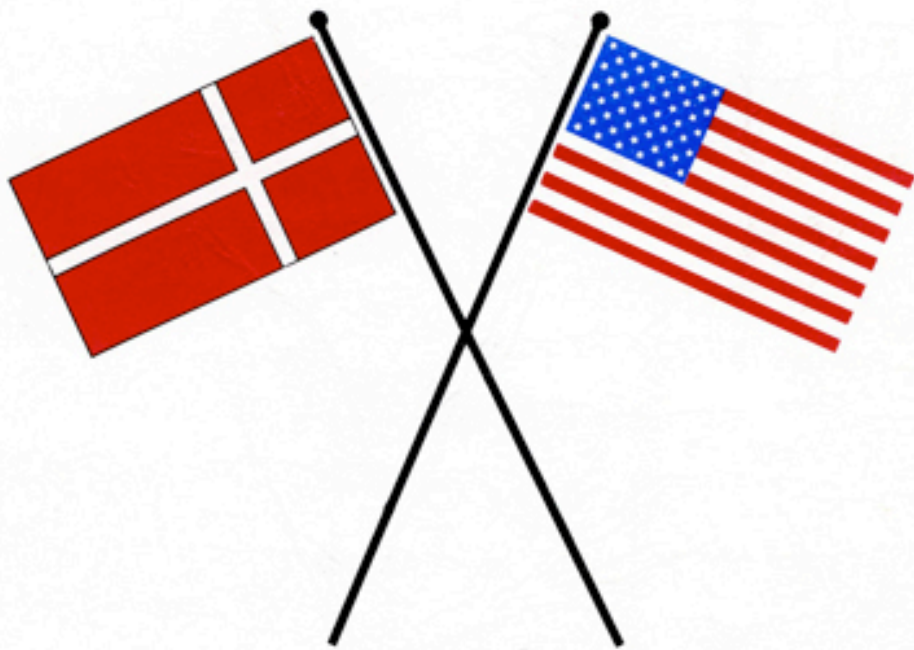


*A
Pioneer Family*



Legacy



Forward by Dennis Andersen, son of Esther Andersen and grandson of
Christine (Jorgensen) Thuesen.

November 2011

This Jorgensen family history is largely excerpted from “A Pioneer Family Legacy” written by Mother based on years of work of assembling photos and information about the lives of her parent’s descendants and her family in the United States. She published and distributed it to most of our relatives.

I plan to distribute this to all interested via my website. I welcome family history stories and photos from others, particularly descendants of my grandmother’s sister, Johanne Johnson, who immigrated to America shortly after my grandmother and lived in the same community. I will add them to this family history as appropriate.



Esther shown with the
likeness she most treasured of
her mother.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

This story is my tribute to our sturdy pioneer families who left us a rich heritage of a strong Christian faith.

I regret I neglected to do this earlier in my life when sister Dora would have been a great help in the process of weaving together the history of our roots.

I am grateful to my family for their support and encouragement and to my brother, George, who at the age of ninety-six years has a sharp memory and recalls dates and happenings of the past. A special thanks to Carol for her labor in the typing of my written pages.

At the age of eighty years, I have tried my best to compile facts and memories of the past. My wish is that each family will continue with its own family history.

It has been a joyful and fascinating task “Going down Memory Lane”

Esther E. Andersen

FOREWORD

Weaving a story of our “Roots” is with gratitude to our forefathers. It is a slow but very fascinating process of piecing together facts and actual occurrence when much time has elapsed between the happening and the writing.

The sturdy pioneers immigrated to America with a strong faith in God to serve and to build. The Danes’ prime motives to leave their homeland were poor economic conditions and the war with the German States of Prussia and Austria in 1864. This resulted in Danish monarchical provinces Schleswig and Holstein becoming German territory. Danes in these provinces felt the heavy hand of oppression after 1864, and more and more turned to emigration as a way of escape. Our parents chose America but Mother’s brother, Peter, immigrated to Australia. He laid foundations there.

Regardless of where they settled, the pioneer farmers endured much with hard work and backbreaking chores. It was no easier for the farmer’s wife with many duties, little convenience and a large family to raise. They were aged before their time.

In the early years only a meager supply of medical supplies and treatment were available for the country doctor, and death saddened many homes.

After the turn of the century change came and work was lightened with the invention of large farm machinery and rural electrification. Gone are the large work horses, the spirited driving horses, the country store, the mud roads, the one-room school houses, the privies; also gone but not forgotten is the neighborhood threshing ring that ended each year with a fun picnic.

Families are smaller, and farms are larger with changes that came through the years.

Esther writes about her parents:

Our mother, Christine Jorgensen, was born February 19, 1859 at Harbogaard pr Lojt Kirkeby near Aabenraa, Denmark. She was baptized and confirmed in Lojt Kirkeby Lutheran Church. She immigrated to America in May, 1884. She crossed the Atlantic Ocean by ship together with Katherine Maag and Jes Jepsen. They came to Cedar Falls, Iowa where many Danish emigrants lived. That same year, October 31, she was united in marriage to Erik J. Thuesen in Cedar Falls, Iowa. They built their home on the farm near Fredsville where they lovingly raised their large family and took an active part in the work of the church and community.

A few years after their marriage, mother's sister, Johanne, arrived from Denmark. She found work in the area and then married Ole Jensen Johnson. They lived on a farm one and a half miles north of Fredsville. It was a great consolation for the two sisters to live so close to each other as they never saw their family and homeland in Denmark again.



Johanne and Christine

They both raised a large family and had a warm fellowship together as they shared their joys and sorrows. Both families had two sons that served in World War I.

Through the years, mother kept up her correspondence with her family in Denmark and with her brother, Peter, who at the age of sixteen immigrated to Australia. He laid a foundation there.

Mother was a great story teller and many evenings after a long day's work she would sit in her easy chair knitting, mending or braiding rags for rugs. I would sit close beside her and listen to her many tales and Hans Christian Andersen's fairytales fascinated me.

Mother loved flowers and she had many house plants near the large bay window in the living room and she always had some to share. Whenever there was illness in the neighborhood, she would bring them a kettle of soup and when a baby was born she would cook a broth for the mother and bring bars of sweet chocolate for making hot chocolate drinks. It was a tradition to serve hot chocolate for birth and other celebrations. I remember father's birthday parties when relatives and neighbors were invited for the evening - Dora baked cookies and cake and Mother made Danish kringle and coffeecake. A large kettle of milk was put on the cook stove and melted bars of chocolate were added for the special drink and, of course, coffee.

Those birthday parties went on in the neighborhood when we went to Uncle Ole's and Chris Krog's. The young people would dance in the basement and we kids liked to slide on the waxed wooden floors between dances.

During World War I, our pastor, Jens Holst, made a trip to Denmark to visit relatives. He promised mother and Aunt Johanne, he would visit their aged mother and family. It was through the Red Cross he had this privilege. When he returned, he came to visit in our home and brought a greeting from the homeland. Mother was very grateful to hear from her loved ones and that her mother was living and well. Letters from Denmark were not received during the war and they could not receive her letters either. Father and Mother planned to make the trip to Denmark after the war but that was not to be. Mother passed on to her eternal reward soon after the war ended. At that time I made a vow that if ever possible, I would make that trip.

Mother had become very ill and we were grateful that our brothers, George and Harry, had returned home from the service. Mother was ill only a few days when our doctor informed us she had gallstones and together with another doctor, they decided to operate. Dora was called home from Des Moines where she was working and Jens from South Dakota where he was farming. At that time there was no hospital and the surgery took place at home on the dining room table. A nurse sterilized the surgical instruments in boiling water heated on the kitchen stove. Because mother's heart was not strong she endured almost two hours of surgery without anesthetics; only local freezing. Needless to say, they were anguished hours. A large stone was removed but to no avail and she gradually grew weaker. Dora arrived and Pastor Holst and Aunt Johanne came. We all gathered at Mother's bedside, except Jens who came later. Her last words to her children were "Be kind". In the wee hours of the morning, November 14, 1919 at the age of sixty years she was called to her eternal home. Dahl funeral home was in charge and they drove a horse-drawn hearse. At that time the casket and body were kept at home until service time and there was a night watch.



Christine Jorgensen Thuesen

The funeral services were conducted by Pastor Holst at home and at Fredsville church. Many came to pay their last respects and many beautiful floral arrangements were given. Mother's good friend, Anna Rodholm, braided a garland of arbutus and placed it around the edge of the open grave. After the service I remember cousin Holger Thuesen saying, "I don't like bragging at funerals, but the words spoken by Pastor Holst about her were true".

Mother was known as a conscientious warm-hearted person always willing to do her part and more. This was a very sad time for all of us and especially for father.

Mother left a void that could never be filled but she left us a rich heritage of a strong Christian faith.

Esther writes about her family siblings:



Our parents, Erik and Christine Jorgensen were married October 31, 1884 at Cedar Falls, Iowa. They lived on their farm near Fredsville all of their married life. To this union, 13 children were born. Jens was the first born; then Johanne, who lived one year and three months. She died a tragic death when she accidentally fell into a tub of water on wash day. This was a very sad time for our parents. A poem of five verses was written and placed inside of a wreath of silk flowers and framed. This commemoration to Johanne now hangs in our family room, well preserved.

George was born two months before Johanne's death. Then Johannes was born and he lived only five months. A year and a half later Theodore was born. Then came the unexpected surprise - triplets were born. Father had to make a fast trip on horseback to the Field farm, now the Marshal Uhl farm, eight miles away to telephone for a doctor.

Generally the midwife (Anna Syndergaard) took care of birth but three were unheard of in this area. Anna came, also Aunt Johanne. I remember Aunty telling me many years later that she went upstairs to hunt for more clothes as mother was prepared for only one baby.

The triplets did not live long. Dorothea lived about three months; Johannes lived two weeks and two days; and Knud lived three weeks. There were three memorial wreaths of silk flowers with verses for each child.



Erik and Christine Thuesen
Jens, George and Theodore

Two years later Harry was born; then Dora with long dark hair; and then Agnes with dark, curly hair.

She was our special sister. Albert came next and was the youngest son.

Last to be born was Esther, the baby of the family. I'm sure I was spoiled.

Father and Mother (Far and Mor as we always called them) were God-fearing people. They were baptized and confirmed in their native land. They kept their faith through the years and we are grateful to them for our rich Christian heritage. Because church was important to them, on Sunday mornings we would all be in church.

In the early years people came to church in surreys, spring wagons or bob-sleigh and the horses were tied in the long shed near the church. Some people walked miles in the summertime as they thought their work horses needed rest on Sunday.

Mother believed in taking little children to church because she thought they learned respect seeing people worship. Our parents worked diligently to make a good living for their large family. They loved to till the soil - father with the field work and mother with her garden and flowers. Father had selected an ideal spot in Iowa as soil in Grundy County is very rich, and we hope it will be preserved for future generations. It is into their hands that the legacies of this land are entrusted.

In 1902 a new ten-room house was built. I remember Ted saying that Mother kept working in the old house because they moved it only a few yards north. She was always busy cooking meals for the large family, including the carpenters while they built the house. Ted told how he would sit in the shade of a tree peeling potatoes while watching the carpenters work. It must have been a joyful day moving into this spacious new home. I wasn't in on that as I was born a year later.

Jens Jessen Thuesen



Jens and Anna Thuesen

Jens was born August 10, 1885 and was baptized by Rev. Mylund and confirmed by Rev. Adam Dan. He grew up on the farm where there was plenty of work for a young lad and he learned at an early age to do farm chores and field work. He attended the Fredsville one-room school through the eighth grade I don't know very much about those early years except what Father and Mother told me, as Jens was eighteen years old when I was born. With Jens and his two younger brothers, George and Ted, Father had a lot of help

and so felt he needed more land to farm. He bought a farm near Madison, South Dakota, where Jens started farming in 1909. Brother George went to help him during the harvest season and the following year George joined Jens on the Dakota farm.

Meanwhile, Father bought a farm near Dike called City View Stock Farm and Jens then farmed there. On March 21, 1912 Jens was united in marriage to Anna Juhl at Fredsville Church. The reception was held in the Chris Juhl home near Dike. They had four children; Alma, Blanche and the twins, George and Gordon. When Alma was born, I became a proud aunt at the age of ten years.

After some years they left the Dike farm and moved to the South Dakota farm and later moved back to the Dike Farm. Father then traded the Dike farm for the large Slifsgaard farm at Fredsville, and Jens and family moved there. The old buildings were in bad shape. George did the carpenter work of repairing and remodeling. Jens and Anna worked hard through the depression years.

In June, 1936, Jens became ill with the dreaded disease, spinal meningitis. He passed away June 27 at a Waterloo hospital at the age of forty-six years. Funeral services were held at the home and at Fredsville Lutheran Church with Pastor C. Stockholm officiating. Burial was in the Fredsville cemetery.

Anna was a widow for many years. After raising her family, she moved to Cedar Falls. She was a caring person and had many close friends. She was a great cook and we enjoyed many delicious meals at her home as well as lovely coffee parties. I remember the Bon Voyage dinner party she had for Harold and I when we left on that long trip to Australia. Anna's hobby was embroidering, knitting and crocheting, and many of us have some of her beautiful work.



Jens and Anna's children
Clockwise: George, Alma,
Gordon, Blanch

Anna's daughter, Blanche, and her twin sons preceded her in death. Anna lived her last year at the Cedar Falls Lutheran Home. She passed away January 28, 1971 at the age of seventy-seven years. Funeral services were held at Fredsville Lutheran Church with burial in the family plot.

The twins both served in WWII. George was killed in action December 15, 1944 in France and his grave is in U.S. Cemetery Luxemburg, Europe. Gordon passed away in Cedar Falls July 12, 1957 with burial in Fredsville cemetery. Blanche and Harold lived in Dike for many years. Harold preceded her in death in 1967 and Blanche entered into eternal rest April 21, 1970 with burial beside her husband in the Fredsville cemetery.

Alma, the oldest and Walter made their home in Chicago, Illinois. Alma entered into eternal rest

December 29, 1978 with burial in Irving Park Cemetery, Chicago.

George Jessen Thuesen



George was born July 14, 1887 and grew up on the family Farm when Fredsville was a thriving village. He attended the one room Fredsville school through eighth grade. He went to confirmation instruction at Fredsville Church and was confirmed by Rev. S. D. Rodholm.

George recalls the hard work of the pioneer farmers with primitive equipment and tools. The chores started before sunrise and sometimes after sunset. At an early age he learned to milk cows, manage horses and drive' a walking plow. Many young lads missed school at times when needed for farm work.

In 1909 he went to Madison, South Dakota to help his brother Jens during the harvest on Father's farm that Jens rented. The following year he farmed together with Jens and later they both returned to the home farm.

Jens married and George took up carpentry which became his life's work. He learned the trade while working for Hans Clausen, a carpenter from Denmark. George later became self-employed and as a skilled carpenter he found plenty of work.

George served in the Army during WW I. He left home for Camp Dodge, Des Moines, Iowa and from there to Camp Cody, New Mexico. He trained in the Engineering Corps Division.

George later was sent to Europe and this was during the influenza epidemic. On the ship en route to Europe many soldiers were ill and many died of the disease. George helped with the care of the sick. He was stationed in France and served there until the end of the war.

George has a large framed picture taken while he was stationed at Camp Cody of the 34-109 Engineering Corp Division. This is an outstanding picture and it hangs on a wall in his room at the Cedar Falls Lutheran Home. George's plans are for this picture to be donated to the Grundy County Historical Museum at Morrison, Iowa.

In 1936, George and his sister, Agnes, moved to Cedar Falls where he lived and worked for thirty-eight years. He enjoyed working with the soil and as a hobby he cared for a fine vegetable garden and flowers. George and Agnes would drive to Fredsville every Sunday to attend church.

When Agnes, became frail she moved to the Cedar Falls Lutheran Home. After her death in 1974, George also moved to the Lutheran Home. There he has for years enjoyed his



carpenter skills in many ways. He has repaired furniture, built benches, a cupboard, a flower rack and many small items for the Activities Department. He is the senior usher at the Lutheran Home Chapel.

George celebrated his 95th birthday Sunday, July 19, 1982 with an open house in the Lutheran Home dining room sponsored by his family. Entertainment was a short program and a sing along. Lunch was served to about two hundred guests who came to wish him well. The serving table was centered with a large arrangement

of red roses and baby breath flanked by a Danish kransekage and birthday cake, cookies and mints. Relatives came from Minneapolis, Ringsted and Des Moines.

George has enjoyed many years of good health and is alert and active. He is a friend to everyone and helps out wherever he can. Time has elapsed since I finished writing the family history and before this reached the printer. Our brother George has passed on to his eternal home. He died January 23, 1985 at the Cedar Falls hospital after a short illness caused by a blood clot. He attained the age of ninety-seven years, six months and seven days. Memorial service was held at the Lutheran Home Chapel, January 25 at 10:45 a.m., conducted by Chaplain Oscar Johnson who chose Psalm 48 for meditation. Funeral services were held at Fredsville the same day at 1:30 p.m. Pastor Don Benson officiated and chose Psalms 34 and 71 and Romans 8 for his comforting message. The congregation sang two hymns "Beautiful Savior" and "Abide with Me". Internment was in the Fredsville cemetery family plot.



George in his home in Cedar Falls

It was hard to part with the last of my brothers and sisters but we have good memories. George meant so much to all of us and was an inspiration to many. We are grateful for the many good years given to George and for the fact that his body and mind remained sound until the end. The Cedar Falls American Legion presented me with a large American flag in memory of George. We will donate this flag to the Lutheran Home where he lived for almost ten years.

George served his country and community well. He was unassuming with deeds well done. He was not a man of many words but he had wisdom and left a legacy.

A Tribute to George

I quote a verse from Emerson I memorized in grade school:

So nigh is grandeur to our dust;
So near is God to man;
When duty whispers, "Lo, thou must!"
The youth replies, "I can!"

Theodore Johannes Thuesen



Theodore was born September 9, 1890 and baptized at Fredsville Lutheran Church by Rev. R. Thomsen. He was t confirmed in 1906 by Rev. P. Godke.

Ted, as we called him, grew up on the farm and learned early to share the hard farm work. He attended Fredsville school through eighth grade and sometimes had to miss school a day or two during the busy seasons on the farm. He had fun watching all the activities in the little village on his way to school. The general store was close to the road and

it must have been enticing to think of all the goodies inside.

I remember we had a frisky pony named Topsy and Mother would have Ted ride to the Fredsville store to buy cookies when unexpected guests arrived. We children thought it was a treat to have fancy store cookies.

In the summer of 1919 Ted went to South Dakota to help brother Jens during harvest. Jens and Anna were farming there at that time. Their twins, George and Gordon, were babies. When Anna weaned the twins they protested with much crying.



Theodore and
Christine Thuesen

I remember Ted telling us that he helped walk the floor with one or the other until they went to sleep.

From Dakota, Ted went to Dagmar, Montana to our cousins Peter and Ida Thuesen. While there he helped Peter haul coal home for fuel from the coal mine some distance from Dagmar. The family also used buffalo chips for fuel. After a short time there, Ted went to Salt Lake City and toured that area, then home to the farm.

Ted farmed together with Harry and they were good farmers. I remember corn picking time when they were up long before daylight to do the chores. After breakfast they hitched a team of horses to their lumber wagons with high sideboards and then off to the corn field at sunrise. I remember hearing the rumble of the two wagons as they drove hastily down the rough frozen roads. At noon they were back home with the big loads and then they had to shovel the corn into the crib by hand before they had dinner.

They picked corn again in the afternoon, and at night they had to unload by the light of the lantern. Some years later they bought a horse-drawn picker and then I no longer had to mend their husking mittens.

They also had dairy cows, hogs, and fed steers. When the steers were ready for market they would ship them to Chicago. Ted made several trips to Chicago together with cousin Jens Thuesen to see the steers sold. They would stay with the Peter Jensen family, relatives of Jens.

The Jensen's had two daughters, Christine and Marie. This was interesting for Ted, a young unmarried man. When Christine came to Fredsville to visit Jens and Julia, we knew there was a romance going on.

Ted wanted a farm of his own and in 1924 he bought 106 acres from Father. On this land there originally had been a small homestead that had been demolished years ago. This was on the south side of the highway and Ted chose this site to build his home. Hans Hansen and a crew of carpenters including brother George built the beautiful house, and Ted and George built the farm buildings.

Ted found his true love and on October 6, 1926, he was united in marriage to Christine Jensen in Chicago. Brother Jens and I were privileged to make the trip to the city and be present at their lovely church wedding and the reception in the Jensen home.

After a short honeymoon, Ted brought his bride to their new home on the farm. Christine had worked for the Wrigley Company in Chicago for ten years and it must have been a challenge for her to leave the city and come to the country home on the farm. She adjusted quickly and well.

To their union three children were born - Theodore, Jr., Neal and Carol. They farmed during the great depression years of



Theodore Jr., Carol and
Neal Thuesen

the thirties and also the good years.

They were diligent members of our church and faithfully attended services each Sunday. Christine loved to teach Sunday School and taught for many years. Their sons served in the Korean war. Theodore served in the Army and Neal in the Navy. Theodore, Jr. was ordained pastor in 1956 and Carol earned an elementary teacher degree.

In 1961 Neal and Jeanne moved onto the farm and Ted and Christine moved to their beautiful new home they built in Dike. They enjoyed beautiful flowers and they continued to grow them at their town home. Ted and Christine were highly respected in the community and had many close friends. It was a pleasure to visit in their home where there was a warm welcome to relatives and friends.

After fifteen good years of retirement, at the age of eighty-five years, Ted became ill and was taken to Sartori Hospital in Cedar Falls. On the fifth day he entered into eternal rest on March 26, 1976. Funeral services were held at Fredsville Lutheran Church with Pastor J. Sibert officiating. Burial was in the Fredsville Cemetery.

Christine continued to live in their home until she moved to the Cedar Falls Lutheran Home in April, 1980. Christine entered into eternal rest October 28, 1984. Funeral services were held at the Fredsville Lutheran church. Rev. Oscar Johnson, chaplain of the Lutheran Home officiated. Burial was in the Fredsville cemetery.

Harry Erik Thuesen



Harry, born November 12, 1893 was baptized by Rev. R. Thomsen and confirmed by Rev. S. D. Rodholm. He too, learned fairly early to do farm work. He attended Fredsville country school, Fairfield No. 9.

Mother had many lunches to make each school day, packed in a tin pail. Home cured dried beef, brown sugar, jelly or cooked eggs were the usual sandwich spread. The boys had a good time going through Fredsville village with all the activities. After school they would stop at the store and get the mail at the post office located in the store. Sometimes one of the Slifgaard's would treat them to candy.

In the winter they had fun at school with their toboggans coasting down Fredsville hill during the noon hour and recess. In the summer they had ball games.

Ted and Harry joined the Fredsville band – Ted played the snare drum and Harry the slide trombone. This band was quite popular and played for the harvest festival and for community entertainment.

Harry enjoyed farm work and all the activities. He was an expert corn husker and he would average one hundred bushels per day. When they finished at home he would pick corn for others. It must have seemed like music when each ear of corn hit the bangboard on the high side of the wagon. These were the years before the mechanical corn pickers were in use.

At the time of WW I and George had left for the service, Harry felt it his patriotic duty to serve his country and enlisted in the Air Force which was in its infancy. This tells a little of his adventurous and lively spirit. We had a farewell party in our home for Harry and Albert Knudsen shortly before they left. Father took them in a sleigh to Grundy Center in -20F° temperature February 20, 1918, to leave for the service. There he made some lifelong friends. He hoped to go overseas but never did. He was stationed in Texas; Florida; St. Paul, Minnesota; and Rockwell Field, San Diego, California. He was honorably discharged in the spring of 1919. It had been a good experience.

Harry returned to farming in partnership with his brother, Ted. After taking a short mechanic's course in Austin, Minnesota in 1920, he decided farming should be his way of life.



Harry and Mabel Thuesen

While in the service, Harry corresponded with a neighbor girl, Mabel Syndergaard. The friendship continued and later a diamond shone on Mabel's left hand. They were married August 21, 1923, at Fredsville Church with the reception in the Syndergaard home. Their honeymoon took them on a camping trip to Colorado.

They rented the 120 acre Ruthenberg farm three-quarters of a mile north of Fredsville. In 1925 they bought it. It took a lot of hard work to build or repair buildings as well as work the soil; however, he enjoyed each and every day of it. Harry was a good farmer and liked to till the soil and care for his livestock, and took pride in keeping the farmstead in good condition. Eventually Harry and Mabel built a beautiful new house and in

their home the welcome mat was always out to relatives and friends. We have enjoyed many good times together in their home through the years.

Harry was a zealous worker in the church and community and the little white church in Fredsville was his first love. Here he was baptized, confirmed and a life-long member for seventy-five years. Although Harry loved the old white church, he saw the need for change and worked diligently to promote the building of the new church. Mabel, too, was active in community and church work. She was organist in our church for many years and at one time was Sunday School superintendent. She taught school for several years at Dike school before marriage.



Harry, Paul, Harlan and Mabel Thuesen

Their two sons served in the Korean war. Harlan served in the Navy and Paul in the Navy Reserves.

In 1962 Harry and Mabel moved to their new home in Dike and Harlan and Joan now own and live on their home place. Harry continued to help with field work on the farm until he had a heart condition and passed away on January 17, 1969.

His funeral service was held at Fredsville Church with Pastor J. Sibert officiating; with congregation singing "What a friend we have in Jesus" and "Our Father has a light in his window," burial was in Fredsville cemetery. Mabel, now a widow of many years, is surrounded with friends and relatives. She keeps busy with sewing and Danish embroidery and is active in church and community.

Dora Johanne Thuesen



Dora was born May 2, 1895 with large blue eyes and dark hair. Our parents must have been delighted to have a daughter as now ` ` there would be a girl to help Mother.

Our parents had to drive a horse drawn surrey to Waterloo to have Dora baptized by a Lutheran minister. This was the time of the stormy split in the Danish Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. I was told that Dora cried a lot on the long trip to the city and father drove the team of horses at high speed.

Dora, too, had the wonderful experience to grow up in the fascinating village of Fredsville. It was fun for her to enter the store and buy a few cents worth of candy or gum. She attended the rural school through eighth grade and the Danish vacation school at the auditorium during the summer. In 1910, she was confirmed by Rev. S. D. Rodholm.

Mother needed help so Dora did not have the privilege of a high school education but later she attended Nysted Folk School in Nebraska. Here she gained many good friends. We had good books in our home that helped in our education.

When Agnes and I were old enough to be of help to mother, Dora wanted to get out on her own. She went to Des Moines where she worked as a maid for the Carlson Family on Kingman Blvd. This was a good experience for her as there were many Danish young people working in Des Moines.

The Danish Young People's Home was located near Grand View College. This was a large house where working people could find room and board. This Home was the gathering place for young people. A married couple was in charge of the management.

Dora had several admirers, but when Carl Bonnicksen came home from WW I he was the one who won her heart.

When Mother became seriously ill, Dora was called home from Des Moines. She came in time to tell Mother of her engagement and received Mother's blessing. The next morning Mother was called to her eternal rest.

Dora stayed home most of the winter preparing for her wedding in the spring. Invitations were sent to relatives and close friends and on March 24, 1920 at four o'clock, Dora and Carl were married by Rev. Jens Holst at Fredsville Church. There were no attendants and they walked down the aisle together.

A reception followed in our home. A bountiful six o'clock dinner was served to the guests. Soon after their wedding they left for the farm near Ringsted, Iowa. Their honeymoon was short-lived as it was oat seeding time.

It was a coincidence that Carl from Ringsted came to Fredsville for his bride and cousin George Johnson from Fredsville went to Ringsted for his bride who was also named Dora. The two couples were married one month apart and started farming in the same neighborhood. Through the years the two families had a warm fellowship together.

Carl was a good farmer and he took over the Bonnicksen family farm a short distance from Ringsted. During the first years of their marriage, prices were high and then they dropped. They struggled through the depression years along with many others. Two sons were born, Glenn and LeRoy, and it was a privilege for them to grow up on the farm with many friends in their neighborhood.

Dora and Carl were both diligent workers in their church where Dora taught Sunday School for many years. They belonged to the Danish Brotherhood and Sisterhood Lodges. After they moved to town they sponsored the annual oyster supper in their home.

They lived on the farm until they retired in 1958 and built a beautiful home in Ringsted. Dora loved flowers and raised many on the farm and continued to have flowers in town. Her specialty was lilies and I remembers her having a large lily in a flat crystal bowl on her dining room table.

Dora and Carl had many happy years together and on March 24, 1970 they celebrated their Golden Wedding Anniversary. They served a dinner at noon to many guests and in the afternoon they had a lovely reception in their church fellowship hall. I wrote a poem in honor of their special day.



Dora and Carl
Bonnicksen



Glenn and LeRoy
Bonnicksen

THROUGH THE YEARS

Fifty years have come and gone,
Since guns were stilled on Flanders field.
The war was over, peace bells rang;
Soldiers in khaki homeward sang.
Home fires burning, sweethearts waiting;
Soon there were plans for springtime mating.

Carl so handsome, straight and tall -
A farmer's son and a tiller of the soil.
Dora a maiden with eyes e'er so blue,
Carl with a diamond soon did her woo.
Now seeding the oats must be done in the spring.
So March 24th was the exchange of the rings

In the little white church on Fredsville hill,
They pledged their sacred vows to fulfill.
Jens Hoist, our dear pastor, the knot did tie
That has lasted through fifty years and nigh
This union was blessed with two little boys -
First came Glen and then came LeRoy.

On the farm in the country is a good place to be
To raise our children, we all do agree.
These two little boys in their childhood days
With James, Mildred and Iona together did play
Then from the parsonage the Stub kids would
come, Holger and Helen to join the fun

Glenn on his bike over the barrel would go.
LeRoy on the pony, the dust clouds did blow.
Years passed by and to manhood they grew,
With books and classes, much studying to do
God did not promise all days would be bright;
Soon Uncle Sam called young men to fight.

When duty whispered low, "Thou must",
The youth, replied, "We will. In God we trust."
LeRoy in the Air Force many missions did make
Glenn in the Medics, honors did take.
Many a year has passed since then -
Out on the farm lives Dorothy and Glenn.

Mike, Monte and Mark, their three fine sons,
With family and Sweethearts they have such fun
In far off California lives Joyce and LeRoy
And dear sweet Kendra, their pride and their joy
Now Dora and Carl proud parents they be,
These four grandchildren they must often see.

This couple so active in church work and such
Through fifty years have contributed much
Carl, the handyman, always on call;
Dora loves coffee parties, with a welcome for all.
This happy pair we do honor today,
May God's richest blessings forever with them stay.

Dora entered into eternal rest July 7, 1971 and Carl on November 23, 1975 with burial at St. John's cemetery in Ringsted.

Glenn and Dorothy own and live in their parents' home in Ringsted and they own and farm the Bonnicksen's home place.

Agnes Christine Thuesen



On April 25, 1898 Agnes was born with large blue eyes and dark curly hair. She was baptized by Rev. Adam Dan and confirmed together with Albert by Rev. R. Jensen at Fredsville Church. Agnes ' was our special sister. She grew up on the farm and attended the grade school through eighth grade and the Dane school at our church auditorium during the summer. She enjoyed Fredsville village and all the activities and going to the store for treats.

Agnes was ambitious and willing to do whatever work she was able to do. She liked to work with the setting hens and care for the little chickens on the farm. She enjoyed crocheting, embroidering and liked to read.

Agnes stayed at home until 1936 when she and George moved to 1610 Washington in Cedar Falls.

She was a neat housekeeper and cooked good meals. George kept a large garden and on the south side of the house they had many flowers. Agnes also liked house plants and brought a Hoya plant from home that had been Mother's. For several years it had flowers and she was delighted. Many of us took slips from that plant and are still enjoying them in our homes.

Agnes would sometimes take a bus downtown to do some shopping and have her noon meal at a restaurant when George was out in the country doing carpenter work. She liked pretty things and was a collector - beautiful Christmas tree ornaments and her specialty was colorful bells. Each year for Christmas they would choose a lovely spruce tree and it was her pride and joy to do the decorating.



Agnes in her home in Cedar Falls

They both celebrated their birthdays each year and had relatives and close friends in for coffee.

Every Sunday through the years they faithfully drove to Fredsville Church for worship. Agnes had many friends and she loved to be in church and join in the fellowship of our congregation.

Agnes lived with George for thirty-six years until she became frail and in September of 1972 she entered the Cedar Falls Lutheran Home. She celebrated her 75th birthday in the Home with a special party sponsored by her family. Relatives and friends came and made it a memorable day for her.

Agnes became suddenly ill and was taken to Sartori Hospital in Cedar Falls. On the third day she entered into eternal rest, June 17, 1974, at the age of 76 years. Rev. R.

Seastrand at the Lutheran Home conducted a memorial service. The funeral service was held at Fredsville Lutheran Church with Rev. J. Sibert officiating and Alma Johnson as soloist singing "Our Father Has Light in His Window" and "Hallowed Church bell". The congregation sang "What a Friend We Have in Jesus". Agnes was carried to her grave in the family plot by six nephews. Many flowers and memorials were given in her name and a special memorial came from cousins Violet and Clifford Larsen in Australia.

Albert Erik Thuesen



Albert was born July 5, 1899 and baptized by Rev. Adam Dan in Fredsville Evangelical Lutheran Church and was confirmed together with Agnes by Rev. Rasmus Jensen.

He attended Fredsville school through eighth grade and Danish Vacation school at our church auditorium. He had one year at Dike High School and stayed with Henry Christensen on Father's Dike farm as this was before our school district joined Dike Consolidated School. Albert also had one winter session at Danebod Folk School in Tyler, Minnesota with Godfrey Guldager as his roommate.

Albert liked to till the soil and he worked for a time for a nursery in Des Moines where he learned the skills in horticulture. He later returned to the farm.

One summer Albert and I went on a vacation tour of the West by car. We stopped first at Minneapolis and visited cousins Alma and Ingeman Pederson, then on to Dagmar, Montana to visit cousin's Ida and Peter Thuesen. From there we went to the Black Hills in South Dakota for a few days. The next stop was at Hay Springs, Nebraska where we visited cousins Dora and Viggo Jensen and from there we went home.

During WW I while George and Harry were in the Army, Albert joined Ted in farming the home place until Ted was married. Then Albert farmed on his own for many years. He was a good farmer and raised a lot of livestock.

Albert had always been an active member of the Young Peoples' Society. Later he seemed to be more of a loner. He was a friend of H. Madsen of New Hartford who was a member of Jehovah Witness. He met Trilby who was also a member and, with her influence and persuasion, he joined the group.

In 1936, Albert married Trilby. After their marriage George and Agnes moved to Cedar Falls. Later Albert bought seventy acres of land, some of it inherited from the family estate, and they moved up on the hill and the home place was rented to Arnold Mikkelsen. Albert was later divorced. He sold the farm and bought acreage on West Airline Highway near Waterloo where he lived alone the remainder of his life.



Trilby and Albert Thuesen

Albert worked for Platt's Nursery and Mr. Platt spoke very highly of his good work. Later Albert became self-employed and worked for wealthy people in the Waterloo area trimming shrubs and caring for their yards. Here, too, he was highly praised for good work. Albert also raised ducks and had a large garden. He sold vegetables and strawberries and shared some with his neighbors and friends.

Because he could not stand the cold weather, Albert drove to St. Petersburg, Florida for many years where he spent the winter. On September 22, 1980 as he was preparing for his usual winter trip, he went to Allen Hospital for a check-up. While there he had a sudden heart attack and passed away on September 24.

There were many memorials and beautiful flower arrangements given in his memory, and many friends and relatives attended his funeral and internment in the Garden of Memory in Waterloo.

Esther writes about herself, her immediate family and the Fredsville community where the two Jorgensen sisters and their families lived:

Esther Emilie Thuesen Andersen

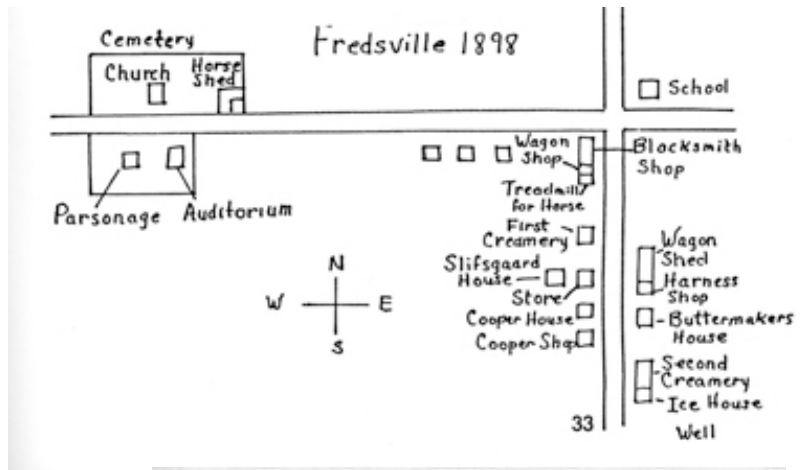


I was the caboose of the family, the thirteenth and the last child, born on September 29, 1903 in the new house on the farm. I was baptized by Rev. S. D. Rodholm and confirmed by Rev. Jens Hoist. As a child I must have been a nuisance, as I liked to wander away by myself. One time they couldn't find me until someone looked in the buggy shed and there I was, asleep in the back seat of the surry.

I liked to follow Albert and sometimes I would go along when he went to trap for gophers. One morning I went with him to check on the traps and there was our pet cat with one paw in the trap. That was the last time for me.

Little girls like to play and Agnes and I had a play house in the grove or in the corn crib when it was empty. I consider myself fortunate that I was privileged to grow up in the lovely and interesting area of Fredsville.

This little village (Esther's sketch) had a general store including the post office on the Slifsgaard farm. The first small Creamery was on the west side of the road. It was a small wooden building north of the store. Later a new large Creamery was built on the east side of the road. The store was south of the old Creamery and on the Corner, north of the Creamery was the blacksmith shop. Diagonally across the road intersection was the first schoolhouse. There were several houses in this area. Next to the new creamery was a house for the buttermaker and across the road was another house. West beyond the blacksmith shop were three houses. Up on the hill to the west and on the south side of the road were the auditorium and the parsonage. Fredsville is located seven miles west of Cedar Falls, Iowa.



Fredsville Blacksmith Shop



This historical picture of our old Fredsville Church was taken in the year of 1911. Here all we children were confirmed and baptized, and the pioneers and their descendents (including descendents of both Johanna and Christine Jorgensen) have been laid to rest in the cemetery that surrounds it. Notice the long barn at the east end where horses were tied. The platform with steps near the churchyard entrance was used to step down from lumber wagons and sleds when the early settlers drove to church.

Dennis writes a special note: Esther had a model built of this Fredsville community, as it existed at this time. It is now stored and occasionally displayed at the Danish Immigrant Museum at Elk Horn, Iowa.

On the north side was our beloved Fredsville Evangelical Lutheran Church where all we children were baptized and confirmed. Fredsville is a Danish name and means Peaceful Village, also "Peace and at Rest". This name is fitting as our forefathers, the pioneers and their descendents, have been laid to rest in the cemetery.

The time came when I was sent to school. My first teacher was Anna Kyhl, a local girl. Most of the children were from Danish families and our English wasn't the best as we spoke mostly Danish at home.

I recall one instance when a mouse ran across the floor and little Louie Nielsen yelled out, "Der render en mus" -- there runs a mouse.

It was fun going to school as we knew everyone.

The small one room school nearly bulged with children -- some of them nearly grown-up. There were double desks, two pupils sat at each one. Small desks were up front for the beginners and the full-size ones at the back of the room for older students.

The iron potbellied stove was near the front. It was the teacher's task to keep the fire burning. We had a porcelain pail and a dipper for our drinking water.

We pupils would take turns going to the neighbors for a pail of water, but some of us went to Old Rodholm's (the caretaker of our church) because "Bestemor" Rodholm, as she was affectionately called, would have some kind of treats for us. Bless her, she was so kind.

The teacher rang the bell at nine o'clock, then singing or reading took place to start the School day. We had fifteen minutes recess in the morning and afternoon and an hour at noon. Our cold lunch was eaten from the tin pails we carried. We ate at our desks, or wherever we wished, and the teacher sat at the big desk up front.

Recess and noon hour were fun times and mostly the boys and girls played together; ante-ante over the schoolhouse, run sheep run, baseball, etc. In the winter the favorite sport was coasting down the steep slope of the hill. We didn't watch for cars as the bobsled, sleigh and the cutter were the only means of travel.

The huge bobs were drawn by teams of husky horses often decked out with fancy harnesses and sleigh bells. Some of the more daring boys would hang onto the runners back of the sled. Many of the teams were pulled to a halt at the blacksmith shop or in front of the store to get groceries and the mail. Our children also had the exhilarating fun of coasting down Fredsville hill.

We had good teachers. Blanche Callahan boarded at our home -- she was kind and mother enjoyed having her in our home. I remember most of our teachers but especially Alma and Helga Larsen.

They both married Knudsen brothers and lived on farms in Fredsville.

There was "Old Soren" as he was called, a loner, who with his rickety canvas-covered wagon pulled by an old horse, would sometimes camp on the school grounds over the weekends. He had a ragged grey beard, long scraggly hair and wore a sheepskin coat. Some children were afraid of him but he was harmless.

Going to school in the winter we wore heavy clothing, long-legged underwear, long stockings, high-laced shoes and overshoes. We also wore heavy coats, wool hoods, and wool fascinators (scarves) and we walked the half-mile in zero degree weather. Sometimes we caught a ride with our good neighbor, Jens Christensen, when he took Art, Alma and Laura to school in the bobsleigh. One cold morning they were walking, Mother saw them

and put on her large gray shawl and went to the road to call them to our house to get warm and Father then drove for us the rest of the way.

In the spring walking was a pleasure with the robins and meadowlarks singing, wild flowers blooming, and the willow trees sprouting green leaves. The little creek was flowing with water and sometimes we would tarry awhile to toss in a few pebbles to see the water ripple. We called it Buttermilk Creek because a thin stream of white water trickled down from the creamery.

It was fascinating seeing the activity at the Creamery, the store and the blacksmith shop. A. F. Schultz lived in the buttermaker's house and Hans Aagaard lived in the house across the road. He made butter tubs for the creamery.

In 1910 the store burned down. I was seven years old and I recall it vividly. About midnight, father calling the boys to come quickly awakened us. "The store is burning." We heard the clatter of pails and all the commotion as they left to help fight the fire. We girls had the northeast upstairs bedroom and we could see the red flames plainly from our window. This was the end of an era, and the beginning of the rural route.

The Danish pioneers had their fun times. They often had dances in the hall above Fredsville store and sometimes in a hayloft on a farm. June 5 was Denmark's Freedom Day and the Danes in America celebrated it gleefully every year. It was a day and night affair with picnic, parade and a dance in the large tent at night. This was held on some farm in the Fredsville area. The tent and refreshment stand were put up the day before.

In 1890, Rev. R. Thomsen of Fredsville Evangelical Lutheran Church, conceived the idea of a Harvest Festival. These festivals were held each year in the fall generally on a farm in the Fredsville area. The enthusiasm of the congregation was great, as everyone was involved in the activities -- local talent was put to use, young and old.

The day before the "Fest" members of the church worked diligently all day to prepare for the event. The men built a large square platform with a raised floor, partly enclosed sides and a roof. This was the stage for the speakers and the performers. It was beautifully decorated by the ladies. I remember when it was on our farm. My mother helped braid the grain entwined with greenery flowers. Apple, pumpkins, cornstalks and fruit of the harvest were also used. Picnic tables were arranged on the green.

The day of the "Fest" people came from far and near with horse and buggy. The horses were tied to the trees in our large grove. Guest speakers were invited and the congregation, in gratitude, gave thanks for the harvest and God's blessings. The Fredsville band entertained and the young people performed with pageant and tableau.

All of us children attended Fredsville one room school through eighth grade and Dane school at our church auditorium four weeks each summer from nine o'clock to four o'clock. We had Bible study, Danish language, grammar, history, gymnasium and learned many Danish songs. We had good Danish teachers and were grateful that we had the privilege to learn the Danish language and culture of our forefathers. Dane school was also held in two rural schools for children of our congregation. We were using the Danish language when I

was confirmed and for quite some time after. I taught Danish Sunday School and later taught in the English language.

An elderly couple from Denmark, Peter and Anna Rodholm, lived in our church custodian's house in Fredsville next to the house where Esther Sorensen lives. This house was later demolished and a new house built near the church. The Rodholms were caretakers of our church and cemetery for twenty-five years. Their son, S. D. Rodholm, was our pastor two different times while his parents lived there. The elder Rodholms were often affectionately called "Bedstefar" and "Bedstemor". They had a fat dog that followed his master whenever he tended the church and cemetery. At that same time, there was gravel instead of sod which had to be kept clean with hoe and rake. Flowers were planted on each grave by members of the families. In the summer it was a beautiful sight to behold.

It was the custom at that time for the custodian to collect the Sunday offering in the "Klinke Pung," a black velvet pouch with a long gold silk tassel. This pouch was attached to a long walnut stick. The "Pung" was later abandoned and collection plates were used. This old historical pouch is now stored among the archives at Grand View College in Des Moines, Iowa.

Rodholm rang the church bell, too. He pulled the long rope attached to the huge bell in the tower of the high steeple. This bell had a special clear tone that could be heard across the countryside, calling people to worship. He also rang the bell when there was a death in the congregation, tolling for each year the deceased had lived. This bell is now a memorial mounted on a marble platform and located where the altar of the old church formerly stood. The recording of this bell ringing is now heard from the tower of our new church.

Our Young Peoples' League at that time was called F. M. U., a Danish name meaning Fredsville Congregation's Young People Society. We met once a month on Sunday evenings at the church auditorium. We belonged to a national society of the Danish Evangelical Lutheran Church named D. S. U. District V. Each year in the fall we had a three day convention at one of the churches in our district. Delegates were elected to serve and large groups of young people would attend the meetings. All were houseguests in the homes of the sponsors.

In my time, our League had thirty-five to forty members. We sponsored lectures, parties for confirmands and different festivals. We had a stage in our auditorium and often put on plays. I took part in many of them. We had teachers from Dike school coach us. We paid royalty on some of the plays -- "Dust of the Earth" and "Old Fashioned Mother." Each played two nights to a full house. After our Sunday meetings, we would have our fun time, "rundlege". We began with singing "Kam gamle, kam unge, slutte kredsen I Bing" -- Come old, come young, join hands in a ring. This brought everyone on the floor to dance to the tune of our singing, a type of folk dancing. When we left for our homes we sang a closing hymn.

Christmas Tree Festival was held on the Third Christmas day. Through the years the young people made the decorations and it became their duty to trim the tree. The tree was always

a large spruce that nearly reached the high ceiling of the auditorium. Candles were put in holders and secured on the branches and a large gold star was placed at the top. A high stepladder was needed for that job.

The children's party was in the afternoon with their parents and Sunday School teachers. The large hall was filled to capacity regardless of snow or cold. The minister would tell a Christmas story and there was the beautiful tree with candles burning brightly among the glittering decorations. Our faithful Rodholm would stand guard with a pail of water and a long pole with a wet cloth in case a candle needed to be snuffed out. Happy, excited children would join in four circles around the tree singing Christmas carols. Next came the treats. Each child would receive a sack of candy, a sack of nuts, an apple and an orange.

The young people had their party at night with a Christmas program and singing and dancing around the tree. We would then enjoy a delicious Danish lunch with our faithful "Bedstemor" Rodholm always there to make the coffee. The Rodholms were our sponsors and attended our meetings, putting out the lights when we left for home.

I did not have the privilege to attend high school at that time. We did not have bus service to Dike school and I was needed at home. I tried to educate myself by reading good books, Harold Bell Wright's books were my favorites. Sinclair Lewis took concentration and Zane Grey's books fascinated me with a lure to see the west.

I attended two Folk Schools, the first at Danebod in Tyler, Minnesota where Professor A. C. Nielsen was superintendent. Later I attended a winter session at Grand View College in Des Moines, Iowa with president Rev. S. D. Rodholm. This gave me education, fond memories and life-long friends.

For some years I was a 4-H leader in Fairfield Township. This I enjoyed; it gave me a lift because I longed to get out in the world and try my wings.

I kept correspondence with my cousin, Elna Thuesen, who worked as a maid for a rich family in Santa Barbara, California. Her letters were interesting. She told about the wonderful times she enjoyed together with twenty-five Danish girls working there as maids. When Elna came back to Newell on vacation, I got the desire to go back with her and try my luck as a maid and see the West.

Father was reluctant to that idea but I made the decision to go and Christine Dall was hired to keep house for the family.

I worked for a very fine family, Dr. and Mrs. Livingston Chase. They were so considerate and kind to me. Their home was two blocks from the ocean and I spent many afternoons relaxing on Miremar Beach. I had a grand time together with the working girls spending lots of time at the beach, hiking in the hills and enjoying our reading club. We often made trips to Solvang where there were many Danish young people. At Christmas time we rented a hall in Santa Barbara, invited the Solvang young people and entertained them with a Christmas program and a dance.

Harold Andersen from Fredsville was on tour of the west stopping first at Dagmar, Montana, then on to friends in Ferndale, Washington and to Pleasanton, California to visit relatives. From there he toured to Santa Barbara where he stayed some time and joined in the fun with the Danish young people. Harold and I had always been friends and our friendship grew while he was in Santa Barbara, and we corresponded after he left for home.

I worked for the Chase family for nearly a year until July, 1931. Before I left for home my friends had a beach party for me and presented me with a large painted picture of Santa Barbara Bay. Because I had a desire to see more of the west, I took a tour through the great Red Wood Trees and on to Yosemite staying in that majestic beautiful park for two days. I then left for home by train from San Francisco.

In that fall, Father became ill and we had a nurse for five weeks who cared for him during the day; I was with him through the night. Father had a serious asthma condition that weakened his heart. He passed away November 15, 1931. Services were held at home and at the church by Rev. C. Stockholm. We are grateful to our parents who left us a rich heritage of a Christian faith.

Harold and I were engaged, and I kept busy through the winter sewing, quilting and tying quilts in preparation for our wedding in the spring.

Our Wedding



Harold and I were married in the Fredsville Lutheran Church February 24, 1932, by Rev. Stockholm at a six o'clock evening service. There were no attendants and we marched down the aisle together. Only close relatives and friends were invited as Father had passed away a few months before.

As my mother was not living I had to plan the reception myself and make the preparations. A seven o'clock dinner was served to forty-five guests in our home. I planned veal birds but it was the time of depression and the Dike bank had closed three weeks before our wedding so money was tight.

Brother Albert then butchered one of his fine hogs and Minnie Martin, who cooked the dinner, cut thick pork chops with a deep slit and filled them with dressing. She rolled each chop in beaten eggs and then in crumbs, then browned and baked them -- they were delicious. Anna

baked cake and Mabel made dinner rolls. We had a surprise when the ice cream dessert was served. Minnie Martin added delicate pink wafers, a lovely specialty of hers. The

decorations were pink and white bells and streamers, and Christine helped me make handmade apple blossom flowers.

Rev. Stockholm gave a short talk and read a telegram we received that day from friends in Santa Barbara. A group of young people arrived with tin cans to chivaree us and we invited them in for ice cream and cake.

There was no thought of a honeymoon with no money and with work to be done. Harold rented the Hieber farm near Cedar Falls and we started out together March 1, 1932. A new house had been built the year before as the old house had burned down.

March 1st was the official moving day across the country. Movers were tenant farmers or those starting to farm. The roads were muddy that March morning and the lumber wagons pulled by horses made deep tracks in the road. The former renter pulled his wagon across the lawn to the front door for loading which left the front yard in bad shape. He also left his muddy foot prints on the oak floors. The kitchen floor was badly marked by milk cans. Brother George helped us use a sander on the floor.

Although it was a new house, it did not have a bathroom so the privy was the old stand by, but there was electricity and running water. The weather turned very cold and the house was not heated; a furnace was put in a week later. I had bought a cook stove from Herman Henningsen but it did not arrive until six days later. Harold's folks let us have a two-burner kerosene stove for cooking and that was all the heat we had the first week. We kept warm in the kitchen.

Harold had horses, milk cows, hogs and machinery as he and his brother, Tobe, had been farming their home place. We could not get the furniture I had ordered because of the bank closing but I had a new kitchen table and four chairs. I got two beds from home and an old dining-room table. When the new beautiful ivory and green range arrived, it was my pride and joy. The new furniture came when the bank reopened.

George gave us a ten dollar gold piece for our wedding but the government said all gold was to be turned in. So we traded it for a copper wash boiler at Herman Henningsen's store but Herman kept the gold. We were very sorry as it was worth much more years later. I washed by hand a few months until we got a washing machine. It was depression time and everyone was in the same situation. We got along the best we could.

When the Watkins man came (a peddler of spices, salves, and flavored extracts), I needed vanilla but we had no money. He said he would take eggs, so I bought vanilla, but it took a twelve-dozen case of eggs. That year corn sold for 17 cents a bushel.

Our first child, Dennis, was born March 3, 1933. Harold sold a cow to meet hospital expenses as prices were low and dust storms came. We were fortunate to have a landlord who cut our rent in half.

Arlan was born June 21, 1934 at Sartori Hospital on the hottest and longest day of the year. When we came home from the hospital, I thought the farm looked like a desert, but in July the rains came.

The morning of our second wedding anniversary I was surprised to see Dahl's furniture truck stop at our front door. I thought he had come to the wrong place, then I saw Harold smiling as they started to unload. And behold, a beautiful walnut bookcase and secretary with four drawers was delivered to our house. How wonderful as now we would have a place for our precious books that were stored in boxes.

In March of 1935, Dennis came down with scarlet fever. We were quarantined for five weeks as Arlan came down with the fever on the third week. In order to sell our cream our hired man had to stay in town and come to the farm during the day. During that time my father's estate was settled and we bought the two hundred and forty acres at Fredsville. I had a fourth share in the farm and I signed the papers through the window.

When the quarantine was lifted, the house had to be fumigated and everything washed in a Lysol solution; toys and teddy bears were hung on the line.

That same year on October 2, Edwin was born. We were also making plans to move to Fredsville in the spring.

We were fortunate to be living on the Hieber farm that winter of 1936 as we were close to town and we had a furnace. It was the coldest winter for over a century. Beginning January 18th, we had below zero weather for five weeks, with blizzards and closed roads. When March 1st came, the governor of Iowa gave movers five days of grace. But for us it was a difficult situation.

The Brunskills, who had rented the Hieber farm, insisted on moving March 1st. The people on the Fredsville farm could not move to the Nielsen place as Henry was ill with mumps. Regardless, on March 1, the Brunskill family moved in with us. They were five adults and we had three small children, a hired man and hired girl. No way could we live together so we moved over to Albert on the home place -- furniture, cattle, horses and all. The Brunskills had begged Henry to move and he told them, "I'll move as quick as I can."

The afternoon of March 2nd we moved to our farm. The buildings were all very old and the house was rambling with many rooms and little conveniences. We were young and strong and this was our home. Relatives and neighbors helped us move and get settled for the night. The kitchen range and the wood burning heater had to be put up, as well as the beds. I remember Dennis was unhappy with the situation; he wanted to go home. Valborg Christensen worked for us at that time and she was very good help.

It took some time to get settled. There were repairs to make and new wall paper was needed in some of the rooms. We did start to paper and then we discovered the chimney in the main part of the house was in very bad condition. A new chimney had to be built. It became a major project as we decided to do some remodeling at the same time.

The house had several small bedrooms as formerly two families lived in the house. We removed the one bedroom and that left us a large room for a dining room. Later, we did more remodeling. The outside buildings were more important to build, so brother George helped to remodel the large, cold kitchen. We closed a door to the north and built a worktable with a sink, put in a large window and made a bathroom in the corner of the

room. A wonderful improvement. Later we did major improvements and replastered the dining and living rooms.

All the buildings were very old and it was our hope to replace one at a time. In 1937 we built a hog house. That was one step forward. It would pay for itself as we could raise more hogs.

The old barn was enormous and spread over a large area. At one time the Slifsgaards milked one hundred cows, had young stock cows and many horses. At hay-making time I drove a team of horses for the hay-fork cart. With the huge barn it was difficult for me to hear the fork-men yell "go-ahead" and "stop". Dennis was six years old and he would help yell. He became hoarse and we took him to a specialist who told Dennis to vaporize, stay in bed and not say a word for a week. He never said a word during those seven days. He was cured and we were very grateful.

On April 29, 1939 the stork came again. Our baby girl was born at Sartori Hospital, 2:30 in the afternoon. We were very happy -- now we had a daughter and our sons had a sister. Harold stopped to tell Bedstefar and Bedstemor the good news, then on to Agnes and George. They were all delighted.

Doris Jensen was working for us and that night when she put the three boys to bed and heard their prayers, Dennis said, "Now we won't need to pray for a baby sister". Edwin said, "We can pray for another one".

Although we had a full-time hired man there was plenty of work on the farm. Our boys learned early to do simple chores. They would fill their red Coaster wagon with split wood and bring it to the house and fill the wood box for the kitchen stove, and they liked to help in the barn. As they grew older they had more difficult chores. One was washing the cream separator every morning. They took turns for this duty.

Meanwhile, WW II was declared and Willie Summerland, who was working for us, had to leave for the service. Willie was a very fine and dependable man and we were sorry he had to leave. Many young men were called to serve so we built a tenant house and hired a married man. LeRoy Benny and family from Scribner, Nebraska came to work for us. He was also a good man.

Our plans for 1941 were to build a new barn. Early in the spring we started to demolish the old barn. Anton Jensen (Hay Anton) was hired to help with this big project. The cow stanchions were moved to the cement platform south of the barn for milking. Board by board the barn was torn down and all good lumber salvaged for the new barn. A crew of carpenters came and laid the foundation and the building went up. I was thankful the



Marilyn, Edwin, Arlan, Dennis

carpenters brought their noon lunch. I served coffee and lunch to all the workers in the afternoon.

The barn was almost completed except for a stretch not shingled when a tornado passed through one night and tore off the roof and tossed it into the yard. It was 10:00 at night and realizing the storm was bad, we got the children out of bed and to the cellar. Then suddenly it was quiet and with the lightening we could see the horrible results of the storm. We were so grateful to be safe. The shattered roof laid in our yard a week until the insurance adjustor came. A large crew of neighborhood men came to help clean up the mess and several ladies came to help me prepare the meal for the workers. The barn was rebuilt and things went smoothly.

The new barn was filled with hay, the silo was filled, and it was corn picking time. Harold and his brother, Ed, exchanged help. They were picking late on October 31, 1942. Dennis and Arlan brought the cows home for milking and, as they opened the door, they saw smoke. Dennis came running to tell me there was a fire in the barn. I took one quick look and saw smoke coming from under the eaves. I called the fire department and they quickly responded. Sophus Hermansen came to help get the animals out of the barn and soon the building was ablaze. The firefighters did their best but the barn could not be saved. The silo also burned and was beyond repair.

We served supper to the firemen and Ethel Kjaer brought us a large pan with fresh rolls which were enjoyed very much by the tired men. We stayed up all night to watch the smoldering fire but were glad the children could sleep. Adversity comes to everyone, but we are given strength to go forward in faith.

Nearing winter we had to find a place for our cows.

Arnold Mikkelsen, living on the home place, offered us his barn and each day the men went there to do the milking. Plans were made to rebuild at once, but, because of the war, it was difficult as we were restricted to the amount of lumber used. We built a small barn just for cows and a year later built the cattle barn. For this barn we had to cut down some of our cottonwood trees and haul the logs to Marshall Uhl to be sawed into lumber. We also bought an old wood silo near Cedar Falls to make the joist for the haymow.

The war ended in 1945, but there were still restrictions. We ordered a new car and it took a year before it arrived. We planned a trip to California to visit Harold's sister Amanda and Herman if by chance the car arrived. The car came and week before Christmas we were on our way west. The children had new outfits and the car was loaded with all sorts of paraphernalia. We arrived in Solvang in time for Christmas and Amanda had a delicious Christmas Eve feast for all of us including some neighbors. We enjoyed the holidays with them and with friends. Marilyn thought it a strange Christmas without snow. We drove on to Los Angeles to visit friends and from there we went to the Rose Parade and then home.

In 1946, we managed to get enough lumber to build a corn crib and we bought an elevator. Happy me - one man less needed to unload corn and one less to cook for.

Years went by, crops were good as were the livestock prices. We started to make plans to replace the over one-hundred-year-old house. This was a major project to plan and to build a house that would serve our needs as well as those of the future generations. Woody Parker, our carpenter, was hired to do the job and draw the plans. First we had to remove half of the old house to make room for the new. Arlan and Edwin sawed it in two and behold!

Honey started to flow. Bees that had been pests for years left their reward of gallons of honey. This part was demolished and we lived in the half that was left. Dennis had worked for Woody during school vacations and learned some skills in carpenter work. All three boys helped with the building. They laid all the oak floors in the house.

In the fall of 1950 the house was completed. It was fun to move into a new house with a furnace and electric cook stove. But fond memories of the old house will linger forever as here the children played, worked and grew up. The cook stove had warmed the large cold kitchen and gave cheer with the teakettle always steaming and the reservoir ever ready with warm water. The oven with the door open would warm chicks and baby pigs brought in from the cold. Our cook stove served us so well through the years. I could not part with it. So it was stored but never used.



Our Fredsville home with all new buildings in 2005 and the former site of the historical village looking west. The new house in lower right is approximately the location of the Slifsgaard house in Esther's Fredsville 1898 sketch above. In the upper right, the new church is on the south (left) side of the road and the cemetery along with the former site of the old church is across the road. The cemetery is where many Jorgensen descendants in America now have their eternal resting place.

The following year the other half of the old house was removed and a breezeway and garage was added. The first years we lived there we cut down old trees and planted many evergreens for shelter and beauty; also an orchard and shade trees. When the new house was finished, more planting was done. Harold loved trees and shrubs and he faithfully nurtured each one.

Our children attended the new rural Fredsville school, Fairfield No. 9, through eighth grade. Then our district consolidated with Dike school where they all graduated from high school. One by one all four graduated from Grand View Jr. College. Dennis, Arlan and Marilyn graduated from Iowa State University, Ames, and Edwin from McAlaster College, St. Paul, Minnesota. Arlan volunteered for the Army and served in Europe after which he attended Iowa State. Edwin served in the National Guard for some years. Dennis and Edwin went on to post-graduate work at the U. of Minnesota and Edwin, in time, received his PhD.



Dennis, Arlan, Edwin
Esther, Marilyn, Harold
1955

In 1957, we celebrated our 25th anniversary with an open house at our home, afternoon and evening. Marilyn baked the wedding cake and we had fancy sandwiches flown here from Cedar Rapids for the occasion.

That same year, in June, we went by ship to Denmark. Marilyn went with us and we had a marvelous time. We had ordered a car in advance and it was ready for us when we arrived in Copenhagen. What an excitement when we saw our parents' homeland and drove to Aabenraa to meet our relatives. We drove to Harbogaard, Mother's home place, and all our relatives were waiting to meet us with open arms. Astrid and Albert had prepared supper for all of us and what a wonderful welcome we had from everyone. We visited all our relatives in their homes and went to church where mother was baptized and confirmed. Marilyn had a great time as all the young people were her age and, oh, how they did sing, both young and old. Fond memories will linger forever.

We also visited Harold's relatives in Sjaelland. We had lost contact with the family for some years so we put an ad in the newspaper and quickly we found all the Andersen's. Harold's ninety-year-old aunt Anna was living with her daughter, Frida, in Koge.

What a joy for her to see us as she had never seen her brother Lauritz, Harold's father, since he left for America. Harold could speak Danish and they talked together for hours. She loved to hear about the families in America. Anna's sister, Elise, and brothers, Olaf and Carl, had immigrated to America, also. We visited cousins Else in Halbeck and Elise and Ella in Nykobing. In addition to visiting relatives in Denmark, we traveled through nine countries in five weeks.

Years later, Else came from Halbeck to visit relatives in America. She stayed with us for two weeks. When she was ready to leave, Edwin and Janice drove Else, Harold and I to New York City for her return trip to Denmark. While we were in New York, we attended the World Fair.

Through the years we made a trip to Spain, England, Norway and trips to Denmark by plane. We will never forget beautiful Denmark and our loving relatives. We remember one evening at Albert's and Astrid's where all the relatives were gathered for a dinner party. After the meal they put out the lights and we looked out to the garden and, behold, the garden was circled with many flaming candles. We went outside by the house (Mother's home place) and sang Danish songs. Oh, how they could sing! I knew most of the songs and they moved me to tears. We have happy memories of good visits with our cousins, Anna and Andreas, Ingeborg, Nis and Mlnna Jorgensen in their lovely homes. Nis and Mlnna made two trips to America to visit relatives and each time we have had a joyful family reunion.

In August, 1958 Marilyn went with us to California for Harold's sister, Amanda, and Herman Strandskov's silver wedding celebration. Before we left I shopped and bought a pair of Danish-dressed dolls. From Solvang we drove to Seattle, Washington to attend the LCA Synod national convention as Harold was a delegate from Fredsville Church. The congregation in Seattle had just built a new church and the Ladies' Aid had dressed Danish dolls to sell for help with the payment. I bought a doll to take home thinking our Ladies Aid could do the same, as we were making plans for a new church. I talked about it at our next meeting. The idea didn't go as well at first; they thought they wouldn't sell. I persisted and soon we were busy dressing dolls. In time hundreds of dolls were sold and orders came in for more and we made a good sum of money for our church. These dolls can be seen in homes from coast to coast. I have also dressed many dolls for gift to relatives and friends, some to Denmark and Australia, and I'm still doing it.

In 1959 two of our sons were married. Arlan and Carol were married August 22nd in the Lutheran church in Hecla, South Dakota. Dennis and Sandra were married November 27th in Prince of Peace Lutheran Church of Minneapolis. Edwin and Janice were married June 30, 1961 in the Augustana Lutheran Church of Minneapolis.

On the year of our church merger in June of 1962, we drove to Detroit for the national LCA Synod convention as delegates from our church. The convention was held in Cobo Hall Arena where a new Lutheran Church was born in a very impressive and solemn ceremony. Seven thousand received communion conducted at long rails before the many altars.

On August 10, 1963, Marilyn and William Gift were married in our new Fredsville Lutheran Church by Pastor Harald Sorensen. The reception was held in the auditorium. Guests from

afar were Herman and Amanda Strandskov of Solvang, California and Arnold and Claire Andersen of Minneapolis, aunts and uncles of the bride and many other guests.

In 1974, I compiled a small cookbook, "Grandma Bakes," with the drawing of mother on the front cover. It was dedicated to our children and grandchildren of the Fredsville community. This little booklet can be found in many homes from the east coast to the west coast and to other lands.

Our Altar Guild made Chrismons in 1963 for two large Christmas trees in church and we also made Chrismons for a large tree at the Cedar Falls Lutheran Home. When time came for us to retire, we made plans to build in Dike. We bought a lot on U Lane and soon a beautiful new home was ready for us. We moved in the spring of 1963. Leaving the farm was not easy but we were grateful that one of our own could take over the farm. The welcome mat is always out for us at the home of Arlan and Carol. We sold our farm to them in 1971.

For a long time we had anticipated a trip to Australia to visit Mother's brother, Peter Jorgensen's family. Realization came when we left Waterloo Airport, November 29, 1965 in - 10F° weather for San Francisco. We visited Harald and Carol Ann Sorenesen and they saw us off on the S. S. Mariposa for a six-week cruise of the South Pacific and three weeks in Australia. En route to Australia we stopped at the islands. We arrived in Sidney, December 24, and flew to Brisbane arriving there on Christmas Eve. Cousin Violet, Clifford and their son, David Larson, who was pastor in the Brisbane Lutheran Church, met us at the airport. It was a very emotional experience for all of us to meet each other for the first time. We drove with them to David and Audre's home and there we celebrated Christmas Eve. At 10:00 p.m. we left Brisbane, Clifford and Violet driving us to their farm home at Kingaroy, arriving there at 1:00 a.m. We woke up Christmas morning hearing a beautiful voice. It was Violet singing Christmas carols while preparing breakfast. The men were up early doing the milking as they had a dairy herd.

We all went to the Lutheran Church Christmas service and the family all sang in the choir except Clifford. Their son, Rodney, was choir director. At church we met our many cousins; the ladies all dressed so fine in light summer frocks with hats and gloves to match. It was so overwhelming and the memories will linger forever.

Our thoughts were also with our families at home. On Christmas Eve they were all at Arlan's and Carol's home. They called us reaching us at 2:00 p.m. Christmas day. What a thrill when we heard Arlan's voice and all the others wishing us all a Merry Christmas. We had a happy time with our relatives and they were all so kind to us.

We also stayed with cousin Agnes and Harold Larsen and our last Sunday at church, their daughter, Cecilie was commissioned as a missionary to serve in New Guinea. We were invited with Clifford and Violet to visit their neighbor, Joh Bjelke Peterson, his wife, Florence, and family. His aged mother was there and she could speak Danish as she had emigrated there from Denmark as a child with her parents. Joh Bjelke Petersen has been premier of Queensland for many years and of late he has the distinction of "Knight of the Realm" and his wife is a senator. We hear from them every Christmas.

Time came for us to say farewell. Violet helped us plan a tour of their country. We traveled by bus and it was an educational tour of some of Australia. Our last city was Sidney. Joan and Clarice had come all the way from Kingaroy by bus to see us off on our return trip. We stayed in Sidney two days and the girls took us to visit more of our relatives. When we were ready to leave, they went aboard ship with us, had a joyful dinner, and waved their last farewell as the ship left for our three-week cruise home.

Some time later Rodney and Joan Larsen came to visit relatives in America and to tour our country. Years later Violet and Joan came and we had a grand reunion together with all our cousins. Next to come were Clarice Jorgensen and Evelyn Dunemeam to visit and tour the United States.

Our 50th Wedding Anniversary

The Sunday before February 24, 1982 we celebrated our golden wedding anniversary beginning with attending church services. Our friend and former pastor, Marvin Nygaard, of Owatonna, Minnesota gave the sermon. A dinner at noon was served in our church fellowship hall to relatives and friends. Our children and their families hosted an afternoon open house reception. Our son, Dennis, led a short program. Alma Johnson sang "Your Home must be Founded". This song was sung on our wedding day, February 24, 1932. She also sang the Lord's Prayer. Lunch was served to the many guests who came from far and near. Although it was a very cold day and snow was piled high around the church and the highway, the sun shone beautifully. It was a most memorable day. Our children and their families presented us with a grandfather clock, and we received many precious gifts in honor of our special day. This was another milestone in our lives.

Looking back, memories come to mind...country living and the influence of our rural Fredsville church and its mission. Our pioneer forefathers' strong faith and a Christian home life helped build a strong America. They left a legacy.

It is important to preserve our heritage and keep it alive. Material things in life so quickly fade away but our heritage holds the key to the joys we share and this binds us closer to the past and helps us to grow. May each one continue with their own family history.



Esther & Harold, 1985

Dennis writes later:

After several years in the Cedar Falls Lutheran Home, Harold died at 94, seven days before Christmas in 1991 and Esther, suffering from her great loss, died two days after that Christmas.

