

Olga Kristine Hemmestad. Born in Gudbrandsdalen on March 5, 1893. Gudbrandsdalen is a valley. Tretten is the town Olga was born in. Tretten means '13.' Got its name in the Middle Ages when the Black Death hit Europe because only thirteen people were left. Faavang to the north got its name because only a few were left after the plague. Øyer to the south got its name because nobody was left.

PARENTS Fredrik and Gina Brodahl. Father ran a country store at Brodahl. Farmed this place too. Wasn't very big. Bought two other places to farm, Rødrud (?) and Skrandrud (?). Family lived at Brodahl. Had cows that had to be taken to the mountains. Made cheese.

BROTHERS AND SISTERS Oldest brother died when he was 4. Olga never knew him. Einar and Albert went to America in 1900. Paul went a year later. Mother always wanted to go to America. Had a brother here. Olga's parents sold their place. It was to become an old folks home. Paul came home before he knew they had sold it. Went back to America with his family. Sister, Marie and brother, Fridtjof. Parents brought another girl. She was related to the family. Her mother had died. Name was Borghild.

GRANDPARENTS One grandfather lived with them for two years he was bedridden before he died. The others died before Olga was born. She was the youngest child. Father's mother lived to be over 90. Could see without glasses when she got that old.

CHILDHOOD Had to help with everything. Farm and store. Had cows and goats. Had to herd the goats in the spring before they took them to the mountains. Father closed the store when Olga was quite young. Another store opened not far away. Not enough business for two stores.

SCHOOL Left Norway when 14. Got only a grade school education. Got confirmed one month after coming to America. Had a private tutor teach her to read when she was little.

IMMIGRATION TO AMERICA Came to Quebec. Family had friends there. Came to Winnipeg, Manitoba first. Planned on buying land in the West. Paulson, the friend in Winnipeg had eight boys. Had been sick. Was afraid something might happen to him. Greeted Olga's family and then moved to Neillsville, Minnesota (?) where he had an uncle. Olga's family decided to go to Thief River Falls, Minnesota where her brother Albert was living. Went to the depot in Winnipeg. Met Paulson there. He couldn't get into the U.S. with all of his kids unless he had someone to sign for him. Olga's family stayed at a hotel in Thief River Falls for a few days while looking for a house to rent. Mother met a Norwegian girl who was studying for confirmation. Mother wanted Olga to get confirmed too. Brother, Paul had been in Thief River Falls before. Offered to take her to the church. Had problems finding the right church. There were four different Lutheran churches in Thief River Falls. Chose the one that was the Lutheran Synod because it looked like a Norwegian Lutheran church. Had a tall tower. It was the one she was looking for. Father was 75 years old when they left. Mother was 19 years younger. Took a boat from Oslo to England. Spent about a week in England. Came to Quebec, then Winnipeg and then Thief River Falls. Stayed there for a year. Then moved to Kerkhoven. Minnesota.

KERKHOVEN, MINNESOTA Had friends there. Rented a farm for three years. Then got tired of Minnesota. Didn't like the weather. Hot in the summer and cold in the winter. Brothers sent away for information on different state. Remembers them getting a lot of literature from Montana. Olga wanted to go to a place that had trees. Didn't

like the prairie.

WASHINGTON STATE Had train tickets to Vancouver. Stopped in Everett, Washington where her brother had a friend. Came in the spring. Stayed a little less than a year. Mother, Paul, and Olga had friends in Parkland, Washington by the name of Løsness. Visited them. Saw Pacific Lutheran Academy. Another friend from Parkland, Hong has been to Ferndale, Washington to visit a relative. Hong's father and Olga's father were confirmed together in Norway. Hong visited them in Everett. Told them about Ferndale.

SETTLING IN FERNDALE, WASHINGTON Family became interested in Ferndale. Hong described Ferndale being like Norway. Everybody asked where you were from. They sent oldest brother, Albert up to check it out. They got a place with a small house. People were very friendly. There was a Swedish settlement in that area. People always came and visited. The house was always full. People invited them over too. Thief River Falls was like this too. Easier to make friends in a new settlement than in an older one. They owned 20 acres. The boys had to clear the land.

PARENT'S DECISION TO LEAVE NORWAY Mother always wanted to go to America. Father was always willing to move. Olga doesn't think it's right to move to another country when you're older. Father was 75 when he came to America. He was interested in things in Norway. Could take part in politics. Couldn't do that he since he didn't know the English language. He could read the Norwegian newspapers printed here. Read the Minneapolis Tidene and Decorah Posten.

1 LEARNING ENGLISH Young people in Ferndale spoke Swedish. Heard a lot of Norwegian and Swedish. Will always have her Norwegian accent. Father died in 1912. In 1918, mother sold the farm in Ferndale to a Swedish family from the Dakotas. Moved to Bellingham, which was a Norwegian settlement. Not much of a chance to learn English there. Learned English through the years.

IMMIGRATION TO AMERICA (See also I-374) Left on May 18, 1907. Spent a week in Oslo. Parents had friends there. Spent a week in England. It was a long trip.

GETTING STARTED IN AMERICA Olga didn't have much experience with this. Was at home. Father didn't do much. They had enough to get along. Mother liked to have company. Would have dinner parties. Remembers one man talking to her father after a Sunday dinner party. Said if he'd have worked as hard in Norway as he has in America, he would have made it in Norway too. Had to work hard. Worked hard in Norway too, but at a slower pace.

MEETING PEOPLE Met people through church. People in Thief River Falls were very friendly. People would come to call.

MEETING SPOUSE Met him in Bellingham. He was a fisherman. Got married in 1920. Just went to a minister. Invited friends over for a reception. Weren't many big weddings in those days.

CHURCH What is now Central Lutheran was at one time, the Norwegian church in town. Some of Olga's friends studied for confirmation in Norwegian. Olga still goes to Central Lutheran. Drove to church until she was 75. She was getting old, the car was getting old, and people were stealing things from it. Had to park it in front of the house. Was going to Ferndale once. Tried to start the car. Noticed the hood was unlatched and the battery was missing. The church has van, which brings her to church.

TRIPS BACK TO NORWAY Went in 1960. Visited her home. Doesn't have any relatives. Knew the lady who was in charge of the old folks home when Olga and her family left Norway. (See also I-152) Her old home was no longer an old folks home. Two bachelors came home from America and donated money for a new one. The people in Olga's old home treated her husband and her like family. Husband was from Kvaefjord in northern Norway. (See also I-783) Olga and her husband went north too; all the way to Finland. Changes in Norway, roads straightened and widened. Many hills in Norway. People didn't build with the view in mind like they do now. The lake Olga lived by is called Losna. The river is called Laagen.

FAMILY IN AMERICA Borghild, the second cousin that Olga's family adopted was five when they came to America. Sister, Marie for married. Died about a week after giving birth to her first child. Brother, Paul went to school. Taught German at Columbia College in Everett. Other two brothers stayed in the area too.

CITIZENSHIP Husband applied for it. Olga applied for herself. Can't vote if you're not a citizen. Didn't study for it much. There were things she already knew about the government. Had to read up a bit. Got it in Bellingham.

MOVING BACK TO FERNDALE Sold farm to family from North Dakota. They were supposed to get money from their farm in North Dakota. They had family problems and weren't able to pay. Mother got the farm back. Olga moved out there while taking care of her mother. She was in bed for two years. Brothers felt Olga should have the farm because she was taking care of mother. Husband was fishing in Alaska in the summer. Husband died in 1964. Olga stayed not quite a year in Ferndale after his death. Sold the farm. Moved back to Bellingham. Ferndale has grown a lot.

1031 FAMILY AND FRIENDS IN NORWAY Corresponds with the people who bought the family farm in Norway. Had been in America 50 years before she went back to Norway. That was too long. Doesn't have the same meaning when you wait that long. School friends were old people just like Olga and her husband. Better not to wait more than 20 years.

MEMORIES OF CHILDHOOD Remembers going to her aunt's place. Had to take the train to the north. Came home with her grandfather. They were closed in a compartment on the train. Olga got scared. Didn't know how they'd get out. Remembers fifth birthday. Didn't usually make a fuss about birthdays but her grandfather came. Brought her a pretty apron. It was white with pink and blue small flowers.

TRAIN TRAVEL BEFORE IMMIGRATING TO NORWAY Railroad was built when Olga was a baby. The engineer for the railroad in that area rented the upstairs of their house. Olga remembers when he left. Lillehammer was the closest town for them. They did their shopping there. Mother liked having company in Norway too.

WORK BEFORE LEAVING NORWAY Wasn't old enough to have developed an occupation. Helped bring the goats up to the mountain in the summer. Let them run loose until the spring. Then had to herd them so they wouldn't get in the fields. Did some Hardanger embroidery once while watching the goats. Got so dirty from running back and forth that they never got it clean again.

CHRISTMAS A lot of partying from one place to another. Lots to eat. Someone would come dressed up as a julebuk. They'd try to guess who it was. He'd hand out goodies. All of the butchering had to be done after the cold weather so that they'd keep. Didn't have freezers. Did a lot of baking. Have kept a lot of the same Christmas traditions here too. In Norway, there was a lot of work to do before Christmas. Everything was prepared for Christmas so they could take it easy. The men had the wood split and piled up. The house was cleaned. Mother always took down the curtains before baking and butchering. Put them back up when everything was done. You could see Christmas. Everything looked nice.

CANNING Butchered a pig every year for Christmas. Wouldn't keep as well here in Washington because of the warmer climate. Did a lot of canning. Canned meat and fruit. Mother used 100 two-quart jars. Later used one quart jars. Finally pint jars. Fruit was expensive when they were living in Minnesota. Canned salmon that her husband would bring home. Remembers going to a restaurant when they first got to Everett, Washington. Could get huge slices of salmon or halibut for 25 cents. Another time, heard about a cannery in Blaine, Washington that was giving away fish. Albert and Olga took the lumber wagon up there. They filled the wagon and gave them two spring salmon, which they didn't usually give away. Albert and Olga gave fish to their neighbors.