

2 AUTOBIOGRAPHY

Written by the Late Judge H. A. Anderson

Part II

People from other parts of Norway as well as the people of this country may think what I have written and shall write hereafter in this sketch is overdrawn. To such let me say that while I shall endeavor to give a faithful picture of our humble life, I shall leave out much that would startle those who have been brought up under more favorable conditions.

I am well aware that people in the richer portions of Norway were totally ignorant of the hardships and poverty endured in other parts of the country. Our husbandry was as crude as our method of heating and lighting. Our field land did not exceed four acres. Nearly all was side hill and in the spring farmers were seen hauling the dirt from the lower edge of the field to the upper part, which fall and winter rains had washed down, to cover the bed-rock. We had no harrows, so all harrowing was done with rakes. To plow, two plows were used for the furrow had to be turned up hill. Thus it became necessary to hitch and unhitch at the end of every furrow. Children and old people who were unable to do the heavier labor were employed in dragging the plow back and forth over the field. I began to do this work before I was strong enough to do it alone. So old lady Marthe and I united our strength to accomplish this task.

The plows were primitive, all made of wood except the point, which was made of iron. The field land was usually heavily manured and produced heavy crops, but most of the hay-land was poor and except in spots bore very light crops.

The grass was cut with small scythes having a short handle so that even small people had to stoop over in cutting the grass.

On account of the frequency of rains on the west coast, all hay had to be hung up in order to dry. For this purpose all the hay-land was covered with long ricks called "Hesje" constructed of poles fastened horizontally, about six to eight inches apart, to posts standing about six feet apart. These Hesje filled with hay standing in parallel rows and sometimes at all angles to the compass present a very picturesque appearance. During rainy seasons the hay would remain for weeks hanging on these ricks.

Scarcely less picturesque was the manner of drying the grain. The grain was all cut with the historic sickle, and bound into small bundles. Poles about 12 to 15 feet were then set in the ground and the bundles fastened to the poles. To reach the upper part of the pole a step-ladder was used. When dry the grain was carried into the barn on the poles, the poles pulled out and stored away for the next season.

I must not omit to mention the manner of sharpening the scythes. The scythes were usually made at home, for every man was supposed to manufacture all his farm implements and for this purpose nearly every farm, with few exceptions, had a small shop. The scythes were never ground. When they got dull they were hammered as thin as possible and then whetted. Our farm had no shop, so we had to go to a neighbor to get our scythes sharpened. About the time we left the country, ground scythes came into use.

School Days In Norway

Our school house was three miles from where we lived, and my folks being very poor they found it difficult to send me to school when I reached the school age, and to avoid the necessity of sending me to school, mother went to our parish priest and obtained permission to keep me at home on the condition that she should instruct me in the rudiments of education. In consequence of this arrangement I was in my tenth year before I entered school. Reading, writing, arithmetic, the smaller and larger Catechism, together with a brief Bible History and the learning of certain hymns were our studies in school. We had twelve weeks of school during the year. My first day in school was one of the events of my life. A long table extending nearly from one end of the room to the other, on each side of which was a bench for the pupils. The teacher sat at the head of the table, the girls on the bench at his left and the boys on the right. The pupil admitted to school last always was placed at the foot of the table, but as soon as the impartial teacher found the new pupil showed superior abilities to any one above him, he or she was promoted to a place farther up along the table. My mother did her work of instruction well, for I remained at the foot only a few days and was then placed near the center of the table.

In studying our lessons we all read out loud, and the reader can readily imagine what noise and discord this made. The deep bass voices of some mingling with the shrill piping voices of others. Feminine and masculine tones vying with each other to give clear and distinct utterance to words. Some reading the smaller catechism, some the larger. Constant reiteration of the same sentence or paragraph in order to fashion it in memory; some stumbling over words difficult of pronunciation, and others racing along to show their ability. During the study hours the teacher usually walked back and forth behind the girls, thus giving the girls the better chance to make up faces and perform minor antics provocative of suppressed laughter and audible titters on the part of the boys, while every grimace and motion made by the boys was un-

der the teacher's eye. Many a chivalric lad took punishment for violation of school rules while the original mischief-maker looked on with a demure and innocent expression that seemed to say, "See how good I am." But the younger boys were not always chivalric. To mitigate their punishment they would often tell the teacher how Anna or Maria provoked their untimely bursts of laughter or other manifestations of mirth, or displeasure. Generally speaking our teacher was not of the harshest kind, but from force of custom he often punished severely children who could not get their lessons.

I remember one boy especially, whom he whipped nearly every day for this reason. This was brutal cruelty, for the poor fellow was not able to learn, and the constant dread of punishment must have tended to distract his attention more and more.

Another boy usually got a licking every day on account of mischief-making qualities, and I was told he always got an extra licking at home when he had had one in school. He was the only child in the family. I have known him ever since our school days, and to this day he carries hate, frequently expressed, in his heart towards both teacher and father. For years he was a disturbing element wherever he lived, and, though at this time a strict church member, the seeds of slyness, trickiness and hypocrisy planted in his nature by inheritance and nurtured by the use of the rod, still bear their fruit.

My school life in Norway closed in my twelfth year. The last day of school was perhaps the proudest day of my life for it was customary on the last day of each term to assign to each pupil the place he or she should occupy at the beginning of the next term. Though I had attended but two terms I was placed at the head of the school on the boy's side. Opposite to me was placed a bright handsome girl, my senior by three years. Unfortunately the sweet, quiet girl of my own age, whom I admired most, sat near the center of the table on the other side. Forty-six years have passed since that day, but memory still holds as a precious souvenir the image of those serene cerulean blue eyes which evoked my boyish admiration.

One incident of my school days will illustrate my mother's character. I have already stated that we often had rains in the winter. One morning as I was about to go to school I found the ground covered with a sheet of glittering ice. About fifty rods from our house was a turbulent brook which we usually crossed on a log, there being no bridge. It had rained during the night, then suddenly turned cold so that the ice covered this log and every stone which projected above the water in the stream had a circle of ice around it. Mother anticipated this condition and came with me as far as the brook to help me cross, but when we reached the place she found it impossible to cross on the log. She spoke of going home for ashes but the hour was late and she concluded that if she did so I would not be on time for school. To hurry matters along she sat down on a rock, pulled off her shoes and stockings, told me to climb onto her back, which I did, and she then carried me across the stream, breaking the ice with her bare feet every step she took for the bed of the brook was all boulders and pebbles.

I always wore wooden shoes until we started for America. Sometimes in clattering over the stony grounds they would split without warning. One day at school some of the larger boys induced me and our nearest neighbors boy, who was a year older than I, to wrestle. For some time we pulled and hauled one another around without any decisive result, but after awhile my antagonist got the advantage of me and threw me while my wooden shoes flew in different directions. I was chagrined by his victory and as soon as I got my wind I began to protest that I was at a disadvantage on account of my foot-gear. The other boys then called my attention to the fact that Berent, my opponent, had on his father's leather shoes several sizes too large for him, which made the contest equally awkward for him.

The Struggle for Bread

Life in Norway on the west coast, at the time of which I am writing, was a constant struggle for mere support. Very few indeed were those who could boast of a bank account or retire at any time to live without the necessity of working for their living. Even old people whose support was provided for as a partial consideration on sale of their homes, had to labor as long as they were able, assisting in all kinds of work on the farm disposed of.

There was no work about the farm that women did not perform on an equal footing with men. In fact men had the easier part, for they rarely helped the women in their house work. Men frequently rested while the women attended to household duties, but when the hour came for work in the field men and women went out together to their appointed tasks. Many women were superior to their husbands and brothers in the labors on the farm. There were few kinds of work that mother did not excel my step-father in performing. The natural result was, strong healthy women with almost incredible capacity for endurance.

I have before mentioned that during part of the summer, the farmers sent their cattle up into the mountains for pasturage, and that the cattle were usually cared for by girls. In some instances the farmer's wife would care for the cattle, but most wives were mothers, large families being the rule, and childless wives rare exception. We belonged to the very poor and one summer my folks were so hard up that they could not hire a girl to take charge of their cattle in mountain pasture. I was six years old and brother Andrew three, but mother resolved to perform the duties at "Stölen" and also at home. When you learn that our "Stölen" was seven miles from our home and that there was only a rocky trail up over steep ridges and the mountain

side, that we had six cows which she stabled and milked every evening, milked them again every morning and turned them out to pasture, made cheese and butter, walked home every morning after her chores were done, usually carrying from eight to sixteen quarts of milk, and then on her arrival home did up the housework and that finished took her place side by side with her husband in the out-of-door work until about six o'clock in the afternoon, you will begin to understand the strength and endurance required to keep this up for weeks.

(To be Continued)

May 9th, 1867, we left the city of Bergen in the good ship "Norden," one of the largest emigrant vessels leaving that port. Her destination was Quebec, the number of her passengers near six hundred. Her captain was a gentleman, kind and prudent.

Our voyage was free from accidents or violent storms. Births occurred en route, but no deaths. Six weeks and three days after we left Bergen we landed in Quebec.

The beauty of the landscape along the St. Lawrence River gave rise to expectations in the hearts of the immigrants which probably have never been realized. At Quebec we were bundled into box cars with a few boards or planks for seats. Two engines, one behind, took our train through to Montreal, but before we reached Montreal the engine behind telescoped our train, wrecking several cars and smashing much baggage. Fortunately none of the cars occupied by people were derailed or wrecked. The Grand Trunk R. R. carried us to Grand Haven, Michigan, where we boarded a steamer for Milwaukee, Wisconsin. When we landed in Milwaukee we had nearly reached the end of our resources. Our money was gone, we had come as far as our tickets would bring us, and we hadn't a friend or acquaintance in all America except Mads Knudtson, and he lived at that time in the extreme eastern part of Trempealeau county, Wisconsin, distant about two hundred miles. To get farther

we pledged our baggage. We were then carried by rail to La Crosse and from there by boat to Winona, where we landed July 3rd in the morning. During the preceding night a terrible storm prevented our boat from landing at Trempealeau and for this reason we were left at Winona until the boat returned on the Fourth of July in the evening, when we were taken on board again, carried to La Crosse and thence up the river once more and landed at Trempealeau early in the morning of July 5th.

While at Winona we remained out-of-doors except being sheltered part of the time by a machine shed. Our apparent necessities soon attracted attention. One gentleman, the last word ought to begin with a big G, came to inquire into our condition during the early part of the forenoon. But we could not understand him nor he us, but he readily came to the conclusion that we needed food, so he went away and in a few minutes returned with a big sack of crackers, besides cheese and bolognas. This done he hunted up a Norwegian to interpret for us and after that he took up a collection for us amounting to about eight dollars.

In the evening of the following day our interpreter secured us our passage on the boat as before stated. The boat's name was "Waragle" and was burned a few years

Having reached the village of Trempealeau we were on Terre Firma and, so to speak, independent of the need of further public conveyance. Our only guide was a scrap of paper containing the following words: "Mads Knudtson, Whitehall P. O., Trempealeau Co., Wisconsin." This piece of paper in lieu of speech we had to make use of very frequently. Reaching Four Mile House above Trempealeau we left a little chest or box with a few trinkets in, which we never saw again. Having had but little exercise for many weeks and the weather being very hot, our clothing stiff and heavy, we found walking taxed us all severely. Especially was this the case with father and mother, who each had a child to carry nearly all the way. Besides, my sister Hannah was still getting all her nourishment from her mother's breast. Somewhere between Trempealeau and Galesville we took the wrong road and I cannot tell where we went but know that we were two days in going from Trempealeau to "Glopstuen" in French Creek, where we stopped the second night.

We did not enter French Creek valley by the road leading from Galesville, for I remember it was getting dark and we were coming down a long hill when at the foot of the hill mother fell headlong with her infant in her arms. A gentleman who could not understand us happened to be close by and saw mother fall. He at once ran to our assistance, took the youngest child and led us to his home. Here we had a good supper, but his house was small and as he could not understand us after supper he again carried the baby and took us to Mr. Gilbertson's place, known in those days as "Glopstuen" or "Gloppetuen." If I remember correctly, during these two days my sisters had both been without any covering for their heads, their bonnets happening to be in our chests when our goods were pledged for our further journey, those having them in possession refusing us access to them. But I remember that some kind hearted lady gave each of them a bonnet while on our way from Trempealeau to Pigeon Creek.

At Glopstuen we were well taken care of, and the next morning we proceeded on our way. We were all spent and tired and had gone but a short distance when some countryman of ours saw our weariness and procured an ox team and wagon, and in this way we were carried to "Old Whitehall," where Old Knudtson, its first settler, and his good wife gave us all a good dinner, and where we rested for some time. About the middle of the afternoon we started for Pigeon. Mads Knudtson was known to our kindly host Ole Knudtson and he sent with us his son, John Knudtson, a lad then of about sixteen years, to show us the way. He went with us past old man Ricard's place and pointed out to us the trail we should take. This trail led by the home of William Oliver and to the home of Benjamin Oliver, where we stayed over night. The next morning we came to Mads Knudtson's place, who then

Mads Knudtson and Wife
We left Alvern two months before. This was the port we had

steered for. Some of us, at least, had expected better things than we found.

Knudtson, like ourselves, had left Norway in debt for his passage and the three years he had been here had not made him rich. He had a wife and several children. Knudtson was a hustler, neither modest nor afraid to assert his wants or rights. He was strong and vigorous to a degree far beyond the average. Had he been moved by a fixed purpose through life, he might have accomplished wonders, for his mental grasp was quick and broad. Many of his habits and characteristics were blemishes, but to this day, if I could reach him, I would go to him sooner than take any tonic prescribed by a physician, for his vigor, flow of spirits and sense of humor would almost invariably banish any Blue Devils that might have kept me company.

I am more grateful than I can express for hundreds of hours spent in his presence. Had he permitted his reasoning faculties to govern his passions, he would not be the obscure man he is today. At the present time he lives near Kingsbury, Fresno Co., California. His age is about seventy-seven. His father was near one hundred at his death.

Having made this digression as a tribute to the man who was to be our Moses in the wilderness, it is no more than fair that I should say a few words concerning Mrs. Knudtson. Her name was Oline. She was as remarkable for her physical health as her husband. She gave birth to thirteen children, and at one time was alone while giving birth to a child. She suffered the usual hardships of pioneer life and poverty, and at times her husband was harsh and inconsiderate towards her. Her mental capacity was very limited and her later years were unhappy for she seemed to store every grievance her husband had committed against her. Her life had been exposed to many ills and accidents, but I heard her say shortly before she died, that she had never had a doctor, nor used a dollar's worth of medicine. It is, therefore, rather strange that her life should go out in the manner it did.

Mr. Knudtson had bought St. Olaf's Hotel on Wisconsin Street, Eau Claire, and in company with his daughter, Mrs. Minnie Atkins, was running the hotel. Mrs. Knudtson had ceased several years before to take any interest in household duties, although her health was apparently good, but she lived with her husband and when her mental vagaries were side-tracked she was cheerful and pleasant.

One day she was standing near the center of the ladies' sitting room in the hotel, waving her apron back and forth to attract the attention of one of her grandchildren playing on the carpet at her feet. Suddenly she fell, having in some manner wrenched one of her hips out of joint. She was soon after taken to the hospital in the city, where after a short time she died. She lies buried in the Whitehall cemetery. She was my friend since first I knew her and always came to me when during later years her unhappy mental condition led her to seek advice against imaginary evils or things long past.

With those brief glimpses of the lives of Mr. and Mrs. Knudtson I return to the morning of July 8, 1867, where we found a temporary haven with these people who welcomed us as heartily as if we had been near relations, which we were not. Mr. Knudtson helped find places for me and my older brother.

After a few days I went to work

for Knut Lund, who at the time lived at the lower end of Vosse coulee. My brother found a place with Bent Peterson, who still lives on his farm in Vosse coulee. I stayed until late in the fall and my services were rewarded with a hickory shirt in addition to the food I consumed. Lund and his wife were kind to me and probably gave me all I earned. Trempealeau Valley church was built that summer, and the following summer my brother Ole was confirmed in this church by the Rev. Valdeland, one of the first Norwegian Lutheran Priests to minister to the people in Trempealeau and Jackson counties. He formed his acquaintance during his later years after he had retired from active ministerial work. I found him a genial, likeable man.

Part VI

New Homes and New Friends

We were among strangers, my parents having parted from Knudtson's under circumstances which strained their friendship on both sides for some time; but in those days no one except he who chose to be was stranger long, for frontier life realizes the dream of a universal brother and sisterhood about as closely as it is possible on this earth. When we came to Big Slough the only settlers there were Hiram Smith and family, Andrew Larson with family, Lyman Hecox and his family, and one James Phillips with family. Phillips lived near the lower end of the slough. He was English and so was his wife. He seemed to be a good man, but his family was a noisy unruly set. Hecox was a number one specimen of the windy. He swore by the "Great Jehovah" and was very impressive to us who could not understand even all the cuss words. I worked for him now and then and found him an entertaining master. It was at his home that I discovered "mince-pie." I was eating alone and this nondescript food was left to the last. I opened it and fed from the table. I did not call it by any particular name, for I knew none that would express its character as it appeared to me. What it was concocted from I know not, for it is probable that its ingredients were as unfamiliar to me as the name of this conglomeration was at that time. For years mince-pie was absolutely safe from trespass on my part, and to this day I attack it with caution.

I spent many jolly hours with Hecox and his family. His daughter Elizabeth—"Libby"—and I were of the same age. She was my partner in all kinds of work on the farm and my superior in most kinds of work. In the summer I have seen her wade knee-deep all day in the slough putting up bay. In the winter time she dressed in men's clothing and worked like a boy in the woods skidding and hauling timber. The question of sex seemed to be absolutely absent when we worked together. We were almost chums if such a relation is possible between man and woman. Her life continued strenuous to the last but rather from choice than necessity. She lived in the northern part of Trempealeau county from her marriage until her death a few years ago.

When we came to Big Slough Mr. Hecox's father-in-law, a Mr. German I think his name was, lived with Mr. Hecox. He died soon after and was the first person among the settlers to die. His daughter, Mrs. Hecox, soon followed him. Hecox soon after the loss of his wife sold his place to Jorgen Nelson, a newcomer.

Phillips also lost his wife early and sold his farm to our friend, Mads Knudtson. Andrew Larson and wife continued on their homestead until death. Mr. Larson was a man of powerful frame, almost a Hercules in size, but his ambition was nil. No day so busy but what he would gladly drop any farm implement which happened to be in his hands and sit down and chat

with the passing stranger or neighbor hour after hour. In short until the stranger continued his journey. His voice was very heavy, deliberate and slow was his enunciation. He was a very religious man, and when I first knew him he belonged to Hauge's church, but during his later years he and a few others separated from Hauge's church and followed the teachings of Elling Eielson. That there were any important doctrinal differences between the teachings of Hauge and Eielson I do not believe, for Eielson, if I remember correctly, was originally an ardent exponent of the teachings of Hauge.

However, Mr. Larson was a worshiper after the old time fashion. His prayers were long. He often led in singing hymns of twenty stanzas. His comments on good and evil, sin and grace, were very lengthy and deliberate. He was always earnest but never passionate. Formality always checked enthusiasm. Though he would have enjoyed himself if every day had been a day of worship, he never was a bore to any one not belonging to his religious circle. He had three children, two boys and one girl. Ole and Lewis, his sons, are still living, but Marianna, a woman of magnificent build, genial and kind-hearted, died soon after marriage.

Hiram Smith was of Yankee extraction, married to a Norwegian woman whose name was Mette. She was one of the queenliest looking women I have ever met. When young she must have been a woman of commanding beauty. Her height was above medium, broad hips and shoulders, head large and shapely with dark hair which usually hung in ringlets or locks around her brow and temples. Her eyes were dark and lustrous and her face at her complete command to express every emotion or passion which might visit her heart. Her mind was as ample and well proportioned as her body. Her disposition was kind and generous. Her smile was an illumination of the room she occupied. She had plenty of temper for proper occasions and her frown inspired fear as easily as her smile invited confidence. She was a friend to the poor, a lover of the beautiful, and withal a noble woman, mother, friend and wife, a treasure beyond price in the poor man's home, a jewel among pioneers, and had fate willed, she might as easily have been an ornament to a throne for she was rich in nature's gifts. I saw her last spring at Onalaska, where she lives with her son. She is past eighty years and last year suffered a paralytic stroke, which reduced her weight from two hundred to one hundred thirty pounds. This naturally affected her appearance and robbed her form of its usual fullness, but much of her former grace and beauty is still her portion.

She first taught me the love of flowers, their names and characteristics.

Her husband was one of the kindest men I have known. With a weak body and a mind inferior to that of his wife he naturally followed where she led. That her character had suffered from mis-

placed love in youth, and that subsequently she married and lost her husband in the war, were steps which placed her hand at the disposal of Hiram Smith. He was a religious man through and through and worshipped with the Wesleyan Methodists. Many a time have I heard him pray when he thought he was alone and unobserved. A good man was Smith. I wish the memory of these good people might be printed on the rocks that crown the hills round about Big Slough and find utterance down through the ages as a stimulus to all that is good and beautiful.

Besides the people mentioned Lars Peterson, Nels Koksalien, and Nels Halvorslien came into the valley the same summer we came to America. They all found homesteads, or I should say they all found government lands which they homesteaded.

They were all newcomers from Norway, sober, industrious men. All have gone except Mrs. Koksalien, who still lives with her son Oluf, where she first settled. Halvorslien was perhaps the most intellectual man who has up to this time lived in Big Slough. His children, four girls and one boy, were all bright and witty. Their inclination to be sarcastic did sometimes hurt the feelings of their associates and perchance deprived them of friendships which they might have prized. Gina, Ingeborg and Martine were lively girls and the first two loved well but not wisely before marriage, and the result was each brought home a love-baby. They soon married, however, and made excellent wives and mothers. Martine married the brilliant and somewhat erratic J. Aretander, attorney at Minneapolis. According to rumor it was his third matrimonial venture, having tired of his first two wives. There came a time when he would have set aside this girl from the backwoods too, but he had found his intellectual as well as physical match and the terms she made were too high so he concluded to retain her. So far as I know they are living happily together at the present time.

One beauty about the settlers in those days, extending from Big Slough through Curran coulee up along the road from Taylor to Hixton, was the sobriety of nearly all. Curran valley was settled by Norwegians nearly all of whom belonged to Hauge's church and as a rule were a devoted people trying to live clean lives. The people along Trempealeau river and in and about Sechlerville and Hixton came mostly from the eastern states and were as a rule a moral and religious people.

The use of liquor was an uncommon thing. The Germans, Scandinavians and Polanders, who have come in later, with all their virtues, brought along some customs and habits which had better have been left behind.

After all these digressions I better speak a word now and then for myself. It was during this first winter that I helped Mr. Smith thresh his grain. He did not have much and to get a machine to his place was an impossibility. He might have threshed his grain in the old time manner with flails, but there was too much Yankee in him to follow a method involving such hard work. So one day when the ground was frozen solid and it was sparkling cold, he found a level place from which he cleaned the snow and the rubbish. There he laid his grain in a circle with the heads of the blundles in. This done, Buck and Bright, his oxen, were brought out and made to walk over these bundles from morning till night. How many days we were engaged in threshing his grain I do not remember.

I Became a Hired Man

The following spring with the assistance of the Smith people I was hired to one Ambrose Wilson, who at the time lived northwest of Sechlerville on a farm belonging to "Jim" Lee. Ambrose did not farm much, but was engaged in hauling merchandise from Sparta to Hixton and Sechlerville. Sparta was at that time the nearest railroad station. Mr. Wilson drove four horses and I drove two. The distance from Hixton to Sparta was forty miles. We made the trip regularly in three days. The roads were very poor and sandy nearly all the way and the horses suffered at the hands of most of those who were on the road. Most of the time we drove by the way of Davis' Ferry, where we crossed Black River. Davis owned and ran the ferry. He was an easy-going fellow. When coming from Sparta we always had to call for the ferry-man. In case of storm or haste, it was often very unpleasant on account of the long waits we had to make, when Mr. Davis failed to hear the call or for other reasons proved to be long in coming. Sometimes we drove by the way of Black River Falls. The road that way was, if possible, worse than by way of Davis' Ferry. But notwithstanding the almost impossible roads, there was a life and activity along the whole distance from Sparta to Black River Falls and farther on in a diminishing degree, that gave to teaming in those days a charm almost wholly gone since the advent of the railroad. Every road-house or hotel along the route did a good business. Especially was this true of the hotels at Cataract. Here Mr. Wilson often managed to stop over-night going and coming. We always stopped with the "Dutchman" and a splendid hostelry it was for the normal man or boy. Very often there were no beds, so we slept on the floor or in the barn. After a long drive and good supper little difference did it make to me whether I slept on a feather-bed or rug.

J. R. Sechler, after whom Sechlerville is named, had a store and mill doing a very good business. The old "Gentleman" was a very active, hard-working man, and we usually met him somewhere every trip we made with his fine pair of "Greys," which he drove so many years. One time we met him at the Ida House in Sparta at the dinner-table. It was on one of my first trips for I remember I had not learned to speak English. When the waiter came around to take orders for the dessert she repeated the names of two kinds of pies, two,

three times, but at that time pies and their names were Greek to me. Mr. Sechler sitting across the table from me noticed that I was a "new-comer" and told the girl to bring a piece of each of the two kinds of pie so that I might make my selection from actual inspection. At his suggestion she did so and when after a few minutes she returned to take away the piece not wanted, she plainly exhibited her surprise when she found no pie left. Mr. Sechler with several others had a good laugh before leaving the table at some one's expense, and for more than twenty years afterwards whenever we met he always recalled the incident of how I got two pieces of pie at the Ida House because I could not talk English.

Is There a Heaven for Horses?

Speaking of his "Greys" Sechler once said to me, "That team has never rested a day except Sundays and days impossible to be out since I have owned them." I think he drove horses nearly twenty years and when I knew them they always looked good. But they were used with judgment and given good care.

I can't say as much for the horses Mr. Wilson drove. He had too much of the American habit of "slicking" things over and letting it go at that. He was not by nature a cruel man, but if he and millions of others find hereafter a heaven, and there is no heaven for the horses they neglected and abused, then there has been a mistake made in the general arrangements of things.

(To be Continued)

Narrow Escapes

It was during my summer with Wilson that I had two narrow escapes from serious injury, or worse. The second day I was with him he took me along after a load of hay to Upper Pigeon Creek. He had four horses on the wagon and considerable over a ton of hay for a load. Coming down a long, steep hill one of the wheels struck a grub and caused the wagon to turn completely over. Mr. Wilson slid off in front, but I was sitting near the center of the load by the side of the binding-pole and was caught under the load. It was fortunate that I was on the side of the pole, else I would have been badly hurt. As it was, I only suffered from a temporary want of air until Wilson could dig me out.

The other instance of threatened injury occurred on one of our Sparta trips, between Cataract and Davis' Ferry. We were crossing a ravine or dry run, from 30 to 50 feet deep. Across it was a shaky bridge without railing. My boss was ahead, halfway up a hill when I was leaving the bridge. Suddenly one of my horses balked and began backing the wagon onto the bridge. I had no whip and was seated on a very high load of furniture. I called but Mr. Wilson found it difficult to stop his load in the middle of the hill, but seeing my imminent danger he dropped his lines, he being on the ground at the time, and ran back and grabbed my balky horses by the bit just as one of the hind wheels of my wagon was about to drop over the ends of the bridge planks near the center of the bridge. Man and horses trembled like an aspen leaf for a minute or two, and then Mr. Wilson succeeded in leading my team off the bridge to a comparatively safe position.

Mr. Wilson was not unkind to me by design, but my summer was not always a pleasant one, for he was one of those men who was from choice of habit always late at night. During the hottest part of the summer this might be excusable—but there was no reason for the constancy of this custom.

I was to have my board and clothes, no other compensation, but I remember driving many an evening or night barefooted, and no other garments on save shirt, overalls and hat. I think the clothes Wilson furnished me during that summer for more than six months service did not cost over \$10.

First Money for Work

The first money paid me for work in this country was paid to me that summer in corn planting time. Mr. Wilson had three or four boys help him one day to plant corn and in the evening he paid them off while I stood by looking on. Mrs. Wilson suggested that I had done just as much as any one of the boys and that I be paid too. So Mr. Smith gave me thirty cents. So far -- I remember this was the only money I had that summer. With the money I bought mother a "Shak r."

My First School in U. S. A.

The following winter Dr. Lyons, then living on Charley Schlimmerhorn's place, asked me to stay with him and go to school. This proposition suited me and I at once began to go to school, doing chores for my board. I think Mr. Lyons had one cow, a pig, and a few chickens.

So far as I could see, Mr. Lyons did no work and mornings his wife used to call him half a dozen times to get him up for breakfast. He seemed to me to be the laziest man I ever stayed with. The board was decidedly the poorest fare I ever found anywhere. During the two weeks I stayed there, every meal except one or two consisted of buckwheat cakes and pasty gravy.

My teacher was Merilde Lyons, who afterward married Ben Smith. One day I saw her whip Sam Smith, --- Waters and --- Turner, three grownup young men, who out of courtesy permitted the lady to discharge one of the common duties of a teacher in those days. I enjoyed the scene for the boys circled the open space around the teacher with amused grins on their faces and the effort brought out a beautiful crimson on the face of Miss Lyons.

I stayed with Mr. Lyons two weeks. The immediate cause of my leaving was the fact that on the last day of my stay I was called early in the morning and asked to go to a neighbor and borrow salt. I promptly obeyed but the neighbor had no salt, which fact I reported on my return. Then I was asked to go to another neighbor on the same errand where I met with the same answer—no salt. Returning the second time I was again requested to go to a third neighbor, to which I think I demurred, for I remember I went home that day and told my parents that I would rather put up with the fare we could get at home than go back to Mr. Lyons.

Our First Home

This summer my folks settled on a piece of railroad land in Section 7, Township 22, Range 6, in Big Slough. Our house, like nearly all the houses in the community, was built of logs, oak logs.

Father cut the logs on government and railroad land in the same coulee where our land lay. How he got them hauled I do not remember, but after they were all hauled our neighbors came and the house was built in a day.

There was no fancy work wasted on this house. The logs were of different lengths, from 14 to more than 20 feet. The house inside was scant 13 feet square. This left many of the logs projecting on the corners. These projections were never cut off, and as time went on served many useful purposes. Clothes lines were rare articles those days, and these projections served often in place of them. It was a good place for fishpoles, traps, scythes, rakes, and many other farm implements. At butchering time, it was a handy place to hang a pig while dressing it. Chickens found convenient roosting places on these projections and tom cats sometimes made night hideous from these elevated perches.

This little house, 13 by 13 and six feet from floor to ceiling, soon came to be a populous place when we children were all home. Later on there were nine in our family. Two years after we built my Uncle Fredrickson came; his family numbered nine also. They stayed with us all summer. The next year came Halvor Monson with a family of nine or ten. They stayed all summer. The year following came Henry Gunderson and his wife and a young man and lady, all of whom stayed for some time.

There was an attic, of course, reached by some pegs set in the wall, which took care of the overflow nights.

'Twas in this little cabin, built of oak logs, that I was married. Here we spent our honeymoon and lived after marriage about a year.

I now come to the period in life to which all boys look forward with such bright anticipations, the time when I was in a measure independent of parental control and earned my own support. For in the spring of 1869 I hired out to Knudt Syverson in Curran Valley for six months at eight dollars a month. I worked two months, then came the report that the railroad lands were on the market and that all who had settled on such lands must now pay a certain amount of the purchase price. Syverson was one of many who had settled on railroad land, and when he heard this report he at once told me that he could not afford to pay eight dollars a month any longer, but if I wished to stay he would pay me four dollars per month. This was a great disappointment to me as well as my parents, and we concluded at once, inasmuch as Mr. Syverson was about to break the agreement I had with him for work, that I should not stay with him for any less wages than originally agreed on, so I quit and hired out to Hiram Smith for one month at four dollars. After my month was up with Mr. Smith, I worked for several parties the rest of the summer.

AUTOBIOGRAPHY

Written by the Late Judge H. A. Anderson

Part VIII

Some Early Settlers In Pigeon

Mr. Lyons was a good-natured, easy-going fellow and good worker as a hired man, but no good without a boss. Around York and farther up along Pigeon Creek were a number of that class of people.

To this class belonged Picket, one of the earliest settlers, who lived on the main road between Pigeon Falls and York, where he had settled on a homestead, which I think he occupied for nearly 25 years. During much of his time he hauled all the water for family use from the creek over 80 rods distant, while at any time a plentiful supply of good water might have been had by digging 25 or 30 feet, a matter of a day's work for a couple of men.

Mr. Picket was one of those subtle and imaginative men who are constantly seeing paradisaical conditions awaiting them in the future brought about by some happening without care or toil. In our years through communications our spirits he claimed to have discovered some plants possessing very valuable medicinal properties and through a dream he had discovered gold mine in the state of New York in the vicinity of his birthplace, and on the strength of this dream he made one or more trips to the place of his birth.

About 35 years ago I spent a night at his house on purpose to listen to his dreams and theories. Mr. Picket and his wife possessed a large degree those amiable and spitable qualities which we just associate with pioneer people. I was welcomed and entertained with the best their home could afford, although I was a stranger to me.

We, Mr. and Mrs. Picket and self, sat up until morning, he telling of pioneer experiences, his dreams, visions and discoveries. He his wife sat by his side listening with a rapturous devotion and enthusiasm like a devotee at the sacred shrine. Constant toil, poverty, and privations were undoubtedly this devoted wife's daily companions from marriage until death. She was the mother of many children. She had seen 80 years or more go by without any material improvement in their financial status.

For any man's life spelled failure, from a financial standpoint, his certainly did, but not withstanding he was still her hero with prophetic vision and immeasurable capacities for accomplishing his plans. Many a rich man with his pampered wife might well envy the happy relation, devoted companionship and unclouded faith of these two, who on their long march on life's highway had truly become one in hope, aim, and devotion. Mr. Picket is dead, his wife still lives and is now the wife of a preacher.

It is probably true that in our backward view of pioneer life we are apt to give the prevailing conditions wrong names. We speak of hardships, poverty, and privations in connection with lives of early settlers because we now have so many things which we consider necessary and indispensable which they had not.

I think that if feelings of want and discontent could be weighed and measured, we would find many a young man living in comparative ease and luxury, with horses, buggies and bicycles at his command, feeling a heavier and bigger ache because he can't have an automobile than did the young men of our pioneer days who had nothing but their legs to carry them from place to place. And the ladies of those days who could afford but one or two calico or gingham dresses a year certainly never experienced half the heart-worry that many of the ladies of the present day feel because they cannot reach the top rung in the ladder of fashion.

After this consolatory digression I recall another old settler who lived near the head of Pigeon Creek, usually known as Doc. Monroe. In his way he was more of a character than Mr. Picket but not so harmless, for his vocation was that of a horse trader, farmer, and horse doctor. In the spring of 1878, I began my career as farmer on my own hook. I had a small span of horses, one of which had been very badly crippled and in the midst of my spring's work the other became sick. Doc. Monroe was the nearest man I knew of who pretended to understand the ills which horse flesh suffers. I led my horse to his place, arriving there about two o'clock in the afternoon. He looked my horse over carefully, found she was about five or six years old, and without any bad habits or blemishes. All my questions he met with evasive replies and an air of mystery. I knew nothing about horses and was green enough to suppose that his knowledge of horses was very profound.

I lingered about his place until dinner in the hope of learning something definite, but my inquiries only brought nods and mysterious shakes of the head. After dinner the old man commenced talking trade and although this raised some suspicion in my mind that my horse was not so badly off as his mysterious conduct had led me to believe, I finally yielded to his advice that I had better get rid of the animal. By the trade I became the owner of a mongrel bull, a sheep or two and some other truck. This trade, however, proved to my advantage, for in a short time the mare died. The funny part of this transaction was that the old man afterward accused me of having imposed on him and cheated him out of his property.

Some time soon afterward I called on the old man for legal counsel, and on my way home rode with him several miles down along Pigeon Creek. At this time he also carried about him the air of a man

who knows a great deal more than he is willing to exchange for mere questioning.

As we drove along and had reached a point near the school house a short distance above York, he began to sigh deeply, smack his lips and display considerable emotion. His agitation was so plain and to me so unaccountable that I asked what was the matter with him. After considerable hesitation he replied that he had just had a message and that in the near future we would witness sadder happenings in the neighborhood than had ever taken place there before.

I then asked him to explain how this message came to him, but he would not tell me, only saying he had experienced such communications whenever some great calamity was about to take place. I was too skeptical then and am now to believe that his emotion was the result of anything unusual or abnormal. My opinion is that it was an assumed attitude calculated to impress me that I was in the presence of one who possessed a range of vision much larger than the ordinary man.

Into a Larger World

After these many years it may be pertinent to ask whether or not I regret this episode in my life. Having weighed the matter often in my mind I answer frankly, "No." Undoubtedly my affiliation with the Adventists darkened several of my years when I needed more cheerful contentions and environments to build up my ruined health, but on the other hand it made me a student of history, of life, and of the many faiths and doctrines that have both consoled and alarmed mankind through the ages. It kept me morally clean and ambitious to be all that God wanted me to be.

This same summer I went to Walworth county, Wis., where I hired out to Luther Smith, an earnest follower of the Adventists, who lived south of Whitewater on what was known as the "Town Line." Three brothers lived there on the several corners where the highways cross. James Smith was a Shouting Methodist, the other brother was rated as an infidel. But they got on fairly well. Luther Smith had two grown daughters and one son. The older daughter died from consumption during the latter part of the summer. My health was poor and my mind was very much depressed. By Smith and his wife I was treated like a son and by their daughter Flora I was treated better than a brother. Never shall I forget her kindness for it was prompted by an affection deeper than that of a sister, and though I never permitted myself to encourage any feeling save that of friendship, I am saddened sometimes when I recall her, for her first dream of a life's companionship did not come true. Dear, generous-hearted Flora has long since gone to her last sleep in a southern state, only a few years after she married.

The following fall I went to stay with a man named Bartholf, living about a mile east of Whitewater. I did chores for my board and went to school. Mr. Bartholf was an Adventist and a man of the Benjamin Franklin type, always dispassionate and judicial. Being fairly well-off, he contributed liberally to advance the cause in which he thoroughly believed. I stayed at this place until spring and was very well taken care of. My duties as chore boy were many. I frequently milked half a dozen or more cows evening and morning, took care of five horses, cleaned the barns, carried in wood and water, and about every morning was called to build the fires.

Mrs. Staples was my teacher and boarded at Bartholf's. She had an academic education and gave me a little start in Latin. Ada Bartholf and James Bartholf, Jr., were my youthful companions. Ada was a sweet girl already suffering from consumption. In the spring she went to Texas but change of climate came too late to save her. She died the fall of the year.

When school closed in the spring I hired out to a man named Loomis, also an Adventist. His wife was one of the neatest women I have ever known. I never saw her otherwise than well dressed, hair neatly arranged, and her disposition was as unruffled as her appearance. Mr. Loomis was very religious and most of the time in doubt about his being acceptable to God. This made him depressed and sometimes irritable. I worked hard there for several months, but I suffered from dyspepsia and mental depression most of the time. Never ate more than two meals a day, about six-thirty a. m. and one p. m. This system I followed a whole year without any deviation even for a day. My pleasantest hours were my moonlight walks over to Luther Smith's where "Sister" Flora was.

Mr. Loomis had another hired man, who, with his wife, lived in a separate house. He was a man of middle age and though full of years, he was a good deal like Mr. Loomis, very uncertain of his future. Loomis and his wife were both middle age and childless.

Before my time was up and when feeling very miserable mentally and spiritually I clashed with my master and one night without notice I gathered my clothes and left. I had no particular place to go to, but wanted to go where I was unknown.

After I left Loomis I wandered aimlessly southward, and the first night slept in a railroad cut. The frequent trains passing disturbed my sleep. The next morning I was hailed by a man living near Jamesville who wanted me to work. The family was one of the roughest I ever met. Father and children swore at and cursed each other with the utmost vigor and freedom. This place proving unconfidential, I soon left and again went southward until I came to the city of Monroe, Green county. Here I met some Adventist people I remembered from the late camp meeting I attended. Among these was Alfred Bostwick, who lived with his aged parents. He was unmarried, very fine-grained by nature and devoted. He had been a music teacher for some years, but throat trouble had compelled him to quit. He had a rented farm near Lena, Ill., and I hired out to him. During the rest of the fall we batched on the rented farm and worked. The following winter passed pleasantly for I remained with Bostwick, who spent the winter with his parents. Bostwick was several years older than I but we soon found we had so much in common that we became like brothers.

The following spring I worked

near Lena for a man named Paradise. He had been a goldseeker in California for some years, and had come back and married a widow with three children and some property. He was a drunken rake, apparently without much principle. His wife was an estimable lady and a member of the "Dunkard" church. I went to their meetings and love-feasts and hold them very highly in respect for their quiet, dignified religious life. All the ladies wore caps in church to comply with St. Paul's injunctions. The men parted their hair in the middle and usually wore it quite long. The front of the skirt of their coats was always rounded. At their love-feasts they washed one another's feet. Their preachers were never salaried. But some of them were able men. They called themselves "The Brethren."

During the summer of 1875, I worked for A. C. Woodbury, a farmer living about six miles from Darlington. My work was grubbing and clearing land. Health poor but hard muscles. The Woodburys had no children and were in good financial condition. They took a liking to me; furnished me with a life scholarship, gave me money and sent me to Hillside College, Mich.

(To be continued)