink or graze.

The early crops Mr. Ashland raised were mainly wheat. The first he broke seven acres of land and had a very good yield. For fuel Mr. Ashland had to go to the Sheyenne River for wood and it was green wood so they had to dry it in the oven in the stove and it smoked so that it made the house full of smoke.

The pioneer family had at all times a good supply of food and a good shelter. Their main hardships were the storms and prairie fires. The fire of the fall of 1885 burned up nearly all the settlers grain and hay. The pioneer's father was lucky not to lose any grain and hay. The pioneer saw the fire come $\frac{1}{2}$ mile off, he hitched up the three oxen and plowed a few furrows which killed the fire. The pioneer saved all the buildings of neighbors. The flames were higher than a house, when the fire was ten rods away it lit the tops of the hay stacks. The children and wife stayed in the sod buildings because it could not burn and they were saved. The fire traveled to the Sheyenne River. It went through all of North Dakota.

Mr. Ashland walked to the neighbors once and while he was there a storm arose and the neighbors did not want him to leave because they thought he would get lost, but he said his mother would worry for him so he left and faced the storm. When he got home his face was all covered with ice. The storm became so bad that no one could move outside. In the spring Mr. Ashland drove the stock to Fort Atchison and they grazed there all summer. He had to pay one dollar per head.

Mr. and Mrs. Ashland had eight children. They are Mr. Arnold Ashland, St. Cloud, Minn., Mrs. L. Lier, Mose, North Dakota, Mr. Jens B. Ashland, Cooperstown, N. Dak., Mr. Oscar Ashland, Hannaford, N. Dak. Mr. Albert Ashland, Cooperstown, N. Dak., Mr. Henry Ashland, Silverton, Oregon, Mr. Roy Ashland, Cooperstown, N. Dak., Mr. Walter Ashland, Cooperstown, N. Dak.

The present home of Mr. Ashland is Section 9, Township 145, and range 59, just west of old Fort Totten road. Sibley Fort pope 1 mile north west of Mr. Ashland.

--Leif Aalgaard

Biography of Omund Ashland
--Leif Aalgaard

I have chosen to write the biography of a pioneer whose parents were also pioneers of North Dakota, namely Mr. Ashland of Cooperstown, North Dakota.

Mr. Ashland is of Norwegian descent. His father Aadne Ashland and his mother Dorthea Ashland of Stavanger, Norway.

Mr. Omund Ashland was born on July 20, 1868, at Stavanger, Norway. He lived with his mother and stepfather there until he was twelve years of age. It was then decided that they move to a better home. They chose to go to America and made preparations to go.

The family of six children, mother and father, sailed from Stavanger to Christiansen on a sailboat. While on the Skager Back water a storm arose and the pioneer family's lives were endangered. The small vessel was tossed about the masts dipping down into the water. After a few terrible hours they reached their port and boarded the liner Thingvalls for America. The Thingvalle was most nicely started when the engine broke. They sailed to Copenhagen in Denmark for repairs. After a weeks delay they started to cross the A tlantic. During the fourteen days from Denmark to America the pioneer's mother contracted a severe case of rheumatic fever. This made the voyage very hard, the children ranging from six months to twelve years were forced to care for one another as best they could. Their leaving the ship and entering Castle Garden, New York must have been quite a picture. The mother being helpless was carried on the father's back and a group of small children frightened and weary with the voyage came trooping behind. Next day they left New York for St. Paul. There they rested in an immigrant house for three days. This house was a very unsanitary place. There were filthy men, women, and children sitting about on the floor all smoking or chewing tobacco and using vulgar language. From there they struck out for their new home. It was late spring when they reached Yellow Medicine County in Minnesota where the pioneer family lived only a short time. It seemed to the pioneer family they were moving from worse to worse. Conditions in Yellow Medicine were deplorable. The houses were overrun with rats. Work was as scarce here it appeared as it was in Norway. Mrs. Ashland's condition was serious and the baby, not a year old yet, was not thriving. For a time the pioneer believed they had made a foolish move for the hard times in Norway weren't nearly as bad as the position they were in now. Mr. Omund Ashland, now thirteen years old, set out to a farmer some miles from his home where he was obliged to do a man's work. One day while at work a horse kicked him cracking his skull just between the eyes. His employer seemed to think nothing of the bruise but poured alcohol into the wound to take out the poison he said. Being only a boy he wanted to go home to his mother. He walked all the way leaving a trail of blood behind him. A week later he went back but the farmer refused to hire anyone who couldn't work for a wee little scratch. Not discouraged at this he walked to the next farm where he found work. He and another boy were sent out twenty miles from the farm to herd a large herd of cattle. They were to stay a month. After two weeks they had a terrific thunder storm. This frightened the cattle and they broke away. The boys worked

Biography of Omund Ashland
--Leif Aalgaard

for hours and finally corralled them. In another two weeks the cattle were herded home again. It was night when they came to the farm but the boy being anxious to get home started off. He intended to surprise his mother and crept quietly into the house, while feeling his way through the entry he came across his baby sister who had died that day. Just a year passed and the Ashland's decided to move to the Dakota Territory. They had heard of the free land the great opportunities there and they also had some relatives living the east central part of what is now North Dakota. Preparations were made for the long journey which was to be made in covered wagons with oxen to draw them. The drive was a hard and tedious trip. The roads were poor and there were very few bridges in those days. Oftentimes all the loads had to be carried across the streams article by article for the water was high and the wagons were low. One team of oxen became lame. They stopped at a farm house where a man trimmed the oxen's hoofs but he clipped them so close that their feet were worse than ever, so the farmer made heavy felt boots and bound them on the oxen's feet. This protected and the lameness was soon gone and the pioneer were once more on the way. The pioneer family met with few obstacles after that and in less than three weeks they had reached their destination, then called the Gallatin Post Office on the Sheyenne River nine miles southeast of Cooperstown. They stayed for a short time with relatives.

In the spring of 1883, the pioneer and his father planned to take a claim. This was done by squatting as it was then called, or settling on a section of this land. Each settler was entitled to the section they lived on. They chose the north half of section ten, range 59, township 145.

The pioneers built a sod house and barn. The sod house was fourteen feet square. Most sod houses at this time were all sod and trees but the Ashland's put a good floor in their home. The walls were two feet deep at the base and grew narrower at the top. The roof was made of branches, twigs and brush piled on three large poles across the top. To fill in the small open spaces they filled them with hay. This structure had one window and one door. In 1884, the pioneer's father made an addition to the hut. This part was fourteen by ten and gave them good sized room. The pioneer's parents were busy at all things in itself. The father made the family's shoes and all the furniture and even some of the dishes used were carved out of wood, while the mother spun and wove and knitted for the family. The beds were a wooden frame with straw for mattresses, chairs, and tables were made from the logs brought from the Sheyenne. Aside from those things furniture was scarce. The Froiland's were the most fortunate people in the community for they owned a sewing machine.

Gurina Froiland, an aunt of the pioneer, was the busiest body in the household during the summer, 1885. She was staying with the pioneer family preparing her wedding outfit.

Meetings were held in the house of the different people. It happened that the folks met at the Froiland homestead on one particular day.

Biography of Omund Ashland
--Leif Aalgaard

While there a terrific blizzard arose and the people were obliged to stay at the hut for three days, for blizzards always lasted three days. The house was so full and so small that they had to take turns sleeping.

The pioneer family's possessions were gradually increasing, especially their stock. This required a better and larger barn so they set to work and built a barn twenty-six feet wide and forty feet long. The barn was built on the same principles as the house.

Griggs County was a large level prairie with no trees for miles and miles about the Froiland homestead. The Fort Totten Road coming from Fort Totten ran just west of the sod stable. It was a common thing to see small bands of Indians traveling this road. They often stopped at the pioneer home to buy food or feed for their horses.

In the early eighties the nearest town was Valley City, which close as it seems now that we have automobiles, was a great distance for ox teams and even horses. Mr. Ashland drove to Valley City to have his wheat ground to flour and brought back other provisions. This trip took him several days. Late in 1883 the branch line of the Northern Pacific was built to Cooperstown. The railroad built up Cooperstown and brought many conveniences for the pioneers.

The Froiland's first neighbors were the Fred Williams family to the north, T. T. Fuglestad and Jens Bull families to the south and Jorgen Soma, an uncle of the pioneer, to the east.

The first implement used by the pioneer was the walking plow drawn by ox teams. The oxen were very hard to control as reins were not used. They were managed by words such as "haw" and "gee" to turn to left or right. Toward noon the oxen would hear no commands but would deliberately turn home. Oftentimes when the oxen saw a slough or a green meadow they would walk from the field to drink or graze.

The early crops Mr. Ashland raised were mainly wheat. The first he broke seven acres of land and had a very good yield.

For fuel Mr. Ashland had to go to the Sheyenne River for wood and it was green wood so they had to dry it in the oven in the stove and it smoked so that it made the house full of smoke.

The pioneer family had at all times a good supply of food and a good shelter. Their main hardships were the storms and prairie fires. The fire of the fall of 1885 burned up nearly all the settlers grain and hay. The pioneer's father was lucky not to lose any grain and hay. The pioneer saw the fire come $\frac{1}{2}$ mile off, he hitched up the three oxen and plowed a few furrows which killed the fire. The pioneer saved all the buildings of neighbors. The flames were higher than a house, when the fire was ten rods away it lit the tops of the hay stacks. The children and wife stayed in the sod buildings because it could not burn and they were saved. The fire traveled to the Sheyenne River. It went through all of North Dakota.

Biography of Omund Ashland
--Leif Aalgaard

Mr. Ashland walked to the neighbors once and while he was there a storm arose and the neighbors did not want him to leave because they thought he would get lost, but he said his mother would worry for him so he left and faced the storm. When he got home his face was all covered with ice. The storm became so bad that no one could move outside.

In the spring Mr. Ashland drove the stock to Fort A tchison and they grazed there all summer. He had to pay one dollar per head.

Mr. and Mrs. Ashland had eight children. They are Mr. Arnold Ashland, St. Cloud, Minn., Mrs. L. Lier, Mose, North Dakota, Mr. Jens B. Ashland, Cooperstown, N. Dak., Mr. Oscarr Ashland, Hannaford, N. Dak., Mr. Albert Ashland, Cooperstown, N. Dak., Mr. Henry Ashland, Silverton, Oregon, Mr. Roy Ashland, Cooperstown, N. Dak., Mr. Walter Ashland, Coopers-town, N. Dak.

The present home of Mr. Ashland is Section 9, Township 145, and range 59, just west of old Fort Totten road. Sibley Fort pope 1 mile north west of Mr. Ashland.

PIONEER BIOGRAPHY

Omund Ashland

by Leif Ralgaard

I have chosen to write the biography of a pioneer whose parents were also pioneers of North Dakota, namely Mr. Ashland of Cooperstown, North Dakota.

Mr. Ashland is of Norwegian descent. His father Aadne Ashland and his mother Dorthen Ashland of Stavanger, Norway.

Mr. Omund Ashland was born on July 20, 1868 at Stavanger, Norway. He lived with his mother and stepfather there until he was twelve years of age. It was then decided that they move to a better home. They chose to go to America and made preparations to go.

The family of six children, mother and father, sailed from Stavanger to Christiansen on a sailboat. While on the Skager Rack water a storm arose and the pioneer family's lives were endangered. The small vessel was tossed about the masts dipping down into the water. After a few terrible hours they reached their port and boarded the liner Thingvalla for America. The Thingvalla was most nicely started when the engine broke. They sailed to Copenhagen in Denmark for repairs. After a weeks delay they started to cross the Atlantic. During the fourteen days from Denmark to America the pioneer's mother contracted a severe case of rheumatic fever. This made the voyage very hard, the children ranging from six months to twelve years were forced to care for one another as best they could. Their leaving the ship and entering Castle Garden, New York must have been quite a picture. The mother being helpless was carried on the father's back and a group of small children frightened and weary with the voyage came trooping behind. Next day they left New York for St. Paul. There they rested in an immigrant house for three days. This house was a very unsanitary place. There were filthy men, women and children sitting about on the floor all smoking or chewing tobacco and using vulgar language. From there they struck out for their new home. It was late spring when they reached Yellow Medicine County in Minnesota where the pioneer family lived only a short time. It seemed to the pioneer family they were moving from worse to worse. Conditions in Yellow Medicine were deplorable. The houses were overrun with rats. Work was as scarce here it appeared as it was in Norway. Mrs. Ashland's condition was serious and the baby, not a year old yet, was not thriving. For a time the pioneer believed they had made a foolish move for the hard times in Norway weren't nearly as bad as the position they were in now. Mr. Omund Ashland, now thirteen years old, set out to a farmer some miles from his home where he was obliged to do a man's work. One day while at work a horse kicked him cracking his skull just between the eyes. His employer seemed to think nothing of the bruise but poured alcohol into the wound to take out the poison he said. Being only a boy he wanted to go home to his mother. He walked all the way leaving a trail of blood behind him. A week later he went back but the farmer refused to hire anyone who couldn't work for a wee little scratch. Not discouraged at this he walked to the next farm where he found work. He and another boy were sent out twenty miles from the farm to herd a large herd of cattle. They were to stay a month. After two weeks they had a terrific thunder storm. This frightened the cattle and they broke away. The boys worked for hours and finally corralled them. In another two weeks the cattle were herded home again. It was night when they came to the farm but the boy being anxious to get home started off. He intended to surprise his mother and crept quietly into the house, while feeling his way through

Omund Ashland (continued) #2

the entry he came across his baby sister who had died that day. Just a year passed and the Ashland's decided to move to the Dakota Territory. They had heard of the free land and the great opportunities there and they also had some relatives living in the east central part of what is now North Dakota. Preparations were made for the long journey which was to be made in covered wagons with oxen to draw them. The drive was a hard and tedious trip. The roads were poor and there were very few bridges in those days. Oftentimes all the loads had to be carried across the streams article by article for the water was high and the wagons were low. One team of oxen became lame. They stopped at a farm house where a man triamed the oxen's hoofs but he clipped them so close that their feet were worse than ever, so the farmer made heavy felt boots and bound them on the oxen's feet. This protected and the lameness was soon gone and the pioneer were once more on the way. The pioneer family met with few obstacles after that and in less than three weeks they had reached their destination, then called the Gallatin Post Office on the Shyenne River nine miles southeast of Cooperstown. They stayed for a short time with relatives.

In the spring of 1883, the pioneer and his father planned to take a claim. This was done by squatting as it was then called, or settling on a section of this land. Each settler was entitled to the section they lived on. They chose the north half of section ten, range 89, township 145.

The pioneers built a sod house and barn. The sod house was fourteen feet square. Most sod houses at this time were all sod and trees but the Ashland's put a good floor in their home. The walls were two feet deep at the base and grew narrower at the top. The roof was made of branches, twigs and brush piled on three large poles across the top. To fill in the small open spaces they filled them with hay. This structure had one window and one door. In 1884 the pioneer's father made an addition to the hut. This part was fourteen by ten and gave them good sized room. The pioneer's parents were busy at all things in itself. The father made the family's SHOes and all the furniture and even some of the dishes used were carved out of wood, while the mother spun and wove and knitted for the family. The beds were a wooden frame with straw for mattresses, chairs and tables were made from the logs brought from the Shyenne. Aside from those things furniture was scarce. The Froiland's were the most fortunate people in the community for they owned a sewing machine.

Gurina Froiland, an aunt of the pioneer, was the busiest body in the household during the summer 1885. She was staying with the pioneer family preparing her wedding outfit.

Meetings were held in the house of the different people. It happened that the folks met at the Froiland homestead on one particular day. While there a terrific blizzard arose and the people were obliged to stay at the hut for three days, for blizzards always lasted three days. The house was so full and so small that they had to take turns sleeping.

The pioneer family's possessions were gradually increasing, especially their stock. This required a better and larger barn so they set to work and built a barn twenty six feet wide and forty feet long. The barn was built on the same principles as the house.

Griggs County was a large level prairie with no trees for miles and miles about the Froiland homestead. The Fort Totten Road coming from Fort Totten ran just west of the sod stable. It was a common thing to

see small bands of Indians traveling this road. They often stopped at the pioneer home to buy food or feed for their horses.

In the early eighties the nearest town was Valley City, which close as it seems now that we have automobiles, was a great distance for ox teams and even horses. Mr. Ashland drove to Valley City to have his wheat ground to flour and brought back other provisions. This trip took him several days. Late in 1883 the branch line of the Northern Pacific was built to Cooperstown. The railroad built up Cooperstown and brought many conveniences for the pioneers.

The Froiland's first neighbors were the Fred Williams family to the north, T. T. Fuglestad and Jens Bull families to the south and Jorgen Soma, an uncle of the pioneer, to the east.

The first implement used by the pioneer was the walking plow drawn by ox teams. The oxen were very hard to control as reins were not used. They were managed by words such as "haw" and "gee" to turn to left or right. Toward noon the oxen would hear no commands but would deliberately turn home. Oftentimes when the oxen saw a slough or a green meadow they would walk from the field to drink or graze.

The early crops Mr. Ashland raised were mainly wheat. The first he broke seven acres of land and had a very good yield.

For fuel Mr. Ashland had to go to the Sheyenne River for wood and it was green wood so they had to dry it in the oven in the stove and it smoked so that it made the house full of smoke.

The pioneer family had at all times a good supply of food and a good shelter. Their main hardships were the storms and prairie fires. The fire of the fall of 1885 burned up nearly all the settlers grain and hay. The pioneer's father was lucky not to lose any grain and hay. The pioneer saw the fire come $\frac{1}{2}$ mile off, he hitched up the three oxen and plowed a few furrows which killed the fire. The pioneer saved all the buildings of neighbors. The flames were higher than a house, when the fire was ten rods away it lit the tops of the hay stacks. The children and wife stayed in the sod buildings because it could not burn and they were saved. The fire traveled to the Sheyenne River. It went through all of North Dakota.

Mr. Ashland walked to the neighbors once and while he was there a storm arose and the neighbors did not want him to leave because they thought he would get lost, but he said his mother would worry for him so he left and faced the storm. When he got home his face was all covered with ice. The storm became so bad that no one could move outside.

In the spring Mr. Ashland drove the stock to Fort Atchison and they grazed there all summer. He had to pay one dollar per head.

Mr. and Mrs. Ashland had eight children. They are Mr. Arnold Ashland, St. Cloud, Minn., Mrs. L. Lier, Mose, North Dakota, Mr. Jens B. Ashland, Cooperstown, N. Dak., Mr. Oscar Ashland, Hannaford, N. Dak., Mr. Albert Ashland, Cooperstown, N. Dak., Mr. Henry Ashland, Silverton, Oregon, Mr. Roy Ashland, Cooperstown, N. Dak., Mr. Walter Ashland, Cooperstown, N. Dak.

The present home of Mr. Ashland is Section 9, Township 145, and range 58, just west of old Fort Totten road. Sibley Fort pope 1 mile north west of Mr. Ashland.