

LINKS ACROSS THE SEA

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Norway America/America Norway

A Family Saga . . .

Fredrik Olaf Gundersen Hjelmeland
1886 - 1968

Ruth Hjelmeland Monson

TO MY FAMILY . . . my children

my grandchildren and

all those who come after

PREFACE

Having stemmed from what I consider very special people with certainly more than ordinary experiences and endowed with tremendous courage and energy, I have often given thought to recording some of the events of their lives. However, it has always been a question of where to begin and adequate time for such an undertaking.

Finding ourselves residing in Norway for a time with John's position at the Stavanger American School in Stavanger, Norway, I decided if it was ever to be, this was the perfect time to attempt the recording of a bit of family history. With this in mind, in October, 1984, I drove from Stavanger to Førde and Bygstad in Sunnfjord, hoping to visit with family members there and perhaps seek out a bit of information plus perhaps find a few old family pictures which would be of interest.

When I first arrived, it was suggested that I go to Signe Bruland, my first cousin, daughter of my uncle Mikal, as she, of all the family, was perhaps the most interested in family history and might have something to share with me. A visit to her revealed a wonderful and exciting treasure, far beyond my wildest dreams! Only a few months prior to this time Signe had been given by her mother, Marie Hjelmeland, an old trunk which had belonged to her father and which had stood for years in the attic of the old Hjelmeland family farm home near Bygstad. She recalled as I visited with her that as a child she and her brothers and sisters were never allowed to touch that trunk; there was something special about it and a trunk only for them to look at.

In this trunk Signe discovered countless old letters which her father had received over the years. It had traveled from Norway to America and Canada and back again, or perhaps only from America upon his return; we do not know for certain whether the trunk was purchased in Norway or America, but we do know from the tags on the trunk that it had traveled from America. I took with me copies of sixty old letters, the majority of them written by my grandfather Gunder Mikalsen Hjelmeland and my father Fredrik Olaf Gundersen Hjelmeland with others written by my grandmother Olina Hjelmeland, "tanta" Petrina Eide, uncle Marthin, "tanta" Olina, and her husband Oli Solemslid. All of these letters were written to my uncle Mikal and it is he to whom we have to thank for preserving this history. In the collection was also found one letter which my Grandfather wrote to my Dad, but he had asked that Dad pass it on to Mikal--therefore the reason for its presence in the trunk. There was also one isolated letter written in 1877 to my great grandfather Mikal Fredriksen Hjelmeland by his half brother, Gunder Fredriksen (Hjelmeland) in America.

The letters were wonderful, but without unlocking the mystery of language, their contents remained for the most part unknown to me. On a separate page you will find a list of the kind persons who so generously gave of their time to translate for me. I am indeed indebted to each of them. Their willingness and perseverance will always be remembered and appreciated.

In one of the following letters, written March 20, 1926, my father says, "He who never dares, never wins." It is with this philosophy I have and will continue to attempt this project. This is just a beginning, but at this point I would like to share with you, my family, the first fruits of this endeavor.

PREFACE II

It was difficult for me to believe after discovering such a treasure of letters in October, 1984, that still another find would be made. However, last September, 1986, I took another trip to Førde in Sunnfjord, having learned some time before, that Andreas Hjelmeland, son of my Uncle Mikal, had also been given a trunk by his Mother, Marie. It, too, had sailed from America and had long stood in the attic of the family farm; and it, too, much to my delight, was filled with countless papers, pictures, and letters including ones dating back to 1862! How exciting it was to go through it with Signe Bruland and Marie, Andreas' wife, item by item, although at first I did not know whether to be happy or sad, as I knew it meant the beginning of another long period of hard work translating, etc., as I would have to know the contents of particularly my father's letters!

This 'edition' now includes the translation of 50 additional letters, many written during homestead years in Canada, the 1920's and the 1930 depression years in America.

Our picture now broadens, as does our understanding and appreciation of their lives, their difficulties, their disappointments, their ideals, and their aspirations. The 'cream' surfaces for us to take, to eat, and to be nourished by.

RHM - June, 1987

MY DEEPEST APPRECIATION AND GRATEFUL THANKS
FOR COUNTLESS HOURS OF TRANSLATING

| | |
|-------------------------|----------------|
| Else-M. Plahte Andresen | Marina Laland |
| Sigrun Bjelland | Liv Monsen |
| Aud Bruland | Judith Musland |
| Johan Bruland | Sissel Reksten |
| Hannemor Eriksson | Sissel Scears |
| Hazel Fredrickson | Elin Skramstad |
| Jorunn Hadland | Ågot Svanøe |
| Joan Halvorsen | Kristin Sundt |
| Ragnhild Haugland | Ingrid Økland |
| Laura Johannessen | |

WITHOUT YOU THIS EFFORT WOULD TRULY HAVE BEEN IMPOSSIBLE.

RHM

THE LETTERS, PEOPLE AND PLACES

From: Ludvig Fredriksen (Hjelmeland), half brother of my great grand-
father, Mikal Fredriksen Hjelmeland, in Vardø, North Norway
To: Fredrik Jonson Njosen (Hjelmeland), his father and my great,
great grandfather on Hjelmeland in Gaular

Vardø
21 September 1862

My beloved Father!

I have received your letter of August 20, and learned that you are all doing fine, which makes me happy. And so am I; both my wife and I are in good health. You are longing for my visit this fall, and if God wills, I intend to take a trip home to see you, but not until October 23, when a southbound steamboat will leave Vardø. I plan to go alone; my wife will stay here at Vardø. At this time of the year with stormy and bad weather, the trip could be too hard on a woman. I promise to come and see you this fall, save that nothing happens to prevent it.

I have been at sea this summer, fishing for shark, but owing to the bad weather I made a rather meager profit.

Before I finish this letter I will remind you to think of your passing away, and prepare for eternity. We all know that our death is approaching and our lives will come to an end. But our soul is immortal, and on the Day of Judgment God will judge all men for what we have done, right or evil. But indeed, I hope we will meet our Lord as our Saviour and our friend.

The Peace of God be with you all!

Your loving son,

Ludvig Fredriksen

From: Ludvig Fredriksen (Hjelmeland), half brother of my great grand-
father, Mikal Fredriksen Hjelmeland, in Vardø, North Norway
To: Fredrik Jonson Njosen (Hjelmeland), his father and my great,
great grandfather and his brother, Gunnar, on Hjelmeland

Vardø
13 August 1867

My dear Father!

I have received your welcomed letter and understand that you want me to come and see you. If possible, you also want to know when. But, I'm not able to take the trip now, because my family and I live in Russia, and we intend to stay here for a year.

Cod and sword fisheries are going on off the Russian coastline, and that's why I went to Russia to make a better living. This year the fisheries have turned out very well. For the time being my fishing boat is on the banks off Vardø. For health reasons, I have finished the bank fisheries. I have hired a man to take over the leadership of my fishing boat.

This winter I am going to fish for zool in the White Sea in Russia, an experiment never carried out before.

From your letter I learn that my sister has emigrated to America which disturbs me very much. I believe, and I've come to know from other people's experiences, that people who have very little or no property at all, cannot easily make a living over there. And my dear brother, I don't approve of your decision to go to America. To get on in a new environment with very little money is very difficult. I know it.

I'm not able to give you exact information on my property, which you want to know. However, I have a farm in Vardø which is worth 1400 speciedaler, and I also have my fishing boats and fishing nets, etc. But, I do not have any cash.

My dear father! I will come and see you, but when I am not able to say. If it is God's will, I will visit you before you die.

My dear Brother!

Instead of going to America, take a trip to Finnmark or Russia. Healthy and industrious people can easily make a good living and without working too hard. But even better, is to make one's way at home. If you want to go to Vardø in the spring, you can go by the steamboat. And if you are healthy enough to work as a fisherman, I will pay you 100 speciedaler and your own meals for the whole summer. I'll pay for your ticket, approximately 20 speciedaler, whether you or my nephew should come. I'm looking forward to seeing you and talking to you. I also want you to see what life is like in Finnmark.

I hope you will write to me before long. I am planning a trip to Vardø this fall, in September, and then hope to get a letter from you.

God's peace be with you all!

Yours, L. Fredriksen

LJ

From: Fredrik Mikalsen Hjelmeland, my great uncle and brother of
my grandfather, Gunder - Fredrik was a fisherman in the
Lofoten Islands
To: Gunder Mikalsen Hjelmeland and Olina Simonsdaughter Hjelmeland,
brother and mother of Fredrik, on Hjelmeland in Gaular

Kabelvåg, Lofoten Islands
26 March 1883

Dear Mother and Brother!

Now, as time and conditions permit, I will take up my pen and greet you with some lines to tell you how I am now living. I can tell you I am doing fine and am in good health to this day's date. God be praised and thanked for that. And, I hope to hear the same about all of you. I can tell you I did fine all the time on my five-day voyage from Bergen to Kabelvåg. We had very nice weather all the time, and there has been very nice weather all winter. But, the fishing has not been good so far, and it looks like the Lofoten fishing will be poor this winter. Later on I will go from here to Vardø if I live and have my health. And when you write to me, you must address my letters by way of Vardø.

Please excuse me for my late writing, but I was eager to wait and see whether the fisheries would be successful or not before writing.

Now I must bring this poor and simple letter to an end, because I do not have anything of interest to you to write about.

Love to you all from your son
and brother,

Fredrik Hjelmeland

Give my regards to my relatives, Simon and Dorthea and their families and to Søren and Petrina.

LJ

From: Gunder Fredriksen, Hazel Fredrickson's Grandfather, and his wife, Oline Knudsdaughter, in Pigeon Falls, Wisconsin

To: Mickal Fredrikson, his half brother and my (Ruth's) Great Grandfather Hjelmeland in Norway (Note differences in spelling of family name) His full name was Mickal Fredrikson Hjelmeland.

Pigeon Falls 19 November 1877

My Dear Brother Mickal Fredrikson

I'm sorry, and I have only myself to blame, that I haven't answered your last letter before now. First of all I want you to know that everything is well and we are in good health, thank God, and everything is in good shape. All our children have been home during the summer, except for Ole, who has stayed in a town named Red Wing in Minnesota, where he has worked at a brick plant for \$30 a month, food included. Our children are attending the English school this winter. The school is free from the age of 7 up to 21 years of age.

I have just recently sold my farm to my son Anders for \$2,000. As we are a big family I have been considering buying another farm. Anders, together with another person, has bought a threshing machine for \$690, and for two months, September and October, they have been threshing for \$485. The machinery is driven by 10 horses and operated by 12-14 men, and it threshes from 100 to 125 Norwegian barrels a day of wheat, and approximately 250 barrels of oats. This year we harvested 600 bushels of wheat, 670 bushels of oats, 30 bushels of barley, 50 bushels of potatoes, 150 bushels of corn, 50 bushels of rutabaga, and some household herbs. We have a stock of cattle of 8, 4 working horses and 3 pigs. One pig I have just slaughtered, weighing 330 Skaalpund or 9 Voge Norwegian weight. One of the other three pigs that I will slaughter for Christmas is assumedly weighing 12 Voger. I have also slaughtered two oxen, one weighing 400 Skaalpund and was 3 years old, the other was 1 1/2 years old weighing 300 Skaalpund meat weight.

I have written in a letter to Søren Knudsen some things that I have not included here, and other things in this letter which were not included in Søren's letter.

Ole Gundersen has now sold his farm to his stepson, Hans, and has bought another farm 15 kilometers away from us. Oline Bendiksdughter Fristad has moved to Hans' farm; they are getting married. Also, Halvor Monsen has sold his farm and has bought another one close to Ole Gundersen's. I don't know anything about the prices yet, as it just recently happened.

Please send me all information you have on our brother, Uldrik, and also about Petrine and her husband, and if you have any news of our brother, Ludvig, who is in Nordland. (Note: All half siblings - same father)

I would also very much like to know if anyone of my folks would like to visit with us over here in America. Not that I am trying to persuade anyone to come over, but I know from my own experience, that it might be well worth trying to seek your fortune here in this country, but whoever will try, should know that they will meet difficulties and hardships, as we will anywhere in this world, but I know for sure that the prospects are better here for making a living than in Norway, as I

have tried both countries myself. As an example, I can inform you that a poor family from eastern Norway had their tickets paid for by a brother here. They arrived in June, last summer. They are five, and they have already managed to repay the brother \$60, and the man is supporting his family as well.

I also would like you to go with this letter to Knud Fauske,^{*} if he is still alive, for him to read, and to give him my regards.

We would also appreciate receiving all the news from you.

Best wishes and all the best from everyone of us.

Gunder Fredriksen
Oline Knudsdaughter (Fauske)

^{*}Perhaps father of Oline, wife of Gunder who wrote this letter??

My Great-Great Grandfather:

FREDRIK JONSON NJØSEN (HJELMELAND)
(Born 1790)

My Great-Great Grandmother:

GURI MADSDAUGHTER HJELMELAND
(Maiden name; born 1780)

Children born in the 1st marriage:

| | |
|----------------|--|
| <u>MADS</u> | Drowned while in military training (Norway) |
| <u>MIKAL</u> | Received the farm in 1845 <u>He was my great-grandfather, my father's grandfather, and my grandfather's father</u> |
| <u>PETRINA</u> | Received part of the farm called Kyskjeteigen |
| <u>ULRIK</u> | Went to Batalden in the North |

His second wife:

OLINE MADSDAUGHTER HJELMELAND
(Maiden name - sister of Guri his first wife; Oline born 1789)

Children in 2nd marriage:

| | |
|---------------|--|
| <u>GUNNAR</u> | Married <u>OLINE KNUTSDAUGHTER FAUSKE</u> and immigrated to the USA in 1870 by sailship - were Grandparents to Ernest, George, and Hazel Fredrickson (Wisconsin) |
| <u>LUDVIG</u> | Merchant in Northland and did business with Russia - drowned at sea (Norway) |
| <u>BERTE</u> | Married three times - went to America in 1866 - was Hans A. Anderson's mother (Whitehall, Wisconsin) |

My Great Grandfather:

MIKAL FREDRIKSON HJELMELAND
(Received family farm 1845)

My Great Grandmother:

OLINA SIMONSDAUGHTER ÅRTEIG

Their children:

| | |
|----------------|--|
| <u>GUNNAR</u> | <u>My grandfather, my father's father - received family farm in 1880 (Born 1847)</u> |
| <u>SIMON</u> | Wife Katrina Lien - their son, Fred Lien to USA - Hawkins, Wisconsin |
| <u>ANNA</u> | Not married |
| <u>OLINA</u> | Not married |
| <u>DORTEA</u> | Married Andreas S. Bringeland |
| <u>FREDRIK</u> | To Nordland |

My Grandfather:

GUNNAR MIKALSEN HJELMELAND
(Received family farm 1880)
(Born 1847)

My Grandmother:

OLINA MONSDAUGHTER EIDE
(Born 1847)

Their children:

| | |
|----------------------|---|
| <u>OLINA</u> | Married Olai Solemslid - 4 children |
| <u>FREDRIK MIKAL</u> | Married Maria Andreasdaughter Skadal - 10 children |
| <u>KRISTINA</u> | Married Ivar Simonsen Osen - 11 children |
| <u>MARTHIN</u> | Married Anna B. Selberg - 3 children |
| <u>PETRINA</u> | Married teacher Andreas L. Eide - 3 children |
| <u>FREDRIK OLAF</u> | <u>Married Kristine Kristiansen from Førde - my father - immigrated to USA - 2 children</u> |
| <u>ANNA</u> | Married John G. Aase - 5 children |

My Father:

FREDRIK OLAF GUNDERSEN HJELMELAND
(Immigrated to the USA 1910)
(Born 1886)

My Mother:

KRISTINE J. ANDREASDAUGHTER KRISTIANSSEN (Immigrated USA 1925)
(Born 1891)

Their children:

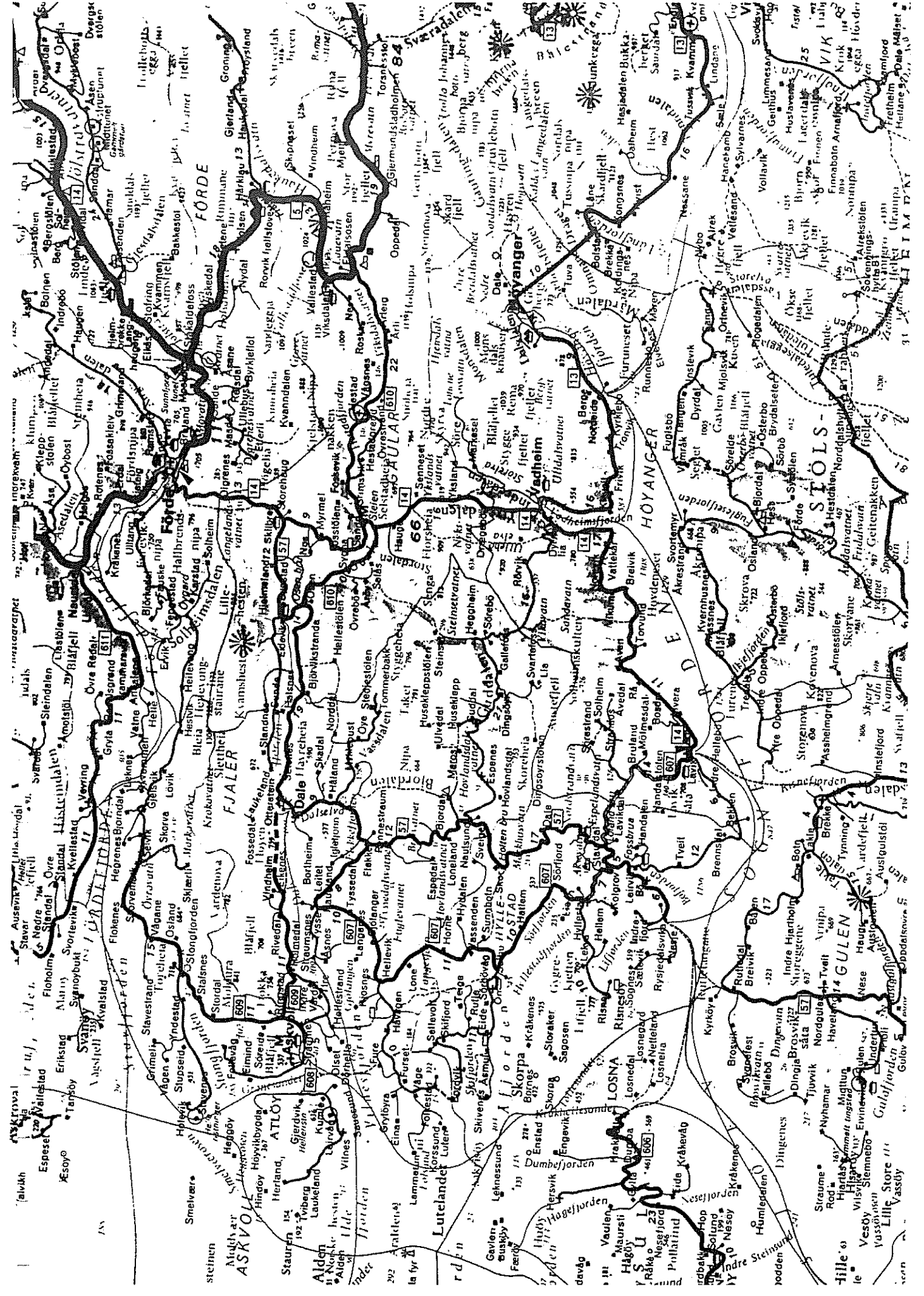
| | |
|---------------------|--|
| <u>ODNY</u> | Married Fredrick Reckling - 5 children |
| <u>RUTH PAULINE</u> | Married John Monson - 3 children |



My Grandfather
Gunder Mikalsen Hjelmela

His son, my Uncle
Mikal Hjelmela





ASKVOLL 17 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50, 51, 52, 53, 54, 55, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62, 63, 64, 65, 66, 67, 68, 69, 70, 71, 72, 73, 74, 75, 76, 77, 78, 79, 80, 81, 82, 83, 84, 85, 86, 87, 88, 89, 90, 91, 92, 93, 94, 95, 96, 97, 98, 99, 100, 101, 102, 103, 104, 105, 106, 107, 108, 109, 110, 111, 112, 113, 114, 115, 116, 117, 118, 119, 120, 121, 122, 123, 124, 125, 126, 127, 128, 129, 130, 131, 132, 133, 134, 135, 136, 137, 138, 139, 140, 141, 142, 143, 144, 145, 146, 147, 148, 149, 150, 151, 152, 153, 154, 155, 156, 157, 158, 159, 160, 161, 162, 163, 164, 165, 166, 167, 168, 169, 170, 171, 172, 173, 174, 175, 176, 177, 178, 179, 180, 181, 182, 183, 184, 185, 186, 187, 188, 189, 190, 191, 192, 193, 194, 195, 196, 197, 198, 199, 200, 201, 202, 203, 204, 205, 206, 207, 208, 209, 210, 211, 212, 213, 214, 215, 216, 217, 218, 219, 220, 221, 222, 223, 224, 225, 226, 227, 228, 229, 230, 231, 232, 233, 234, 235, 236, 237, 238, 239, 240, 241, 242, 243, 244, 245, 246, 247, 248, 249, 250, 251, 252, 253, 254, 255, 256, 257, 258, 259, 260, 261, 262, 263, 264, 265, 266, 267, 268, 269, 270, 271, 272, 273, 274, 275, 276, 277, 278, 279, 280, 281, 282, 283, 284, 285, 286, 287, 288, 289, 290, 291, 292, 293, 294, 295, 296, 297, 298, 299, 300, 301, 302, 303, 304, 305, 306, 307, 308, 309, 310, 311, 312, 313, 314, 315, 316, 317, 318, 319, 320, 321, 322, 323, 324, 325, 326, 327, 328, 329, 330, 331, 332, 333, 334, 335, 336, 337, 338, 339, 340, 341, 342, 343, 344, 345, 346, 347, 348, 349, 350, 351, 352, 353, 354, 355, 356, 357, 358, 359, 360, 361, 362, 363, 364, 365, 366, 367, 368, 369, 370, 371, 372, 373, 374, 375, 376, 377, 378, 379, 380, 381, 382, 383, 384, 385, 386, 387, 388, 389, 390, 391, 392, 393, 394, 395, 396, 397, 398, 399, 400, 401, 402, 403, 404, 405, 406, 407, 408, 409, 410, 411, 412, 413, 414, 415, 416, 417, 418, 419, 420, 421, 422, 423, 424, 425, 426, 427, 428, 429, 430, 431, 432, 433, 434, 435, 436, 437, 438, 439, 440, 441, 442, 443, 444, 445, 446, 447, 448, 449, 450, 451, 452, 453, 454, 455, 456, 457, 458, 459, 460, 461, 462, 463, 464, 465, 466, 467, 468, 469, 470, 471, 472, 473, 474, 475, 476, 477, 478, 479, 480, 481, 482, 483, 484, 485, 486, 487, 488, 489, 490, 491, 492, 493, 494, 495, 496, 497, 498, 499, 500, 501, 502, 503, 504, 505, 506, 507, 508, 509, 510, 511, 512, 513, 514, 515, 516, 517, 518, 519, 520, 521, 522, 523, 524, 525, 526, 527, 528, 529, 530, 531, 532, 533, 534, 535, 536, 537, 538, 539, 540, 541, 542, 543, 544, 545, 546, 547, 548, 549, 550, 551, 552, 553, 554, 555, 556, 557, 558, 559, 560, 561, 562, 563, 564, 565, 566, 567, 568, 569, 570, 571, 572, 573, 574, 575, 576, 577, 578, 579, 580, 581, 582, 583, 584, 585, 586, 587, 588, 589, 590, 591, 592, 593, 594, 595, 596, 597, 598, 599, 600, 601, 602, 603, 604, 605, 606, 607, 608, 609, 610, 611, 612, 613, 614, 615, 616, 617, 618, 619, 620, 621, 622, 623, 624, 625, 626, 627, 628, 629, 630, 631, 632, 633, 634, 635, 636, 637, 638, 639, 640, 641, 642, 643, 644, 645, 646, 647, 648, 649, 650, 651, 652, 653, 654, 655, 656, 657, 658, 659, 660, 661, 662, 663, 664, 665, 666, 667, 668, 669, 670, 671, 672, 673, 674, 675, 676, 677, 678, 679, 680, 681, 682, 683, 684, 685, 686, 687, 688, 689, 690, 691, 692, 693, 694, 695, 696, 697, 698, 699, 700, 701, 702, 703, 704, 705, 706, 707, 708, 709, 710, 711, 712, 713, 714, 715, 716, 717, 718, 719, 720, 721, 722, 723, 724, 725, 726, 727, 728, 729, 730, 731, 732, 733, 734, 735, 736, 737, 738, 739, 740, 741, 742, 743, 744, 745, 746, 747, 748, 749, 750, 751, 752, 753, 754, 755, 756, 757, 758, 759, 760, 761, 762, 763, 764, 765, 766, 767, 768, 769, 770, 771, 772, 773, 774, 775, 776, 777, 778, 779, 780, 781, 782, 783, 784, 785, 786, 787, 788, 789, 790, 791, 792, 793, 794, 795, 796, 797, 798, 799, 800, 801, 802, 803, 804, 805, 806, 807, 808, 809, 810, 811, 812, 813, 814, 815, 816, 817, 818, 819, 820, 821, 822, 823, 824, 825, 826, 827, 828, 829, 830, 831, 832, 833, 834, 835, 836, 837, 838, 839, 840, 841, 842, 843, 844, 845, 846, 847, 848, 849, 850, 851, 852, 853, 854, 855, 856, 857, 858, 859, 860, 861, 862, 863, 864, 865, 866, 867, 868, 869, 870, 871, 872, 873, 874, 875, 876, 877, 878, 879, 880, 881, 882, 883, 884, 885, 886, 887, 888, 889, 890, 891, 892, 893, 894, 895, 896, 897, 898, 899, 900, 901, 902, 903, 904, 905, 906, 907, 908, 909, 910, 911, 912, 913, 914, 915, 916, 917, 918, 919, 920, 921, 922, 923, 924, 925, 926, 927, 928, 929, 930, 931, 932, 933, 934, 935, 936, 937, 938, 939, 940, 941, 942, 943, 944, 945, 946, 947, 948, 949, 950, 951, 952, 953, 954, 955, 956, 957, 958, 959, 960, 961, 962, 963, 964, 965, 966, 967, 968, 969, 970, 971, 972, 973, 974, 975, 976, 977, 978, 979, 980, 981, 982, 983, 984, 985, 986, 987, 988, 989, 990, 991, 992, 993, 994, 995, 996, 997, 998, 999, 1000.

From: Gunder Mikalsen Hjelmeland at home on Hjelmeland
To: Fredrik Mikal Hjelmeland, his son, at Alvoerin

29 September 1897

Dear Son!
Mikal G. Hjelmeland

Last evening I received a letter from the county engineer saying that I should go to Båfjord in Sogn On October 2, to supervise the building of a bridge. So then I must ask that you get permission to be at home this coming week because there is so much work here.

I imagine that you are at the auction today at Haugland since the weather is so unpleasant. If you are there, you must talk with Ekelanden, who allowed you to keep the drills up in Dybevig when you were at Vassenden, and ask if he will keep the drills until you have time to pick them up in the fall. Then you must talk to Lyder Myremelshaug that he should come here Monday evening, October 2, and lay down the trapdoor in the house; this he must do without delay.

I do not have time to leave here until next Saturday.

You must be certain to do this.

You are greeted lovingly,

G. M. Hjelmeland

Hjelmeland, 29 September 1897

JM

From: Gunder Mikalsen Hjelmeland in Norway (Father of Fredrik)
To: His son Mikal who has just arrived in America for the
first time

Below is a translation of but one page of this letter. The remain-
ing portion was not found.

So you must write where you are over there and if it is comfortable
and if there is a lot of flat land and if it is pretty, the houses
they have and how the conditions are in every way as you understand
could interest us to hear about.

I do not now remember anything worth mentioning this time to tell you,
my dear son, so I will end it with a dear greeting from my heart from
myself and your dear mother, also from your two brothers and four sis-
ters. Marthin, your brother, wanted to write you at once, but I told
him to wait 14 days so that you could get news more often from your
birthplace which I presume is very dear to you.

Well, live well in Jesus name and may God strengthen you to all good
both in body and soul, and be careful in what you are doing and always
have God as your protector. You must say hello to Hans Andersen from
me and everyone you understand knows me when you talk to people from
here.

Hjelmeland 28 April 1901

G. M. Hjelmeland

JM

From: Gunder Mikalsen Hjelmeland in Norway (Father of Fredrik)
To: Halvor Monsen Eide in America, his brother-in-law - brother
to Oline, Gunder's wife

Hjelmeland 28 April 1901

Dear Brother-in-law and Family!
Halvor Monsen Eide

It shames me to write now, since it is so long since I have sent you even a few lines, for I must admit it is my fault that it has been so seldom we have exchanged letters lately. You must forgive me my carelessness.

First of all, I must express my heartfelt thanks for your kindness and hospitality to my son who has joined your household, and also your picture with your wife. You look quite natural, age has not made much change. So you two surely had good health and that is the best a person can acquire in this life. I and my wife are quite well in strength yet. But, we have often been very busy and had too little of necessities till we established our own home. But we give God our thanks we have never been so poor and we have not suffered from need of food or clothing.

Now I must tell you Jens Fauske has sold his farm to Ole L. Bringeland. Was paid Kr. 6,400, equal to 1600 Spesidaler.¹ Jens Nåsen bought from Ole Bringeland. The price I do not know. There have not been many deaths since you left. It is Johan H. Aase Indebakken and Andrias Aasness that have died.

Your grandfather's sister Petrina is about the same, one day she is a little better, the next day worse. So it seems unlikely she will ever regain her health. I shall greet you so dearly from her and Soren and say many thanks for the picture you gave me of you and your bride and also from Marthin and your sisters I shall thank you for the pictures. They were very much like you.

Now we have already come up in years. We are now in these days 54 years. So it will go backwards in both strength and morale as far as work is concerned. It will be hard for us to have the farm long, if it is God's will that we shall live for a while yet.

I have no news to tell about. I think my son can far better tell than I can write about the conditions here. We have much and many things to struggle with. The tax burden is very heavy. The farm owners have less, so it is difficult to get along. It seems man has enough to contend with wherever they are in the world.

You, with your family are greeted in the friendliest way from me and my wife. Live well in Jesus.

G. M. Hjelmeland

¹Old currency used at that time

From: Gunder Mikalsen Hjelmeland at Hjelmeland in Norway
To: Fredrik Mikal Hjelmeland in America, having just arrived there
for the first time

Late Spring 1901
(April or May - missing on letter)

Dear Son!
Fredrik Mikal G. Hjelmeland

Your dear letter from Liverpool of March 19, came to us the 26th in the same month, and from that we see that it has gone well so far. Then we received a postcard dated April 2 from the agent J. Martens, Bergen, the 5th of April, Good Friday morning which read that you arrived in America March 30, and that everything was well. Together with the post card there came a letter to you from Halvor, your mother's brother, about returning the ticket if you did not come to America in the spring. This was written March 17.

The letter dated April 4, which you, dear son, had written Monday, your sister Oline received Monday, April 22 at Eidevig and from that we could see with great joy that you had arrived at your mother's brother, Halvor Eide, and that he was at the railroad station to meet you and that you recognized him from the photograph. This was a great joy for me to see and hear that Halvor was at the railroad station to meet you so you must thank him with all my heart for the same.

Well, I have read through your dear and interesting letter many times about the journey, and from that I see that everything has been quite good for you all the time. Oh, great God be praised and thanked for His great mercy with us and your safe arrival. Oh God help you to have happiness and prosperity in your enterprise.

Well, dear Mikal, now I must tell you how we have been getting along at home since you left. We have all been and are in good health all the time and things have been as usual. I believe that you would like to know if I got the big slab of rock home from "Markingsgaren" (stone wall) to the wall in the washhouse. I succeeded Wednesday after you left to get it home and set up, and it went quite well. I had three horses for it, and we were eight men; they were from Indre (inner) Hjelmeland. The horses were mine, Gabriel's and Andrias in Gjørne's. The slab of rock has become very useful as a separating wall between the washhouse and the woodshed. The slab was in its place when Marthin came back home from Bergen.

The following week we took home good wood from Jøsetlien due to the excellent state of the ground. Monday, April 22, I tore down the washhouse and soon built the new washhouse. It went quite well. I had Ivar S. Osen together with me for four days.

This last week was warm and good so the snow is almost gone now in the stretch of swamp. The quality of last summer's hay was quite good due to the weather so the the sheep have survived the winter. Yesterday April 27 we started sowing and the horse was clever pulling the plough. We sowed the Ækkren field and Sørenstykktet yesterday, leaving one square of the field for potatoes.

Lyder Myremelshaug has been here twelve days and fixed the room in the hall which I will use for a storeroom. It became a very nice room with passage down to the basement.

Lyder did not come until Wednesday after Easter and the reason for that was that his wife became so ill that he had to take her to Bergen. She was operated on and had a tumor in the stomach and is now in the hospital in Bergen.

It will be difficult to get everything ready with the house since Lyder came so late and now he will be at home with the spring work, but I plan to have the wedding approximately June 6, if I can manage to be ready by then. There is plenty to do and repair so it will be a busy time for me. I have not brewed the beer yet, but half the malt is ready.

I and your mother and Kristine and Ivar Osen are going to a party at Jens Fauske on the Day of Prayer. He, Jens, has also brewed some beer.

Note: The wedding referred to above was Kristine and Ivar Osen's. Unfortunately, the remaining portion of this letter is missing.

JM
SR



Jacobsen  *BERGEN.*

My grandfather Gunder
Mikalsen Hjelmland and
his brother Simon Lien.
These brothers had different
last names because
Simon took the name
of the farm to which
he moved.

My aunt Kristine
Hjelmland and her
husband Evar Osen,
married June 10, 1901



From: Gunder Mikalsen Hjelmeland in Norway (Father of Fredrik)
To: His son Mikal who arrived in America almost three months
prior to the writing of this letter

Ludvigsdalen the 23 of June 1901

Postscript written in top margin: I sent your letter home, and now
Friday it came back.

My Beloved Son!
Fredrik Mikal G. Hjelmeland

Your dear letter of the 27th of May I received the 12th of June, and
I see from that to my great joy that you are with good health and are
doing well. God be praised for his great mercy to us. We too, dear
Mikal, are with good health to this day.

Your letter I have read several times with great interest. Thank you
so much for it, dear son, May you continue to write so, as it is a
great pleasure for me.

I see from your letter that everything with the harvest there is quite
different from here. It is also a great pleasure for me to hear that
Halvor and Hans' family is so nice to you and that so are the sons of
Gunder, my father's brother. Ask Anders Gundersen if he remembers me.
I remember him well and his brothers and sisters.

Now I will tell you about Ivar Simonsen(Osen) and Kristine's wedding.
They were married the 10th of June and it was a lovely wedding. There
were many people, and it was nice. Olaf Hjelmeland was toastmaster and,
believe me, he kept people going with jokes and fun; he sang and made
speeches. The fiddler was Ole Nas, and he played all the time. He
earned Kr. 36. The wedding money was Kr. 580. The bridal couple got
a hanging lamp from Mads, the bridegroom's brother and a nice Bible
from Justine Aase, six teaspoons from Helene Hjelmeland, and six tea-
spoons from Karl Henne, one of the bridegroom's brother-in-laws, one
table runner, a coffeepot and three sets of cups and saucers from shoe-
maker Rasmussen--all very useful and pretty things, so it was very nice
to see that the people showed us so great honor.

The neighbors at Hjelmeland and Bringeland were here from all the farms
but none from Hindvik. Your mother and sister would not allow me to
invite anyone from there, but inside I felt it was not right of me to
leave them out.

Anders Alvaren with wife and children were here as was Simon Osen and
he was quite lively and said he had a good time. But, Ane, the bride-
groom's mother did not come. When I went to invite Ivar's parents,
Ane did not speak a word; she is of the difficult people. Simon Lien
with all his children came, Ole Lunde Eidevig, Olaf Osen, Halvar
Lervig, Boune (sp ?), Ole Eide, Andrias Skjelbred with his wife and
children. His daughter, Helene, is quite well now. He took care of
serving the beer, and he was very competent and careful. He managed
so well that I have one barrel of beer left.

I brewed 2 1/2 barrels malt and got about 7 barrels of beer because it was very good malt and the beer was good too, especially the first brew. The first brew I made the 17th of March, and I was all alone and quite worn out when I finished it. Luckily, I had gotten running water into the smokehouse. We had good luck with water for the brewing and house-cleaning before the wedding, and for the wedding as well. To have water in the smokehouse spared us a lot of work. The water has been plenty this spring with enough rain so it looks quite nice and promising for the crops. The second brew I brewed the 22nd of March.

No one from Skjur Aamodt came to the wedding. He has been sick this spring. He suffers from a kidney illness. My sister, Anne, did not have the time to come to the wedding. The bridegroom had two cases of soft drinks; I had one keg of brandy and some vine. There were a lot of young people. I cannot name them all. One brother of Olai Solemsli was here.

Now I am here at Ludvigsdalen lodging with the same people as last fall. It is very nice with good food and good company. It is quite easy this time because there are only ones who have worked here before who are working here this summer. They will not hire strangers. There are three contracts to work on, and we are twenty workers, but there is a lot of rock.

I will be here probably until around the 13th of July. Since I came here and have it easier, I think I have become stronger and healthier. It is injurious to the health to overstrain oneself with work.

I have to tell you that the farmyard looks very nice now since we moved the smokehouse. I also got ready the room "stabbur" we would use for food storage and it is very good, and I prepared a very nice room with a dormer where the bridal couple had their bed. I had Lyder to help me but for only 14 days time. His wife has been ill all the time since you left. She went to Bergen for surgery; she had a tumor in her stomach. It was just the same with her when I left home and she could not go out.

I was not able to replace the siding on the house this summer.

Petrine at Teigen is still bedridden, but is mostly without pain now. But, it is not easy for the Teigen people now since she lost her health.

Mathias Andersen Hjelmeland is dead. He was ill in bed for 8-14 days. He was buried Thursday before Whitsunday. I think he died of inflammation of the brain.

And, "Kårkonen" (retired women living on her own farm) Louise died nearly at the same time and was buried the fourth day of Whitsunday.

Now I have told you as much as I think would be of any interest to you. For the rest, everything is as usual.

The horse was cut (vasectomy) 8 days before Whitsunday. It was the veterinarian who did it because Martin took him to Førde together with Martinus Hjelmeland and his horses. All went well with the horse. I do not think it did him any harm.

I received word from the county road engineer to come to Ludvigsdalen the 29th of May to start the work I have here; but, of course, I could

not do that. I asked permission and I got it as we could not have everything ready for the wedding before. We had thought of having the wedding on the 6th of June, but that day people were at the horse-market fair at Førde and the priest was at Dale for the Bishop's visitation. He came here Monday, the 10th of June by the steamer.

Wednesday, the 12th of June, at 3:00 in the afternoon I had to go from the wedding to Ludvigsdalen. I went from Sveen to Hyllestad. When I left home the second group of guests were having their last meal before leaving; there were about four "table settings".

I have had a very busy time this spring and was overworked, so I was glad when the wedding was over and I could go away for awhile. I started here the 13th of June on the same project as last fall.

When you write to me again you have to tell me if you are alone with the brickwork and how much you are paid for a day's work, if it is busy, if the stone is hard and if it is easy to make a fine wall with them. You have to learn to work patiently and not overstrain yourself. I pray fervently that you take care of yourself in all ways.

Last time I asked you to write and tell me about our relative's homes, the weather conditions, people's daily life, church service, Sunday life, the food, and everything you think I would be interested in. Tell me if Halvor is working much and if their economy is good, and if you have seen Oline Fauske, wife to Gunder. She and my mother were great friends. Give her my regards.

In the last sentence in your last dear letter you really put the crown on it when you tell me not to work too much and that you think there will be a possibility to get some money to pay my debt. For that I am very grateful.

Then you have to write and tell me if you will have Hjelmeland. It is my dearest wish that you shall have it.

I will now finish my long letter to you with love from father, mother and your brothers and sisters. Please remember me to Halvor, his wife, and children.

Live well in the name of Jesus.

G. M. Hjelmeland

from Ludvigsdalen

The following are postscripts written in several margins throughout the letter:

Friday, the 23rd of June, I got a letter from your mother and everything was well at home.

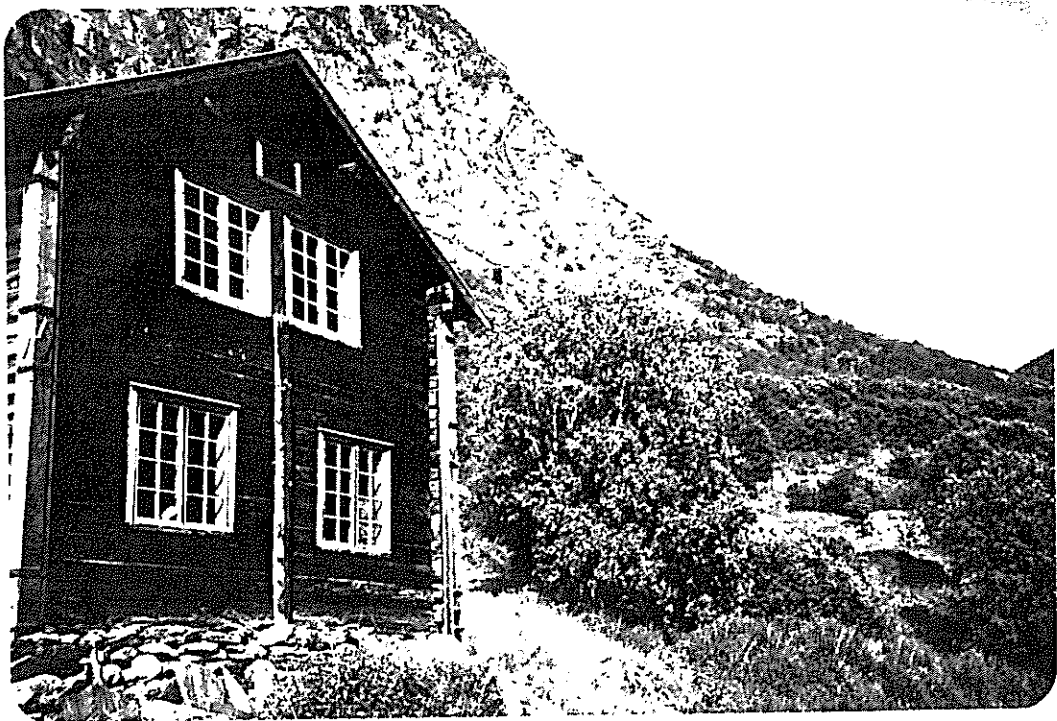
Give my regards to Hans and Alvoeren(sp?) the sons of G. Fauske, and everyone else who knows me.

I would have written before, but I waited for a letter from you.

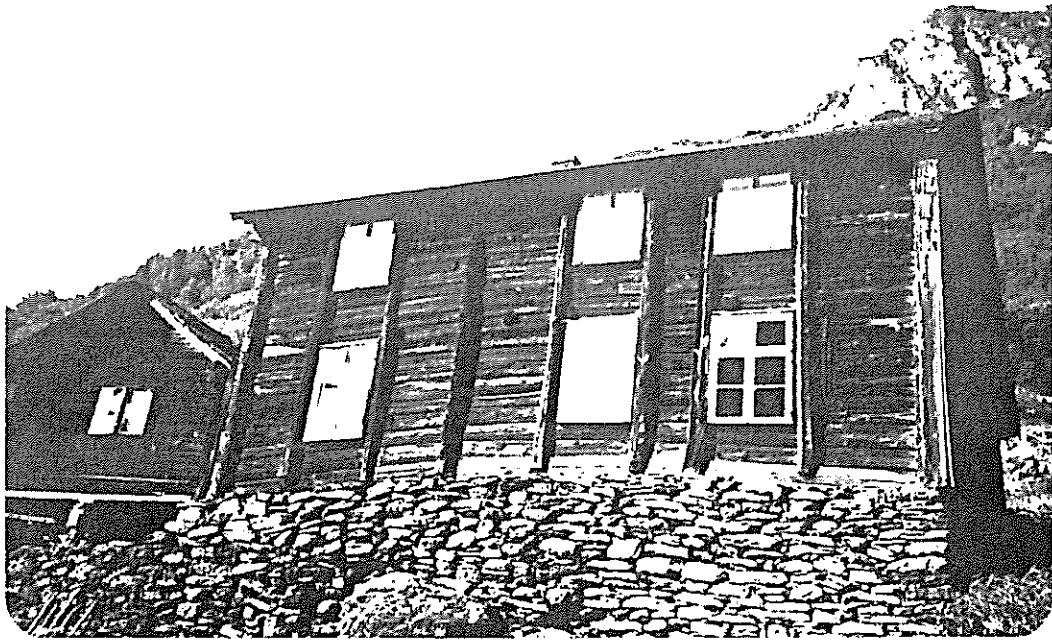
LM



*The Forthun Church in Forthun, Luster-Sogndal
where Grandpa received his mail from home & America.*



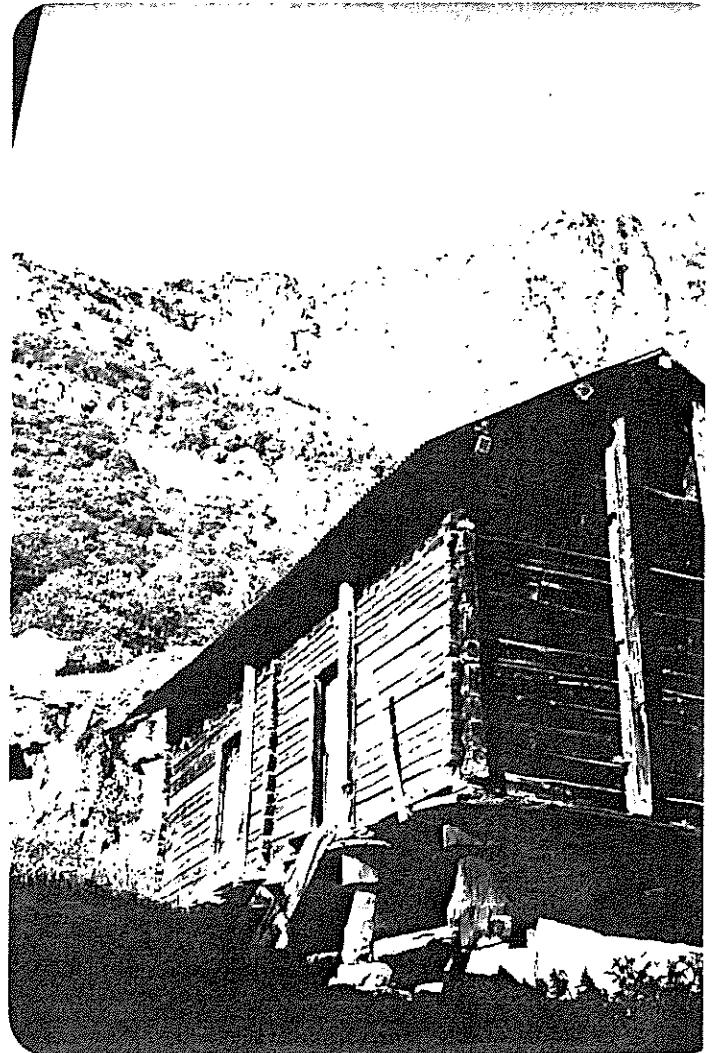
*The Apthun farm where Grandpa stayed. It is
one of the oldest farms in that area, first recorded
back in the 16th century - fantastic old buildings.
(1563)*



Above & Below:
The Aptheun Farm where
Grandpa stayed in Luster
when he worked on the
roads—



Grandpa rented from this
boy's great grandfather. John
& I searched out the farm
in the summer of 1986.



From: Gunder Mikelsen Hjelmeland at Opthuun, Lyster in Sogn
To: Fredrik Mikal Hjelmeland, his son, in America

Opthuun, Lyster
29 September 1901

My dearest Son, Mikal Fredrk G. Hjelmeland

Your most longed for letter dated July 17, 1901, was received here September 22, at Forthun Church in Lyster, and it pleases me to know that you are in good health; do not forget to thank our Great Lord for it.

I have read your letter several times, and I see from it that you are doing pretty well, that our kinfolks are kind to you and, to my great relief, I see that you have met with Oline Fauske,* my mother's friend. When Oline lived at Fauske they became close friends--do say hello from me.

My dear Mikal, I will now tell you, in detail, how my work has been since you got my letter which I sent from Lodvigsdal June 24. I came back home to Hjelmeland July 15, the weather was good and the haying was in full swing. Very quickly we managed to get the best hay into the barn, but then we had rain for two full weeks and no hay was brought in. August 16 we had to start cutting the grain, for you see on August 13, I had gotten word from E. Borch asking me to be the foreman for the road construction work at Berge Opthuun in Lyster, Sogn. The length of the road was to be approximately two kilometers. The area is very steep with soil and big boulders, no large mountains. I had to be there August 18. It was with great sadness I had to leave my dear home with still so much undone with the hay and the grain, but praise to the Lord, who always has been good to me both bodily and spiritually, the weather improved, and in a letter I got from Marthin, your brother, the other day, he tells me that everything is now safely in. He also sent me your letter at the same time.

I am staying at a farm named Opthuun, the most inner farm in Sogn with just one day's travel crossing the Døle mountain over to Gudbrandsdal. I was very fortunate in getting quarters here. I have a room for myself, the folks are kind and the food plentiful. I guess I will have to pay kr. 5.00 per week as everything is more expensive here than it is at our place. I have 30 men working with me every day. They work on a contract basis, and their wages up to this date have been approximately kr. 3.30 with the State paying half of it.

In about eight days, October 5, I expect my son Marthin to join me. He wanted to go out working even if he was badly needed at home. I do not like to be away from home for so long; so many things are being neglected, and your mother has to deal with everything alone with very little help. She really has a busy time these days.

Your sister Kristine gave birth to a well-formed baby girl August 5. Everything went fine, and the baby was baptized August 18. Godparents were your mother, your sister Petrine, Gustine G. Aase, Simon Osen and your brother Marthin. She was named Olga Sofie after your mother and Simon Osen. (Note: O/Olga from O/Oline and S/Sofie from S/Simon.)

* Hazel and George Fredrickson's grandmother on their father's side.

I had some of the wedding beer left for the baptism, and we had a pleasant time together. Simon Lien came with his family and our neighbor Martin Gregoriussen with his family, but mother of Ivar Simonsen Osen came neither to the wedding nor the baptism. She is a very strange person, and I'm afraid it will be difficult for Kristine to stay at Osbrækken as long as this woman is in charge there. I got a letter from your mother awhile ago, and she tells me that Kristine is going there this winter. If she hasn't gone already, she will be going this fall.

Your sister Oline went to Bergen last July, so now three of my dear children have left their birthplace, their parents and sisters and brothers in seeking their own fortune in this sorrowful world. We miss you all very much and pray to our Lord that He will keep His hand over you, and that you may turn to Him, in the Name of Jesus.

September 25, Mr. Borch, the Kommune engineer, came for inspection. He was very friendly and well satisfied with what he saw from our work. I will be here for another four weeks and then go on to Lærdal in Gaupne to do some work on a bridge which may last until just before Christmas, so you see this will be a very long time for me being away from my dear home. This new work station is approximately 30 kilometers from here, but still in Lyster though. In Lodvigsdalen the work came to an end as I had to be here this fall.

I have to ask you, Mikal, did you not pay the shoemaker at Eidsvigen for the boots he made for you? He says that you had said you would pay to Anders O. Lunde, but he says he didn't get anything from you. Please give me the details in your next letter.

Another half sheet of paper in finishing my letter to you. Oh yes, my dear son, believe me, we miss you a lot. It is felt as though something has been lost forever in this separation between parents and children. My dear Mikal, do be careful, and may God always be with you whatever you do and wherever you go.

When I reached the point in your letter where you say you don't know whether or not you will have Hjelmeland, tears were running down my wrinkled cheeks, because it has been my greatest wish for you to have the farm. I would not like to see it go to strangers. You know and understand that none of your brothers or sisters will be able to take over the farm as they are too young and do not have the means. It is not easy any more for your parents to keep struggling along on the farm as we are feeling worn out, and especially if Marthin is leaving us. You know he has mentioned he cannot stay at home without getting paid for his work which is understandable. I feel that we cannot manage the farm now as our children are coming of age and are leaving us. The worst part is that the farm is not being properly looked after since I have to be away for long periods. I don't want to quit this work either as it is well paid. I have to think about it. I want to do what is best.

As I am writing these lines to you, my dear son, I received a letter from your dear mother at home saying that everything is fine with them and that they are in good health. She says that she has sold a bull and that she got kr. 54 for it. From the same letter I see that my father's sister, Petrine Teigen, is still ill in bed. Everything is as miserable as can be as they are going into poverty. May God help them.

Your mother and your sisters and brothers at home send their love. Also remember us to Halvor and Berte and the family and tell them we do appreciate their kindness towards you.

In closing I send my dearest wishes for you, my dear son. Please do not wait as long as you did the last time in writing us again.

G. M. Hjelmeland

The letter is being sent October 1, 1901

I am not as strong as before. When I am working very hard I can feel a pain in the chest, but when I take it easy I'm doing all right. Thank God.



Hans Anderson was a son of Bertha Hjelmeland Anderson. She was a daughter of my great, great grandfather Fredrick Hjelmeland and a half sister to my great grandfather, Mikkel Hjelmeland. Mikkel was father to my grandfather, Gunder Hjelmeland. Bertha was a full sister to Hazel Fredrickson's grandfather, Gunder Fredrickson Hjelmeland who immigrated to America in 1870 by sailboat. Bertha immigrated to America prior to 1870. Anderson became a prominent judge in Whitehall, Wisconsin

Judge Anderson,
his wife,
Dad, Adny
and I in
Whitehall,
Wisconsin
approximately

935.



From: Gunder Mikalsen Hjelmeland in Norway on Hjelmeland
To: Fredrik Mikal Hjelmeland, his son, in America

Hjelmeland 7 January 1902

My dearest son, Fredrik Mikal G. Hjelmeland

Your most welcome letter dated November 13 was received here December 5, 1901 at the farm Havelbu in Lyster, Sogn, where I had been working on a small road job after having finished the road job Berge Optun. I finished that work on November 26. December 16, I returned home after having been away from my dear home for 17 weeks.

I have read your very informative letter several times with great pleasure. We really do appreciate your letters. The very first I like to know and be reassured of is that you are in good health, and thank God, I can say the same for all of us at home. We are healthy as we were when when you left your childhood home, your birthplace. Then I read from your letter that you have moved from one place to another, which I gather is not too good, because then the work and the people are unknown to you, but one has to try a little of everything. I understand that you were well looked after at the Andersons', my cousin, and I'm glad to know that all is well. But, I feel that things are not always good and it is not pleasant having to apply for work where the language is tough.

Everything went pretty well for me on my trip to Sogn last fall. It was quiet and peaceful, and the people respected me. But everything was expensive. I had to pay kr. 6.00 a week; the food was good though. I got a raise of kr. 0.25 on my daily wage, so as of today my daily wage is kr. 3.75, which was very much welcomed as I am in great debt after having built the house. I thank God for his blessings, allowing me good health and work enough to ease my debt. You see, I have to work very hard these days.

Your brother Marthin was with me for seven weeks in Sogn, and he earned good money. He made two contracts; on the first he earned kr. 5.36 and on the second kr. 3.00. On both contracts together he made kr. 185.00 and I put kr. 100.00 in the bank for him for Christmas. Last fall the weather was very good for working, but on December 18, we had a snowfall of about three feet. It got very cold with eastern winds during Christmas. Later it got a little milder and now the snow depth is half of what it was.

I'm pleased to tell you that I'm off duty these days as member of the area Board. Olaf Hjelmeland and Andrias Hjelmelandsgjærde will now represent this community.

I believe Kristine is going to Osbrækken next spring. I'm hoping your sister Oline will be home from Bergen by then and that she will remain home as we need her here; your mother is not able to manage more than taking care of the cows without overtaxing her strength. Marthin and Fredrik are doing quite a good job out of doors, but indoors it is hard for them to put anything in order.

On Christmas Eve your mother and I, Ivar and Kristine with Olga visited with Simon Lien. Oline Holmedal and Johannes Vagstad and both of his sons also came, and we had a very good time together. He had brewed one-half barrel of malt for Christmas. Jens K. Fauske with wife and children also came. I had some malt left from the wedding malt that I brewed at the same time.

Yesterday, January 5, Anders R. Hjelmeland had a meeting at our house, and last night Simon Lien, Olaf Hjelmeland and Andrias Gjære were here for a couple of hours. We shared among us the five beer mugs that were your grandfather Mikal's. We had a most enjoyable time together; you see it had been very quiet here during Christmas.

And my dear Mikal, I have to thank you ever so much for the beautiful New Year's card which we received here January 4. Your brother Marthin was in Eidsvigen when it came. It made me so happy to know that you sent greetings to all of us, your parents and your sisters and brothers. God bless you, and may He keep His strong hand over you.

You were asking about Fredrik and how he was doing while Marthin and I were in Sogn. You know he had school part of the time and then the dairy work every day, so he only managed to have the wood chopped. You know there are so many things to cope with when at home. We haven't been able to get more wood due to poor road conditions, and there are so many things undone when arriving home after being away for so long, but things will straighten out in a little while. We are short of grain this year, and also potatoes are short, but the quality is good.

Finally, I see from your letter that you won't give up Hjelmeland. Oh it is good to have a home and especially when it is the place where you have grown up, when it is not in too poor condition.

You are greeted most dearly from all of us. Live well in the name of Jesus.

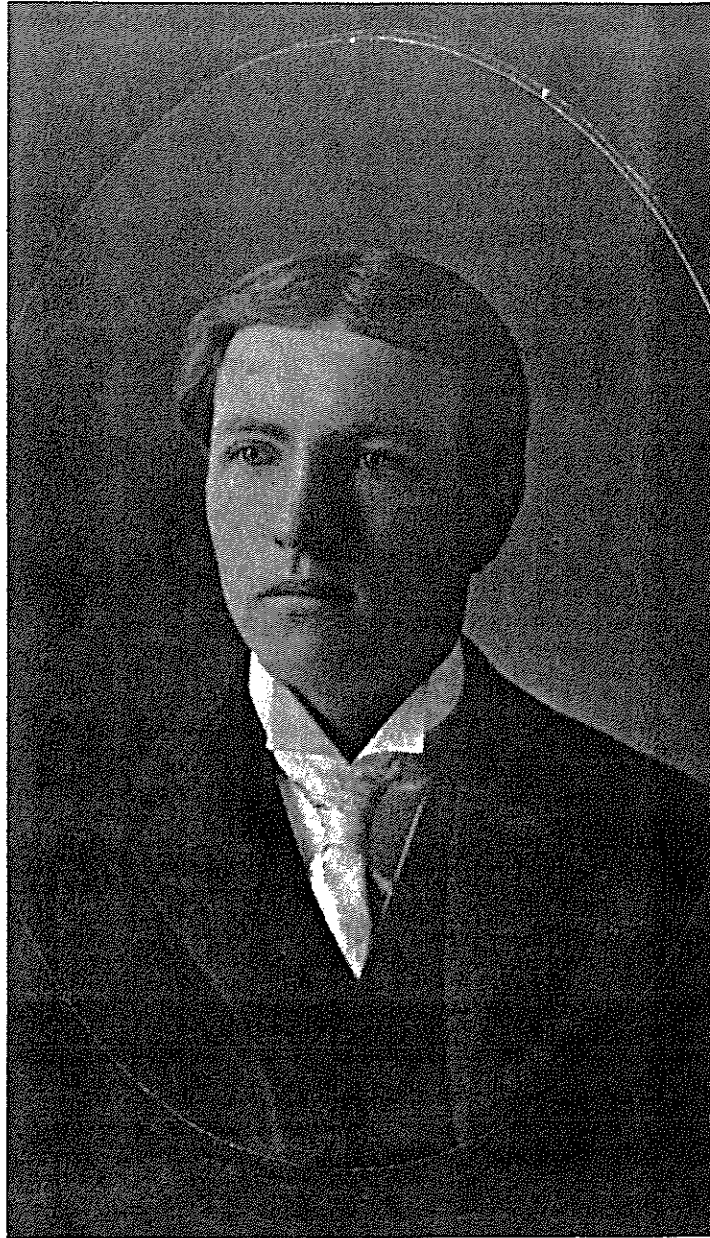
From your Father,

G. M. Hjelmeland

Petrine Teigen is still bedridden. I feel so sorry for them. Søren and Petrine send their love.

Please say hello to all of our relatives over there and tell them everything is as usual with us at home. Greetings to Olai Solemsli* too.

* Alf Solemsli's father must have been in America twice--not married at this time.



Uncle Mikal had his picture taken
in America - Whitehall, Wisconsin
and sends it to his family in Norway -
taken when he was perhaps 23-24 years
old.



My Grandmother
Oline Mansdatter
Eide Hjelmsland
Her brother, Halvor
Eide, immigrated to
America as well
as her sister Helina.
Halvor settled in
the Whitehall, Wis-
consin area

Uncle Mikal



From: Oline Hjelmeland in Norway (Mother of Fredrik)
To: Mikal Hjelmeland, her son, in America

Hjelmeland 7 January 1902

My dear Son Fredrik Mikal

To you my dear son so many thanks from your Mother for your welcome letter and New Year's card to me and all your brothers and sisters. It is a great joy for me, your Mother, to hear that you are in good health and doing well. It has often been hard for me, both before you left for America and since, to think that you should travel so far away to a foreign country, but I believe it would have been far worse for me if I had not known that you had gone to my brother. But now I see from your letter that you have left there and are now among strangers. Dear Mikal, there is one thing I must ask you and that is that you must be careful not to overwork yourself too hard. I felt when you were home that you were often careless with yourself. You wanted everything to be done in such a hurry. That requires strong health for the one who always goes hard at it, but it is probably not so easy to avoid for someone who is under another person's orders.

I often think about how you don't have anyone to wash and mend and take care of your clothes. When you were home, I felt relieved when you came home every weekend. Even though I couldn't do much, I could at least see that your socks were darned. Dear Mikal, you must not deny yourself the necessities where clothes and food is concerned.

It must be a great sorrow for my brother, his wife and sons now that Mons is dead. Write and tell us if you know whether it is Mon's wife who will now take over the farm. I read in your dear letter that my sister Helline has written and asked you to come there. If it is no trouble for you I think you should visit Helline as she was very kind and I am sure she will not ask you to come without a reason. Write and tell me how many children Helline has.

Skjui (?) Aamot died the 7th December 1901 so it is his son Johan who takes care of the houses now. Today it is _____ so Kristine is at Olineken for a visit. Olga, her daughter, is good and sweet and is doing well and is big for her age.

From your Mother Oline Hjelmeland

RH and JH

From: Gunder Mikalsen Hjelmeland at Hjelmeland in Norway
To: Fredrik Mikal Hjelmeland, his son, in America

Hjelmeland 8 April 1902

Dear Son!
Fredrik G. Hjelmeland

Your dear letter dated March 9, 1902 came to us, your parents, sisters and brothers Easter Eve, March 29, and we read to our great joy that you are in good health and that everything is going well. Oh, God be thanked. Here we have the same good news to tell you that we, your parents, are the same as when you left regarding health and your sisters and brothers are quite well also. Oh, dear Mikal, I must confess that I have not been so happy since you left your birthplace, as I have a longing inside me for I miss you so very much.

Your dear letter I have read and considered several times. I see that you have already tried several jobs and that you are not satisfied where you are but would like to try going still farther out in the West. Oh, I cannot say anything about that, but I think the climate is not so healthy there. I don't think that you should go there.

Then I must tell you, dear Mikal, that I received a letter from Hans Anderson March 25, 1902 with a money draft from you face value kr. 332.71. Easter Eve I sent the draft to Bergen Kreditbank, and the money has come to the Eidevig post office. Oh, dear Mikal, thank you so much for sending the money. It is a loan. I get the money now, and you get it back again in the farm if you will have it and live at your birthplace. I do hope you will have the farm.

Now I can tell you dear Mikal that Marthinus has ordered that a division of the land be held. This notification was sent on March 22, 1902. Now I will ask you kindly that you write and tell whether you will have the whole farm. If so I would have it into one field, but if you want only one part, maybe half of Meteigen to Teigen, I would prefer that so there could be two brothers here on this farm. The dividing would be cheaper if that could be done. I only ask you; you must write your opinion in this matter.

And I must tell you that on April 1, I was instructed by E. Borch to go on April 14, to be in charge of a big bridge work across Jostedals River at Leirano in Lyster. It is very hard to be away from the farm at any time, but to leave now when the spring work is to begin is extremely bad as the farm is reduced considerably when I must be gone so much and have little help. Your brother Marthin has begun to work on the Sande Vadheim road and that is his greatest delight to work on the road, but he will go home and start the spring work, I hope. Yesterday, April 7, Fredrik signed up for the Confirmation.

Concerning the hay for the cattle, I believe it will be in fairly good supply. I have not sold the horse, and I will not sell him as I am very fond of him.

There is still more than two feet of snow below the houses, but up in the hill it has started getting dry where the hill is the steepest. I

cannot remember a winter with so little snow as this. I have not gone to the northern part of the farm since I last wrote you, and there are only six loads of wood in the out fields this year.

Thursday, April 3, Samuel Simonsen Bringeland was bridegroom with Marie Oliveresen Sole, and it was a beautiful wedding. It was at Bringeland. I was there the whole time. Petrine, Fredrik and your mother were there one day each, and we all enjoyed ourselves.

Well, my dear Mikal, I must once again thank you so kindly for the money you sent me, also the same great thanks for being so diligent in writing to us. Oh, God bless you with his mercy in everything.

My aunt Petrine lies the same. She cries when I come to Teigen. You are greeted from them both.

At last, dear son, you are most heartily greeted from your father and your mother and all your sisters and brothers.

May you live well in Jesus name. Say hello to Knud Lien.

From G. M. Hjelmeland

Mr. Anderson's letter contained your kr. 332.71.

JM
SR

From: Gunder Mikalsen Hjelmeland in Lyster, Sogn - Norway
To: Fredrik Mikal Hjelmeland, his son, in America

Opthun Farm
Lyster, Sogn
16 June 1902

My beloved son Fredrik G. Hjelmeland,

Your dear letter of May 13, 1902, arrived at Hjelmeland May 31 where your brother Marthin, with your mother's approval, opened and read the letter addressed to me and your mother, since I was not at home. Then I came home on June 6, and the first thing I asked for was if there had been a letter from you, dear Mikal, and to my great joy a letter had arrived saying all is well and that you are and have been in good health, which is thanks to our merciful Father in Heaven who blesses us all with such good health. We, your parents and siblings are all in good health, and I am fairly healthy when I do not work too hard. If I work too hard my chest gives me pain.

You will perhaps recall that I wrote to you from Opthun last fall, saying that I was going to stop working with the Berge Opthun project in October, and that I was going to Leirdalen in Indre Sogn and take over a big bridge project across the Leirdal river. This project was postponed then, and this spring, on April 1, I received an order from E. Borch to go to Leirdalen and begin work on the above mentioned bridge. On April 14, therefore, I left for Leirdalen to start working. However, when I arrived there the snow was one meter deep. How much frozen earth there was on the river bottom I did not know. I contacted Borch and was told not to proceed with the work under these circumstances. He promptly ordered me to go on to another project at Kinn, some twenty kilometers from Florø, Standal at Svortevikholmen. I arrived there on April 22, and stayed until June 6. Some twenty men were employed there, and we finished eight contracts, 780 meters. It was easy work, mostly with earth.

On May 20, I received a message from Mr. Broch. He told me to proceed to the Berge Opthun project when I had finished the eight contracts and begin the work there immediately. I left from Hjelmeland on June 8, and work got underway in Opthun on June 10. Presumably, I have another five or six weeks to go before I can return home. We are now working on the remaining five contracts with 30 men. Your brother Marthin is among them as well as Andreas S. Aase and Ole Monsen Fauske. Those three are on a team with three men from Sogn. This is how spring has been for me.

I feel I am getting tired of all this traveling and stress with all the things there are to be done. Your brother Marthin was very clever and helpful in the spring work. He went home when I was leaving to make sure the most important things got done this year also. I was home on June 7, and we dug up a lot of turf (peat) for the cold winter. Your brother Fredrik is attending preparation for his confirmation. He has grown a lot and is quite good at work when there is someone around to help him.

I can inform you that the court proceedings in connection with the division of the outer Hjelmeland farm were held at Martinus Grigoriussen on

May 26, 1902. The court judges are Nils J. Hustad and Ole O. Døskeland. I was home during the proceedings. What the outcome will be is not easy to say. I will have to stay calm and hope to keep the whole "homefield". The court found it most timely for Marthinus to move the houses and get a new farmyard. The estimated cost for this was Kr. 1580. Of this I would have to pay Kr. 300, Marthinus Kr. 250. For the remaining amount an appeal would be sent to the state authorities for a grant. If the state does not wish to grant this money, I do not think the houses will be moved since I offered to take the farm in two parts.

This is all I can tell you of this development so far. The foreman for the reapportionment process is called Havn. I asked him when he thought the land would be mapped, but he was unable to give an answer.

Ina, the daughter of Uldrik F. Batalden, became a widow this winter and is left with two children, one of whom is not quite well. Her husband died of tuberculosis. There are all kinds of fates these days.

Oluf R. Hjelmland celebrated his wedding on June 11 at Kleppe. Either your mother or one of your sisters was supposed to be there. On Tuesday, June 10, your mother was going to the funeral of Oline Rytne, the elder.

I am not happy about you working at a sawmill. The work is supposed to be dangerous and you will ruin your health if you stay with it for some period of time. I ask you kindly not to do this. Your health will suffer from this kind of work.

Yes my dear Mikal, tears run down my cheeks as I write these lines. I have always missed you dearly; there has always been something missing since you left me. You must not decide to stay over there too long. For myself and especially for your mother it is getting too hard to take care of the barn and the animals. She seems to become so exhausted, especially during wintertime when it is cold and there is much snow.

I feel it would be a pity if the farm should not be run and developed from the present good state it is in. It is almost sad to think about, being away and suffer very hard work and not have time to enjoy it. Think it over, dear Mikal, you will eventually have a hard time settling down anywhere when you travel to so many strange places. I must confess it would be a hard blow to myself if you would not, in the near future, take over the farm. I have put down quite a lot of work on the houses also.

Yes dear Mikal, thank you very much for being such a good writer of letters to your parents and siblings.

Please give Knudt Lien my thanks for his invigorating and interesting letters to me of old times and memories. I hope he is not offended that I do not write him directly. I have nothing to tell him that I would not tell you. It is dear to me, Mikal, to see that Knudt honors you for your careful behavior, that you do not associate with bad company. Oh dear God, give you both strength to do good out there and to us here at home in the name of Jesus.

Incidentally, everything is quite as usual in our home area. Andrias A. Hjelmland is getting married Thursday, June 19. (The brother of Olaf Hjelmland). Andrias S. Skjilbred was taken suddenly ill in his back and had to go to the clinic in Bergen for an operation. He is there

now; it is true how sudden our lives can change. Dortha accompanied him to Bergen.

Well, my dear son, I have written a long letter now about things I hope will be of interest to you. I will end my writings for now, hoping these lines will find you in good health. Please send my greetings to Simon A. Hjelmeland, Johannes A. Hjelmeland, Knudt Lien, Johan Lien. You my dear son are greeted from your father and mother, your brothers and sisters cordially. You must write back to us as soon as you receive these lines. Live well in the name of Jesus.

From

G.M. Hjelmeland

You must send us a clear address

JB

From: Gunder Mikalsen Hjelmeland in Sogndal, Norway
To: Fredrik Mikal Hjelmeland, his son, in Blair, Wisconsin

Steig in Sogndal 20 April 1903

Dear son Mikal G. Hjelmeland

Your dear letter of the 17th of March, 1903, I received April 4th and to everyones joy we see that you are in the best of health and doing well. God be praised and thanked for that. Then you are told, dear son, from your parents, brothers and sisters, that we, your father, your brothers and sisters are in good health to this time, but on the other hand, your mother has been sick for some time this winter since Kjyndesmesse (February 2) and now on April 4th, she went to Bergen to see a doctor. She came back April 14th. She is now a little better. Her illness is heart disease in a small degree. She had so little appetite and was very thirsty all the time. But, after she came back from the doctor she has had more appetite and less thirst. Then she was ordered to rest and not do very much. She sleeps good since having been to the doctor.

Well, dear Mikal, you must not let this message worry you; you must believe it is God's will. I don't know more this time to tell you about your mother's illness. The doctor believed the illness came from overwork and said if she was careful about herself he believed she would be fairly well again.

Petrine in Teigen lays with the same. A month ago we believed that death had come to her but now she has improved again and is like she was when she first became bed ridden. Søren has had a very hard time. Ane is still with them and people have been good to them in Teigen. They have gotten various money gifts this winter. Easter Eve Søren in Teigen received a letter from Anders G. Fredriksen that he would send him a money gift, namely kr. 20. This was truly a fine gesture. You must tell him many thanks from me on Søren and Petrine's behalf. You must also say hello to him and family.

You wrote in your letter March 17 that when we received your letter you believed that Olaus Solemsli would be staying with us. You were exactly right for Tuesday afternoon, March 31, Olaus came to Hjelmeland and stayed here until April 5. We did not know anything about his coming. He has suffered a great deal from sickness, but I believe he is in good health now.

The snow has gone from the nearest fields and I believe there will be sufficient hay for the cattle this spring. It has been quite cold this Easter week, but the cold must soon be at an end.

Now I must tell you I have had Lyder A. Myremelshaug here six weeks this winter working and repairing the house. He made a new sled, one new bed, one new table and one new large shelf in the living room. That cost me kr. 70. All together with materials, food, and daily wages this work has cost me approximately kr. 200.

Then I must say you have to write and tell whether you will have the farm or not. If your mother is not restored to health, then I cannot

manage the farm alone because I do not run the farm the way it should be run. My time is so engaged in the service of the road construction that the crops of the farm are neglected for that same reason.

Your brother Marthin and Ivar Osen are now working at the construction, Sande Vadheim, on the schoolhouse at Seneset, but within eight days Marthin will finish and go home and begin with the spring work.

On the 17th of April I left my home and went to Sogndal in Sogn and will be supervisor on the State's construction, Sogndal Marifjæren, now for four or five week's time instead of supervisor Nøstdal who is going to Gudvangen. When I am finished here, I shall go to Leirdalsbro and begin working with the poles (on the bridge) if it is possible to do so with the water height in the river. I came here April 18 and shall lodge at a place called Upper Steig.

The reason I did not answer your last dear letter earlier was that I wanted to know about your mother's illness so that you too could know the real condition.

Old Pernille Hjelmeland died March 13 and was buried the 20th. Marthinus Gregoriussen made a beautiful funeral. Everyone in our home was there. He had nice beer. Oluf Hjelmeland has now gotten a daughter on April 4. And Andrias A. Jr. got a son on April 15, so now there are two small new people on Rasmus' farm. Oliver Bringeland, brother of Simon Bringeland, arrived from America before Easter. He is sick and not at all well. Johan Torbjornsen Bygstad is going to America this spring, and Ole Sorensen Engebøhaug has taken over his farm. Three of Kristian A. Nas or Tuene's sons came home from America now before Easter. They will go back to America in three months.

It has been a bad winter for those people who have worked on the roads. Rain and slush all the time and also bad snow conditions on the fields. I have had only one load of wood from Skjetnebræbben from Christmas and up until now. The second and third of April the snow crust was so hard and strong that we were able to get the hay from the barn at Mayskjønladen, and that was very good.

Your brother Marthin went together with Aksel Kvamme and several others up to Nordfjord on a road project from Stryn Olden, and they had a contract there but they barely made enough money to pay for themselves. Because of bad weather they couldn't work on many days.

I have had a fairly busy winter. I have worked to get material for the house, and I was very often together with Lyder planing and sawing. I am glad because I will soon have the house repaired. But then, it is difficult to express myself about what is wrong in the family especially when it concerns someone being ill which is the case in our family. But, with the help of God, I hope that it too will pass.

I cannot remember for sure but I believe I wrote you in the last letter that Ivar and Krisitne have come to Hjelmeland again and that they have "Klæven" for their room. It was impossible for them to stay at Osbrækken any longer after Simon's death. It was decided, I believe, at the county meeting last summer that there is going to be a new road from Stavhaug to Eidevig. Your sister Oline is and has been at home this whole year and this has been very dearly welcomed now since your mother is ill.

We were a little surprised that you did not visit your mother's sister Heline when you were in Dakota and finished there. Write about it in your next letter. I wrote a letter to Hans Anderson last summer. Do you know if he has received a letter from me? Write about that too.

Then you must say hello to Halvor Monsen Eide and family from us, and Hans Andersen and family and Heline and family. Then, most important of all, you are greeted from all of us, brothers, sisters, and parents but especially from your dear mother and father. May you live well in God.

G. M. Hjelmeland

JM and IØ
SB

From: Oline Eide Hjelmeland at home on Hjelmeland (my Grandmother)
To: Fredrik Mikal Hjelmeland, her son, in America

No Date*

From Your Mother!

My dear son Mikal - Almost a year has passed since I received your letter in which you asked for my photograph. You already have your father's photograph, and I told you that I would send your uncle one. The reason why it has been delayed, is that I was sick when I had the photograph taken. I would like to have a photo taken of your father and me together, but up to now it has not been done.

I was very happy to get your letter. My best wishes for you and all of our children for now and for the life to come. Indeed I worry about my children; we live in a perilous world.

You wrote to your father that you have talked to Knud, my brother-in-law, my sister Hellene's husband, but you didn't say anything about how they are getting on. Nor did you tell us how many children they have. I know she had five children, maybe she has even more now. I would like to know how she is getting on. Poor Hellene, she lost her mother when she was only fourteen, and our father was sickly, so she had to be on her own at an early age. But praise the Lord for His mercy upon us!

I must tell you that people at Yndestad did not like that Sina had not let them know about her engagement or that she was preparing for her wedding. I have talked to the parish secretary, and he didn't like that Sina was going to marry so soon. They had only been acquainted for a very short period of time. But, I do hope that she will be nice to her aged parents-in-law.

*This letter had to have been written between 1902-1906.

LJ

From: Gunder Mikalsen Hjelmeland in Fardal, Sogn
To: Fredrik Mikal Hjelmeland, his son, in America, perhaps Wisconsin

Sunday Evening at Fardal (Sogn)
The 18th of October 1903

My beloved Son!

Your dear letter dated September 14, sent to your mother, was received by me October 16, at the steamship wharf at Fardal in Sogn. From this, your dear letter, I am pleased to learn about your good health and that you are doing fine, which I am most happy to hear. But, nevertheless, there are many things on my mind all the time. I am thinking about your living in a strange country, toiling and struggling away your youth and healthy days, and when you are coming home, if our good Lord so wills, your manhood days are over and your manly strengths may have gone, both needed so much here on the farm. You see, I feel that much too little is being done on the farm, and no one feels it is their responsibility. As it is now, the season's work is being performed hastily, and you know how it is with me; I cannot do any hard work, and then when the order comes, I have to leave. You know that my time is better paid when I'm away working on the roads than at home.

The hay season was good this year, and we also got twelve loads of good aftermath (second crop of hay). The grain, I believe, will be average. The potato crop exceeded our expectations since we had planted too little of the seed potatoes. The cattle are thriving, and all the sheep came home this fall, except for one lamb. This is what your mother wrote me on October 13. We have the same horse that we had when you left.

If it is at all possible, I am begging you, my dearest son, to inform me in your next letter how long you are going to stay over there. You know you are so dear to me. Your much appreciated answers to our letters to you prove that you do not forget your Father and Mother, your sisters or brothers. When five to six weeks have passed since I sent my letter to you, we begin longing for your reply, so you must rest assured that you are constantly in our thoughts. You should know, too, that when I read your letters and also when I write my letters to you, tears are coming to my eyes.

Olai Solemsli did not do very well, it seems to me, when he let his father's freehold farm go to his brother and did not charge anything for his rights. His brother got the farm including all the animals and household goods for about 6-7 hundred "daler". I do not know when it was decided this way, but it happened right after his return from America. I learned of it not too long thereafter. Now he is complaining about it, and, by the way, he is not feeling well either. He has some trouble with one of his hips and is limping a little, and he has lost the strength in one of his hands. So, things do not look very encouraging for Oline, I feel. It used to be a good farm with well-kept buildings, situated by itself, and could easily keep ten cows -- quite a good house. I was invited over on a Sunday last summer, and I would never have thought that the farm was as good as it was, so I don't know what to think about his getting himself into this situation! This is not a good start for my own people as for a home of their own.

Oh, how precious it is to have a home to call our own. Oh Lord, please help them all to that end. (Note: Oline was grandfather's oldest daughter; her husband was Olai Solemslid and Alf who went to America their son.)

Regarding the apportionment of the farmland, I don't believe anything will happen during the first three years according to the apportionment foreman who advised me when I asked him about it last winter. So, when you write to me again, you must state whether you will have the farm. I would appreciate knowing very much, and I feel I must know this for sure. And also, you know it is my wish that you take it.

Your father,

G. M. Hjelmeland

I did not find time to paint the house this year either.

Please do not mention it to anyone what I have written about Olaus.

This year Simon Lien was the elector. Just now I guess he is working on the road to Holmedal.

It is the same with Petrine Teigen, so you understand that the situation at Teigen is very sad for now.

From: Gunder Mikalsen Hjelmeland at Fardal in Sogn
To: Fredrik Mikal Hjelmeland, his son, in America, perhaps Wisconsin

Fardal in Sogn
22 October 1903

Dear Mikal!

again
I must write you/for I always have a lot to tell you. I'm happy to say that I'm in good health, that is when I am not doing hard work; that I cannot take. Your mother is quite all right, but she writes in her letter to me that she cannot tolerate the cold. All your brothers and sisters are also enjoying good health, and God willing, we do hope to hear the same good news from you.

I also want to tell you that I stayed at home for two months and managed to get all the hay harvested and in under the roof as well as the second hay and the grain except for 50 poles of grain sheaves from Napejuhaugen which still wasn't dry enough when I had to leave home on September 25, when the order came from Mr. Borch to go to Marifjøren in Sogn to put up 150 meters of roadside guard stones and iron guard rails. This job, including traveling, took me three weeks, and on October 15, I came to Fardal again following Mr. Borch's orders to take over the inspection and reconstruction work of the Fardal slopes, approximately 232 meters. This area has some very steep inclines and the road is to be constructed with four bends, one above the other. I do not like this terrain for the ground is so very loose to build the road on. Yah, so it goes with me that I am often away from home.

Your brother, Marthin, left for the road Sande-Vadheim on August 31 where he is working with Ole Fransen Haugbøe on a vaulted bridge nearby Dragebø. Ivar Osen is also working on the same bridge; all together, ten men are working there on a contract, and they will get Kr. 2500 for the job. So this is where he will be working this fall, and I somewhere else, apart from each other.

Your sisters, Kristine and Petrine, went to Bergen on September 24, and I guess everything went all right. They returned on October 3, your mother writes me. When you write, please tell me what kind of work you are doing and how much money you are making in a day. Please be careful with your money and have it placed in a safe bank.

They are building a new dairy house at Hjelmeland dairy, and it is near the small barn that is standing below Gjert Hjelmeland. I believe Knud Lien has now sent money home three times to your brother Marthin, which he has put into the Inner Holmedal Savings Bank. Last spring, in May, our Minister, Mr. Borchgrevink, left us for another parish somewhere in the eastern part of Norway. This summer we had a clergyman, Mr. Gundersen, who was a good speaker. On Sunday, October 18, our new Minister was to speak in Bygstad Church for the first time. His name is Gloppestad

Now I have written to you about many things, but any other special events do not come to mind, and what the youth at home are gossiping about I do not know!

If you get a chance, you might ask your mother's brother if he doesn't have any regrets having sold Eide. Please remember me to Halvor and Berthe, and to Gunder Fredriksen's sons as well as Oline, their mother, Gunder F. Fauske's wife. Also remember me to Hans Andersen and his family. Do you understand that Hans Andersen is going to take a trip to Norway to Inner Holmedal?

Your sister Anna is now just as big as your mother. Petrine is healthy, strong and bright and good at work. Fredrik did an excellent job on the farm this summer.

Finally, my dear Mikal, I, your father, send you my heartfelt greetings. Oh, my dear son, take care and may God be with you. This will be my prayer.

Gunder M. Hjelmeland

I do hope you will answer right away. Write a long letter.

Six teams with 30 men are now doing contract work here on the Fardal slopes. Most of them are without any experience, but they are willing and obey orders. My quarters are quite comfortable and with nice people.

This year we experienced very nice weather during the harvest. We did not get any rain at all from the time the grain was cut until it was brought into the barn. The last 50 poles of grain sheaves were taken in on September 26.

Live well, in the name of Jesus, my dear Mikal.

From: Gunder Mikalsen Hjelmeland in Norway (Father of Fredrik)
To: His son Mikal in America

Hjelmeland 10 January 1905

To my beloved son, Fredrik Mikal G. Hjelmeland

Your esteemed and most appreciated letter dated December 4, 1904, was received here on the 23rd of the same month, the day before Christmas. Your brother Fredrik brought it along from Eidsvik.

Everyone here is happy to know that you are doing fine and not complaining too much. In return I can tell you that everyone at home, your parents, your sisters and brothers, all are in good health. Your mother and I are doing fairly well; we are growing older you know, but we have our daily chores. It's toughest on your mother. She has the animals you know, and she does not feel too well in this cold weather.

I have read your letter with great interest many times already, and I thank you ever so much for being such a good and keen writer. You can't imagine how happy we were when we received this letter from you for Christmas. Praise God for his great mercy.

I have to tell you what has passed since I last wrote to you. I came home from Fardal on December 1, and since then I have been busy chopping wood and repairing things which got broken while I was gone. During Christmas everything has been quiet and peaceful. The weather has been rather unpredictable; the snow melted as soon as it reached the ground, so the ski conditions are poor. Olai and your sister, Oline, made the crossing over the mountain on Christmas Day and stayed here over the holidays. He had to close the store at Erviken as it did not seem to pay very well. They are now staying at Solemslien, but I don't know what their plans are. I guess he wants to go to America, but Oline is against it. Oline is not feeling very well these days; you know she is expecting a baby in the spring. Your aunt Anne got sick when she was earning her living in Bergen and wrote home asking if she could come home for the winter. She came just before Christmas and is staying with your uncle Simon Lien.

Your cousin, Helene A. Skjelbred, got married to Johan Berg Skjelbred, a widower, on November 24, 1904. The wedding was at her parents' and your mother and all your sisters and brothers were there, with the exception of Oline, myself, and Simon Lien.

I have had so many expenses to pay this past year. Johan, Skjur Aamodt's oldest son, died December 5, 1904, from a tumor on the brain. It was a great loss for his mother and family. He was doing so well with the housing business; he was clever and very popular with everyone. Andrias Hjelmeland's wife, Marie, died just before Christmas when giving birth to their eighth child. What a grief for the bereaved husband and children, and not a happy Christmas for them.

On January 7, your brother, Marthin, got a letter from your friend K. Lien; say hello to him from me. I have given Ole Lunde your regards as you requested in your last letter, and he, in return, sends his greetings to you. I talked with him on New Years Eve and I asked him to question her if she had made up her mind about you. He said it would

be better if I would come over one evening, and he would arrange for a meeting with her because she would feel better with me, he believed. I got your mother to come along with me one evening, and your mother is explaining how it went in her letter. I advise you to write to her without delay, if that is what you want. I believe her parents are quite satisfied with the arrangement, and we are not telling anyone.*

This year I paid Kr. 67.67 in taxes, so you see there is no profit for keeping the farm as all children are grown.

With Petrine things are the same.

Your parents, your sisters and brothers are all sending their love. Say hello to Halvor Monsen and his family and all of our relatives. Did Anders Fredriksen's mother travel westwards with her son Ole? Please write if you know anything about Fredrik Uldriksen, if he's alive or not.

From G. M. Hjelmeland

Please write back dear son.

*Typist's note: The "she" in this paragraph is unknown. It appears to be a very personal and confidential matter between son and father.

From: Oline Eide Hjelmeland at home on Hjelmeland (my Grandmother)
To: Fredrik Mikal Hjelmeland, her son, in America

No Date*

From Your Mother!

My dear son Mikal - Your father has told me that Ole Lunde occasionally has talked to him about you and his daughter Oliane. He wants to know if you and she are engaged or not. One Sunday after church, I think it was the 21st Sunday this fall, I happened to meet Anne Maria, the girl's mother. She has always been so nice to me. A couple of years ago, I visited her and we had some coffee in her home. Now she invited me in, too, but since I wanted to talk to her in secret, she told me just to drop by, but not on the day when the steamboat was coming, as it would be crowded with people.

One day, when the weather was nice, I went to see her. She showed me around in her home, and she boasted of their flourishing business; they were well off. She talked very much, and I kept almost silent.

I know that you asked your sister Oline to go to Oliane and ask her if she had gotten your letter. I want to know, and if I had met Oliane, I would have asked her. I asked Anne Marie if she knew, but she didn't. She only said there had been some talk about it. She didn't know Oliane's reaction. Now I have talked to Oliane and told her that we didn't know anything, only that her father has asked your father about the letter. She had gotten two letters from you, but she was too young then ?.

Now she doesn't know your address, but you know hers. I had the impression that she wanted you to write to her. Maybe you have other pen friends, too, she said. I think that you ought to take the initiative and write to her. I do hope that God will give you a good and faithful wife!

*I believe this letter had to have been written January 10, 1905; see Grandfather Hjelmeland's letter dated January 10, 1905.

LJ

From: Oline Hjelmeland in Norway (Mother of Fredrik)
To: Mikal Hjelmeland, her son, in America

Summer, 1905

My dear Son Mikal

I say many thanks for your letter of May 13. Martin, your brother, opened the letter and when he saw it was from you, he came home with it.

Thank God you are well. Your father was home eight days ago. He was well, and the first thing he asked about when he arrived was whether there was a letter from you. But up until now, we have had no reason to complain about your letter writing, and we thank you very much for being such a diligent writer.

Your sister Oline and I were at a funeral in Solemslid. It was the funeral of Olai's grandmother. It was only one day after Oline came home from Bergen. There I spoke with a sister of Olai's father. She said that she has two sons in America and the older one had not written her for several years. The mother was a widow, and I thought it was awfully hard on her. His wife was from Harsta. And then there was one from Førde who also had a son who had not written for several years. Both of these women were very unhappy. But dear son, this is not anything to write you about as it does not concern you at all. But, I should wish that the time had come when you could come back home. You have often been missed during these five years since you traveled to America. Your father says that he will sell you the farm at a good price if you do not wait too long to return and take it over. But you may stay a while longer if it can be of help to you.

Olaf Hjelmeland says that it is hard work to be in a saw mill, so you must think of your health even though the profit might be less elsewhere. I often think of you, remembering that you were not very old before you had started to do the heaviest jobs as your father was away so much of the time. But, God gives strength to you and all of my children in the name of Jesus.

We had a cold May for the animals. We let the cows out on May 20th and they were doing quite well this year and that was good because . . . It wasn't so good to have them out the whole day on account of the wind and cold. This winter we had 15 animals, 9 cows and 6 young horses. We had a big heifer that expected a calf this winter and now she is going to have a calf three weeks before Mikkelsmesse (St. Michael's Day, September 27). And, I sold a bull to Knut Eide which I got 58 kroner for. He was a little over two years old, not so big but he was fat. I also sold one last autumn and got 59 kroner for it. It was somewhat bigger but not so fat, but it was before St. Michael's Day.

Last summer we had two mature pigs, one male and one female and then we got piglets a while after St. Michael's Day. I kept two of the small ones. I then had four pigs to take care of for a while. I have now sold one of those I kept last fall. It was about 50 kroner, but I will not have two another year because it is so much work if they

are going to amount to anything. This winter it was Petrine and I who took care of the animals and worked in the barn. It is . . . good Petrine is better now than ever since she was left alone with no one to trust. (?) Oline has come home now so we have good help. Kristine is with good health and doing very well. Her parents-in-law are very fond of the child, and she has a kind husband. Her mother-in-law has praised Kristine ever since she came down there so she is doing well and is happy.

When you write, you must tell me whether you have heard anything from Halvor and Heline.¹ I think it is strange that he should buy a farm to struggle with in his old age.

The 27th of May your sister Oline and I were at the funeral of Oline Holmedal. She died Whit Monday and was in bed for three days. (?) She and her husband were here at Easter and then they visited us one night. I am glad to read in your letter that you, my dear son, are well, and the same good news I can return to you. I, your mother, am healthier now than I was at the age of fifty, and that I can thank God for.

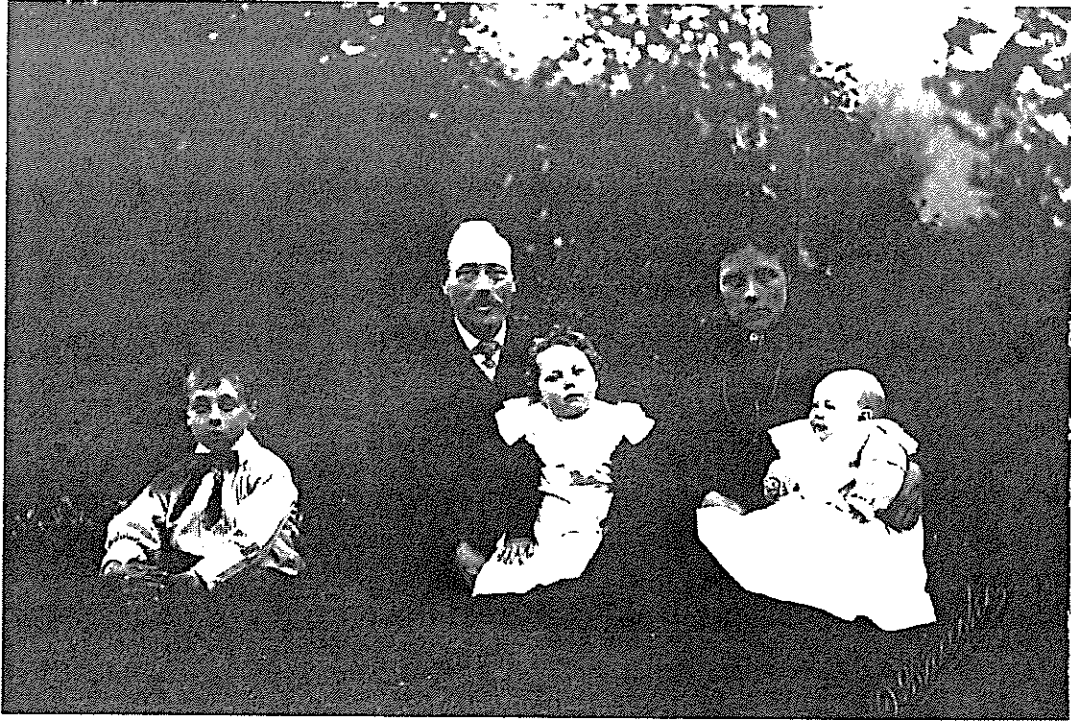
Finally, you are greeted by your mother. Live well with God.

Your Mother, Oline Hjelmeland

Please give Knut and Johanes my best regards. I am glad that you are with them. Greet Halvor and Heline if you write to them. I am to greet you from Oline and Petrina. Oline says that she will write you soon. Fredrik and Anna are in school.²

¹Halvor and Heline are siblings of Oline and both immigrated to America.

²Oline, Petrina, Anna, and Fredrik are all siblings of Mikal.



Tanta Olina & Oli Solomonid and
three of their four children - Alf,
Inrid and Olga

Note: The following is the translation of four short pages from perhaps two different letters. There are parts missing.

From: Lina (Olina) Solemslid, Alf's mother in Scanlon (?), Minnesota
To: Mikal Hjelmeland, her brother, in Whitehall, Wisconsin

Scanlon 5 December 1905

Dear Brother!

I was very happy to receive your letter yesterday evening. You are the only one I have had a letter from since I arrived here. I wrote to you about fourteen days ago, and I understand from your letter to me that you have not received it. I enclosed two photographs of mother, one for you and one for uncle. It would be a pity if they should not reach you as we cannot get them back since our address was not on the envelop.

.

. . . Mother has had many concerns in her old days -- that quarrel -- you should have been home last fall. Martine was not always so nice, and I can tell you a lot more when I see you.

Write and tell me if there are any people I know where you live -- if Knut Lien perhaps lives nearby. We heard back in Norway that he had married Sina R. Ynnesta and had a baby. It is extraordinary what people can cook up. You must not tell him what I write to you, but that was supposedly why he had to leave so quickly. Because Marti received a letter from him we then understood that it wasn't true.

You must send me our aunt's address in Dakota. I will then write to her and send her the same photo as you were to get. Uncle should have one of those I sent you, and then you must tell him to write to mother. I should have written to him, but since I do not know him I do it in this way.

I will end my letter for this time with love to you, my dear brother. Olai sends his love to you, and then I must send greetings to uncle from our little boy. His name is Alf Gunnar after both of his grandpas.

Lina Solemslid

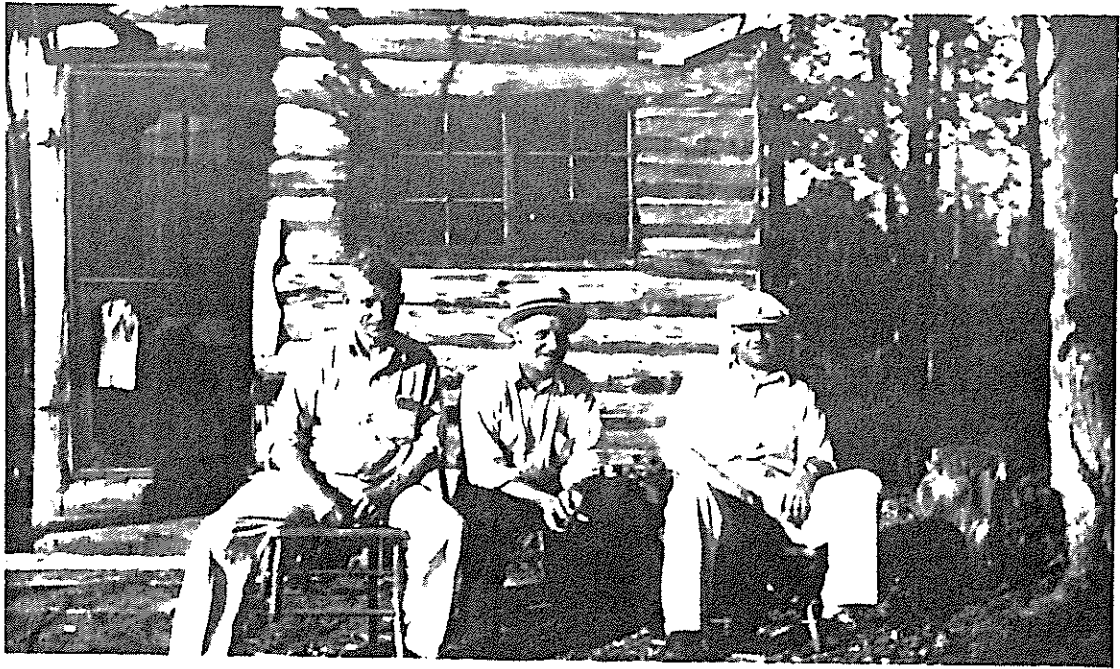
. . . Alfred is at home since Johan died; I suppose you know that Johan is dead. Sigurd is at Aamodt with Søren.

I will now end my letter with love to you my dear brother. I send greetings from Olai and from our little son who is asleep. I must send best wishes to his uncle from him. He is named Alf Gunnar after his grandpas. My love to uncle and aunt and Sina and her husband.

You are greeted with best wishes
from your sister,

Lina Solemslid
Scanlon, Minnesota

HE



Dad, center, is pictured here with Fred Lien, left and Matt Haugby, both from Sunnysford. I believe "Fridolf" referred to in this letter is Fred Lien, Dad's first cousin who lived & died in Hawkins, Wisconsin. Their fathers, Gunder Hylmelard and Simon Lien, were brothers, last names taken from the names of the farms on which they lived. Picture taken perhaps in the 40s in Wisconsin.

From: Gunder Mikalsen Hjelmeland at Hjelmeland in Norway
To: Fredrik Mikal Hjelmeland, his son, in America

Hjelmeland 20 August 1906

My dear son, Mikal G. Hjelmeland

Your dear letter dated June 23, 1906 was received here on July 9, and was very much appreciated. It is good to know that you are well and doing fine. We are very thankful that you are so good to write to us. May our good Lord bless you for it. I have read your letter several times already.

I apologize for not being able to answer your letter more quickly, but you know I am growing older and I have so much to take care of when I'm at home. I'm happy to inform you that everyone at home, we, your parents, your sisters and brothers are all in good health, but your mother and myself, we have to be careful when it comes to heavy labor. But, you know how it is, we cannot stay idle, and your sisters and brothers need help.

Your brother Marthin has been home since he came back from the army, so for the time being we are in good shape. We could use a bit of sunshine though. As we were to start with the haying, the rain came, and we did not have anything in before July 23. But during the last two weeks we have gotten 42 loads of hay in the barn; in addition we have all the dry hay on the racks. The fields around the houses have been done. From the Geillabadden we have gotten four loads and three at Meteigen, so you see it is not one of the better years we have experienced, due to warm and dry weather we had in the growing month of June, when we had so little rain. But if we now manage to get it all into the barn, we will be satisfied, and the quality is good.

I won't be gone for so long this summer as previously planned and as I wrote you in my last letter. When we finished the road Songdal-Hafslo, we were dismissed and I came home June 29. I was to start on the new road at Marifjøra, but they did not get enough people because people were busy with their haying. I was happy enough to be able to stay at home at that time as I had plenty to do here. I had a new roof laid on the summer stable which was greatly needed.

Shame to say, fourteen days have passed since I started this letter and I have not finished it. You see, the weather turned so nice and I had not the time to write. Today is the tenth Sunday after Trinity, and having just had a nice and strengthening afternoon nap, I will try to finish this letter.

Everything went fine with the haying this summer. We will cut the grass now on the 23rd of August; we have had good quality too. As for "Res" ? the haying has been as an average year. This year we had good help which was very much needed due to our late start, and the grass grew very slowly. Marthin and Fredrik are good at cutting the grass and Marthin was good enough to remain at home when he returned from the army. He wanted to work on the road at Maristuen, but then he got the letter from Ivar Osen telling him about how little work there was, and that it would all end around Mikeili (September 29). Martin is staying

at home for the time being because Fredrik has been hired as a clerk at N. Andersen's county store in Førde and is leaving around Mikeili. At the same time I guess I will be off to Standdal, but I haven't heard anything yet. Marthin will be the one at home to take care of the reapportionment of the farmland, but the time has not yet been set. I assume it will be this coming fall. You were asking in your last letter when Marthinus is to move his houses, but that has not yet been decided.

The fields are still green, and also the potatoes have been delayed this year, but the growth looks promising.

Two weeks ago, I received a registered letter with kr. 500 enclosed. It came from Whitehall, and I gather it must be from you, but it does not say.

We believe that you already know that on June 17, we lost one of our best milking cows. This cow had a calf last March, and she produced more milk than any of the others. She had had four calves in previous years, but four weeks ago she was attacked by a young bull and died.

With Petrine it is the same, and Søren has much haying left. He has a cow that became ill some time ago; unfortunately she doesn't seem to recover. Ivar Osen is working on the road at Maristuen. Ivar and Kristine's children are healthy enough. Gudmund is now aware of who is carrying him; he is big and fat for his age!

Your parents, your sisters and brothers are sending their love. God bless and take care of you. Do not follow my example in waiting so long before answering.

G. M. Hjelmeland

On August 6, we got a letter from your sister Oline saying that all three of them are in good health. I'm sorry to hear that Oline is so homesick. She also writes that you have moved to another town named Stanley.

Three weeks ago a large religious meeting was held at Rupenhaugen. People came from north and south, including your mother and myself. It was very interesting.

Jonas T. Hjelmeland who has been ill for a very long time died July 31, and was buried August 7. Your mother and I attended the funeral. Ole Lien, the old church caretaker, died August 17. He had been bedridden for a couple of years and had been very ill. He was somewhere between 80 and 90 years old. Otherwise, everything seems to be well in hand.

Tomorrow, August 21, the election for government representatives is to take place here in the county. According to the new election law, an elector is not appointed, but today everyone goes to their church and a person from the people is voted on, and the one receiving the most votes is elected.

Your sister Anna is now staying at the mountain summer farm. Petrine came home from Kroken (at school) July 1. She will return August 31 and be there until Christmas. Everyone seems to have their own inter-

ests these days, and it costs quite a lot to attend schools.

Last winter we sold the horse and got kr. 255 for it. This spring your brother Marthin bought a new one at the market at Førde, a very fine horse, but the prices had gone up and he had to pay kr. 290. It's a dun like the one we had when you left for America.

I forgot to mention that Tomas Olsen Haugsbø came home from America some three weeks ago.* He is planning on returning in October, and they say that Fridolf and Oline, son and daughter of Simon Lien are going with him.

Heartiest greetings to you,

G. M. Hjelmeland

Eidevik 20 August 1906

You have to send this letter to Oline, your sister, because I have gotten one and your mother another and we still have not answered them. Please Oline, do not be offended; you know that summer is a very busy time for us. We send our sincere greetings to you, Oline, your husband and your son.

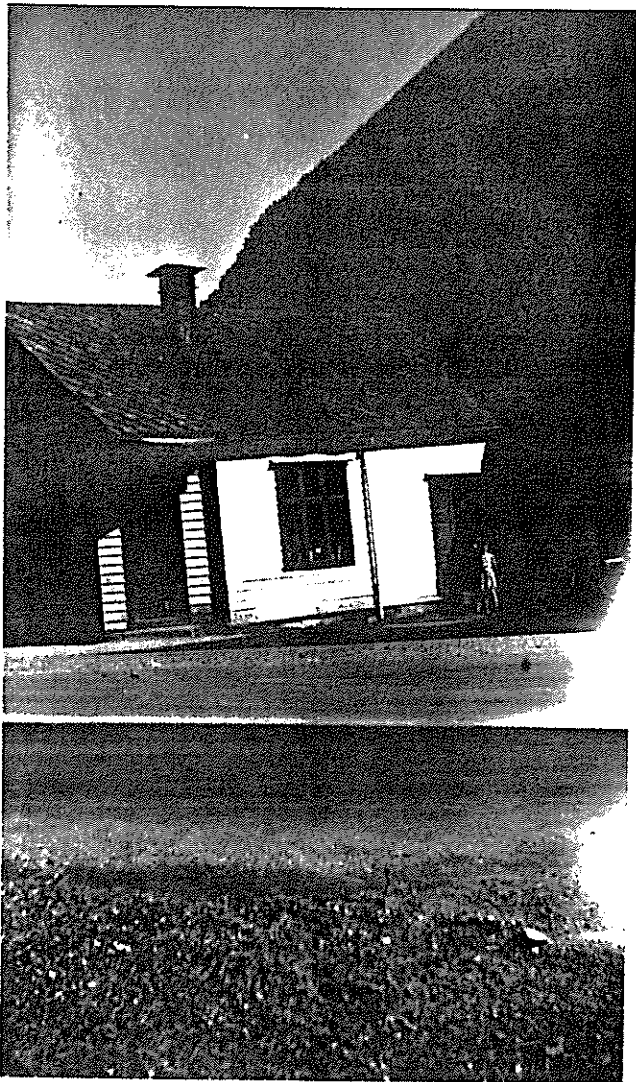
On July 29, after having attended a meeting and we were on our way back home through the woods, we met Olai's mother and she had the little girl with her. They were all in good health at Solemslien and she seemed to be looking fine as always.

Note: There appears to be two endings to this letter. One might think it is made up of two separate letters. However, the dates at the beginning and at the end are the same, August 20, 1906. At the beginning he has written Hjelmeland as the place of writing; at the end he has written Eikevik. Perhaps he began the letter at Hjelmeland and completed it at Eikevik, not far from Hjelmeland where the post office was located at that time.

RHM

* I believe this must be Fred Lien, Dad's first cousin who lived many years and died in Hawkins, Wisconsin. Their fathers, Gunder Hjelmeland and Simon Lien were brothers, last names taken from farms on which they lived.

SB
SR



Above, Forde, Sunn-
fjord where I had
been hired as a clerk in the
N. Andersen County Store
and began work
September 24, 1906. The
store (left) was located
just opposite the bridge
in the center of the
village. Mother's home
was Forde near the
church, far right.

Here Dad is 19 years
and he has just been
hired as a clerk at
the Anderson's County
store in Forde. He
begins work September
24, 1906



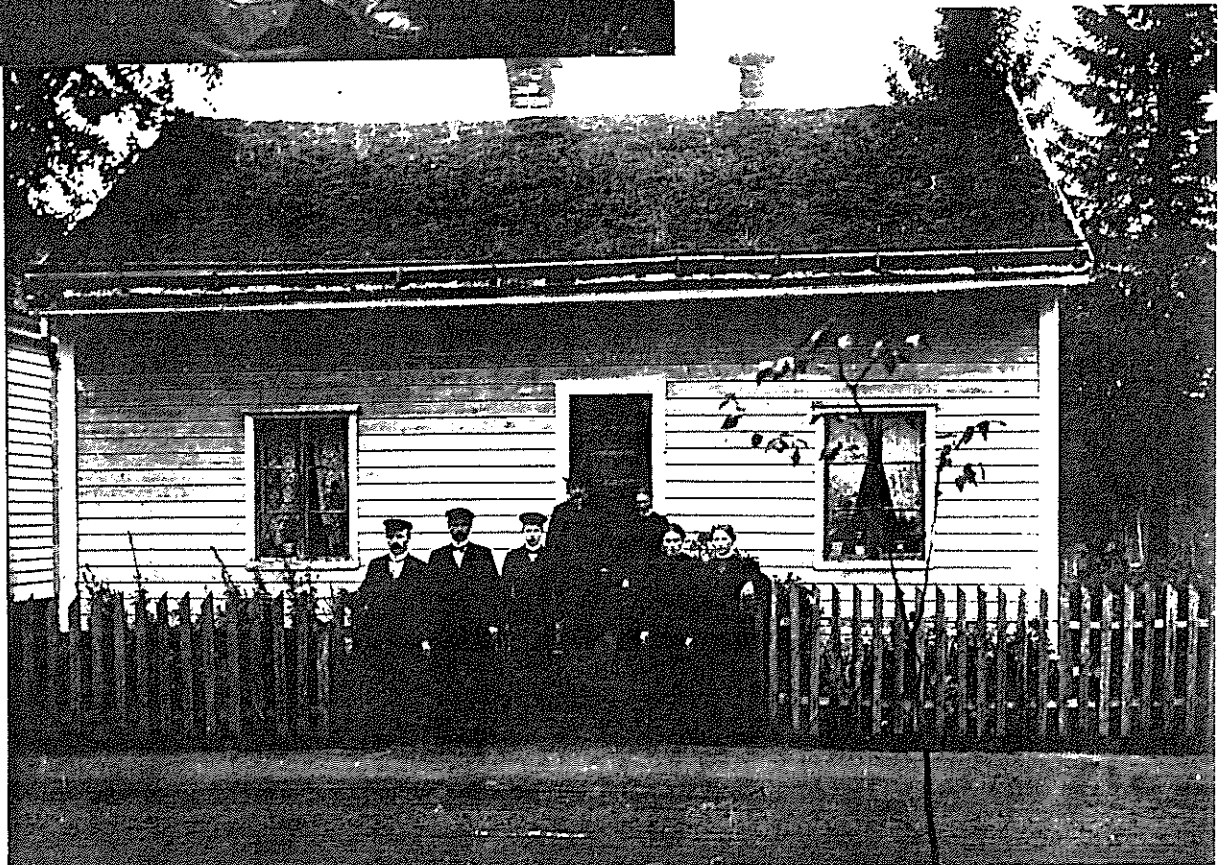
Fredrik Olaf Hjeltneland

It is in Forde that he
meets my mother Kristine
Kristiansen for the first
time. Mother is only
fifteen (15) years old.



Here mother (center) is
with her two sisters,
Elisa, left, & Pauline,
right. Picture taken
perhaps when mother
was about 14-15 years
(1906-1907) Pauline
died of TB when she
was only 19 years old.
Mother was 15 when
Pauline died.

Below, mother, far
right, with her family
in front of their
home in Ford —
about 1907.





Mother is
Confirmed in
the spring of
1907 when she
is 15 years old.
The pin she
wears is a
gift for her
confirmation.



From: Gunder Mikalsen Hjelmeland at Stavdal in Sogn, Norway
To: Fredrik Mikal Hjelmeland, his son, in America

Stavdal 18 October 1906

Dear Son!
F. M. G. Hjelmeland

Your brother Marthin picked up your dear and informative letter of 10 September 1906 in Eideviken on the 25th of September at night. We were all happy to read your letter and learn that both you and Oline lived well and had no special problems. God be praised and thanked for His great mercy with us, He who keeps His protective hand over us and gives us such good health for our daily doings. The first and greatest thing I have to inform you is that we are all in good health, both your parents and your sisters and brothers. For my own part, I have been extremely energetic and ambitious to work this summer and fall. Your mother cannot bear so much work now at her age as I do; after all, she has too much work to do now according to her strength. It is too much work for her to have such a big dairy management and work with all the cows in the winter. But we hope it will be a little better for her when Petrine comes back from school at Kroken at Christmas.

About the crop this year, it was an average year concerning the hay and the grain. The second crop of grass was plenty, but the potatoes were a little less than last year. But we have had very nice fall weather so all the grain came fresh and in very good condition into the barn. Most of the grain we took in on September 19.

On the 24th of September, your brother Fredrik went to Førde to work and says he enjoys it. Your brother Marthin is not pleased or content to be at home. He is very bitter; but there is no other way, I must have one at home. He also does not like to work or fix anything inside the house or do the daily chores. But working outside in general, both your brothers are clever, and especially Fredrik. He has been very keen.

When I returned home from Sogn last summer, I tore down the old cog joints and now since Mikeli (September 29), I have put up an open shed in the barn where the cogging joints used to be and there I will make a stable for the horses. I did not manage to complete it as I had to come here to the road construction at Stavdal on Sunday, October 14, and begin work on the road again.

I am staying at a different place at the construction site this time than I did before. I have a single room with oven, and it looks as if they are kind people I have come to, so I presume I will have a nice time there this fall.

I have no other special news to tell you from home; everything is much the same. Petrine in Teigen is bedridden as before. Søren struggles about and has very little help. He and the girl they have raised managed to get the crop in this year too. Ivar Osen is still working on the road as a foreman. He has been quite lucky with his wages. I believe he still has an average of kr. 4.00 per day. He had been to Filefjellet until Mikeli. Then he was at home for eight days, and now he is going to Hafsta in Sogn with his crew.

As you know, they have three children now, and with so many small ones in the house there is a lot of noise and commotion and also much work with laundry and so forth. There is quite a lot of fuss with them, too, and your mother often seems to tire from them. But, they are healthy children and happy. Gudmund is very big and nice for his age. He has started to stand a little and makes a distinction between people.

You are greeted very heartily from your parents, brothers, and sisters. Live well in the name of Jesus our Savior.

From G. M. Hjemeland

You must say hello to Oline and husband and child from their dear father. I will write to Oline at my first opportunity as I have not written her since spring and that is not good, but so much of the letter writing rests with me. Petrine wrote her a letter before she went back to school again.

JM
SR

A portion of a letter

From: Gunder Mikalsen Hjelmeland in Norway
To: His children Mikal and Oline in America

Hjelmeland, 1906-1908 (?)

You asked me to write about the reapportionment of farmlands. It is going to begin 13 May, and it will perhaps be done within a week of Pentecost. Those who are going to stay here until Monday are one from Øvrebø, Jølster, one from Tæffre, Førde, three from Yttre, Holmedal, one from Skarstun, one from Hellevik, one from Engebø. That's where the test is going to be. After the reapportionment, Marthinus will be given three and one half years to move his houses. I don't think there are going to be any changes.

It is 14 days since we had a letter from Marthin. He wasn't sure if he was able to finish his work by Easter. If not, they would not be coming home for Easter. I wrote him this winter and asked him to come home this spring and be home and help me. I have not heard from him yet, but I hope he will do it.

What I have written in this letter is for both of you to read.

Believe me, it is so strange and quiet at home since Kristine left with the children. I miss the small children very much. They are coming to see us for Easter. Ivar Osen (Kristine's husband) has bought a horse, a mare five years old. He paid Kr. 275; his mother lent him the money. It is going better now, but it has just begun. I've been there twice since they left. The little ones have been so happy to see me, especially Signe. Kristine said she wanted to write to Oline.

You must greet all our relatives. You are all four greeted heartily from us all. Please greet Alf from Grandpa.

G. Hjelmeland

PS Petrina sent a letter to Oline two weeks ago; hope you have received it.

JHa

From: Gunder Mikalsen Hjelmeland at Hjelmeland
To: Fredrik Mikal Hjelmeland and Oline Hjelmeland Solemslid, his
two children in America

Hjelmeland
Saturday 16 March 1907

My beloved children!

Your dear letters, the one of 20 January arrived here 10 February and the other of 3 February arrived here 23 February. From the two letters we see to our great happiness that you are all in good health. The same good news have I to tell you. We have all been in good health up to this time. The same thing I hope to hear from you again. Oline wrote in her letter of 20 January 1907 that you, Mikal, would soon be moving but that you did not know what address we should use when sending letters to you. Write and tell us what you mean by that. You, Mikal, are very good to visit our relatives and to write us concerning them, and I do believe that Oline Fauske* must talk a lot with you about her home community in Norway. Oline Fauske was a good friend of your grandmother at Hjelmeland. Say hello to her and her family from us.

At home here everything goes in the old routine. It has been a mild winter as far as the temperature is concerned. But the weather has been very unstable, one day with snow, the other rain. Today it is raining, mild and fine weather. But we have had very bad road conditions the whole winter except the main road. It has been impossible to get to the woods with the horse from 23 January to 12 March. I was so out of firewood that I had to carry four loads of wood from Meteigen before I could get out there with the horse. Thursday, 14 March, I drove to the outshed by the swamp. We had excellent road conditions, and I had Andrias from Tuna with me to help with the loading and it all went well. He is now foreman at the Hjelmeland dairy.

Even if the snow condition is good on the field this spring, I will not take more wood from the outshed because I have so much in Barketaget at Meteigen that I won't need more this year. I have had enough wood this winter because I have taken good care of it so the wood has been very dry. We have also had much turf (peat) to burn. That is good fuel.

My daily work is to drive the milk to the dairy each day and when I return home and have eaten I have a little nap because I feel I am not the best for doing anything more before I have had a little rest. After that the main thing is to get enough wood to the house and chop it. Then I have to drive out on all the errands.

The herring was expensive here this winter. The first we had was kr. 9; I bought one barrel. But now the fishing is good near Kin so it will be cheaper eventually.

We have had around 38 kilo at the dairy this month. Seven cows have had calves, one cannot bare, and two are yet to calve. Seven sheep have had lambs, and we now have ten lambs. One sheep died while giving birth. It is hard work during the time when the sheep are giving birth to their young.

* Hazel and George Fredrickson's grandmother, Oline Fauske Fredrickson.

The snow is still very high, to the fourth board on the smokehouse. (?)

The two oxen I wrote about in my last letter I got kr. 150 for eight days before Kjyndesmesse (February 2). As far as the hay, I believe it will not be too bad if we get a reasonable spring; we should have enough.

The old one (Petrine) in Teigen is lying the same as before, and it is very poor circumstances for them. They must get help from the social office now.

The hay from Møskjønnes we have transported home now.

Fourteen days ago your sisters Petrine and Anne were to Førde church and at that time Fredrik was healthy, and he is doing well up there in the north (Førde is north of Hjelmeland). He is hired for the whole year.

Your sisters met Mathias Solemslid and his wife by the church. They were fine all of them north in Liden they said.

Live well in the name of Jesus, you beloved children.

Your Father

You must write back at once as I think it is so good to hear from you.

This letter is written in a hurry; that is why it is not any longer.

I myself will drive to Eideviken tonight with this letter. Johannes A. Hjelmeland and Lyder A. Hjelmeland are leaving for America the 19th of this month.

JHa
IØ
SB



Jacobsen  BERGEN.

My Grandmother
Hjelmeland & her
sister Anna Aarnodt

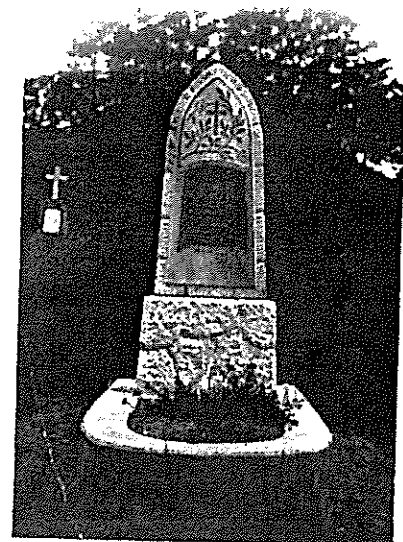
Grandma died at the age
of 60 of appendicitis.
Uncle Mikal is in
America & Grandpa
writes here to share
this news).

Oline M. Hjelmeland
født Eide (barn Eide)

25 April 1847

13 June 1907

"Velsigna Vera Minnet ditt"
Blest Be Your Memory



From: Gunder Mikalsen Hjelmeland at the home farm in Norway
To: His son Mikal in America (Mikal learns of his mother's death)

Hjelmeland 24 June 1907

My dear son Mikal Hjelmeland

Your heartily welcome letter of 28 April '07, came into our hands the 16th of May, and to our joy we read that you were of good health. It got to be a long time before you heard from us, your beloved ones, this time.

Dear Mikal, you must accept what you now read with composure, and we shall seek comfort in God's will. Your beloved mother became ill Saturday, the 8th of June and Sunday, the 9th of June the doctor visited her twice. Monday the 10th I left with her for the Bergen hospital as she wanted to see about an operation. Tuesday, the 11th of June, at 9 o'clock in the morning, we arrived in Bergen, and between 10 o'clock and 11 o'clock Tuesday morning the operation took place. The first day after the operation she appeared quite well under the circumstances, but then the sickness took hold again. Her sickness consisted of inflammation of the appendix, and the doctor told me it had ruptured and that it was too late even before she came under medical treatment. Thursday, June 13th, my dear and faithful wife died peacefully, and in the belief of Jesus Christ, Son of God. She died at the Bergen Hospital between one and two o'clock in the afternoon. Your dear mother asked me to greet you in the most beloved way, and she was asking to see you and meet you again on the other side of the grave where there are no separations.

Myself and Anne, my sister, and Anne Aamodt, your mother's sister, were there with her at her deathbed. She was very ill, but consoled by a loving God in her illness. Oh, dear Mikal, it is a heavy event I must convey to you, that of your dear mother's passing away from life on this earth, but dear Mikal, we must not mourn like those who have no hope. We must believe that this is God's will that we should bear this separation. Drink to this life.

Your mother had been well and in good spirits this spring. She often said she wanted to write to you and ask you to come back home again because it was too much for us to struggle with the farm now, but she was too late in writing. Monday, June 10, the day we left for Bergen, all your sisters and your brother Marthin were present at Hjelmeland when we left with her to Sveen. Oh dear, it was a difficult and sad journey and how unfortunate it had to end the way it did. I must admit, dear Mikal, it was a heavy cup to drink. I feel so depressed, and it is so sad and empty at home. Friday, June 14th, I returned home again with her, and Thursday, June 20, your beloved mother was buried at the Bygstad Cemetery. There were nearly 100 people who attended the funeral. We had no alcoholic beverages; only coffee and milk were served at the burial.

I see from your last letter that you intend to stay over there until fall, 1908. However, I believe I would like to see you return this coming fall, as I am not always so strong anymore and sometimes I am

troubled by the same sickness I had when you left for America. It has settled in the chest, but when I manage to cough it up, I recover somewhat and am about the same as I was when you left, That is, when I do not overwork myself.

Oh, may our great and Almighty God give you and all of us strength in our great sorrow over a beloved mother and a faithful wife. God bless her memory.

In all our other endeavors everything has proceeded as normal this spring. The reapportioning committee began Monday, the 13th of May, and was finished Saturday, the 18th, namely Whit Saturday. I was awarded the road from Præstehaugene across Mathinus' new property past the field where the cattle are grazing to the strip of land which the sub committee would not award me. Furthermore, I gained a good deal of forest which was an exchange. But then I lost an area of 300 square meters of valuable land . . . ? . . . so it went in one direction. That Marthinus fellow brewed beer which he offered the men and it appeared that this had an affect on the outcome. Nevertheless, I am grateful, in this time of great sorrow, that the reapportioning proceedings are finished and grateful mostly because I have the farm and can share it with you, if God lets me live to experience such a time.

Sunday, April 14, your mother and I were north to Solemslien and visited with Oline and Alf. We walked Sunday morning on the crusted snow from Hjelmeland to Solemslien and Monday we walked back again.

Now I must express to you our great and sincere appreciation from your beloved mother and from me for the beautiful gift you sent us with Oline. I believe Oline did the right thing when she came back from America because it must have been heavy and sad for her to be parted from her relatives. I expect that they will be able to have a good life here too.

Your brother Marthin came home from his road job at Easter time and since then he has been at home; however, yesterday he went into compulsory military service and will stay there for four weeks, so now I am the only man at home.

I have not been out working on the road this spring as there is little such work available at this time. Nor was it possible this spring with so much work to be done at home. The fields and the pastures are looking very beautiful as we have had abundant rain this spring and early summer; however, there has been less warm sun. The cattle have been healthy up to this time. Yes, there will be little help for us this summer.

Petrine from Teigen is bedridden with the same as before and her condition has not changed. Andrias Andersen Hjelmeland, brother of Olaf Hjelmeland, left for America at Easter to make some money. Today Torstein H. Hagenæs is to be married to Gustine G. Aase and the wedding takes place at Hagenæsset. Fredrik, your brother, is still staying with Andersen in Førde, but he says he will leave there this fall. He is healthy and seems to like it quite well there.

Then I have the good fortune, in the midst of our sorrow, to tell you that I and your brothers and sisters are all well up until now and the

same good fortune we wish for you, and we wish to see and hear from you again. Finally, you have warmest greetings from all your brothers and sisters and greetings from Alf and Oline. Your sister, Oline, was south here for the Whitsun holiday, and then she came back south again the Sunday your mother was ill and since then has stayed here at Hjelmeland. I must also greet you from Søren Hjelmeland and express his thanks for the money you sent him with Oline. And finally, you are greeted from me, your loving father. Live well in Jesus. That is my dearest wish Mikal.

G. M. Hjelmeland

Please greet all my relatives over there in America and tell them I had to "drink a heavy sorrow".

EA and JHa
SS/SB

From: Gunder Mikelsen Hjelmeland at Osbraekken, Norway
To: Fredrik Mikal Hjelmeland, his son, in America

Osbraekken 19 October 1907

Dear Son!
Mikal F. G. Hjelmeland

Your dear letter of September 4, was received here on October 4, and from this we see that you are healthy and keeping well in every way, which is good to hear. We, too, have the same to report to you this time, that I, your father, and your brothers and sisters are well to this day. May God be praised for his great mercy towards us.

There were frequent rains this summer, and we were able to get only half of the hay from down in the marshes. There was also much damage to the small hay barn at Meteigen, and the field, Miskjonnen, was not cut this summer. We did not begin cutting the grain until the 25th of September, so I fear it will not be worth more than food for the cats. I have never before cut grain when it was so green.

We had good weather in the swathing of the grain, and we harvested the last grain by 9 October. We had only harvested two loads of hay before the rain ruined it, but whatever we got in is well preserved and stored. We had a fairly good crop of potatoes, and they are good quality; the last was harvested on October 14. So, it has been a struggle this summer concerning the crop and harvest and such little help. Yes, there were many of us who had their hay damaged, especially those of us with spread-out farms.

The animals have been healthy, but I don't know if we will find all the sheep; we have not brought them down yet.

Fredrik, your brother, will be working for Andersen in Førde until the coming spring, and Marthin, your brother, is going away to work at Vadheim. It is mostly stonework. They are building a chemical factory run by water-powered electricity.

I almost got the impression in your letter that you would like to continue to work over there while the times are so good. Yes, I don't know what to say. I'm sure you understand that running the farm with so little help is very difficult for me.

My letter is so uninteresting because I have so little to write about. Everything is very routine.

On 15 October, we collected the sheep from the fields. Only two lambs were missing. Whether we will find them, we don't know for sure. On 16 October, Marthin left to work at Vadheim.

I haven't been out to work as a supervisor as there is less roadwork this year. I have a small job, lasting about 14 days to lay iron pipes along the edge of the road from Osbroen and down 110 meters on the north side of Gaula River. We are two men, and I have Ivar Osen with me. I lodge with Ivar and Kristine.

Fredrik, your brother, had a letter from you awhile back. When you write again, you must tell us if you are coming home or not this winter. You must greet Halvor Monsen Eide and family, Hans Andersen and Oline Fredriksen. Petrine in Teigen is poorly, the same as before, and they must have support from social benefits, so they have had unfortunately a very difficult time.

You are greeted most dearly from your father and sisters and brothers.

G. M. Hjelmeland

You must also greet Heline, your dear mother's sister if you write her.

Hjelmeland 22 October 1907

When I traveled home from Osbrakken Saturday evening, the 19th, I forgot to post this letter to you. So, I will again try to add to this letter a few lines to you, my dear son.

Yes, now I am sitting alone in the livingroom, the only sound is the "terpelikkeren" (?). Petrine and Anna have gone to bed. It is indeed so difficult to be so alone, and how empty this house and home has become since your dear mother passed away. But the pain is perhaps most felt by me.

Fredrik, your brother, came south here this weekend and told me he had written to you awhile ago. He is keeping fine he says. I have given much thought to the fact that it is not easy to tempt or persuade you to come back home to Norway again or perhaps even unwise that you should travel here before you think it is worth it. Especially as times and earnings there are so good and you would like to perhaps stay another year while the salaries are so good. So, I can't say anything about that. May God give me health, and if he wants me to live on a little longer, I will do all I can possibly manage.

You must do whatever you think best, but if you decide not to come this winter, and want to stay on another year, I would like you to pay the salary of a farmhand, if I could find one. You do understand I would like very much to arrange things in the best way for you. After that you have to decide for yourself.

Dearest greetings from us all,

G. M. M.

Write back soon.

SS
SR

From: Oli Solemslie, Father of Alf Solemslie, in America (Washington)
To: Fredrik Mikal Hjelmeland in America (Minnesota)

Seattle, November 10, 1907

Mr. Fred Hjelmeland

As I have not had a letter from you for quite a long time, I will send you a few words to find out about your health and how times are in Minnesota -- whether they are as bad as here, with lack of money in the banks. There is a shortage of work, and if this continues, it will not be good. If I had a bit more money, I would have gone home with you. I have work for another one or two days, but then there is probably nothing more for me to do. You must write and tell me if you will be going to Norway soon.

The weather has been fine all this autumn and is still so. I have nothing more of interest to tell. I am in good health and I hope to hear you are too.

At last, my best regards to you and my friends from me.

Love

Oli Solemslie

2224 Cave, Seattle, Washington

Note: Oli's wife Oline, my father's sister, had been in America also but chose to return to Norway with their two-year old son, Alf. Oli then was alone for a time in America before he later also returned and remained in Norway. When Alf was twenty years old, he returned to America with my mother; this was the year 1925. He lived out his life and died in America in 1983 at the age of 78. He was always special to me.

HE

Note: Mikal returned to Norway from America between the end of 1907 and late summer, 1908 after seven years, March, 1901- ? 1908.

From: Gunder Mikalsen Hjelmeland at Kjølsdalen in Nordfjord
To: Fredrik Mikal Hjelmeland at home on Hjelmeland

Kjølsdalen 7 October 1908

Beloved Son!
Mikal G. Hjelmeland

Well, I have now arrived at Kjølsdalen, and tonight I have found lodging with the accountant of the road works here. His name is Hans Ræknes. I came here 6 o'clock this evening. He was quite friendly, but it has not been settled what I shall pay per day yet. This is a new construction site which begins here and goes along the fjord, the work consisting of both earth and rock. The place lies with the sun on the north side of the fjord and it looks pleasant.

I should tell you a little from my trip to Bergen. I arrived there Monday at noon. The trip went well, and I found room with Anna Aamot. I went to see Doctor Klaus Hansen, the chief physician on Tuesday, and he check the illness. It was not a serious problem he said, but that I should not eat all kinds of foods. He gave me a list of what I could eat and what I should not eat. I must not do heavy work, and I must keep warm and my feet dry. He gave me a prescription for some medicine that I should take. For his fee I had to pay kr. 10 and for the prescription kr. 2.55, so it is expensive to see a doctor. I've been in good health these past days. I have not felt any pain so it has helped a lot not to be working. I hope and believe that there will be enough work for me to do this fall.

I have ordered cement tiles from Riber. They will come to Sveen on Friday, and when you start the work in the entrance you must begin at the staircase because there are eight half-ones which can be used towards the kitchen door. It is best this way because of the size of the tiles, and when you run out of tiles, then fill in with cement. I also bought a flat stepping stone 36x42 inches. I have often missed having such a stone. This also arrives Friday.

I met Louise Soli at the market place Tuesday. I told her then that I had bought a cow from her mother. She thought I had paid too little for the cow. They had almost agreed upon selling it in Bergen for kr. 90, but then they would have to pay for the transport of the cow to Bergen, and I told her that they would not gain much if they should pay the fare to town. Don't give in, Mikal, if they try to undo the deal because that would be shameful for them to do.

Your two aunts send their love. My dearest wishes to all of my children. The tiles and the stone are to be paid to Mr. Ræknes (Mr. Riber). in January, 1909.*

Address:
Kjølsdalen
Nordfjord

Ræknæs, the 7th of October 1908

G. M. Hjelmeland

* Letter reads Mr. Ræknes, but I think he meant to write Mr. Riber here; see above reference to both names.

You must write and tell about the cow whose foot was not well if she is all right again.

You must write back as soon as possible. I talked to Martinus about the farm boundaries after you had left Sveen on Sunday. He said we could have a look at it when I come home again. So you must not start with any farming until we have had a look at the boundaries.

HE

From: Fredrik Olaf Hjelmeland at Electrical School in Kristiania (Oslo)
To: His Brothers and Sisters at home on Hjelmeland

Kristiania
October 19, 1908

Dear Sisters and Brothers!

Thank you very much for your letter, Mikal. You are living well I see, and and same good news I can tell you. Have been healthy the whole time.

Yesterday I visited Andreas at Aas. It was spendid I must say. I got to see the exhibitions, the menagerie, preservation of all different kinds of zoological stuffed animals, different kinds of rocks, as well as other collections. I was there the whole day and ate dinner with all the candidates, so you can see it was fantastic. It looked like some of them were well-to-do people. They were well dressed, you understand. It was a very nice day!

Our conversation was mainly about our home district and the people living there. Oh how we were wishing we were home having some blood sausage, and you can be sure we would have done credit to that!

I don't have much to write about, but I have to write right away or I will have to wait too long for your letter in return.

How is it going at home now? You, Mikal, I understand are very busy with threshing, drying, painting, slaughtering, and plowing the fields, and in addition you are working outside the home. Yes, you are carrying on in the right way, that's for sure.

I'm also busy occupied in my studies, but it goes slowly. Mathematics is difficult. This evening I've spent several hours working with it.

It is getting to be cold here now. Today the thermometer shows below zero. It would have been good if I had had that grey underwear now. I believe I have use for it. If you haven't sent the other things I have asked for, you can send them together.

I don't know more to write about this time. I hope to get a letter from you before long. You, Petrina, and Anna too, must write to me and tell me how you are getting along at home. You know I am eager to know. You no doubt have had a letter from father? Martin didn't spend many days at home, according to his letter. Where has he gone now? Write back right away, Mikal:

"About how much milk production you have."

"If you have bought some cows."

"Whether you have started fencing in the fields."

"Whether you have plowed more land."

"Write all you know."

Greet Kristine and Ivar and wish them happiness on the birth of their baby boy.

Loving greetings to all of you,

Yours,

Fredrik

LJ

Regards from Andreas to all of you, except Petrine. She will have a letter from him before long.

From: Gunder Mikalsen Hjelmeland at Reksnes, Nordfjord
To: Fredrik Mikal Hjelmeland, his son, at home on Hjelmeland

Reksnes 19 November 1908

Beloved son Mikal G. Hjelmeland

Your dear letter dated November 10 reached me on the 11th. To my great relief, I see that you are all well and that everything seems to be going normally at home. God be blessed and praised. I, too, am able to come with good news that I am well and healthy. However, my arm is not quite yet restored, but I seem to recognize some improvement, slowly but surely, so that I believe with time my arm will be completely healed.

In your letter I read also that you are keeping very busy. Yes, when you are the only man at home time for idleness becomes scarce. My work here on the project is progressing satisfactorily; we have completed five contracts so far and at the moment we have seven contracts under operation. The field force now, including myself, numbers forty-five men plus the black smith and the carrying boy.

On the 13th of November Mr. Borch arrived to investigate the work. It went well; I heard no comments. He stayed here Friday as well as Saturday as he had to wait for the steamship. Weather permitting, work will be in progress here all the way until Christmas. The workers, however, have a tendency to shirk their responsibilities during bad weather. They took off three days last week, and this week they have taken off two days. We have experienced very good weather this fall, but now on the 9th of November it deteriorated and we had a bit of snow and rain; however, we cannot expect good weather continuously. We got only about two inches of snow which disappeared quickly, as we are working close to the sea shore. I do not believe we shall have much snow on the ground before Christmas.

Fredrik wrote me a letter on November 8, which I received on the 11th. He says that he is fine and in good health, but it seems to be rather expensive to live there. He said he would write home to you on the same day, so I expect that you have recently received a letter from him.

Marthin wrote me a letter on November 8; however, I did not receive it before the 16th. In this letter he writes that they have full winter with snow and blizzards. He writes among other things that he has to pay kr. 7.70 per week for room and board which is entirely too much. I write with the same mail to Marthin as I write to you at home. He writes too that he is well and healthy, and he believes that he should finish the contract in fourteen days, but he does not mention where he will be working when he finishes up where he is now. On the 14th I wrote back to Fredrik.

It is good to hear that the cow which I bought at Berge gives much milk. Yes, she is giving so much milk that we are the ones who have the most milk now. Yes, and now the time has come for us to pay our taxes. I have not received any money as yet, so you shall have to get money for the taxes at the dairy if possible, because they should have paid me by this time. Now you must write and tell me how everything went at Osbrækken during the christening on Sunday, the 15th. I wrote a letter to Oline Solemsli, but I have not yet heard from her. I suppose they

are very busy up north with the foundation for the cow shed, so they have very little time left for writing me.

So far this week we have had three days when it has been impossible to work because of rain and sleet. If the weather does not soon improve, I am afraid that the work will be closed down. However, I shall bide my time here for another eight days before I close down the work.

Yes, I have so little to write about that my lines become dry and surely of little interest. You are all greeted most lovingly. Give little Signy best regards from Grandfather. Also, give regards to the folks at Teigen and at Brækkene from me.

The fire taxes should have been paid by the 15th of November.

From

G. M. Hjelmeland

From: Fredrik Olaf Hjelmeland while studying in Kristiania
To: Mikal Hjelmeland, his brother at home at Hjelmeland

Kristiania 2 January 1909

Dear Brother!

Now I have returned from my Christmas visit at Mathias and Olav Yndestad and Martha, of course. It was very nice to be there. We were at three parties and had a lot of fun with folk dancing and all kinds of things. At one party we were only young people, and then we partied almost the whole night. They didn't want us to leave before New Years Eve, but both Andrias and I did'nt have time to stay there any longer. We must use our time and start our work. School starts January 8, 1909. It is a long vacation for all those who had to stay here in Kristiania. I did'nt want to work or study during my Christmas vacation, but to be truthful, many of us including myself should have studied. We need it.

How has your Christmas been? I am sure you have had a young-people's party where you had a good time. I got the package from Petrina with the socks and the shirt. Many thanks, Petrina. Thank you also for the letter and the card. I am going to write to you later. I am forced to ask for more money this time. If you can, you must send it soon, because I am broke.

I don't have so much more to write about. Nothing remarkable happens here, so there is nothing to write about. Life here is monotonous and dull; it is only repetitious, the same over and over.

You must write me back and tell me how you celebrated Christmas. Write about everything you know I am interested in.

I have to finish here and wish you all a happy New Year.

Greetings to you all from
Your Brother F. Hjelmeland

From: Fredrik Olaf Hjelmeland in Kristiania (Oslo)
To: Fredrik Mikal Hjelmeland, his brother, at home in Hjelmeland

Kristiania 8 March 1909

My dear brother,

I received your letter with the money enclosed a few days ago. I'm so happy to hear that all is well at home. As for myself, I can say the same, and I have been well all the time. And at school? Well, all right I guess. My class will soon be finished, and on the 20th or 22nd of this month the examinations start. Then it would have been an advantage if I were to know the things that I should; unfortunately, many things are lacking! I try to comfort myself by telling me that an exam, even if not too good, is better than none at all! The examinations will take approximately 8-9 days, with two subjects each day, one written and one oral. The subjects, both oral and written are as follows: math, geometry, stereometry, mechanics, and electro-technique. I'll let you know as soon as the exams are over, how it went. Of course I'm hoping that everything goes well if I'm not in bad luck!

Well, well, what do you know, so you are going back to America again and already this spring! Then everything should be fine at home, and you feel the same, isn't that so? Perhaps Tin and I will play a trick on you . . . simple enough, we will divide the farm between the two of us as soon as we get the opportunity, which may be when you get the last glimpse of Norway when you travel west! Just you remember!

You're asking whether I'll be home for the summer. I don't think so. If I can get a job here, I'll remain here over the summer and next winter (3 months) and I'll study English. All this can be done in the evenings thus not affecting my work days. Whether it will go according to my plans is hard to tell, but this is what I have in mind, and I plan to stick to it. The technical evening class' subjects are math, mechanics, electro-technique and drafting which is exactly what a technician in a practical job needs and has to be good at and not be at a loss. Nowadays you need to know your profession, otherwise you may be fired, and there are plenty waiting in line to take over your job!

Are you quite sure that you will be going? and if so, when? Will you pass through Kristiania? Is there someone else from Bygstad who will be traveling this spring? Have you gotten Lyder to work for you at the farm? I guess he will get fed up if he has to do all the work alone, and he really has to stick to it to finish before winter comes! Are you going to hire Arne as well since Petrine will be leaving? Or will just Anna and Lyder do the work at Hjelmeland this summer? Well, I have to ask, and good luck to Anna. Please take my advice, Mikal, and get the road to the barn in a better condition. You remember how we toiled last summer, and a new man, unknown to the struggle, may not like it! He simply cannot manage, that's the truth!

Has Marthin left for Sogn by now? And, did he do well at school?

Please write soon. Best wishes to all of you.

Yours,

F.H.

In the margins:

Sunday I went to see the skating race here in town, and a man from Kristiania won the Championship of the World! We got Monday, the first, off from school due to the Holmenkollen ski competition. We watched many excellent cross country skiers, and the best ski jumper reached 31 meters. He also came from Kristiania. One of my classmates participated, and he was one of the best.

Say hello to Ivar and his family and to all who are asking about me!

*Marthin, their brother

From: Fredrik Olaf Hjelmeland in Kristiania (Oslo)
To: Fredrik Mikal Hjelmeland, his brother, at home in Hjelmeland

Kristiania 15 April 1909

My dear Brother

I received your letter a long time ago, but I couldn't have replied any earlier anyhow even though I have had ample time now during Easter vacation. But, as they say, "The more time you have, the less will be done."

The holidays are now over and school has started again with the same old work, just as in the days before only I feel everything is going better now.

It has been very quiet and peaceful over the holidays. The only change was Maundy Thursday when Andrias Eide came to town, and we went to the theater in the evening and saw "Bjørnefjeld" (Bear Mountain) and the actors spoke in the Norwegian dialect. It was especially nice to listen to you know, the actors all being city people, spoke the dialect very well. It is especially welcome to watch and listen to this kind of acting in a city.

This will be just a short letter. I don't know anything to write about. Everything would be completely unknown to you even if I tried to dig up some stories about city life.

Please send me some money as soon as possible. Hopefully this will be the last money I spend until I start earning my own. Please send me plenty in case I want to go home, and you will not then need to send me more later. I might be home around Whitsun; I'm finished here around that time, and then I may take my bundle on my back and start walking homewards and be a haymaker for you this summer. You will need one anyway, I reckon, and I guess it doesn't matter who you hire as long as he does the job. You will need one who can order the women-folk around, and you know I am capable of that!

So much for that! Please do not forget about the money - 100 Kr at least. I cannot manage with less.

It looks like you will be alone with the spring work on the farm. Both father and Marthin will be away? I guess they were home during Easter? And Petrine, has she left for Bergen now? What kind of a position has she gotten?

End of this nonsense!

My dearest wishes to you all

Yours Fredrik

¹"Landsmål" which is now called new Norwegian - actually, it is more like old Norwegian!

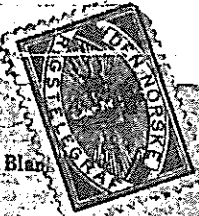
From: Fredrik Olaf Hjelmeland in Kristiania (Oslo)
To: Fredrik Mikal Hjelmeland, his brother in Bygstad

CABLE SENT FROM KRISTIANAIA (OSLO), MAY 29, 1909:

EXAMS FINISHED, RECEIVED 1.38. (which is excellent - translator's
comment)

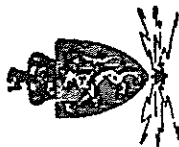
FREDRIK

SB



*Fred. Nielsen
Bygølod*

Tjenstlige Bemærkninger:



Rigstelegraf.

Den norske

Optaget fra Kl.midd.
den Kl.midd.
af

Telegram fra *Kristiania* No. *9170*, Ord. *9*, den *21/5* 190*9* Kl. *5/8* midd.

*Færdig med eksamen
Karakter 1,38.
Fridrik*

KRISTIANIA ELEMENTÆRTEKNISKE DAGSKOLE.

Afgangsvidnesbyrd

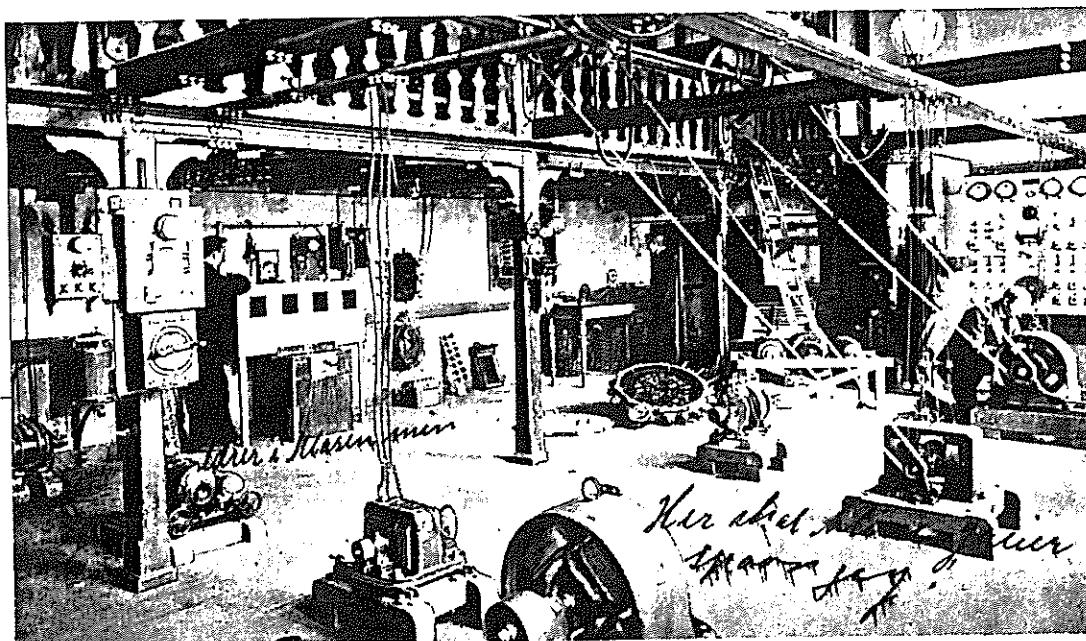
for

Fredrik Hjeltnand

Below:

*A Classroom in Rada's
school - card sent to Mabel*

Aar 1907



Interier av laboratoriet, Elementærtekn. dagskole.

Det ordinære Kursus.

Fredrik Kjeldstrand,

der har gennemgaaet det ordinære 6 Maaneders Kursus ved

Kristiania elementærtekniske Dagskoles elektrotekniske Afdeling

og aflagt fuldstændig Afgangsexamen, har i de enkelte Fag erholdt følgende Karakterer:

| | |
|---------------------------------------|-----|
| Norsk | 2,6 |
| Bogholderi | 1,2 |
| Regning | 1,0 |
| Mathematik | 1,0 |
| Mekanik | 1,4 |
| Fysik | 2,0 |
| Tegning | 2,0 |
| Elektroteknik med praktiske Øvelser { | 2,8 |
| | 2,8 |

Hovedkarakter *1,87 meget god*

Flid og Opførsel under Opholdet ved Skolen *meget god.*

Kristiania den *31^{te} marts 1909.*

Claus Tøpke
Direktor

W. H. J. Jørgensen
Overlærer

Note: At the end of April, 1910, just four months after this letter was written, Dad left Norway to begin his long adventure in America.

From: Fredrik Olaf Hjelmeland in Sandefjord, Norway (?)
To: Fredrik Mikal Hjelmeland at home on Hjelmeland

Christmas Eve 1909

Dear brother!

A long time has passed since last time you heard from me, so one could almost believe that the letter writing between us had stopped. But I hope this is not the case. I, at least, will not let myself to believe that.

It is Christmas Eve. We have just eaten (Deniy (?) and I) the ribs and the porridge which our good landlady so nicely served us. It is the second time I have had ribs since I left home. It is doubtful that I would have had them this time either if I hadn't ordered them, but I wanted very much for it to be as much as possible like the Christmases we had at home on Hjelmeland.

We worked until 5:00 tonight. We just finished a construction job with 90 lamps at a big dairy that has its own power station. We had to mount the big generator plant and install the lights. It was Deniy and I who worked alone on this construction job, and we finished it in three weeks. The foreman was so pleased with our work that he gave us each kr. 10 as a Christmas present. It is only Deniy and I who are left here now. The other two electricians were finished eight days ago.

I like it here in S. (feel certain he is referring to Sandefjord), so I should be happy to stay down here for a longer period, but I feel there is too little to be gained from it. Everything goes from hand to mouth; I spend what I earn and there is not a single thing left and nothing to show for all my hard work here. So when I start to think how conditions really are here, so poor and so few possibilities, one could be tempted to do almost anything--to follow ones own excited thoughts of going far, far away to a place with greater opportunities to trump destiny than here.

Yes, wherever that place may be, one could ask the gods of Grøndal because I surely don't know. -- -- I am constantly plagued by these thoughts or ideas. Some of them are wild and big. In one way it is good I don't have the opportunity to realize some of these dumb ideas that are dreamed up in my "triangle snuffhead". These ideas never let me rest. -- But think of a hard-working man, he works the whole year without being absent one single hour -- and then when the year is over and he looks at his status after having bought just some cheap clothes and shoes and finds that he has not a single penny left of his whole year's income then -- the enthusiasm and working spirit seems to fall to a freezing temperature no matter how hot it is around him. Now I must or will have more or -- nothing.

I have corresponded with Bendik Sélberg. He promises me work if I want to come, but he doesn't mention anything about the conditions and what the salary is. He himself works as a stoker. I am not afraid of hard work. If I only could get something out of the hard work, I should really toil. This is enough of this nonsense.

Let us put aside all of these problems and remember that it is Christmas. During Christmas we are supposed to be partying and crazy like the old vikings were. Well you wonderful Christmas Eve, you are not so good to everyone and so it is the case with the whole world, too. You, too, have your step children. Look with your flaming eyes out over the whole world, look at the rich and the poor, at the castles and the cottages and judge for yourself.

As for me, I sit here alone in this badly furnished room, the only living creatures are the rats and mice and they are having their Christmas party in the four walls around me. To be honest, this is not so much to be happy for. -- I have only my cross nature, my dreary, dark and pondering thoughts. I feel an unrest. I don't know how to describe it. I feel a longing for something, but right now there is no fixed point or goal; it is for the time only swinging on its own rusty hinges.

This is enough about the joy of Christmas Eve. I wouldn't miss it if it was gone at once. It is 12 o'clock midnight!

First Christmas Day!

I have just gotten up and eaten my dinner. I am sitting here in just a shirt and pants and I am trying to finish this strange letter of mine.

After I finished my letter writing last night, I went out and listened to the Christmas singing from every house and cottage, and they all seemed to be in a high Christmas spirit. I just walked quietly around in my own thoughts and wasn't disturbed by all the happy Christmas melodies I heard. At 3:00 a.m., I returned and went to bed and slept like a rock until 12:00 noon.

We are going to start work on the third day of Christmas. Then I am going to work with my foreman until New Year and finish all our books and business this year. I am only glad the vacation is so short. It is so boring to just walk around and have nothing to do. I get bored and tired of life.

It is a long time since I heard from you now, Mikal. Maybe you think it isn't important for me whether I hear from you or not now that you don't have to send me any more money. But for me it is not the same!

How are you? Have you given up the plans of going to America? Have you stayed at home since you were in Vadheim? Has Marthin stayed home for a long time? Is father going to leave after the New Year? Are you going to the military next spring if you don't go to America? Write and tell me about things that would be of interest to me.

I am sure you are going to have a Christmas party. You will have fun since all those educated people will be there and participate with their knowledge. Yes, it must be nice to be a learned and great person.

You must not let father read this letter. The others may. Say hello to father and say I am fine and doing well, which I, in reality, am.

Greetings to all my relatives. Will close with a Christmas greeting to all of you.

Your brother Fredrik

PS When I think of it, let father read this!

I0
SR

From: Fredrik Olaf Hjelmeland in Sandefjord, Norway, a small town
on the Oslo fjord
To: His Family at Home in Hjelmeland

Sandefjord 1 March 1910

Dear All of You at Home!

I'm sure you feel it takes too long to get words from me. I think I'll have to order myself to sit down and write a little every night, so after a while you will know that I am still alive. Really, I do not have too much to do in the evenings, so for that matter I could have written piles of letters, but that isn't quite my style. I find it very bothersome, and letterwriting and me never seem to be in agreement!

Here in Sandefjord things are what we make them. We who are in charge of the lighting installation have very little to squander, and sometimes I get bored stiff! It's almost like silent contemplation, which I feel might be beneficial sometime but not for long though! Hopefully there will be a change soon.

How are things at home? Everything is going well, I hope. Are all you three guys at home now?

March 4

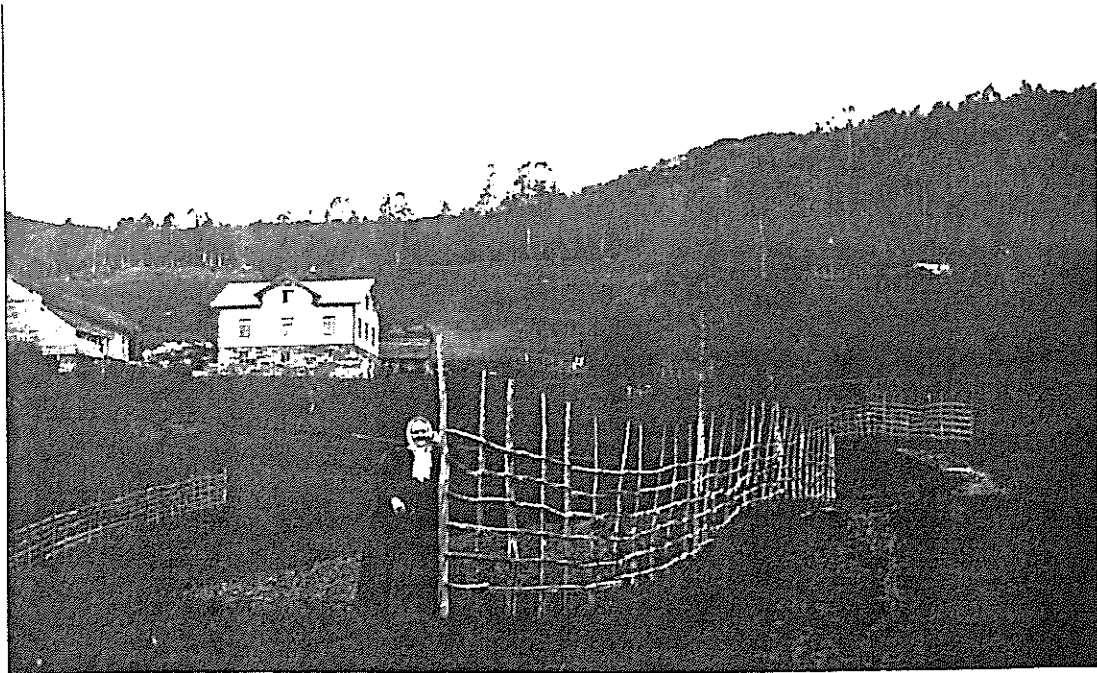
Since noon today, I have been home--nothing to do at the workshop, you see. If this continues, I'll be home soon.

I'm sorry but I do not have anything to write about, really, so I will stop here. Just recently I wrote to Anna. I had a letter from her a long time ago.

Greetings to Oline and Kristine and their families, and also to Søren and Petrine and Anna in Teigen.

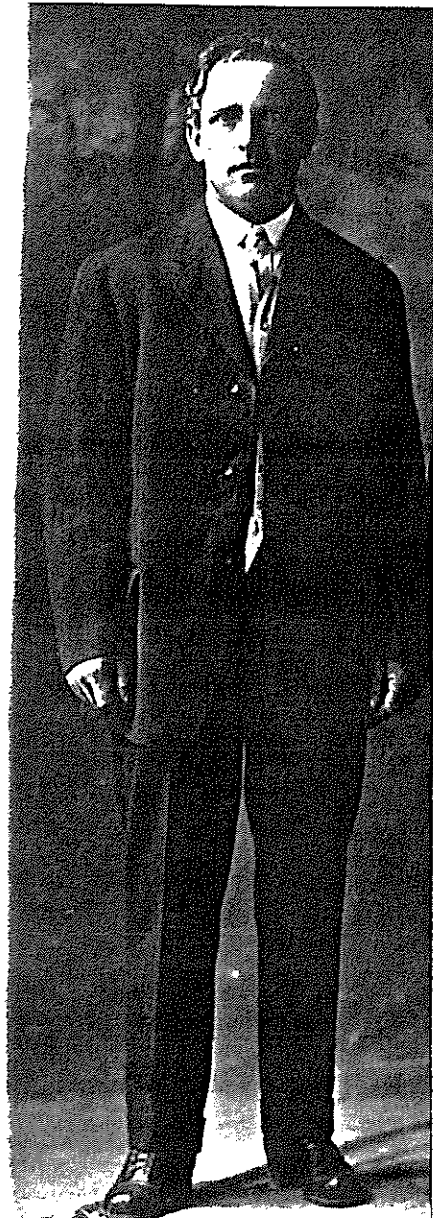
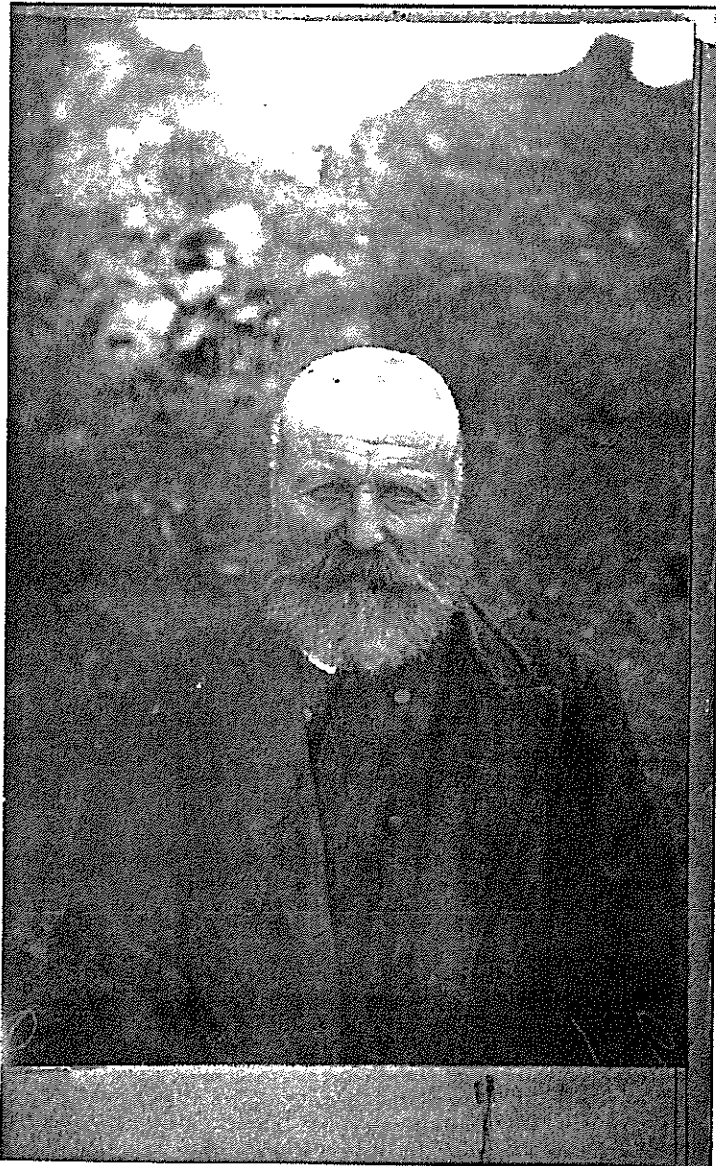
All the best to all of you
from
Fredrik Hjelmeland

Note: During the latter part of the following month, April, 1910, Dad left with Uncle Mikal for America. No mention is made in any letter here about this possibility. The farm transfer from Grandpa to Uncle Mikal and the subsequent lease to Ivar Osen (Kristine) are on the following pages. These were prepared prior to their departure for America.



Farm
at
that
time
1910

Family Farm ownership is transferred from Father
to oldest son 5 March 1910



NOTE: The Deed below is a translation of the official document which transferred the ownership of the Hjelmeland Family Farm from the generation of GUNDER MIKALSEN HJELMELAND to his son FREDRIK MIKAL GUNDERSEN HJELMELAND, dated 5 March 1910.

DEED OF CONVEYANCE

The undersigned, GUNDER MIKALSEN HJELMELAND, hereby conveys to my son FREDRIK MIKAL GUNDERSEN HJELMELAND my own farm Hjelmeland, farm Nr. 113, usage Nr. 2 in Inner Holmedal County taxed at 3.95 with all buildings existing on the farm, with acreage and trees, rights and obligations, such as the farm has belonged to me, with half ownership in a waterfall at Svartebruhølen in the Hjelmeland river, and a building site at the same place for an agreed sum of Kr. 6000 - six thousand kroner. In the deal is included all fixtures or installations nailed to the walls, grain, poles for hay-drying racks with rack wire, one plow, one harrow, four stoves, one threshing machine with wheel and frame. The sum is to be paid to me before the coming July 1, and when purchase price as such has been paid to me, then the afore mentioned farm shall thereafter belong to FREDRIK MIKAL GUNDERSEN HJELMELAND, as his legal property and I, according to the law, after the transfer of the property, become his responsibility.

As long as I live I shall receive yearly from the farm the following support:

1. Sufficient shelter, food and care for 2 - two cows, one young, 4 - four sheep and shelter for a pig. The proprietor shall arrange for transportation of milk to and from the dairy, together with his milk.
2. 150 kilos good oat meal, 350 kilos potatoes. From this shall be delivered to me every year on November 1, 75 kilos oat meal and 200 kilos potatoes and the rest every year on April 14.
3. The full right to use and dispose of the wing of the house and storeroom, as well as the right to a building site if I should desire to build for myself a cottage. In that case I waive the right to dispose of the wing of the house; in addition, I shall have the right to clear up the area around the house and to use a piece of property with free fertilizer.
4. The proprietor shall furnish me with good firewood as well as six working days with horse and "legs". (driver)
5. Loving care and observation during sickness as in healthy days.

The afore mentioned support shall be valued at Kr. 120 for the purpose of the official stamp document.

As security for said support, I retain a mortgage in the farm.

Hjelmeland 5th March 1910

Signatures:

As Buyer:

Fredrik Mikal G. Hjelmeland

As Seller:

G. M. Hjelmeland

As Witnesses:

A. Hjelmeland

Sofie Hjelmeland

Read in court at the special convening for Sunnfjord district magistrate on the 14th of March, 1910 properly extracted and in register of mortgages Nr. 33, folio 491 executed according to contract. The following notice is taken:

1. Deed of conveyance from Mikal Fredriksen to son Gunder Mikalsen for Kr. 2400 and the right of usage of the farm for the seller and according to his instructions support stated below - yearly value fixed at Kr. 160 - officially registered 10 April 1880
 2. Support - letter to Mikal Fredriksen and spouse Oline Simonsdatter, officially registered 10 April 1880
 3. Hiring - document to Henrik Markvarsen for accomodation, "provstevahaugen" officially registered 18 June 1880
 4. Legal settlement and decision about the borders for Naes and Underlands grazing land towards Bringeland, officialy registered 25 February 1888
 5. Taxes (contributions) to the chaplain of _____ is Kr. 2.15
 6. Declaration from G. M. Hjelmeland and others about taking over free ground gravel and more, officially registered 8 October 1903
 7. Official division of Ytre Hjelmeland's home fields officially registered 21 January 1907
 8. Overproved division of the home fields, officially registered 24 February 1908
- Simultaneously registered herewith:
9. Tax assessment over the lot "Hjelmhaug"
 10. Tenancy contract from FREDRIK MIKAL HJELMELAND to IVER SIMONSEN OSEN, on his farm from 1 June 1910 to 1 June 1916

For official registry, 16 - sixteen kroner has been paid.

Ragnv Walmann
Notary Public

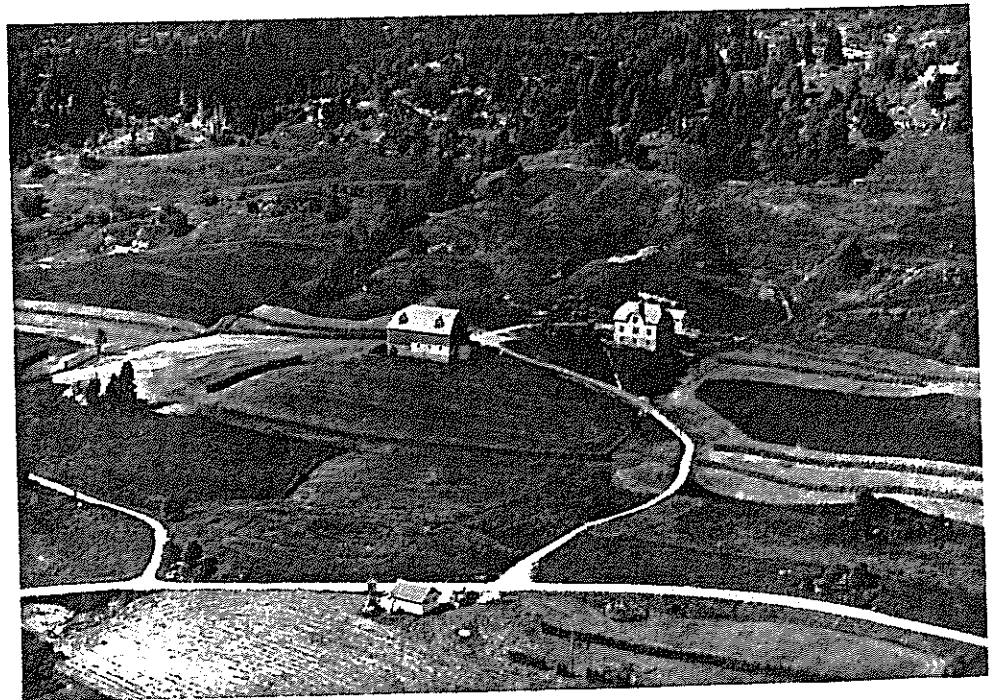
EA



Kristine & Ivan
Olsen (parents of
Eudmund, who
leased the family
farm from 1910-
1919 during the
period when Uncle
Mikal was on his
second stay in
America & Canada.

Jacobsen  BERGEN

Hjelmeland Farm
taken many
years later,
perhaps 1960's



NOTE: The contract below is a translation of the official document which leased the Hjelmeland Family Farm to Iver Simonsen Osen, husband of Kristine, Mikal's sister, during the years Mikal was on his second journey in America, 1910-1919. The contract reads for only six years, but Mikal was gone for nine years; perhaps it was renewed or extended.

TENANCY CONTRACT

Fredrick Mikal Gundersen Hjelmeland and Iver Simonsen Osen enter the following contract:

I, Fredrick Gundersen Hjelmeland shall rent to Mr. Iver Simonsen Osen the Farm Hjelmeland, farm number 113, right of use number 2 in Indre Holmedals township of "skyld mark" 3,95 (old way of describing the value of the farm), on following terms for 6 - six subsequent years from June 1, 1910 to June 1, 1916

1. The tenant assumes the owner's rights and obligations with regard to the cotten on the farm.
2. Straw and hay must be raised on the farm as well as all manure and must be used with the exception of what he is given permission to use on newly cleared land on own property accordingly after the amount of hay from his land that goes to the farm.
3. The tenant shall have right to firewood from the farm's forest, but he shall every year dig peat used for fuel that amounts to 1/3 - one third - of the firewood.
4. The tenant assumes the owner's obligations with regard to buildings, fences and the upkeep of them.
5. When he is at the end of his contract he shall see to it that the same amount of summer firewood as he started with is being provided for.
6. The tenant shall carefully look after poles to which grain sheaves are fastened to dry, poles of hay-drying racks as well as wire of hay-drying racks. With resignation he shall hand over the same supply as he got at the time he took tenancy possession.
7. The tenant shall have the right to use ovens, the reaper, one plow and one harrow. There will be no wear and tear compensation, but he shall deliver them back in proper condition.
8. The tenant is to keep the buildings in leak-free condition, do maintenance on windows, doors, locks and do minor repairs in the cowbarn, stable, and other farm buildings. To do this he has the right to take timber and birch bark in the forest.
9. The tenant is answering pension (paid to the owner of farm) in the mentioned six years.
10. The tenant has the responsibility to pay taxes on the farm: fire-insurance, parish taxes and the like from January 1, 1910 to January 1, 1916. Road construction and similar work is the tenant's task as well.

11. The tenant shall do minor clearing of new land on the farm.
12. From June 1, 1916 shall the tenant have the right of use of the farm "Kirketeigen" as long as Henrick M. Hjelmeland is using his farm.
13. For 1918 and following years, a yearly fee of NOK 10 is to be paid for this. The land shall be supplied manure proportional to the amount of hay grown.
14. The tenant is given the right to take stone material to do stonework in "Storakerlien" as well as trench stone at the meadow above the country road.

I, Ivar Simonsen Osen, am taking over as tenant all the above mentioned obligations as well as the remaining two obligations under points 15 and 16.

15. Should the contract be brought to an end before the lease time is out, the contract shall be annuled in full. Likewise if the tenant neglects some of the responsibilities he has been given through this contract.
16. Stamp duty and administrative fee for this document is to be picked up by the tenant.

Osen, the 11th of March 1910

Witnessed by

Olaf Hjelmeland
Kristine G. Osen

F.M.G. Hjelmeland
Ivar S. Osen

The yearly right of use is estimated, with regard to paper bearing an official stamp, the fee for the registered deed of NOK 250. The mentioned pension (kår) is earlier attached to the farm.

D.u.s.
(Stamp affixed on original)

Olaf Hjelmeland
F.M.G. Hjelmeland

Being read at the court at the extra session for Søndfjord's district, presided over by the chief magistrate of that rural district on March 14, 1910 and being written down as follows in the registrar of mortgages Number 33, Page 487.

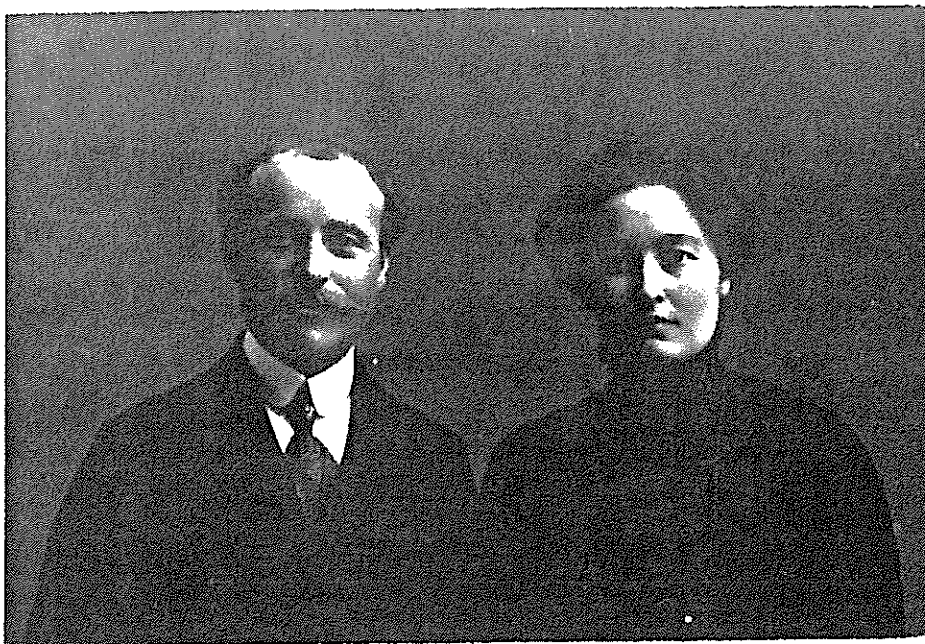
Mark the following:

1. The farm's right of use for the seller Mikal Fredriksen and after he has his right pension (kår) according to the deed registered April 10, 1880.
2. Contract for sustenance (of old people) to Mikal Fredriksen and wife, Oline Simonsdatter; deed registered April 10, 1880.
3. Contract to Henrich Markvardsen on the cotter's farm Prestesvaug; deed registered June 18, 1880.

4. Settlement of a civil claim between the borders for Næss and Aunelands pasture with Bringeland and Hjelmeland; deed registered February 25, 1888.
5. Statement from G.M. Hjelmeland and others willingness to obtain from property gravel for road construction: Storehaug - Eidevik; deed registered October 8, 1903.
6. Payment to the pastor is NOK 2.15 (pointing to Number 2)
7. Pension (kâr) to Gunder Mikalsen according to the registered deed of March 14, 1910.

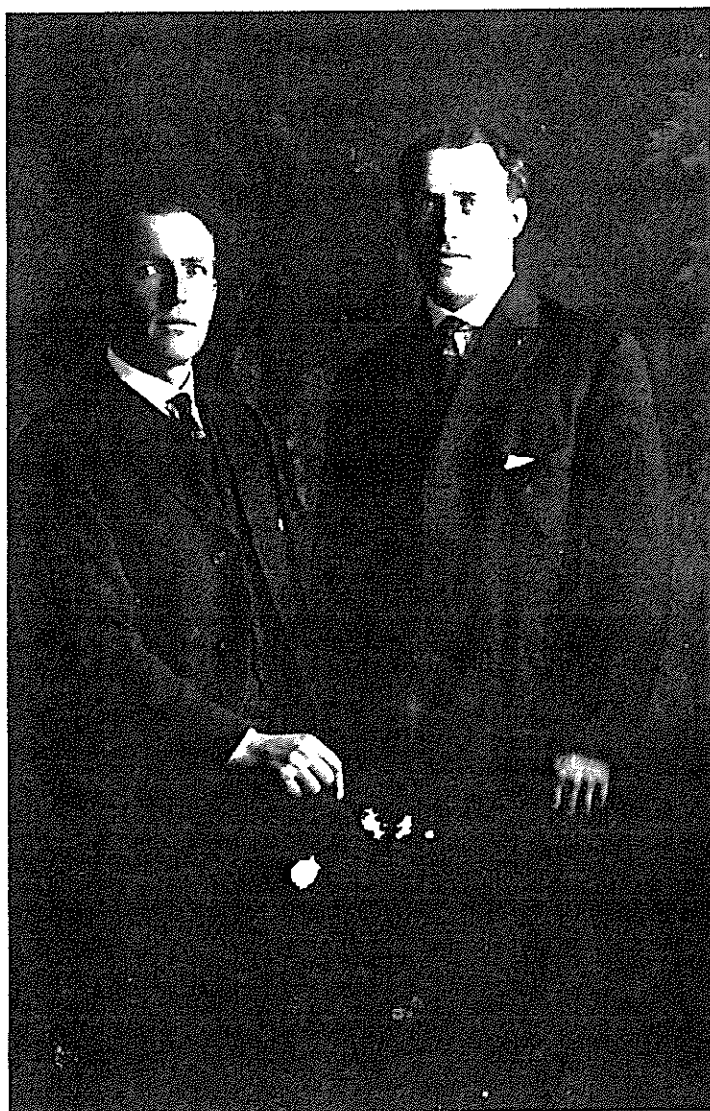
NOK 2 is paid to get this contract registered.

Ragnvald Wahmm
Sworn



Switzerland
1911

Uncle Marthin and his
wife Anna



Marthin writes to
his two brothers
- Mikhal & Fredrik
both in America

From: Marthin Hjelmeland in Vadheim, Sunnfjord
To: Fredrik Mikal Hjelmeland, his brother, in America

Vadheim 20 August 1912

Dear Brother!
Fred M. Hjelmeland

Many, many thanks for your dear letter of 5 June 1912. It is truly a great pleasure for me to have a letter from you, dear brothers, specially as everything is going well. First of all permit me and Anna to give you our thanks for the gift you sent for our wedding day. It was for us an unexpected gift and therefore again our sincere thanks. I got kr. 50 from both of you together so I hope this corresponds to what you sent. Note: Marthin must be referring here to both Mikal and Fredrik.

I am now a married man, and it seems strange that I should be the first of my brothers to marry, but so it happened all the same. The wedding took place on the 27th of June and quite a number of people were there with us, about 90 people, children included. Oluf Hjelmeland made a speech on your and Fredrik's behalf, and said that you both would have wished to come if it had not been so far away; he also expressed a wish on your behalf that we should live happily together as long as we live. He also talked about how sad it was to live so far away from ones nearest and dearest. When he had ended his speech, he and Anna Gele (?) Hjelmeland and Klara Aask (the dairy maid) -- you know her -- sang a song he had written for the occasion. Everything went well, and I think people were satisfied although they did not get any liquor or beer.

We got many useful and fine gifts such as a chest of drawers from Ivar and Kristine and a cabinet or sideboard from Olai and Olina. We also got two spoons from aunt Aamodt. We also got a lot of other useful things from various guests at a total value of about kr. 150. Then we got kr. 250 in cash, in addition to the money we got from you. From Anna and Petrina we got father and mother's pictures enlarged and framed, truly a dear and nice gift which will always decorate our home, if we ever have one. Mother looked very much like herself. Father, though, looked a bit younger than he really is, but they looked handsome both of them.

I now work at Vadheim and have been working here since the end of June, and will probably be here until Christmas, and perhaps even longer. There are not so many stone-workers here now, just a few, and because of that we will be here a bit longer. There are different kinds of work to be done. At present we are taking part in enlarging the factory. When we have finished this, we shall start working on the stone warf where ships can dock. Thus our work will be prolonged. The working situation is not bad for the moment; I think I can say better than we have been used to before. The salary is not exactly bad either, but the cost of what we need to live has become more expensive. One may say, however, it is better to be a worker now than before.

Our father is still away. As you know, he is at Eikefjorden. He has been away the whole summer and will probably be away until Christmas. He is well and in good health.

You have probably not heard that Bertil L. Kopstad is dead; he died this summer from an illness of the kidneys. He had been ill for a long time so death did not really come unexpected. Marta Kvamme, sister of Thorstein, is also dead. She died of pneumonia. Ola K. Selberg is now recovering, so there is hope that he will be quite well again. It is a great advantage to be in good health in this life. It must be difficult to have an illness one cannot get rid of.

Knut Lien is at Molde in Romsdalen doing mason work; he has been there the whole summer, since Midsummersday. They will soon have a baby again. I had a letter from him some time ago, and he asked for your address. He probably wants to write to you.

Well, this summer is now nearly over. Bad weather and dark nights are already here, and it proves that the autumn is not far away. Time goes fast and so do we, and year after year goes by until the end of life. I suppose you have now spent half of the time you plan to be in America this time. When you return, I guess you will be living at Hjelmeland the rest of your life and not think of going back to America again. Oh yes, you have done well in America, I think, so you have no reason to regret that you went over there. But I will also say that I think it is the right thing to do to settle at Hjelmeland for your old days. This was really not what I intended to write about, but so it happened.

You would like to hear something from Bygstad too, I think, but all in all I have very little to tell. People have now finished the haying, and they seem to be satisfied with the outcome. As I have said, it was a very good crop of grass. They also got a good crop of grain and potatoes, especially potatoes, so we must say the harvest has been good here. Ivar finished the mowing this week. He has had little help this summer, so it is good that the work will soon be finished.

All here live well and are in good health. It is truly the best I can tell you that everyone here who is close to you live well and are in good health. I have no further news from our parish. Everything continues as before; one day is like the other, and thus time moves on without stopping.

I think I shall stay at Selberg for the time being; later on I will see what may turn up. I may buy a piece of land from Nils Haugsbø, but it is really too expensive as it is so small. It is always expensive to buy from total strangers. Fredrik has also, I understand, bought land now. I received a letter from him fourteen days after I heard from you. I wrote to him a couple of days ago. We are happy to hear that all is well with you. It is the best thing to know that you both are well.

Father waits for a letter from you, I believe. Make our old father happy by writing to him regularly, because he likes to have news from his children. I think I must now end this letter with the best regards from your brother Martin.

Live well, Mikal

Ivar asked me to send you greetings from everyone at home. Yesterday he got in quite a lot of hay. They are all happy to be at Hjelmeland. I hope you will write back as soon as possible. I like to hear from you. Love from Anna and me.

HE

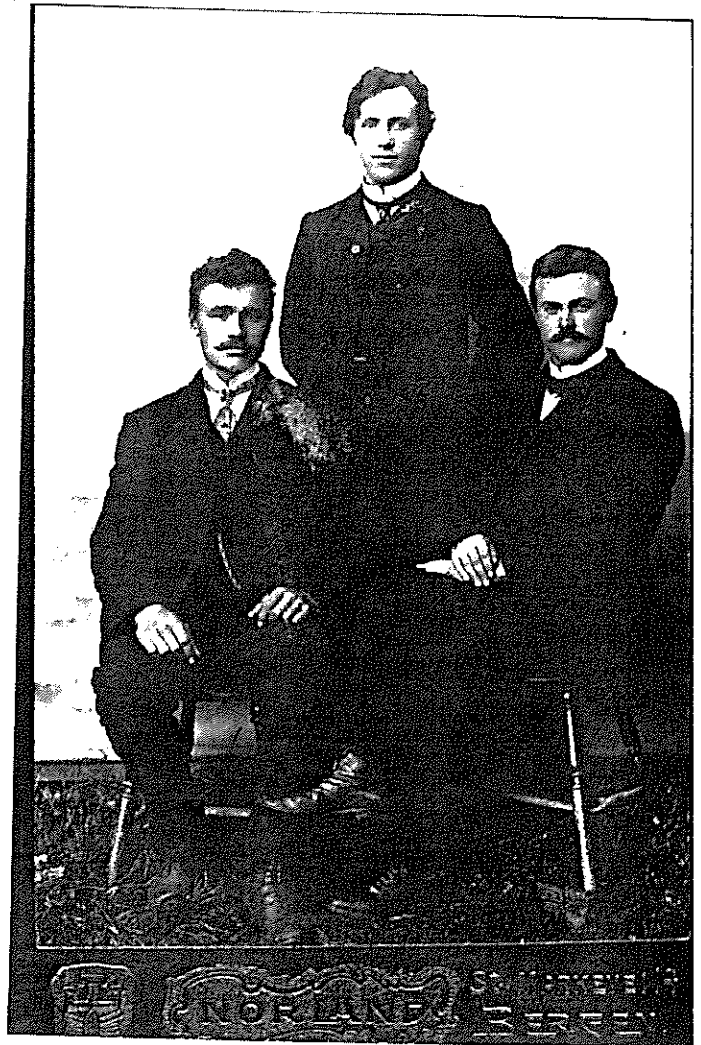


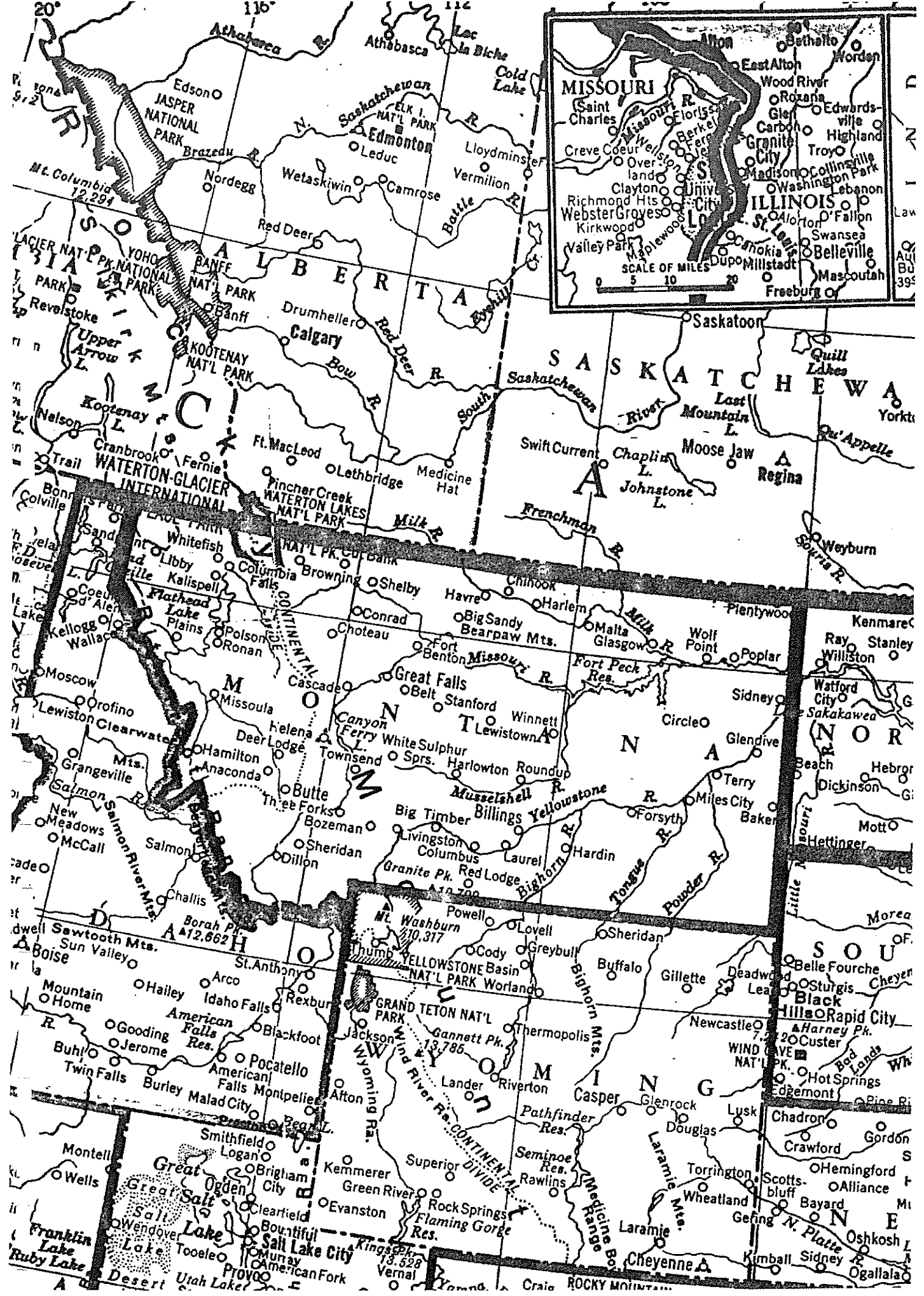
Mada's sister, Anna

A. H. Björlo

NORDEFJORDEID

*Two Eide brothers and
Mada, center*





From: Fredrik Olaf Hjelmeland in Glasgow, Montana
To: Anna Hjelmeland, his sister, in Norway

Glasgow, Montana
October 11, 1914

My dear sister Anna!

Many thanks for your nice letter. It reached me last night, finally. You see, it went to Canada first and was delayed there a few days before it was forwarded to me. Mikal also got a letter from father yesterday. It has been a very long time since we had heard anything from home now, so both letters were very welcomed. You write such good letters, Anna; it seems so easy for you. If I had been as clever as you are in writing letters, I would have done nothing else! But, I'm afraid it would be a poor way to make a living!

And you have been accepted at the Teachers' Training College, which I think is not at all foolish. It may be many times better than going to America and wasting your best years for nothing. I'm sure you will make a fine teacher, too, and if this is what you want, it is a safe and secure profession to be a teacher on one or another subjects. I can read from the tone of your letter that you are much more content now than you were when you wrote your first letter this summer. From father's letter I understood that you made it very well on the admission's test, too. And now you want to learn to play the organ, too. When I come home and you have become a teacher, you will have to teach me to play too.

I see you will have company at college and better still, a friend from home there, Gustine. Has Gustine been attending college for a year already? Nikolay Bygstad is a boy I do not know. Lovise Aamodt, what is she thinking of doing? Hasn't she attended college earlier? Are you learning English at your school? I would like to get hold of a teacher myself when I return to Norway so that I, too, can take advantage of all the knowledge or wisdom that floats among the youth home in Bygstad these days. If all the learning does not come to me directly, it may come indirectly which is more or less the same. Anyway, you know "that the woman is the man's head", so if you find a sweet and gentle girl at your school who might tire of school life and thus does not want to become a teacher, please let me know and I will release her. But remember, she has to be sweet and lovely, know how to do all kinds of work, and most important, she must have lots and lots of money! Because, that's the power in this world, or at least it looks like that is the case in this country. Well, enough of that. I guess I should be satisfied with the one I have!

I'm so glad you've started school, Anna; I'm sure it is the wisest thing you could have done.

As you will see from this letter, I'm still in Montana, in a small town called Glasgow. Mikal is here, too, and we have good work both of us, he as a bricklayer and I as an electrician. We will stay here until Christmas. Then I may go and see the land I own. I'm happy as long as Mikal is here. I feel so safe and secure when he is around. He wanted to go home for Christmas, but it looks like he cannot go after all be-

cause he has bought some lots for housing, and he has also been lending out some money. It's in Canada that we bought the lots, and it is quite impossible to sell them again because times are bad due to this terrible war. But hopefully it will soon be over, and Canada will become just as good as before. I for my part have approximately kr. 2000 placed in lots here, but I cannot get the money out yet, and that is why Mikal cannot go home for Christmas. He may have to wait until next year. He wanted to go now because he feels there is so much to do on the farm, but due to the circumstances, he had to change his plans. What about yourself, Anna, do you have enough money for the school? Hopefully father will give you some. If not, please let Mikal and myself know about it.

I think I have so much to write about, but when it comes to putting it down on paper, it somehow disappears.

I read from your letter that you have been on many a mountain hike during the summer. Yes, I'm sure you feel free and easy there. There, I believe one can forget the struggle for life for a short while. I wonder if my life will be too short for me to come home again to revisit the old familiar and well known rocks and mountains like Storehesten and Bløjene, and everything else which is so dear to me. It is my sincere hope and wish that time will pass quickly and at the same time that I can feel I have accomplished something and have benefited from my having immigrated.

I read from your letter that Mads and Fredolf were to go back to the U.S. So Mads thought it was rather poorly at home now. I don't think he would have said that if I had been present. Perhaps I would have reminded him that not everything is so wonderful here, either. I, for my part, have never seen so much misery at home in Norway as I have seen in certain places right here in the "land of gold", but mainly, the people have themselves to blame. Drunkenness and brutality are common here, its disgusting. But it's a good thing to have a strong character which keeps me away from that sort of company. A young man from Kristiania, whom I worked with in Chicago when I first arrived here, said to me that if I didn't start drinking I would never get any buddies in this country. Fortunately, I have come to another conclusion. If you can't be a friend without being a drinking companion at the same time, then this kind of friend is not much to be trusted when you really need a friend. That's what I think.

How are Petrina and Andreas doing? I guess that he is at the same school as before. You don't mention them this time; next time you write you must give me their address as I want to write to them for Christmas. I understand that father is out much. That is good as long as he is in good health. It would be so nice to see dear old father again. I wrote to him a couple of weeks ago, and Mikal wrote to him today; I think he appreciates getting letters from us.

It is very quiet in this town. I do not know many my own age here. It's just a small town with approximately two to three thousand people.

It must be a terrible time home in Europe now, just like being one thousand years back in history. If this is to be the modern civilization, we would be better off without it. I guess you feel the consequences of the war in Norway too, and I have read in the newspapers that things are not so good any longer.

I guess I shall have to close my silly letter with this for the time being. Please write again as soon as you have a chance telling me how you are doing in school. Say hello to Gustine from me, too. She was just a kid when I last saw her.

Take care of yourself, Anna, until I hear from you again.

Best Wishes,

Yours, Fred O. Hjelmeland

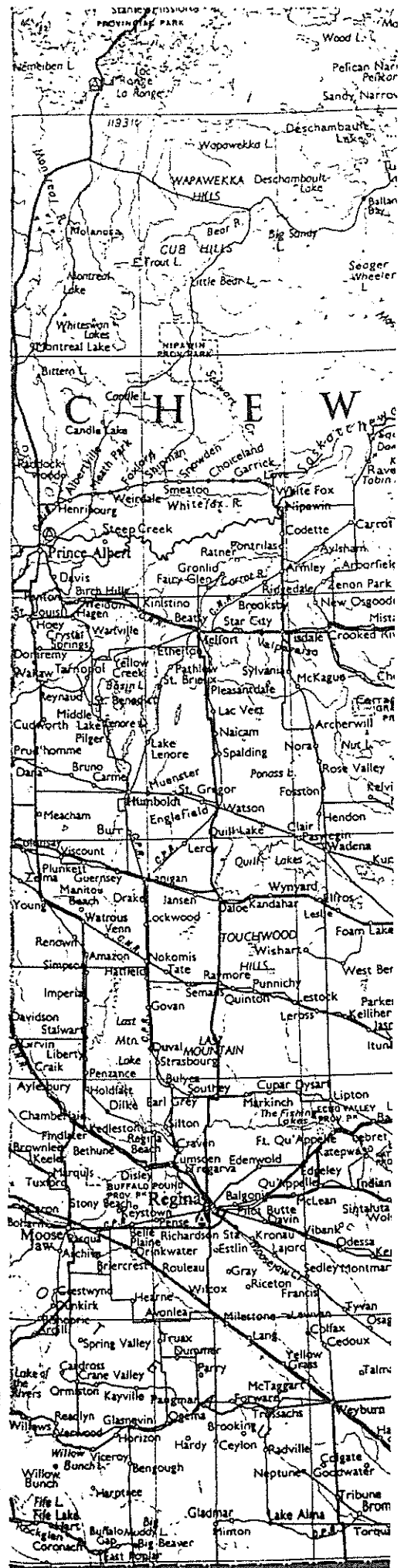
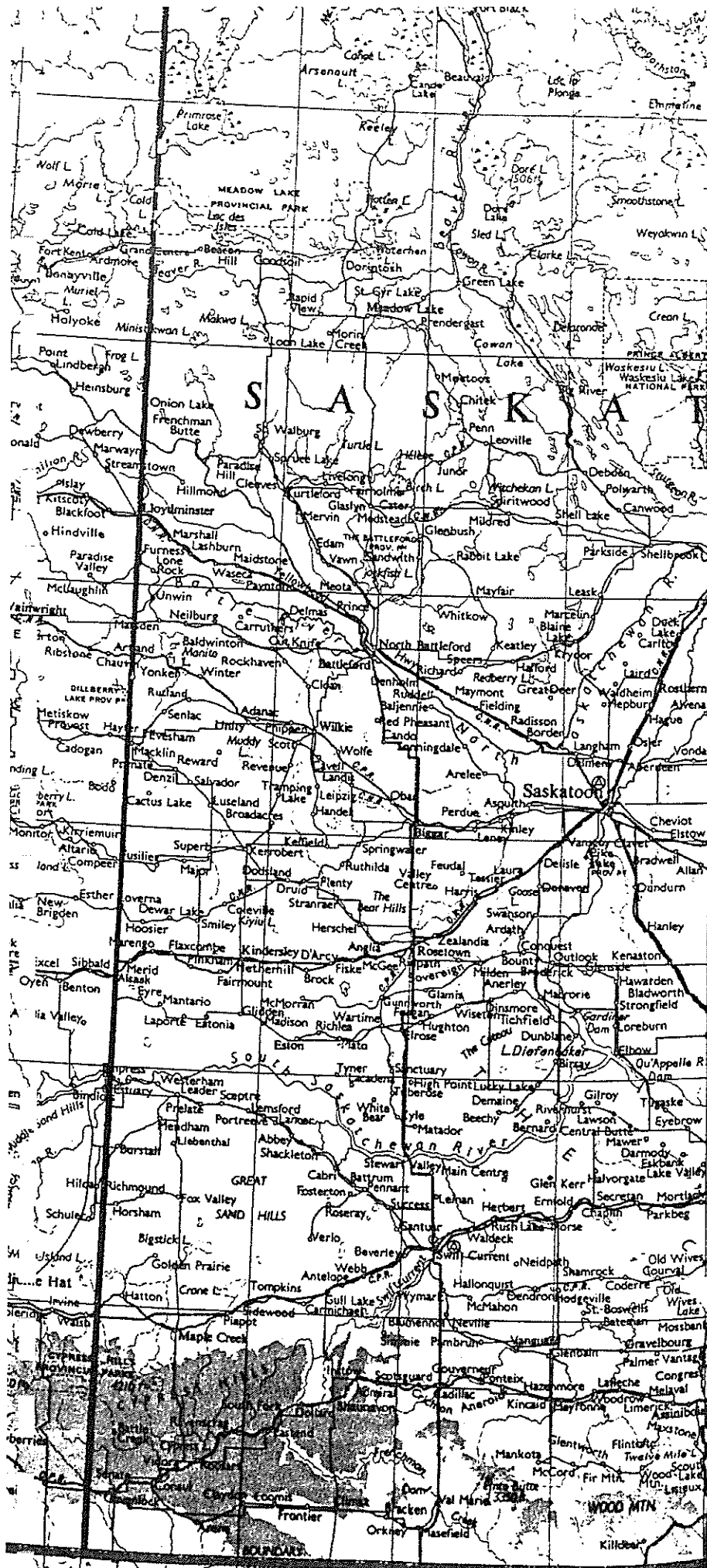
Address:
Glasgow, Montana
North America

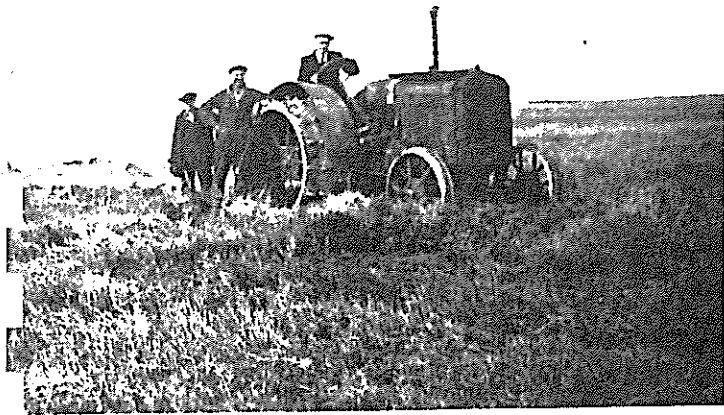
Say hello to father and Petrine and also home to Hjelmeland when you write.

Mikal sends his heartiest greetings, too. Please excuse his laziness in writing, but he did write to Metta last night, and if I know him right, you are not supposed to tell anyone. You know he is always afraid that anyone should know about his love affairs!

Please send Bendik's address to me. You can get it from Gustine. It's such a long time since I heard from him, and I would like to know how things are with him.

SB
SR



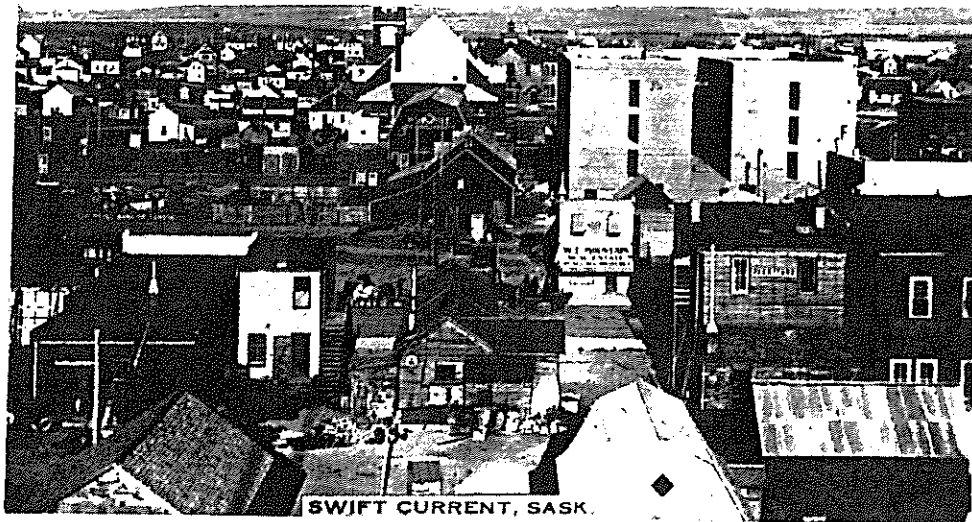


Dad's Homestead land,
dad "driving".



Dad at his Homestead with
Mom's picture on the wall

The prairie
Town of
Swift
Current,
Sask.
Canada



From: Fredrik Olaf Hjelmeland in Canuck, Saskatchewan, Canada
To: Fredrik Mikal Hjelmeland, his brother, in Chicago, Illinois

Canuck, January 14, 1915

Dear Brother!

This is the first letter I write on my land. Well, I cannot say on my land either, because I am not living there yet but rather 20 kilometers from my place with my neighbor. I came out here yesterday.

I am not in the best mood, my dear brother, but I hope I will get over it. I get so angry when I discover there are so many evil persons around. Then I am tempted to believe almost anything! You know, the first thing I discovered when I returned here was that the lumber that should have been in the inside of my shanty had been stolen. The window and paper also. It was very disappointing to come here and discover this, especially now in the middle of winter and so far from home. We have to get use to many things. Life is not always a game of fun; I realize that very often.

Now I had to find a man and send him to Shannowan and get more lumber. He should also bring some coal. He went early this morning and should be back Saturday night. I am looking forward to moving into my own shanty, but I cannot move in before I get lumber and coal. I have already bought groceries, a stove, dishes, and pots and pans. A man I met in Shannowan brought it out here. This man lives here on 2-16, and I stay with him now. He also went to get my other things. Yes, this is life, but I am sure it will go well soon. I have started now, and I am going to continue even if it turns out to be hard. It is no fun yet, but I am sure it will be better when one gets more use to the things here. It is always hard to start something new. I have very fertile land; no one has better land around here -- that is a great advantage.

It looks like it is lively here in our neighborhood. They arrange dances very often; there is a dance tonight. Three boys came over and asked me to join them and go to a dance 30 kilometers from here. But, I don't feel like going. I don't have my clothes or shoes either. I still have my trunk in Shannowan. He is going to bring that also. But the money, Fred, it goes like sand. But I am sure it will be fine here when I am organized. If I should need more money before I get money from Mrs. Lapp or Mr. Mack, I am sure you will help me. That would not be the first time.

I hope you have gotten the letter I wrote you from Swift (Current) about the lots there. I paid on the due date. We have good lots in Swift (Current), so I am not afraid that we will lose money on them.

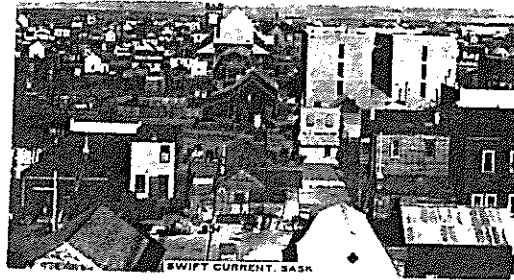
How is it in Chicago? It must be good to know that one is among civilized people; that is not what they are around here. If I ever find out who stole my things in my shanty, it is going to be hard for him. The lumber was $\frac{1}{4}$ " 'shoplap', not much used out here, so if I see someone who has such lumber around here, he must explain to me where he has gotten it. There was another man out here who lost his 'Flox' (?). Another one lost all his bed coverings and many other things he had in his shanty. You understand that the people around here are rather shameless.

Note: Letter incomplete



Above:

Uncle Mikal
second from
left in Swift
Current, Sask.
Canada



Swift Current
Saskatchewan
Canada

Below:

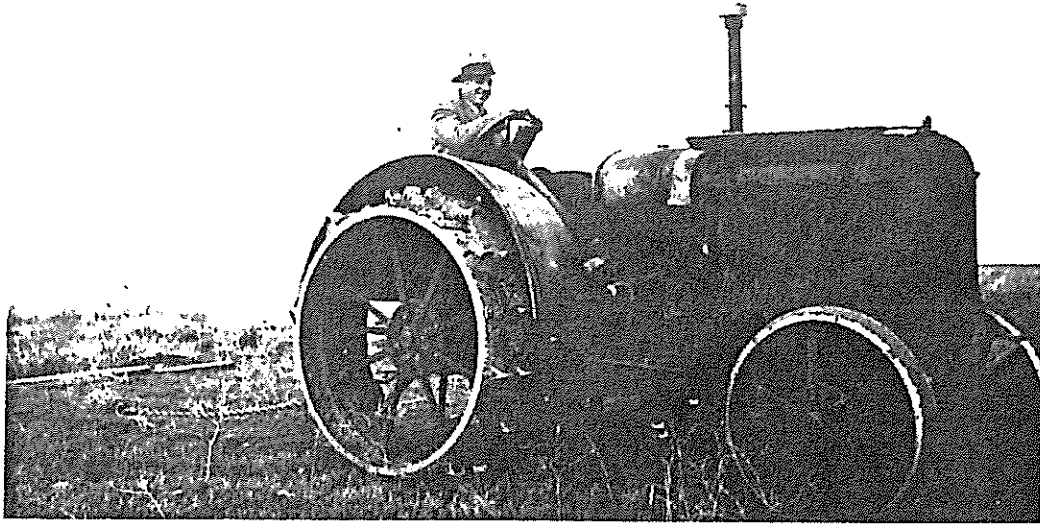
Dad second from left (top) Mikal far right - with Homestead friends





*Dad's Homestead land near Swift Current in
Saskatchewan, Canada - 1933 - Dad far right above
Dad left below*





Alf visits the Homestead in Canada - about 1933



*Mikal & Dad, 4th & 5th from left, perhaps in
America - or Canada*

From: Fredrik Olaf Hjelmeland in Admiral, Saskatchewan, Canada, near the site of his homestead

To: Fredrik Mikal Hjelmeland, his brother in Chicago, Illinois

Admiral, 26 April 1915

Dear Brother!

I have just returned to Admiral today. I am staying with Tom now as I write this letter. I wrote you a letter from Swift (Current) a couple of days ago. You must have received it by now. I did not reach Mrs. Lapp; she was at her homestead. However, I did reach her sister, but there was no help in that. She got my address and said Mrs. Lapp would soon write to me and tell me what she intended to do. I'll have to see whether or not I receive a letter. She told me last time I spoke to her (that was around New Years) that she intended to pay for the entire lot by next fall. She did not want to pay anything before she was able to pay the total amount in one lump sum. I'm expecting a letter from her in the near future. Then we shall see what she intends to do.

Including interest she now owes us \$486.00 so it will soon grow to five hundred. I did not find Mack as I wrote in the other letter. He and his wife were working on a farm, so I have good reason to believe we'll get it next fall, all of it. But, I need money right away for the tilling. Had planned on tilling 30 acres, but since I did not get any money, it will have to do with 25 acres, But I have to till or I can be cancelled. Will you lend me \$100.00 until fall, say til November? I must pay for the tilling at once.

Yes, isn't it confounding when one needs the money so bad and one cannot even get one's own money which was due more than a year ago? I have \$439.00 coming counting what is due me from Tom and Huseby. I'm not including what I paid for the lot in the winter. Well, I hope that the money I now invest in land will one day pay off with good interest. I have to accept that my circumstances for the moment are somewhat meager-- never mind if it is a bit tough now.

If you can see your way to loaning me the money, you must send it to me so that it would reach me at the homestead about two weeks from now. Mail them in two different installments, one for \$60.00 and one for \$40.00. If you mail them as money orders, it can be difficult to cash them at the Post Office in Canuck as it is not so often they have that much money there. And, if I got two money orders I could just give them to those who are doing the tilling for me and I won't have to travel to town to have them cashed. There are two different parties who are going to do the tilling for me. I hope I'm good for the loan. Should something happen to me, then the land will be good for it, as the money will go into the land.

I'm considering going to Montana to work again this summer, thinking about leaving towards the end of May. Have heard it should be good times in Great Falls. There will not be much doing in Canada before one sees whether or not there is going to be a good crop. If there is a good crop, there will be much work available come fall as many

have left Canada. Will you be leaving Chicago this summer? Have you written to anyone in Montana? Hope you will write at once to let me know what you intend to do. Will close for this time with the hope to hear from you soon.

I will be returning to my homestead tomorrow, about 35-40 miles from Admiral. Am getting to know the trails out on the prairie now. Everyone prays for rain here this spring. Hope we will get it too.

Many greetings

Your Brother Fred

Canuck, Saskatchewan; Canada

EA and JM

From: Fredrik Olaf Hjelmeland in Admiral, Saskatchewan, Canada
To: Fredrik Mikal Hjelmeland, his brother, in Chicago, Illinois

Admiral May 24, 1915

Dear Brother!

Last post day I received the money you sent me from Whitehall. I must thank you so much, Fred. I got the money on Friday. Saturday I traveled to Admiral. I'm here with Tom Swensen now. Have thought of traveling to Swift Current tomorrow.

I can see you are not in the best mood these days, but I'm sure that will be better. From the Scandinavian, I see that the strike in Chicago will soon come to an end and that quite a lot of work is to be started, so Chicago will be as good as any other city this summer. Especially as you are so well acquainted and know the place so well now.

I see you have thought of going back to Norway next winter. I wish I could join you for a trip, but I cannot think of that.

Won't you try to get some of your money back from Simonsen before you leave? He should at least pay you the interest if not more. I wonder if Dr. Barber wouldn't be willing to take back the house from Simonsen if he reduced the price a little. He has been willing to take it back twice before for the same price. Simonsen could do better that way and invest the money he received on his land. It is too hard, if not impossible, to manage both. If I were you I would write him about it and hear what he says. Anyhow, you should at least claim the interest for your money now or by fall.

Note: The remaining portion of this letter is missing.

From: Fredrik Olaf Hjelmeland in Williston, North Dakota
To: Fredrik Mikal Hjelmeland in Whitehall, Wisconsin

Williston, North Dakota
June 26, 1915

Dear Brother

Came to Williston early today. Came from Havre.* I thought I would go to Minot sometime today. There was not much to do in Havre yet. They have just started on the Courthouse there. In Glasgow there were a few small houses but nothing like it was last summer. Mosley (?) is in Kalispell. I shall write to you when I come to Minot. Don't come West yet. It is not worthwhile.

Fred

* Havre, Glasgow, and Kalispell are all towns in Montana.

37 Williston 26/15-
Kjære broder!
Kom til Williston
i dag tidlig. Kom fra
Havre. er kommet ut god
til Minot. i dag ingen
Det var ikke mye
gjøre i Havre end
Der var nettop bygget
Courthuset der. I Glasgow
var en del små hus
men ingen som
det var i Glasgow
Mosley er i Kalispell
skal skrive til deg
når jeg kommer til
Minot. Kom ikke
vest enda. Det løn-
ner seg ikke.
Fred.

JM

From: Fredrik Olaf Hjelmeland in Minot, North Dakota
To: Fredrik Mikal Hjelmeland, his brother, in Chicago, Illinois

Minot, North Dakota
July 8, 1915

Dear Brother !

Many thanks for your letter and card. It was great to hear from you again, but it seemed a longer wait than usual. I have been spoiled, you see, as you were so good to write last winter. It is much appreciated that someone writes to one who leads such a solitary life.

I am so happy to hear that you got the church job--perhaps you can earn yourself a steak on that one. Have you thought of sending for Knut Lien to help you? Perhaps you could get back the money he owes you. On second thought, perhaps it would be best not to take on too much help. It might not be worth it on a small job. It must have been disappointing not to get that other brick job, too, but maybe you can pick up some other jobs on contract. There is one thing I would have liked, Fred, and that is if we could have found jobs together. We should have had a contract job together, but as we have different trades, that doesn't work out; we can at least help each other though. I feel I don't accomplish anything, but it is not so easy for me before I have finished with the land. Then one is more free, you know. Perhaps we shall not have made this trip to America in vain after all. Even if it takes longer than we had planned.

I don't think you'll miss anything by not coming to Minot, because the buildings they build here are not very large and they don't take long to construct. But perhaps if you came west, you could get work on the courthouse in Havre. It's a large building, but it is not ready for brick work yet. There was a church which should have been built there too. I spoke to Amundsen when I was in Havre. He didn't have much to do then, but he said he thought there would be much more work there towards fall.

If you have thought of coming west after you have finished the church, I would first write to Amundsen if I were you, to inquire what time they will start on the courthouse. He doesn't supervise the job, but he would still be able to tell you when it starts as he is in Havre. I've heard that there are plenty of brick jobs in Great Falls, Montana this year too. But don't you think Chicago is going to be all right after the strike? It can't go on forever.

As for me, I work from time to time so I earn a living. Today I started with the brick contractor I wrote about. Perhaps it will be steadier now. Last night I contacted the supervisor of the electrical workshop and he promised me a chance at the first job that came in. I should contact him Saturday evening when he would know better because he expected more jobs this week. He had to see the superintendent first. I hope I can start soon as nothing will come from the work I have now. It must improve now.

It looks as if Devig is doing well also, but as one can understand from his letter, he needs money. If only he doesn't start being too ambitious;

it can have bad consequences if hard times return. I suppose he'll be sore at me now, because I don't want to join him. But I must think of myself first, as it is uncertain when I can go back to Norway again. But on the other hand, I want to stay in good with him because he can be very useful to me if I go back to Norway again soon. Perhaps we can still be partners again. I only hope he does well, because he deserves to. Devig is a good fellow.

I'm writing to Huseby tonight, too, to ask for the money he owes us. I don't know if he'll get the letter as I have only the address to his homestead.

I will finish off for now and hope to hear from you soon.

Best regards,

Fred

I've moved you see.

Use only this address: Minot, North Dakota

Have you heard any news from home lately?

Do you know where Simonsen works this summer? If you get his address, please send it to me.

From: Fredrik Olaf Hjelmeland in Minot, North Dakota
To: Fredrik Mikal Hjelmeland, his brother

Minot, North Dakota
July 8, 1915

Dear Brother!

Many thanks for your letter and card. It was nice hearing from you again. I think it has been a long time this time. I was use to getting letters from you, you know. You were so good at writing last winter, and it is nice to have someone writing you when you are living the life of a hermit.

I am happy that you got that church. Perhaps you'll make some money on it. Have you thought about asking Knut Lien to help you? Perhaps you could get back the money he owes you then; but if I were you, I would not take too much help. It isn't worthwhile for a small job. Wasn't it irritating that you shouldn't get the other bricklaying job too? But, perhaps you can pick up some other jobs on contract.

There is one thing I would like, Fred, and that would be if we could work together, taking a contract together. But, since we have different trades it wouldn't work after all. But we can still help each other. I feel, however, that I can't manage so much before I am finished with the land. Then one is more free, you know. Perhaps we should not have taken this trip to America for nothing after all, even if it takes more time than we had thought to begin with.

I don't think you will lose anything by not coming to Minot, because the buildings that are built here are not so big. It would not take too long to lay the bricks. But, if you were to come West, you might get work on the courthouse in Havre: It is a big building, but it may not be ready for bricklaying for a long time yet. There was a church which should be built there, too.

I talked to Amunsen when I was in Havre. He didn't have so very much to do then, but he said he believed there would be some work later in the fall. If you have in mind coming West after you are finished with the church, I would, if I were you, write to Amunsen first to learn when they will start on the courthouse. He doesn't have the job, but he should know when they will start because he is in that town. I have heard that there is quite a lot of bricklaying work in Great Falls this year, too. But don't you think that Chicago will be good after the strike is over? It can't last forever.

As for me, I work now and then so I keep alive. Today I started with the bricklayer contractor I wrote about. Perhaps it will be a little more steady now. Last night I found the foreman of the electrical shop again. He promised me the first chance when they took on a new man. He said I should come in and see him Saturday night. Then he could better know because he expected some jobs this week. He also had to see the superintendent first. I do hope I can start soon as nothing will come out of this work I have now. But sometime it will get better.

It looks as if Devig is doing well also, but as I understand from the letter, he may need some money. If only he doesn't start too big. It

could have bad consequences if there should be hard times. He may be hurt because I wouldn't go in with him, but one must first look after oneself. And, it is uncertain yet when I will be going back to Norway. But, on the other hand I would have liked to be on good terms with Devig as he can be of good help to me if I ever go back to Norway. Maybe we still can become partners, but the time for that has not come yet. I will just hope he is doing well because he deserves it. Devig is a good fellow.

I am writing Huseby tonight also about the money he owes us. I don't know if he'll get the letter, because I don't know any address other than his homestead.

I will end this letter for now hoping to hear from you soon.

Many greetings,

Fred

I have moved.

Use only this address: Minot, North Dakota

Have you heard anything from home lately?

Do you know where Simonsen is working this summer? If you are able to get his address, please mail it to me.

JM

From: Petrina Hjelmeland Eide, at Mysen Station, Smaaleness Youth College
To: Fredrik Olaf Hjelmeland, her brother, in Canada

Mysen Station
Smaaleness Youth College
December, 1915

Dear Brother!

Some days ago I received a letter from Anna, and with it was also a letter that you had sent to Father. I did not know where you were and therefore I could not write to you. It is true that if one does not answer as soon as one receives a letter, and is in the mood, it will be late before one answers. When one has become a housewife all our work and time goes into making a home, and when one has a little lad to take care of besides everything else, one's time is so filled always. But you know that to write a letter does not take such a long time; it's just to get started.

It is so good to get letters from you over there; wish it could be more often. But the fault is probably ours. Now you will get a letter for Christmas. Andreas and I talk often about you -- and that you should not have traveled to America. I am sure that you would have done very well here in Norway also. Thor Devik has now started his own store in Sandefjord. Yah, you maybe knew that already.

If you had been here in the east, you could have come to us often. It would have been so much fun to have had you here different times; but no, we haven't been so fortunate yet. It's good to know that you get lonesome for home and think about coming back. That would be so wonderful, Fredrik. I pray I will live to see that day. I remember from when you were a little boy, how nice you always were. And after you came back from Sogndal's Folkehoyskole (college), how you had grown to a tall and handsome young man. I must write this because it is so much in my thoughts as I continue this letter to you.

It would be so wonderful to get a picture of you. If you have recently been photographed, please send me one. They were here one day and took photos of Leidulv. You shall get one and see what a handsome boy we have. He is just so good looking! Big for his age, and sturdy and crafty. He is everywhere now -- crawls all over the floor so he sometimes looks like a floor rag, but he's just such a fine boy anyway! Yah, he is his "mom's" greatest joy and his papa is so proud to have such a boy.

It is so good to have a husband and children. That makes a home then; we are all in the same boat! If there are any big waves, we will all make out fine together. Andreas is a good husband. He has gotten a good job now, so I guess we will stay here. It is not so good to keep moving around. One becomes so restless and often strangers.

There are always visitors at our place. Too many people around isn't good either. It's good to be alone with "one's own" sometimes too. I have so much to do as I also have one of the teachers from the college boarding here. There's lots of work with the baby, but it's good to have work to do for those we love.

How are things with you and Kristine now? She wrote to Anna this summer that she would come to us 'Rupehaug' Sunday, but the weather was so bad she did not come. It's been such a long time since I have seen her. Yes, actually some years. I'm sure you get letters from her, from Anna, and from father. Yes, father has many to write to. All of his children who are all in different places. This summer when we were home, father came home a Saturday night and left again Sunday evening. He looked very well, was in very good spirits, and was not showing his age. We have a good father. Let us please give him as much pleasure as we can. It must be strange for him to have his children travel in different directions. It must be sad and empty for him.

At Hjelmeland nice and cheery children are growing up, and that is a pleasure to see. It must be a joy for father to see his family grow, and each one is healthy and well prepared for a good life. That must make father feel younger. There'll be many young men and ladies for you and Mikal to see when you come back to Norway. Gudmund is a sturdy fellow, solid as a rock and loves to work. Asbjorn is more of a scholar, so fine featured and so wise for his age. Olga and Signy are clever little girls. Yah, Olga is becoming an adult. Alf Solemslid is also big, and both of Olina's little girls are roses! Ingolf, Kristina's son is a dear boy. He is so good, that lad. Yah, Kristina has fine children, but she has also lots of work with them. She doesn't have a maid either. Ivar helps her, I'm sure, so that must do.

Yah, now it is soon Christmas. I'm looking so much forward to Christmas. We always have a Christmas tree, and I think that is so special. We have three rooms and a kitchen, but we rent one room out to the teacher, Asphaug. We pay 25 kr. a month for house rent, but we get 10 kr. from Asphaug, so that leaves 15 kr. for us to pay. There are electric lights in all the rooms, and I have gotten an electric iron. We have very little furniture. I bake my own bread. Bread is not so good here in the east. Yah, you probably know that. We have gotten the folks at home to butcher two sheep for us. We are having Christmas steak. If you could only have some with us, you and Mikal.

When will he come, we ask ourselves here at home now. We wait for him now. If it hadn't been for this terrible war, I'm sure he would have come this winter. I will write to Mikal as soon as I get his address. I wrote to Kristina that she must send it to me. She had a letter from him recently but had forgotten to send the address when she wrote to me.

You are getting old now Fredrik, 29 years! Soon a bachelor! Yah, in a few years surely we will have you here at home with us. You are so welcome.

You must greet Mikal so much from us and ask him to write me. I will, yes, I will write to him as soon as I get his address. Our address is Mysen Station, Smaaleness Youth College.

Many loving greetings to you and to Mikal, and many wishes for a happy Christmas and a good New Year. You must be a good fellow and write to me very soon.

Yours,

Petrina

ML

From: Fredrik Olaf Hjelmeland in Minot, North Dakota
To: Fredrik Mikal Hjelmeland, his brother, in Chicago, Illinois

Note: On the top of the original stationery is printed the following:
WAVERLY HOTEL, American and European, Reinhardt Reiersen, Proprietor - Rates \$1.00 to \$2.50 Per Day, Thoroughly Modern, Sample Rooms

Minot, North Dakota
December 14, 1915

Dear brother Fred!

It's not long since I received your letter telling that you have gone to Chicago. I hope you will get something to do. If not, I suppose you'll go back to Whitehall to work.

I am in Minot today. Had to come here to see the doctor. I haven't felt very well the last week and feel far from good yet. The doctor said it was nothing serious, only a bad cold or flu. I believe it is the same as influenza at home. My whole body is aching. There were many in Granville who had it.

The first two weeks I was in Granville I did pretty well -- approximately \$80, although I wasn't able to work two of those days. But since that time I have done almost nothing after I became sick. I hope it will soon go over. There will be plenty of work in Granville when they get a bigger generator, but that will probably not be until spring.

We have the houses on contract. That is how we are working there, and I get what is left over after all the materials are paid. And when I work by the hour, I get .60 cents. I installed electricity in a hotel, worked there 27 hours and got \$30 for it. But now since I fell ill, I have done nothing. I am up every day, but I don't feel like doing anything. I did a small job last Saturday. Worked four hours for \$8, but I got worse after that so decided to come here to Minot to see the doctor.

I have spent a lot of money lately. Bought clothes and shoes. The money seems to disappear.

Had a letter from Petrina and Andrias. They are doing very well. If people worked as hard in Norway to make a living as they do here, one could live twice as good there as here. So let us both go back, Fred, so we can have some benefit from life, we also.

I don't know yet when I'll be going to Canada. It will not be before the New Year. I want to spend as little winter time as I can in the country. I have been thinking about writing a letter home, but I haven't gotten it done. Will try now. Surely you will write soon and tell me how you are doing in Chicago. Hopefully some job will turn up for you to do.

How are you going to celebrate Christmas? People like us have a lot of Christmas joy here in this country. Isn't that so! I'll drop you a few lines later on for Christmas.

Fred

Granville, North Dakota

JM

From: Fredrik Olaf Hjelmeland in Granville, North Dakota
To: Fredrik Mikal Hjelmeland, his brother, in Chicago, Illinois

Note: This letter was written on hotel stationery which reads:
METROPOLITAN HOTEL, O. L. Wangsnes, Proprietor; Patronage
of Commercial Men Especially Solicited; First Class Service
at Reasonable Rates; Granville, North Dakota

December 25, 1915

Dear Brother!

I received your letter yesterday, Christmas Eve. It was the only card and letter I got. But I didn't expect more either. When one doesn't write, one cannot expect anybody will write you. Well, today it is Christmas day, and it is also my birthday. I am 29 years old today. Time goes very fast when one looks back. But a year is a long time when one looks ahead.

I would guess that you have been Christmas visiting today at Olgas'. How do they like it in Chicago? What are Marie and Anna doing? Have they planned to go to Canada in the spring? I have heard that Simonsen is in Montana some place working in a foundry, but I don't believe it. You would have heard if it was really so.

As you see, I am still in Granville. I am well again now. I am not working steady, but when I work I get good pay for it. Yesterday, Christmas Eve, I installed electricity in a little church. I worked there about nine hours and earned \$10.50. Had it on contract. There will not be much to do for awhile, not until they get in a bigger generator and put up lines and poles in the streets. And that might not be until spring. I could have made quite a bit of money here if I didn't have to go back to Canada again. It is set up so that I am paid for the work I do, and those who own the power station provide the materials; that amount which comes above the materials, I get. I'm the one who makes the estimate and gives a price for the jobs when we get them. There hasn't been too much to do lately.

I have been here in town a month's time now and have earned only \$110, but then I haven't worked more than half the time either. And, I have also spent much money here, too, so it can't be so much gained in such a short time. But you know if I could have been here next summer, I could maybe have earned several hundreds of dollars in a hurry. I wonder about Shaunavon, Sask.; if they put in a power station there, maybe I'll have an opportunity next summer. That town is a lot bigger than this town.

I don't know yet when I'll be going to Canada, but it won't be long from now. I'll let you know right away. I hope I make some money up there so that I can pay down on the lots. If I don't make any money and the payment and taxes come due, I'll use up all my money and have nothing left to use on the land. But I hope I'll make some money up there for the land.

I see from your letter that you have already gotten yourself work and that it'll last you all through the winter. If only it had been a little

more steady. But one can't complain as long as one can manage the expenses through the winter. This may be your last winter in this country. It may soon be time for putting some good years in on your farm at home. It looks, from Marthin's letter, as if the workers at home are making more money now than in this country if you change kroner for American dollars. And in Norway you don't need to go for months to find something to do. Oh my, for the old country . . . (not legible on copy)

Perhaps our time will come, too, Fred. Let us only stick together no matter what happens. We'll never regret that. I must confess that I am happy as long as you are in this country. It seems safer that way. But that must not keep you from going home. They may need you still more. They, too, may think at home that it is time for the right owner of Hjelmeland to take over the farm and settle down.

Well, I'll finish this with best wishes for you for the New Year, and thanks very much for the one that is soon gone. I wonder if we shall meet again in the new year. Say hello to Marie, Anna, and Olga from me.

Many greetings,

Fred

Address: Granville, North Dakota

Write soon.

I wrote home to Father a week ago!

From: Fredrik Olaf Hjelmeland in Granville, North Dakota
To: Fredrik Mikal Hjelmeland, his brother, in Chicago, Illinois

Note: This letter was written on hotel stationery which reads:
METROPOLITAN HOTEL, O. L. Wangsnes, Proprietor; Patronage
of Commercial Men Especially Solicited; First Class Service
at Reasonable Rates; Granville, North Dakota

January 1, 1916

Dear Brother!

Want to write to you today, the first day of 1916. Another year has now passed. Time goes truly fast when one looks back. Received your letter the other day and see that you have had a pretty good Christmas. Well, you know a lot of people in Chicago now so it should be quite nice there. If I were down there, I would become a member of a Norwegian association, gymnastic association or some other group.

I suppose Lagrid isn't in Chicago anymore. You haven't heard where he is, have you? It would be fun to know how he is getting on. So you think Marie and Anna will be going to Canada again in the spring. They are probably fed up with the life in Chicago again.

Well, maybe conditions will improve in Canada in the spring because of the good crop they had up there this year. Personally I plan on staying in Canada until I have received the claim on my land. I really must get some kind of work there so I can make enough to cover expenses, and then, too, I will get some crop in for the summer also.

As you see, I am still here in Granville. I don't know exactly when I'll be leaving here. Perhaps I will leave in a week or so or perhaps I'll stay here longer. I am waiting for a big schoolhouse here. If I get that, I'll stay here quite awhile. For awhile now I haven't earned more than my board. You see, the more that passes of the winter before I go to the country, the better it is. I intend to stay there most of the summer anyway. I have much to do there with the plowing and picking stones. It is both cheaper and better to stay there in the summer than in the winter, but if I don't get anything to do here, I'll go in a week or so. I should like to go to Swift to straighten out our things there. I have a couple of jobs on hand this week, too, so I keep things in balance.

I have heard from Huseby yet. Wrote to him a couple of weeks ago. Can't understand what is the matter with him. He might have skipped the country. The strange thing is that my letters have not been returned either. I intend to write the postmaster where Huseby gets his mail and ask him if he can give me any information about him. There must be something wrong with him. I am sure he would have answered if not.

I am waiting for a letter from Norway which was sent to Whitehall. You surely receive the letters sent to us in Whitehall.

It is sad that you are not able to work steady there when there is work to do. But one should be happy when he can manage the expenses. Did you do as good last summer as the summer of 1914?

Well, I'll let you know soon if I'll be going soon or not. But you can use the same address. Live well then, Fred, and good luck in the new year. Also, many thanks for the old year.

Fred

Granville, North Dakota

Haven't heard anything from Norway yet.

JM

From: Fredrik Olaf Hjelmeland in Granville, North Dakota
To: Fredrik Mikal Hjelmeland, his brother, in Chicago, Illinois

Metropolitan Hotel
Granville, North Dakota
10 January 1916

Dear Brother!

Thank you so much for the letter I received here two days ago. You are very good at writing to me Fred. It is so nice; it is good to have someone close to share ones thoughts.

I had a letter from Kristine today. She is waiting for me now. Sometime ago, I had a letter from Anna, our sister. She really is in high spirits now. We'll have to go home for her wedding. I pass on her letter to you. You, too, ought to go home soon and establish a steady relationship with Metta. Maybe there are other fellows who would like to have her as well. But if she is the right type, she surely will wait for you.

As you see, I'm still in Granville. I have been working today about five hours. I earned \$8.00, and that isn't bad. Saturday I earned a bit more, but it isn't every day I have work. When I do work, I am well paid. I feel the work is so much easier to do when I can do it my myself.

I see from the newspapers that the working situation in Norway is very good. It would have been nice to have been able to start my own shop back home. If everything goes as I have planned, I hope someday to start my own shop at home. If I would have to go home as a common laborer, there would not be much to go back for. When you take over the family farm back home again and I come home, I will put in a gasoline motor and a generator. The gasoline motor is so big that it could run the thrashing machine and also a little circular saw and other machines if you wanted. We could also have a little generator for electric lights. Of course it would cost some money, but it would be great to have also. It would, be a bit strange for the others at home.

I'm not sure yet if I'll get the schoolhouse or not. They haven't had any meetings yet. I wouldn't be too disappointed either because I'll have to go to Canada quite soon.

So you think my chances of getting any money from Tollef Swensen/Siversen (?) are slim. If he doesn't pay, he is the lousiest creep I ever met! Last spring he promised for sure to pay. I will become neither richer nor poorer whether I get it or not, but right is right! If he doesn't pay, I could be tempted to 'skin him. That would be possible if we were face to face -- just to teach him a lesson in honesty. I think we will come through it okey, Fred. We'll just have to be more careful in the future.

There are many people who believe that Canada will be just as good after the war as before -- anyhow the farming country. The price of land has gone up a great deal this autumn. If we only could finish off these lots. I'll see what I can do when I get to Swift. Maybe I'll leave about a week from now, but you can send your next letter addressed to Granville.

I hope you'll be able to pay your expenses in the winter, Fred, and also have some left over. I see from your letter that you have bought yourself a new suit. I, too, have to buy myself a new one before I leave for the country.

Live well then Fred.

Many greetings from F. Hjelmeland
Granville, North Dakota

What is Lagrid doing in Alaska?

From: Fredrik Olaf Hjelmeland in Granville, North Dakota
To: Fredrik Mikal Hjelmeland, his brother, in Chicago, Illinois

Granville, North Dakota
February 20, 1916

My dear Brother!

Many thanks for your letter. It was good to have letters from both Kristine and yourself. But, Fred, you write so very little, and you tell me that you are so moody. What's wrong with you? Is it the letter from Knut that made you so blue? Did he write about Metta? Next time I hear from you I do hope you are in better spirits, boy! It doesn't help to look at the dark side of life; things will just turn worse then.

I am still here in Granville, but I guess I'll be heading for Canada in just a couple of weeks. I have a few jobs to finish here first. Today I've ordered a suit for myself from the taylor here in town for \$27. I'll get it in about two weeks time. You see, I had to. I was almost without clothes!

Some time ago I received a letter from Sneider Dalsom (?) in Swift Current. I will see them when I get to Swift.

I do hope you have a steady job now, Fred. There might be some more jobs in Chicago shortly. Perhaps you will be traveling westward when spring comes. Have you heard anything about the church that is to be built in the vicinity of the one you worked on last summer? I would like to hear that you got it.

I see that Anna and Marie are going to Canada in the spring. What are they going to do up there? Any news about the house? Some time ago, I asked you whether the bank note is on Simonsen or on the house. If it is on Simonsen, I wouldn't give a damn for the house. Then it is up to Simonsen to look after it. But, I feel that you should try to find out how long a bank note is valid in Canada when no interest is being paid for the money.

A boy here in Granville just recently arrived from Canada. He owns some land around Cabry where Ole Medal had his land. He says that conditions are good up there right now due to the good crop they received last summer. Medal will start farming next summer. Last fall he bought six horses. I assume he got a good crop last fall, and I guess he got a loan on his land as well. It might be easier to get work up there next summer than here due to the fact that not so many people are left there. Most of the young men are now in the army.

Well, Fred, this is all for now. I hope to hear from you soon, and please do write more than last time. And then you must be in better spirits! I feel that it is worse if you should be in a bad mood than if I should be

Your brother,

Fred

SB



My dad, Fredrik
Olof Gundersen
Hjeltneland,
perhaps in his
twenties, in
America or Canada



This is the only letter in
this collection written
specifically to my father—
all others to Uncle Mikal.
Grandpa, however, asked
Dad to share the letter
with his brother, the
reason it too was found
in Mikal's trunk.

Sai. Ikonvik på Eikefjord 22. April 1910.
K. Juni.

Kjære Søn Friedrich O.G. Hjeltnesland.

My Grandfather
writes to his son
my father, June 1,
1916 - Norway to
Canada

Det kjære og oplysende Brev som du
6. April 1916. Komt mig ihuende paa Hjeltnesland,
besv. er samme at Du lever vel og det gaar Dig
godt, hvilket er det beste og kan faa se og
høre fra mine, Gud være Tak og lov, og her
det samme store gode at meddele Dig at jeg
er har vært daglig frisk og ved god Helse til
en delene tid, - samt Dine Søskender og Ders
Børn. Olga gaar til Præsten i Sammar.
Hun skal være flink at læse, Sigrun
og flink at læse og passe sine yngre søsken
det, Gudmund og Adrijen er og bra at lære og
Du er dygtige at bygge Ved. Andreas og
Petrius kom hjem til Hjeltnesland den 27. April
Andreas skal være hos Glendelmann J. Njåsen
i Sammar, skal vist have kr. 100.00 pr. Maa.
med og Kartin Petrius skal være paa Hjeltnesland
Denn har alt faat sig end stor Søn, Glen
vilde gjerne være med Maren (ungest søn
indimellom.

er af dit Brev at
Brevet som jeg ser
Glen er dygtig og
jeg. Og ser at Du
hjem til far
traugges det far
Flem, bliver
ravit tilans nu er
et paa Guardia
Før Du N.B.
far det gaar
ind i Exproli
Flora's men
er skive
+ Du ikke i B.
far i i B.
Bladet

alene naar en
er jeg mere efter
indre og forandrer sig
naar har det vært et meget
værdier, med Stegn og Sal, saa
meget lovende ud nu paa Marken
hine Sangeband blev brenkemand
i Været i januar solgte
et end Tyssk Frise
mere nu efter

Alles famil som jeg
Ansvita eller sig. Du
er ikke, men det
er meget dygtig
saa Glen
skriver
Du mig
les paa an. Hvertiligte
skive snart til
Hjeltnesland. Juni
at vilgaude. Det vil
er

From: Gunder Mikalsen Hjelmeland in Norway
To: His son Fredrik Olaf Hjelmeland in Saskatchewan, Canada

Sønnhornvik on Eikefjord
1 June 1916

My dear son, Fredrik O. G. Hjelmeland

Your dear and informative letter of 6 April 1916 reached me at Hjelmeland 27 April. I see from same that you are living well and doing fine, which is the best news I can get from my people. Thank God I have the same good news to tell to you, that I have been well every day and am in good health, as are your sisters and brothers and their children.

This summer Olga is preparing herself for the confirmation; she reads very well, and so does Signy. Signy also looks after her younger brothers and sisters. Gudmund and Asbjørn also read very well, and they are very clever at chopping wood. Andrias and Petrine came home to Hjelmeland 27 April; Andreas will be working at J. Njosen's country store this summer for 100 Kr. a month, food included. Petrine will stay here at Hjelmeland; they have gotten a big son who wants to be with his mother. He is a little whiny at times.

I see from your letter that Mikal got hold of the letter I sent you last winter. He is very slow in sending words home. I see that you think that he will be home next Christmas. Yes, he really needs to come home now as the barn and the cow stables, especially the cow stables, are in a poor condition, and as he is coming of age and wants to take over the farm, it has to be done now.

Are you getting NB Folkeblad? It is being sent to you from Florø, and on my way through Florø I stopped by their offices. Please write us as soon as possible and tell if you are getting the newspaper. If not I shall have to cancel the subscription, because I am paying Kr. 5 a year having the newspaper sent to you. I don't know how much it would cost to have the magazine, Allers Familie Journal sent to you in America or Canada, but I'm afraid it would be rather expensive.

On May 6, an Animal Fair was held at Bringeland. Ivar was there with some cows and a one-year old ox; for two of his cows he got second prize each, and for some of the others, third prize. The ox was too young to receive a prize, but he got a ribbon for him, and he was asked to keep the ox until it was fully grown and then it might win a prize. Last March Ivar's mare got sick and could not be used for working; the veterinarian assured him that the mare would recover, but she didn't look well when I had to leave home. Ivar had to buy a new horse last spring. He bought a dun mare, four years old and good natured, costing Kr. 445, a very good price at these expensive times. Marthin, your brother, sold an old cow that had calved one month prior to his selling her just after Easter. He got Kr. 200 for her; you get good prices for everything nowadays, it seems.

Søren at Teigen is now being cared for by Hans L. Lersand. He is in very poor condition; he is bedridden, and is not able to get out of bed without someone to help him. It is especially his legs that are bother-

ing him, and he looks very weak. I went to see him Maundy Thursday, and I'm afraid he will not live over the summer. Yes, it is a bad thing to be old and not able to manage any longer. It is sad to be alone and growing old; I feel it myself as time goes by and things change.

This spring we have had wonderful weather with rain and sunshine so everything looks very promising out on the fields.

Torstein Langeland lost his wife last fall, and last winter, in January, he sold his farm to a German lady for Kr. 30,000. But he didn't get his money, and now there are some disputes going on as she was unable to pay him according to the agreement.

Young men are still being called in for military service (neutral defense); unfortunately it seems like this terrible war will never end.

John Aase is supervisor at a factory making barrels at Steenen in Førde, where he has been since last fall. I believe he holds a good day's salary, but he has never told me how much he gets.

This year I was taxed for Kr. 84 by the kommune and Kr. 20 by the state. Simon Lien (Gunder Mikalsen Hjelmeland's brother - last name different due to the area in which they settled) still has and manages his farm; this year he has no hired help. Here there is no one who will take employment at a farm any longer for the salary that a farmer is able to pay. Andrias and Dorte Skjelbred are still working on their farm and are doing well. Sigurd is living at home, so there are only three people there.

Olai has had plenty to do this past winter. He has developed a machine for making barrel bottoms (translator's comment: I'm not quite sure if this is correct, but with a little fantasy, it could be!) and he has received Kr. 300 each. Marthin, your brother, came home from M_____, at Easter. Since then he has been here taking care of his small farm. He has two really nice boys. Anna, your sister, came home from Bergen May 3, and will be working for Ivar and Kristine this summer. She will not get married this summer; I believe they will wait until Mikal arrives.

During the month of April I surveyed a road wall at Hauge by Langeland's shore which had to be reconstructed. May 10, I had to go to Eikefjord to continue the road construction from Vadset to Eikefjord. It's not easy to get people to work on the roads nowadays due to the barrel industry where they may earn up to eight and ten kroner a day on a contract basis. You really have to pay these days, if you want things done.

The land that you have, is that the same as you got when you first came to Canada? Did't you and Mikal buy some land together when he came to Canada? Did you sell the first lot, or do you still have it? What about the housing lots you bought in Canada; did you sell any of them? Did Mikal sell his part of the house that he had in Canada? I would appreciate your telling your father what the situation is as I do not know the full answers to these questions.

I see from your letter that you will be coming back to Norway when you have received the rights of your lots. It would make me very, very happy to see you again, if God will let me live.

Any more news I cannot tell you, because here are so few people telling me anything.

The Young Folk's Society here at Bygstad was going to buy a new organ for their community house for May 17. Whether they got it, I don't know. Maria, daughter of Marthinus Hjelmeland, collected money at Hjelmeland and Bringeland, and she received approximately Kr. 30. She came to me, too, and I gave her Kr. 2; you see everyone wants money for celebrations and meetings these days. I heard that Martinus Hjelmeland also was thinking of getting an organ at the same time; I don't know whether he got one or not.

On 30 May, I got a letter from home, from Petrine and Anna. Everything is fine, they write. Ivar had sold two young oxes for which he got Kr. 180. You know, both meat and fish prices are high these days. They also wrote that Marthin, your brother, has started making barrels now. Well, he isn't much familiar with this kind of work, but it may not be very difficult, and he might learn it quickly. He was not very keen on this kind of work, but even if this type of work will be going rather slowly in the beginning, I'm sure he will improve. He is working for Jens Njosen on a contract basis, and as he is able to stay at home he can save a little instead of being forced to take employment far away from home.

A letter received by Kristine was forwarded to me; she had gotten it from Mikal. He had written it April 3. He wrote that everything was fine with him, and that he might go to Wisconsin this summer. It seems that he is thinking of returning to Norway some time this year, which is none too soon, if you ask me.

I am doing fine here, and there is plenty of work that I supervise. I have now 24 workers, but I understand I will soon have 30. I have satisfactory board and room here. I go home at noon and take a good afternoon nap for about an hour. You remember I always liked taking an afternoon nap which I felt gave me new strength. I haven't asked yet how much I will have to pay for board and room; I usually pay by the month. Oh yes, I really must thank the good Lord for giving me this good health so that I can continue my work, and I feel I'm in a much better mood when I can work out in the open; I'm feeling much better now.

The Gaular Kommune Board has elected a committee who is going to look into the proposal of getting electricity for some of the farmers at Bygstad. They are thinking about the Aas waterfalls, but I guess they will take their time.

Now I have told you all I can think of that might be of interest to you. You may send this letter on to Mikal, so that he, too, will hear from me. He does not write very often, but both you and Mikal are greeted most lovingly by your father. Please write soon, and I'm hoping that these lines will find you in good health.

Live well in Jesus,

G. M. Hjelmeland

SB

| Plant | Year | Height | Flower | Color | Time | Notes | Other |
|----------|------|--------|--------|-------|------|-------|-------|
| Plant 1 | 1916 | 10.5 | White | 3 | 1847 | 1.5 | Stem |
| Plant 2 | 1916 | 16.5 | White | 3 | 1865 | 16.7 | Stem |
| Plant 3 | 1916 | 16.5 | White | 3 | 1889 | 13.5 | Stem |
| Plant 4 | 1916 | 16.5 | White | 3 | 1892 | 25.12 | Stem |
| Plant 5 | 1916 | 26.5 | White | 3 | 1891 | 8.2 | Stem |
| Plant 6 | 1916 | 22.5 | White | 3 | 1863 | 30.11 | Stem |
| Plant 7 | 1916 | 23.5 | White | 3 | 1896 | 23.2 | Stem |
| Plant 8 | 1916 | 23.5 | White | 3 | 1897 | 17.10 | Stem |
| Plant 9 | 1916 | 23.5 | White | 3 | 1896 | 6.1 | Stem |
| Plant 10 | 1916 | 23.5 | White | 3 | 1888 | 25.7 | Stem |
| Plant 11 | 1916 | 22.5 | White | 3 | 1881 | 28.3 | Stem |
| Plant 12 | 1916 | 26.5 | White | 3 | 1897 | 24.6 | Stem |
| Plant 13 | 1916 | 23.5 | White | 3 | 1884 | 7.6 | Stem |
| Plant 14 | 1916 | 23.5 | White | 3 | 1895 | 17.7 | Stem |
| Plant 15 | 1916 | 23.5 | White | 3 | 1895 | 17.11 | Stem |
| Plant 16 | 1916 | 23.5 | White | 3 | 1890 | 13.14 | Stem |
| Plant 17 | 1916 | 24.5 | White | 3 | 1869 | 3.8 | Stem |
| Plant 18 | 1916 | 24.5 | White | 3 | 1897 | 22.11 | Stem |
| Plant 19 | 1916 | 26.5 | White | 3 | 1891 | 10.10 | Stem |
| Plant 20 | 1916 | 29.5 | White | 3 | 1883 | 18.11 | Stem |
| Plant 21 | 1916 | 29.5 | White | 3 | 1893 | 7.5 | Stem |
| Plant 22 | 1916 | 29.5 | White | 3 | 1868 | 17.1 | Stem |

From: Fredrik Olaf Hjelmeland in Swift Current, Saskatchewan, Canada
To: Fredrik Mikal Hjelmeland, his brother, in Whitehall, Wis. perhaps

Swift Current
July 12, 1916

My dear Brother!

I received your post card a few days ago and see from it that you have plenty of work to do. I'm sure you have been waiting for a letter from me, but you haven't been waiting longer than I have! I never received the letter you sent me from Northfield. Did you send it to Swift?

As you see, I'm in Swift for the time being and have been here a month now. I'm working for Morten Electric Co. and get \$4.00 a day, but I'm afraid it will not last long. I've only been there a little over a week. I have also done some work for the telephone company. It may well be that I take on some more telephone work if Morten does not receive more jobs. By the end of next month, I'll leave for the country again. We have had an awful lot of rain this summer, almost too much. The crop looks promising; it looks like it will be a bumper year. The only disadvantage may be that the harvesting is being a little delayed. I've never seen so much hay around Swift as this summer. It's almost like good old Norway, and it's due to all the rain we have had.

I haven't been working for more than two weeks since I came here to Swift -- have been here a month. But now it looks like I'll get steady work until I leave for the country. As you know I had in mind to come to see you this summer, and perhaps I would have done just as well to have gone, but I felt it was too far away and I don't like to be too far off from what I have a claim on.

I've heard that things look rather good at Minot, North Dakota this summer. If I had stayed there I might have had my own shop by now. A young man, a fine fellow too, wanted to go in with me, but I guess I'll get another chance another time. I've heard that Montana is a good place too. Here, too, is plenty enough to do, but most of it is out in the countryside. Here there is plenty of labor work, but I don't think there will be any progress before the war ends. Everyone thinks that Swift will be the best town in the line when the war is over. Every house is now occupied again; as for other larger towns, there are vacant houses by the dozens.

How are things going for you? Does the future look brighter for you this summer? How much will you get for the church? Is it a big job? Are you planning on going home for Christmas? I believe you will get some money in from Ludvig this fall. He has gotten steady work, and Marie is working also. In addition, they have three rooms rented out, so they are doing well. What kind of a payment are you to get? I guess it has been settled by now? The contract, I believe, is still with the lawyer here in town.

I would have loved seeing you before you leave for home, but I'm afraid it's impossible. I feel it is the right thing for you to do to go home and sell the farm to Ivar and then return to the States again. Then we could find a good place in a good town and work, but you have to go to

Norway first and learn how things are there now, and maybe get a wife. How is Metta doing? Is it all over and done with? Well, I guess we could find a good place in Norway, too, for that matter. I read in the "Skandinavien" that one new factory after the other is being established, so there is progress, too. But it looks like I'll be tied up here for some time to come. It just depends on how soon we will get the railroad out to my land. I won't sell it before I can get a good price for it.

I have one thing on my mind that I would like to ask you, and that is if you would mind very much if I were to join the army. You see, I've got another nine months to put into the land, and I don't need to be there any more if I enlist. If I join the army now, I will not be sent to England before sometime next summer, and by then I'm sure the war will be over. There are some 350,000 men from Canada in the army now, and only 60,000 have been sent to England, so you see it's a slow process. If I join the army, I want to try to be in transportation of equipment, that is ammunition, etc. I'll get an automobile to drive, for instance, or I might even get a job as an electrician. I don't think they will send me in the regular army due to poor vision in my right eye. It's not too risky for those in the transport company either, I believe. So if I go, I'll join them. But I won't enlist before I hear from you. I would like to join the Scandinavian Battalion if I go; they are to be in Winnipeg this winter.

I'll have to close for now hoping to hear from you very soon. Please do write a long letter this time and tell me all about your work, etc. Have you heard anything from Norway lately? I haven't had a letter from home the whole summer.

Many greetings,

Fred

Swift Current

Please write without delay. Marie and Ludvig send their greetings. Ludvig is going to write you soon.

SB

From: Fredrik Olaf Hjelmeland in Canuck, Saskatchewan, Canada
To: Fredrik Mikal Hjelmealnd, his brother, in Chicago, Illinois

Note: The following is a translation of the last three pages of a seven-page letter. The first four pages appear to be missing.

Just don't worry about that Fred. I'll make out just fine, you'll see. It is always hardest to start. As long as I am here myself, there isn't so much to worry about.

Do you have work in Chicago now? I'd like to hear that you are doing well down there. So then I will probably get to see you in Montana this summer.

As you know from before, I was on a trip to Grand Forks. I found a girl from Fauske down there and as you know I have written to her off and on. She is apparently a very ambitious girl from what I could see, and if I didn't have my girl in Norway I don't know what I would do. Whoever gets her is getting a good girl. She is very good at keeping house also. Andrew Birkeland's brother, who is younger than I, is really after her. But she doesn't care a thing about him. He has bought a quarter of land not far from Grand Forks. And then there was another fellow that you don't know, a salesman, who was absolutely crazy about her. She showed me the letters she had gotten from him. They were hot enough! She no doubt has had plenty of good chances in Grand Forks, but she is careful. The only thing I didn't like about her was when she started telling me about how many fellas she could get ahold of there in Grand Forks. But you know that (bragging) is in the family. But all in all I think she is a very good girl. I got the very best impression of her, and she is kind, too.

Peter is a very nice fellow. You met him. All together I had a very nice time in Grand Forks, the best time I have had in this country. It was like a taste of the good old days at home after I was confirmed. Yah, every person needs a change once in awhile.

There is one thing I am going to be longing for here on the homestead and that is reading material. You'll send me Norwegian newspapers. And, if you get ahold of any Norwegian books down there, please send them to me. You know that is about all I have to do is read and write and sometimes go to see my neighbors. Now when I get more settled here I will write home to Father and Marthin and also to Petrina. Have you written to Glasgow about the mail? There are surely letters there for us.

Will close for now and hope to hear from you soon. The worst of all is that we get mail here only once a week.

Greet Marie, Anna, Tom, and Olga.

Hearty greetings,

Yours,

Fred

Canuck, Sask., Canada

ML

From: Fredrik Olaf Hjelmeland in Canuck, Saskatchewan, Canada
To: Fredrik Mikal Hjelmeland, his brother, in America

Canuck, Saskatchewan
September 11, 1916

My dear Brother!

As you see, I'm now out in the countryside again, having arrived here September 1. I had been out working for a few days, but I got very sick and had to stop. I'm feeling better now. It was just a cold.

Will begin threshing in a few days. Some damage has been done due to rust and hailstorms here as well as in other places in Canada and in the States. But it's not too bad. It would have been a very good year here in Canada had it not been for the rust. But I believe it is worse in the States, according to the newspapers. As for myself and for some of my neighbors, it was the hailstorms which did the most damage. I might get the seed back. Well, this was my first crop -- better luck next time. I have a small field that did not get so much damage; it looks quite good. Experts tell me that this field of wheat may have had as much as 35-40 bushel an acre had the hail not taken it.

I wrote a letter to you from Swift in the middle of August. I hope you have gotten it, but I haven't seen any answer to it as yet. I'm looking forward to receiving a letter from you soon. You haven't gotten a letter sent to me from Kristine, have you? I'm expecting one in Whitehall.

I am sending you a letter I got from Father some time ago. It looks like they are doing well. I have the feeling that a man may be better off in Norway than in the States these days. But it is too late to think that way now. I'll stay here until I get something out of all the hard work or "go bust".

I see from Father's letter that Marthin now has become a barrel maker. Well, it looks like if we only get old enough we'll learn a little bit of everything. There are some very high prices they get for cattle at home these days as you will see from Father's letter. I imagine that the farms, too, have increased in price when one gets such good prices for what is grown on it.

Have you heard from Simonsens lately? You have to go after them this fall. They have done very well this summer. She had started a boarding house when I left, and they had a very good crop, too. If you are going home, you should try to get two payments this fall. Are you planning on going home for Christmas?

How did you do on the church? I guess you won't come out West here this fall since the harvest in Dakota was a failure. Montana has been fine all summer through. Surely it would have been nice seeing you before you leave for home, but I'm afraid I can't make it. If I were you, I, too, would have gone home, and Anna expects that you will come for her wedding also.

The "NB Peoples Magazine" is being sent to me here, and I read an article about Mads Knudsen Fauske from Whitehall. I believe a true

Norwegian colony has been there for many years. Does he still live in Whitehall?

Have you written to me in Swift lately? If you have, I guess the letter will be forwarded to me. I will end my letter this time with the hope of soon receiving a letter from you.

Fred

Canuck, Saskatchewan

You know that I wrote to Mrs. Lapp the same Sunday I wrote to you, and I have received an answer where she promises to pay this fall. If she doesn't, I'll notify a lawyer.

Will you be writing to Father in the near future? It could be that I will not find time now during the threshing, but we should write more often to Father than we do!

From: Fredrik Olaf Hjelmeland in Canuck, Saskatchewan, Canada
To: Fredrik Mikal Hjelmeland, his brother, in Whitehall, Wisconsin, USA

Canuck, Sask.
October 2, 1916

My dear Brother!

Some time has passed again since I last heard from you. I really do hope to get a letter soon. The last one I got from you was the one with the pictures of the church enclosed. I sent a letter to you a little while ago with a letter from father enclosed. I reckon you've gotten it.

Today the weather is not so pleasant and no threshing can be done. Last night we had a snowfall, so I guess we have to be idle a few days. There is no money in threshing. I knew that beforehand, but it's all right this year as I had to stay on my land anyway for the threshing. I guess I'll make a \$100 or maybe a little more. When the harvest is over, I'm thinking of taking a trip to Swift. It has to do with Mrs. Lapp. I guess I'll get something from her this time; if not, I may see a lawyer and seek his advice.

I guess I'll stay here until I have entire claim on the land. If you want one of the quarters, you may have it because I won't get enough money to meet the claim requirements on the land, I'm afraid. And I would have loved, too, to go to Norway next Christmas. Are you still planning on going this fall or maybe wait for company?

How are things in Whitehall? Is there enough for you to do, and do you think you'll get that hospital? I hope you do. I would have enjoyed meeting our relatives in Whitehall, but I don't think I'll visit Whitehall before I leave for home unless it would happen that you'd be there next summer and I could come and work for you. But don't let us make any decisions as yet; they rarely come true. There is one thing, however, that I would have liked to see come true and that is to see you again before you leave for home, but I'm afraid that is impossible if you leave this fall. Father is sending NB People's Magazine to me, and I read there and also from the "Scandinavian" that times are very good at home now, so I guess that that will be the place to go to soon. And, if it is God's will, we may both go there in a little while.

I haven't heard anything from Thor Devig since last year's summer. He may well be angry with me since I did not accept his proposal. I may write to him some time during next winter. He still has his business, I've heard, and I'm sure he is doing well, too. I don't believe it will be difficult for me to get a start when I get home.

I'm ending my letter with the hope that I will get a letter from you soon.

Best regards,

Fred

Greetings to Sina Yndestad. Have you had any letters from Simonsen lately? I haven't heard anything from Huseby. He's also a swell guy!

From: Fredrik Olaf Hjelmeland on his Homestead in Saskatchewan, Canada
To: Fredrik Mikal Hjelmeland, his brother, in Whitehall, Wisconsin I believe

October 31, 1916

Dear Brother!

Thanks a lot for the letter I got a few days ago. You can believe I waited a long time before I got it. I went to the post office every mail day, but no letter. There are not many who write to me now. You are the only one here in this country and also the only one I care to hear from.

I am still busy with the harvest. It is a real dog's life. And there is little in it, too, because we lose a lot of time. But the way it is for me this year, it is better than nothing because I must be on the land anyway. And, we can take small jobs threshing near where we have our own land and still have the time count toward our stay on the homestead. I get \$4 a day for threshing in this area.

You ask in your letter how long I have before I can claim the land. I can do that next summer if nothing comes in the way. But, of course, it will take some months to get the deed on the land, but by next Christmas everything should be fixed up. And if it goes that way I'll take a trip home -- but we shouldn't think that far ahead. You ask if I'm thinking of staying at home, but that's hard to say. That depends on how things turn out after I get home, but no matter what, either you or I must go back a trip because I don't expect to have sold our property by then. I'll wait until times get better.

There was an engineer out here awhile back and surveyed the railroad here. He surveyed a half mile from my land, but it is hard to say where it is going to go before we see it. Hope it comes soon.

The crop out here was fairly good this year. I, for my part, didn't get anything because of hail, and the same thing happened to some of my neighbors. I wrote in my last letter that you could have half the land, and that you certainly can. I won't be a farmer anyway. I am going to try to get ahold of enough money to start an electric shop either here or at home, preferably at home. If you are going to stay at home, then I'll probably also stay in Norway. Are you going back? Then I will probably do the same, but we shouldn't live apart from one another as we do now. That's not very pleasant.

I can see from your letter that you have plenty of work down there. I am so happy to hear that. Those two houses that you were going to build in Whitehall, are they by contract also? You can be sure I would like to be together with you if nothing more but to carry brick and mortar to you. Hope you get that hospital also.

Do you think you'll be going to Norway this winter? I don't suppose you could wait another year and we could go together maybe. There is another thing, Fred, and that is if you go home now and are going to buy cattle, it's going to cost you an awful lot of money. They will surely get to be cheaper after the war I would think. And there is another thing also. They are talking about compulsory military service here in Canada. If that should happen, I would probably have to go.

But then I would put the land in your name so you could have control of it. But I don't think there is going to be any compulsory service here; it is just talk. There are far too few laborers here in Canada the way it is. No matter what the circumstances, I'd like to meet you again before you go home. So, if you're going home in the winter, we have to arrange where we can meet, even if we have to go half the way each of us. I would think that if you stayed another year that you would have plenty of work to do down there where you are now. You'll probably get that church also, I think. But you mustn't listen to me, Fred. There are more at home waiting for you than want you to stay here. Yes, you understand.

I am sending you a picture of some of the threshing crew. You see me there also if you look closely. It's a tough bunch. Everyone has a homestead around here.

Have you heard anything from Norway lately? I got the letter you sent me from Kristine. Have you heard anything from Simonsen? You must go after them for money this fall. They have made good money this summer, and they have had a good crop also. If they don't pay this fall, they will never pay; that I can tell you. They are probably expecting to use the house for nothing.

You must write immediately -- right now, Fred, because I look for a letter from you every mail day.

Many greetings.

Your brother,
Fred

Can you get ahold of any Norwegian books from the Norwegians down around there? If you can borrow some, I will send them back when I have read them. I probably won't be going back to Swift until December. Then I'll be going after Mrs. Lapp.

Will be finished threshing about two weeks from now.

