



70TH ANNIVERSARY

Little Forks
Lutheran Church
1877-1947

OBSERVED SUNDAY, AUGUST 8, 1948

HATTON - PORTLAND

North Dakota

1877

"70 YEARS IN CHRIST"



LITTLE FORKS LUTHERAN CHURCH

HATTON - PORTLAND
North Dakota

PRESENT CONGREGATION OFFICERS

| | |
|-----------|---------------|
| Secretary | Olaf Ringerud |
| Treasurer | Anton Jemtrud |

Trustees: Clarence Braaten, Roy Lee and Andrew Olson

Deacons: John Basol, Hurluf Owen, (no one has as yet been named to take the place of Ole H. Nelson, deceased).

Board of Education: Charlie Braaten, Peter Bakken and Mrs. Roy Lee

Organist Oscar Jemtrud

1947

70 YEARS OF LITTLE FO

Foreword

There has been discussion for some time on the possibility of celebrating the seventieth anniversary of the Little Forks congregation. At the annual meeting, Nov. 12, 1947, it was decided to observe the anniversary in the summer of 1948. Olaf Ringerud was elected chairman of the History committee. Others on the committee have been Mrs. Emma Gunderson, Anton Jemtrud, Peter Boc and the Pastor.

Gathering historical records and pictures for a seventy year period is never an easy matter. There had not in all these years been any official gathering of historical data for such an event as we now contemplated. However, we are thankful for the complete record of secretary's minutes of all business sessions and the faithful entry of ministerial acts in the official records kept by the pastors. Most of these records are in the Norwegian language but as long as we have those who know well

RKS LUTHERAN HISTORY

both languages we will not be separated from this rich historical treasure.

It is hoped that this study and the interest evidenced by all in this anniversary would lead us also to think of the proposed Diamond Jubilee. It is not too early to begin now to make plans for this event.

As we today remember the founders of the congregation and read the record of its early beginnings, let us thank God for all their efforts in establishing and maintaining the Church of Jesus Christ that it might be here for us. Also let us pray that God might find us faithful that the Word of the Lord might be proclaimed to our generation.

If the Lord shall yet withhold the great harvest many things lie before us. Our first concern is for the souls of our people and their worship of the one, true God. We recognize the great challenge of the Church in the open country, which in such a large measure provides for the growth of both city and country congregations. Many of our young people will leave us to make their contribution elsewhere. We send them on with God's blessing, but first, through the power of the Word of God, we would plant their feet firmly upon the rock, which is Jesus Christ. There are plans, too, for extensive repair and improvement of our church plant in the next three or four years.

The work of building the Kingdom of God is to continue as long as the time of grace remains. We do not only think about the past today. An anniversary also directs us to look forward. May we continue to hear the Word that was read when this congregation came into being, "Arise, shine; for thy light is come . . ."

Alford Setness

PASTOR

Through the Years . . .

The Little Forks Congregation was organized December 28, 1877. This organization meeting was held at the Fingal Enger home with Patsor Hagboe, Erick Nyhus, Torgrim Olson Fecher, Johan Olson, Ellef P. Nyhus, Sevat Swenson, Kolbjorn Olson Liedvalen, Amund Amundson, Bernt Johanson, Gunder H. Stavens, Helge Nilson and Fingal Enger present.

The meeting opened with the reading of the first three verses of the sixtieth chapter of Isaiah,


Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee. For, behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people; but the Lord shall rise upon thee, and His glory shall be seen upon thee. And the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising.

After hearing God's Word, Pastor Hagboe led in prayer.

At this first meeting a constitution of ten paragraphs was drawn up and adopted. The constitution provided that there

should be three trustees, two deacons, a secretary, a treasurer and an advisor. The following were elected: as president, Pastor Hagboe; secretary, Helge Nilson; treasurer, Ellef P. Nyhus; as trustees, Sevat Swenson for one year, Gunder Hanson Stavens for two years and Fingal Enger for three years; as deacons, Kjolborn Olson Liedvalen and Torgrim Olson Fecher; and as advisor, Ellef P. Nyhus. The name of the congregation was to be The Aadalen Norwegian Evangelical Lutheran Congregation of Traill County, Dakota Territory.

Eight Sunday services and four week day services were to be held each year.



ANDERS ANDERSON HESLEIN

Since the congregation had no church building as yet, services were held in the homes of members and in the school house. Less than three months after the organization meeting, the

congregation held a special meeting and changed the name of the congregation to The Little Forks Norwegian Evangelical Lutheran Congregation, Traill County, Dakota Territory.

On December 12, 1881, Anders Anderson Heslien donated two acres of land in Enger Township for a cemetery plot. The cemetery was formally dedicated January 21, 1883. A. A. Heslein was the first caretaker.

It was decided at the annual meeting November 13, 1893, to erect the church building at this site. The building was to be 50 feet by 32 feet and 20 feet high. The following were elected to serve on the Building Committee: Fingal Enger, Ole Haakenson, Paul Boc, Sevat Swenson, Andrew Stavens, Ole Gronbeck, Erick Nyhus and Elias Kekken. Daniel Bjerke and Peter Wold were secured as carpenters and building was begun in 1884, but because of hard times and early fall work it was not completed until the spring of 1885. However, the annual meeting was held in the new Church building November 12, 1884. The first janitor was Ellef P. Nyhus, assisted by Sevat Swenson. Nils Rodningen was an early "Kirke sanger."

In 1891 the Ladies Aid donated an organ and bell. Mr. Haukom was the first organist. After a short time Olaf Haakenson replaced him. The salary of the organist was \$1 per service.

The first Confirmation was held May 23, 1880. The following were confirmed: Nils Anderson Heslien, Helge Amundson, Ole Olson Haagenson, Carl Olson, Nils Olaus Olson, Anders Anderson Heslein, Halvor Christofferson, Ragnild Amundson, Sigrid Anderson and Ingeborg Nilsen. The first baptism recorded is that of Johanna, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Paul Boc, who was baptized May 26, 1878 by Pastor B. L. Hagboe. The first marriage recorded is that of Erik Pederson Nyhus and Anna Olson. They were married July 28, 1878. The first death was that of Ingeborg Helgeson Nelson, who died July 23, 1881, and was buried July 25, 1881.



FIRST MARRIED COUPLE

hard L. Hagboe was the first pastor of Little Forks congregation. There were fourteen services the first year, that is, in 1878, which was two more than the number which had previously been set as a minimum. It is to be remembered that Pastor

Hagboe was a home missionary seeking to establish further congregations. In 1880 he left to go to Brookings, S. Dak.

Pastor M. J. Waage was called July 14, 1880. He accepted and served the congregation until 1887 when Pastor B. Tollefson was called. It was during his pastorate that the present church building was erected. The first church was destroyed by a cyclone July 27, 1900 and the new building was built the following year.

Missionary Lars Skrefsrud visited the Little Forks congregation in the summer of 1894.

Pastor Tollefson remained for 18 years, leaving in the spring of 1905, and going to Banks, N. Dak., to do missionary work and engage in farming.

In July of 1905 Pastor A. J. Eikeland came directly from Luther Theological Seminary, St. Paul, Minn., to become the pastor of Little Forks and Goose River congregations. Pastor Eikeland spent his entire ministry in these congregations, also serving Washington Prairie which was added in 1920. In these 35 years from 1905 to 1940 we have half of the history of the congregation to date.

According to the records there was a meeting at the Little Forks Church, March 24, 1899, concerning the parsonage. A committee was elected to work with the committee from the Goose River congregation. The parsonage was built sometime in 1899. The present parsonage in Hatton was purchased in 1920.

Various improvements were made on the church building from time to time. In 1914 the chapel was extended at a cost of \$1,079.50. In 1939 the church was redecorated and improvements made on the kitchen. Again in 1947 substantial improvements were made on the chapel.

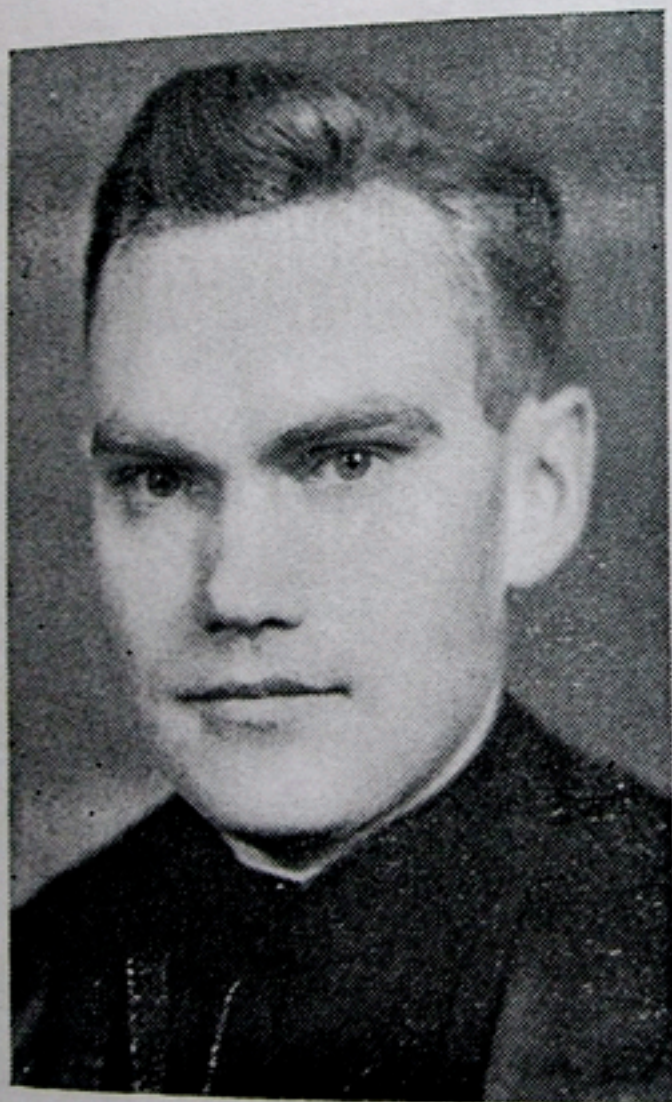
Pastor Eikeland resigned in 1939 but continued to serve until the summer of 1940. Mrs. Eikeland had gone on to her reward three years earlier. She died December 14, 1936, after 32 years of faithful service beside her husband in the Lord's work in the congregation. Her remains lie in the Little Forks cemetery. One son, Fridtjof, is in the ministry, a pastor at Warren, Minn., another son, Ansgar, lives at Arthur, N. Dak. Two daughters also live in Minnesota: Mildred, at Hastings, is engaged in teaching, and Freida, Minneapolis, is employed by Augsburg Publishing House. Pastor A. J. Eikeland now lives at the Home for the Aged at Grand Forks, N. Dak.

Upon the resignation of Pastor Eikeland a call was extended to Pastor K. C. Grundahl, Robinson, Kansas. Pastor Grundahl and his two young sons, Gordon and Allan, came to be with us in the early part of July in 1940. Installation services were held Sunday, July 7, with Pastor Eikeland as the installing

officer. On June 6, 1943, Pastor Grundahl was married to Miss Alice Naas, instructor in music and nursing at Concordia College, Moorhead, Minn. They labored earnestly in the Lord's work in our midst until the fall of 1946 when Pastor Grundahl was called to be an instructor at the Camrose Bible School and to serve a parish at Camrose, Alberta, Canada. His farewell sermon was preached on New Year's Day, 1947.

Pastor Alford E. Setness, Buffalo, S. Dak., was then called to become the pastor of Little Forks, Goose River and Washington Prairie congregations. He accepted early in January and promised to come about May 1. Pastor and Mrs. Setness and family arrived April 30 and Mr. Setness was installed by District President David Stoeve May 4, 1947.

Today, August 8, we observe the first anniversary celebrated by the congregation. We are thankful for God's guidance during 70 years and pray for God's strength and direction through all the years that may lie ahead.



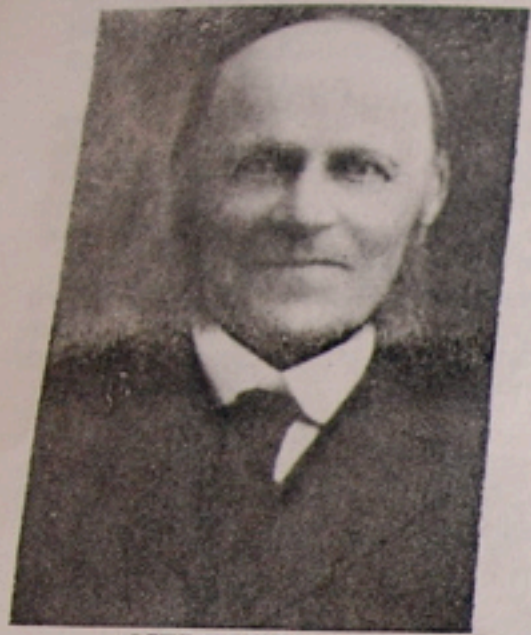
The Present Pastor

REV. ALFORD SETNESS

MINISTERIAL ACTS 1877 - 1947

| | | |
|-----------|-------|-----|
| Baptisms | ----- | 915 |
| Confirmed | ----- | 643 |
| Marriages | ----- | 179 |
| Burials | ----- | 260 |

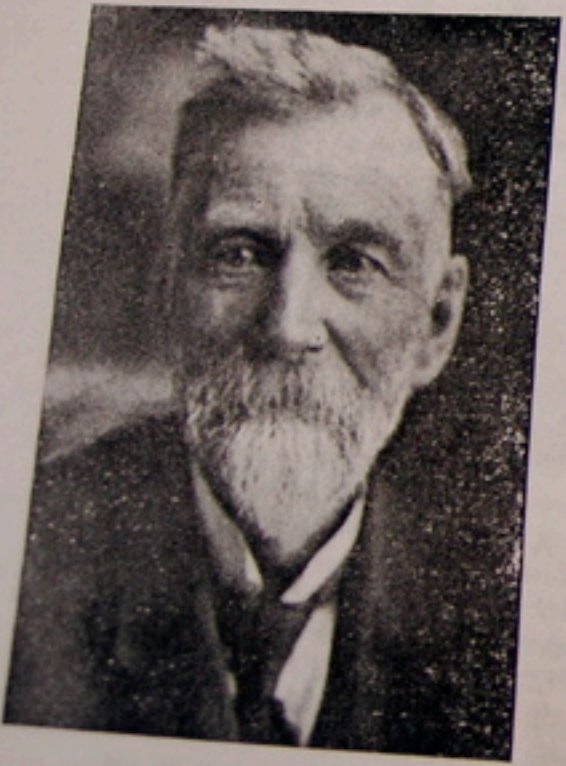
PASTORS OF
*Little Forks Lutheran
Church*



PETER NYKREM
Early Missionary



A. J. EIKELAND
1905 - 1940



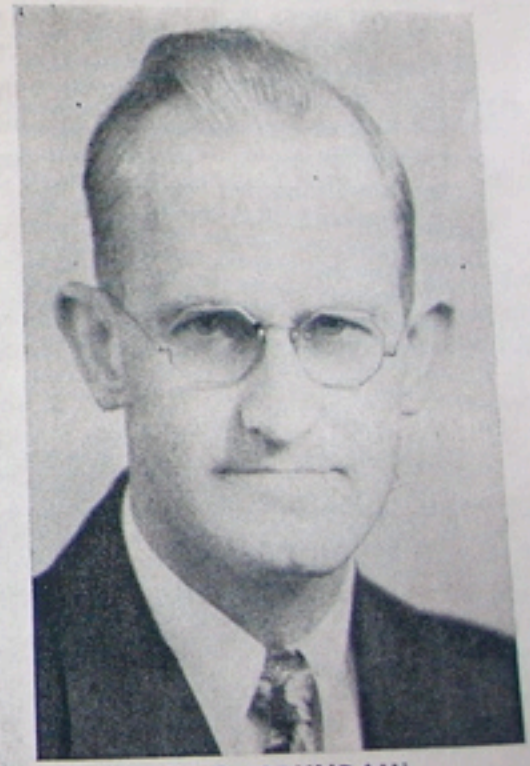
BERNHARD L. HAGBOE
1877 - 1880



M. J. WAAGE
1880 - 1887



B. TOLLEFSON
1887 - 1905



K. C. GRUNDAHL
1940 - 1946

1877-1947



LEFT TO RIGHT—Mrs. Helge Nelson, Mrs. Ole Haakeson, Mrs. Marie Nyhus, and Mrs. Paul Boe.

LADIES

The early records of the church activities of the Ladies Aid of the congregation have been destroyed. We can depend on the oral reports of our Pioneer Mothers, who took an active part in the work, and welfare of the church at home, and on the mission field.

When Hol congregation mentions a Ladies Aid being organized in 1877 with Rev. Hagboe, pastor, and that later a sale of different articles made by the ladies was held at the Fingal Enger home, we know that the ladies of this community had contributed their share of the work.

In 1884 there was a formal organization of the Little Forks Ladies Aid at the home of Ellef P. Nyhus, with the following elected as officers: Mrs. Paul Boe, president; Mrs. Ole Haakeson, secretary; Mrs. Rev. Waage, treasurer.

The Ladies Aid held monthly meetings and often an all day session, when the President would cut out men's shirts and other garments to be sewed there, or to be taken home and finished.

At first dinners or lunches were served free by the hostess to everybody present. The midday meal consisting of meat and potatoes, lefse, flatbrod, speise kjod, ost, rommegrod, bread and butter. Also sandwiches, takkels and several kinds of rich layer cakes were served for lunch.

In 1895 at one of the meetings, Mrs. Kjolborn Livedalen put a glass in the center of the table and said "From now on we contribute ten cents to the Aid for our lunch."

Once a year the finished articles were sold. Part of the

BELOW, LEFT TO RIGHT—Mrs. Andrew Stavens, Mrs. Amund Amundson, Mrs. Per Nyhus.



AID



ABOVE, LEFT TO RIGHT—Mrs. Eric Nyhus, Mrs. Gunder Stavens, Mrs. F. F. Enger, and Mrs. K. Livedalen.

money was used to pay for the materials used, the rest was used for the home church missions and charities.

The first item bought was the church bell which still hangs in the belfry. It calls us to worship in the Little Forks Church on all religious occasions.

On July 27, 1900, when a cyclone completely destroyed the first church the bell was later found undamaged in the cemetery, and when the present church was erected the following year the bell was again put to use.

Our church bell stands as a monument commemorating the work of our Pioneer Mothers.

In the secretary's report for the congregation for May 27, 1883, we find the congregation borrowed money from the Ladies Aid to defray expenses of the church building.

Down through the years the Ladies Aid has done its share in building up the church as it stands today. Besides it has contributed liberally to Missions and Charities.

In the fall of 1942 the Ladies Aid joined the Women's Missionary Federation.

As charter members of the Little Forks Ladies Aid, these can be named; but there may have been many more: Mrs. Rev. Waage; Mrs. Ellef P. Nyhus; Mrs. Per Nyhus; Mrs. Erick Nyhus; Mrs. Fingal Enger; Mrs. Sevat Swenson; Mrs. Kolbjorn Livedahlen; Mrs. Andrew Stavens; Mrs. Gunder Stavens; Mrs. Amund Amundson; Mrs. Ole Haakenson; and Mrs. Paul Boe.

BELOW—An early Ladies Aid Meeting.





ABOVE—The Present Ladies Aid of Little Forks Lutheran Church. Some new members not in photo.

THE LADIES AID

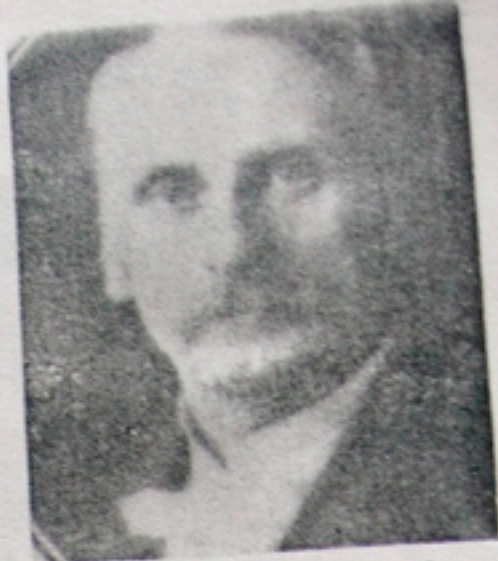
1947

LEFT TO RIGHT—Mrs. Thorwald Stavens, Mrs. Fred Engwald Stovens, Mrs. Carl Enger, and Mrs. Peter Bakken.



Our

SUNDAY SCHOOL



CHRIST YTREHUS
First Superintendent

SUNDAY SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENTS OF THE PAST 70 YEARS

| | |
|------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Christ Ytrehus | Nov. 12, 1884 - 1885 |
| Ole Raaen | 1887 - 1888 - 1889 |
| No Record from | 1890 - 1897 |
| Erick P. Nyhus | 1897 - 1898 - 1899 - 1901 - 1902 |
| | 1904 - 1905 - 1906 - 1907 - 1908 |
| | 1909 - 1910 - 1911 - 1913 - 1916 |
| F. G. Enger | 1900 |
| Felix P. Eoe | 1903 |
| Iver Thompson | 1912 - 1915 |
| Anton Jemtrud | 1914 - 1917 - 1918 - 1919 - 1920 |
| | 1921 - 1922 - 1923 |
| Helga Gjelleriet | 1924 - 1925 - 1926 - 1927 - 1928 |
| | 1929 - 1930 - 1931 - 1932 - 1933 |
| | 1934 - 1935 - 1936 |
| Pauline Ringerud | 1937 |
| Marion Ringerud | 1938 |
| Mrs. Roy Lee | 1939 - 1940 - 1941 - 1942 - 1943 |
| | 1944 |
| Mrs. Oliver Gulson | 1945 - 1946 - 1947 |
| Mrs. Harry Enger | 1948 |

BELOW—Sunday School Children of 1947





Our Sunday School

(CONTINUED)

OLE RAAEN

Early Parochial Teacher
and Second Supt.



SUNDAY SCHOOL TEACHERS—LEFT TO RIGHT, BACK ROW: Mrs. Harry Enger, Superintendent; Mrs. Roy Lee, Mrs. Oliver Gulson, Mrs. Peter Bakken, Mrs. Percy Boe. FRONT ROW: Delores Olson, Mrs. Gilman Wastvedt, Mrs. Roy Lee, Dorothy Enger, Mrs. Irvin Vigen, and Mrs. Fritz Enger, below, left. Below, right, Mrs. Harry Enger, present superintendent.



THE LUTHER LEAGUE



LEFT TO RIGHT—Donna Enger, Elroy Nyhus, Violet Olson, Olaf Ringerud, Jr., and Twila Gulson

Luther League work was begun in 1902 or 1903. Peder Boe was the first president. Miss Thea Gronbeck was the first secretary. Other first officers are not known as the first records have been lost.

The Luther League presents special programs at the church about once a month and occasionally has other gatherings, such as summer picnics, an annual sale and social gatherings with other leagues of the parish. The Christmas party was a joint gathering at the parsonage December 30, 1947.

The Luther League has sent representatives to the International and District Luther League conventions regularly. Peder Boe, Jr., Irving and Jean Eng, Monica Enger, Ardis Enger, Twila Gulson and Olaf Ringerud, Jr., attended the International Convention at Milwaukee, Wisconsin, in June of 1947. Peder Boe, Jr., represented the League at the District meeting at Bismarck April 29, 30 and May 1 and 2, 1943.

Contributions are made each year to the youth work of our Evangelical Lutheran Church. Recently a gift has been given to the Red Willow Chapel Fund.

The present officers are Olaf Ringerud, Jr., president; Twila Gulson, vice president; Donna Enger, secretary; Elroy Nyhus, treasurer, and Violet Olson, Pocket Testament League secretary.



Kolbjorn Olson Livedalen

*First Officers
of
Little Forks Lutheran Church*



Sevat Swenson



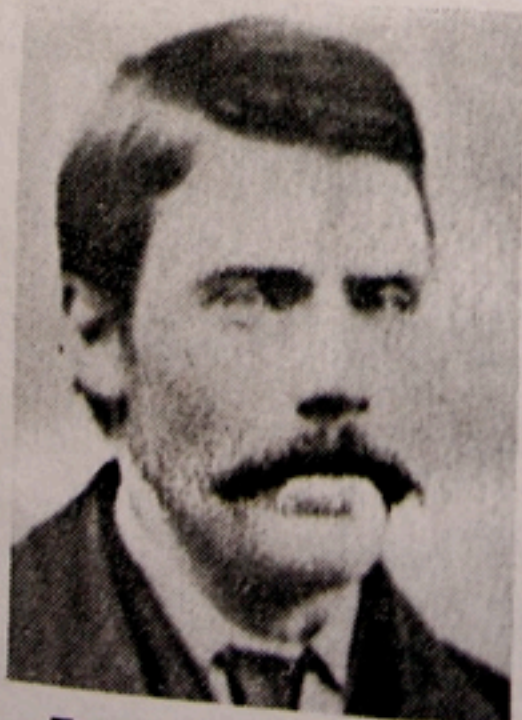
Helge Nelson



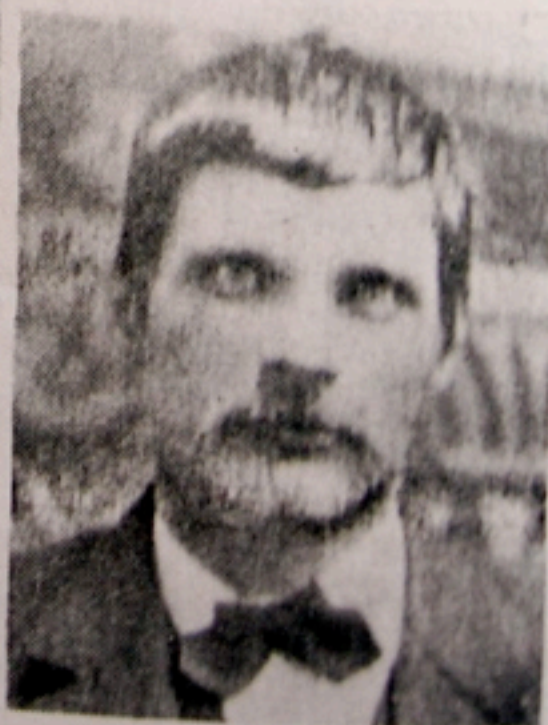
Fingal Enger



Gunder Hanson Stavens



Tangrim Olson Fecher



Ellif D. Nyhus