

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.

Christmas card

From: Fredrik Olaf Hjelmeland in Swift Current, Saskatchewan; Canada  
To: Fredrik Mikal Hjelmeland, his brother, in America

Swift Current  
December 19, 1916

Dear Brother!

As you can see, I am still in Swift Current. I work for Carter Jones. I plan to stay here a couple of days more before I go back to the homestead. Have received your letter and will write soon. It is extremely cold here now.

I wish you a Merry Christmas and a Blessed New Year. Thank you for the old year. Wonder if we will celebrate Christmas at home next year.

Fred

Swift Current  
December 19/16  
Kjære bror!  
som du er er jeg  
i S. C. ender. Arbejder  
for Carter Jones. Kommer  
nu til at aflygge her  
en par dage endnu  
for jeg tror på om  
tiden. Her langt det  
brun. Skal skrive senere  
med det aller første. Det er  
stærkest kald her nu.  
Vil om du kan en god  
fæl Fred og at velkommen  
Nytter sig for det gamle  
året. Skal tro på en  
for jer selv. Hjelmeland  
Stk. osv. Fred.



At Christmas in  
remembrance  
Old pathways we tread,  
Where distant voices  
echo,  
And friendship's  
light is shed.

From J. O. Hjelmeland

To E. M. Hjelmeland



From: Helene Eide Knudtson, sister of my grandmother, Oline Eide  
Hjelmeland, in Kingsburg, California  
To: Fredrik Mikal Hjelmeland, her nephew, in Whitehall, Wisconsin

Kingsburg 16 January 1917

Dear Fred!

Thank you many times for your most welcomed letter. It was so kind of you to write to me. I haven't heard anything from Norway for a long time. Your youngest sister wrote me a long letter last winter, and I was so happy to hear from her that I answered at once. But since then, I haven't heard anything from her or from my sister, Anne. I do not have her address either because she has sold her house on Harbor street. For that reason I cannot write to her. I thought of writing Sigurd to get her address, but maybe you can send it to me. If you can, it would be very kind of you. When you write letters home, ask your sister Anne if she got my letter.

I see that you are planning to go home next autumn. Well, I guess you are old enough now to go home and get married! I hope you get a girl as good as yourself. Your sister told me in her letter that you had someone waiting for you. When you write won't you tell me who she is. I doubt if I know her, but I am sure I know her folks. How I wish that you could have come to visit us, but I know it would cost a lot of money so I can't expect it. When you send letters home, you must greet your father from me and also all your brothers and sisters.

We have had a very cold winter; but, it hasn't done so much damage around here. We only grow enough oranges and lemons for our own use. But where Mathias Knudson lives they only grow these types of fruit and from what I understand, they have frozen and the harvest has been lost. But so it is. We almost have to expect it sometimes. We lost our harvest in Dakota three years in a row. Now we have to take what comes and be grateful because we are well. Then we can always find a way.

Robert was home during Christmas vacation. He is a very fine boy; he is almost as nice as you, Fred. Kathe and Tobias are back in Dakota. They came back (from Norway ?) in the summer. They could not visit anyone in Sunnfjord because having so many small children made it too difficult to travel about. She wrote me and said they would go to Norway again when the children were older and then they would visit Sunnfjord, I am sure they will come and see you too. He has bought another farm now in Dakota, and they have bought a new Studebaker automobile. But Kathe wrote me, too, that Tobias was thinking of Norway now when they have had this cold weather with so much snow. He has his own sea boat there that he has to fish with.

Greet Berte from me. Tell her that I was surprised she could write me now at her age. I have heard that Anders Fredrickson is dead. I suppose you were at his funeral. Greet all of them from me. And, if you have time, send me a few words and the address of my sister, Anne, please. Live well.

From your aunt Helene

Greet Anderson (Hans) and all at Monsens.

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

Swift Current, Sask.  
Canada  
January 20, 1917

Dear brother!

I learned from Marie yesterday that you have not heard from me for ever so long. I sent you a letter, to Whitehall, between Christmas and New Years. It must have gotten lost. That is the first letter that has been lost that I know of. And I have been going here waiting for a letter from you. It wasn't strange then that I didn't hear anything.

As you can see, I am still in Swift (Current), but I will be going to my land again next week. I quit work a week ago. I would have gone to my land by now if I hadn't been waiting for a letter from Mrs. Lapp. That is a person who doesn't hurry too much. When I came into town before Christmas, there was a letter here for me at Simonsens from her. She wrote she had some money for me but wanted to know where to send it. I wrote to her right away but didn't get an answer. And since that time I have sent several letters but haven't heard a sound! One week ago I wrote to her again, and it was a very firm letter, too. And I registered it so she must get it. I'm waiting for an answer now. If I don't hear from her, I'll get a lawyer to write to her. That confounded woman!

I have had a pretty good time since I arrived here. We had a nice time at Christmas, but I didn't get one single Christmas card this year, nor any letters. But possibly there are some for me at the homestead. Have you heard anything from home lately?

We have had a cold winter up here this year. But now half the winter is over, so it goes fast.

Do you have a fair amount of work lined up at Whitehall for the summer? I think the daily pay will be high in Canada this summer.

I'll write to you again as soon as I get to the homestead. You can send your letter there. Hope there will be a letter from you when I get there.

This is a new year. I hope we meet once again this year. Many greetings.

Your brother,

Fredrik

Address: Canuck, Sask.

ML

From: Gunder Mikalsen Hjelmeland in Sundhavnvik  
To: Sven Vaage, his Supervisor in Førde

Sundhavnvik  
31 May 1917

Mr. Sven Vaage, Division Engineer

I forgot to mention to you, when we last met in Førde, that I would like to request approximately three or four days leave of absence from my work to attend the wedding of my youngest daughter which is to be held on June 15.

Now I, respectfully, beg to request permission to go home for those days, approximately three working days. I will be much obliged if you will allow me to make this trip. The wedding is to take place in my house at Hjelmeland.

Respectfully yours,

G.M. Hjelmeland

The reply from Mr. Vaage is below:

Granted

Before you leave you must make arrangements regarding your work, as you have done in the past when you have been away, so that the work can continue uninterrupted.

Førde, 3 June 1917

Sven Vaage

From: Petrina Hjelmeland Eide in Brekstad near Trondhjem  
To: Gunder Mikalsen Hjelmeland, her father, at home on Hjelmeland

Brekskad 16 December 1917

My dear Father!

Hearty thanks for your letter. I thought immediately that I must write right away. Yes, dear father, I think of you so often, and we talk about you so often. You were a good father. When I was a child I did not think so much about that, which can be expected of a child. Children are children. They only demand and the parents will so gladly give them all they have, without thinking that it could be too much.

If only you, father, could have come to us one evening at Christmas! It would be so cozy when grandfather arrived. You must take a trip to us. Take fourteen days one summer or spring. When times become normal again, surely it will not be as expensive to travel as now. Money, has little value now. I got a pair of shoes yesterday. They cost Kr. 27. Awhile ago, before the war, they would have cost only Kr. 15.

We are doing fine, however, and have all we need. Even though I have much to do, I still have some relaxing time. It's so nice to have dear ones to work for that we love; that makes the work seem so much easier. But it's true I'm often very tired when evening comes. By 7:00 Gunnar and Leidulv have fallen asleep so it is quiet here then and I can have a restful interval before I go to bed.

This past week we have had a lady here making flatbread. She was here for a day and a half. She can only do so much each day, as she not only makes the dough, but also rolls it out and bakes it. It's good to have so much good flatbread.

Andreas is excellent at getting our daily needs filled. He does not want us to be in need. But it is certainly not so easy during these times when everything is so exceptionally expensive. Good thing that we are not such a big family to feed. Leidulv and Gunnar do not need so much food yet. Leidulv eats less than he did just after I stopped breastfeeding him. But he looks very good and is very big for his age. Gunnar is really big and heavy, but he has not started walking yet. He got a nice brown knitted suit yesterday. It cost Kr. 13. All wool is unbelievably expensive now. But we must be glad we can get it at all. We have extremely better conditions here in this country compared to many other countries. Oh if only this war would stop. It has made so many homes unhappy. Who is responsible! They will, I suppose, wash their hands and say like Pontious Pilate, "I am not to blame for the blood of the innocent."

When I saw in the newspaper that "Bergensfjord" (ship) had arrived from America, I felt how happy I would have been if my brothers had come now for Christmas. Surely they would never join the war. Mikal will surely want to come home and take over work on the farm. Ivar is getting the land by the hills this spring and has enough to do. He is getting it just when he needs it. Marte must be lonesome now. It must be sad that a childhood home becomes so desolate. I still feel that Hjelmeland is my home, and if Hjelmeland gets worked up to a "flowering garden" and

well cared for, it would be wonderful to come home again to see. Surely after these times it must become better to be a farmer than it has been. How many times have you, father, traveled back and forth to Hjelmeland? Must be many times. It's been so often that you think nothing of it. I feel as though I can see you coming up from the road sign. How Kristina's little children run to meet you, so happy to see grandfather coming. Yah, they have many little ones. There'll be a whole flock around the table for Christmas. It would be so wonderful to come in to you all for a short while Christmas Eve! And, to be a good Christmas elf and have a package along for each of you! I'd like so much to give you something because it's so nice to give to the one's we love. But, I can be glad knowing that all my loved ones are doing all right and have food and clothes.

Oh if only everyone could come to us for one evening. Andreas is sitting here now playing the organ. He has learned quite a lot now. I have started learning too, but I have less time to practice. Both the little boys are sleeping. I never write before they are asleep, and I'm sure you never get a letter where I haven't mentioned that the boys are asleep.

Anna is probably not at Hjelmeland for Christmas Eve, but she'll be coming some time during Christmas. That'll be her surprise!

Strange to have one's first Christmas in one's own home. Everything is so quiet; the clock is ticking so loudly, and there is something not quite usual! But things have become different for me. My present home has become more like my childhood home. Now there are children in our house, and that makes it more like Christmas. If only we had had grandfather. That would be so much fun.

Sometimes the children really have quite a noisy time. It seems like the house is on end when they drag out benches and chairs and the one hollers after the other. Today when the boys and I sat on the sofa, we played that we were out traveling. Leidulv said we should travel to Bygstad. That's the first time I had heard him mention Bygstad. I thought it seemed so amazing. He sees Bygstad as a special place, and I will be sharing with Leidulv everything that I think is so wonderful there.

You must not wait too long before you write to me during Christmas. I want so much to get a letter and hear how everyone spent Christmas.

Kristina has very much to do. She surely doesn't have much time to have a short rest on a pillow. But she must just remember that one must take only one day at a time, and that way everything goes fine.

Yes, a blessed Christmas, father, and a good New Year is our wish from all of us. You must wish everyone there a Merry Christmas!

Many loving greetings from your Petrina

Dear Kristina!

I have thought so often that I should write to you, but I have very little time. How are things going now that you no longer have a maid? Little Olga has surely grown, but of course she is still a child and can't manage to help with food and clothes yet. So mother has to be the clever one! Yes, you have many sweet children, Kristina. I hope you will reap many joys for all the work you have done -- and you will, you'll see. Next summer I must get home and talk with you and yours. I'd like to do that

believe me. Write a letter to me during Christmas. Of course I can't expect that.

Hearty greetings to you and all yours -- and a Merry Christmas!

Yours,

Petrina

. From: Petrina Hjelmeland Eide in Brekstad, near Trondheim  
To: Kristina Hjelmeland Osen, her sister, at Hjelmeland  
Note: Petrina and Kristina are two of my aunts, sisters  
of my father.

Brekstad 6 January 1918

My dear Kristina!

Thanks so much for your letter and picture. It was so fun to see you all again. I look at your lovely "flock" of children often. (Note: Kristina and Ivar had eight children at this time.) The picture is especially good, but I didn't recognize Oddlaug. Isn't she a lot like Asbjorn? And I could scarcely recognize Audhild either, but all the others I could. Olga is very much like herself and Signe, too, but she has grown so much. My but you have three fine and handsome sons. They are going to be three wonderful boys. Ingolf is doing good. He is no longer the last little boy. It is now Oddfinn, and he will surely be very special. Has Ingolf begun to read? We would like to have put a frame on your picture right away, but there were no frames to get here, so we will have to wait until we get to Trondheim.

I am wondering if I'll be able to see you all this summer. If the war keeps on, we will just have to stay where we are, but it would be so wonderful to see home again. It is not that I am so lonesome for Bygstad, but I am often lonely for my family. I am living well. I have enough of everything I need, and enough work too. My little boys are a lot of work, but I can't complain to you, Kristina, because you, of course, have much more to do than I have. I thought about you when I saw you all on the photo, of how much work you have had with your children up to now. You have had to do many, many things. Oh, I do hope and pray that your children will repay you for all you have done for them. You must not have Olga do too much; it is such heavy work both in the house and in the barn at Hjelmeland. The women have a lot to do, that is for sure. Gudmund and Osbjorn must help as much as they can, carry wood and water and look after little Oddfinn.

Before the New Year, we were able to get two liters of oil but now we get only one. In the morning we have electric lights when the dairy is running. You couldn't have had a very good lamp when you wrote your letter; I had to laugh when I read it. I thought it was a lot you had written me as I know how tired you must be at the end of the day and need so much to rest. Therefore you must have even more thanks! It is so good to hear from each other and especially at Christmas time. I have not heard from Marthin or Oline.

Yah, and how have you and yours had it at Christmas? It must have been a special time when Anemor came. How I wish you could have come to me. I baked both lefse and cakes for Christmas and cookies, too. We are doing fine as far as food is concerned. We fry vegetables and have with bread for our evening meal and often for breakfast, too. Fried potatoes are very good; I just brown them with a little fat on the pan.

We have had it quiet here at Christmas time. There are not so many who stop in to us, and we have not so many places to go either. We visited Benteruds, the principal, the second day of Christmas, and the Sunday

between Christmas and New Years they should have visited us but then they received a telegram that his mother had died, and so they couldn't come. Only the dairy girl was here. Christmas Eve Liedulf was up until 12:30 and didn't want to go to bed then either but wanted to go out. He screamed like everything but was barely into bed when he fell fast asleep. He got a box of apples, chocolates, and nuts and a picture book from Mathias. And then he got a little horse from Benteruds, and from us he got a little picture book and some soldiers. So he had plenty to play with and the Christmas tree to look at. He doesn't look much at his new toys; the old ones are best. To drag the benches and chairs around the floor is the best fun for him. Now he has to be in most of the time because the weather has been so bad lately with snow and wind daily. It is like living on the mountain side. It seems it is blowing and howling all the time.

How are you doing as far as food is concerned? Is your pantry full? If we have sild and lots of potatoes, we won't starve too soon. I just love sild. Sometimes we have "sild oatmeal" and sometimes sild and potatoes and sour milk. Now milk and butter are very expensive, but the farmer deserves the higher prices. He needs to get something for all his work, but goodness it burns in your change purse when you pay for butter and milk. We have got quite a bit of flour. I think we can manage until mid summer with sifted rye flour, wheat, and oatmeal and then we have a stack of flat bread. Many will probably be starving now; and if the war isn't soon over, I think it will be bad for many of us. I think there must be a lot of talk about food at home too. Here it is the question of the day.

Mathias writes that he had gotten a letter from Mikal for Christmas and that he was going to Fredrik for Christmas and that they won't be coming home now. It is a good thing that they can be together over there. Has there come any other Americans to Bygstad other than Bendik Hjelmeland?

You must thank Father very much for the Christmas gifts. I'll write soon to him. I like very much to write to you back home, but I am tired when evening comes and when the children are awake it is impossible. The little boys make more racket than the little girls, isn't that so? How is Father doing? Does he get some oil from you? If he doesn't, he then can't lay and read in bed. He must have received the book we sent him. It was a good book; and he will surely get much pleasure from it. Couldn't Olga write a little to me? I forgot to send "People's Friend" when I sent the book, but I'll get it sent. You, Signy, must also write to me; it is so much fun to get letters from you. You all must write often.

Gunnar has not started walking yet, but he stands without holding on to anything. He is big now. Next summer I can take both out with me.

Yah, if only you, Kristina, could have come in to me an evening. I believe you, too, would have enjoyed that. It's 10:00 o'clock so I don't dare sit up any longer as we don't have a lamp; unfortunately it is broken. We had a little hall lamp but it too has broken, so we can't use it.

Yes, many thanks again for your letter and photo. You were a "pearl" to rememebr me. When will my turn come to send you something? A very hearty greeting to you all from us all.

Your Petrina

ML



From: Petrina Hjelmeland Eide in Brekstad, Trondhjem  
To: Gunder Mikalsen Hjelmeland, her father, on Hjelmeland in Gaular

Brekstad  
27 February 1918

Dear Father!

It has been a long time since I have heard from anyone at home. Before I got Anna's letter, I thought something must be wrong home at Hjelmeland or at Olina's or at Marthin's. I dreamed at night about sick people and always some of mine were included. I was almost afraid to open Anna's letter, but when I opened it the fright was gone and I was so happy to hear everyone was all right at home. I was so happy when I learned everyone was fine that I forgot I had waited so desperately for a letter.

I waited so for a Christmas letter, but none came. I know so well that all of you have so much to do during winter in the snow and the cold, but if only you could have sent me a few words. I think so often about all of you. Even if I have everything that I need, I sometimes feel a longing for those I left behind. You, Father, should write. Now you must write as soon as you get my letter.

Anna wrote that you had been to Førde. She would have liked to have been able to spend some Sunday afternoons at Hjelmeland. Yah, I have the same feeling, but we have to be happy even if we can't be in our own home place always. We are not so far that we cannot come home sometimes. Next summer, if all things are normal, we will try to take a trip if Andreas has time. He is so busy now, it is almost too much. He is secretary to "trade" (?) and he is bookkeeper for the egg coop. And besides that he has evening classes and his ordinary school work. He gets a little extra pay keeping the books for the egg center. They produce a lot of eggs here at Ørland, and now eggs are the unheard price of 4.80 kr. a kilo, and you don't get more than 15-17 in a kilo. The farmers around here are doing fine now. They are getting great prices for cheese and butter and milk so for us who buy, we surely will be feeling it in our pocket books.

How are things going at home? I often think of Kristina. I know she works very hard both early and late. Her many children (11) require much care and work.

I think she is looking forward very much to coming to Hjelmhaug. Has she been well this winter? And how are Olga and Signe doing now that they are the "big maids"? They can help a lot even ones the age of Signe if they want.

Have you been well this winter, Father? Anna didn't write anything about that. Are you going to travel out again in the spring and where?

Gunnar was real sick in the night, but he is fine again now. It's so difficult when such little ones are sick. He walks well now and is heavy and good just like Leidulf was. Leidulf is a big boy now and does errands for his mother. We are all living well. I am busy most of the time with the children, but it will be better when Gunnar can walk on his own. I often have to hold on to him anyway.

Many loving greetings to all of you from all of us.

Petrina

ML

From: Petrina Hjelmeland Eide, in Brekstad near Trondhjem  
To: Gunder Mikalsen Hjelmeland, her father, on Hjelmeland

Brekstad  
2 April 1918

Dear Father!

My heartfelt thanks for your letter. Strange it is to receive a letter sometimes. I had waited so long. Every single day I wondered what could be the reason why I did not hear from Hjelmeland. If you were too ill, the others could write. Then I thought: "Oh, no, they do not write if something is wrong," and I became so sad. Underneath my painful scare, there was a tiny hope that all was well with you; you just did not write to say so. When Anna's letter arrived saying all was well, a big burden vanished. I could not have been happier if someone had given me a gift.

On this evening, I am sitting here alone. Leidulf and Gunnar are sound asleep. They are healthy, chubby, and happy. Gunnar likes to be outside, but he is not much for walking. He just waddles and falls when outdoors. Recently he cut four molars which is very early. He also eats more than Leidulf, who eats so little lately. He ate much more earlier. Do you remember the summer he was home and went in the cupboard and helped himself to buttermilk? Buying milk now we pay 36 øre for one liter, 16 øre for skim milk. We are living well, never lacking for anything.

Andreas has a new and extra position now. He is Business Manager of Provisioning. He receives kr. 2000 in yearly salary. Added to the other salary, it is a good job. Now he is busy all day. His office hours are from 9-12 and from 3-5. Then he teaches two hours a day and spends two hours at the laboratory (chemical experiments with river water). Soon he is done with that for this year, having just the two hours of teaching a day. He is also Business Manager for the Egg Coop, receiving for that job 1% of all income. It amounts to about kr. 500-600 a year. They sell an enormous number of eggs here at Ørlandet. Some sell for more than kr. 100 a month. This is what you should start at home, too. Get together and send the eggs to the consumer, not using the merchants as middlemen.

You can see that Andreas has become very popular here at Ørlandet, making us want to stay here for a long time. I would be happier if we were closer to Hjelmeland. It is sad never to see your own family. I have a burning desire to come home this summer, but I would have to travel with the children alone because Andreas would not have the time. He has too many "doings", as you always used to say, Father. If you could only come and see us now and then, that would be heartwarming. Of course there are many who have to leave their home district and not do as well as we are. I have an able husband. He is also good to me and the children. I enjoy myself in our cottage, but these flat fields I could do without. I miss the forests and rivers from home terribly. Here you can never hear a river run its course; it is too flat.

Easter Sunday Andreas and I went to church - first time we went to church together since we came to Ørlandet. The young girl who is at Benterud's

(the Principal) took care of the children. One Sunday earlier Leidulf went to church alone. He sat down by a girl he knew, but in a short while he said he wanted to go home and just left. Coming home he told us he had been to church, but I thought he was just talking nonsense. The pastor was on the bridge he said. Later others told us that he had indeed been to church. He got to go with us another Sunday but he was so fidgety that his father had to take him home.

Wednesday, the 29th of last month, Nonaas and his wife came for a visit. He is a teacher whom Andreas knew from Garnes. Now he has a position at the Correctional School in Trondhjem. They did not leave until the day before Easter Sunday and in the late afternoon. I had much to do while they were here, and I had cleaned and made ready for Easter before they came making me very tired on Easter Eve. It is not easy to have guests over so many days and two children to care for besides. All this housefuss makes you weak. I am not as strong as I was when home at Hjelmeland.

It would be good to come home this summer and do some framing and cock-of hay. I am, however, in good health every day and have been all winter, and Andreas and the boys as well. The Nonaas' have no children. They have been married longer than us. Of course they preached child-upbringing to us. We should do such and such in bringing them up right -- just look at their dog, how obedient he was. People with no children always preach like that. They always know best how someone else's children should behave.

Many have died this winter. Olina Eide's passing sure created a big empty space. Personalities like hers put a distinct mark on a place, and it was fun and a delight when meeting her. I can vividly see her walking around. Also Nikolina, she too had something special about her. You met her mostly on the road to or from church. Now I am not going to see them any more. The generation that lived in the district when we grew up is closer to us than the one now growing up. When we come to Bygstad in our old age, if we live that long, we may find it deserted. But our relatives are there and make us long for the place. May we always keep together and never become strangers to one another.

How are you doing, Father, and the others there at home? Kristina, I have often wanted to see you and will if I make a trip home this summer. You have so much hustle and bustle, but to have many children is a blessing. They are no happier those who have no children. They get tired of themselves. For us who have children the days fly by so fast.

How was your Easter? Did you have good weather? Was Anna home, too? Hope you will write soon. It is so nice to get letters from you and the others at home as well.

I have to tell Olga thank you for her letter. Will write her for her coming birthday. That is a promise.

Many greetings from us all,

Your Petrina

Greetings to Olina and hers and to Marthin and his family from us and to everyone at Hjelmeland. Before Easter it was drizzly and cold, but now it is mild and nice with bare ground.

ÅS

From: Kristina Hjelmeland Osen on the Hjelmeland farm  
To: Gunder Mikalsen Hjelmeland, her father, working on the road

Hjelmeland 12 June 1918

My dear Father!

Many thanks for your letter! I am happy to know that you have arrived safely and found lodging. You are old now, Father, and it is amazing you are still able to work out on the road so far away from your home. We here at Hjelmeland are all well. Ivar is still working on the road, but he will have to quit before long. (Father 71 yrs old)

It has been raining here a lot since you left, and it has been rather cold off and on. I can tell you that we have gotten ahold of Berent's sheep but lost the two lambs. Olga and Signy found the sheep up in the field, so we don't worry about that any more. Berent and Marta have been at home for "skjiftesamling" (a change of land ownership). Berent stayed at Lem. Marta stayed awhile at her friends both at Resa and at Fauske. None of them were up here. Ivar met Berent at the market place at Førde and asked him to come and see us, but they didn't come. I would have welcomed them but if they do not wish to come, they will have to do as they like.

We have sold our horse to Adolf A. Aase. Ivar sold it before he went to the market. The price was 1400 kroner. I suppose you have heard prices on horses are going down on the market and that a great many of the farmers returned without selling their horses. Our neighbors envied Ivar because he sold his horse for so good a price. Ivar gave Adolf 40 kroner back which Adolf was very grateful for. Adolf got 1350 kroner for his own horse, so he didn't lose much money. The horse Adolf sold was just as good as the one he bought from Ivar but, unfortunately, he had to sell it because it jumped the fences. But don't tell anyone about the 40 kroner because they just want to keep that between the two of them. Yes, he who bought a horse in the spring got a good deal.

We will put the money in the bank, Father, and when you come home we will divide it. Yes, it is good to have such a good father whom we can go to and who will help us when we need it.

Olga went to Førde with her father, and they went out to Anna at Steinen and had a good time there. She was in good health. We haven't had any letter from Petrina nor had Anna. I will just have to sit down and write her a letter. I am a bit worried about them. But, if there was anything wrong, she no doubt would have sent us a message.

We have buried a black ram which was found dead at Kleiven, and two of our sheep who had twins were seen with only one lamb each. Yes, that is           ?. Losing sheep is a great loss for us. We can just barely see the potatoes now in the potato fields, and there are very few weeds.

You were well received when you came to Eikefjorden, and it is good to know that you are appreciated wherever you are.

Live well dear Father,

Yours, Kristina

Must greet you so much from Ivar and greetings to Grandfather from all your grandchildren. Oddlaugh speaks often of Grandfather.

I will go down to my sister Oline Sunday so she can hear from you also.

We have received our money for April. We got 379 kroner. It was the biggest payment that anyone has gotten but we did not take any butter out that month (for our own use) ?.

With warmest greetings from me. Write soon.

Kristina

LJ  
JHa

From: Anna Hjelmeland Aase at Steinen, near Førde, Sunnfjord  
To: Gunder Mikelsen Hjelmeland, her father, at work on the road

Steinen 20 June 1918

Dear Father!

Many thanks for the letter I received from you the 15th of this month. I see you are back at your usual work on the road again. I think you are happy now that you are healthy and strong again. It was good you got back the same lodging as I believe it was a good place to stay.

Here everything with us is going fine. John started working at the factory Monday after we came back here. There are not many laborers now and they will all soon be finished. Then John will be at Skei during the haying time.

I suppose you did receive the telegram we sent you? We thought perhaps if the boats were going, you could come out on Florøy a few hours to see Petrine. She came over to Førde this Tuesday and will be staying here with us until Sunday. Then Ivar and Kristina will come here if the weather is good. Petrina will be going to Hjelmeland Sunday night. It went well with her traveling with both of the small boys. They had had a bit of seasickness, but other than that everything went well. They are two nice big boys Petrina has, and they made a lot of activity and noise here at our place. Petrina hadn't gotten your letter before she left. She will write you when she comes back to Hjelmeland.

Ivar and Olga came to us at the time of the market. Olga came along as she was in need of a raincoat. They now have a summer maid at Hjelmeland, and the dairy-maid will perhaps come there. Petrina will stay at home for two months this summer so she will be of some help also, but she has much work with her small boys.

Ivar sold his horse before he came to the market for 1400 kroner. There weren't prices like that on horses at the market so Ivar was lucky this time also.

Well I must end for this time. Live well, dear Father, and let me hear from you often.

Loving greetings from Petrina and  
the children and John and from

Your Anna

JM  
ML

From: Petrina Hjelmeland Eide in Brekstad, Trondhjem  
To: Gunder Mikalsen Hjelmeland, her father, out working on the roads

Brekstad  
20 October 1918

Dear Father!

Hearty thanks for your letter. Oh how late I am when it comes to writing letters. Always it gets put to the last. It's just like I can't get settled down to write a letter. I can't understand why it is I write fewer and fewer letters. It must be I am always so busy with the household. There is one thing and then soon there is another. I have a sixteen-year old girl here to help me, but there is not so much she can do alone. She gets 20 kr. a month.

Now we have moved into the new house. There are nice rooms, and they are painted all over so they glow and shine. Yah, I do like this place very much. We pay 30 kr. a month for rent but then we have free electric lights. The rooms are warm and good. We will probably be staying here at Ørland now that Andreas is getting 5000 kr. a year in wages and also all the age benefits. And then he figures he can make a little extra wage on the side.

Money goes fast now that everything is so expensive, but we're doing fine. We bought a sheep that weighed 32 kilos. That was an expensive "fellow"! Meat is extremely expensive and so is butter and milk. Butter is 7 kr. per kilo and milk 47 øre a liter. Fish is the cheapest here, but this spring it has been so hard to get. They have been fishing so little around here. Only a couple of times have we gotten ahold of fresh sild.

Leidulf has not been feeling well for awhile. He was in bed a day and apparently had Spanish flu, but now he has jaundice. We had the doctor yesterday. He is up again, but he doesn't have any desire for food and he is very weak. He will not taste the medicine we got from the doctor. You know he is a little strong-willed fellow who won't let you threaten or tempt him. He is so yellow over his whole body and is getting so thin and small.

Gunnar is healthy and thriving. He is heavy and chubby and good and is all over the place. He is very restless and always has to have someone looking after him so he doesn't hurt himself. Yah, there is so much life and excitement with little boys like that, but it is so good when they are well. It is so hard to see Leidulf when he is not feeling as well as before. I sure hope he is soon well again. He sleeps well at night.

How are you doing Father? Are you going to stay over there until Christmas? I don't suppose you know yet if Mikal will be coming home by Christmas. Surely we'll have peace (from the war) now and both Fredrik and Mikal will come home (from America).

Andreas and I have been well all fall and our children, too, except for this with Leidulf. Here the Spanish flu is raging terribly. It's mostly young people who die, especially men. Here there is sorrow in many homes.

At the dairy nearly everyone has been sick with the Spanish flu. The manager and his wife were very sick but they are all right again now. It is important not to get a cold.

I have not had a letter from Hjelmeland for a long time, but I don't write either so I can't expect others to write. I had a letter from Anna a long time ago. She was up again and was going to have a christening in fourteen days. And it is now three weeks and I have still not written.

The weather has been very nice here this fall. All the harvest is in and everyone got a lot. We have enough potatoes and vegetables for our own use, but we didn't get as much as last year. I am glad for each day that passes that I and all of mine can stay well. It is so sad when sickness comes.

Yes, dear Father, you must live well. I think often about you way out there among so many strangers, but it is good to have something to keep busy with and receive a reasonable pay. It is good to be able to manage oneself. Do you get good food? And do you get good butter? It is important to have good daily care.

Leidulf is standing up against me as I write, throwing little bits of paper on my letter and pushing me.

Loving greetings from us all.

Yours,

Petrina



From: Simon Mikalsen Hjelmeland Lien (my grandfather's brother) in  
Norway (Took the Lien name after moving to the Lien farm)  
To: Gunder Mikalsen Hjelmeland, his brother, in Norway

Melheim in Ovre Årdal  
3 November 1918

Dear Brother!

Now I have come to Ovre Årdal in Sogn. I arrived here on Sunday, October 20. I received orders to come here September 13, but I refused then to go, but now I have had to come anyhow.

The road we are going to build stretches six kilometers in distance from Farnes, in a northerly direction, following the valley to the uppermost farm named Aabølle. The road building began at the end of July. The first foreman here was Gjørven, the next one Remme from Remmedalen in Nordfjord, and I am the third foreman here. The part of the road that is left to build consists mostly of solid rock and big boulders, one on top of the other. It is the lowest part of the road that is left to be completed, and here it goes in bends and curves all the way. The road building started at the upper part. It is very steep and like the slopes at Hjelmeland except for the rocks. You know what it looks like.

About 60 men are working here. In addition are the blacksmith, myself, and the people who are putting gravel on the surface of the road. I am very busy. Rumme had told the workers one foreman could not handle the work from now on, but I think I can manage if I have       ?. Only experienced people are working here; they have done the roadbuilding to Tyinfaldene so we are progressing quickly. There are quite a number of people in the Ovre Årdal area and especially in Farnes. Most of them are workers, but quite a few are farmers.

At Tyinfaldene people went on strike this summer. A lot of them are working here now. Here it is very expensive to live: 4 kroner for food and lodging. I make very little profit working here, but I like it here at Årdal. Days pass by quickly. I am very occupied in my work, and I hardly know what day it is.

The weather has been nice since I came here with no rain, comfortable temperatures, and no wind. A lake nine kilometers long stretches from Nedre to Ovre Årdal, and here there is a steamboat. The mountains on both sides of the lake are very steep; there are no farms here. They are working out plans for factories here at Ovre Årdal, and if it comes into full production, then it will be a city here, or more correctly, Rjukan, the industrial city, No. 2.

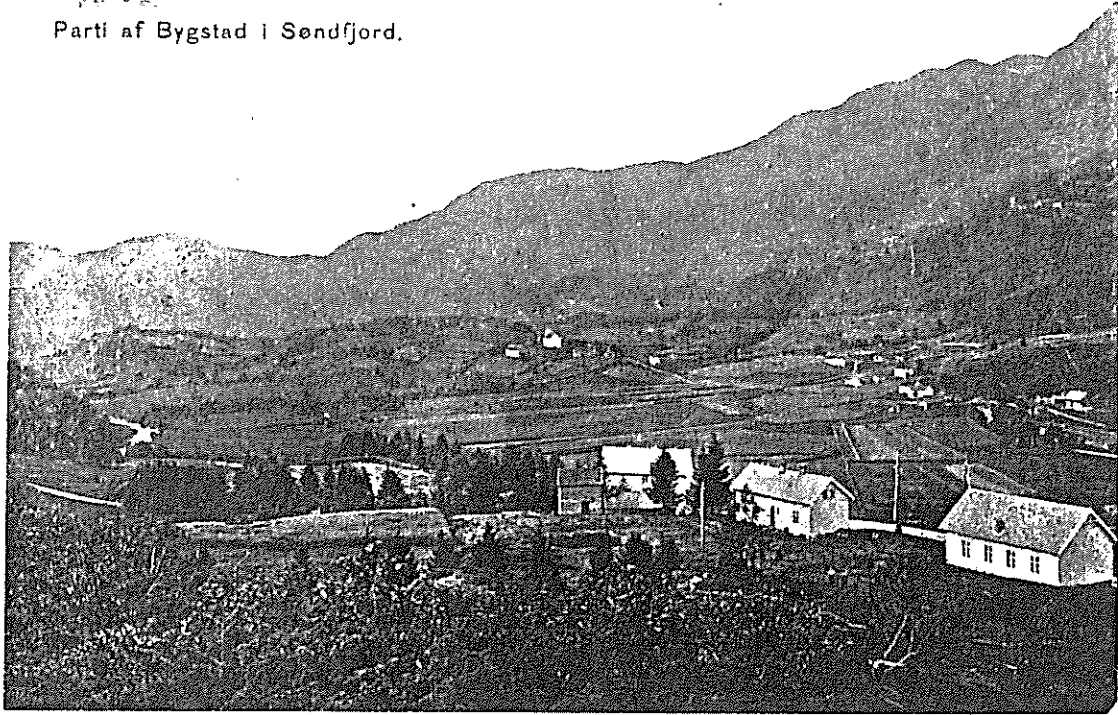
The road to Tyinfaldene is built on the steep mountain and is winding at the top. At Farnes is also a hotel where I had to stay the first night I arrived here. It was Saturday night at 9:30.

When you receive this letter you must send me one so I can hear how you are getting on. In closing, kind regards from your brother. Live well in the Lord.

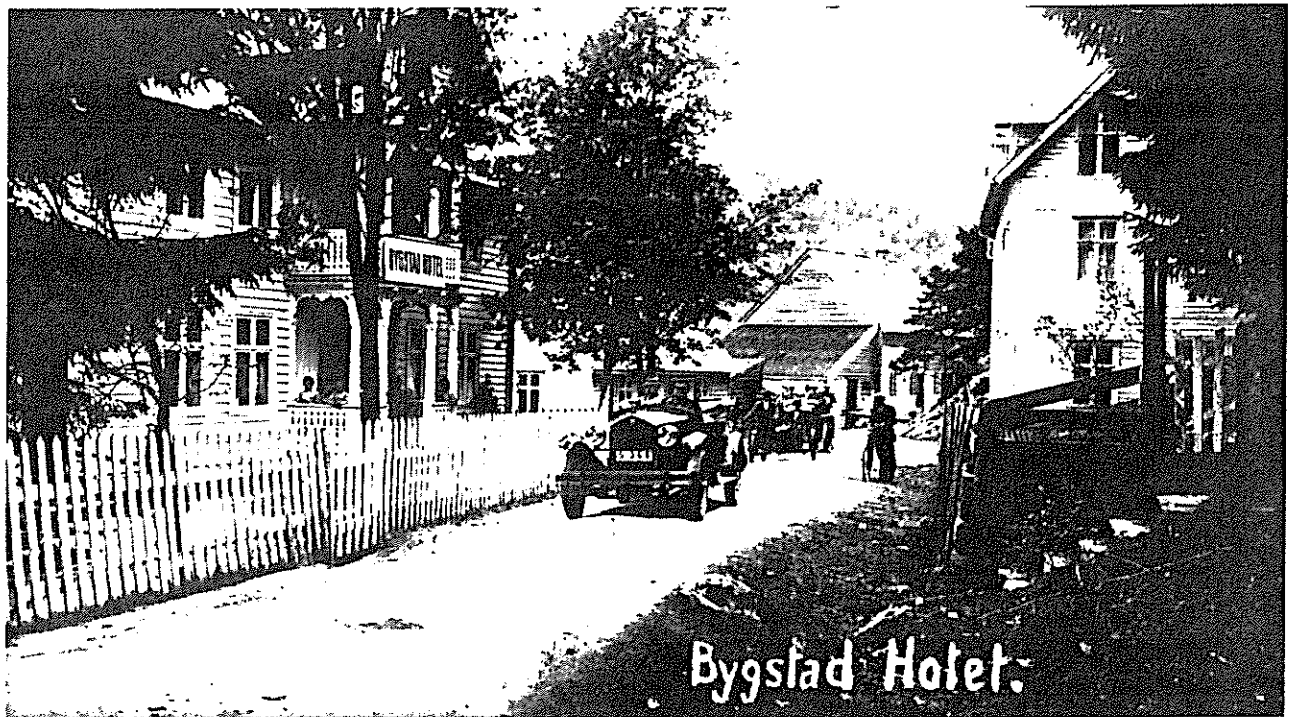
Warm greetings

S. Lien

Parti af Bygstad i Søndfjord.



*Uncle Mikal has come to the decision to return to Norway, after nine years, 1910-1919*

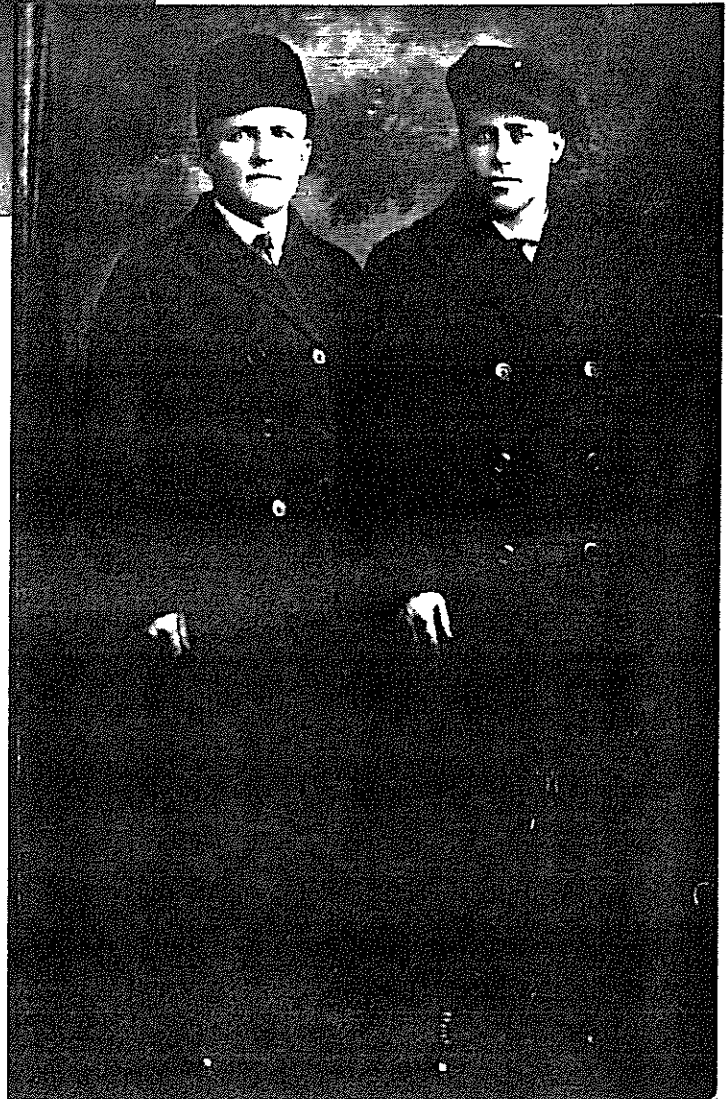




The Time had come  
for these two brother  
whose bond was so  
incredible strong,  
to each go their own  
way, Uncle Mikal  
choosing to return  
to Norway, my  
father later choosing  
to make for himself  
a life in America

Dad Mikal

Despite the distance  
between them, they  
continued this bond  
for the remaining  
49 years in which  
they lived; both died  
the same year, 1968,  
Mikal in May, Dad  
in November.



Mikal Dad

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

Regina, Saskatchewan  
February 5, 1919

Dear Brother

Received your letter just one hour ago, and I see that you are serious about your returning to Norway this time.

I said to Marie the other day that I wouldn't believe you were actually going until you had bought the ticket. I see you have bought it now so now it's for certain. With all my heart, I wish you a pleasant voyage. I had thought of writing home about your journey home but then I wasn't too sure it would materialize so decided not to; now it is too late. I'm sure it must have cost you a lot of money as it is a very costly voyage. You'll have to try to find yourself a rich girl when you get back!

I haven't had any letters from Norway since last time I wrote you. I'm hoping to get one any day now from Kristine. You'll have to scold her for not writing to me when you see her!

As you see, I'm sending this letter to Chicago so you'll have it on Saturday. Perhaps I'll send you another letter to New York also.

When you get home now, I'm sure you'll go and visit Petrine also. I will write her in a few days. Yes, I'm sure you'll find many changes there since we were walking around Hjelmeland last. Please send me a letter from New York telling me all about what you have bought for yourself before leaving. That I would appreciate knowing.

Marie has written to you, but I understand from your letter that you have not received it. She is leaving here on Tuesday, the 11th of this month. As for myself, I will be hanging around here for two maybe three more weeks--work from time to time as before and once in awhile play a game of poker. Last week I did well and won \$75, so that was not too bad.

I have also applied for Naturalization Papers now, so that's been taken care of; but, it may take one or two months before I get them. I got the money from Imperial Oil a week ago.

Well dear brother of mine, if I can do fairly well this summer, we may see each other again sometime next winter which will give us a good reason for a real party! Of course you may be married by then, but that won't matter. I am glad that you are going home. You may think it strange for me to say that I am happy about your leaving me, but you know what I mean. Just now your place is at home, so you can begin making a decision about your future. Here you were never sure of anything about the future and had to live accordingly--almost like a gypsy. But, as you have learned to live with it, you may hate to give it up; it gets in the blood and it is difficult to stop.

I'll send you a letter in New York.

A thousand greetings,  
Fredrik

A thousand greetings,

Fredrik

PS I think it is best that you use Blilie's address until I am more certain where I will be this summer. It is Box 23, Swift Current

SB

From: Fredrik Olaf Hjelmeland in Regina, Saskatchewan; Canada  
To: Fredrik Mikal Hjelmeland, at Hjelmeland, in Norway  
Mikal has just returned to Norway after nine years.

Regina, Sask.  
March 25, 1919

Dear Brother!

You can't believe how strange it is to use this address when I write to you. It is still difficult for me to believe that you have returned home to Hjelmeland. I am sure you will be there when this letter arrives. I received the card you sent from New York, so I knew what day you left.

I am still here in Regina, but in a couple of days I will be going to Swift Current and from there to my homestead. What I will be doing this summer is not quite sure yet. I will find out after I come to Swift Current where I will meet Rollefson. At any rate, I will get a job so I can work out in the district. You know there is better money in that. The bricklayers and the carpenters are still on strike. Whether they get what they demand is not decided yet. There is very little housebuilding now.

It has been rather cold here for a while now, so spring does not come as early as it looked at a certain time this winter. Marie left Regina the 13th to go to Admiral. Maybe I will meet her when I go to Swift. I have not been working much lately. (English text) But, I have been playing poker most of the time. Made pretty good, more than expenses anyhow. You know I've got to do something. Don't worry about me. You know I can take care of myself in that game. (End of English)

You can be sure I have been waiting and longing for the first letter to come from home to hear how you find conditions at home now. You have a lot to take care of there, but don't be foolish and work yourself to death. Life is not that long.

When I come home, I want to set up a transmission plant for you. Maybe they will soon be installing power and light for the whole community. I surely hope they want to keep pace with the times in Bygstad too.

I have had Miss Sand here a few times. There is nothing between her and Lundblow any longer. (English) I don't care much for her either now. It seems that she cannot keep any friends any length of time. She is a funny girl that is what I found out. (End of English) She is going to Kristiania next Christmas.

This is enough for this time. I will write more in detail when I come to my homestead. Greet Father and all our brothers and sisters so much. I am certain Father is happy now that you have come home. From now on I will be writing letters to both you and Father. Will you be going up to see Petrine?

Box 23; Swift Current

Thousand greetings, Fredrik

I didn't really understand what you bought for Kristine, so explain it better in your next letter. Greet Bendik so much for me and thank him for his letter. I will write to him soon.

This passport contains 32 pages.  
Ce passeport contient 32 pages.



PASSPORT  
PASSEPORT

CANADA

No. of passport } 31198  
No du passeport }

Name of bearer } *Fredrick Olaf Lydbom Lars*  
Nom du porteur } *Requie,*

Accompanied by his wife }   
Accompagné de sa femme }

and  children

et de  enfants

NATIONAL STATUS } *A Naturalized British*  
NATIONALITÉ } *Subject 30th January*  
*1926 of Norwegian*  
*origin*

*The, Julian Hildworth, George*  
*Baron, Deputy of Army, St. B. St. W. W. W.*  
*Governor General and Commander in Chief*  
*of the Dominion of Canada*

*Request in the name of His Britannic*  
*Majesty, all those whom it may concern to*  
*allow the bearer*  
*to pass freely without let or hindrance and*  
*to afford him every assistance and protection*  
*of which he may stand in need*  
*Given under our hand and seal at Ottawa, three*  
*this Twelfth day of January 1923*



*By King of Norway*

PERSONAL DESCRIPTION  
SIGNALEMENT

Profession } <i>Electrician</i>	Wife	Femme
Profession } <i>Repsel, Aulens Norway</i>		
Place and date of birth } <i>25th December 1886</i>		
Lieu et date de naissance }		
Domicile } <i>Canada</i>		
Domicile }		
Face } <i>oval</i>		
Visage }		
Colour of eyes } <i>Blue</i>		
Couleur des yeux }		
Colour of hair } <i>Brown</i>		
Couleur des cheveux }		
Special peculiarities } <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
Signes particuliers }		

CHILDREN

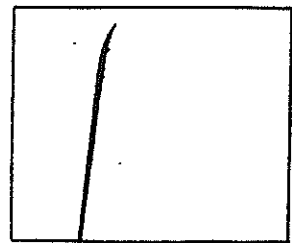
ENFANTS

Name Nom	Age Age	Sex Sexe

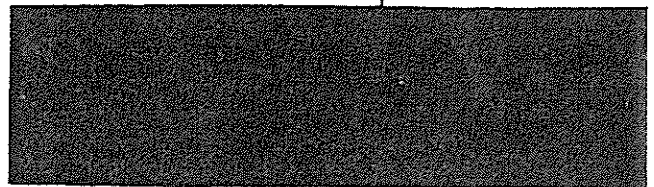
PHOTOGRAPH  
PHOTOGRAPHIE



OF WIFE  
DE FEMME



SIGNATURE OF BEARER

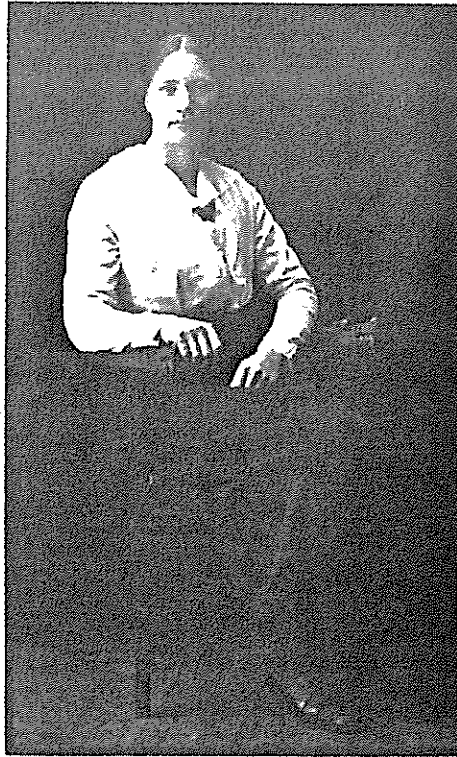


Signature of the Passport Officer :

Signature de l'agent délivrant le passeport :

*[Handwritten Signature]*





*Kristin Kristiansen.*

*Mathew, left, with friends - A Sunday at Vassenden*





From: Fredrik Olaf Hjelmeland in Moose Jaw, Saskatchewan, Canada  
after having been in North America for nine years  
To: Salutation reads to his father, sisters, and brothers, but  
it is predominately to his brother, Fredrik Mikal Hjelmeland  
who has just returned to Norway after nine years in America  
and Canada

Moose Jaw, Saskatchewan  
May 20, 1919

My dear Father, Sisters and Brothers!

Thank you a thousand times for a most longed-for letter which I received just an hour ago. I was afraid the letter had been lost somewhere since it took such a long time before it reached me.

The letter you sent from Bergen I got a long time ago when I was at the homestead. I have been here at Moose Jaw for almost a week now, idling, but hopefully I'll start working pretty soon. I could go back to Regina to work for Sun Electric, but I don't think I'll do that. I've heard there is quite a lot to do there; they have quite a lot of construction work going on, but I won't go back anyhow. I shall start working for Delco Light here. The man that had Delco previously, whom Huseby worked for, lost it, and another man has gotten it. He started May 1, and it takes some time to get everything in order. He has promised that Huseby and I would get all the wiring for ourselves, allowing him a small percent of the profit, so hopefully we'll make some money on it during the summer. That's why I won't go back to Regina. You see this is a good district for Delco Light. I guess I'll start working in a few days. I will start first; you see Huseby is still working for the same man as he did last winter. He won't begin at Delco Light until they get more for us to do. In my next letter I may be able to explain a little further how things develop.

It is only a few days since I arrived here from the homestead. I passed through Swift Current on my way. Canter Jones still had nothing to do except for a hospital at Wengard. But he was hoping to sell many Delco Lights this summer as the crop looked promising all over the Swift Current district. You see, we have had a lot of rain this spring and the wheat has gotten a good start, so it might well happen that we'll get a fine crop this year. The Simonsens I haven't heard from since Marie left Regina. She is out in the country now; you might get a letter from them.

I have sown 80 acres of crop this spring, 40 acres of wheat and 40 of flax. (Original text in English) What do you think I can do with all the money I will get for the crop? I suppose it will be too much to spend all alone. Last year I got \$69 and my seed after I paid threshing and hauling to town. You know lots of the others did not get the seed back. (End of English text)

. . . ? . . . my application for it. But it takes awhile to get my papers in order. I don't get my Naturalization Papers until some time next fall. It takes such a long time now days, and I will not get my "official status" before I get the rest of the papers, so I will not have it all in order before around Christmas.

It seems like we are getting the railroad to Cenuck this year, at least they are going to start on it (original letter torn here) . . . . three miles from my property. I read in Regina Leader that they have gotten others to start right away with the road, so I guess it must be true.

When I returned to Swift Current I met Rollefson. He won't do anything with his Light Plant now; he will wait and see how the crop turns out. Carter wanted me to go back to Leader again, but I won't do that. I feel that the prospects are much better here in Moose Jaw than anywhere else. Yes, I'm positive about it . . . (original letter torn here)

I haven't been to Regina since I came here. I was thinking of taking a trip, but you see I'm almost broke. I have all my money in Swift Current, so I have to wait awhile.

The Blilies are here in Moose Jaw also. Lars is working for the town as a lineman for .70 cents an hour, so you see we have friends here.

(Following paragraph mostly English) I have been pretty good for some time now. Don't play any more poker either now. You cannot do that in the spring--no money floating 'round, and it is no good either when you are going to work.

There are quite a number of strikes in this country these days. The Union in Regina won and they got what they wanted. Now there is another big strike in Winnipeg. There are 35,000 men out, which means the whole city is on strike. It was the construction union that started it, and all the other unions went out to help. I guess there must be a change pretty soon; it can't go on like this much longer. It looks like the working class is trying to rise a little. The cost of living is extremely high. It is almost worse now than when you were here.

See from your letter that you do not know yet how you will like it there (back in Norway). Everything seems to be a bit difficult I understand. After reading your letter, I sort of lost my urge to go home. I really don't know why, maybe it isn't so bad to be here after all, everything considered.

I guess you haven't seen Petrine and Andrias yet. You probably haven't had time to go there. I'm happy to know that everyone is doing fine at home.

I knew it all the time, that it was only you and I who were the tramps in the whole family. Soon it will be only me who is the gypsy in the family. You have already started working I see. Have you thought of building this summer? I'm sure you will have a busy summer. You don't have to look for a job so far as I can see. Will you be buying a full livestock all at once? I feel that would be foolish. I guess prices will go down in a few years. My advice is to start modestly in the beginning, but it's up to you to decide. When will you be coming to Canada again? If you are broke, I will send you the ticket!

When will they finish with the road construction back home? You wouldn't know whether they are planning to build a power station in Bygstad, would you? I guess they will never make it. If they are so well off as you say they are, why don't they use the money to make things a little easier

for the people, and they might save a little on hired helpers in these expensive times. But maybe they don't look so far ahead into the future. Anyway, it is a big project to begin with.

I'm so pleased to hear that father got the road at home. Surely he deserved it after such a long service.

(The remaining portion of the letter written mostly in English:) How about you? You have not found a girl yet to suit you? Is Metta married yet? I suppose it would not take long before I hear you are engaged to someone. Take my advice and get a rich one, but tell her first who is going to be the boss!

You did not say much about Kristine. Is it something wrong so you will not let me know? I had a letter from her just before I got yours. She told me you had been there. If it is anything, let me know. You know I'm not quite sure about her. I think they use her as a regular slave home, but I cannot get her away from there. I don't think I will be home yet for a year or so! You will tell me what you know anyhow.

Note: The remaining portion of this letter is missing.

From: Gunder Mikalsen Hjelmeland at Sundhornvik near Eikefjord  
To: Fredrik Mikal Hjelmeland, his son, on Hjelmeland

Sundhornvik  
14 August 1919

My beloved Son, Mikal Hjelmeland

Everything went just fine on my trip to Eidefjord. I arrived at my quarters in Sundhornvik Monday evening at 8:00 pm. My room had been nicely redecorated and was in good order.

The weather became quite unpleasant, and I stayed on board the steamship all the way to Eidefjord. En route from Florø to Eidefjord I was with A. Storøy, the teacher, and the two of us agreed that he will send you my cost-of-living allowance for the first six months of 1919, which is Kr. 875 (eight hundred and seventy five) which you are to receive and put into the bank at Sande on a separate account. Do ask if the interest will be higher when placed on a six-month's notice.

I am well and healthy and am busily occupied in gravel work. At present, there is no shortage of workers here.

Both Anna and John are doing fine and their boy has grown quite a bit.

Please inform me when you are in receipt of the afore-mentioned money. Also, tell me how much hay you managed to get into the barn on Monday, the 11th of this month. It looks as though there will be a lot of rain now.

The money is to be sent Friday, the 15th of this month, to your address and may reach you Saturday, the 16th, at Bygstad at the same time as this letter.

Your brother, Marthin, mentioned that you want to go to Bergen for a short trip when you are through with the haying. If you go to Bergen, I would like to ask you if you would buy me a raincoat. If you could find one just like the one you gave me, preferably with pockets at an angle like the one I have, and the color should be black. If you have to pay more than Kr. 50, you can just forget it. I guess I can find a cheaper one later.

Please remember me to all your sisters and brother. You are greeted most heartfelt from your father.

G. M. Hjelmeland

My new address, after August 23, most probably will be Hopen, Høidalsfjord.

SB

From: Petrina Hjelmeland Eide in Brekstad, Trondhjem  
To: Mikal Hjelmeland, her brother, at home on Hjelmeland

Brekstad 16 November 1919

My dear brother!

I have thought so often that I should write to you. It is a big shame that I have not done so long time ago. The more I wait, the more ashamed I feel, and I hardly dare start writing. Yes, it is not only you I do not write. I am always so busy with various domestic chores that I am really tired when evening comes and then, I very much want a quiet moment for reading. I still enjoy a book and read when I have time. Books are good company. They neither lie nor gossip.

I was very happy to hear that you were back from America. Hjelmeland is dear to me, and I very much want it to be well kept. It is a splendid farm with green, fertile fields and cozy, fine, and practical houses. I will not come to Hjelmeland until you have gotten a practical haybarn and cowstable. You have much on your hands, indeed, and everything is so expensive now. The money seems to have wings. Everyone earns much, but there is, however, not much left when the year is over.

Are you going to build a barn this summer? Where will you place it? Do you enjoy living at Hjelmeland? Is it not lonely without children on the farm? These "Tom boys" of ours should have been there; then it wouldn't be quiet long. They are lively and noisy boys, but they can also be good. Leidulv has already begun to use a pencil. Yes, Gunnar, too, and when they do that, they are quiet.

You have neither wife nor children. You are spared much work and expense, but then you are alone with everything. Yes, in due course I think you will have both wife and children at Hjelmeland. And when you get married, I will come to Hjelmeland for the wedding, that is for sure.

The children grow older. Gudmund is almost one year old, but he is clumsy at standing up and walking. He is very chubby and good, a lovely child. They are fine boys all three of them. If they may live and stay healthy, they will become three fine young men.

When will you come up to visit us? If I do not come home this summer, you and Anna should make a trip up here to us. That would be nice. I guess Anna often is over at Hjelmeland. It is such a long time since I have heard from her and from Kristina. I now long to hear from them. Andreas wrote a letter to Fredrik a long time ago. It is such a long time since I have had a letter from Fredrik. Do you know when he will return to Norway again?

Andreas said that you do not look any older. It would be so good to see you again. When will it be? I often think of you all at home when I sit up here, listening to the ever-blowing wind. It always blows here. It is such a naked woodless land. But I am happy here because we have a nice home, and that is most important wherever you are. People here are kind. They are good farmers, I think. The manager of the dairy, however, will have to leave, I have heard. They say he has taken more than maximum prices and done other wrong things. He is a real snob so

I think it is good that he leaves. But another of his kind could take his place. There are many kinds of scoundrels around, and he is not the worst.

Christmas will soon be here. How nice it would have been to spend an evening with you at Hjelmeland. Then Father would be home too. Isn't it good that he is still able to be working out? I guess he will soon come home now. Who is with you at the moment? Does Olga go on to the "continuing" school? Or were the plans changed?

You must send Kristina and everyone else our regards. It was my intention to write a letter to Signy for her confirmation, but the week before I got such a sore throat that I had to stay in bed on the Sunday of confirmation. I was up long enough to go and vote "Yes", but I had to go to bed again as soon as I got home.

Here we are all well, and that is very good. Andreas has always much work to do. He is at the office from 9:00-12:00. Then, practice with the students from 12:00-2:00 and from 5:00-7:00 in the classroom, and in the evenings he also has writing to do. After Christmas, however, he will not be so busy. There will be less work at the "provisioning",\* yes, almost nothing. But, I suppose he will find something else to do. He always works very hard.

It is 10:00 and I am tired.

You must write me a letter. Take an evening and write and tell me how you are doing. Did you sell the harvest?

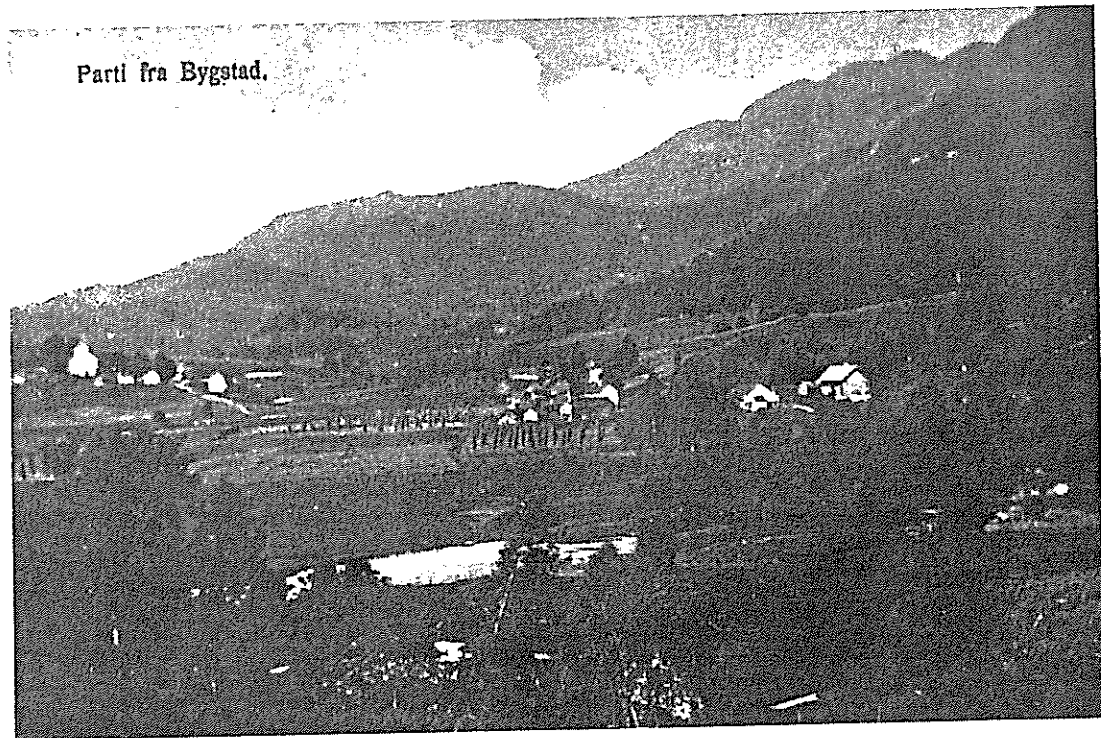
Many hearty greetings from all of us,

Petrina

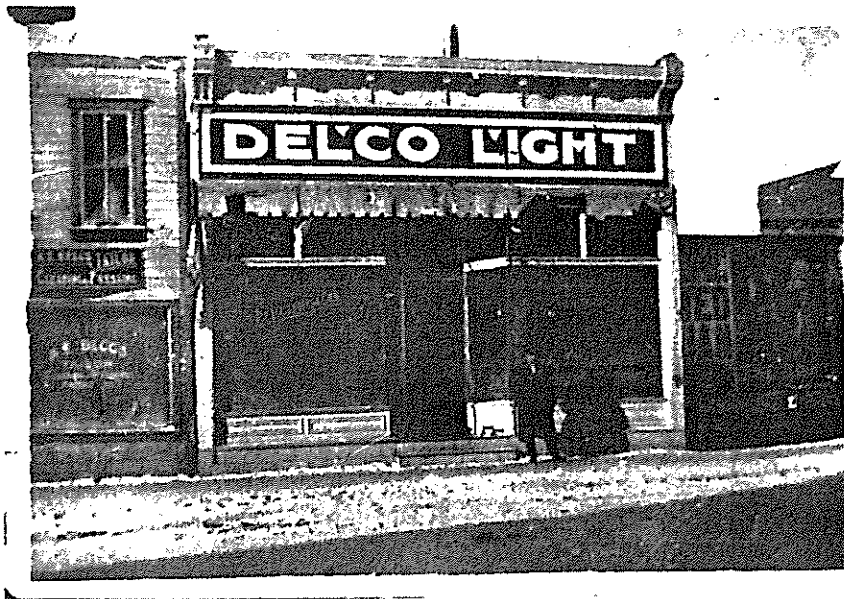
Address - Brekstad at Trondhjem

\*Taking in supplies and making ready for the winter

RH and HE

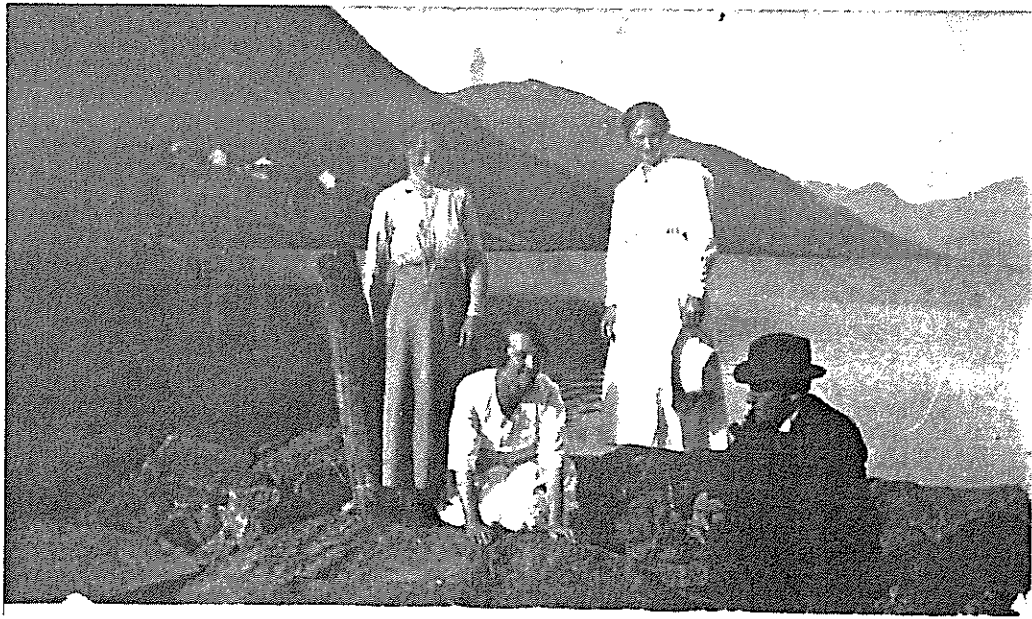


Uncle Mikal has returned to Bygstad,  
Sunnfjord Norway, and to Hjelmeland



Dad is offered a  
job with Delco  
Light in Moose  
Jaw, Saskatchewan  
Canada. He cannot  
accept for six  
months as he  
must remain on  
the homestead.

It was the beginning of many years with Delco  
Light, continuing later in America. Delco Light was  
wonderful as it offered electricity to a previously  
kerosene lamp society.



*Family and friends occupied Mother's time as she waited for Glad to return from America*



*Novland & Markheim 14.  
Riverton*



From: Fredrik Olaf Hjelmeland in Edmund, Saskatchewan, Canada  
To: Salutation reads to his father, sisters, and brothers, but  
it is predominately to his brother, Fredrik Mikal Hjelmeland

Edmund, Saskatchewan  
December 16, 1919

Dear Father, Brothers and Sisters!

Well, Fred M., you really are a clever letterwriter. I have had only two letters from you since you arrived back at Hjelmeland! So you must be very busy since you cannot take the time to send me a letter now and then. You know I like to hear how you are getting along at home, what you are doing and if you are going to stick to it. Have you started building a barn and cowshed yet? Have you bought the livestock or will you wait until later when prices are more normal?

I got a letter from father recently. He is the only one writing back as soon as he gets my letter. You can rely on that. Probably he is there when you get this letter, so I am not writing to him right now. I also had a letter from Andrias Eide and sent him a letter for Christmas.

I write this letter on my homestead. Came here on December 4, and I have to stay here until next June. I have to stay here six more months on the location. Now I am my own cook again. Believe me, I am trudging alone here all my myself. This is a devil of a life anyhow. We have had a terrible hard autumn with storms and cold weather, 40 degrees below many times. The cold weather started at the beginning of October. We also have some snow. I tried to get a pair of skis from Chicago, but I have to wait a couple of weeks before I get them.

Mr. and Mrs. Blilie are here. They will stay here, too, the whole winter, so I have a good couple to visit. I have to loan them some money because they don't have much left. They didn't get any crop on the land they bought north of Swift Current. They didn't even get as much as the seed back, so they have difficulties now. Huseby didn't get any crop either this year. His crop got ruined by hail. I got a crop, so I didn't lose anything. It was a little better around here than around Swift Current.

They built a little more on the railroad this summer, and they are going to continue next spring. They changed the route of the railroad line so I am only 10 kilometers from it. This is the final one so I will be near enough. Blilie is 20 kilometers from the line.

Huseby has thought of going to Norway this winter, but if he really leaves is another thing. You know, when we come to Canada we never leave the place. We always get tied to one thing or another. If I take a trip home to Norway, I am quite sure that I have to come back again. But I don't know when I can take this trip. If I had not taken the homestead, I would have been home long ago and pretty well fixed too. But it is too late now to be sorry. I might come out all right yet. I did well last summer. Worked only five months and earned \$1,400-\$1,500. Not many people did better, but what can it help when

the money is spent as fast as it is earned?

The Delco Light man in Moose Jaw would take me as a partner if I could stay with him. He offered me \$200 per month through the winter. I should visit the farms and repair the Delco Light Plants (service work). But I couldn't take it because I had to go back to the homestead. I think I can get my job back again next summer; if I do, I will buy an automobile. Maybe Blilie will go with me if there is enough work for two. If I get finished with this homestead I am sure I will manage, especially if I continue to be in good health, and opportunities will come hereafter too.

How are the conditions at home? Have you heard if they have thought of building a power station in Bygstad? If not, we have to get hold of a farm plant. Then I will install it and help you when I come home.

I haven't seen Marie Simonsen since last winter. Can't understand how they make it. Mr. Simonsen is gone; they will try another year. Maybe you get letters from them so you know more than I do.

Well, now we have Christmas again. You will have to come all of you and have Christmas dinner with me. I will prepare it myself, so you know it will be good. I sure hate this cooking business, but it's got to be done.

(Text in English) I had a letter from Kristine a few days ago. She is still waiting. She did not say anything about you. Have you seen her this summer? Do you think I could get her over here? It sure is not good the way it is. How do you like her? How about you? Have you not gotten hold of anyone yet? If you don't look out, you might be going that way all your life. Have you met Metta since you came home? Is she married yet? I suppose that is the reason you don't write, you are too busy with some girl that you have not time for anything else. (End of English text)

This is all for now. Please write at once and tell me about everything you know is of interest to me and about the young people at home also.

To close, warm Christmas greetings to you all, father, brothers, and sisters.

Yours,

Fredrik

Am to greet you from the Blilies.

Use this address: Edmund, Saskatchewan, Canada. Edmund is near to Canuck.



Dad and his good  
friend Lars Blilie



About  
1920

Mother takes care of her brother Karl's children, Alf  
and Anna Kristiansen (baby), after the death of their  
mother. She cared for them for five years until  
she left for America.

From: Fredrik Olaf Hjelmeland in Moose Jaw, Saskatchewan, Canada  
To: Fredrik Mikal Hjelmeland, his brother, at Hjelmeland in Norway

Moose Jaw, Saskatchewan  
June 19, 1920

My dear Brother,

At least a couple of weeks have passed since I received your letter, so it is about time to answer. But in order to get even with you I should have waited some 3-4 months before answering! Do you know that I did not get a single letter from home during the entire winter when I was at the homestead? The last I got came around Christmas. I almost made up my mind never to write home again, but that intention was hard to stick to.

I'm back in Moose Jaw now. I came a few weeks ago, and I'm working for Delco Light again. They've kept the job open for me for more than six months, which was pretty good! I have undertaken all the wiring for the whole summer, and in addition, if the crop is good I may profit a bit. I have one man working for me, but I may have to let him go. You see, just now there isn't very much to do and I can manage alone. But as of August, I may take on 2-3 men.

The crop looks very promising this year. We have had plenty of rain at Swift Current also, so if this weather continues we will all have a good year.

A month ago I went to see the Simonsens. Ludvik is having a good crop this year. They, too, have had much rain this year which means a good crop. If they get a good price for it, you should try to get some of the money you have coming from them while the exchange rate is high. Ludvik said he will be paying you for some of it this fall if the crop is good. He has insured his house for \$1,500, and you should try to get some of your money this coming fall before they pay other debts!

I have not heard from Huseby in a very long time, but he has been writing to someone else here in Moose Jaw telling them that he will be returning shortly to Moose Jaw and that he will be with me. I believe he isn't too satisfied with the opportunities at home (in Norway), but I never thought that he would be back when he left for home. But it is kind of funny with some of the Americans; they get a bit restless and cannot settle down any place. I think, though, that I could be content at home, but it is difficult to tell before one has tried it and it might be another few years before I make the trip.

The Blilies are living in this town, too. Lars works for the city. They have rented a house here, and I stop over and also eat with them when I am in town. I have a good home with them.

I have gotten all the wiring from Delco Light on percentage or sub-contract. I prefer this arrangement to daily salary. If they send me out on small jobs, they pay me \$1.00 an hour and expenses which is not too bad. You should come and work with me here, that would have been great. But, I would guess you are very busy where you are; however, I'm afraid the outcome is not in proportion to the work you do. I see

from your letter that you are not especially happy with the course of events at home, and I understand it all too well. The timing, unfortunately, was not too good when you left for home. When one has to pay such high prices for horses and cows, and then after only one year they sell for only half the price, one can get discouraged and fed up.

In your last letter you did not mention anything about the money that you lent Alfred Aamodt, whether you will get it back or not. Don't forget to tell me in your next letter. I guess the whole family is on the rocks now. Has Sigurd still got the farm?

How is Olai doing? It was very sad to learn that everything had burned for him. Is he considering rebuilding again? I guess it would be almost impossible today.

Is father at home these days? I haven't hear from him in a very long time. Perhaps he is doing construction work on the roads again.

I had a letter from Kristine just before I received your letter. She says that Anna had been very ill, but I'm happy to know from your letter that she has recovered. Kristine might come over here this summer; if not, as far as I'm concerned, she can remain in Norway forever! I'm through with her as long as she wants to stay there forever. I guess you talked to her when you were at the christening in Førde.

I'm expecting a letter from Olga; I'm hoping to get it one of these days. Well, just this short letter from me today. I'll try to write a bit more about work and the crops next time. Why don't you take a trip over here soon? I can at least promise you a car ride if nothing else!

Well, dear Brother, I hope that things will improve at home and that better times are ahead. Don't forget to write at once! Do not postpone it or else I may have to wait too long. You know I do appreciate your letters very much.

Warmest wishes to everyone at home.

Yours,

Fredrik

Box 222  
Moose Jaw  
Sask. Canada

From: Fredrik Olaf Hjelmeland in Moose Jaw, Saskatchewan, Canada  
To: Fredrik Mikal Hjelmeland, his brother, at Hjelmeland in Norway

Moose Jaw, September 1, 1920

Dear Brother!

We don't hear so much from each other now as when you were here in this country. If I remember right you owe me a letter, but I suppose you've had a busy time and had no time for writing.

I'm doing fine here, am still living in Moose Jaw, and I'm working for Delco Light. I'm earning quite well -- up till now about \$75 a week, sometimes more, sometimes less, but I pay my own expenses, gasoline, etc. But, I hope to do still better in the next few months.

I'm expecting Huseby back in a couple of weeks. He is going to join me. We are going to try and open a business together if we can find a good spot. But this fall we are going to work for Delco Light..

I had a good crop this year, but then the hail came and I lost \$500-\$600 on that, so there always seems to be something wrong. I don't seem to have much luck with that farm. The harvest in the area was good so that helps the country. I want to keep the land a few years more until I can get a good price for it. It is certainly costing me enough. Farming 45 acres this summer cost me around \$200, but hopefully that will yield a good crop for next year. If I don't get that, I will stop farming and let it go to grass. It is more profitable.

Have heard that Simonsen was hailed out too, but that they had good insurance so they didn't lose too much anyway. They bought a Ford car too, not a new one. They can buy themselves an automobile before they can pay off their debts! Have you received any payments from them this summer? They could at least have paid off something. They had money this summer, but it looks as if it is difficult for them to pay back what they owe you.

The crops are good around Swift Current this summer, better than around Moose Jaw. But Blilie will not get too much because it rained so much this spring that it was washed away. So it is very strange. Either it is too dry or too much rain so it washes away. That's the way it is in this country.

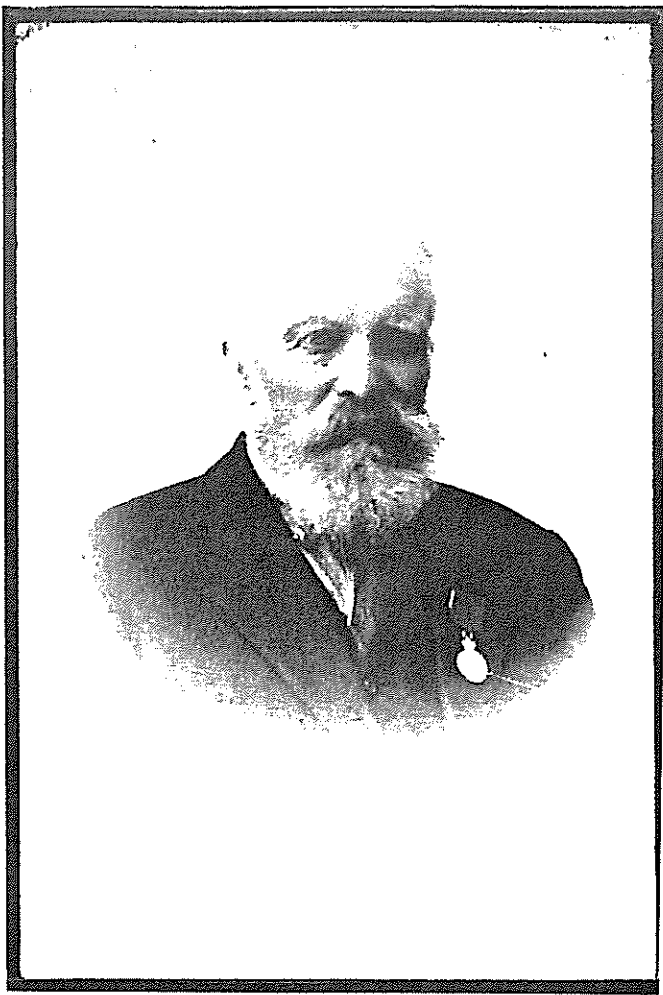
Well, how is it with you? Are you going to stay in Norway? Have heard that times are not as good now as they have been. How are Alfred and Sigurd Aamodt? Have you been there? Let me know how they are. I see from your last letter that they are putting up electricity and power in Bygstad. Do you think that will go through? If so, perhaps I will think about coming home.

How is Father doing? Is he still working? He is getting on in years now and he should quit. At what time I will come home, I do not know. Not until next year anyway. Now you must take time to send me a few words. It doesn't take too long once you start. Have you got much help this summer? Well, this is all for now. Hope you will write at once. Warmest greetings to you all at home.

Address: Box 222  
Moose Jaw,  
Saskatchewan, Canada

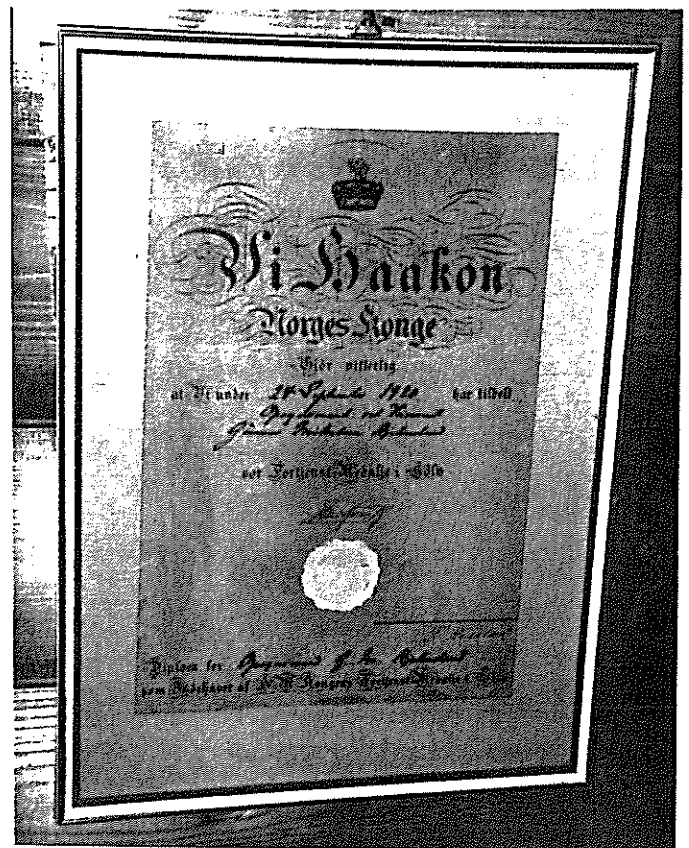
Yours, Fredrik

SS



Grandpa Hjelmeland  
wearing the "Kongl.  
Orden af Meritmedaljen"

This is the certificate  
which came with  
the medal. It hangs  
in the living room  
of Santa Maria  
Hjelmeland on the  
Hjelmeland farm.



From: Gunder Mikalsen Hjelmeland at Eikefjord, Norway  
To: Fredrik Mikal Hjelmeland, his son, home on the farm

Eikefjord 8 November 1920

Beloved son Mikal Hjelmeland

Everything is fine here. I am in good health, and everything here has gone well for me to this time. This same blessing I hope to hear and see for myself of you when I come home.

I wrote to Marthin about eight days ago that I thought I would be finished here so that I could come to Sveen on November 13 or 17, but on the Day of Prayer, November 5, Mr. Vaage came to Eidefjord. His most important reason for coming here this time was that he had been appointed by "Fylkesmann" (District Governor) Christensen to go to Eikefjord to present myself with the King's Order of Merit which Mr. Vaage presented and attached to my breast, 5 o'clock in the afternoon, the Day of Prayer, in Eikefjorden School. A number of the workers had arranged for the festivities which I knew nothing about until I came into the house. It was all very ceremonious, and a diploma went with the medal. There were speeches by Vaage and Størøy and Vaage proposed that three-times-three "Hurrahs" should be shouted for Hjelmeland.

Well, if the weather is not a hindrance, I will be finished here on the construction Ovre Storebro the 13th of November. And when I am finished here, I shall go to the construction Vadset Eikefjord and gravel and finish one half kilometer there. That will probably take eight days so I cannot say exactly the date I will be home. However, if the weather stays fairly good, I might come Wednesday the 24th or Saturday the 27th.

And finally, all my children are greeted most heartily.

G. M. Hjelmeland

It is most likely that I will not be home until the 27th.

\* Day of Prayer is the Sunday after All Saints Day, November 1.

Eikefjord 11 November 1920

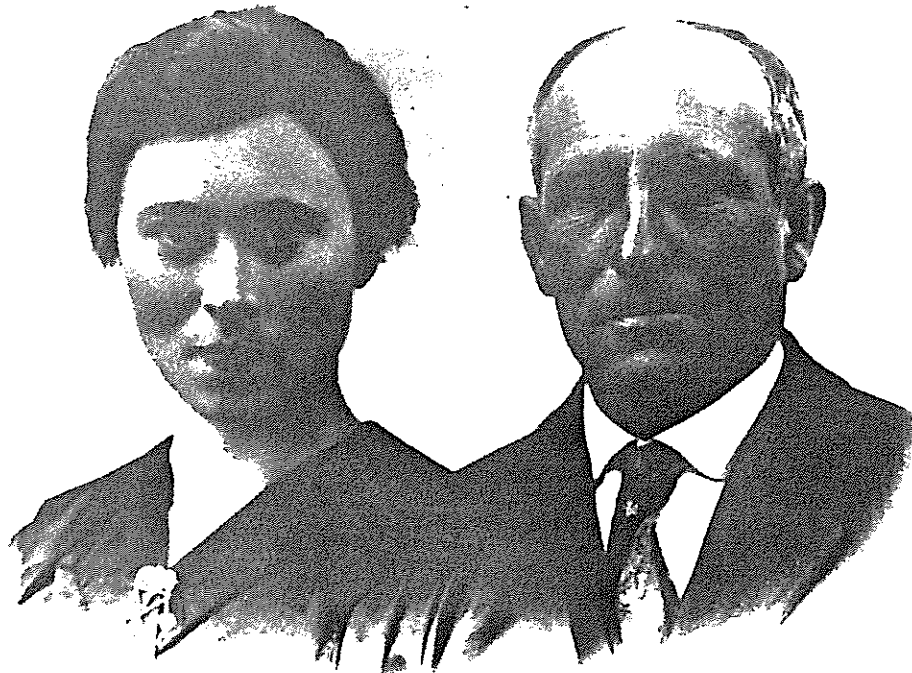
My letter dated November 8, did not get off as was my intention, as the mailman passed and did not pick up the mail which was his duty.

As I have written before, it is not possible yet to know which day I am coming. It all depends on the weather; the weather now has already delayed the work here at Ovre Storebro two days. If it does not become tolerably good, it is quite obvious that I cannot come until December 1. You are patient to write to me, and I want you to know that it makes me very happy to hear from you.

Dearest greetings from Father

JM





---

The "new lady of the farm" referred to in this letter is Marie, Uncle Mikal's wife to be. Marie was many years younger than Uncle Mikal. This dear lady still lives on the Hjelmeland farm. Everyone loves to visit her. Together they raised ten children, four sons and six daughters.

From: Petrina Eide, sister of Fredrik and Mikal Hjelmeland, in Brekstad near Trondheim where she lived almost all of her married life -- died in 1983 at the age of 99 years  
To: Gunder Mikalsen Hjelmeland, her father, at home on Hjelmeland

Brekstad 19 December 1920

Dear Father!

Thank you very much for your letter! You are home again now, and have seen the new lady of the farm.\* It will be nicer with a wife in the house, and children running in and out. A home without children crying is empty and deserted. You are busy driving to the dairy, cutting firewood and repairing domestic utensils on the farm. I know you enjoy resting on your bed reading. It is nice when old people are interested in reading books and magazines. It is nice to do so in free moments. I also enjoy reading a book when it is quiet in the house. If I did not enjoy reading, it would be difficult when we are so far away from our relatives.

I am looking forward to Christmas; the Christmas tree and Christmas hymns and carols remind me of my childhood. Also I am reminded of juniper on the newly scrubbed floors and the smell from the coffeepot and the beer mug, the ribs, and then you father with your high forehead and your hair combed back, dressed in a clean shirt. It was a sacred time at home--the lights on all through the night and the clean linens on the beds. Yes, that was Christmas with Christmas hymns and the Christmas message. Yes, thank you for those days father! Now I am looking forward to your Christmas letter and gift. Strange will it be, if I live, that you will not come anymore.

It is good to know that you have all you need. You have it warm and good and good ribsteak. If you only had a mug of home brewed beer; it was not a bad custom that people should have a barrel of beer if they could just show a little moderation, but some cannot.

We have baked "lefser" and made "sylteflesk". You should be here with us for awhile during Christmas--then we would have a real festive time. Olga often is homesick for Bygstad . . . ? . . .

I needed to get some help as I was awfully exhausted from the children. Gudmund is almost two years but needs to have someone look after himself all the time now when he isn't sleeping. The small boys are all fine. Leidulv has begun to read a little and likes to draw.

How is Mikal doing? He is probably at the Christmas party at his fiance's home or is she at Hjelmeland? I have often thought of writing Mikal, but it seems like it never gets beyond that. I have this struggle every day and think I have so little to write about. But when I finally begin, there is always something about which to write. The more often you write, the more there is to write about.

---

\* She must be referring here to Mikal's wife to be, Marie.

It has been good weather for a long time, not so cold and the wind not too bad.

I suppose you will be at Anna's for Christmas, or is she coming to Hjelmeland? It is not so good to travel over the mountains with a little child in the winter. I wish that just one night during Christmas I was able to come home or that you and all my brothers and sisters could come to me. If Andreas had gotten the job at Mo, you could have taken a nice trip to Mo over Christmas, all of you--Mikal and his fiance, Kristine and Ivar, Marthin and Anna, and Olina and Olai. It would have been a whole group of us, and when you came to Fyrde, Anna and John would have had to join the party.

Andreas is sitting here writing home to his parents. Last year his mother was ill and he thought at that time that she might not live another Christmas. But she recovered again and may have many more Christmases.

It must have been a solemn occasion that you will always remember, father, when you received the Silver Medal (from the King). Yes, it is good to be recognized when you have worked hard for many years, as you have done. Good it is to receive such news. It freshens up life and gives it more worth.

You must give Mikal my warmest regards.

Heartiest Christmas greetings  
from all of us together,

Petrina

I think I will write you between Christmas and New Year to let you know how we are then.

RH

From: Fredrik Olaf Hjelmeland in Moose Jaw, Saskatchewan in Canada  
To: Fredrik Mikal Hjelmeland, his brother, at home on Hjelmeland  
in Norway

Moose Jaw, Saskatchewan  
26 April 1921

Dear Brother!

A thousand thanks for the long and interesting letter! Your letter was very welcome! You know it isn't every day that I get a letter from you, but this time you were very good. It was such a long and very informative letter. Many thanks to you!

After having read the letter, one is nearly afraid to take a trip to Norway. The conditions there aren't exactly encouraging according to what one can understand from your letter. But I think I dare to take the trip anyway but will have to be careful to have enough money for the return.

As you see from my letter, I am still in Moose Jaw. I've been waiting for better weather so I could drive the car to the homestead, but it has been raining a lot lately so the roads are very soft and bad still and I don't dare take the trip by car. I will take the train to Shanowan tomorrow as I have to go out there for the sowing.

I haven't worked much this winter, just enough to keep the balance. But, I have been fairly lucky after all. There have been many hundreds of people here in Moose Jaw this winter who have had nothing to do. Have gotten a meal ticket (coupons for food?) from the town. It has been even worse in the big cities in the East, but now it does look a bit better out here. I think it will be a pretty good summer, if there is a harvest. Building material has gone down a bit in price and they are trying to reduce the daily wage also. In our trade they have reduced it from \$1.00 to .90 cents. It's the big companies who try to make bad times so that they can get cheap labor.

The C.P.R. (Canadian Pacific Railroad) will not do anything this summer since they have laid off all their men. They are not going to build or open up any new lines either. They have graded up to nine miles from my homestead. If they are going to do any more there this summer is uncertain. Construction has in any case been stopped until the month of July. But as the saying goes, "Don't take your worries ahead of time." If they don't come this year, I suppose they will do the rest of the job next year. But I believe that if we get a harvest this year we will also get the railroad in there.

I didn't finish this letter to you last night. I will try to get it mailed today. I'd thought of going to my land today, but then I got a telegram this morning from a boy who went to Kristiania (Norway) last fall saying he is coming back today, so I will wait until tomorrow morning before I go. I would like to hear what he thinks about his trip to Norway. You don't know him. He's a fellow who I got to know after I came to Moose Jaw. But I will go to my homestead tomorrow. I have nearly \$1,000 to pay for taxes and \_\_\_\_\_, so there goes the money again. I don't think I will get the deed and every-

thing else for my land until the fall. I hope I get a good crop this year. I have 45 acres of summerfallow (land plowed but not seeded) that I will sow wheat in and then I will sow some flax also. I'll be around there this summer in Shanowan and district. I've taken an agency for Delco Light in Shanowan district. They had good crops in Shanowan district last year, so if they get a good harvest this summer I think I'll do pretty well. In any case, I'll try. And then I can better tend to my land also. I can get \$160 for every plant (Delco Light Pump) I can sell, and then I can earn between \$100-\$200 for every plant I sell for wiring.

I met a man from Admiral a couple of weeks ago. I know him well from before. He said that if there was a harvest there he would install an electric plant for the town and he wanted me to do the wiring. So you see everything will depend on the harvest for me this summer. If there is a harvest I shall do well. If not, there will be nothing. But I will try all the same. Then I'll be the wiser in the fall, but then it will be too late if things fail or go to the dogs.

We have had a pretty good time here in Moose Jaw this winter. There have been four to five Norwegians here in the same house. It's a Swedish widow who runs the house. It's always nice and clean and the food is good, just like a home, so I hate to leave here. (English) We've had a poker game once in awhile also. Last Sunday I made \$15 but not in this house. She would not let us play here. The rest of the boys are pretty well broke anyhow, except for Huseby, so I play with someone else. But, I have not done much of it this winter. It is a little too hard times. (End of English)

Note: A page is missing here . . . . . to sell it. It shouldn't be hard to get as much as you have coming at least, if you want to do something about it. And if I were you, I would certainly do it for if they intended to pay for it, they would at least have paid the rent by now. All they are after is to have someone rent the house. So, if you want to do something about it, write to Andersen (lawyer in Whitehall, Wisconsin) and give him my address so that he can tell me what he wants me to do. There's no sense in what is going on now. In the meantime, I shall find out about taxes and insurance. But the rent for the house should have been stopped in any case. That would pay you interest at least so you better let Andersen know what you want to do as soon as possible. At the same time you can write to Simonsen and ask what they want to do, if they want to pay you anything now or not and let them know what you intend to do. It seems to me to be the best thing for you to do. You asked if I have gotten anything from the Sveinsen. No, not a cent. But if I don't get anything, I am going to take it out of Sveinsen's hide! Note: Page missing here also.

I should have written to Father but now you are getting a letter so then you all hear how I'm getting along. It doesn't really matter who gets the letter. I also had a letter from Kristine the other day. She is waiting I am sure to see me there next winter if I can scrape together enough this summer for a ticket. You say in your letter that you are sending a picture of your sweetheart but I didn't receive it. I would sure like to have one you know and see if you have good taste!

Greetings to Bendix from me and say that he must be careful about getting married. That's something you can never get out of again.

I should like to meet you and Bendik again and refresh the time we had together in Chicago. It was I who was the greenhorn then! We are going to have a game of poker after I come home too.

Try to get ahold of Sam Hjelmeland's address and send it to me. Don't forget!

Live well everyone. Greetings to Father and all my brothers and sisters and let them read this letter.

Hearty greetings to all of you,

Yours

Fredrik

Use this address: Canuck, Sask.  
Canada

JH  
JHa  
ML

From: Gunder Mikelsen Hjelmeland at Løvik in Kvammen  
To: Fredrik Mikal Gundersen Hjelmeland, his son, at home on Hjelmeland

Løvik 28 October 1921

Beloved Son!  
F. M. G. Hjelmeland

The trip from Førde to Løvik in Kvammen went well. I got the same lodging as last summer. Vaage was here for two days and made preparations for the work on the new road. The job is divided in four contracts; we are twenty workers. There is one contract left where work has not yet begun as so few people wanted to work last autumn on account of the long distance from this place to their homes. The weather is bad and the continuous rain delays the whole work; many people do not show up.

How are things going at home? When did you harvest the grain? Give Marie my best regards. If you do not have time to write to me, then Marie must write. Tell me if more than one of your cows has had a calf. Have you gotten all your sheep home?

When I came to Ervik last Sunday, Matthias Sagen Kramstad came on board and asked if you had lost any ram because one sheep with a collar with your name had been found. Matthias then told me that he had mailed a post card to you about the sheep.

How does the work go on the road at home? Have you graveled the road yet? You must ask Ivar for me to take a look at the hides which are to be tanned and see to it that they are properly tanned.

I am in good health, and everything has gone well so far. I have not much to write about. You must write me a long letter and tell me everything from the home parish.

Best wishes to you all from your father.

G. M. Hjelmeland

From: Petrina Hjelmeland Eide in Brekstad, Trondhjem  
To: Fredrik Mikal Hjelmeland, her brother, at home on Hjelmeland

Brekstad  
14 March 1922

Dear Brother!

Many thanks for the letter I got yesterday. You don't write to us every day, so it was almost strange to get a letter from you.

I have always promised myself that I absolutely would be at your wedding if that in any way was possible. We would very much all like to come, but at that time of the year it is not so good to take out the children. We have been very much looking forward to your wedding and especially when it is going to be at Hjelmeland. But when you want it so early in the spring, Andreas will not take the little boys out. It is much easier to travel when it is a little later in the year, but since you have already decided to have your wedding at Easter time, there is nothing to do about that. You can't go by what time it is best for us to travel. That is too much to expect.

I will come home if I in any way can get anyone to look after my house while I am gone, but I must travel alone. You see I really want to come. It would be sad for me not to be with you on your special day. Could you possibly delay it to the beginning of June? You mustn't feel bad about my asking. You must just have it whenever you think it is best. I will do all I can to come, but I would like to have had Andreas along.

Andreas is in Trondhjem. He left today, so I am alone this evening. The little boys go to bed early, so there is peace and quiet all evening. Andreas is so busy with this egg center. Now they are going to get an egg center in Trondhjem, and he is the foreman. They are really good at chicken production here at Ørland. When it comes to that, Bygstad is way behind. Andreas hurries home and works with all these extra projects. He has always had a lot to do since we came here, so we have done well. But Ørland is certainly not a paradise for people from west Norway who are use to forests and rivers.

Andreas came from Trondhjem on Sunday. There was such a storm that day that the waves rolled in over the boat. I sure didn't feel good watching. The little boys only laughed when the waves rolled over the boat and we could hardly see it. It was the worst weather he had ever been in. I was so happy when I saw that the boat made it into the dock. You can tell Olga that. She knows what it looks like when it is storming here at its worst.

You don't seem very pleased about farming, Mikal, but things can get better. You are certainly not starting in the best year. It must have been discouraging that you had to buy your animals and all that was needed to run the farm when everything was the most expensive. And the past summers have been so unpleasant. So, we will just have to hope there can still come many good years. Now that you are getting a wife, everything will be better. There are always problems no matter what occupation one has. To be satisfied is the secret.



It is nice to hear that Father is well. I suppose he is chopping wood and is busy as before. How is Simon Lien doing? I suppose he will be at the wedding, so I surely hope that I'll be able to come.

We live well. I'm busy all day long. Since I do everything myself, I'm very busy. But I do have short periods once in awhile when I can read. But, I can't go anywhere unless I go to one of the farms and get someone to come here and look after the boys. They are hard to keep track of. Gunnar is getting to be a genuine Hjelmeland fellow. He is still chubby and wide and is grown up for his age. They obey me so little because they know I won't spank them, so then they dare to do anything.

You must be very busy getting ready for the wedding. Oh my, how nice it would be to come home then. And you're sure you don't want to have it in the summer when everything is most beautiful? Then we would all have come. Now I have to travel alone, and it is uncertain if I can go at all.

You must greet Marie and all the others from me. I have received a letter from Kristina and Olga, and you must thank them so much. Surely Fredrik will come soon (from America). I'm waiting so much to hear he has arrived home.

I must greet you from Andreas and say that he cannot get away from here at Easter time, but he would have liked to have been at the wedding.

You are greeted so many times from all of us.

Yours,

Petrina

From: Fredrik Olaf Hjelmeland in Saskatchewan, Canada (perhaps Moose Jaw)  
To: Gunder Mikalsen Hjelmeland, his father, home at Hjelmeland in Norway

December 10, 1922

Dear Father and Family!

It is quite a long time since I last wrote to you, Father. I have always written to Fred, so in a way you all knew how I was doing just the same.

Now it is soon Christmas. I've been away from Hjelmeland many Christmases now. It is as if I cannot get away from this place, but I have to break away soon. When one has land and different things to take care of on the farm it is not so easy. It is especially true when one has no one to rely on to look after things.

I live well, am in good health and have work to do. I've been working with the same electrical business firm for the past four years; that is when there was work to do. In winter there is not so much to do. It's too cold to travel around in the countryside. I have no work to do in town; I'm working mostly for the farmers and in the small villages. The farmers here had good crops this year. Times are slightly better now, but they have been rather bad the last two years here, too, especially for the farmers. The winter has set in in full force here now, and it is unbelievably cold, but I go out every day all the same and keep pretty busy. I had thought of quitting six weeks ago to go home to Norway, but they wouldn't let me go. That would not have kept me from leaving, but I have some things yet to take care of with my land.

I have applied for a passport and hope to receive it some time during the winter. Then I will take a long vacation, if Fred will let me stay with him. I can then use the scythe once again. I wonder if I could find a small machine to produce electricity on the farm. I will try to get ahold of something when I get home. It could be used for pumping water as well. I will see what I can do about that.

I guess you are at home now, Father. Are you still working? You ought to have a pension by now. You have been working for the county for so long now. That is the least they could do for your long and faithful service.

How are my brothers and sisters? Are they all in good health and doing well? It will surely be wonderful to meet them all again after so many years. I will know them all, of course, but the children are all strangers to me. Is Marthin home on his farm now, or is he away most of the time? I suppose Olai and Oline still have the workshop. They are doing well, I hope. Kristine and Ivar are doing well, also, I hope. What is John Aase doing? Is he still in Førde?

Well, I hope we shall all meet again in good health. I should have liked to have been home for Christmas, but I cannot make it this year. In closing, I wish you all a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. Thank you for everything in the past year.

A thousand greetings to you all.

Your Son,  
Fredrik

HE

From: Gunder Mikalsen Hjelmeland, my grandfather  
To: A State Pension Board

Gjelsvik  
15 December 1922

From G. M. Hjelmeland, Road Inspector

The undersigned hereby applies for a pension for my retirement days.

I was born 1st May 1847, thus becoming 76 years of age next year.

As to my service with the Road Constructors, I would like to inform you that for the first nine years, from 1870 to 1879, I worked, with short intervals, at the State's Road Works, and started as a road inspector October 1, 1879, a position which I have had since then. During the first years I just worked a short period of time each year, later I worked partly shorter periods and partly longer periods of time; and from 1918 on I worked the whole year round with the exception of a short period of time during the winters, lasting from one to four months.

Most of the time I have been working on local roads. I have been employed as an inspector on major roads twice on Sogndal, Marifjæren, and once, from February 27 to May 8, 1919, at Eidevik, Espeland.

My health has been, and still is, good, but I do feel that my age is making itself so strongly felt causing me to retire very shortly.

When I retire, my financial position will not become too poorly as I may live on my son's farm, Mikal Hjelmeland at Hjelmeland in Gaular.

I am in the possession of Kroner 4000 cash, and I do not have family responsibilities; but of course it will make a great difference on the income that I now receive. This is why I have taken the liberty of bringing about an application. Considering my long service of employment with the Road Works, I dare assume that a pension will be granted.

Gjelsvik 15-12-1922

SB

Dad returns to  
Norway, March 5,  
1923, after 13 years!

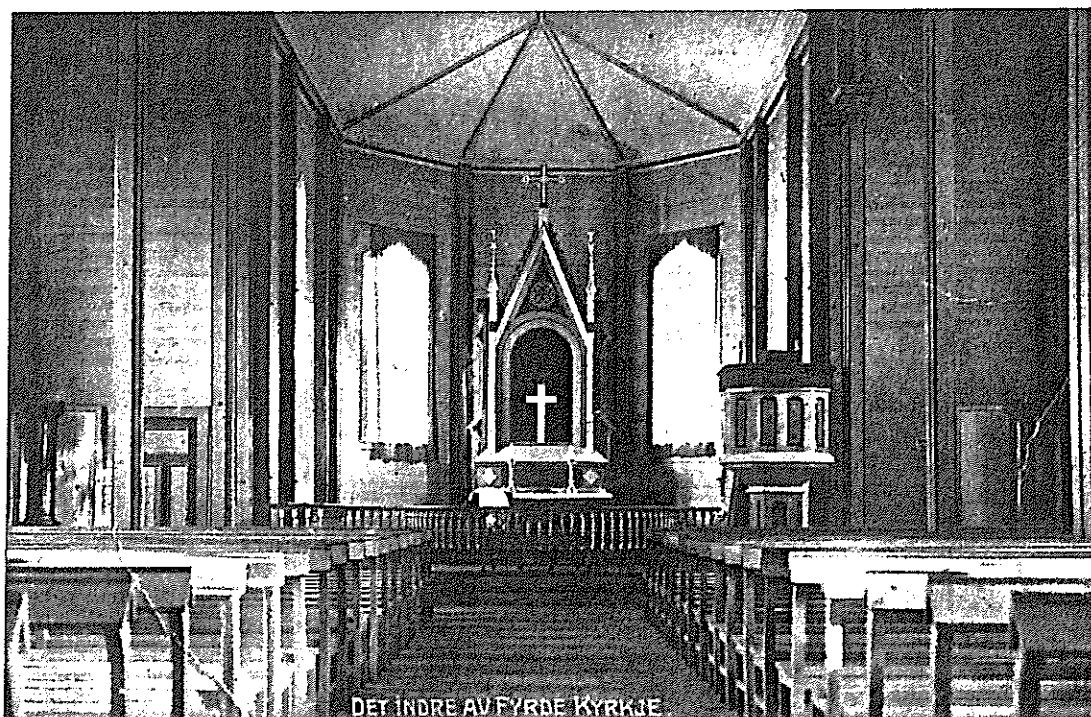
Mom & Dad  
just before  
they were  
married, 1923



Mom & Dad in Bergen just  
before they were married.  
The lady on the right made  
Mother's wedding dress.  
Uncle Olaf, Mother's brother,  
is in the center.



Mother & Dad  
were married  
May 31, 1923  
in the Fyrde  
Church



DET INDRE AV FYRDE KYRKJE



TELEGRAM FRA

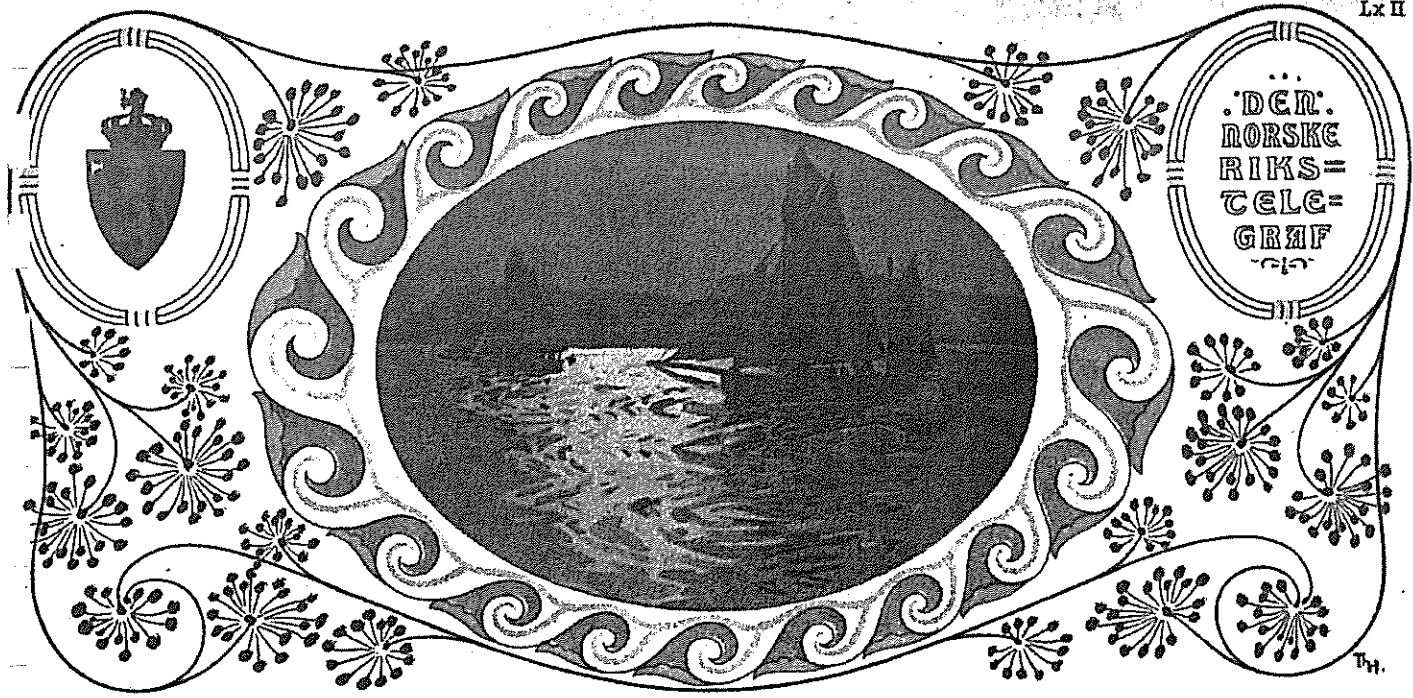
*Hlop*

NR. 834 , 10 ORD , INDLEVERT DEN 2 / 10 KL. 16,10

*Christine Kristiansen**Førde i Sunnfjord**Lukka og signing  
paa trediveaarsdagen**Lava Nicolai*







TELEGRAM fra *Kristiania*

NR *64929* *18* ORD, INNLEVERT DEN *31/5* 192*3* KL *8.15* SIGN. *acs*

*Brideparret Kjellmeelund*

*Født i Lunnefjord*

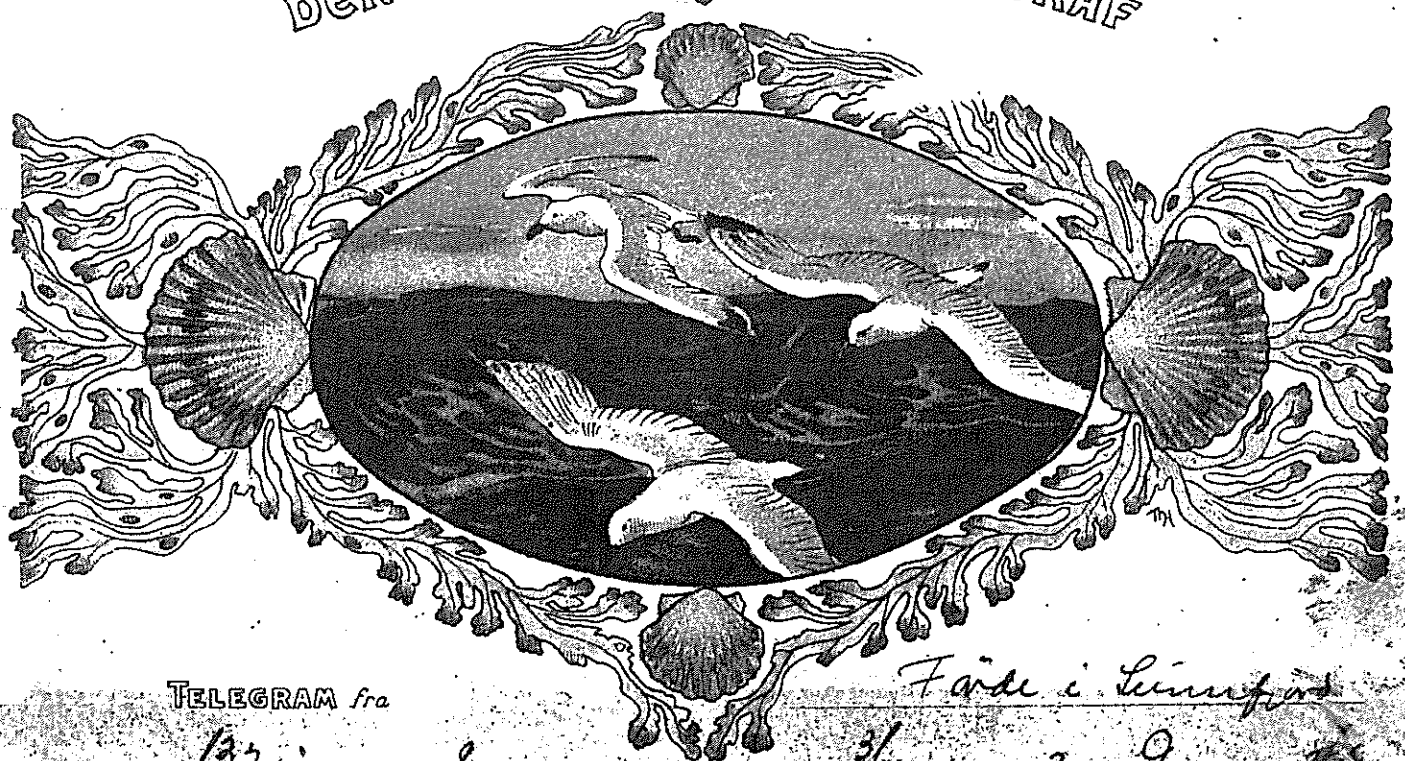
*Genkjøbt med bryllupsfesten.*

*Al held og lykke for dagen og fremtiden ønsker heds.*

*Kjellmeelund*



DEN NORSKE RIKSTELEGRAF



TELEGRAM fra

N<sup>o</sup> 132

8

ÖRD. INNLEVERT DEN

31

Färde i Linnuford

/ 5.1923 KL. 9

SIGN.

45

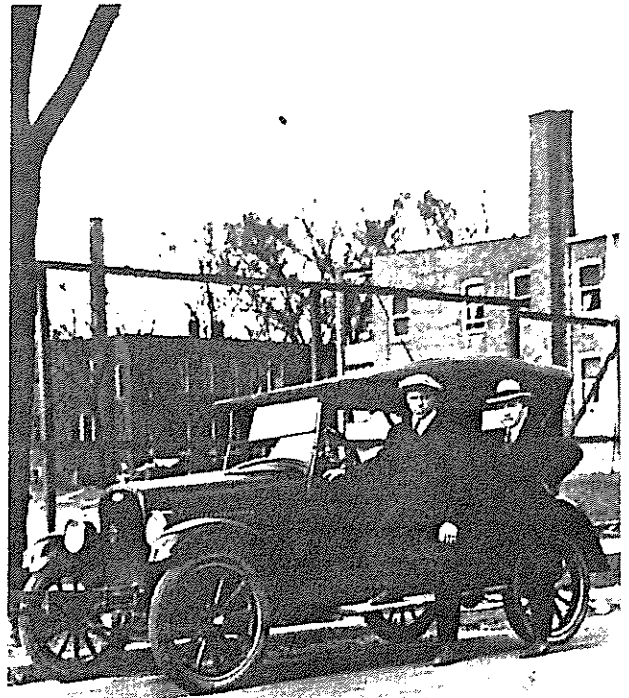
Brudeparet Hjelmelant

Färde i Linnuford,

min hjertelige lykønsknng.

Tomine Rognvann

*Dad & Ben*



*Dad, left, and his good  
friend Ben Hjelmeland*

From: Fredrik Olaf Hjelmeland in Waukegan, Illinois  
To: Gunder Mikalsen Hjelmeland at Hjelmeland in Gaular, Sunnfjord

Note: Original letter was written on Dad's business stationery which read: FRED HJELMELAND, Electrical Contractor, Box 92, WAUKEGAN, ILLINOIS, Phone 1403.W

May 29, 1924

Dear Father and Family!

Hearty thanks for your letter and Mikal's letter which I received some days ago. I understand that you have been suffering from a serious epidemic at home. The worst thing must have been that you had to be in quarantine for such a long time and were not permitted to go anywhere. But I guess it must be all over by now. Ivar and Kristine's children are all well again, I hope.

As for myself, I've been in good health all the time; and as conditions are, I manage well. Also, I had heard there was a contagious sickness going around at home. Anna wrote to me about it, and so did Kristine.

Yes, now I have a daughter also. Yes, it goes fast when it first begins. Have known it for quite a long time; Kristine sent me a telegram when it was all over. I also had a letter from Kristine when she was up and about again. Everything was well with her and the baby. Have not heard when she is planning to have the christening, but I expect a letter from her any day now.

I've also had a letter from Olga Solemslid. She is good at writing. You can tell her I will answer her soon. Had a letter from Alf, too. He wants to come over here now, so I should probably lend him some money for this. You, Father, may give him enough for the tickets, and then you must let him have some money for his travel expenses. But first he must apply for immigration permission. It will not help him to go to Canada because he cannot go to the States from Canada, only if he had been there a year or so first, and perhaps not even then. It's rather difficult to obtain immigration permission here now, so he had better apply for going directly to New York. You can tell him from me that he should take out life insurance at home now because it will be easier for him to pay it in American money, with the exchange being as high as it is now. He should take out insurance for at least 5-6 thousand. This he must do before he leaves. So you can let him have enough money to come over here, if he still wants to go. He can work with me for some time until he can find something better. But times are not as good now as they have been. That is as far as factory work is concerned. Many people have been laid off lately. It may be because of the presidential election which will take place this fall. But as for the building trade, it is as good in Chicago as before.

As for me, I cannot complain; have a fair amount of work to do, and I think it will be good until Christmas. Summer and fall are the best seasons here. I still work on my own, so I can use Alf if he comes; but it will, in the end, all depend on how much work I have.

It has been a very cold spring here, and it is late as well. We still have to use our winter underware, so it is not as warm in America as you at home think. I see from your letter that you, too, have had a late spring, but I think by now there is summer and sunny weather at home also.

You have no doubt seen Theodor Lien. Greet him from me; he promised to send me a letter (when he arrived home).

It's good to hear that you are so well, Father. I'm sure you will live for many more years and that we shall meet again once more in this life. But time goes fast; it will soon be a year since I left Norway again.

Have you been over to see my daughter, Father? It will be some time yet before I can see her. But I have thought of bringing Kristine over here this summer, if she can find good company and if things are such that she can leave her home. But, I'm a little afraid it will be difficult to get her into the States as I'm not a citizen here. I have thought of going to Chicago soon and there I shall try to find out about the Immigration laws. I could have her come to Canada, but this will not help if she cannot proceed to the States. As I said, I shall try to find out all I can about it. If Mikal comes over, he would be the best company she could have. But, they mustn't leave before they apply for immigration papers.

Well, enough about that. If Kristine gets away, you Father, may keep the bank books I have left with you. If the exchange rate remains high, I may be able to send a little more money home.

I live, as I said, fairly well now; am busy with my work and thus the time goes fast. I drive out in the country every morning and return to the town by evening as I have most of my work in the country and in the small towns.

Well, this is all for this time. Hope these lines find you all in good health and free to go wherever you like.

Best regards to everyone at home.

Yours lovingly,

Fred

HE

From: Fredrik Olaf Hjelmeland in Waukegan, Illinois, at the time when he is alone and waiting for his wife and new-born daughter to arrive from Norway and having recently arrived in Waukegan from Canada  
To: His father, Gunder Mikalsen Hjelmeland, and his sisters and brother, Fredrik Mikal Hjelmeland in Norway on Hjelmeland

Waukegan, Illinois 24 June 1924

My dear Father, Sisters and Brother!

It's been some time since I heard from you. I hope you've received my answer to the last letter you sent me. I mailed it a long time ago!

With me things are as usual. I trudge along, all by myself, work and strive as best I can. I have plenty to do so I can't complain. One job is coming in after the other, but my expenses are high, too, so I have to make good money if there is to be any profit. Ordinary expenses like board and room, and wash, in addition to gas and oil for the car, run to over \$100 a month, but as long as the money is coming in, it's not so bad. I expect to have plenty to do up to Christmas, so hopefully, I may earn a few dimes by then.

I have already earned and saved the cost of my journey to Norway, and that's not bad! And as you know, it's not a year since I returned, just about ten months. In addition I have traveled and changed locations. It took me awhile adjusting and coming to a new place not knowing a soul; it's not that easy to begin with, but I cannot complain, I feel I have been pretty lucky, and may even do better up to Christmas if nothing special happens.

We have had a cold and rather wet spring here this year. The farmers complain about too much rain. In Canada, you know, it was always the opposite (?) because it rained there constantly. But in Canada, the crop is looking promising this summer, and I guess I will be getting some bushels of wheat from there, hopefully enough to pay my taxes. I still owe \$170 in taxes to Canada; I didn't pay everything in full last year.

Ben Hjelmeland came down to see me last Sunday. He works at a big hotel in Chicago; he has quite a good position there, I believe. He, too, has many plans on his mind, but they may not be carried out so quickly. I believe he will return to Norway in a few years. Times are not so good in Chicago as they used to be, but that is mostly in the factories. When it comes to the construction business, it is still good. There are many big buildings that they have just started on, among others a hotel which is to be the biggest in America, which says quite a lot!

As for the factories, it is more or less politics. A presidential election is to take place in the fall, which makes life a little tougher on the people, and so the big guys will make the people vote as they want them to. So I believe, and others too, that it is just temporary.

This area no doubt is good from Chicago and north to Milwaukee. I believe that this whole area is going to be developed. Construction works

have started more and more in this direction, but in spite of all this, I liked Canada better, but it had its own good reasons. You know I never had a better time in my life either here in this country or home in Norway than what I had in Canada those last years I spent there. Here I am very much alone. I haven't any friends or buddies which means I am rather lonely, but I shouldn't complain, I have enough work. But, Canada still has a compelling power that draws me. I liked the people I met there better, but it doesn't look like I shall be going back for awhile. Time will decide my fate; you are not always the master of your decisions, I feel.

The house has now been sold. I have put \$337.10 in the bank for you, Mikal, in my name though and by November 1, 1924, you will receive \$500. All expenses have now been paid; I have the papers and the bills, and if you want me to, I will send them to you if you are not coming over here. It's just the same for me, but if the exchange rate is good, I might send it. But, I'll wait a little while still, until I hear from you whether you are coming or not.

It might well be that I will need all the money I've got next spring. You see, I have something on my mind, and if it can be carried out, I may need every cent I can get. That's why I thought I might keep the money here, and you could get the money I have at home, but on the other hand, I may send you what I've got here and then change the other \$500 with you, if it's the same for you.

I got a letter from Kristine the other day and see that you have been to Førde. How do you like my daughter? Is she just as clever at crying as I was when I was small? I would guess she has been christened by now. What name did she get? She is going to be an American girl anyhow. How is Kristine? Is everything all right with her? I'm so glad that everything went so well. I don't know yet how to get her over here. It's not so easy to enter the States any longer, the regulations are stricter. But I will get hold of some papers here and send which might be a help. I will not take her through Canada because it is just as difficult to enter the States through Canada. She will be considered a newcomer anyway, so much I have found out, and then they may make me stop there as well, which is out of the question. The times in Canada are not so good just now and you know I have gotten a start here. If you are coming, Fred, I would advise you to come through New York if you can make it. But if you had to come through Canada, it wouldn't be so difficult for you to cross the border, but there might be some problems since you are not a Canadian citizen. It might be that you would have to have a passport, and that you won't get before having lived in Canada for a year, I believe. So, the best for you would be to come directly to New York.

If you had given the house to me before you left for home, you wouldn't have lost so much on it, but there is no sense in thinking about that today. I never visit the Simonsens any more. She is rotten to the core, that woman, and that kind of people I do not need!

But I feel, Fred, that if you could make it over here for say one and one half years, you would profit financially, I'm almost certain of it. And you could use it to give Hjelmeland the road you want for them to have, without too much toil. Well, this is my opinion, and of course you will do what you think best, but if you come, please come as soon as you can, and do apply for an emigration permit immediately, so when

you are ready to go you don't have to wait for the permit. And I want you to take Kristine with you, helping her on the voyage with luggage and everything.

How is Alf Solemslid doing? Will he leave? If he had been here, he could have worked with me. I had another letter from Olga Solemslid; please tell her I'll write her later.

This will be all for now. How is father doing? Is he in good health? Was he godfather to my daughter? How is Teodor Lien doing at home? When will he return? He said he would write me, but it seems he has forgotten. Johan Hagsbø was just the same person as the day he first left Hagsbø and just as stubborn too!

Goodbye for now, hoping these lines will find you all in good health and greetings to you and everyone at home.

Yours,

Fred

Will Petrine and Andrias be home for the summer? Alf Solemslid may like to know my home address which is 940 North Avenue, Waukegan, Illinois, but tell him to use the post office box number if he sends a cable when traveling.



Mother in Norway sends this picture of she and my sister Odny to my Dad in America to "introduce" him to their first daughter. Dad did not actually see her until she was one year old.



From: Fredrik Olaf Hjelmeland in Waukegan, Illinois at the time  
that he is waiting for his wife, Kristine, and little daughter,  
Odny, four months old and whom he has never seen, to join him in America  
To: Salutation reads to his father, sisters, and brothers, but  
it is predominately to his brother, Fredrik Mikal Hjelmeland

Waukegan, Illinois  
August 14, 1924

My dear Father, Sisters and Brothers!

Many thanks for your letter that I received today. I will try to answer right away, not do like you and wait several months before answering. It has been a very long time since I've heard anything from home. Everyone has their own tasks to do, and time is precious.

From your letter I see that you have already started haying, but you don't mention what kind of growth it has been. Has it been just as cold and rainy as last year? Here we have had quite a funny summer so far. That's what they are saying those who are familiar with the climate here. You see, it has been a very cold and wet summer with only a few days of what we could call nice summer weather. Anyway, it is far from what I remember of the nice summer weather of 1910. But the crop seems to be good here, except for the corn. This is late due to the cold and rainy weather. July wasn't too bad, but this month there has been an awful lot of rain.

Regarding good or hard times, I cannot really tell. People say that in Chicago many are unemployed which is not strange at all. Thousands of people are arriving each month. It is mainly factory workers that are out of work. Many buildings are still under construction according to the newspapers. Have you been taking out just as much . . . ? . . . for the buildings this year as you did last year? I have seen from the newspapers that better times are expected due to the arrangement that was made in Europe regarding Germany's loan to the allies. Europe will be needing a lot of all kinds of equipment, so I believe that America will soon be getting all the money back which they have loaned Germany. This will mean a lot for the factories here. The prices on all farm products have increased a great deal lately, which means better times ahead. The farmers here have experienced the worst part of it. Everything they had to buy was expensive, and what they sold was cheap. So they now believe in better times again. As for the presidential election, I would think that the same party that we have today will continue, but I don't think it will make much difference who is to have the power. The presidential election today does not have so much influence on life as before. Personally, I feel that better times are approaching. I read a lot of newspapers and they are all saying different things, but it might well be that I'm mistaken. We have to take it as it comes; this is what I have now come to think and let someone else worry about the outcome!

Regarding the waterways, they have great plans for Chicago and the district. They are trying to get through to the Atlantic Ocean from the Lakes. From Canada the St. Lawrence River ends in the ocean. Then, I believe Chicago will be the largest city in the world! But Chicago is

big enough as it is. The city is very chaotic, and I prefer to live in a small town where one doesn't have to look to all four corners of the world before crossing the street!

Well, Fred, here may be many very good opportunities for one who dares and is not afraid. But you know I got burned quite a bit when in Canada, and it costs too much hard work to let it happen again. But as far as I know, nobody here has lost anything on real estate. The Chicago borders are expanding very rapidly so there is a good chance to make money if you were to buy in the right direction. I can see now what we lost by not settling in Chicago when we came here the first time, but then I did not know the opportunities here and therefore knew very little about what was best. What is done cannot be undone, but maybe it is not too late yet!

I see from your letter that you are considering coming over here. Because it took such a long time before I heard anything from you, I was sure you had given up the idea of coming to America. Now I understand it has become more strict to go, and everyone is to come in proper turn. As to your going to Canada, you know the rules just as well as I do. If you still have your old American citizenship papers, I believe there would be no difficulty in entering the United States, and you would not need a passport. Those living in the States do not need a passport to enter Canada and vice versa. But the authorities must never find out that you are coming from Norway. Then you would have to stay at least a year in Canada before entering the States. This may be one way of doing it: You could say that you had been in Canada for such and such a period of time, and that you now would like to go back to the States. They wouldn't be asking too many questions if you don't give them a reason to be suspicious, so you should have the answers ready before they start questioning you. How long would it take if you were to wait in turn for your going to the States?

But you should have been here now; then you would have gotten a good time for the rest of this year. I don't think it would be difficult for you to reenter the bricklayer's union again. Have you kept the old book? The bricklayers are, without doubt, one of the best trades here now. That's what everyone here says. You have lost a good year. If you had come last year, you might have gone home for Christmas this year and be well fixed at Hjelmeland for the rest of your days!

(English text) Fred, I might get in wrong to tell you to come over here if anything should happen and it should not come out as we expected. But as I can see things as they are and look a little into the future, I'm sure that you would have a pretty good financial benefit of your trip if nothing, as no one can help like sickness, etc. would interfere. But that is a thing that can happen at home as well as here. You know very well that I would like to see you here. But then again, you've got a wife and a little boy, and they come first of all, and then (there is) our old father. I'm pretty sure that he would feel it pretty bad. They cannot see into things as we can; they are more satisfied with things as they are, which is, after all, a lot better. But neither one of us is made that way. I think that we are much alike that way! (End of English text)

I see from your letter that you and Father went to see Kristine. I had a letter from Kristine yesterday, but it had been written before you were there. Did Kristine ask Father for money? She must get money

for herself, for the tickets, and for everything that she needs. I for my part will send her \$100 which she can show for herself when she comes ashore here. I'll send her a draft for the dollars and she will be paid in American dollars at a bank in Bergen. But, something could interfere with her travel plans. You don't think that she needs to wait in turn for her going, do you? I want her over here now so very much. You know it is no way to live, staying apart for a lifetime. She sent me a picture of herself and Odny; she looks healthy enough, but one cannot judge too well from a small picture.

(English text) If there is anything that you can help her with, Fred, do it for my sake, and I might do you a turn some other time. I want her to take the two chairs along which you gave us for a wedding gift. Don't you think you can do it? I would feel a lot better if she could come over here now. I might have to go to Canada again; I'm supposed to have some crop up there, but I think it is pretty far to go. (End of English text) I haven't heard anything from the man who rents from me for a long time. It is not so easy when you have to trust strangers. If you are coming over this fall, I could go then and you could stay with Krisitne until I return. If you were to work in Chicago, the streetcar leaves from here every thirty minutes, and it takes about an hour to get there.

I'm not sending your money with this letter, but I will send it shortly. I have approximately \$600-\$700 outstanding for work I have finished, and I expect to receive that any day now. Then I don't need to take money out of the bank to send you. It might take another week or so. I still have \$1,200 up in Moose Jaw. I will send it sometime this fall. The exchange rate between Canada and the States is just about normal now.

As for my work here, I cannot complain. Last month was not the very best, but I expect that from now on and through the middle of the winter I'll have plenty to do. I have several jobs waiting. I earn a good salary when I'm working but then again I lose a good deal when I'm not working, but I'm confident that I'll manage.

Ben is in Chicago. I'm afraid he doesn't like the job he has right now too well, as he has to work on Sundays as well. He has been out here several times, but then he always has to have someone substitute for him.

(English text) Well Fred, life is not what it should be for me either now. I think you will find that I have changed pretty much. But you were not here during the best years I had in America. It is pretty hard to forget that time. But probably it all will come out all right yet. I know I have a pretty good wife. The only trouble with her is she did not know her own good. But, she has learned a lot this last year I know that, and that will do her a lot of good. (End of English text)

This will be all for now. If you wait as long to answer my letter as before, I will do the same to you.

To all of you,

Fred

SB  
SR

From: Fredrik Olaf Hjelmeland in Waukegan, Illinois  
To: Gunder Mikalsen Hjelmeland, his father, in Norway on Hjelmeland

Waukegan, August 14, 1924

Dear Father!

I'll write a few words to you too, at the same time I'm writing to Mikal; you may read his letter as well. I understand from his letter that you have been out working again. What time have you thought to quit?! How are you these days? I do hope you are in good health. I am certain we will meet again sometime. I am seriously considering returning to Norway in a few years, if I live, and then stay home for good. It can be possible to live in Norway, too, that is if one has something to live on. But I do want Kristine to come over here, if she can make it. But that does not mean we are not coming back to Norway again. Anyway, that is my decision at this time.

You must not take it too hard if Mikal is going to America again. It would be a great help to him to get the farm at Hjelmeland in the state it ought to be. A year or two would be the most he would need to be here. He would do better here in a couple of years than he would do at home in his entire lifetime, so you have to manage the farm another few years until he returns.

I read from Mikal's letter that you have been visiting Kristine. Did she ask for any money? Please let her have whatever she wants, and the rest, in case she comes over here, you may keep for me.

I see from Mikal's letter that Petrine and Andrias have been home this summer. I guess they are a bit angry with me since I haven't written to them. I hope they are doing well. When will Alf Solemslid come? Or maybe he is not coming?

I for my part am doing pretty well. I have done quite a lot of work since I first came here, and I expect it to continue.

Have you done what I wrote in an earlier letter about mother's gravestone? That you must see to, Father. And I will repeat what I've already said and that is that it should have been done a long time ago.

If you have the time, please write me a letter and tell me all about whatever you may think of.

Just these few words today. I promise to write more next time. I really haven't that much to write about. Everything takes its own course. One has to try to do one's best; that is all one can do.

Take care and live well, dear Father.

Warmest greetings,

Your son Fredrik

From: Fredrik Olaf Hjelmeland in Waukegan, Illinois  
To: Gunder Mikalsen Hjelmeland, his father, at home on Hjelmeland

Note: Letter-head stationery reads: FRED HJELMELAND, Electrical Contractor, Box 92, WAUKEGAN, ILLINOIS, Phone 1403-W

November 26, 1924

Dear Father and Sisters and Brother!

Will write a few words home so you can know how your roaming son is doing. It is Christmas time again soon, and you will no doubt receive this letter before that time. I have been expecting to hear from Mikal, but I know he is not so quick to answer so I suppose it will take some time. But, I should like to know if he received the promissory note I sent him over a month ago. I don't think it should take him so long to write and let me know!

I often have letters from Kristine, but she doesn't write about what goes on at Hjelmeland. She wrote to me that she had visited at Hjelmeland. How do you like my daughter? Does she look nice to you? Kristine is very proud of her, as you can imagine, but one cannot go by what a mother says about her own child! I have received a picture of her, too. She looks healthy and good. Yes, I suppose I'll be able to see her for myself soon.

Can you tell me what has become of Theodor Lien? Kristine wrote me that he should have left home on 19 October, but up until now I have neither seen nor heard anything of him. Kristine said that he would stop off here and see me before traveling on, but it looks as though he has forgotten it.

As for myself, I'm about the same as when I first arrived here in the United States. I'm working as best I can, but progressing so slowly. It has been quiet now for a couple of weeks, but yesterday I got two good contracts again, so I can't complain. I have been fortunate all summer. If I'm lucky next year, I shall be satisfied.

Father, Kristine wrote me and said that you have given us a whole sheep. I must give you my warmest thank you. It feels good to know you always want and have wanted only well for your children. It is as if it is your greatest wish to always want to do well for us, and you can never give enough it seems -- and to me, me who has given you the least of all your children. But if you didn't have sufficient for yourself -- dear Father, it pleases me so that you have. There is nothing better than being independent or self sufficient. If you are ever in need of anything, I would share what I have with you. Everyone who knows me would say the same.

Christmas is soon here again. My quick trip to Norway didn't give me any opportunity to stay for Christmas. It is a long time ago since I celebrated Christmas at Hjelmeland. It was the Christmas Mikal came from America. That is 17 years ago. The time passes so terribly fast when one looks back, but a year can seem very long when one approaches it day by day and expects things to happen to break the monotony, some-

thing to give new hope and joy, to give one more self confidence and energy. But, I feel it will come if one only has an unshakeable faith in what one does and does well. The reward will come in time. That is my belief.

Recently I have been a bit uncertain whether to bring my wife and daughter to America or not. It was too bad she did not travel when Theodor did, as she could have had company all the way here. I also have thoughts of whether she would like it here. All is unfamiliar and the language also strange to her. I suppose we could just as well wait until next year, as I have since I got back from Norway. (?) Perhaps I could come back to Norway for good in a year or so, but I am a restless chap who expects to see something for all my work and also a future, so I'm afraid I wouldn't be able to settle down there (Norway) either now. I think in a way one loses oneself at home. Things go so slowly like dragging a sledge behind you. But it would be easier if one had some goal to begin with. Everything is easier then.

Yes, enough of this sort of writing. You don't have to worry about me writing such strange things. Don't doubt that I'm not doing well here because I am. I have nothing to complain about. I am well at all times, do a good day's work, and do as well as most people in the working class.

How are you now, dear Father? Hope you are well at all times. I suppose you have plenty of work just looking after little Gunnar. It was nice of Marie and Mikal to name their boy after you so the name can remain at Hjelmeland.

So, in closing I want to wish all my sisters, brother and families a very happy Christmas celebration and a blessed New Year. I sent, among other things to Kristine, for Christmas, two Christmas lights for you Father. It is just a small remembrance for a Merry Christmas to my old Father.

From your Son,

Fred

I got about 900 bushels of wheat from my land in Canada. I received only half of it. The price of wheat is good now.

From: Fredrik Olaf Hjelmeland in Waukegan, Illinois  
To: Fredrik Mikal Hjelmeland, his brother, at Hjelmeland in Norway

Note: The following letter was written on letter-head stationery which read: FRED HJELMELAND, Electrical Contractor, Box 92, WAUKEGAN, ILLINOIS, Phone 1403.W

January 7, 1925

My dear Brother and Family,

Thank you ever so much for your letter which I received between Christmas and New Year. I see from it that everything is fine at home. I can say the same for myself. I am well and in good health.

During Christmas I made a trip up to Wisconsin to visit the Liens. Since Theodor did not stop here on his return, I went to see him and learned he was bound for California just after Christmas. It was good to see him and to find out how things were at home. He also had some things for me from Kristine. I spent 4-5 days there with them and had quite a nice time. Theodor left for California the day before I left. He is hoping to get a job at a lumber factory there.

I also happened to meet some of the new arrivals there. They are working at a crate factory, but they felt that they weren't being paid well enough. I guess it was between \$2.50 and \$3.00 they had. They ought to be content with that for a start. Do you remember when I first came to Chicago? I made only \$7.00 a week. I believe that isn't any better. Hawkins is a very reasonable town to live in. One may live on approximately half of what I have to pay here, and the day pay is accordingly. Yes, Hans Haugsbø came to the best place he could come to with his family. It is not that easy to arrive in a totally strange town with your family and not know the language. But they felt at home there. Anyway, it was a good change going up there - got through the Christmas holidays.

I have not done much since I came back. I spent a few days in Chicago and went to see Simonsens, but they were not home. They have moved, but I found their new address which is 4258 Armitage Avenue. I will probably go up to them some time (English) and just tell them what I think about them in very plain words at that. And I can do it, too, if I feel that way. (End of English) I almost regret that I did not get a judgment against them, but that would have cost you \$50-75 more and would have taken more time. I would have indeed enjoyed doing it! As far as I know both of them are working, but people like them never make anything anyway, which has been proven many times. They owe money everywhere in Canada, so they've got a swell record up there!

As you see, I have now received the rest of the money for the house. I got it January 3, and am sending you a Bill of Exchange on New York Bank. Here in Waukegan the exchange rate for Norwegian kroner is rather poor, so I am sending them in dollars. I don't believe that the krone will increase very much for awhile, or maybe it will. But that is up to you to decide whether you will have it exchanged now or wait awhile. I am sending you \$506. It was \$515 but then there is the exchange of

\$3.79 and \$5 to Cost of Remaining Tax Sale from Settle, \$5. I will send you the documents in my next letter for you to see for yourself.

I guess the house had been sold for taxes and had been reduced before I got anything to do with it. If only I had taken over the house before I left for home, you wouldn't have lost so much on it, and wouldn't have had to pay the lawyer so much either. If Simonsens had given it up at that time, then the debt which was on the house would have gone to their land, but it is too late now. The best thing to do now is to forget all about it. I am glad it has been settled, and I managed to get everything I could for it; it is a little help now as you are going to build.

Are you planning to begin building in the spring? As I understand from your letter, it doesn't seem like you are coming over here. I would have enjoyed having you here this summer. I feel we are going into a very good year with regard to construction, but how long it will last is another question. But why didn't you apply for a passport when you were in Bergen? You're not obliged to go just because you have applied. But you would have a free hand to do what you wanted to do. If you were to come here early in the spring, you could have returned home before the winter and saved a lot on the trip. But as you cannot make it, I feel it is best to dismiss these thoughts for good. It will just make you upset thinking about it and make you restless. I'm sure you will manage in Norway, too, and much better than many others.

I know exactly how it is at home, but nevertheless I am considering going home in a few years, but not before I see a way out. First I will have to sell my land and have everything settled. I have some wheat on my land, but it is a long time since I heard anything from the man who rents it. He was to take it on the elevator and send me the bill, but as yet I haven't heard from him. If I don't get a letter very soon, I will have to make a trip up there. We get a good price for the wheat now, up to \$1.90 a bushel in Winnipeg. I have some 4.28 (?) on my land, but I owe \$50 for the threshing. I don't want to go; it costs too much. All the same, I hope to get it settled one way or another.

I see from your letter that Martinus did not get his way regarding the road. I gather he wasn't very happy about that. It was much worse for him than it was for you to lose several thousand kroner. You'll sleep as well nights, which I doubt he will. I, for my part, wouldn't have liked to have a temperament like his. It must be very painful.

Well, brother, I'm still going around here in Waukegan. I haven't been doing anything for nearly three weeks, so it is about time to get started again. The snow is now gone, and we can drive out into the country with the car. Hopefully there will be some work to do, and I am looking forward to warmer weather. I believe I'll make an average income here if I stay. I'm still very uncertain. I have another town in mind, too, in Michigan. A small town where Ford just recently established a factory, and when it comes into full operation, there will be work for 15,000 people. For the time being there is a boom, which may continue for awhile. There is a shortage of housing, and everyone is likely to start building. I guess a shop would be needed, so I think I may go up there and look it over! (Note: He must be referring to Detroit - how right he was! It did grow!)

Well, this is all for now, but I would like to first ask you one thing and that is to please send me some words as soon as you receive this letter,



so that I will know that you have gotten the Bill of Exchange. You see, Brother, I have so much on my mind. I will write a little to Father now also.

Warmest greetings.

Your brother,

Fred

How did it go with the pig? Did she recover?

How is little Gunnar? I guess he can walk alone by now.

Ben sends his regards. He is now working in a cabinet shop.

I haven't heard anything from Hans Andersen.

I have heard that son to Andreas in Tuna (?) is in Canada. Could you try to find out where; I would like to know. It is, I understand none too good times there now.

Say hello to Olaf and get Sam Hjelmeland's address.

I'm sending the check in another letter. The amount is Kr. 3308 on Bergen's Privatbank.

SB

From: Fredrik Olaf Hjelmeland in Waukegan, Illinois  
To: Gunder Mikalsen Hjelmeland, his father, home on Hjelmeland

Waukegan, Illinois  
January 7, 1925

Dear Father!

Thank you ever so much for the letter I got for Christmas. I sent you one for Christmas, too. I do hope that you have received it. I see from your letter that you have not been feeling well this fall. I do hope you are better now. You must try to get more easily digested foods, like fish and light soups, etc., which may do you good. Father, you have the money; use it when you can. That is what is it for. If I were you, I would buy everything which might be good for you, and I am sure that Marie would prepare it for you. Use your money as long as you have the opportunity. You have earned it yourself and owe nothing to anyone. Do it, Father!

I am writing to Mikal at the same time, so it will have to be a short one today. Fred and Theodor Lien say hello. I visited with them during Christmas. Some time has passed since I have had a letter from Kristine. She was planning then on going to Bergen to get a passport. I do not know how it went, and I am anxious to hear from her. I hope the weather was nice when she traveled for the sake of little Odny. Did Kristine send you something for Christmas?

It has been rather quiet here for some time now. I hate to be idle, time passes so very slowly then. When there is work to do, time runs swiftly, and I feel so much better. I believe I will get some work shortly, but there isn't very much to do during the winter. I may get to work in a factory for some time, but I don't like the idea. The pay is poor, and if I can get a small job now and then, I may do just as well. By the way, I have been quite fortunate since I came here, and the prospects are promising for the summer.

Had a letter from Alf Solemslid; he said he would wait until Kristine left. The "Bergensfjord" departs from Bergen February 11. I feel it would be best if they would come over with that ship. If I were to go to New York to meet her, I would have plenty of time to do that then, and the toughest part of the winter will be gone if she comes at that time. But she has to make the decision herself. I am so looking forward to Kristine and my little daughter's coming and we can start a home. It isn't very pleasant the way it is now, either for her or for me.

But Father, I still haven't given up Norway, and if it is God's will, I would like to go back one day. You know I am on my own here and Kristine has all her folks back in Norway, too. I'm afraid she might get homesick. You know it won't be the same over here as it would be in Førde together with you! But hopefully it will work. So many others have done well here, and I will teach her the language.

Well, dear Father, I do hope you are in good health and will take my advice in taking care of yourself. You know how I would love to see my dear old Father again. This will be all for today. Say hello to my sisters from me, but most of all you are greeted from your son Fredrik

Write when you can.

SB

Note: Below is a single page which was written by my Grandfather Hjelmeland intended for my father Fredrik Olaf. It is uncertain if it was ever mailed. From information given we can assume it was written between the middle of March and the end of April in the year 1925. It was at this exact time that Mother and Alf left for America.

You write that you want to pay half the cost for the grave monument for your Mother's grave, but that is not necessary. As I understand, your brother and sisters are not going to pay anything which is fine with me.

My birthday is May 1, 1847, so I'll be 79 on May 1st this year. The reason why I did not write in my last letter to you about the things in the package you sent me for Christmas which Mikal and Gunnar were to have, was that Mikal said that he was going to write you very soon thereafter, so I did not mention it in my letter to you.

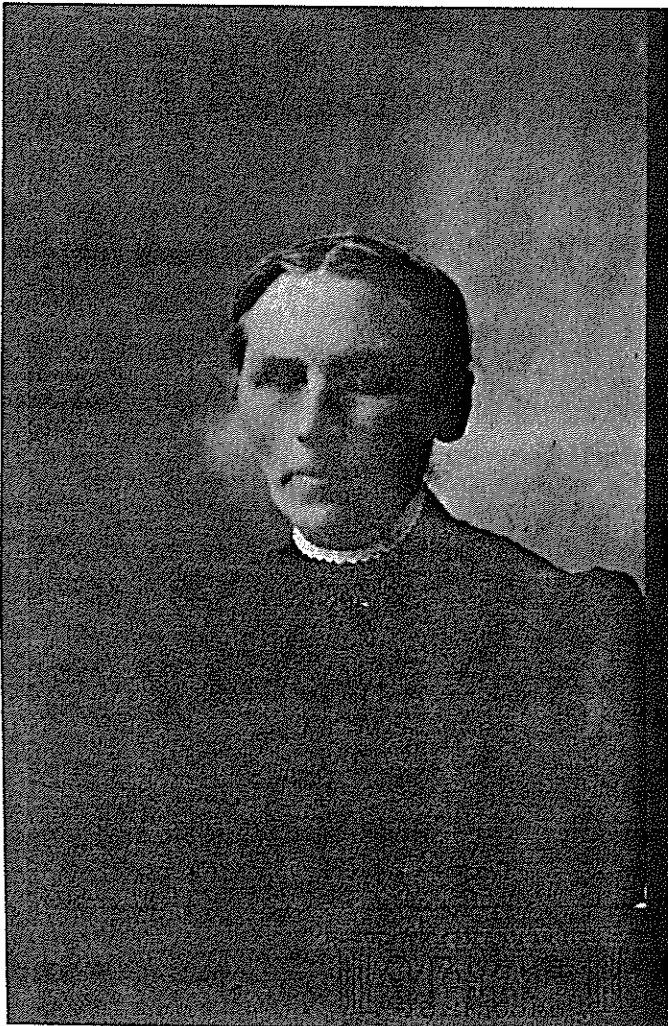
On your Bank Account No. 34 in Gaular Sparebank, you have Kr. 249.53. You see Kristine got Kr. 2000 on August 14, 1924, and on March 12, 1925, she got Kr. 1500 and Alf got Kr. 2000 on March 12, 1925.

February 10, 1921, I deposited in Bank Account No. 4,077, Kr. 300 as an inheritance which is to become Kr. 1000 as inheritance later.

You have in the bank now . . .	Kr. 370.35
Plus Account No. 34 . . . . .	<u>247.53</u>
Totaling . . . . .	Kr. 617.88

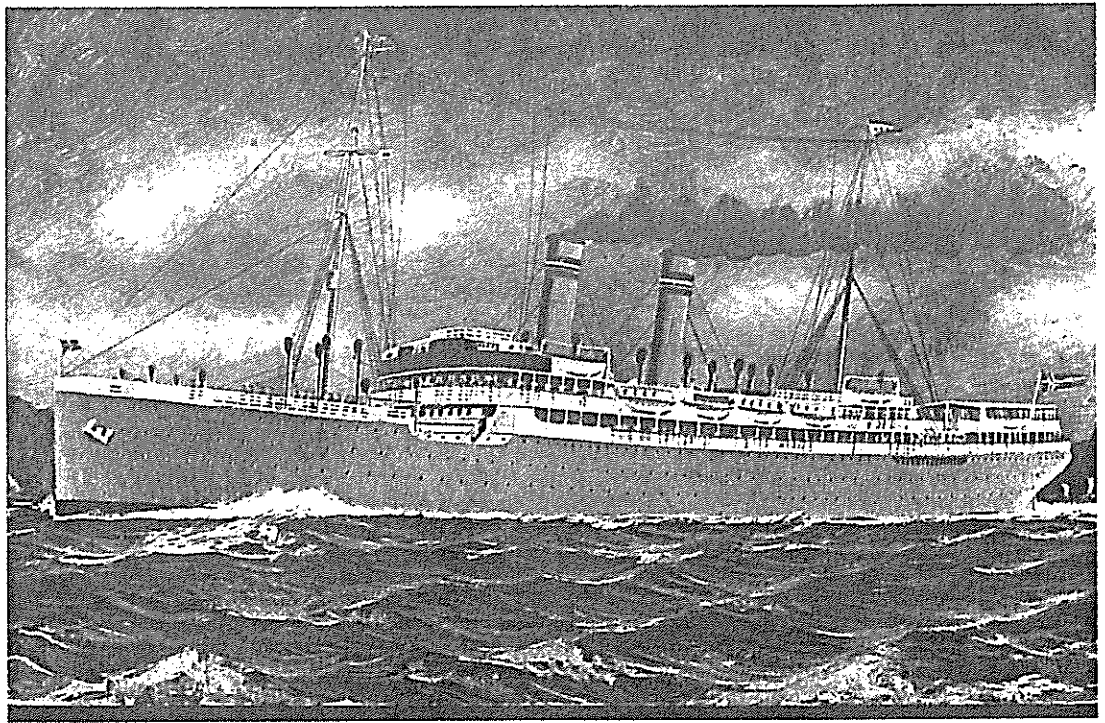
I see from your letter that Petter Solberg has written to you requesting some assistance for Anna Hjelmeland, the widow, since she is to build a new cow barn this summer. You are asking me how much I think you should give her, but that is difficult for me to say. You have to decide that yourself.

\*This is the time Mother and Alf left for America.



*The Funeral*

*My Grandmother  
Kristensen died  
the day before Mother  
left for America,  
March 16, 1925.  
Mother was not  
able to stay for  
her funeral.*



Above: The  
"Bergensfjord" —  
Mother sailed  
on this ship  
from Norway  
to America in  
1925 - March

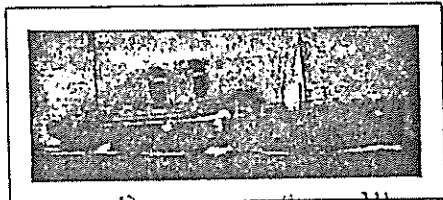
Left - Mother's  
passport picture  
1925 - the  
original picture  
is lovely!



PASSAGERENS GJENPART

BILL. NO. A 86292 2den Kl.

NAL Den norske  
Amerikalinje



„Bergensfjord“

S/S

fra Bergen til NEW YORK og videre til Waukegan, Ill.

Avgangsdato fra indskibningsstedet:

Bergen den 21 MAR 25

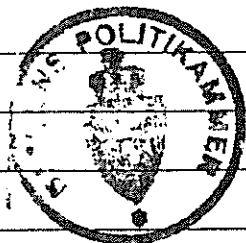
LUGAR NO. 50 KØBE C

NAVN

Alder

Alf Solheimslid

19



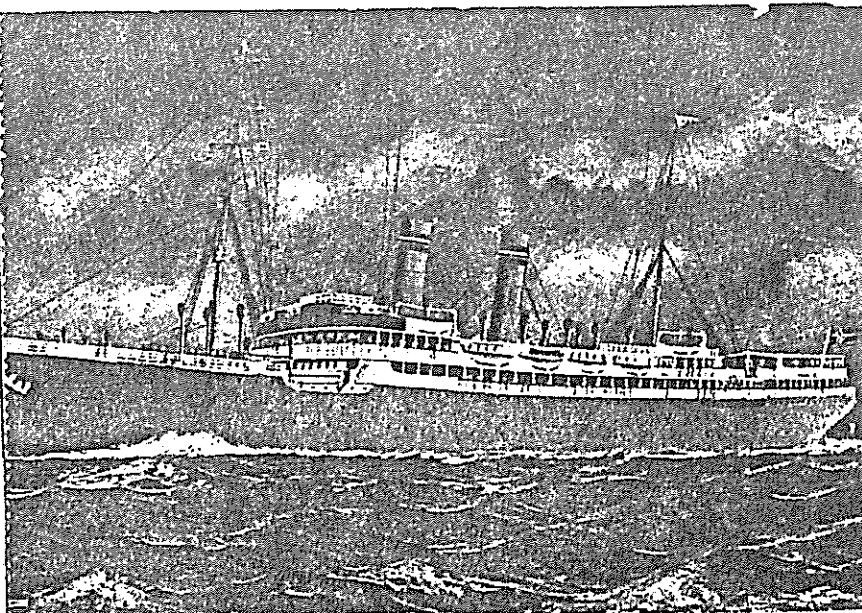
U.S. Indvandr. skat \$ 8.- betalt i Bergen

Passagerfragt:

Total Kr. 1245.-

Obs. Transportbetingelser:

Se billetkontraktens bakside.



Here is a copy of Alf's actual ticket when he, together with Mom & Odny, left Norway and immigrated to America. They sailed on the "Bergensfjord" on March 21, 1925.

LISTE OVER  
KABIN-PASSAGERER MED

D. S.  
**BERGENSFJORD**

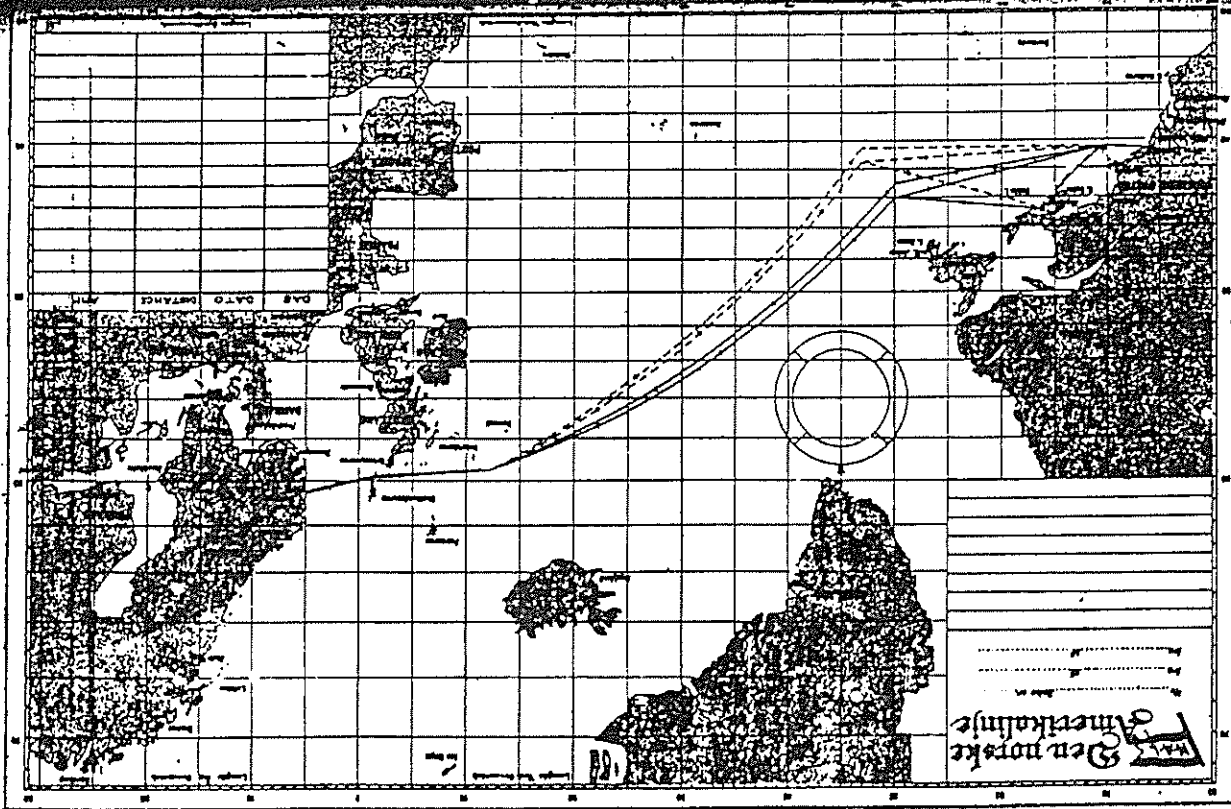
FRA  
OSLO  
TIL  
NEW-YORK

FREDAG 20 MARS  
TUR NR. 96 VEST

††

Kaptein: OLE B. BULL

Overstyrm. Ragnarld Eljerboen | Regnskt. . . . . Arne Urbye Blix  
Maskinn. Peder Karstensen | Læge . . . . . M. Jensen  
Overstuerf. . . . . Decar Svendsen



Førnelli, Axel

Gregaard, Eise  
Gabrielsen, Agnes  
Grindland, Karl  
Gjersdahl, Valborg  
Gjersdal, Henry  
Gjersdal, Sigrid  
Gjersdal, Tordis

Hauger, Birgit  
Hansson, Augusta  
Helland, Kristian  
Hansen, Adrienne  
Hermansen, Ole  
Huseland, Olanda  
Huseland, Riborg  
Hansen, Harald  
Haaland, Lars  
Helgesen, Jacob  
Hovden, Sigvald  
Hjelmeland, Kristine  
Hjelmeland, Odny

Ingebretsen, Marcellus

Johnsson, Aasia E.  
Jensen, Olaf M.  
Johanson, Marie  
Jacobsen, Elise  
Jacobsen, Clara  
Johnsen, Tore

Kaistø, Anna M.  
Kvalvaag, Anna J.  
Kjolleberg, Reinert Wahl  
Kristensen, Nils Gustav  
Kristensen, Blane Magnus  
Kristiansen, Ida

Knutson, Knut M. J.  
Kjævik, Olga Sophia  
Kristiansen, Ferdinand  
Kjær, Nicolai  
Kvamstrøm, Albertina  
Karlsson, Karl

Kristianson, Märta  
Linder, Ebba  
Lepsoe, Robert  
Lepsoe, Hjørdis  
Lepsoe, Robert  
Lea, Ruth  
Leifsen, Clara S.

Arvika

Oslo  
Spangereid  
Kristianssand S.  
Lund

Oslo

Rabylshede,  
Stavanger

Fvælt

Flære

Kvinesdal

Haugesund

Skudenes

Kvinesdal

Førde

Kvinesdal

Oslo

Brooklyn, N.Y.

Norrköping

Bergen

Oslo

Halse

Torvestad

Svelo

Lista

Sør Audnedal

Brooklyn, N.Y.

Oddernes

Bergen

V. Aker

Oslo

Stockholm

Grebbsgård

Gateborg

Stockholm

Bergen

Stavanger

Brooklyn, N.Y.

Lykkedrang, Karl

Madsen, Thorvald

Manner, Erling

Mosby, Gudrun

Marcusset, John S.

Mathisen, Axel

Mickelson, Hjalmar

Mickelson, Alice

Mickelson, Wolter

Myhr, Olaf

Monsen, Mikal B.

Mindrebom, Omlne Mathilde

Mortensen, Mauritz

Mønnekjen, Tjøstoft

Nicolaysen, Aslaug

Nilsen, Gudrun Tjørve

Nordbø, Ragnhild

Nygaard, Morten

Nysætr, Johanne

Nilsson, Olof

Nilsen, Janna A.

Olsen, Wolmar

Olsen, Berthe

Olsen, Minda Emily

Ommundsen, Ragna

Ommundsen, Harry

Paust, Dagfinn

Pettersen, Peter

Pettersen, Charles

Plepenburg, Gustav

Persson, Paul J.

Røhne, Ella

Schmidt, Rosa

Stang, Wolfgang

Sederholpe, Nancy

Strøm, Hjalmar

Sallvik, Olau

Sandanaa, Cecilie

Salvesen, Salve

Svendsen, Otto Sev.

Syvertsen, Anna Jørgine

Syvertsen, Heiga

Syvertsen, Kristiane

Sørensen, Simon

Solheimslid, Alf

Toblassen, Bolette

Gesine

Raudesund

Bergen

Oslo

—

—

Saltvik, Åland

—

—

Minneapolis, Minn.

Stavanger

Kristianssand S.

Halse

Risør

—

Evje

Lista

Evje

Tveit

Skøyen

Kil

Trondhjem

Oslo

—

Halse

Kristianssand S.

—

Oslo

Mandal

Oslo

Berlin

Ø. Entervik

Kristiansund N.

Bergen

Oslo

Horten

Trondhjem

Fargo, N.D.

Stavanger

Oddernes

Mandal

Brooklyn, N.Y.

Mandal

Lista

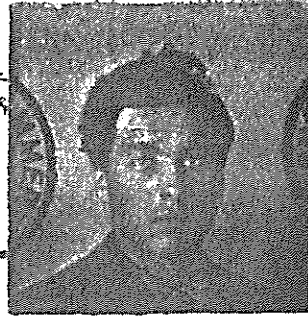
Halse

Gaular

Vane



THE COMMISSIONER OF  
POLICE  
AT BERGEN,  
THE KINGDOM OF NORWAY  
MAKES KNOWN BY THESE PRESENTS:



as  
*M. Olai Solheimstad*

a Norwegian state-citizen  
has the intention to leave this place for

*America*

the present passport has been issued with the request that all to whom she might apply will afford her the assistance she might need, and allow her to travel freely and without hindrance.

This present passport is valid until

*25-5-1926*



Bergens politikkammer

*16-5-1924*

*Anton Eriksen*

*MEMORANDUM*

*M. Solheimstad*

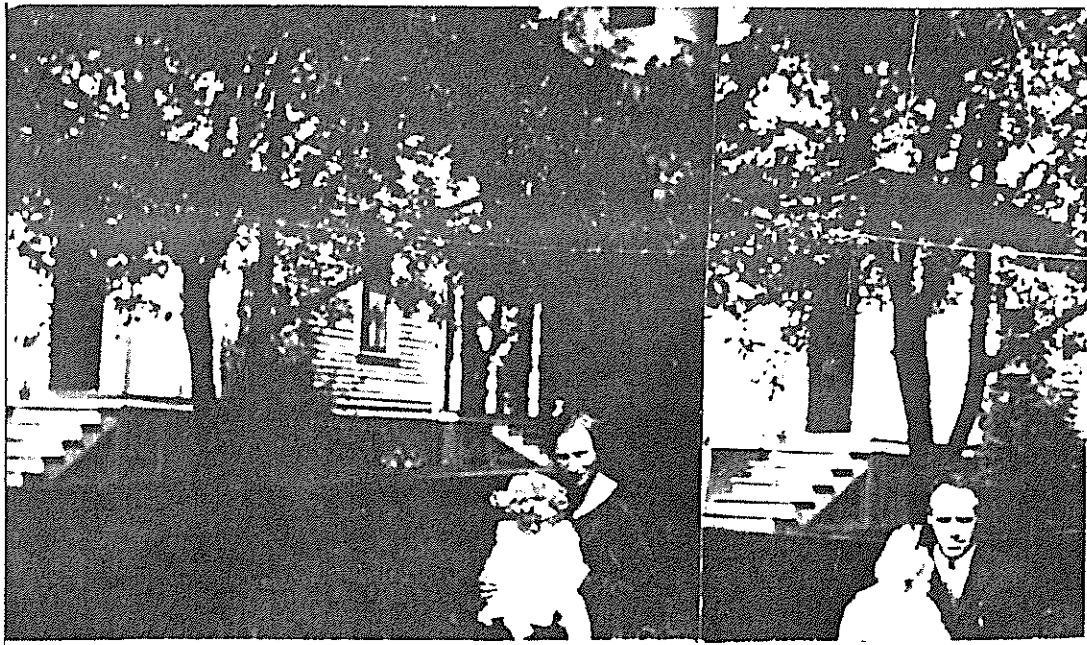
Det attesteres at Pasindeværen af den Person som er vist i Billedet er at hun egenhændigt har søkket sit Passet. Bergens Politikkammer d. 16-5-1924  
For Politimesteren

*MEMORANDUM*

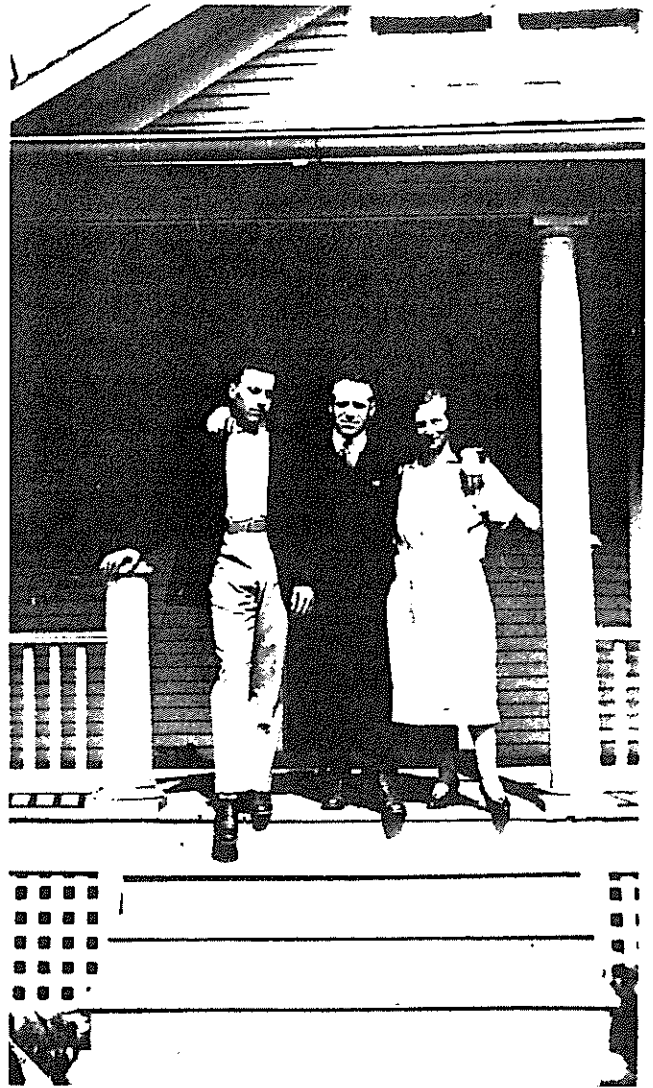
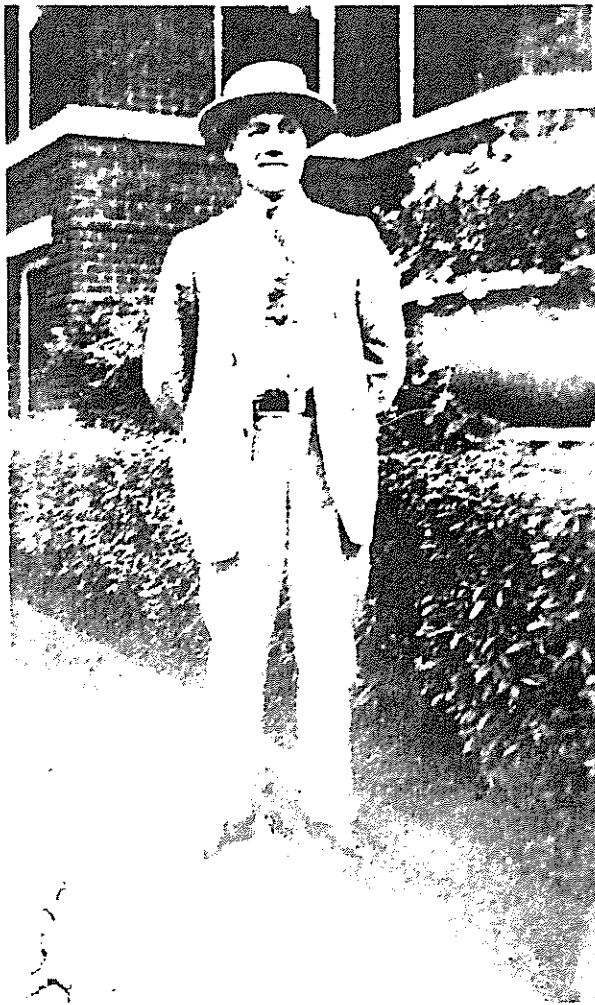
This is to certify that the photograph attached hereto is a likeness of the person to whom this passport is issued and the signature is autograph. Bergens Politikkammer d. 16-5-1924  
For politimesteren

*MEMORANDUM*

Quota Immigration Visa No.	<i>3716</i>
Issued to	<i>M. O. Solheimstad</i>
This	<i>MAR 4 1925</i>
(S. I.)	
No charge	<i>J. L. Thomas</i>
America	<i>U.S.A.</i>



Not the best pictures but the only pictures just after Mother's arrival  
 ("910 County St. Waukegan, Illinois) 1925



Dad's dear friend Ben Hjelmeland -  
 with Dad when he met Mom, Old Alf in Chicago

Alf, Dad, Mom, 1926

From: Fredrik Olaf Hjelmeland in America  
To: His Father, Brothers and Sisters in Norway  
This is the first letter he wrote home after Mother and  
Odny arrived in America

Waukegan, Illinois April 15, 1925

My dear Father, Brothers and Sisters

Many thanks for your letter, little brother, and everybody else as well. And the picture you sent with Kristine; it was very much appreciated, and you haven't changed a bit! What a nice remembrance from dear father.

And now I have started a new life, quite different from what I had before. All of a sudden I have a large family! April 1, Kristine, Odny and Alf came to Chicago. We stayed there for the night at a hotel, and we came to Waukegan April 2. Bendik and I were at the station to welcome them. I guess they were pretty happy when they saw us and the long journey was finally over. Do you remember, Mikal, the very first day when we arrived in Chicago? Many a good day as well as others not so good have passed since then. It's a good thing we do not know in advance what is going to happen to us.

And now I will try to tell you how we are doing. I had already gotten an apartment before they arrived, so that had been well taken care of. We have two bedrooms, a dining room and a living room, kitchen and bathroom. We do not have electric light yet, but that I'm going to install. In fact, I have already started, but I have been too busy to be able to complete it. I got my landlady to have electric lights installed and thus I got the job. If everything goes well this summer I may build my own house before next winter, but it is rather expensive to build these days. With the land and everything it may amount up to \$8,000-\$9,000 at least, and I want to build a house made of bricks. It will sell best if I am going to sell again. I was hoping to have the basement done before the winter, and then during the winter when there is less to do, build the rest. Then I would be able to do very much myself. There is no risk in building a house here; you never lose a dollar and prices are still rising.

April 16

Today I have been at home installing the lights. I will stay at home tomorrow as well to finish it. Kristine is happy to have me at home; you see, I have been away almost every day since she arrived. I'm so busy as never before. Alf is working together with me. He is of great help and will still be of even greater help when he has made himself acquainted with all there is to do. He is very willing. We drive out in the country every morning and return home around six or seven in the evening, and Kristine and Odny have to be alone. But Kristine has been so busy since she arrived getting everything in order and has not had time to become homesick, and I don't she will be either. I believe she had thought America to be much worse than it really is. She really enjoys being here. If she only could speak the language I don't think she would have changed it for Norway. I was so worried

she would be homesick, but now I don't think she will be. Alf is so enthusiastic; I'm sure he will become a good American. He is trying to learn the language, but it takes time.

And so have we little Odny. She was one year yesterday. She is big and healthy for her age, and so good. She sleeps the whole night through which is nice. She is smiling to her daddy when I come home in the evening and calls me daddy. She knows me well already and even when they first arrived she was never afraid of me. It's nice to get them as big as this from the start! She can rise up all alone now, holding on to benches and chairs but cannot walk alone yet. She is fat, and it might well be that she is a bit too heavy for her feet to carry her. She is like a butterball, rolling and crawling on the floor. She is cheerful and hearty and her daddy loves her very much.

Last Sunday Bendik was here for dinner. He is working in Chicago.

When everything gets in shape here, it will be nice. I pay \$40 a month for the apartment. The cost of living is rather high so you would have noticed the difference from when you were here, Mikal. Everything is more expensive here than in Canada, but times are good. Much construction work is going on in Chicago as well as here in Waukegan. I, for myself, do not have much to do here in town. I work mostly out on the countryside and in small towns. I have plenty to do and am very busy. I guess Alf will be working with me through the summer. He is well taken care of here with us and it's real nice to have him. In the evenings he looks after Odny while Kristine and I may go out for a ride.

You would like to know whether it is possible to come to the States through Canada. I do not know how strict they are in Canada these days, but you do have the advantage of having your old American citizen papers and knowing the language. There are many routes to take when you do not have too much to carry, so even if you had to stay there for some time I guess you would be able to get a bricklayer job even in the winter. There is one thing I want to say to you Mikal -- doing road construction work at home for just a few kroner a day and getting wet feet every day, it's not really worth it. Even if you are feeling healthy enough for the time being, it may trouble you sooner or later. If you feel you might be able to come over, you know you will always have a safe place to come to, and you will be able to make a good day's salary even during the winter. Just for a couple of years, that's all you need. (Writing illegible) . . . but it is not for me to say whether you should go or not. That's up to you to decide. But, if you have to work on the road at home to make ends meet, I would not hesitate if I were to decide. But I know there are many things for you to consider with farm and family at home. Are you going to build this summer? Fred, do what you think best; you know it is too difficult for me to decide for you.

(Text written in English): There is something I want to ask you. Did I ever write home to you about Ben being engaged to be married here in this country? The reason I ask is that Ben's sister, Gustine, wrote Ben about it, that I had written you about it. This was just after I came down from Canada. No, Fred, I cannot say that I ever wrote you . . . text missing . . . I know Ben never went out with any girl here. He was mad at me because Gustine wrote to him about it. And as far as I am concerned, it is impossible to remember anything about that I wrote

you about the matter. You tell me in the next letter what it was any-how. (End of English text)

This will be all for now, hoping to hear from you soon. It's always so nice getting letters from home. My next letter will be to father. I'm happy to know he is fine. Not so long ago I had a letter from Petrine; it seems like they are doing well. You had to wait a long time for this letter, but you know I have been so busy and the time ran short. You see I have to do the shopping as well. The days pass too quickly and I feel I get too little done. But now everything is going better for me, having my own family here and a home of our own.

Thanks for this time and all the best to all my sisters and brother. Special greetings to Father and everyone at home.

Your brother Fred

P.S. I got a letter from Andrias asking me for help in getting his son over here from Canada. Andrias has many brothers here in the States who ought to be closer to ask for help than I.

Following is a very special note written by mother (Kristine Hjelmeland) just sixteen days after her arrival in America and her reunion with Dad. It was written in the margin of a page in this letter.

"Now I have come safe and sound to Waukegan. The journey went fine for all of us. I like it here very much. I have nothing more to be homesick for. Now you must write; you Marie must also write a little."

Best wishes from  
Odny and Kristine

From: Alf Solemslid, my first cousin who immigrated to America with Mother and Odny, arriving the end of March, 1925, at the age of 19; he is 20 years old at the time of this writing.  
To: Gunder Mikelsen Hjelmeland, his grandfather -- and mine, in Norway

Waukegan 4 December 1925

Dear Grandfather!

I must say many thanks for the letter I got from you a long time ago. It is a shame I haven't answered before, but we always try to find an excuse. I have been waiting for uncle to write and then I could write at the same time. (Note: His uncle is Fred Hjelmeland, my father.)

I have heard that you have been out working again. I must say I think that is well done; you are not so young anymore. (Grandfather was 78 years old at this time.) Gudmund says that you are healthy and doing well. When he came I was with uncle to Chicago to meet him there. We drove from here Saturday noon, and we understood they were to arrive that night, but they didn't come until Sunday morning. Saturday night I was together with Bendik and looked around in Chicago. We visited many nice places. Among other things we went to one of the finest theaters here in America. It was so beautiful there that I cannot with my pen describe how it was. The most interesting of it all was all the wonderful lights and so many types of carvings on walls and columns. When we left there we went home to Bendix and waited until 12:00 midnight. When we came to the station we were told that the train would not arrive until 7:30 the next morning. Then we went back to Bendik's house and went to bed. Next day we got up at 6:00 Sunday morning and met at the station at the correct time. I was not able to talk very much with the others who arrived because we parted with them there.

I work at a workshop here. By the way, I have worked there the whole summer. It is very poorly paid. I plan not to stay there so much longer. As soon as I understand the language a little better, I will apply for something else.

Well, I don't know more to write about tonight. I am sure uncle has told you everything worth writing about.

Greetings from your Alf

I should have sent you a Christmas card, but I send you a Christmas greeting now. I wish you all a very happy Christmas and a Happy New Year. Say hello to uncle and aunt (Mikal and Maria) from me.

From: Fredrik Olaf Hjelmeland in Waukegan, Illinois  
To: Gunder Mikalsen Hjelmeland, his father, and also his brother  
and sisters in Norway

Waukegan, Illinois  
December 5, 1925

Dear Father and Sisters and Brother!

It is a long time since you've heard from me now. I owe you a letter as I received one from you in the summer. Hope you've had news of us through others. Have, off and on, written a letter to Mikal.

I was really surprised, Father, when Gudmund told me that you had been out (working on the roads) again this fall! You don't give up so easily, do you? Well perhaps it is best for you - keeps you young and keeps your mind occupied. It pleases me to hear you are well. How are your feet? Isn't it very difficult when you are out on construction?

We are all well. We are healthy and Odny is soon a big girl. She is so busy with toys, and she puts the house upside down. But she has been well all the time, except for an occasional bad time with teething problems. Lately she had problems with cutting her eyeteeth which brought her much discomfort.

Kristine is keeping well. It was a bit hard for her during the very hot summer. It was probably one of the hottest summers I have experienced over here, and we live on the second floor so we feel the heat even more.

Kristine and Alf have been to evening school this fall and know a lot of English now, but it doesn't go so fast either. I for my part am busy with the usual. I work for myself; I like that best, and have quite a lot of work right now. I have no one working for me now. I shall be here for another year, but then I have to go up to Canada again to take care of my land there and hopefully get something out of it. I was on a trip up there recently. There is a town near the land now, so it is more convenient. I think the prospects look better there now, so I bought myself some more land, so now I have a large farm there. If I can just get something out of it, but I must get myself a good caretaker. Will try to get as much out of it as possible and sell it afterwards.

I haven't thought about any changes here as long as we are thinking of returning to Norway again to settle down. We can, of course, live there if we have something dependable to work on. Even if I didn't get the best impression of conditions in Norway on my last trip home, I believe we will return there in not too long a time, if we are still alive - and then I hope to meet my dear old Father again.

Now soon there is Christmas again, and I hope you will have these lines before then. We sent you a parcel a few days ago. It is only some small Christmas gifts as a remembrance from us here in America to you at home. There is something enclosed for Anna, for Mikal and Marie, for Kristine, something for the children, and a little suit for little Gunnar. One One cannot send what one would like. It is difficult all around to send

anything at all. It could get lost, but hope you'll get it. If you do, use the pipe and give the other gifts to the others with all our best wishes from all of us here abroad.

I didn't hear anything from home all summer, that is directly to me, before Gudmund came. He, of course, had greetings from all, but you were not at home when he left. Kristine has received many letters from Førde. She sent two parcels to Førde for Christmas.

I have already found some work for Gudmund. He is paid well - 75 cents an hour where he works now, but that will not be for long. Later I will try to get him a job at a factory over the winter.

Well, this is all for now. I hope these lines will find you well, and in closing, I want to wish you all a happy Christmas time and a blessed new year. Odny sends many good wishes to Grandfather also.

Warmest greetings to you all,

from Kristine and Fredrik



From: Krisitne Hjelmeland in Waukegan, Illinois  
To: Gunder Mikalsen Hjelmeland, her father-in-law, on Hjelmeland in Norway

Waukegan, Illinois  
6 December 1925

Dear Father-in-law!

Thank you so much for the last time we were together. Yah, now we have already been here in America for eight months, and I am happy to be here. This summer I found it to be so very warm that I wished I was in a colder climate, but now it is over for this year. It was also warm in Norway this summer, but that was good since there has not been a real summer for many years.

Well, how are you now? It should have been nice to come to Grandfather and say "Merry Christmas", but now a letter will have to do instead.

Odny is now getting bigger and is very nice. You have so many grandchildren that it must be hard to remember them all.

Fredrik, I'm sure, likes to see Norway again almost more so than I. It is so strange now since my Mother died, when, in a way, it is like the bond has been broken from the home. I feel very content now here where I have my husband and my little Odny. Yes, you can be sure it is wonderful for Fredrik and Odny to be together. When I am at school, he takes care of her, and he is very good at it, too.

Now it is soon Christmas. Would that we remember Him who came to earth to save we who are lost. I am so happy that my mother will be celebrating Christmas in her right home where there is no more sorrow or sin anymore.

Now, Grandfather, I want to wish you a blessed Christmas. We often talk about you. Also you must have a very good New Year. Give my greetings to Mikal and Marie and little Gunnar. Give them our dearest thanks for what we received. It was delicious to have Norwegian meat.

Live well,

Warmest greetings from Kristine

AB

From: Fredrik Olaf Hjelmeland in Waukegan, Illinois  
To: Gunder Mikalsen Hjelmeland, his father, on Hjelmeland

Waukegan, Illinois  
30 January 1926

Dear Father and Sisters and Brother,

My hearty thanks for your letter which I received recently. I also received one around Christmastime. It makes me happy to know you are well. Yes, that is wonderful, and old age is so much easier, too, then. I suppose you have given up traveling out any more. I think you did well to be able to go last year. All in all, your service has been long.

I see from your letter that you've had a pleasant Christmas. There is more a feeling of Christmas home than here in this country, especially for one who has emigrated here. I suppose it depends on what one is used to.

We had, by the way, quite a nice Christmas. We had a very nice Christmas tree which we decorated with electric lights and a lot of other pretty decorations. Christmas Eve we had "Norwegian" roast lamb and Christmas day we had rømmegrøt and lamb. Bendix and Hagbart Yndestad came for dinner Christmas Day. They came down from Chicago. Also Alf and Gudmund came. Gudmund has been staying with us since Christmas. He had work, where he first started, until Christmas, but there has not been any building there since. I've been very busy up to now, and I'll have even more in the spring. Gudmund will begin work again soon, too.

Perhaps I will move from here in a few months to a slightly smaller town. It is not for sure yet. It is only a few miles from here; and I do most of my work there anyway, so I might as well live there. And then I will also have an electrical workshop. But as I said, nothing is decided yet. I must also take care of my business in Canada. I must get some houses on the farm and find a good man to rent it. The houses will cost me quite a lot.

So glad, Father, that you liked the pipe I sent you for Christmas. It wasn't expensive. It cost only Kr. 14. I didn't really know what to send. It is so difficult to find the right thing. When is your birthday? Isn't it the 1st of May? You must tell me in your next letter. I suppose you will be 80 years old then.

You didn't write in your letter whether there were any presents for Mikal and little Gunnar. There was a tie for Mikal and a suit for little Gunnar. So write and tell me if they were in the package. There was only a name on Mikal's gift.

Tell Mikal that I've received his letter and will write again soon. You must always use Box 92 when you send letters. The letter you sent before Christmas had no box number so it was lost for awhile, but I did receive it finally. I had a letter from Peder Selberg and he wrote that Anna Hjelmeland is going to build a shed and cow barn and he wanted help from me. Yes, I had thought of sending her money anyway. How much do you think I should send her?

See from your letter that you have bought a memorial stone for Mother's grave. That was good. Mikal, I'm sure, will make certain it is put up on the grave in the spring. I said I would pay one-half portion. I suppose you still have some of my money left there and you can take from that.

Yes, Father, I hope we will meet again one time, and I do believe that we shall. You should go for walks every day and be outside when it is mild and pleasant weather so you would eat more and get more strength!

Kristine is also thanking you so much for your letter. She and Odny are both well. Odny is growing and is very content. She has started to talk now, and there is a mixture of Norwegian and English because she hears both.

This is not a long letter. Will write to Mikal also. Are Andreas and Petrine still living in the same place? And do they have the same address? Would you tell me in your next letter, please? What date is Petrine's birthday? I should like to know.

This is all for now. Hope to hear from you very soon.

Live well, dear Father. Love from us all.

Your son,

Fredrik

From: Alf Solemslid, my first cousin, at the age of 20 years and  
during his first year in America  
To: Gunder Mikelsen Hjelmeland, his grandfather -- and mine, in  
Norway

Waukegan 31 January 1926

Dear Grandfather!

Many thanks for the letter I received from you recently. It is nice to hear that all of you are fine and in good health.

First I must tell you that I have gotten a a new job at another place now. It is at a workshop for the big Cann Co. here in Waukegan. It is much better work here, and it is also better paid, 52 cents an hour. The worst is that I now have to work during the night, but it should not last longer than one month or so because I was hired to have day work, and I was promised that the night work should not last for so long. Tonight I don't have any more news and anyhow, I am sure uncle has written everything there is to tell.

Christmas was for both Gudmund and me a little different from last year, the first Christmas we have been away from home. So we felt it a little strange, although we had a nice time. The first day of Christmas Bendix H. and Hagbart Yndestad were here. Then I made "rømmegrøt" and we had "surstik". Second Christmas Day we had "rømask" and more things like that.

Well, now I can't think of more to write about. By the way, it is difficult for me to concentrate to write a proper letter because uncle (Fred), aunt (Kristine) and Gudmund are sitting and chatting here so loudly about weather and wind and the old country so they disturb me with their good humor!

Now it is almost midnight Sunday night, and the others want to go to bed. Then I also must go to sleep so I don't disturb them. They are getting up early tomorrow morning to go to work. For me, I don't start work until Monday night. I work ten hours, five nights a week and Saturday night I work only nine and a half hours.

Finally, best wishes from your  
daughter's son,

Alf

Gudmund says "hello".



From: Fredrik Olaf Hjelmeland in America  
To: Fredrik Mikal Hjelmeland, his brother, in Norway

Waukegan, March 20, 1926

My dear Brother and Family!

It is almost too late to thank you for the letter I received just after New Year. I guess I have never been so late in responding as I have this time.

I see from your letter that there had been some agitation last fall in connection with the election. I guess some of them were not pleased not being reelected. I believe they must have something to pass the time away at home, too, and some commotion once in a while does not do any harm; it sort of awakens you from the hibernation! Well, enough of that.

Now, a few words about things here. The winter has almost gone. By the way, this month has been rather cold, colder than February, but now we have gotten milder weather. The little snow we had this year has now disappeared.

Up to this month I have been very fortunate with regard to work, but this month it has been somewhat quieter. But I do expect quite a lot to do in the near future, so next month I will have plenty to do again, I hope. I haven't been looking for work either. I have stayed at home because of some good news I have to tell you about. You see, we have gotten another daughter. I would have preferred a boy this time, but I guess we do not have a choice. It was on March 7, a Sunday, at 10 o'clock at night it happened and everything went just fine. Kristine was not in labour more than an hour and a half. We had a nurse a week before, and the doctor came at 9:30. Everything went fine. Yesterday Kristine was out of bed for a little while, and today even longer, so I'm hoping that soon she will be just as strong as before! The nurse is still here and will be here for another week, at least. I pay her \$20 a week. It's best to be careful so there won't be any relapse later.

Yes, Fred, now I have myself a family, and things are not that easy any more, but there is no home without children, and I'm hoping they will do well. By the way, Odny is a very good little girl who loves her daddy very much. She wants to come along whenever I am going out. I believe she takes after me, a little hasty sometimes! Everything has to be done in a hurry. She is also very dutiful and healthy and hangs around me wherever I go. Just now she is asleep and I have got time for a letter.

I'm still here in Waukegan and may remain here for some time. You know it doesn't pay to travel so much especially not when one has a family. So I guess we will stay here until we travel to Norway, and that we will do whether it is foolish or not!

I am considering building a house here this year. I have bought the lot but may wait some time yet, but the rent is high, too, which shows

during the year. My monthly expenses on housing alone are at least \$150, so you see I have to make quite a good income if I want to put anything aside. I'm not complaining; I've been lucky. How people make out working in the factories for \$25-\$30 a week I do not understand.

I hope to get \$300 out of my land this year as I did last year. I have already got part of it, but not all. I guess I have to go (up to Canada) again this spring to pay for the land I bought and have some more divided up to earn some interest. If I had had my land divided up some years ago, I would have done very well, that is, if I had a good man on it. What do you say if I could get John Aase to come to Canada? He might do very well here. It does not cost so much to go to Canada now, much cheaper than before. He might come alone at first to see how he liked it here, and afterwards bring his family if he so preferred. I would build a house for them and divide up the whole farm. I have 3/4 section now. Please ask him what he thinks about it. As I understand, there will be nothing for him at home. You know the old saying: The one who never dares, never wins! I for myself, have become a bit more cautious than before, and I may lose being too cautious!

If I had bought lots when I first came to Waukegan, I could have doubled my money by now! Waukegan is a good town. Still not very big but has grown quite a bit since I came, and I guess that pretty soon it may have doubled its size. This summer some 10 miles of new concrete roads will be constructed which is not bad for such a small town. They use mostly concrete these days, not so much brick any longer. All the main roads out in the country are made of concrete now, and more and more are being built every year now, which makes it easy to drive which I do quite a lot of. Most of my work I do in the country, and I also get a better price there!

This summer I might open a shop in another town some 10 miles from here. I do quite a lot of work there already, and if I had a small shop I may be able to get even more. I'm considering this seriously; I want to do my best, which is all I can do!

Kristine is adjusting very well. She already knows a little English which makes things easier for her. We will not be staying where we are now over the summer. It will be too hot on the second floor during summer. Alf is still staying with us. He works at night in a work-shop here. Gudmund had been working with me for some time last winter. He may get a better job next month. He wants to learn bricklaying, but it is difficult to get in. There is a school in Chicago where he may learn it which might be best for him. He may do it next winter, and then maybe get a job with a contractor next spring. I know several who would help him then.

March 21, 1926

Today it is Sunday. I have been out in the country today where I made an offer on a big job. I don't know whether I will get it, but I believe I stand a good chance. I got another good job yesterday, and I expect to get 9-10 different jobs at the same place. As spring approaches, everything gets better. I love springtime when everything starts to live again, the fields and forests get green and fertile, and everything seems to get a new spirit. The spring is pleasant enough here, but not as joyful as the spring in Norway when the sun

is shining and the birds singing. Oh yes, it's good to be in Norway. Even if one has a little less there, I believe that people are more satisfied there than they are here.

Not too long ago I sent a letter to Father. I hope he got it, and I may expect a letter from him soon. I hope he is well, then old age is not too hard to bear. Please share this letter with him because it is meant to be for all of you. Did you get the necktie I sent you? They said it was a fine tie, made of real silk. And how did the outfit fit little Gunnar?

I see from your letter that you will not be building a barn this year either, but that you will finish the foundation. That might be the best way to do it, not having to pay for everything at once. I'm sure you will get a fine barn eventually! I am thinking that some changes should be done with the house as well, in order to have a better appearance from the road, and have water installed in the kitchen and have a sink. You won't believe how much easier it would make things for you. You know when you improve things you may save money in the end. You know how things are over here, and you also know how to do it!

If I build a house this summer, it may cost me approximately \$7,000-\$8,000. I'm thinking of a seven-room bungalow with bricks. It may cost a little more but is much better, and it will pay better if you sell later.

Well, dear Brother, this is about all for now. Please respond immediately, it is always so nice getting a letter from you.

Say hello to Olaf and tell him to send me the Bygstad and Hjelmeland Saga.

Best regards to Father and all of you at home.

Your brother  
Fredrik!



From: Fredrik Olaf Hjelmeland in America (Waukegan, Illinois)  
To: Fredrik Mikal Hjelmeland in Norway at home at Hjelmeland

Waukegan, March 28, 1926

Dear Brother and Family

Thank you very much for the letter I received a few days ago. The same day I also had a letter from Father. I had just written to you before I received your letter, so this time you'll have a quick reply as I need your advice in a matter.

Kristine had a letter from her brother Karl asking me to lend him 6000 kroner. I understand that he is having financial difficulties right now; I believe his business is not going too well. He offered me a mortgage deed in return for a loan.

English portion of letter: I don't know what to do about it. I wrote to him again and told him to see you and if you thought, after he told you all about his circumstances, that it was safe enough to lend him the money that you would do it properly and then I could send you the money later. I don't think Karl will tell you anything wrong or try to. It seems funny to me that it is only 6000 Kr. he should need so badly. That should not be so very hard to get ahold of I should think. He wrote me there already was a 16500 Kr. mortgage against his property, so if I lent him 6000 Kr. it would be in all, 22500 Kr. I suppose that would be all that place is worth. It all depends on if he has other obligations too, and for how long. If that party will foreclose, then I will have to buy them out to save what I have in the place. But, I suppose the value of the place is more than 22500 Kr. I suppose I have to help him if that will save him from going concerns. Then I will get my money back. He will give me the same percent as he has to pay the bank. If I had my money loose, I would buy the whole place and be done with it.

Now, Fred, what do you think I should do? I am working hard for my money so I don't like to lose any more than I already have. But, you know how it is. If he should lose the place just for 6000 Kr., that would not be very nice either.

If you see it is all right to lend him that money, and if you have it and it will help him to save his business, then I suppose we had better help him. I would not send the money before I heard from you and if he should need it before, you have to lend him and I will pay you back right off.

Return to Norwegian in original letter: Alf owes me 1500 Kr. plus interest. I also have some money at home; Kristine has 1000 Kr. or so in Førde, but we are not going to use any of hers. I'll send you the money as soon as I receive money from Alf, if it works out you are going to do this.

If anything goes wrong for Karl with the house, I want you to buy the place for me if it should be put up for sale, that is if the price is not too high. Kristine would not like it to come into the hands of strangers. I will do what you think is best. I wrote Karl and told him to see you, and what you would do was all right with me. I shouldn't bother you with this, but I have no one else I can trust in this matter. Do what you think is best and safest. I'll send you the money as soon as you want it, if you give him the loan. But be sure to get the papers for the mortgage deed registered. Have Karl do this, and he should also pay for it. Enough about this.

We live as usual. The weather has been rather bad lately. Today we have had a bad blizzard and it is very cold, the worst March in many years.

Let me not forget to congratulate you on your new little daughter. You have one of each, a boy and a girl. I only get girls. Almost at the same time too--only four days apart. Not too bad! (Note: Jofrid and Ruth were the two daughters born at this time.) Kristine has recovered and is doing her work as usual. She has a lot to do.

We are going to move May 1, to another house. This one upstairs in the summer is too hot.

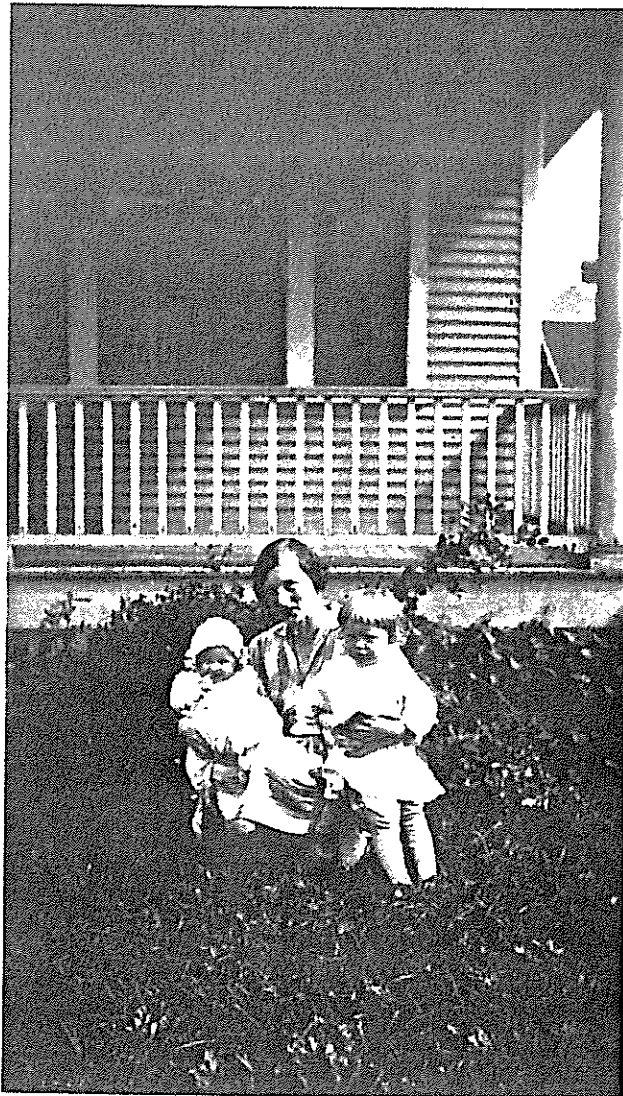
Greet Father and tell him I am going to write him soon. Please write me immediately when you know what to do.

I'm not going to build a house this summer.

Best regards to all of you,

Yours, Fred

JH



Mother, Odny. & I in  
front of our home at  
47 Elmwood Avenue,  
Waukegan, Illinois  
We moved here May 1,  
1926 from our home at  
910 County Street where  
I was born March 7, 1926.



My christening or baptismal  
day

Left to right: Our dear neigh-  
bor, Mrs Hagner, Mom & I,  
Mrs Lars Blicher, wife of Dad's  
very close friend in Canada,  
their son, who was also  
baptized that day and  
Mrs Gulbranson my god-  
mother.

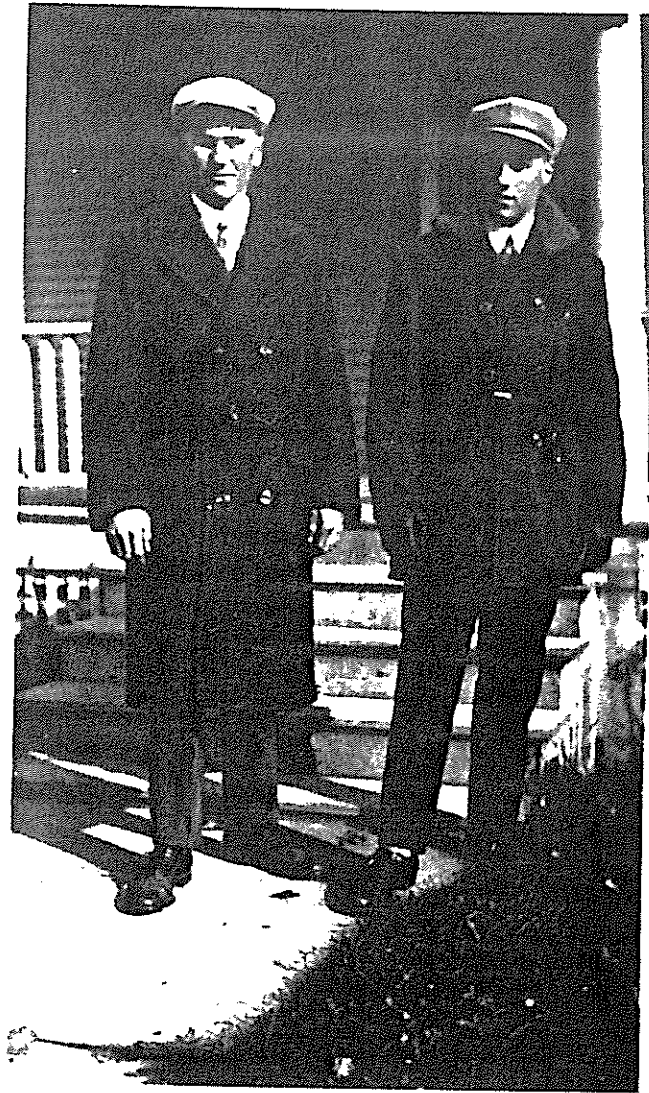


Our family with the Blilie family, Dad's very good friends from Canada. Adny is next to Dad; Mother is holding me. I believe this must have also been taken the day or weekend of my baptism. I was baptized in Racine, Wisconsin. (Myrtle Hogen is behind the Blilie girl; she lived next door.)

The Blilie Family appear to be ready to leave. How do you like the cars at the time I was born ?!







Gudmund Olsen (son of Kristine\* & Ivar Olsen) and Alf Solemlied (son of Olena\* & Alar Solemlied) my only first cousins who immigrated to America. Alf arrived on the Bergensfjord with Mother and Udoz in 1925 when he was 19 years old but soon to turn 20 in two weeks. Gudmund, I believe, arrived in 1926 when he was 19 years old. They both lived with us when I was born.

\* Both my Father's sisters



In this letter, also, Dad asks if they have put up the marker or stone for Grandma's grave and if they will send him a picture of it. This must be the picture they sent. It reads:

Aline M. Hjeltneland  
fodd Eide (born Eide)  
25 April 1847  
13 June 1907

Velsigna Vera Minnet ditt (Bless be your memory) She was buried in Bygstad cemetery, Bygstad, Sunnfjord.

From: Fredrik Olaf Hjelmeland in Waukegan, Illinois  
To: His father, sisters and brother in Norway -- may well have been the last letter his father received from him as his father died two months later

Waukegan, Illinois June 21, 1926

Dear Father, sisters and brother!

It is quite a long while since you received a letter from me. Several times I have been determined to write, but other things came up. I have been very busy, and the days run too fast. I got your letter a long time ago which I am sorry I haven't responded to. I wrote to Mikal; I'm hoping he told you about it. I'm expecting a letter from him, but he must be very busy, too.

Some three weeks ago I went to Canada again. I paid for the land that I had bought, and now I have gotten the deed on it. If the harvest is good there this year, I might sell it again. You see, it is hard to manage the land when I'm so far away. I'm hoping I will get a good price for it next spring, if they get a good crop on it this year. Most probably I will settle here where I am now, at least for some time, maybe until I go to Norway. You know we have been thinking of going back home to our native country, if we will live for a time.

I'm sure you know that we got our second daughter March 7. She is sweet and healthy and has already grown a lot. And she is so good; she hasn't kept us awake one night. We are all well and are doing fine.

We have gotten another house now. We moved May 1, and have bought furniture for more than \$500. We have a nice little house all to ourselves now. Alf and Gudmund are staying with us. They are both nice boys. I'm sure they will stay with us as long as they are here. Gudmund may go to Chicago next fall, hoping to be enrolled at a bricklayer's school they have there. I, for my part work hard at my same job. I have plenty to do and am working alone and doing fine. The cost of living is high here, and so is the rent and everything one has to buy. Everything is much more expensive now than when we first came to the States. But I'm not complaining, I have done quite well.

I have bought some house sites and some other land here for approximately \$6000 since I returned. Everything has not yet been paid for, but I have many accounts outstanding for work done. The last lot I bought I can sell again any time for a couple thousand more than I paid for it. But it is hard to guess how long times will remain good. I personally think that there will be harder times ahead, but I hope I'm mistaken. Here in Illinois times are still good, but farther west times are poorer and the unemployed are flocking in.

The summer has been cold, and I have been using warm underwear up until now. No one here can remember having experienced such a cold spring ever before. But hopefully warmer weather will come; usually the summers are warm enough here.

Well how are things at home? Will Mikal build the stables and the barn this year? And how is father doing? Is he well, and does he get up

each morning? I am sure we will see each other again one day. Has the stone for mother's grave been put up? Could you please try to get a picture of it and send me.

Kristine wants to name our little daughter Edith. That is not after anyone. She has not been baptized yet. I believe we will wait until she can walk alone. Kristine and Alf are out driving the car tonight. Gudmund and I are babysitting. Alf loves to drive, and he is very good at it. I will buy a bigger car soon and have one for work and one for the family. I have also bought a radio so we can now have entertainment at home without having to go out. You too Mikal should have a radio. It is very nice.

This letter was not sent right away; I have been so busy, and I had to hire a man for a time. I could have gotten even more work if I had gone after it, but then I should perhaps have had a shop and that does not always pay so well.

I'm sending you some pictures. Unfortunately, the children are not in them as they were both sleeping when the pictures were taken. You will have more pictures in my next letter and then the children will be included.

I shall write to Mikal as soon as I get a letter from him, and I will tell him how things are with us here and in general. I haven't sent anything to Marthin's widow yet, but I will send her a letter later. Did she build this summer? I guess Petrine and Andreas are at home this summer? Say hello from us. If not sooner, they shall hear from me by Christmas for sure.

Well, this will be all for now. I'm hoping to hear from home pretty soon. You always write such good letters, father. Please send me a long one.

Best regards to all of you from all of us.

Your son

Fredrik!

Address:  
Box 92  
Waukegan, Illinois

Please ask Olaf Hjelmeland to send me Hjelmeland's and Bystad's Saga which he has written. I would appreciate that.



From: Petrina Hjelmeland Eide, in Brekstad near Trondhjem  
To: Gunder Mikalsen Hjelmeland, her father

Note: This was Petrina's last letter to her father. He had, however, actually died the day before she wrote this letter, so in reality he, of course, never received it.

Brekstad  
19 August 1926

Dear Father!

Yesterday we received a telegram from Mikal saying that you are very ill. It is painful to get such tidings when being so far away. So many thoughts rush through my mind. Should it be the last time I will have seen you Father when you sat by the road as we passed by Hjelmeland? I can still clearly see you sitting there, that lovely Sunday morning.

I am also thinking of the fact that, if I live that long, the day will come when I have to see my own little boys go out into the world. Such is life. Now and then everything seems rather hopeless. When illness strikes, we all become so helpless. Help us, oh God, to find comfort in Him who can give us help. My hope is, Father, that you will get well again, that I once more can greet you and see you sitting there by the window looking out over Hjelmeland when I arrive at the farm.

Oh, dear Father, is this the last letter I am sending you? No, it must not be. I spent so little time with you this past summer. If I could only reach you now and hold your hand in mine. This is the strangest letter I have ever written. Illness is never greeted with welcome. Often we have to ask why there is so much suffering. Maybe it is in order to make us stop and think. Many tasks we feel are so impossible to do then become mere trifles.

I sincerely hope that you are well again, Father. If you yourself cannot write, please ask someone else to do so. Even if just a few lines so I will know. I am thinking about you all day, of how you are. May you be in good care. God bless you.

Heartfelt greetings from us all,

Petrina

Should have written much more. Oh, Father!

Ås

*Stående opplysnings  
gjennomført i  
Hjerte*

Tjenstlige bemerkninger:

Optatt fra *f*  
den *27/8* kl. *11*  
av *f*

Den norske Rikstelegraf



Telegram fra *Hjerte* nr. *9*, ord *48*, den *27/8* 192*6* kl. *10.*

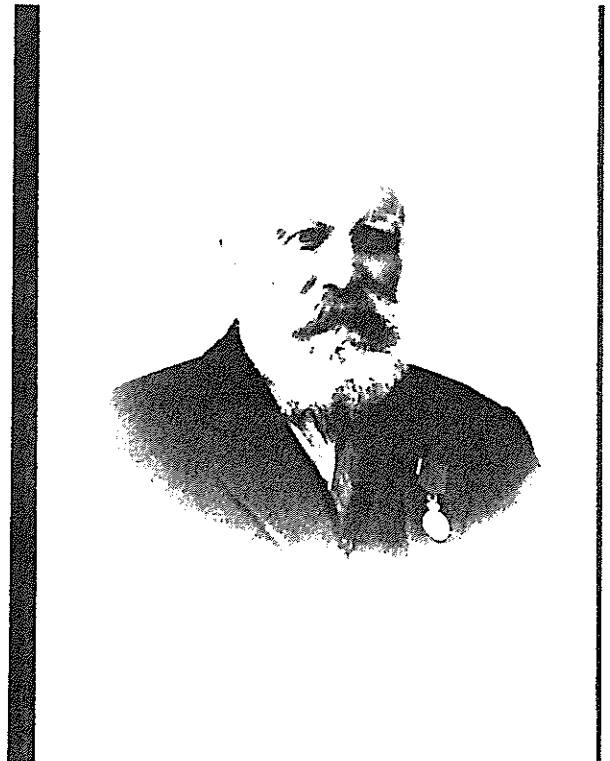
*Skrevet fra delta begravelsen  
høflig deltakelse.  
Ia bli rost for de dør. Hilsning  
fikk utfordret hos lenge for.  
Breddepunkt snakket om han se takk  
for alt han becaut. I tillegg det  
mestest fordi han var omme  
det utket. Som hoddin gen gjave  
minnet vil leve*

*Trastheim*



Note  
 garden  
 of  
 house  
 second  
 door —  
 used as  
 the site  
 of a  
 funeral

The funeral at Hjelmeland  
 Grandpas brother Simon Linn  
 and Andreas Eide are in front,  
 right of center.



My Grandfather Gusder  
 Hjelmeland dies at the  
 age of 79 years, August,  
 1926, the year I was  
 born. Dad was in  
 America

Note: The following telegram was received by the Hjelmeland family at the time of Gunder Mikalsen Hjelmeland's death (my grandfather) He died at the age of 79, the same year I was born.

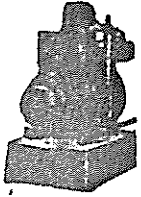
Dated: 27 August 1926 at 10:30 o'clock

From: A person named "Svarthumle" and sent from Eikefjord, an area where grandpa often worked on the roads

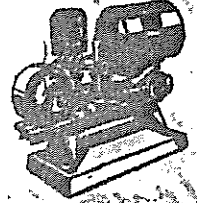
To: The family of the deceased Foreman Hjelmeland

Prevented from coming to the funeral. Sincerest sympathy. Very few get recognition before death. Hjelmeland got a well deserved recognition while he was alive. The people in the country settlement talk about him and thank him for everything he has done. He was a man who cooperated and who made things run smooth. A very fine leader. May his memory live on forever.

Svarthumle



PHONE 4725



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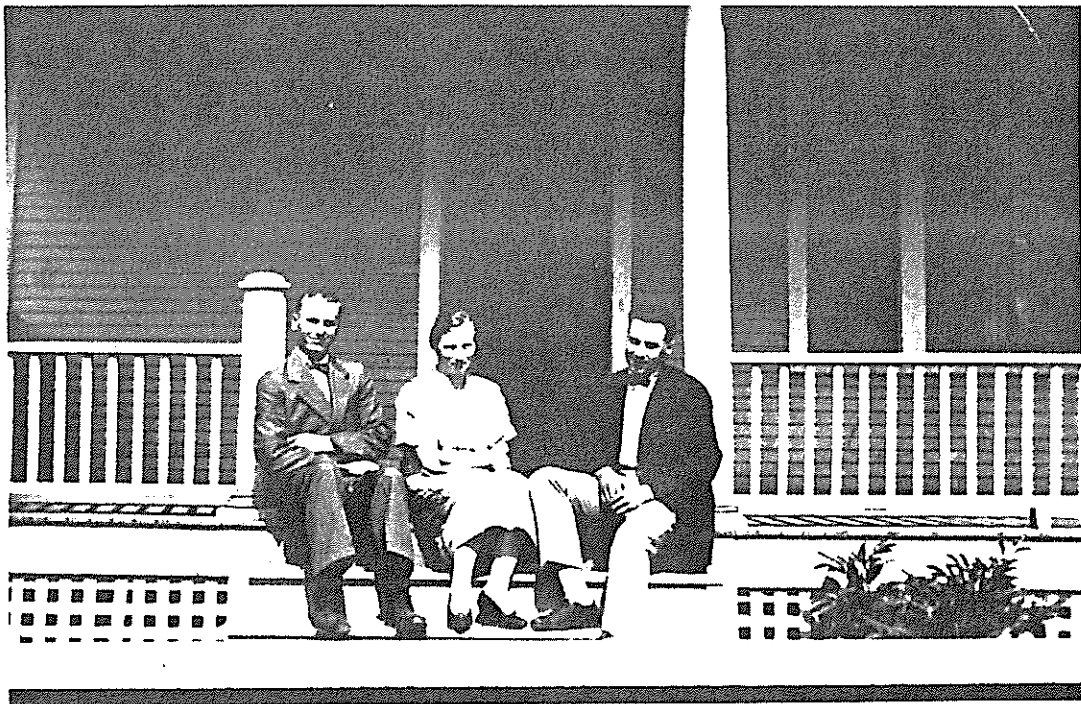
November 29/27

Kjære broder med familie.

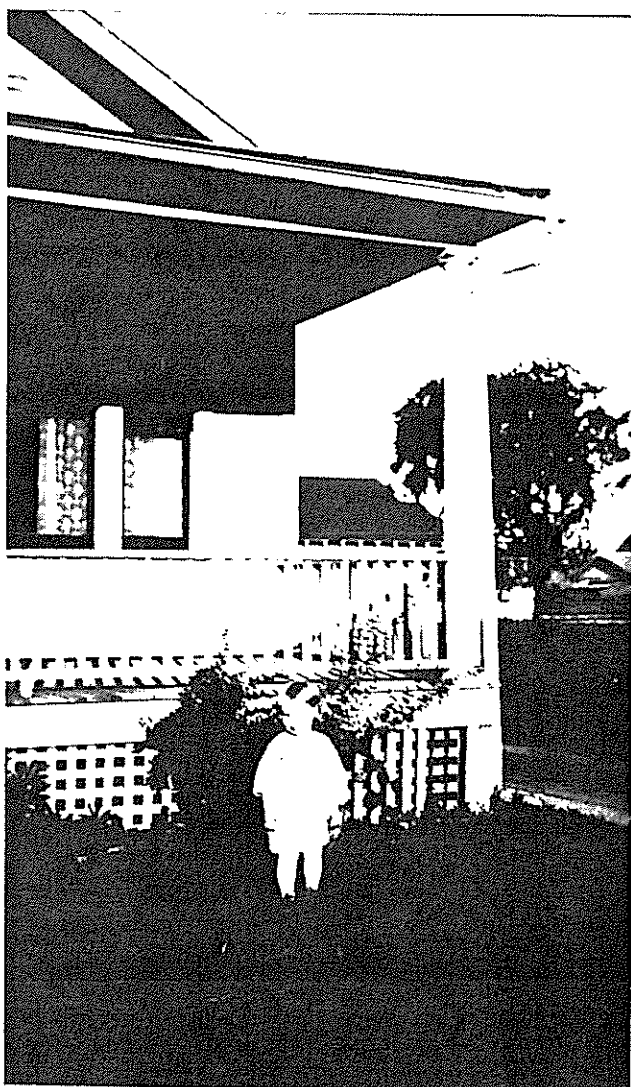
Mikael har du afgivet besked om at faa høre mere fra mig. Ved du at jeg ikke har skrevet til dig paa et helt aar nu. Det er saa længe at jeg er helt skamfuld at skrive ogsaa. Men jeg ved du har hørt i fra mig gennem gutten. Dem har jo ofte skrevet hjem.

Og naar dem har faaet brev igen saa er det første jeg spør dem om. — om det kunde være noget om dig. Jeg har savnet dig meget siden jeg kom tilbage til Amerika den sidste gang. Jeg ønsker inderlig at det ikke var saa langt imellem os. Det hadde været saa meget mere triukelt om vi kunde post besage hverandre af og til. Men jeg haaber at den tiden ogsaa vil komme ogsaa. om vi lever en tid. Jeg er nemlig ikke mere stak for Amerika nu end jeg var for hvad angår beviser her. So jeg er besluttet at so snart jeg ser min adnig og kjære mig i Norge nogen kunde godt vil jeg komme med hele familien og helse paa den for godt.

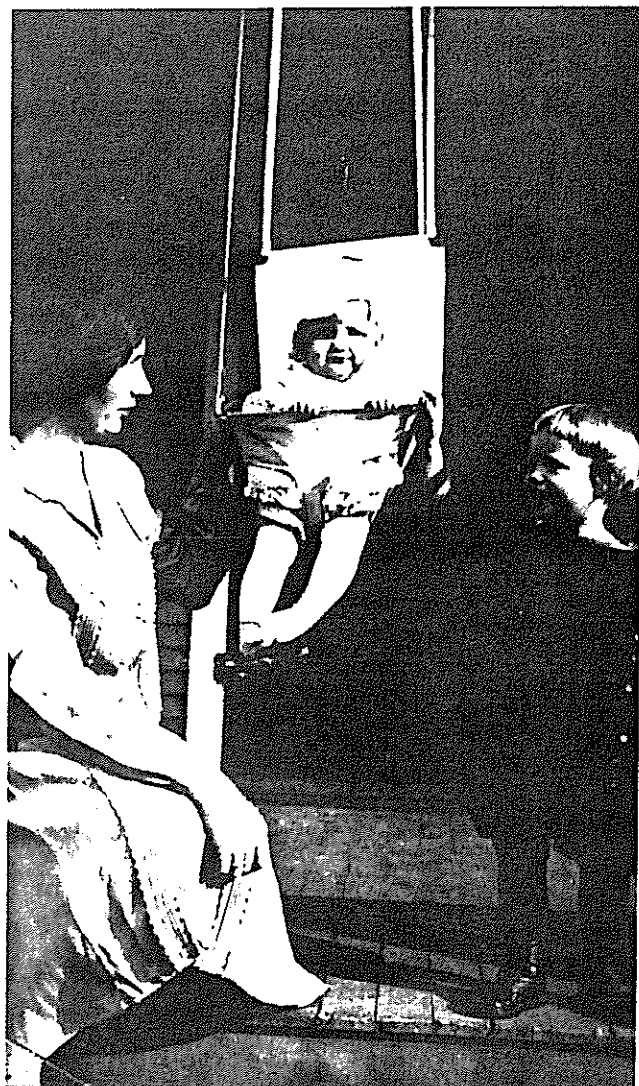




*Dad, Mum, & Alf on Elmwood Avenue, about 1926.*



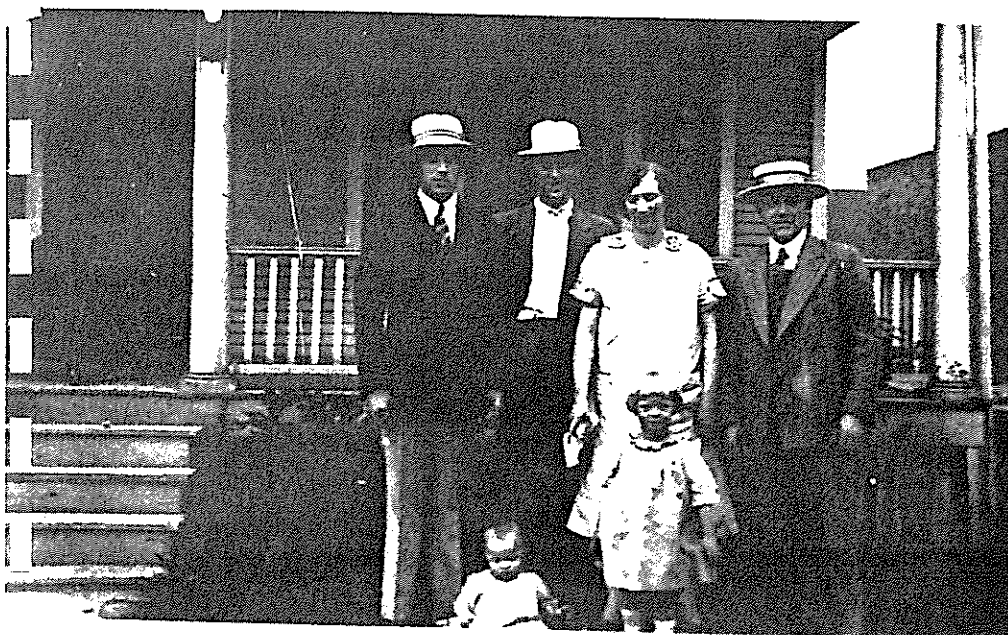
*Alfny*



*Mum, Myself, Alfny*



Wally Johnson,  
 Edmund Olson.  
 Dad & Sverre (Astrum  
 Wally was from  
 Sweden. He & his wife  
 Fern remained family  
 friends until Mom called  
 her. They still live in  
 Waukegan, Ill. (1986)



Dad & Sverre  
 were related  
 through their  
 mothers.

Left: Alf, Gudman  
 Mom, Ben  
 Hjelmeland, Alden  
 & I on Elmwood  
 Ave. Waukegan.

Uncle Mikal sends  
 a picture to Dad to  
 show his new Ameri-  
 can-style barn  
 being built.  
 to R: Gunnar,  
 Uncle Mikal, Jofred,  
 Marie, ? , ?  
 in the Hjelmeland  
 farm in Norway



From: Fredrik Olaf Hjelmeland in Waukegan, Illinois  
To: Fredrik Mikal Hjelmeland, his brother, on Hjelmeland in Norway

Waukegan, Illinois  
November 29, 1927

Dear brother and family,

Mikal, have you given up hope of hearing more from me? Do you know that I haven't written to you in a whole year now? It is such a long time that I feel ashamed to write now. But I know you have heard from me through the boys.\* They have often sent letters home. And when they get letters back, the first thing I ask them is if there is anything about you. I have missed you so much since I came back to America this last time.

I wished we didn't live so far from one another. It would be so nice if we could visit each other now and then. But I hope that we will have the chance if we both live. I am not so sold on America now as I was before, as far as the living is concerned, so I have made up my mind that as soon as I can make a go of living in Norway, I will move with my whole family and stay there for good.

Money is not everything in life either. Many things we cannot get for money, and some of those I will get when I visit Hjelmeland again. You will see us there one bright summer day all of us. Hope we are not more than we are now. We have two small girls both of us. Odny speaks English as good as any, so she will be able to talk to uncle in Norway. He will understand her even if the others do not. It is difficult to get her to speak Norwegian. We speak only Norwegian to her, but she answers in English. Isn't it strange when one considers she hears almost only Norwegian. But when she is out with other children then, of course, she learns English.

Ruth does not say so many words yet. She is a very nice girl, easy going and good natured. I don't think she takes after me in that respect. Kristine likes it in this country. She has gone to school every winter since she came over, so she has managed to learn the language well now.

Well, we work as hard as we can all of us. I myself am busy every minute. There is no rest even on Sundays. There are many people I have to see on Sundays, and I have to make business with them then, because during the week they are all in Chicago. They come here or visit the countryside during weekends. People live around these small lakes of which there are many here in Lake County, where I do most of my work.

December 4, 1927

Now some days have passed again. Today is Sunday. Bendik is here today. He visits us very often. Now Gudmund is back in Waukegan, too. He works for me. Very good boy, Gudmund. He goes out and installs

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\* Alf Solemslid and Gudmund Osen, nephews of Fredrik and Mikal



electricity alone now. Alf is still in Chicago, where he works in a machine shop. Sverre Ivarson is here in Waukegan too. He has been in Chicago awhile and then here. Now he works for an electrician here in town. It is impossible to say how long it is going to last. I tried him for awhile, but the work I offered him seemed to be unfamiliar to him so it didn't go so well. I work mostly on older houses, and he was not accustomed to the way we do it here. (English text) This is no country for Sverre. I think he is going to have a hard time getting 'long here. He is a very nice fellow to have in the house. But when it comes to work, I don't think he is there. I hope he will get 'long all right. (End of English text)

As you can see by the printed heading on my business stationery, I have taken over Delco Light in this county. I have one person with me who has one share in the business. I have sold quite a lot this year since February when we started, but there are many expenses with it also, far from only profit. But times are not exactly the best here now for business, so it helps to have an agency for something; one always has something to do then. I sell a lot of electric pumps, too, and do wiring. I want to keep Gudmund as long as I can find work for him to do. And if the winter is not too severe with cold and snow, I think we will have plenty of work. For awhile now I have been very busy and it will continue like this until Christmas.

We have recently moved to another house, too. We live in a new bungalow. I pay \$50 per month for rent. Then it costs around \$175 per month if I count everything that is included. Also I keep two automobiles going and I rent an office in town, so you see there are fixed expenses each month.

One of the lots I bought last year I sold recently. I made \$300 on it. The other, I paid \$3,000 for, I still have. Lots and all real estate do not go so fast this year as before. It is somewhat of a setback from last year. But we will surely have good times again. I will sell the other lot next spring.

I had a letter from a man in Canada. He wanted to buy my land there. He offered me \$7,500, everything on crop payment and 6% interest to be paid in 10 years. I am not quite sure yet. What do you think? I didn't get much out of the land this year either. The crop was good, but the frost took most of it. The man who wants to buy it has land there now, but not enough. He is also a Swede, born in Minnesota. I know him, a hard worker of the worst kind. I haven't decided what I will do yet. The man came from Valdik, close to Swift Current. He had a farm there which he sold and bought 1/2 section farm where I have my land. He paid for it at once. He has equipment enough, more than he needs now; that is why he wants to buy more land. The contract that I have with the person renting the land now says that I can sell the land if I give him a notice in the spring before March 1. In that way he will have time to look for another place. Don't know yet what I will do, whether I am going to sell or not. I will inform you in my next letter.

Say, Mikal, how much money do you think I have at home now? Shouldn't you take care of the money that was given to me after our father? How much was that? Alf also sent home some money that should be put on my bank account for kr. 1500. He borrowed kr. 1500 when he came over here. He then sent it to his father to be given to you. And there will be

interest for kr. 3000 also, the bank's interest at home, so I get enough money to pay the expenses on my farm and also seed and taxes. The renter I have is, I have been told, not so capable. A Swedish neighbor wrote to me and told me that my renter was a lazy, good-for-nothing who would starve both himself and me out if he had the farm. He didn't finish the planting and sowing before the end of June. The neighbor who told me got 30 bushels to the acre, so he made money this year. I think I will sell the land. It is not good business to have land in Canada or in the States. We do not get much out of it that way.

Could you find out how much I have, Mikal, and take care of what I have there at home? You can write and tell how much I have so I can know somewhat as to the amount. I don't know anymore what I do have over there. Enough of that!

Thanks a lot for the meat you sent with Sverre. It was the best you could have sent. I also received what you sent for Christmas last year. This year I think we will get some from Kristine's sister, so we will get Christmas meat this year, too. I ate most of the meat you sent; we tried to keep it as long as possible. You have better food in Norway than we have here. We get tired of all the fresh meat; I would much prefer to have the salted herring.

I understand you have built a splendid new barn and cowshed. Sverre had a picture of it. It looks like an American style. The majority of people in this country do not have so fine a barn. It will be wonderful to come back to Hjelmeland for a visit in a few years. I am sure you have worked hard and the farm is in excellent condition. I tell you one thing, Mikal, I think one can be just as content in Norway as in America. It is not always so easy and straightforward here either. We have to work very hard if we are going to make it. If you have a picture of the buildings, one with you on it, send it to me. Your son is quite a big boy now. There will be another to take over Hjelmeland.

I sent a little present as a Christmas gift for your children from uncle in America. Buy something for them from me. It is not much, \$10 (New York Draft), but it is so much you see we have not forgotten you.

Mikal, this will be all for now. You can be sure it will not be so long until the next letter. I also hope to get a letter from you for Christmas. Our very best wishes to all of you. Have a nice Christmas and a very good new year. Greet Olaf Hjelmeland from me and all my sisters. Merry Christmas, dear brother, and an even better New Year.

A thousand greetings to you all,

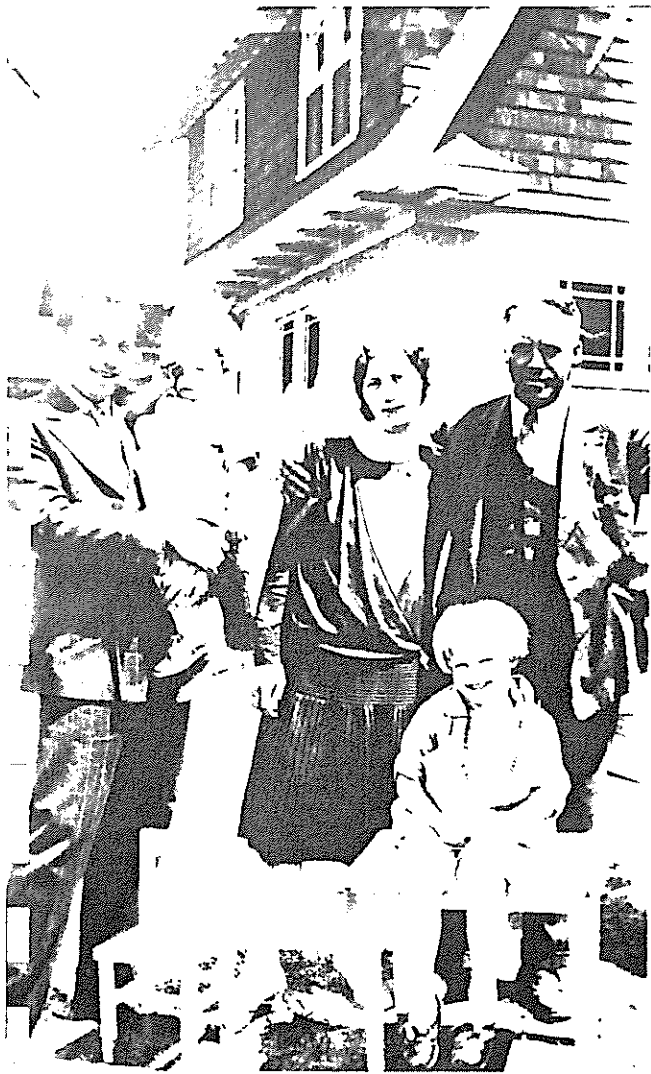
From Fred and Family



Dad and his good friend Ben Hjelmeland  
They were not related but came from  
the same area in Sunnyside, Norway.



Mom, Dad, Alder & I at Ben and his  
wife, Toras', home on Round Lake.



We have now moved to a new home on Tyerman St. It is the house right (not above.) We moved here the summer of 1927. Mother said it was a very nice house. Above, Alf is holding me.

Mother, Alf & Odny, all died within one and a half years of one another: Mother, 1983, age 81; Alf, 1983, age 78 and Odny, 1984, age 60.



From: Fredrik Olaf Hjelmeland in Waukegan, Illinois  
To: Fredrik Mikal Hjelmeland, his brother, at Hjelmeland in Norway

Waukegan June 21, 1928

Dear brother and family!

Well, how is life for all of you at home? It is a long time since we have heard from you. I sent you a letter quite a long time ago; I don't know if you ever got it. Here life goes as usual. We work the best we can, so the time goes and we with it. We must do our best; then we will have more out of life.

I am working the same as before, but business has been less profitable lately. Right now I feel it is more difficult to get jobs around here, as people are more careful and they don't buy as much as they did before. This is especially the case with the farmers, and they are the people who I work mostly for and am dealing with. I believe times are better in Norway now, so it could almost be as good for us to be there as over here, especially if we could live a little close to Bergen. Then we could take a trip to Bygstad every summer. But I would want to have a car if I lived there.

I have heard that Gustav Hjelmeland is home now. He must be quite a guy. Say hello to him from me and say that I would like to see him when he returns. If he would let me know when he comes, I would come . . . ? . . .

(Perhaps a page missing here) . . . ? . . . I always have \$2,000-\$3,000 that people owe me for jobs. It is not always so fun to be in business, especially in times of economic crisis. But I hope it will get better. The coming months, from now and up to January, is always my best working period.

Gudmund is still here. He is working for me again after having worked for another contractor. He is clever and a good worker. Alf is in Chicago working at the same place as before. He visits us very often. Ben Hjelmeland is here almost every Sunday. He has built a house out here by a little lake which he is trying to sell. But that is going to be hard right now. It is a nice house he has there. Ben has a steady job as a furniture maker in Chicago. We have been talking about taking a trip to Norway in 1930 together. This time you must come to Sveen and meet us.

I have 140 acres in wheat on my land in Canada this year. I hope we will have a good crop, if the weather stays nice--not too dry and not any hailstorms. Right now it is not too bad up there; I received a letter recently.

I am sending you a picture of all the family; it is Alf who is with us there. I look like you see me on the picture except for my Sunday clothes. You see I have two big girls now. It goes fast even if I married late. The house you see is not ours. Ours is on the other side. We are standing opposite it. We have a five-room bungalow (seven rooms with kitchen and bath). We pay \$50 per month. Have long thought of building a house, but it is almost like throwing ones money away as things are so high.

I need my money in my business. If I don't have money I can do nothing.

Well, how is it going at home? Have you had a good year? Say hello to Olaf Hjelmeland from me. How is he doing now? Has he started to drink again? If Olaf knows Samuel's address, send it to me. Say hello to Simon Lien from me. Is he still working? How is Anna Hjelmeland (Høgsbo) Do you think I should send her some money? Did you tell her what I wrote to you earlier about her son? If he is capable and wants to go to school at home, I will help him. Or if he wants to come over here, I can send him a ticket. What he would like to do I can help him with.

Well, this is enough for now. What do you want me to do with the bank books that Martinius had? Will you take care of them? Now you must send me a long letter telling me about everything that is happening there. Tell about everything Mikal. It is not so often we write to each other now. Kristine and the boys often get letters. Sverre works at a hotel in Evanston now. Maybe that is a good job for him. He visits us now and then.

This letter is not so long but it is at least so much that you have heard from me. We are all fine and well and "fit as a fiddle", and that is the best one can wish. Say hello to all my sisters. Where do Anna and John live? Would like so much to hear from you soon. Greetings from us all.

Your brother Fred

Should greet you so much from Gudmund.

From: Fredrik Olaf Hjelmeland in Waukegan, Illinois  
To: Fredrik Mikal Hjelmeland, his brother, on Hjelmeland in Norway

Waukegan, Illinois  
December 2, 1928

Christmas is approaching again, and I want to send greetings from America. I have been expecting a letter from you, Mikal, but I know how it is. Things get postponed so long you tend to forget them. But I know you have not forgotten your brother in America yet.

Everything is as usual over here; we are all healthy which is the most important thing. We work hard each day. I am still doing my same work. One can often get very tired, and I think if I started doing something else, it would be much better. When you really think about it, however, it is probably best to continue doing something you know how to do. If you cannot make a go with that, things will go very wrong if you do not know your work.

I am still a dealer for Delco Light. I have two counties now, and have an office in another town also. Sometimes I do really well, other times I do not get much more than to cover my expenses. I will continue with this work until I take a trip back to Norway again. And, if I like it there we will settle there.

I bought myself a car the other day that is as good as new. It has been used for three months. I knew well the man I bought it from. It is an Oldsmobile six-cylinder car. It cost \$995 new, and I paid \$675, so it was a pretty good bargain. I now have three cars including the little truck Gudmund is using for work. I use the new one, and I have a salesman who uses the other. You can see I have my expenses, so if nothing comes in, things will soon go the wrong way.

I bought a house here in Waukegan this summer and paid \$4,500 for it. The house is not worth much, but the site is worth the price I paid. It is a business site. I do not live there myself yet. I rent it out for \$25 a month. Where I live I pay \$50 a month, but that is a new, modern house. I do not know yet if I will build a store on my site or sell it. Waukegan has grown about 10,000 since I came here, so it is quite a pleasant town. There are about 29,000 inhabitants here now.

Times here are now fairly good, but I think they will be good next year. There was a presidential election here this year and the same party was reelected. So everything points towards good times ahead. In 1933, there will be a Worlds Fair here in Chicago. I have planned to stick around here until that time. If I am here until that time I want you to take a trip over here in the spring of 1931 and stay until we return home in the summer of 1933. If you will come, I will buy your ticket to Chicago, and then you can work here for a year before the Fair. There are big plans for building here before the Fair, so I think the trip will be very much worth your while. It should also be easy enough for you to find a man at home to take care of your farm for a couple of years. It would also be a welcome change for you to take a trip over here again. Think it over, Mikal, and see if you cannot break loose for awhile. You can stay with us for as long as you like, and I think you know me well enough to know you are more than welcome.

(In English) When you are here we will take a trip all over America in the automobile so you can see again the old territory you've been to before in this country. I think you would like the trip very much. We are going to have a very enjoyable time here together. So think it over Fred. I do not think you will lose anything by the trip. You've got all to gain and nothing to lose as far as I can figure it out. I'm going with the whole family back to Bygstad with you, when you take the trip home again. I think you would feel about ten years younger after you take the trip, Fred. Let me know what you think about it. I certainly would like to see you again here once more, just for a trip. And I would do what I could to see that you get something out of the trip too. (End of English)

I have to get this letter off now. I enclose a little present for your children. I suppose Gunnar has grown to be a big boy now. Is he going to look like grandfather? I also enclose a New York draft for Anna Hjelmeland Hagsbø, and also one for our sister, Anna. I do not know Anna's address now, so I enclose it in this letter to you. Will you make sure she gets it for Christmas? How are Anna and John now? Are they able to keep both ends together?

I think we will have a good time here during Christmas. Alf, Høgbart, Bendik and Sverre Iversen are all coming out here for Christmas, so there will be enough from Sunnfjord. We are going to have a big Christmas tree. But there is one thing we are going to miss this year, and that is our Christmas steak. Do not expect any this year from Norway. We have had each year since Kristine came, but maybe we will find something similar in Chicago. I like all kinds of Norwegian food. I get so fed up with all this fresh meat all the time. You cannot get fish here that is any good. It is not like the fish market in Bergen.

We have had a little snow here already, but not much. It will go away again pretty soon I should think. It has been rather cold lately. I drive out in the country each day trying to sell. Sometimes I am in luck, other times I drive for nothing. That is part of the game when you are a salesman. You have to accept a "no" and a "yes" in equal spirits. I do not do any wiring myself anymore. When Gudmund cannot do it, I hire someone else. Gudmund is working now on a fairly big job, about \$1,200. It is for a real estate company. Have done some work for that company earlier this summer for about \$2,500. And for each Delco Light I sell, I sell a wiring job also. (I do not try for much work in town. They do it so cheaply it does not pay. The competition is great. There are between 15-20 electrical contractors in this town now. So you see there are plenty of those who will make a bid for a job. So I let them have it for the most part and concentrate on the farmers. I think that works better for me.)

Well, this is all for now. If you will answer this letter, I will write again soon. Do you know if Anderson in Whitehall is still living? Had planned to take a trip there last summer, but there is never time. Next summer, however, I will take the trip. I will take the whole family in the car. I have heard that Martinus' boys have gone to America. Where did they go? Where does Gustav Hjelmeland live in Wisconsin? In which town? Have you received the bank books from Martinus? You can get them from him and take care of them for me. I have not written to him yet, but I will soon. I have not seen the Simonsen family in several years, so I do not know anything about them. I have not heard from Huseby either in a long time. Last time I heard from him he was in Los Angeles. The Blile family is in San Diego, California.



Well, thank you very much for now. And all of us would like to wish you a Merry Christmas celebration and a blessed New Year. Let us hope we will meet soon. We will celebrate Christmas together sometime.

Warmest greetings from

Kristine, Gudmund,  
Odny, Ruth and  
from your brother  
Fred

From: Fredrik Olaf Hjelmeland in Waukegan, Illinois  
To: Fredrik Mikal Hjelmeland, his brother, at home in Norway

Waukegan - December 8, 1929

Dear Brother and Family

We don't hear from each other too often, dear Brother. Now and then I hear of you especially when the boys get letters from Norway, and I guess you do the same about us. Well, Brother, we are trying to do the best we can. I think it is just the same wherever you are. We have all our tasks and duties to carry out. To meet one's responsibilities takes most of our time and strength. We all live well here. We are all in good health.

The children are growing up and are just as noisy and active as children can be. Odny has already attended school, kindergarten. Maybe Kristine and the children will take a trip home next spring. I can't make it so soon. When you are in charge of a business, it is hard to take some time off. Many times I have been thinking of taking a holiday, but up until now it has never come true. We are always busy. It is hard to get away from everything.

Well, Brother, I am doing the same kind of work as before and that is to go by car out to the countryside to try to sell. It isn't always that easy, but I am getting along. Last April I bought a new car and it has already gone more than 20,000 miles. I drive a lot you see. This is with my new car only and besides that some wholesale jobs with the truck, but not so much. Gudmund is the one who drives the truck most of the time. He work for me full time. He is a good and a quick worker. He earns approximately \$50 a week, and that isn't bad for a newcomer. During the winter he will probably not earn quite that much.

This year hasn't been so good for me. We are having bad times so people aren't buying. They save their money hoping for better times to come, but the expenses are all the same. We have to keep things going you know. As you already know, I have a house of my own now. I have built a new garage, and the house has been remodeled. I have purchased another house, too, which is for rent now. Both houses are business properties. so I am able to build a store if I like. I am thinking of doing so next spring, if I can afford it. It depends on my income.

Brother, I often miss you. I have no one to consult. I am just the same person as I used to be - rush ahead and start thinking afterwards, and many times I have had to pay for that. But, usually I manage and it ends all right. And when I get ahold of some money, it goes fast either into real estate or taking care of the houses, buying furniture, a car, etc. Money goes just as quickly as I earn it. It would have been hard to make ends meet if I was going to live on a worker's wages. But, as long as I am in good health, I'll manage. Have never taken precautions and will never do so I'm afraid.

We have got a big house here now. Just now we are eight people in the house. We have Gudmund and Alf and also Ragnar Hjelmeland. He arrived a month ago. For a couple of weeks he was working at the same factory as Alf, but because of a shortage of work, he had to leave and since

then he hasn't had much to do. It is hard to get work here now. The last few weeks he has been working for me, but I haven't got much work for him either.

Kristine was sick this past week and we had to hire a girl to help with things in the house, so we have enough people in the house now. Kristine is well again, but we have decided to keep the girl until After Christmas. In fact, it is too much for Kristine to do especially before Christmas. We are expecting Ben and Sverre for Christmas. Sverre comes almost every Sunday. He enjoys coming to Waukegan.

Christmas will soon be here again. Time passes so quickly, and we are getting older. I am wondering if we are ever going to have Christmas in Norway again. I do hope so, anyhow, and if we do, it must be at Hjelmeland. I know we are welcome to have Christmas there with you. I am sure it will happen if we have some more time to live. Usually we have a nice Christmas here. We do it the Norwegian way. We have had a Christmas tree each year and are going to have one this year, too. We dance around the tree and the children love doing so. Wouldn't it be nice if we could be like children again and be as happy and carefree as they are. We can learn much from children.

I am sending you some pictures. I do not have any of the house. Someone has taken them, and maybe you have gotten them already. I'll send you some later. You will also find enclosed a check for \$10 for Gunnar from uncle Fred. He must share it with his sister. I am sending a little to our sister Anna and also some to Anna Hjelmeland Hagsbø. How is she getting along?

Well, how is it going with you and your family "Little Brother"? You are no doubt busy as usual. Are you more satisfied with conditions at home now? One can live just as happy in Norway as some other place. I think I would like to live in Norway also. If we could manage, we would like, some years ahead, to go home for good. We have got to go home before the children are getting too old to settle down in Norway.

Mikal, I'm expecting a letter for Christmas. I'm quite sure I'm going to get one. I'm expecting letters from Anna and Petrine also. We don't write to each other too often any more, but still we are thinking of each other and wanting to see one another again.

How is Olaf Hjelmeland? Does he know where Samuel is? If he does, get the address and let me have it. Maybe I will take a trip to the West next winter, to California. Blilis and Huseby are still there, and if it isn't too far to go, I would also like to see Sam. But it all depends if I can manage. If there still is a shortage of work, I'm thinking of taking this trip because I then will have plenty of time.

This is meant to be a Christmas greeting to all of you from all of us here. We would like very much to be at Hjelmeland this Christmas, but it has to be another year. Then I would like to end this letter with our very best wishes to you all. Merry Christmas and a Blessed New Year. Please send out regards to everyone at home, Oline and Kristine and their families as well. I often get news of them from the boys here. They send their regards. Merry Christmas from Kristine, Alf, Gudmund, Odny and Ruth - but most of all you are greeted from your brother.

Fred

Box 92, Waukegan, Illinois

ES

From: Anna Hjelmeland Aase at Vassenden in Jølster, Sunnfjord  
To: Fredrik Mikal Hjelmeland, her brother, at home on Hjelmeland

Vassenden 29 December 1929

Dear Brother Mikal!

Many thanks for the letter. I received it the third day of Christmas in the evening so I could not actually send an answer before today. No mail goes here on Saturday, but it goes today in the afternoon. It is good to hear that you are all well. You are quite a few now. You have plenty to do as a housefather and the housemother has plenty to do when there are as many as four children. God will bless you so all will go well.

You write that you want me to come and carry the baby for her christening, but it is a difficult time of the year to travel so far. I would, of course, like to visit my family, but when I look at the snowstorms up in the mountains, it isn't easy to think of going so far away, especially for those, like myself, who can take so little cold. I hope you are not disappointed. I would have done it if I had been at Bygstad. John doesn't care to have me go either. You have many over there. Marie has so many sisters or you could use Signe. Well, you know best yourselves what you will do about that. I am not so strong that I dare take the chance, so you must have me excused. I'll wish you good luck with the little one. May she bring joy and blessing to her parents. (Note: I believe this baby must be Oddborg.)

We have had a quiet and peaceful Christmas. We don't have so many to come to our door during the holidays. We are among strangers, and that isn't always so nice. But, I do have a flock of healthy, happy children, and they provide me with work and create a pleasant atmosphere also. We struggle for them both early and late, and certainly it isn't only a little it takes to keep going in food and clothing. It is difficult to complete this letter as our little one would like to help with that too.

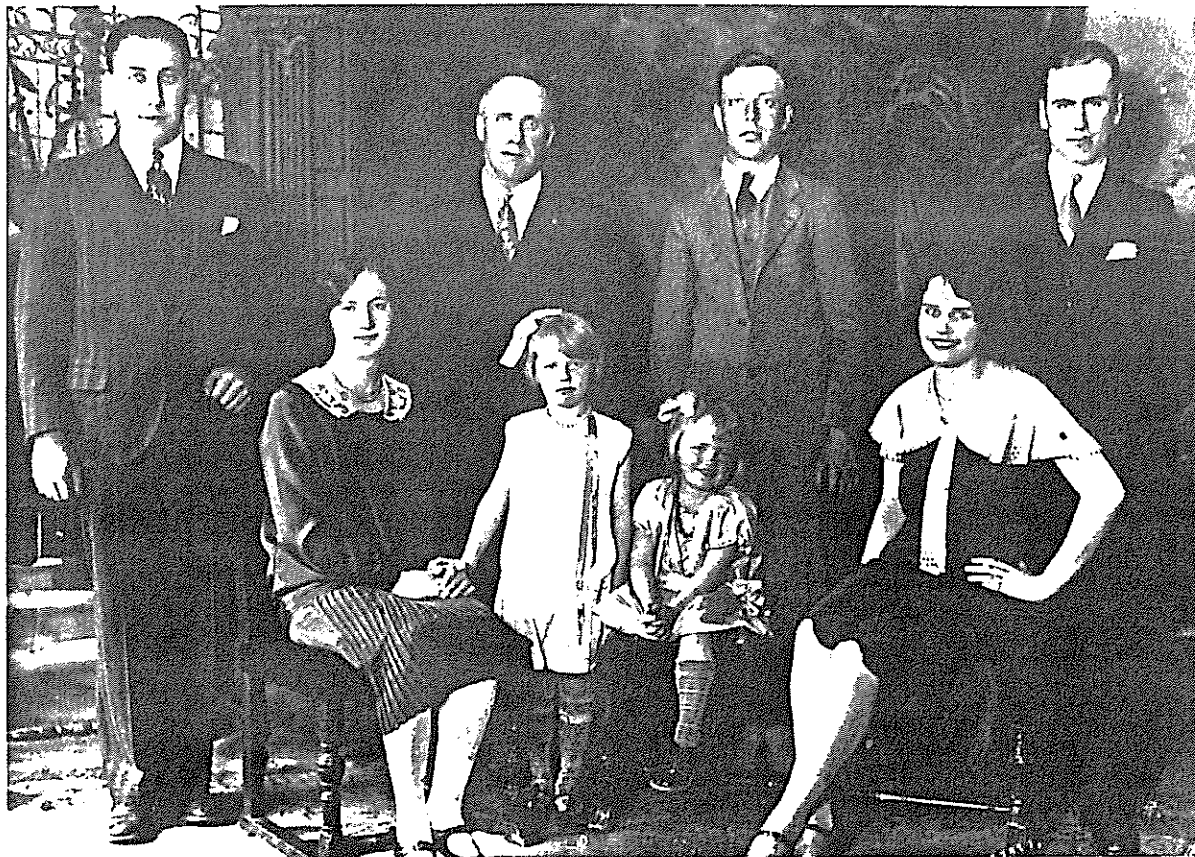
Have you heard from Fredrik for Christmas? I haven't had any letter since after Easter. We had a card from Gustav Hjelmeland. First Christmas day John and I went to church. Third Christmas day the three oldest children and I went to a fest for the China Mission. It was the minister who preached. We have a good preacher here in Jølster, if only the churchroad hadn't been so long. It is good to have God with you in this changeable world. Let us set all our hopes with Him and we shall not be ashamed. It is when we don't trust in Him we can develop a bad conscience. I have experienced that.

I wish you all a blessed New Year and thank you for everything in the old year. It is seldom I can visit Hjelmeland now. I miss that.

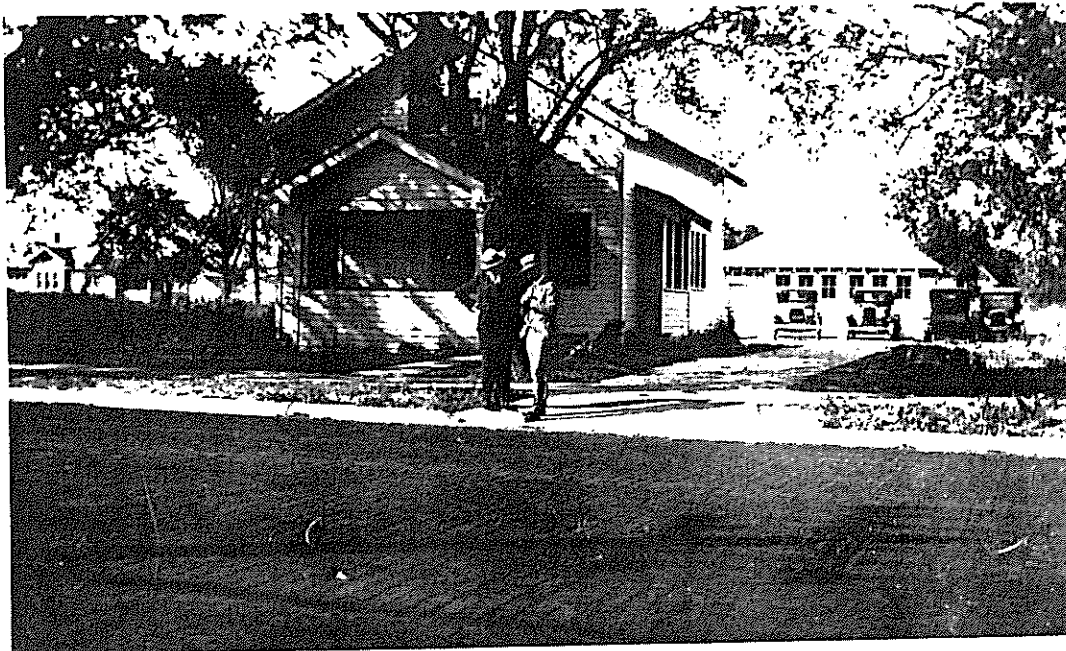
Greetings from all of us to all of you.

Your sister Anna

JH  
ML



Family members who immigrated to America pose for a picture to send to loved ones in Norway - about 1929-30. Alf, Mom, Dad, Aday, myself, Avere, Gudmund's first wife, Ruth, & Gudmund. Ruth died of childbirth; the baby died also.



Our home at 1826 Grand Avenue. Dad built Service Electric Company in front of this house while Mom, Aday and I were on a trip to Norway.



*Our passport picture on our trip to Norway  
1930*



*Odny*

*My family, the morning we  
left for Norway, 1930. Dad did not go.*



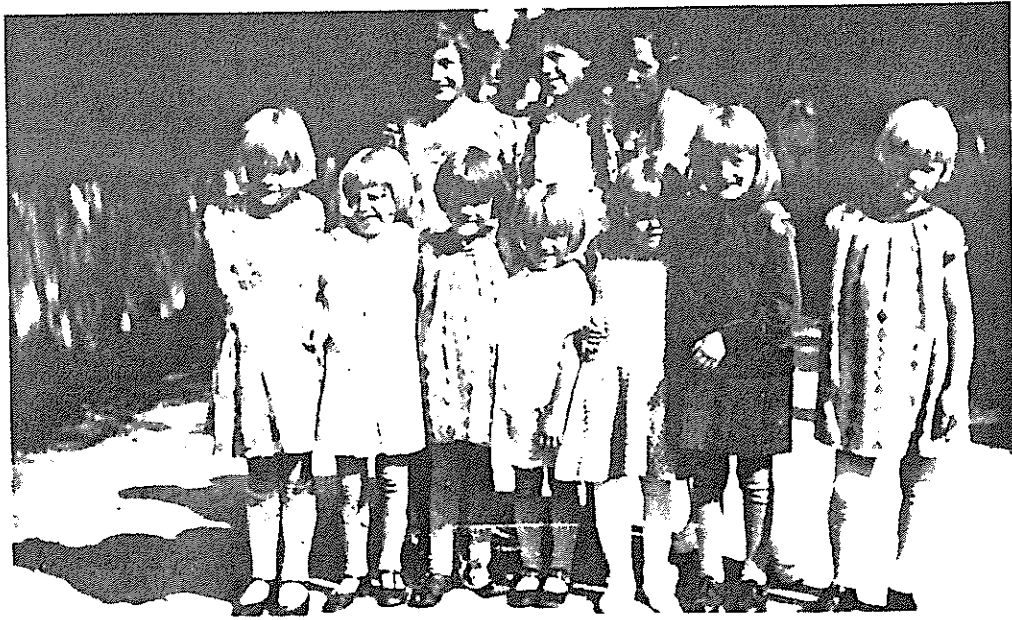


*On board ship with  
Lena & Wally 1930*

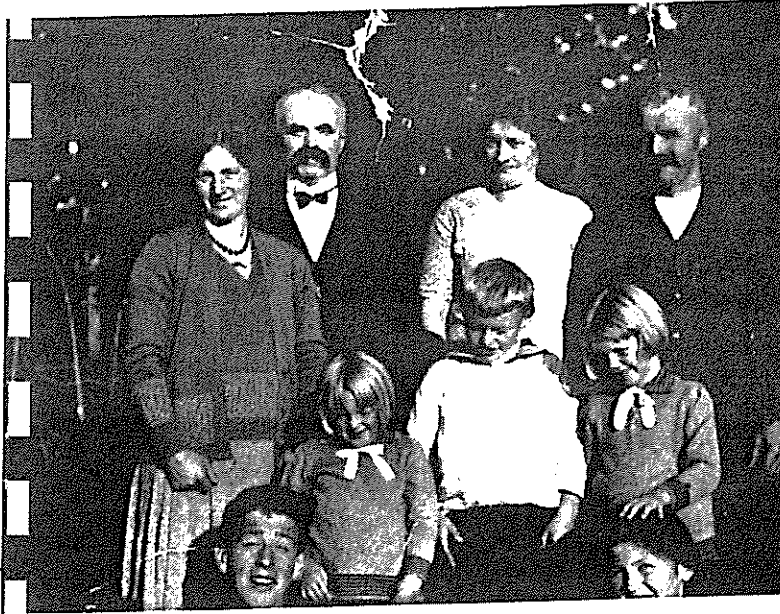


*Odny & I and our cousin  
Anna Kristiansen in Forde*

*1930 - Mother sails to  
Norway with her two  
small girls, her first  
visit home in five  
years. Think how ex-  
citing it must have  
been! - But not quite  
complete without Dad  
along. Wally & Lena  
Johnson, good friends  
were on the same  
sailings - The Bergens-  
fjord & the Stavange-  
fjord*



*Friends in Fjorde, 1930*



*Mother, Uncle Karl, Lena & Olaf Kristiansen, mother's brother and wife. Children are Alf, myself, Mathias, Odny & Anna. (Alf & Anna are Karl's children & Mathias is Olaf's son. This picture was taken the day we left to return to America.*



*Odny in Norway  
Fjorde, Sunnfjord*



*Mother & Fred and myself in new store, Waukegan, Ill.*



PHONE MAJESTIC 4725

FRED HJELMELAND, MANAGER

## SERVICE ELECTRIC COMPANY

AUTHORIZED KELVINATOR SALES AND SERVICE

ELECTRICAL CONTRACTORS

1826 GRAND AVENUE

WAUKEGAN, ILLINOIS

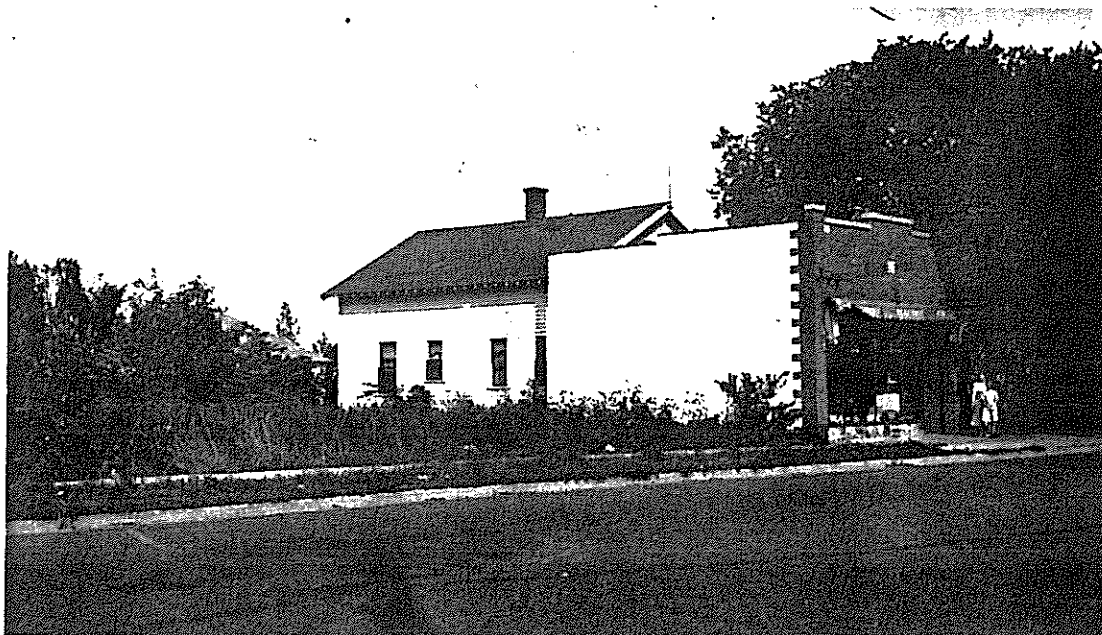
KELVINATOR

ILCO PRODUCTS

HOTPOINT RANGES

ELECTRIC LIGHTING  
FIXTURES

APPLIANCES



*We live  
in the  
house  
behind  
the store*



*Budmund, 1931 Don't you love that car?!*



*Odny & I 1933*



Below:  
 Fred & Selma  
 Fredrickson &  
 their grand-  
 daughter Eunice  
 Fredrickson  
 (Loulie)

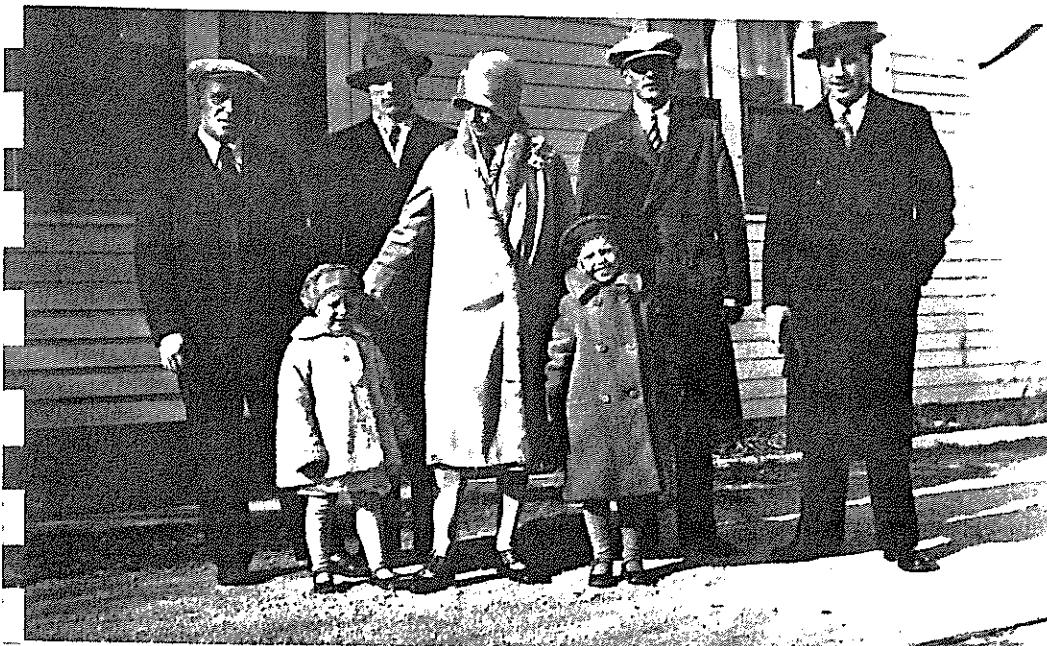
Above: Our first trip to  
 the Fredricksons near Hixton,  
 Wisconsin. It was the only  
 year we saw Fred Fredrickson  
 as he died the next year, 1934.  
 L to R: Fred Fredrickson, Hans  
 & Mrs Anderson, Selma Fred-  
 rickson, Mom, Dad, Almy,  
 and I (Summer, 1933)



Left:  
 Selma and  
 our family -  
 our first visit  
 1933



L to R  
Ody, myself,  
Dad, Olef, Bringe  
land, ?, Thora  
& Ben Hjelmeland  
& Mom at  
Ben's home at  
Round Lake

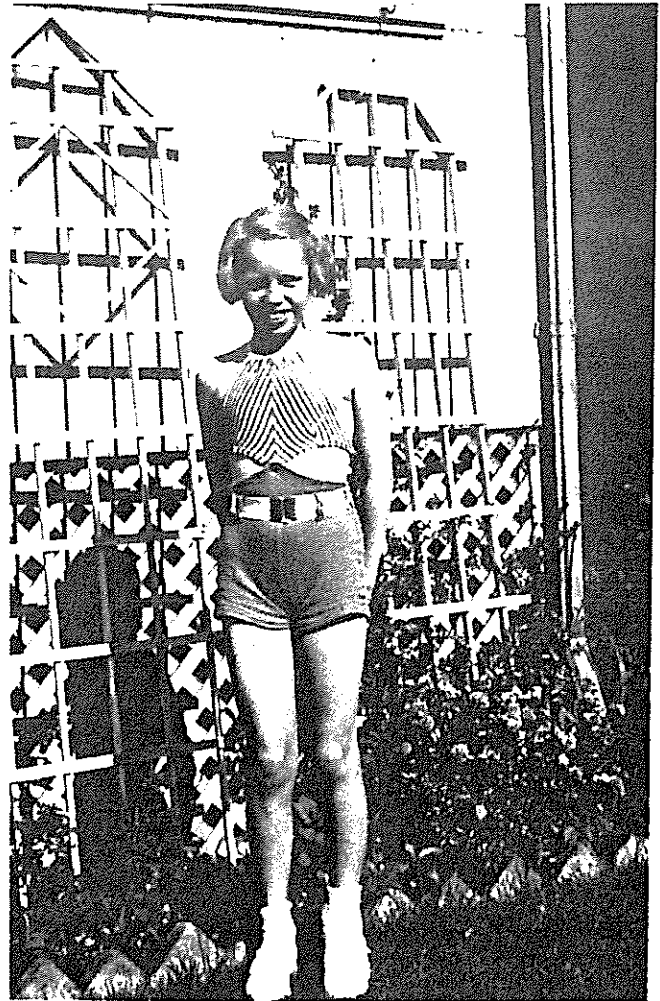


L to R  
Dad, myself,  
Dudmund,  
Mom, Ody,  
?, and Alf



L to R  
Mom, myself,  
Lena Johnson,  
?, Dad, Ody,  
Sverre and  
Wally Johnson





*Adny!*

From: Fredrik Olaf Hjelmeland in Waukegan, Illinois  
To: Fredrik Mikal Hjelmeland, his brother, on the Hjelmeland farm  
Sunnfjord, Norway

Waukegan, Illinois  
September 3, 1933

Dear Brother and Family,

Brother, it is a long time since you have heard from us here in America. We are all doing fine and have been in good health. The children are growing up. Odny is in the 4th grade and Ruth is in the 2nd. We haven't more children, and it doesn't look like the family will get any bigger either. It is bad times to bring up a family, so I think it is best not to be so many. Kristine and I have been in good health all the time so we have been fortunate in that way.

For more than three years now we have been having bad times here in America, and it isn't any better now as far as we can see. People say that there are many who have gone back to work again. In spite of the fact that some have returned, there are still more than 12-13 million good laborers unemployed. Activities within the building trade have completely stopped except for making government buildings, and that work is only enough for a few.

Roosevelt is a good President; he is trying to do his best. During the past years the entire country has been badly governed. I think it will take a long time to get the country back on an even keel. Everyone is hoping for better times to come, but that will be a job that won't easily be accomplished. Worst of all, there were millions of people who were pretty well off and in their middle-age, and even if the times had been good, there wouldn't have been so many job opportunities for them; but now when there is nothing, they have lost everything they have built up in the banks, on the stockmarket, and in what they thought were good investments. Most of them found out that they were completely broke. It seemed like everything had disappeared. For an ordinary man this is hard to understand.

I'd like to compare the situation with an abyss or bottomless pit. If you had bought a house, you lost it. If you had put your money into a bank, you lost it. If you had bought stocks, you lost them; and if you had lent out money, you lost it. The situation was unbelievable. On properties I had bought, I lost about \$10,000. The properties are of no value today. I had \$650 in a bank, and it is all gone and just the same with about \$1,500 in work I have done and don't expect to get paid for. About \$12,000 is gone forever. But still I'm much better off than many in my class. We have managed so far and we are even able to give some help now and then. I still have my business and in waiting for better times to come, we'll pull through. If I'm lucky enough to stay in good health, I have no worry about the future. Never give up is my motto. Even if it's ever so pressing and dark now, things will surely one day clear again.

We are seeing another Norwegian family a lot. His name is Hans Wange and he comes from Sogn. He is married to a lady from Oslo. They have three small children, the eldest one is only four years. He is in his forties, educated as a mechanical engineer, and is also a good machinist. For a

long time now he has been without work. It has been impossible for him to get any kind of work. This family is in real difficulties; they haven't got a single cent. They haven't received government relief yet; they will not ask for that. I have been giving him \$5.00 a week; I can't let them starve to death. They are nice people. He is a good worker, but he hasn't succeeded in finding something to do. You'll find hundreds like him in every city.

A man who has past 40 has no chance here now unless he has his own business. It is impossible to start for himself when he doesn't have anything to start with. Alf has gotten work now. He works in a factory as a machinist. I'm glad he got something to do again. We don't see much of Alf and his wife. I don't think she likes us so well so she keeps him from us also. Well, I hope we can get along anyhow. Gudmund is still with me, but he hasn't much to do--enough to live from anyway. We are all hoping for better times to come. I do want to keep Gudmund if it is possible. I could never get such a good and reliable worker as Gudmund, so I hope I get enough work that I can keep him. It is no use for him to try to get some work in another electrical shop either. Nobody has any work to do. He knows he will get what I have. We are getting along very well. I give the same hourly pay as I did in the good times. I could easily get another electrician for just half of what I'm paying Gudmund, but in the long run I would be the loser. I can send him on a job all by himself, without inspecting the work he has done. Everyone that we do work for likes him. He does his work fast and well, and very nicely. I have never had complaints about the work that Gudmund has done it. He does the work much better than I do.

I haven't done any wiring for the past six years. I'm no good anymore. I'm trying to be a salesman now. Mikal, you never thought I could be a salesman. But, all the same, that's my job now, and I manage to make my living from it in these bad times. If there's a job that's hard, it's being a salesman now when no one will spend any money. But, I have made it up to now. There's a lot one can do if one has the willpower to hold on for awhile when things don't go so good. Never give up. Things will surely be better sometime. I go out to the country every day. I drive about 30,000 miles a year. I like my job selling Delco Light. I'm going to have this job as long as I stay in America.

This year we have had a very dry summer so the crop isn't the best. But anyhow there are enough farm products. The farmer doesn't get anything for them. I think farmers in Norway are much better off than farmers in America. Thousands of farmers have lost their farms during the last three years. Brother, it's hard to understand that this can be America. I have never seen a mess like this. They say it is just the same all over the country. Whenever it is going to change no one can tell. We are only hoping for the best.

Last spring I took a trip up to Canada where I have my land. Alf was with me; we drove up. It is about 1,500 miles from Waukegan, so the whole trip was about 3,000 miles. On the way back home, from Fargo, North Dakota to Waukegan, it took us just one day (700 miles). But then we drove fast. Alf and I took turns driving and didn't have the least bit of trouble. Everything went fine.

I have taken my farm back, even if it is of no value. It is just the same in Canada as in the USA. Nobody wants to have a farm anymore. Farm products are badly paid, so there is no profit at all. The only thing

that is going up are taxes. It doesn't look as though they will ever be coming down.

It was terribly dry in Canada this year also. I had seeded on my land 320 acres of wheat, but I probably will not get anything back from that, so that can truly take the will out of a man who tries to do his best. On my way up to Canada I paid for seed wheat \$450 and had also to pay for the gasoline used by the man who works my land. He had nothing. He does all the work with a tractor. There is not one horse on the whole farm, and therefore I had to buy gasoline for him. I don't know what I can expect from the farm this year. I had a letter from one of my neighbors and he said the crops were completely dried out again this year. Maybe we will get 4-5 bushels to the acre. I still haven't heard from the man who works for me yet. He will take everything I predict if there is anything to take. I'm not going to spend one more cent on that land-- come whatever wants to come! It has cost me enough already! I have worked hard all my time in America and have made good money. I put the money into properties and lost it.

Olaf Bringeland is in Waukegan now. He is staying with us. He manages to get some work now and then. He also lost all of his money in the banks here. Yah, you can believe this is a fine America! You can't pick up gold on the streets any more. You remember Mr. Huseby, don't you? He went with me to Canada. He is still in Los Angeles, California. He has written letters to me several times asking for money. He is also down to the "bare ground". Hasn't been working for several years. But I have refused to lend him money. I think he will be able to manage. He is a bachelor with no family to care for. So, he will have to help himself. I have enough with me and my family right now. You see, if there is work to be had, they don't want to hire anyone over 40 years old. So what are they going to do with all of us "old" folks? (Note: Dad is 46 years old at the time he wrote this letter.) They will have to start building Old Folks Homes and house the people at the expense of the government. You have to pay tax on everything you buy, both for what you eat and what you wear. Yah, it's a fine situation we find ourselves in!

I think you are getting tired of reading about all this misery. But I have to tell you, Mikal, it is twice as bad as I am able to describe it in a letter. But once again I want to say I haven't lost my spirit. There will surely be sunshine one day again. We are managing so far. I have my business, I get some repair work now and then, and I sell a little off and on, enough so we keep a balance. As long as we all are in good health, nothing else matters. In 1930, there were 19 electrical contractors in Waukegan; now there are only 3 left. All the others went bankrupt. How long the three of us can manage, I don't know. I'm going to hold out just as long as the other two. I have still my credit with the wholesale companies and will continue to have so as long as I am able to pay my expenses every month. I have managed so far.

This year the World's Fair is being held in Chicago. Fifteen million people have visited the exhibition so far. It is a great exhibition and many folks are attending also. I guess they haven't anything else to do, so if they have a few cents, they take in the exhibition. Two of our relatives came from Hixton. They are the son and daughter of Fredrickson. I'm sure you know them. They stayed over with us for one night. Nice people. They send you their regards. They also knew Knudt



Lien. And so was Gustav Hjelmeland here one day. He was also going to the Fair. He brought his wife with him. Nice guy, Gustav. He is apparently doing pretty well. I have never seen anything of the Simonsen family in Chicago. Tollefson is in Chicago, too, now I heard. He still has land in Canada, but it is of no value.

Mikal, how much money do I have at home? Let me know. If this keeps on over here much longer, that will probably be all I have left. Let me know how much it is.

How is everything at home? I hope you are all in good health. Have Petrina and Andreas been home this summer? They are doing fine, I hope. How are Anne and John? You must greet them all from us here. I owe them all letters, but there is not much letter writing these days. You must write to me at once, Mikal, and let me know how all of you are doing. Perhaps we shall meet once again. I haven't given up hope of seeing Norway once more. Live well all of you. Give my greetings to all my sisters and brothers.

Greetings from all of us here  
to all of you,

Yours,

Kristine and Fred

From: Petrina Hjelmeland Eide in Brekstad, near Trondhjem  
To: Fredrik Mikal Hjelmeland, her brother, at home on Hjelmeland

Brekstad 21 November 1933

Dear Brother!

Oh how little I know where to turn to find comfort many times. I have a heartache so great that words are too little. I wanted so much for Gunnar to live amidst us here. But no, we stood there powerless. God wanted it differently, and for His will we must bend. I must find comfort in the words that not one sparrow falls to the earth unless by our God Father's will, and so a human's life must be more worth than a sparrow.

Oh dear, a place is empty. Gunnar has passed away. That good boy that father and mother held so dear. There was something especially good about him, both when he came and when he left. Always obedient and nice to everyone. Clever at whatever he did. He was a good son for us. Oh, why did Gunnar have to leave us so soon? I must believe that God did this of love to us and Gunnar.

Gunnar wanted so much to live. He had a good home and was getting ready to take country high school together with Leidulv. Both of them were looking so much forward to that. But God's ways are not our ways.

Mikal, not one person could help Gunnar as he laid very sick with a high fever. It was not easy to be a mother then. Oh how helpless we stand when death comes. Then there is only one who can help. But it is not possible for us to understand that such can happen. God must help us all. Gunnar did not speak often as he laid sick. He always had a high fever and was very tired, so lay often nearly asleep. Since the 14th of August I have not thought about or talked about much else but Gunnar. And so it isn't about anyone else when I write letters either.

Write a letter to me. It feels like I am waiting for someone to help me out of this great sorrow. Surely you have read the letter I sent to Kristina. Ask her to write to me. Be happy that all of you are well. Be happy, Mikal, that you have all of yours around you. It is "wonderful days" when the children are small. Our boys were sturdy boys, and their father and I were so happy, but we had to lose one! God must take care of my other two. I pray for that.

Leidulv is doing very well, but it seems like nothing can make up for the sorrow over Gunnar. We must find comfort from Him who comforts the sorrowing. Tonight I sit home alone. Andreas and Gudmund are at school. Gudmund goes with his father in the evening for two hours plus what he goes to public school.

Have you had a letter from Fredrik? It is a disgrace we don't send letters more often to him. I wonder how he is doing. I'll try to send him a letter soon. But, it is like I'm not in the mood for anything. Each day is so gray and sad. Life is not always only good days. Andreas and I have learned that now. Dear Jesus, You help us all.

You must greet Kristina and ask her to write to me. You must also greet Olina. I'll soon write to her.

You and all of yours are so dearly greeted from all of us here.

Petrina

On separate page:

Psalms for Gunnar Eide Funeral  
Wednesday, 25 October 1933

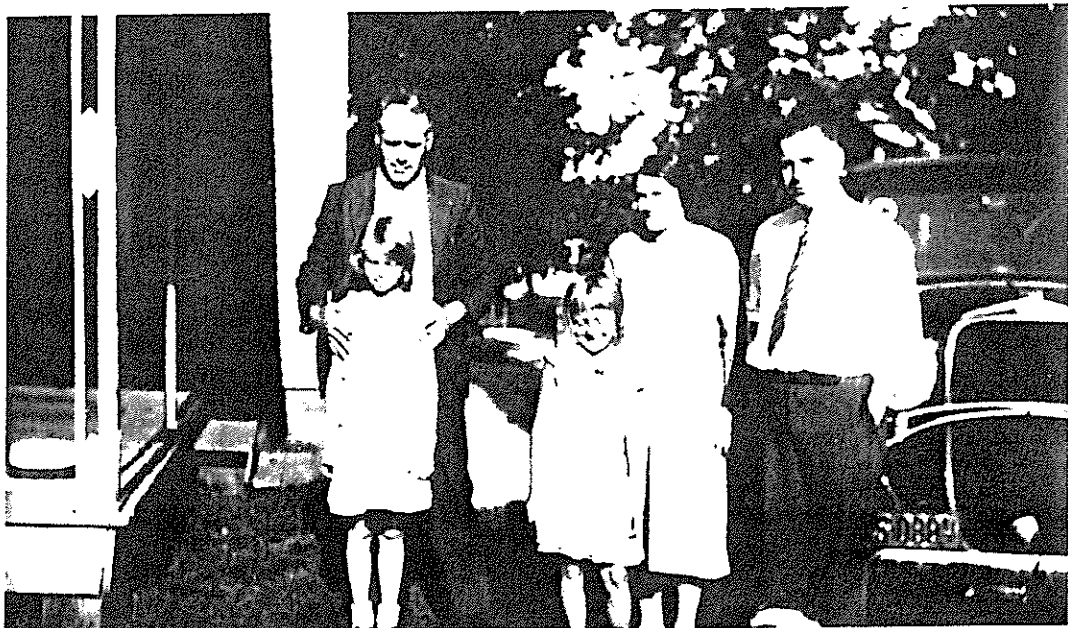
Note: Gunnar was either 16 or 17 years of age when he died.





L to R:  
 Dad, Mom,  
 Kristine &  
 Fred Fern,  
 Emma & Matt  
 Haugby in  
 Hawkins,  
 Wisconsin  
 at Hiens  
 1933

Dad, Almy &  
 I with Ole  
 and Signe  
 Haugby in  
 Chinelander,  
 Wisconsin  
 1933



Man holding  
 child  
 John Skadek  
 brother to  
 Marie, Mikal  
 wife - he  
 immigrated to  
 America &  
 settled in  
 Wisconsin

From: Fredrik Olaf Hjelmeland in Waukegan, Illinois  
To: Fredrik Mikal Hjelmeland, his brother, at home in Norway on  
Hjelmeland

Waukegan, Illinois  
December 10, 1933

Dear Brother and Family

Merry Christmas to all of you at home. This letter will arrive a little late for Christmas for as usual, writing has been put off. The less you write, the more effort it takes to sit down and write. Soon it will be Christmas again. Time passes so quickly; it seems such a short time since last Christmas. On Christmas Day, I am going to be 47 years old, but I don't feel as old as the years tell. I am always in good health and being out in fresh air whenever I am able makes me feel good. The only thing that shows more than before is that my hair has become grey. But it runs in the family.

We are all in good health. Odny and Ruth are attending school. Odny is a gifted pupil; Ruth less, she doesn't take so much interest as Odny does. Ruth is wilder, but very nice. She is very much like her father both in mind and looks. She isn't afraid of anything. We have two nice girls. Odny is soon able to take care of my store. There isn't so much to do there, but someone has to be there. Of my selling, 95 percent of it is done outside the store. I keep the store to show samples to my customers, if they want to have a look at what they are going to buy before they decide to do so.

My business has been better the last months. I suppose times have become better as a whole, but it will take a long time before they get normal again. We had a terrible time here. I am sure you cannot imagine how bad it was. But many people think it will be better now. We have gotten a fine President who is for the common people; but the rich are against him, and because of that it will take more time to get things better. The President we are having now (President Franklin Roosevelt) doesn't give in to the big bosses and the banks, so to save themselves they have to give in to the government and as soon as they do so I suppose good times will be back again. The USA has never had a better President than the one we have now, and most of the people are in favor of him. Last month the government put more than four million men back to work, and no one gets less than .50 cents an hour. Tradesmen get \$1.25 an hour. Having this work, people no longer need go on relief. Now they are able to earn their living.

Last Thursday I was on a trip to Chicago, and there I met Mads Bringe-land. He was on his way to Norway. So when you get this letter I am sure you have received greetings from us here. Mads has gotten old now, so it was time he took a trip home, if he was ever to do it. I believe Gudmund and Alf are thinking of taking a trip to Norway next summer. Anyway, that is what they have in mind now. Alf works steady now. Gudmund works most of the time, but I am not always able to get work for him.

I have also been thinking of taking a trip to Norway once more. But we are four people now, so it will cost a lot. It won't be in the near

future. If I am able to sell here, then maybe we shall settle there. Sometimes I feel tired of America, but it would be difficult to settle down in Norway, too. I don't know what I would begin with there. But this is only a thought crossing my mind. We don't know what the future will bring, and perhaps this is for the best. We have to cope with one day at a time.

I have been waiting for a letter from you, Mikal, but I haven't gotten one yet. I wrote a letter some months ago. You no doubt have received it. I hope to get one for Christmas. I have heard from Alf's letter from his mother that one of Petrine and Andreas' sons died last summer. It must have been very difficult for them. Haven't hear from Petrine yet. Did they visit Hjelmeland last summer?

What time, Mikal, are we going to celebrate Christmas together again? I am sure it will happen. You never know. There is so much that can happen that you never would believe could happen. Christmas will be over by the time you receive this letter. We are going to have a Christmas tree as usual. Usually we have a nice Christmas. I have been wondering if you have sent us a Christmas dried leg of lamb. For several years we have gotten one from you, and we think it is so wonderful to have it on Christmas Eve.

This will be all for this time. I hope this letter will find you all in good health. We will, I am sure, once again celebrate Christmas together. Please give my regards to all the family and all of those who ask for news about us now and then. Send my regards to Olaf Hjelmeland also.

And again, a Merry Christmas and a Blessed New Year from all of us here to all at home.

Your brother,

Fredrik

Ask Olaf to give you Samuel Hjelmeland's address and send it to me.

From: Alf Solemslid,, my first cousin, in Zion, Illinois  
To: Fredrik Mikal Hjelmeland, his uncle, at Hjelmeland in Norway

Zion 17 November 1934

Dear Uncle!

Thanks for the last time we were together. It is already a while ago. I am now back in America and have started to work again. The trip over went fine. We did have two days with really stormy weather, but otherwise it was very nice. I was seasick the two stormy days on the ship but after that I was well as usual.

When I arrived in New York on Friday morning, Ruth (his wife)<sup>\*</sup> and two other ladies were there to meet me. Ruth and I stayed in New York until Monday morning when we took a bus to Chicago. There Gudmund came with a car and met us. We came to uncle Fred's place at 12:00 Tuesday night, the 6th of November.

I have now 100 kroner that I didn't use. I send them in this letter. I will try to send the rest of what I borrowed as soon as possible. Many thousand thanks for lending me the money. I hope that it was not too difficult for you to lend the money, and I hope you will write soon and let me know if you have gotten my letter. (Note: The envelope showed that the letter was registered.)

We have had very nice weather here since I returned, not as much rain as you have in Norway. I have not seen uncle Fred more than one time since I came home, and that was the night I came. I have been at his place a couple of times, but he is always out, always on the go. The night I came it was so late and everyone was so tired that I didn't get so much chance to talk with him. Ruth and I stayed overnight at his place on Wednesday.

Today it is Saturday, and I will go down to uncle tonight. I will also go tomorrow as Bendik will be there then too, I understand.

So must you and your family live well.

Best wishes from

Ruth and Alf

Would it be possible for you to visit my mother now and then when you have the time? It was hard for her that both Ingrid and I should leave at the same time.

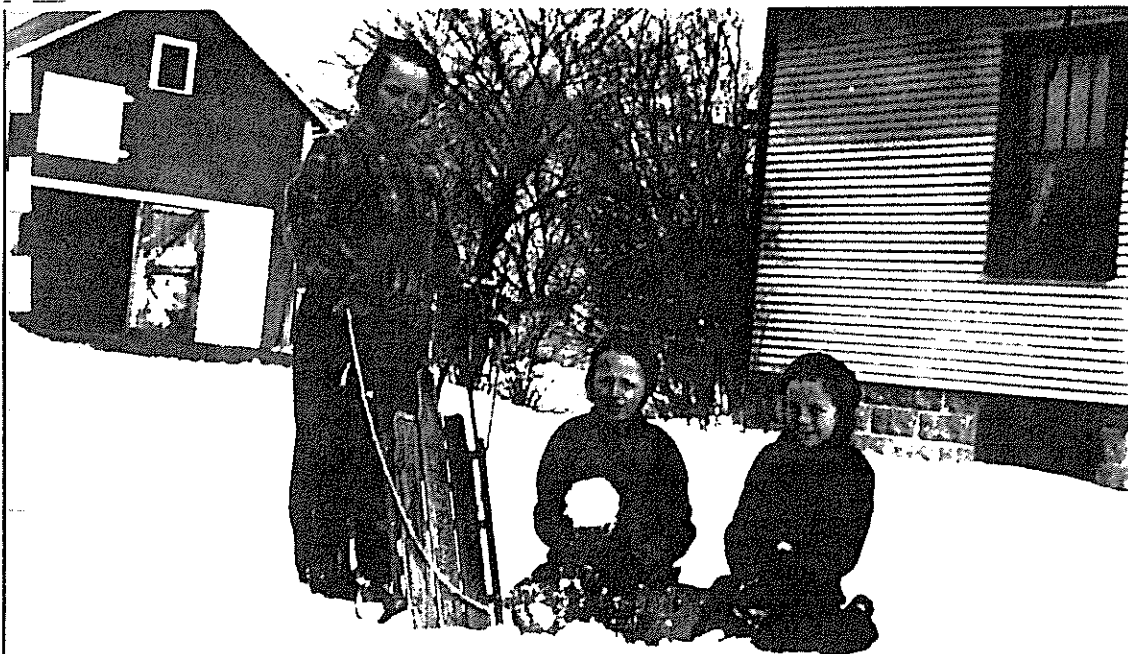
\*First wife



Oday & I with  
Grand Avenue  
playmates  
Backrow: Lucy  
& Rosemary  
LeBarron &  
Mary Gaulton  
who lived in  
the house below  
(next door)



My second  
grade class and  
teacher Miss  
White. I am  
third from  
left, second  
row, my best  
friends Lillian  
Cowell and  
Shirley Olson on  
either side



Oday,  
myself  
Shirley -



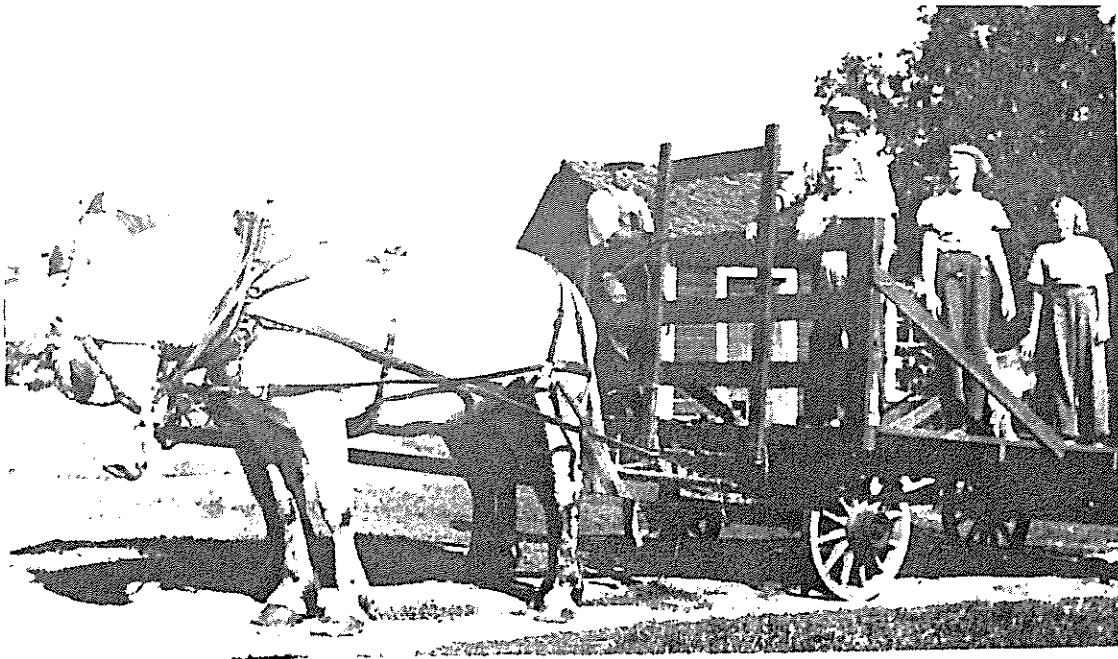


*"Zipper"*

*My Family*



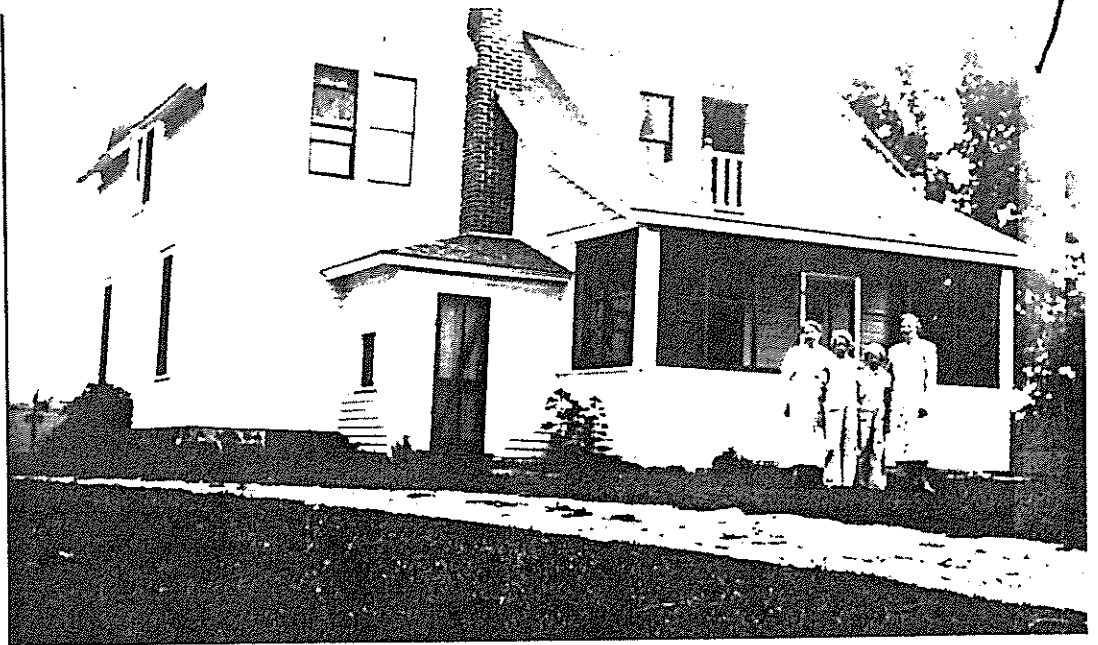
*Our family  
with Grand  
Avenue  
neighbors,  
the LeBarrons  
L to R: Odny,  
Lucy, Jeanne,  
Mom, myself,  
Rosemary,  
Marilyn & Dad*



At the  
 Fredrickson's  
 farm -  
 George, Lynn,  
 Gordon,  
 Odny & I

Fredrickson's  
 home -

Selma  
 Odny  
 myself  
 Mom



Hazel & Selma  
 Fredrickson,  
 Mom, Kristin  
 Lien, Dad,  
 Fred Lien,  
 George  
 Fredrickson

From: Fredrik Olaf Hjelmeland in Waukegan, Illinois  
To: Fredrik Mikal Hjelmeland, his brother, on Hjelmeland in Norway

December 1, 1935

Dear Brother and Family!

You will surely be frightened when you see a letter coming from me. Don't really know how long it is since I last wrote to you, but I know it is very long. I think I have had two letters from you since then. You know that the less one writes, the more effort it takes. You certainly hear about us now and then through letters Gudmund and Alf send home. They are more faithful at writing than I am. But now you shall get a Christmas letter all the same.

We are all well, all in good health, and Odny and Ruth are growing so that one can almost see the difference every day, especially Odny. She will soon need adult-size clothes. She weighs over 90 pounds. Odny is in the 6th grade in school now and Ruth is in the 4th grade. They are both good girls and up until now have always been healthy except for some of the common children's diseases. Kristine is also in good health and looks much younger than I do. But I have nothing to complain of either; I have always been healthy and well. The only thing that has happened quickly is that I have gotten so much grey hair. Lately I have had a bit of rheumatism, but it will probably go away again. I'm not quite so agile as I use to be, but I can still do a somersault and stand on my hands! But, the limbs feel a bit stiff afterwards.

I still have my business here. This year it has gone better than it did in 1933-34. Those years it was terrible here, but now I think times are going to be better here. Things are looking up anyway. But it is harder to manage when one gets older. For a man who is over 45 years here in this country, it is almost impossible to get work if one has not been in the same place for many years. If I had to depend upon getting a job in a company here, I would go as fast as possible and get a farm or go to Norway again, for they want only young people here now. They have so many to choose from also. It is much better, then, to have one's own business as long as one can pay the bills and keep a balance, so to speak. No one can fire you then either. And it doesn't depend so much on what one can do with one's hands either. As long as the head can think, one can always get someone to do the work.

There are several electric companies here in Waukegan that went bankrupt in these bad times we had. At last there were only two of us left. But this year there are three new ones which have opened again after things became better. One must do the work so cheap that there isn't much left after one has paid all the bills. But it will be better when there is more to do. Gudmund has worked for me again the whole summer and I have also had two other men, but one of them does only Delco Light service work.

Now it is quieter again so I believe there will not be so much to do this winter. But I don't count on only the electrical work I can get. I go out and sell, also, and earn just as much on that, perhaps even more. You probably never thought, Mikal, that I could ever be a salesman.

But I am, nevertheless, and do the job pretty well, too. It was that that helped me through all these bad years when over 20 million people were on Government Relief. In the last year, the U.S. Government has spend 4 billion on the unemployed, what in Norway is called unemployment relief.

So you see what kind of times we have here yet. But one has work in a way and that helps a bit to keep things going. The prediction is that things are going to be much better in construction. It's about time, too, considering that there has been nothing of that kind of work for five years. But everything is going faster now than before. All work takes fewer workers now, too, in that there is more machine work. That is another reason so many are out of work. Those who make money from machines are from the factories, and therefore the ordinary working class is getting poorer and poorer, the big fellows richer and richer.

Well, that's enough of that. I can't complain. I've managed fine myself through all these bad years, and we'll manage as long as we keep our health.

I still have my land in Canada. But, I don't earn anything from it, not even enough to pay the taxes, so I don't know what I'll do with it. It was a costly deal for me too. The man who bought it gave it up again with a lot of unpaid tax that I must pay. I say to Kristine that after the children are grown and we can't do anything more here, we can live on our farm in Canada in our old age. But I don't think she thinks much of the idea.

Last summer we took a trip to Whitehall, Wisconsin. Anderson had a stroke last spring, and he lost his memory. We didn't see him in Whitehall as he was at the doctor's in Madison when we were there. You know he has a daughter in Madison. It's not so good for the Andersons now. His daughter, Rose, is still just as poorly, and Mrs. Anderson is too. So it's not so pleasant to visit them. We were there only a couple of times. We stayed with the Fred Fredrikson family. Fred Fredrikson died last spring, and Mads Fredrikson died a couple of years ago; so now it is Mrs. Fredrikson and their son, George, and daughter, Hazel, who are managing the farm. They are very nice people and were very glad that we came and visited them. Kristine and the children were there for ten days. I was there only one day, as it is not so good for me to be away from the business. If I am not here, everything stands still.

Kristine and the children had a very good time there, especially the children. They want to go back next summer. It's nice for them to have a place to go in the summer, especially a farm. They are very hospitable people, too, and the food they have is real Norwegian. Next summer I want to be there a week, too, even if I have to close the shop.

I wish, Mikal, that you and your family were so close that we could take a summer vacation together each year and also that you could take a trip to us now and then. I would give a lot so that you could come and visit us. Then I would take a vacation for as long as you were here. But, I'm afraid that will never happen. But if we keep our health and luck, it can be that we shall come and visit you one time again. But it will cost a lot. Four costs more than one, and it is many times difficult for only one to travel so far. Well, you know that from the time you were here. I can send Kristine and the children and stay home myself.

That wouldn't be quite so much, and then we wouldn't lose our income completely either. But I would also like to see you all again, and with God's will, we shall meet once more in this life.

After Kristine and the children had been at the Fredriksons for ten days, they went to Hawkins, Wisconsin and visited Fred Lien and family and were there a few days. Then I drove up one Saturday evening and was there over Sunday. Then we came home again on Monday. I had just bought a new Ford car, so it didn't take us so long to drive 350 miles. I buy a new car almost every year so I always have a good car. The Liens are getting on well. He has a hardware store in that little town. He has it alone so they manage well. Mads Hagsbø is there also. He has a butcher shop there. He is also doing well. Tom Hagsbø is in Rhineland, Wisconsin. He has not been so fortunate as he apparently lost most of what he had. I guess he is an agent now for a washing machine, but you know there's not much to earn on selling in these times with the competition so great.

The Fredriksons and the Liens were also here and visited us in the summer. The Liens were here for a week and the Fredriksons for three days. I took them to Chicago when they were here and showed them different places there. They seemed to enjoy themselves.

Ben Hjelmeland is also here near Waukegan now. He built a large house this summer. The other house he had burnt down, so now he built a much bigger and better one. He isn't finished with it yet. It cost a lot more than he had planned. I did his electrical work. Ben is still tough and can keep up with the best. He is small but tough. He doesn't give up easily. He hopes to sell the house when he is finished with it. Well, I could have had many fine houses for what I have lost here in this country. But I don't think about it any more. If I can just keep my health, I'll manage. A man should never give up as long as there is hope, and as long as one is in good health, there is hope, too.

How is everything at home? When Gudmund and Alf get letters from home, I always ask if there is anything about you, Mikal. I like to hear about and from you. But it is so seldom that happens. But it is perhaps my fault because I have been even worse at writing now in the last few years than you have been. Do you know when we got your Christmas meat last Christmas? It was not before the end of January, but it was delicious no matter when it came. Thank you both. It is shameful that we never send you anything, but if we take a trip to Norway again, we'll see if we can make up for it.

How are Petrina and Anna now? I hope they are well. I don't know if I will get to writing them for Christmas. Greet them from me and wish them a blessed Christmas time from their brother in America. If Anna or any other of my other sisters are there at Christmas, you can let them read this letter, for it is for all of you at home. I haven't so much to tell, but the most important is that you hear we are all in good health and getting on well. We hope that we will hear the same from you.

When we visited the Fredriksons, we also visited the brother of Marie, John Skadal. He has a nice family and seems to be doing well. I was asked to give my best regards when I wrote.

I hope to hear from you at Christmas; if not then, after Christmas. It's nice to get letters from home tho it is not so often now. Kristine gets

letters from Førde more often but not as often as before. The longer one is away the less frequent one receives letters. It is, of course, natural, but just the same it is not that we are not in each other's thoughts, but rather that it takes more of an effort to sit down and write the longer it is between each letter.

I would like to get the address of Samuel Hjelmeland. If you can get it from Olaf, please send it to me. Karl Fauske is here in Waukegan now. He is working here on construction this time.

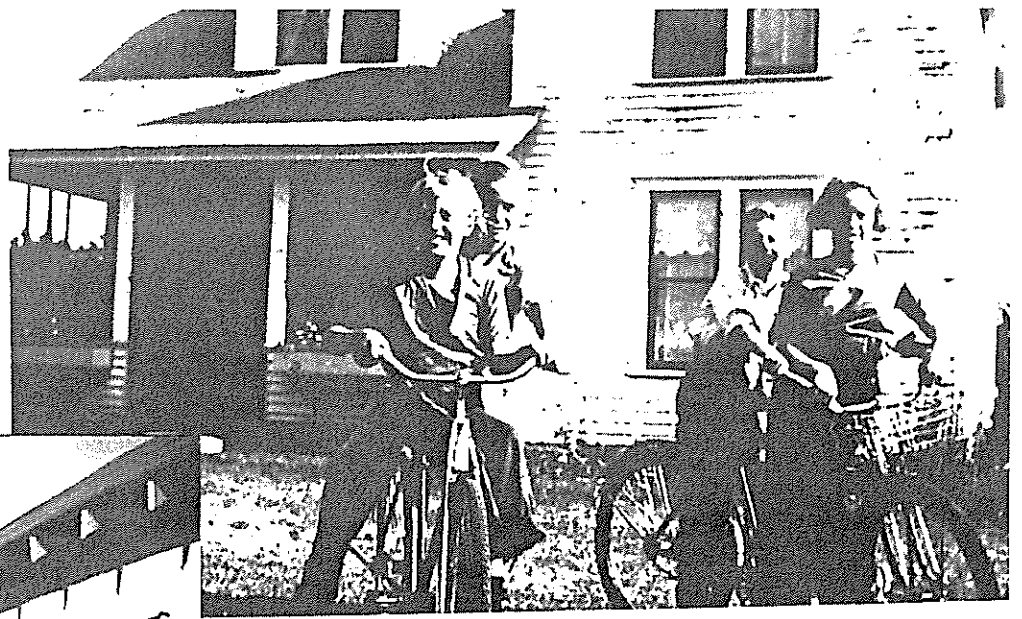
I hope this finds you all healthy and happy. And in closing, a blessed Christmas to you all from all of us here.

A Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year from your brother,

Fredrik

JH

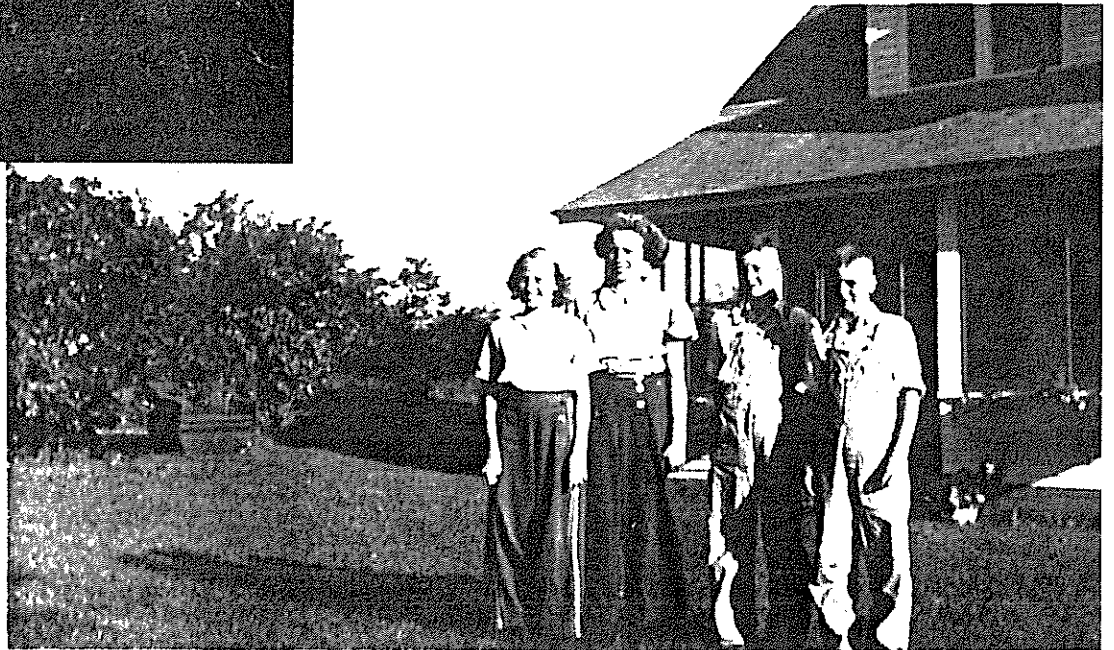




The Monson boys and the Hjelmeland girls meet at the Fredrickson's farm while on summer vacation in Wisconsin

Left: Oday & I, 1937

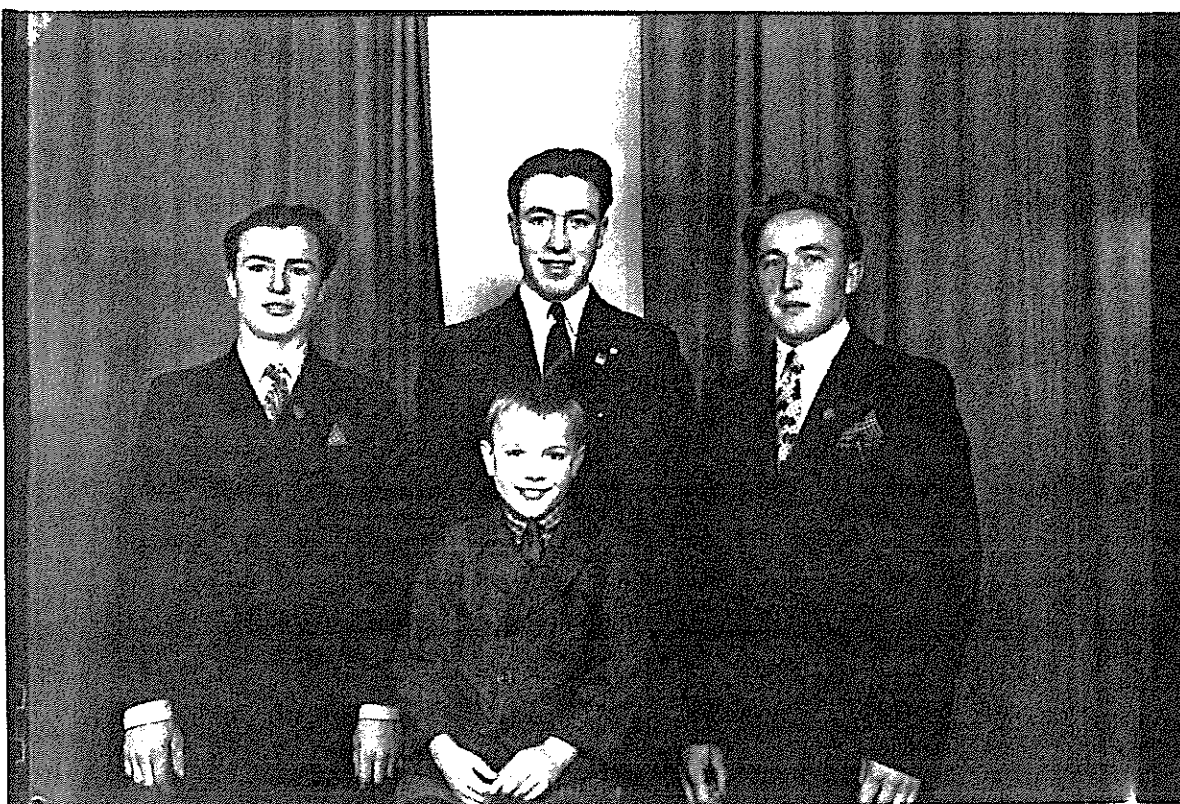
Myself  
Oday  
John  
Gordon





Uncle Mikal's Family

Front row: Gofrid, Marit, Uncle Mikal, Fritz, Lenta  
Maria, Kersten, Björg; Back row: Finn, Andreas,  
Oddbjørn, Gunnar, Signe Below: The four sons





SUNNFJORDLAGET

i AMERICA

46 de  
AARLEGE STEMNE  
SUPERIOR,  
WISCONSIN  
27, 28, og 29  
de JUNI  
1958

SUNNFJORDLAGET

i  
AMERIKA

50  
AARS

JUBILEUM  
BLOOMER  
WISCONSIN

22-23-24 de Juni  
1962

SUNNFJORDLAGET

i AMERIKA

53 de  
AARLEGE STEMNE  
SUPERIOR, WIS.  
2, 3 og 4 Juli  
1965

SUNNFJORDLAGET

i AMERICA

51 de  
AARLEGE STEMNE  
RHINELANDER,  
WISCONSIN  
28, 29, og 30  
de JUNI  
1963

*The Sunnfjordlaget in  
America was <sup>his</sup> an organization  
of people who had immi-  
grated to America from  
Sunnfjord. Mom and  
Dad always looked  
forward to their  
annual gathering  
and attended as  
often as they could.  
It still meets  
each summer  
and is made up  
also of families  
of earlier immigrants.*

SUNNFJORDLAGET

i AMERIKA

47 de  
AARLEGE STEMNE  
BLOOMER,  
WISCONSIN  
19 de - 21 de  
JUNI  
1959

From: Fredrik Olaf Hjelmeland in Waukegan, Illinois  
.To: Fredrik Mikal Hjelmeland on Hjelmeland in Norway

Waukegan, Illinois  
November 21, 1937

Dear Brother and Family

It has been such a long time since I wrote to you that I cannot remember the last letter I sent. I believe two years have since passed.

Now Christmas is soon here and once again all the memories I have from our birthplace and all my folks over there will come to me so clearly. Even if we don't write letters so very often, you are always in our thoughts and we talk about you often that we surely would like to see everyone again. Time flies, one year after the other. We plan many things, but we do not always succeed in accomplishing our plans.

I for my part am not as good to work any more. But I keep the balance as long as I can work with my head. And that is maybe better now than ever before. I have made many mistakes that have cost me a lot, but I have always come out of it nevertheless. Now I am more careful. I am perhaps a little more afraid of taking risks. One gets older you know, then we lose something which is called nerve, isn't that right brother?

I do not have any son that can help me in my business. Maybe you could send one of your boys over here to me. Then I could train him and give him a good start. You have so many of them.\* Yes, brother, I would give much if you and your family could visit us now and then, and we could visit you. But it can still be. If you are not able to come over here, we will, if we live for awhile longer, come and visit you. And I hope it will not be long before we do. I think you would like to see us too.

Last summer we took a trip to Whitehall, Wisconsin again. We take a trip up there every summer. We visit Mrs. Fredrickson at Hixton, Wisconsin on a farm. They all remember you around there. The Fredricksons are very nice people. They like to see us come there every summer. I only stop there for a couple of days, but Kristine and my girls stay there for two or three weeks.

Last summer I could not find Mr. Anderson. He was not at home just at that time. He is still, as far as I know, quite healthy. Mrs. Anderson and Rose Anderson are not so healthy. I think they are quite poorly. Mrs. Anderson is, of course, very old. I believe it is senility. Last summer I didn't meet Marie's brother,\*\* but the summer before last I talked with him. He has a nice farm there. He told me to greet you all so much. It is a little late to send this greeting now.

We normally also take a trip up to Fred Lien and Matt Høgsbå. They still live in Hawkins. Ole and Sam Høgsbå live in Rhineland, Wisconsin.

\*Mikal and his wife Marie had four sons, Gunnar, Andreas, Finn and Fritz.

\*\*Marie, Mikal's wife, had a brother, John Skadah, who settled on a farm outside Pigeon Falls, Wisconsin.

sin. We generally take a trip to visit all of them during our summer holidays. Next summer they plan to have Sunnfjordslag in Rhineland, Wisconsin. We plan to go there, and I am sure we will meet many people from Sunnfjord there.

When we consider everything in general, we have it good here. We have always been healthy. Odny and Ruth are two very nice children. Odny is so big now. She is almost grown up. She has only two months of elementary school left, and then she is going to begin in high school. Ruth has two years left in the elementary school. They are really very good children both of them.

Considering what we would want most, Kristine and I have talked often about taking a trip to Norway again. But you know, brother, it is not so cheap. We are four in the family, so it is not that simple. It is not so easy either when one has a business. It is not easy to find someone who can take care of the business while we are gone. That is really the hardest of all. If I could find someone here who could do my work here, I would take a trip home next summer. But it is so hard to find someone I can trust or rely on. Gudmund is still working for me. He is a very good worker. But it is another thing when it comes to the business. Then it is always up to Fred. I have never had as good a worker as Gudmund. One can always rely on him. All one has to do is tell him in the morning where to go and what is to be done. That is all, and you can always be certain the work will be done and done well also. If he could only take care of the business as well, I would have taken a trip to Norway. But that is one thing he doesn't think he can do.

(Note: There appears to be a page missing here.)

. . . turn against him. There is a dispute here between the government and the big shots. We will see who is going to win out. We have high taxes on every possible thing here now as well, and you know that doesn't help either. One thing is certain though, and that is that there are all too many people unemployed here in this country. They say that we have six to seven million unemployed. I have always had work, so I don't know how it is to be without a job. When we had the most difficult time here in 1932-1933, I worked so much harder to keep things in balance. But many people just gave up and lived off the State. It is no longer any disgrace to go on relief here in this country. Many people like it because they don't have to work any more.

Well, how are you all? Are you still in good health, Mikal? You are perhaps not quite as fit as you were when we were together in this country. Yes, it is a big shame that we cannot come together now and then also. I have made up my mind to come home and visit all of you before long.

Next time you write to me, Mikal, give me the names of all your children. We would like to know them. Your eldest son is going to be confirmed next fall. Odny is going to start in high school after the new year. She is going to be confirmed in the spring.

Well, now we have Christmas again soon. It doesn't seem so long between birthdays any longer. I will be 51 years old on Christmas Day, but I still feel well and keep up about the same as before. But I am glad that I don't have to work for anyone else. They don't want to have you as a worker for them here after you are 45-50 years old.

We are going to have a party here on Christmas Eve. We always have one on Christmas Eve. We have a Christmas tree, and we walk around the tree and sing Norwegian Christmas carols. Yes, Mikal, when do you think we will celebrate Christmas together again?

I hope this letter finds you all well, and I wish with all my heart that you will have a happy Christmas holiday and a blessed New Year. And if you have the time, Mikal, please send me some words. I enjoy hearing from you more than anyone else.

Warmest greetings to you all from us all here.

Yours,

Kristine and Fredrik

I got the money you sent me.

IØ  
SR

From: Petrina Hjelmeland Eide in Brekstad, Trondheim  
To: Fredrik Mikal Hjelmeland, her brother, at home on Hjelmeland

Brekstad  
24 February 1939

Dear Brother and Family!

Happy birthday to you! Sixty years is a long time when we are looking ahead, but it is a rather short time when we think back. I hope you are all in good health. How is your oldest daughter? When is she to leave for Oslo? Don't postpone bringing her to the hospital. What does the doctor say?

Congratulations on your new son! Now you are as many people at Hjelmeland as we were. I think your home is full of life. Years are passing quickly. It seems to be a short time since we came to Ørland, but this summer 22 years will have passed since we arrived here.

How are you? Before long, "Framholdskulen" is finished. Gunnar has attended. Thank you for your Christmas letter. It was very nice. This letter will be short. It happened that we got visitors just when I was going to write. Then I had to put it off. But today I have to send your present for your 60 years birthday.

Thank you very much Marie and Mikal for your hospitality when we have visited you on our summer holidays. God bless you all! To whom are we to go with our worries and joy? To Jesus Christ, the living Son of God who can help us in our troubles.

Andreas gives his greetings to you. The boys are at school. They were both fine when we heard from them this week. We are grateful.

Andreas and I are sending you, Mikal, and your family, a nice Bible. I know you like to read that book. God's Word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.\*

Kind regards from Andreas and

Your Sister,

Petrina

You must greet everyone at home from us.

\*Note: Psalm 119:105

LJ

From: Kristine Hjelmeland in Waukegan, Illinois  
To: Fredrik Mikal Hjelmeland, her brother-in-law, at Hjelmeland in Norway

Waukegan, Illinois  
December 3, 1939

Dear Mikal,

Yes, it is a long time since we have heard from Hjelmeland. We hope everything is well. Heard the Fredricksons talked about your having a guest from America. It appears she went home again just in time. Yah, the world is in an uproar now. I am hoping and praying that Norway can stay on the outside and not get involved.

Now Andersen is also dead. You no doubt have heard that Mrs. Andersen and their daughter Rose died last spring. I saw Andersen this summer. He was very poorly then but got up and had coffee with us. We talked about you, Mikal, and he asked me to give you his best greetings. Now it is one year since I last saw Rose, and she also asked about you. Yes, now their house is deserted. That is life. We think we are taken up with so much and are so very busy, but when we are gone, the world goes on without us. I am glad that I found Jesus when I was still young. He has been with me all these years. I hope and pray that Fred also will find Him soon.

Odny and Ruth are good girls. Today Ruth sang a solo in church and Odny played the piano for her. Ruth has a very good singing voice and Odny plays well. She is also president for a club. Ruth goes to confirmation class. Confirmation will be next Palm Sunday. In January she will be finishing grade school and will then begin high school. Odny has been in high school two years and has two left.

We now live in our new house close to our shop. We rent out part of the other house but use two rooms for the business.

I wish you could come for Christmas. Fred would be so happy to talk to you, Mikal. He becomes tired and worn, but when he feels good he says he is the youngest in the family!

Gudmund is healthy and is always working. We have had one of Sina Yndestad's sons visiting us. He stayed for two weeks. He then went up to Whitehall to visit some friends who live there. Marie, I saw your brother and his family last summer. They were all well; the children have gotten big and are very nice.

Yah, now Fred has started another letter to you so I can stop. Live well all of you and have a blessed Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Warmest greetings from us all,

Kristine

AB

From: Kristine Kristiansen Hjelmeland, my mother, in Waukegan, Illinois  
To: Anna Kristiansen, her brother Karl's daughter, in Førde,  
Sunnfjord; Norway  
Note: Mother has now been in America 15 years.

Waukegan 21 January 1940

Dear Anna!

A thousand thanks for the letter I received from you. You can be sure I was happy to receive it. It was the first Christmas Eve we celebrated here without hearing from Norway. But, then your letter came two days after. I must first wish you a Good New Year. I hope all is well at home with all of you. It doesn't look so bright as far as the war is concerned. Did Alf come home for Christmas? I think so much of everyone now. Anna, will you promise me to write as soon as possible when you receive this letter. We must try to write more often than we have done before.

I see you are still going to school, and that is good. Yes, Anna, I'm sure that was a great job you had last summer. I have always liked to work with flowers, but this past summer, I could not bend down so much as to plant a flower so it wasn't fun. But I bought many new flowers for around our new house so we did have fresh flowers up until Christmas. The weather was so nice. In the front of our house I have two Norwegian spruce trees and four others. I do hope they survive the cold weather we have had now for a time.

Yah, now on Friday Ruth is finished with grade school. They are having a program and the parents and brothers and sisters are coming to listen. Ruth sings with three other girls and will play the piano with one who will play the violin. They are also presenting a short play on some of America's important men.

Next Monday Ruth will begin High School, and she must be at the school at 8:00 in the morning, so it will be a little different from now on. She use to get up by that time and has helped me to make up all the beds and other small chores so I will miss that.

Today there has been a Norwegian ski tournament not so far from here. Fred and the children were thinking of going, but it was a bit too cold. They must stand still for three hours in the snow. Ruth and Fred were there last year. Ruth would like very much to be there again this year.

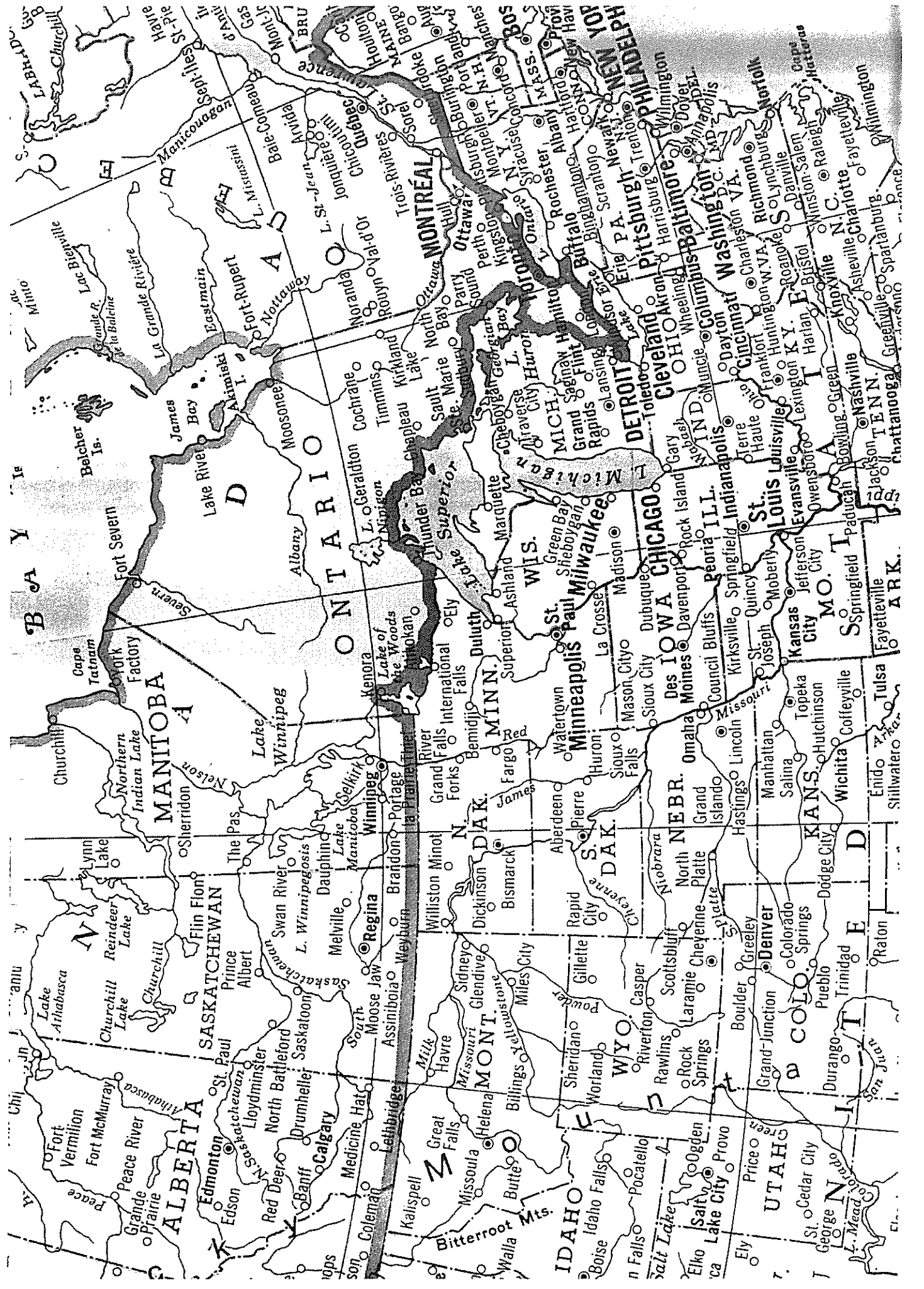
Odney and Ruth are out racing on their skates. It is in a park just a small distance from here. They flood an area with water and take care of the ice and shovel the snow off. They turn out the lights at 10:00. I wish you could be here to go skating with them. They say Ruth is one of the best.

Yes, Anna, I am sending a few pictures we have taken. Greet Alf and your Papa (Karl, mother's brother), and Marie. Greet Olaf's family and ask if they have sent me a letter for Christmas. I did not hear from anyone at Bergum or from Alfred either.

Live well Anna.

Your aunt Kristine

Mvsself!



LABRADOR  
St. John's  
Sept. Isles  
St. Pierre  
Miramichi  
Becher Is.  
James Bay

MANITOBA  
Fort Severn  
Lake River  
Akimiski  
Moose Lake  
James Bay

ONTARIO  
Albany  
Winnipeg  
L. Superior  
Thunder Bay  
Sault Ste. Marie  
L. Huron  
L. Erie

QUEBEC  
Montreal  
Trenton  
Pittsburgh  
Columbus  
Washington  
Richmond  
Danville

INDIANA  
Indianapolis  
Cincinnati  
Columbus  
Dayton  
Cincinnati  
Cincinnati

ALBERTA  
Fort Vermilion  
Fort McMurray  
Peace River  
Edmonton  
St. Paul

SASKATCHEWAN  
Saskatoon  
North Battleford  
Banff  
Calgary  
Medicine Hat

MINN.  
St. Paul  
Duluth  
Superior  
Marquette  
Green Bay  
Sheboygan  
Milwaukee

WIS.  
Madison  
St. Louis  
Evansville  
Owensboro  
Lexington  
Paducah

MO. ILL.  
Springfield  
St. Louis  
Evansville  
Owensboro  
Lexington

IDAHO  
Boise  
Idaho Falls  
Pocatello  
Salt Lake  
Ogden  
Provo

UTAH  
Salt Lake  
Ogden  
Provo  
Price  
Cedar City

WYO.  
Cheyenne  
Laramie  
Rock Springs  
Rawlins  
Casper  
Riverton

NEBR.  
Omaha  
Lincoln  
Hastings  
Grand Island  
North Platte

KANS.  
Kansas City  
Topeka  
Hutchinson  
Wichita  
Coffeyville

ARK.  
Fayetteville  
Springfield  
Paducah  
Bowling Green  
Nashville

MISS.  
Memphis  
Jackson  
Tenn.  
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Bowling Green

IND.  
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Hamilton  
London

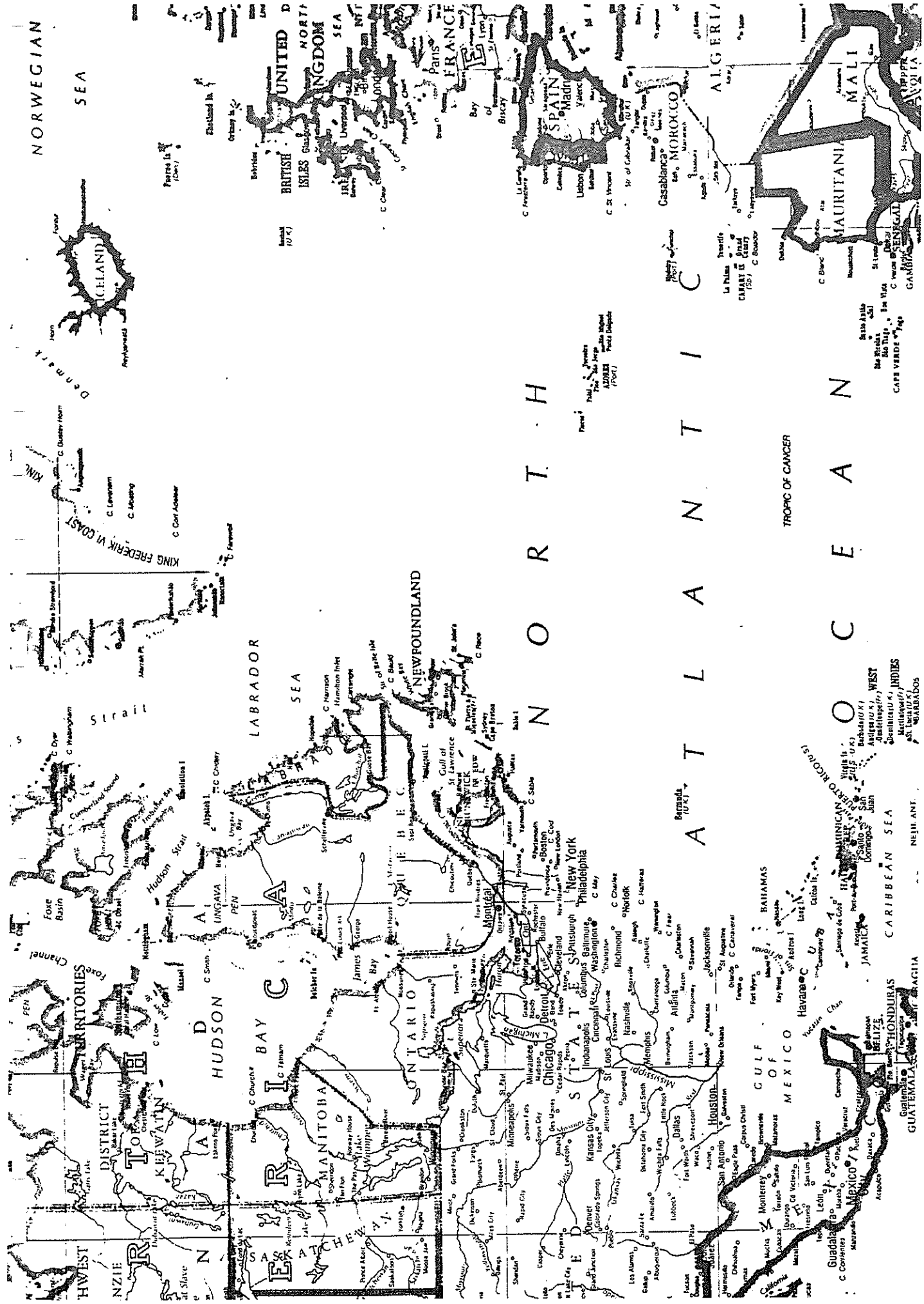
QUEBEC  
Montreal  
Quebec  
Trois-Rivières  
Shawinigan  
Saguenay

NEW YORK  
New York  
Buffalo  
Rochester  
Syracuse  
Albany

PENNSYLVANIA  
Philadelphia  
Pittsburgh  
Harrisburg  
Allentown  
Scranton

DELAWARE  
Wilmington  
Dover  
New Castle  
Georgetown





N O R T H

A T L A N T I C

O C E A N

TROPIC OF CANCER

NEPT. ANT.



# Edrik Hjelmeland.

					Marna	Ellen Tostens dtr.	Harold Olson Espeland	Ola	Ola	
	Hans Marthe Johanna f. 1716 z. 1718	John		Sigrid Monsen Espeland	Ole	Martha Ole Ole dtr Olson	Bornie		Ole	
Wife Harold	John J. Fylling 1777	Sydney J. N. Bell	Daniel P. Bell?	Eli Espeland	Ole dtr.	Mads Hjelmeland		Enke Martha Ole dater	John	via Hols
Wife	Lis Johansd. Fylling 1803	Simon Dannilsen Bell Sergeant Sheriff		1. Gunn M. 2. Oline M.	Hjelmeland	" "	Fredrik J. Njøs			
Wife	Simon's	Partig		Michael Fredriksen	Hjelmeland					1 half brother to Regis grandfather
	Günder Michaelson Hjelmeland Fredrik (brother) Ruddy named after him (his uncle)									
Hjelmeland										

C. H.  
8-7-1945

## Petrine Eide til minne



Petrine Eide er gått bort, ti dagar før 100-årsdagen hennar 7. april. Ho var dotter til Olina og Gunnar Hjelmeland frå Hjelmeland i Bygstad, og var enke etter meieriskulestyrar Andreas L. Eide, som også var frå Bygstad. Dei fekk tre søner. Ein av dei døydde ung, medan dei to andre bur og arbeider på Brekstad og i Mo i Rana.

Petrine har helle livet vore bunden til heimbygda med sterke band og fortalde med glede om barndoms- og ungdomstida si i heimbygda. Det er lenge sidan! For ho minntest då faren kom heim med den første komfyren i bygda. Det var eit svært framsteg den gongen for kvinnfolka på garden. Alt matstellet vart mykje lettare enn før då dei kokte i grua. Som ungjente steite ho på Hjelmelandsstølen, og det arbeidet likte ho.

Ho var den siste av ein syskenflokk på åtte, og fem av dei vart buande i heimbygda. Så lenge syskena enno levde, besøkte ho heimbygda nesten kvar einaste sommar. Ho ville sjå att den vakre bygda si med Storehesten og dei grøne llene og treffe igjen syaken, slekt og ungdomsvener.

Storparten av sitt vaktane liv har Petrine Eide budd på Brekstad i Sør-Trøndelag. Likevel så snakka ho rein sunnfjording. Ho har hatt god helse og steite sjølv den vakre heimen sin til ho var over 99 år, men siste året tok kreftene til å svikte. Ho har vore ein trufast medlem av Santalmisjonen og Kvite Band.

Gravferda går frå Ørland kyrkje i dag. L.E.

## OBITUARY

### IN MEMORY OF PETRINE EIDE

Petrine Eide has passed away, just ten days before her 100th birthday, the 7th of April. She was the daughter of Olina and Gunnar Hjelmeland from Hjelmeland at Bygstad. She was Andreas L. Eide's widow. He, too, came from Bygstad, and he worked in dairy farming. They had three sons; one of them died quite young. The other two live at Brekstad and in Mo i Rana.

Petrine has throughout her lifetime kept a close contact with the place where she was born, and she enjoyed telling about her childhood. Quite a long time has passed, she recalled, when her father brought home their first stove. At that time this was a great improvement for the womenfolk at the farm. Earlier, they had to do the cooking on the hearth; now it was much easier to do. When she was young, she was a dairy maid at the Hjelmeland mountain farm, and she enjoyed it.

She was the last one of eight brothers and sisters. Five of them lived in their home area. When her brothers and sisters were alive, she used to visit Hjelmeland almost every summer. She wanted to see her birthplace, "Storehesten" (Big Horse) and the green valleys, and she loved to meet her sisters and brothers, relatives and friends.

Most of her adult life Petrine has lived at Brekstad in Sør Trøndelag. Still, she spoke Sunnfjord dialect. She has been in good health and lived in her nice home until she had passed 99 years. But last year she got weak and sickly. She has been a faithful member of Santalmismission and Kvite Band.

The funeral is to be held at the Ørland church today.

3-4 (?) April 1984



