LINDGREN MEMORIES

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*Linnae's notes, July 2020: I have omitted from this copy of "Lindgren Memories" the Appendix with Lindgren family history and genealogy that was at the end of the 2004 printed booklet.

** The page numbers in "I Remember Dad" differ by one from the 2004 booklet because I left out the map on p. 12. Otherwise, the document page numbers are unchanged.

Introduction to the Lindgren Memories

By Linnae Coss (2004)

The Lindgren memories are six documents recalling the lives of Amy and Frank Lindgren, and the early years of their eight children. The documents and dates written are:

I Remember Dad (1968)
Things I Remember (1969)
I Remember Mother (1985)
Growing Up in Iowa (1987)
Aunt Nellie's Memories (1988)
I Remember My Grandparents (2004)

The first four documents are memories written by the children on several themes. My mother Ruth Coss organized the project of collecting them. Some stories are repeated, as the different themes overlap. The children write in birth order:

1903 Gene (Regina) Dickerson
1904 Gil (Gilmore) Lindgren
1907 Ev (Evelyn) Winblade
1910 Obie (Obed) Lindgren
1913 Ruth Coss
1915 Em (Emory) Lindgren
1917 Irene Lessing Dahlen
1920 Roy (LeRoy) Lindgren

The fifth document (Aunt Nellie's Memories) is a family history by Roy, Gene and Ruth, recorded as they took notes on conversations with their mother Amy Lindgren's sister, Aunt Nellie. The sixth is Gil's son Dick Lindgren's recollection of his grandparents.

In these documents, I have added some notes of explanation in brackets – thanks to Uncle Roy, my cousin Dick Lindgren, and especially Aunt Irene for answering questions about these notes, and to Aunt Irene and my brother Jon Coss for their extensive genealogy research information.

These memories are a tribute to a way of life which no longer exists. In the early years, farming was just becoming mechanized, and many things were still done by hand and with horse power. Frank Lindgren had one of the first tractors, and was eager to make use of the new technology. The Depression brought some worries. But by and large, life was good, thanks to Frank and Amy's hard work and ingenuity, and to the support they and the children found in their faith and their community of family and friends.

A brief family history

Amy and Frank Lindgren and their children lived on a farm in the small town of Lanyon, Iowa, 20 miles south of Fort Dodge. The community was mostly Swedish at that time (first half of the 1900s).

Frank Lindgren was born on July 4, 1873, in Hamneda, Sweden, in the southern province of Småland. He emigrated to America in 1893 – he was 19 when he left, and

arrived after his 20th birthday. He worked for a short time in a bakery in Chicago, then moved to Lanyon, working first as a hired hand on the farm of Amy's uncle John Burman.

Amy (Clara Naomi or Naemi) Johnson was born on a farm in Lanyon in 1878. Her parents had emigrated from Sweden in the 1860s. Amy and Frank met in Lanyon, and were married in 1902. It was a double wedding ceremony, the other couple being Amy's brother Frank I. Johnson and Esther Carlson. Newly married Frank I. and Esther took over the Johnson family farm, and parents J.P. and Johanna Dorothea Johnson retired to a house in Lanyon.

Frank and Amy Lindgren first rented a farm northwest of Harcourt. Then they bought a farm (160 acres) east of Lanyon (near neighbors named Kullberg – it later became the Anderson place). In 1915, they sold that farm and bought a second (290 acres) south of Lanyon, the farm where the children grew up and which eventually became son Gil's. They lived in the original house on the farm for five years; then Frank tore it down and had a new house built in 1920. The children attended a one-room country school until 1916, when the larger Lanyon Consolidated School was built in town.

The "Grandma and Grandpa" mentioned in the memories were Amy's parents, J.P. (John Peter) and Johanna Dorothea Johnson. Frank's parents remained in Sweden. J.P. and Johanna were retired when their Lindgren grandchildren were growing up. J.P. died in 1910, at age 76, when he was hit by a train. Johanna died in 1930, at age 83.

The children had many aunts and uncles living in the area. Among them, Amy's three sisters – Lizzie Lindgren, Esther Rohden, and Nellie Anderson – and her brother, Frank I., who had taken over their parent's farm. A second brother, Obed, was a missionary in China. There were also great-aunts and uncles nearby, siblings of Amy's mother and father.

Frank Lindgren had two sisters and a brother who had emigrated from Sweden like himself. Jennie Lambert and John (married to Amy's sister Lizzie) lived nearby. Another sister, Selma Anderson, moved to Chicago. He also had two sisters in Sweden.

After 39 years of farming, Amy and Frank retired in 1941 and moved into the town of Lanyon. Son Gil rented a year, then bought their farm in 1942. Frank kept active building the hay loaders which he had designed while on the farm. In 1946 they moved to a house in Fort Dodge. In 1950 or 1951, they moved to another house in Fort Dodge, at 301 K Street, one of three which Frank had built. Frank died in 1953, at age 79.

Amy's sister Nellie, nine years younger, was married to Ernest Anderson, a pastor. They had no children. When Ernest died in 1953, within three months of Frank, Nellie moved in with Amy in Fort Dodge. They lived together until the mid or late 1960s, when Nellie moved to a retirement home. But even then, she visited Amy often. Aunt Nellie died in 1986, at age 99.

In her last nine years, Amy had a live-in companion and housekeeper, her friend and former boarder Esther Mocklebust. Although her eyesight had failed greatly by then,

she kept busy making crocheted rugs for friends and family. She lived in her own house at 301 K Street until her death in 1981, at age 103.

I Remember Dad
(1968)

IN SWEDEN

Ev

[From age 16 to 19 (1890-1893), Frank worked in a general store in Hamneda run by the Hemberg family. Ev and her husband Vern went to Sweden in 1968 and Ev spoke with the Hemberg's son, then 83.]

Johan Hemberg (83 years old) said Dad gave him his skates when he left for the USA and he treasured them. Hemberg was 8 years old then. Tears came to his eyes as he recalled the day so long ago. Hemberg said Dad used to walk to and from the store, morning and evening, a distance of 3 or 4 miles one way. If the weather was really bad Dad would stay overnight – the Hemberg family lived in quarters over the store.

Hemberg said there were no automobiles at that time, and the nearest railroad station to Hamneda was in Markaryd, a distance of about 10 miles. They took Dad there by horse and wagon [when he left for America]. They had no buggy. Dad took the train to Malmö where he got on the ship for the US. Hemberg recalled how very disappointed he was when Dad didn't come along with his brother Uncle John Lindgren on his one and only trip back to Sweden.

Obie

Conversation with Aunt Jennie at age 88 (1971):

- In Dad's family the children were, oldest to youngest: Amanda, John, Frank, Ida (passed away in infancy), another Ida, Selma, Jennie. Also, Olga, a foster daughter.
- Aunt Jennie said Dad was his mother's pet.
- In school in Sweden the two most important subjects were Bible and geography.
- There was a river nearby [the Lagan River] where Dad swam in summer and skated in winter.
- One day the crown prince, the son of King Oscar, was hunting near Dad's home. While going through a gate something happened and the gate almost fell on him. All the kids watching laughed. After this incident the crown prince had dinner at a neighbor's house and Aunt Jennie helped.
- Dad did not care to fight, and if a bigger kid picked on him, he would call his big brother John.

- One day Dad caught a big fish in the river. A bigger kid took it away from him, so Dad called John. John grabbed the fish and hit the kid in the face with it.
- Jennie said, people always wanted the Magnusson kids to work for them because they would work.
- When Dad was working in the store in Hamneda and business was slow, he would chop wood outside. One day Jennie and some kids came to buy a quarter pound of coffee and Dad knew they didn't have enough money, so he supplied the difference, as he always did, Jennie said.
- One night when Dad came home he was completely soaked and had almost drowned. While crossing a bridge over a river he had fallen in.
- While working at the store and then at home on the weekend, one day he decided that he would not go back. His mother had to convince him to return.
- When Dad's mother was sick, he would come home every night.
- When Dad left home to go to the USA at about 18 years, his mother wept. [Actually, he left at 19, just before his 20th birthday.]
- In the USA, when Dad began courting Amy, Jennie was not pleased, because she figured he would never go back to Sweden.

Ruth

Dad was "big brother" to his youngest sister, Aunt Jennie Lambert (nine years difference). He would roughhouse with her but was never rough. Aunt Jennie recalls that their mother would say, "Wait until Frank comes" when something in the house needed to be done. He could always find a way.

Conversation with Aunt Nellie (1971): Dad's name was Peterson [Petersson], after Peter Gustav Magnusson [his father] ("son" was added to the father's first name to make the son's last name.) Uncle John and Dad came to America and found there were so many Petersons that John decided on Lindgren for a last name (translated: linden tree – branch). Dad followed in taking the name, as did Selma and Jennie.

IN IOWA

Gene

- I remember that Dad always "graded" the driveway after every rain. The usual time was after the day's work in the fields but before the evening chores were started.
- I remember that Dad never used any stronger words than "Good Land" and "Good Heaven." When he said "Good Heaven!" we knew that his ire was really up.
- Once when I was very young, probably in second grade, someone in school told me to "go to Hell." After I'd related this at home that evening, Dad said, "If anyone ever tells you that again you just say 'You go ahead and show me the way!' "
- The day of the election [in 1932] that put Roosevelt into office, and assured everyone that the worst of the Depression was over, had been a long one. Dad had worked at the polls. Coming home that night he got stuck in a snow drift. It was hard shoveling but Dad related, "Snow was never so easy to shovel as it was that night."

Gil

I remember Dad having one of the first tractors in the community. He and Uncle John had a threshing machine together and used two tractors to run it.

When I was 16 years old, Dad and I, Justus and Hilmer Carlson went to the Iowa State Fair in Des Moines. [Justus Carlson was Frank's best friend, and Hilmer was his son.] A car tried to pass us and Dad did his best to prevent them. Finally, in desperation, the man in the car behind thought he could make it. But in doing so, he hit Dad's car. Both cars stopped. All of us got out. The other driver seemed to think it was his fault, and handed Dad five or ten dollars. We resumed our journey. After a long silence, Dad remarked, "Let this be a lesson to you, Gilmore."

Ev

- In a letter to Aunt Selma [Frank's sister], as she was making plans to come to the USA also following Dad, Dad wrote, "I have no money to send you for the trip, but I have a heart full of love when you get here." (Dag [Dagmar, Selma's daughter] has the letter.)
- Dad was mowing weeds with a horse-drawn scythe near the house, when I (6 years old), ran out to him holding up a letter edged in black. It was from Sweden – his mother had passed away. He got down from the seat, checked the horses, took my hand, and we went into the house. [Frank's mother died in 1913, at age 74.]
- [The "Grandma" the children knew was Amy's mother Johanna Dorothea Johnson, who lived in Lanyon.] Dad was Grandma's favorite son-in-law. She said if she ever had to live with any of her children or in-laws, she would want it to be Frank.
- On Sunday mornings after breakfast, Dad would always read from the Bible in Swedish. Everyone had to be present around the table. After reading he would also pray in Swedish. Then to church, all of us.
- I remember when we siblings would have our disputes Dad would sit on a chair, call the two quarrelsome ones over, and say, "Kläppä hän." The boisterous one would have to pat the other on head or shoulder, meaning "all is forgiven" or "I like you again."
- I remember how Dad would lift a jug for a cool drink of water during oat harvest, carrying the water jug along on the oat cutter machine. We would bring "4 o'clock" coffee or lemonade and cake or cookies to him in the field.
- I remember how he used to put the bridle on our work horse Bill and then hoist us up on his bare back to ride. If the roads were muddy Dad would hitch Barney and Bill to the surrey and drive us to school.
- I remember Dad's unusually blue eyes. I always thought of them as navy-blue eyes. He always wore jaunty hats. They were always turned up in back and down in the front, worn at an angle.
- I remember when corn husking was finished, how Dad enjoyed eating oyster stew and crackers for the evening meal to celebrate.

- I remember when we used to come home as adults for a visit, and when the day came to leave, Dad would always pray after breakfast these words: "Bevära våra barn när di resa hem" – Protect our children as they travel home.
- I remember how 10 years before Vern and I ever went to Sweden, we were saying that one day we were going, and Dad drew up a map of his former surroundings and then he smiled and said, "Helsa hem" – Greet home.

Obie

[In 1915, the Lindgrens bought the farm south of Lanyon where the children grew up. They lived in the original house until 1920, when Frank had a new house built and tore down the old one.]

- When only the basement [of the new house] was finished on the farm, Dad came home one day to find we had had a mud fight and all the walls were plastered with mud. "Now you can all get busy again and clean it up," he said.
- All of us were doing some broad jumping just north of the barn. All thought we were pretty good until Dad came and beat us all.
- I remember when Dad couldn't make it up the Fort Dodge River hill in our old car and blocked one wheel to keep it from rolling while the radiator cooled down.
- I remember when Dad hitched up Bill and Barney to the sleigh and we all went to Justus Carlson's for Christmas Eve.
- I remember Dad when, on his way to Chicago with a rail car load of cattle, the conductor made a charge of $9 and some cents, and Dad gave him a $10 bill. Said the conductor, "That makes quite a hole in a $10 bill." Said Dad, "Yes, but not a very big hole out of a load of cattle."
- I remember when Dad would tell the joke about the man who was hard of hearing. He went into a hardware store and bought an article. When he asked "How much?" the proprietor said, "25 cents." The man gave him 5 cents and walked out. The proprietor said to another customer, "That's OK – I made 2 cents anyway." [2 + 5 – 5]

Ruth

- I remember hearing the sound of the grates in the coal furnace being shaken. That meant that it was early morning and Dad was firing up the furnace.
- I remember the play house that Dad built for Irene and me in the grove of trees near the house. There were 2x4 supports, a roof, and the walls were of twine, stretched back and forth. The furniture was made of old boxes, old chairs, etc.
- When we were little, we'd go swimming on a hot day. Dad would swim with one of us sitting on his back.
- I remember the old green Buick that Dad had. We'd all pile into the car on a hot summer evening and drive to John Lindgren's for a visit.
- Dad would take a short nap after the noon meal. He'd lie down on the floor in the summertime, put a newspaper over his face, and snore. After "40 winks" he'd be up and back to work.
- Dad would sharpen our pencils for homework. With a sharp knife, he'd whittle the end of the pencil, then sharpen the lead into a fine point.

- I remember Dad coming in for a quick shave before making a hurried trip to Fort Dodge. He's prop up the mirror on the kitchen table, strop the straight edge, and go to work on his beard.
- I remember Dad looking for a tool that had disappeared. One of us had been using it, I guess. Someone suggested that probably Dad had used it and not put it back. After one withering look, we resumed our search and it was never suggested again.
- About discipline, I remember Dad giving a quick spank on the bottom, or a slap on the back of the head. None of us can remember a hard spanking.
- I remember Christmas Eve at our house, or a relative's. The smells and tastes of the Swedish smorgasbord were great. After the dinner, we'd all gather around the Christmas tree and Dad, or an uncle, would read the Christmas story in Swedish.
- I remember Dad playing with my son Jon where he was about a year old. They were both on the floor rolling a ball back and forth. Then Dad played "bear," growling at Jon and pretending to attack him.

Em

I remember when I went with Dad (by car) to Omaha to buy calves for feeding and fattening. We stayed on the seventh floor of a hotel. It must have been right after the threshing season because in the middle of the night I yelled, "We're going to put the straw-stack right there!" He told me the next morning that he didn't sleep a wink after that. He was afraid I'd walk in my sleep and maybe crawl out the window – to my death!

At the end of threshing season all of the accounts had to be settled with the other participating neighbors. Dad also paid Ob and me a small fee for some incidental chores in connection with the operation. One year, we figured out what he owed us with some simple mathematics. (We did this in the "balcony room" [the east bedroom, which Em and Obed shared].) I went down and presented him with the bill and came back up with the money. I guess we figured we should do some double-checking and found we had overcharged him a dollar, so I dutifully brought it down to him. I have never forgotten his remark: "I'm glad you boys are honest." I went back up to the room and again we went over the account only to find to our chagrin that we were right the first time! Neither one of us had the nerve to ask him to return the dollar!

Dad and Mother took a three- or four-day trip and left the operation of the farm to Ob and me. The main job was to get some 40 acres of corn cultivated and I believe do some haying. The job was done when the folks came home, and though usually rather sparing in compliments (I thought) Dad met us by the corn field gate and said, "You did a good job, boys."

I remember when Dad had his fistula operation in Omaha in about 1932. I suppose I heard it secondhand, but I understand the nurse in the recovery room said, "Mr. Lindgren, it's time to wake up – time to wake up!" Dad's response: "Vat's the roosh!" (What's the rush?)

In September 1933 [at age 18] I went forward and knelt in prayer in the Lanyon church after an evening evangelistic sermon. There were others who responded similarly. I had not been on my knees long before I felt an arm around me. Dad had come and knelt beside me for encouragement. I will always remember his simple words: "I'm so glad you came."

I remember when I told Dad I was planning to go into the ministry. Only one statement: "Emory, the world needs good preachers."

I'd like to translate two letters Dad wrote to [wife] Ruth and me. The first one was apparently written while we were still in Seattle on the way to Alaska [as missionaries of the Swedish Covenant Church]:

> Dear Ruthie and Emory:
>
> At this time you are one and we congratulate you. May God be your refuge throughout life. Whatever you meet – all will be well. Here is a memory verse: "I will instruct thee and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go: I will guide thee with mine eye." Psalms 32:8
>
> There is no more news so I will finish. Write as soon as you know when you will be able to go to Alaska.
>
> Lovingly, Pa and Ma

(Aunt Nellie helped translate the tougher words.)

This is the second letter:

> Dear Ruthie and Emory:
>
> I haven't written since you came to Alaska. You haven't told us what kind of weather you have, if it is dark all day or how long it is dark.
>
> I wonder what kind of a Christmas you had in Alaska. It was lonesome here at home. Only LeRoy was home. But I am glad and thankful to God that you and Ruth went out in the mission field. You will have to sacrifice much but God will reward you if you are faithful in His service. You have not told us if Ruthie gets her support from the denomination.
>
> Write often and tell us much (mycket) how it is in Alaska. If you can read Swedish I will write again.
>
> Lovingly, Pa

<u>Irene</u>

I remember Dad coming in from outdoor work when I was a young child to stay with Roy and me while Mom went to Ladies Aid meetings and everyone else was in school. When we were small Dad's names for Roy and me were always, Peter and Honey.

When Roy and I were about 8 and 11, we had two pet ducks. The whole family was gone one day. Upon returning we missed the ducks but found duck feathers in Dad's hog yard [the assumption being, the hogs ate the ducks]. Roy and I wasted no time, and

we verbally presented Dad with a bill for two ducks! I remember Dad laughed, really enjoyed our "logic" and paid us on the spot!

I remember that Dad would bring presents to us when he returned from a trip to Chicago where he had gone to sell a load of cattle. I especially remember the dolls he once brought Ruth and me – they were identical. Each doll was dressed in a blue-figured dress and each had black shiny slippers. We were playing with the new dolls one day and "Yunta Cawla" walked in. (He never knocked, did he?) ["Yunta Cawla" was an itinerant who worked here and there in return for a meal.] Ruth wanted to be friendly and she said, "Papa shipta dooka e Chicaago." That is Swedish for, "Papa bought the doll in Chicago." I said nothing as I recall. I let Ruth do the conversation in Swedish

I remember Dad reading from the Bible and praying in Swedish after breakfast on Sunday morning.

I remember Dad telling of driving home from working as a trustee during a presidential election in the Depression days. Herbert Hoover was through and FDR had been elected [in 1932]. It looked like a better future, of course. Dad said, "I was so happy my car just flew over the snow drifts!" Dad was "personality-plus." I thought he was "cute as a button."

I remember how Dad enjoyed having his hair washed. I did it whenever I was at home [as an adult]. Then I would wrap a big Turkish towel around his head and he would sit down and read the evening paper.

I remember Dad's impatience one day when he was building Voga's house, next to Mother's present home [at 301 K Street in Fort Dodge]. An "expert" in figuring stairways had been employed by Dad to plan the stairs to the second floor. He had spent the entire morning, maybe longer, and it was obvious he had made mistakes and had to re-figure. Dad said to Gene and me (we were visiting Mom and Dad that week) – "Den dombbomen (that dumbbell) – if he isn't finished by noon I'll fire him and do the stairs myself!"

I remember how very much Dad looked forward to celebrating the golden wedding anniversary with Mother [in 1952]. In spite of their protests, they really enjoyed the open house held at the Covenant Church. They had objected to all but the simplest of festivities. The next day I said to Em, "They really enjoyed the day, didn't they, despite their protests ahead of time." Em said, "Yes, they did – almost more than they should have!" (after all the protesting). Dad and Mom drove Em to Minneapolis then and Em flew back to Alaska [where he and Ruthie were missionaries].

I remember Dad recuperating from his heart attack. Mother had given Dad his supper on a tray, in bed. Mom and I were eating in the kitchen. Dad called Mother to come. He handed her the dish of fruit Jell-O, saying, "I don't want this!" He could have just left it on the tray uneaten but he was kind of lonesome and wanted a little attention. I got a big kick out of the incident. And I said to Mom, "Let's eat our meals on trays, too, in

the bedroom with Dad and keep him company." We did. [Frank had two heart attacks within a couple of years, and died after the second, in 1953.]

Roy

I remember the enormous amount of patience that Dad had with kids who did things that weren't very bright. He never did say much, if anything, but somehow we rarely made the same mistake twice.

I remember on a warm day Dad would come in the side door and head for the coolest spot in the house, the water tank in the basement, because there on the cool floor would be all those jars of homemade root beer.

I remember answering an ad about a correspondence course in drafting. Not long thereafter a salesman appeared and told me I had signed up for a course and owed him $200. About that time Dad came along and not long thereafter the salesman disappeared.

I remember that Dad figured every day except Sunday was a work day, summer, winter, spring, or fall. There was always some work to be done. I think it was Obie who figured out that if all the other work ever got done we might "sort the corn cobs" just to keep busy.

I remember Dad repairing the corn picker under the "yard light" and getting up at 2:30 a.m. to pick corn for a few hours before the sun thawed the ground and turned it into sticky mud. I also remember Dad drawing house plans.

I remember Dad's idea of how to meet a train – be there at least an hour early. Many are the times we left home at 7 o'clock to meet a 9 o'clock train in Boone, 30 miles away. It must have been a carryover from trips to the State Fair in the old Buick when we had all those flat tires.

I remember the inventing and improvising that Dad used to do. The list would be endless. The butter churn that was hooked up to an electric motor. The corn sheller that was taken apart piece by piece and reassembled "upstairs" in the corn crib. The two barns that were made into one. The unusual bathroom that he created at the first Fort Dodge house by knocking a big hole in the back wall of that brick house. [They bought the brick house in 1946. Not until 1950 or '51 did they move to 301 K Street, the house Frank had built for them in Fort Dodge.]

I remember when Dad had a heart attack and was supposed to stay off his feet for six weeks. In spite of this, he moved the telephone from the dining room into the bedroom so he could use it. But he followed the doctor's orders – he sat in a chair and Mother pulled it here and there while he switched the wires around.

LAST DAYS

Gil

I remember the last time I saw Dad. He was at the Lutheran Hospital. He woke up briefly and said, "Hello, Gilmore – I'll never live through this." Then he fell back to sleep. This was about 3 p.m. About 6 p.m. he was gone.

Ev

At Dad's funeral, Aunt Jennie said, "Lille Frans (Little Frank), he is gone" and she wiped her eyes. He was a slight man in stature, about 5 feet 8 or 9 inches, but his love for his children was big, big. Dad passed away April 24, 1953. He would have been 80 years old the following May 4th. Bless his memory.

After Dad had passed away, Uncle Obed Johnson [Amy's brother] once said of him, "He had gray matter." Gust Kullberg said once, "I knew your Dad a long time – he was a wonderful man." He had known him 42 years.

Em

In a letter Ev wrote me after the funeral, I quote: "Aunt Nellie told me that Mother had said, when they were alone before he went to the hospital, Dad asked her to hold his hand. He said, 'Hold my hand because I am soon going to heaven, and you follow me'."

Irene

I remember the peace and quiet of the Lost Grove Cemetery the day of Dad's funeral. The sun was shining and the meadowlarks were singing their loveliest. It was such peace and quiet – and sadness. But we are lucky to have had such a great Dad!

Things I Remember
(1969)

Gene

- I remember Grandma's enormous pansies in a round bed and the sweet peas climbing the fence.
- ["Grandma" was Amy's mother Johanna Dorothea Johnson. Her son Obed went to China as a missionary in 1909.] I remember spending a night or two with Grandma and waiting in the Lanyon railroad station for the Interurban [a local one-car electric train]. One time "old man" Kullberg dropped by Grandma's house and, about Uncle Obed going to China, said to Grandma, "I don't understand how you can let Obed go to China." Her reply: "Well, it isn't easy but if it is God's will, then certainly I won't stand in the way." (This conversation is translated from Swedish.)
- I remember Aunt Nellie [Amy's sister] coming to the farm when our little brother Edwin died [in 1909]. He was just over six weeks old.
- Christmas when I was young meant appearing in a program at church, and that too meant a new dress and shoes. The big meal was on Christmas Eve with all kinds of Swedish goodies, with relatives to share it in one house or another.
- After the dishes were done came another program. This was more or less a rehearsal for the big Sunday school program which was always held about dusk on Christmas Day. Every child memorized a Bible verse and recited before that vast audience! A few daring souls sang in solo, duet or small group. The program at home always either started or ended with Dad reading the Christmas story (in Swedish) from the Bible.
- In the small town church was our whole social and religious life, combined always with a real feeling of belonging because we became involved.
- I remember waking up to religious music on the radio on weekdays.
- I remember husking corn by hand and getting $25 for the season's work. When that big harvest was done we always celebrated with oyster stew.
- About 1923 [after Gene had become a teacher], another teacher and I wanted to have our hair "bobbed," which was fast becoming the vogue then. We went to our school superintendent, and he said, "Sure, go ahead – if too many people object you can wear some kind of hat in the classroom." But I had to clear it at home, too, I thought. No problem there, but apparently Mother felt the need to talk it over with Grandma.

  Whatever the conversation was all about I don't know, but according to Mother, she said, "Well, you had your hair cut short when you were young." Grandma – "Well, it was the style then." Mother – "Well, it is the style now again." So home for Christmas and up to Grandma's we went to get the worst over first. She said, "Well, turn around and let me see." I turned. She approved! Thus my first stylish haircut.

Gil

- I remember going for walks with Grandpa Johnson. He was a nice fellow. [Amy's father J.P. (John Peter) Johnson died in 1910 when Gil was 6 years old.]

- Since we did not have electricity until about 1920 and even then electric refrigerators were unknown, we would have to drink milk while it was fresh and warm. For meat in the summer, Mother would quite often dress a chicken. In the winter we had dried beef, etc. We always had enough protein to eat.
- The good old days were when we picked corn by hand. Dad had one of the first mechanical corn pickers (one row at a time). It took three weeks to pick 80 acres.
- Dad owned a threshing machine in partnership with [his brother] John Lindgren for several years. The company put a long shaft on the cylinder so it could be powered by two tractors instead of one. Dad later owned a threshing machine in partnership with Justus Carlson.
- Cutting the oats with a binder and "shocking" it, then threshing, was a long process.
- I remember when grain was hauled to town by asking neighbors to bring a team and wagon.
- The first tractor we had was a Mogul with a very large flywheel. It had three speeds. However, to change speeds it was necessary to change the sprocket on the rear wheel. This job as I remember took several hours. It did not have a radiator. The engine was cooled by enclosing the cylinder with an enclosed "tub" of water which it seemed was always very hot and steam would always come out of a stack.
- I remember when the drainage ditch was put in on the now-Anderson farm [east of Lanyon]. [The procedure was called "tiling."] David Carlson said, "Everybody talks about tiling. They even talk about it on Sunday."
- I remember the first car we had. It was a Model T Ford, when we lived on the place now occupied by Dale Anderson [east of Lanyon]. Since the roads were bad in winter it could only be used part of the year.
- The Lanyon Consolidated School opened in the fall of 1916. When basketball started a couple of years later, the games were played in the daytime, partly I suppose because the Interurban did not run very late at night, and also because the "old-timers" considered playing basketball an unpardonable sin.
- The Interurban of the Fort Dodge, Des Moines and Southern Railway was our connection with the outside world. It was very convenient to have transportation available every two hours.

<u>Ev</u>

I remember Grandpa's funeral, although I can't remember him at all. It was held in Grandma's house [she lived 20 years longer], and Dad lifted me up by the arms so as to see the casket. There were so many people that they had to stand. I recently found out that Grandpa passed away in November of 1910, which would have made me three years and nine months old. Who said a person can't remember anything before five or six?

The first car we had was a Ford, which of course had to be cranked in the front to start it. The top folded down even though it was a four-door, and when the top was up, isinglass side curtains were fastened down when it rained or snowed. It must have been

about 1912 the first time Dad took us all for a ride in it (we lived on the farm near Kullberg's [east of Lanyon]). I was so proud of Dad, and that he could steer it, and this great conveyance he had afforded us, that as I stood behind him, in the back seat, I put my arm around his shoulder to show my great feeling for him. He promptly told me to take my "hand away – it makes me nervous." I guess he needed every wit he had to steer this great new thing on wheels – at least that's the thought I got, and I did remove my hand, not one bit dismayed.

Aunt Esther Rohden [Amy's oldest sister] taught me, along with her kids, I guess, to count to ten in Indian. She had had real Indian playmates, or acquaintances of some sort, from whom she had learned. The counting went: In-sheam, Neck-uh-ti, Hunt-a, Aw-za, Wiz, On-he, Nay-he, Nay-heather, Shock-na. Wish I knew what tribe it was.

In the "Little White Schoolhouse" that I attended through third grade, one spring a program was given for the parents. One song we sang, as a group, went: "Does the wind with your umbrella try to have a little play on a very rainy day? Oh, don't get cross at the wind and rain for the sun will shine again. It never will do to fret I say. So hurrah for a rainy day." We yelled "Hurrah." Nellie and Jennie Burgh were the teachers, Jennie for two years, Nellie for one.

I remember going to Callender [northwest of Lanyon] on the Interurban with my seventh grade teacher, Alma Olson, for the weekend. She invited Maurine Bortz, and we became friends through high school. Back home again I felt like I'd been to Timbuktu – so far away. I've often wondered if that dear teacher sparked my insatiable love for travel. If she did, bless her! To this day I often wonder where and how she and Maurine Bortz are.

I remember the Covenant Church which was set out in the open prairie with trees around it, west of Lanyon, where Fourth of July celebrations would be held. The food was picnic style, and homemade ice cream was on the menu. Some would bring a freezer of "red" ice cream, probably colored with raspberry juice, some plain vanilla "white" and some "blue," colored no doubt with blueberry juice (or maybe grape juice?). The children were given miniature silk American flags. I also remember the "Fourth's" on the farm held out near the road under the trees, that Ruth mentions.

I remember the huge mulberry tree that grew on the west side of the church where the Sunday school addition is now standing. I later learned that mulberry trees have a Biblical meaning.

I remember along with Ruth the food at Grandma's "get-togethers" – especially the good crock-baked beans and homemade biscuits, and the little cob-fed cook stove in her little kitchen, with the sink and small hand pump on it, in the corner of the room. I remember the pink flowering almond bush on the lawn, the most beautiful pink I ever saw, I thought. Her sweet peas growing by the fence never smelled so sweet as when she would let us pick a small bouquet.

I remember in the 1920s when the farm [south of Lanyon] was called "Cedar Drive Stock Farm" and Dad raised thoroughbred Hampshire hogs. A big stockyard was set up,

with terraced seats, so the buyers could see and bid on the hogs as they were brought into the straw-covered center auction circle. Caterers brought huge boxes of round hamburger buns with ham inside, and coffee. They were there for the taking and I would gorge, not because I thought they were so terribly good, but because they, and the occasion, were such a big event. Each and every hog sold had a pedigree, a few were sold as a lot, and must have been unworthy of a paper. I think Dad had about three such sales, at least I know he had one because I remember gorging on those ham buns. Uncle John Lindgren had the same for his thoroughbred Black Angus cattle. (The tent was set up on the area which is now the cow yard. It was growing then with a green close covering called "pig-grass," which was a ground-hugging and spreading plant that never needed cutting or mowing.

The farm was named "Cedar Drive Stock Farm" for two reasons – because of the hogs (and corn-fed steers), and because the drive was indeed lined with cedars, from the road clear up to the house. The constantly clipped cedars were started from "cedarlings" which were found growing underneath the present remaining evergreens, and Dad would give us a dollar for every one we found which was of a certain size. Many were the times I went cedar-looking in vain when I wanted to earn the big sum of a dollar for some yearned-for treasure.

These things "lie gentle on my mind":

- Churning butter in a barrel churn in the basement.
- Winter sunsets from the kitchen door.
- Eating "bread and cheese" before going to Julotta [early morning church service on Christmas day].
- Seeing how many hard-boiled eggs we could eat at Easter morning breakfast.
- The purple of the dwarf iris in the spring. Cypress vine.
- Burgundy cockscomb. The riot of color in a "portulaca" bed (now known by the prosaic name of "moss rose"!)

<u>Obed</u>

One thing I'm sure we all remember was that at our house we all "ate." I especially remember after butchering pork there would be white gravy on homemade bread and fried pork. Then too the meat balls that had been kept in lard in the basement. Then of course the homemade flat bread (which was round). Then too the homemade ice cream.

I remember the creek just west of the house. The water was about 18 inches deep (except at flood stage) so anyone swimming there used the breast stroke – with the crawl stroke you would be scooping up mud from the bottom. We were amazed when one boy in the neighborhood said he could swim because "I read how in a book."

I remember the "bag" swing just west of the house. About half-way up another rope to another part of the tree would cause a crazy jerking ride.

And the diving board up near the roof in the barn, the hay of course being the "water." Toward spring it must have been an 18 to 20 foot drop. I guess where there is no water, necessity becomes the mother of invention.

I remember our "Driver Training" car – the 1918 green open touring car, a Buick. When I learned at the illegal age of about 12, Em was the co-pilot with both hands on the emergency brake, and the first lesson was out to the main road and back. And those were the days when liability insurance was yet to be invented.

I remember helping pick corn. I think Em and I each had a wagon and horses to haul it to the crib. Only two horses are vivid in my memory – Bill and Barney.

I remember once cutting alfalfa, and a pig (200 lbs.) was in the way and the mower cut into its legs. Dad took my part, saying the pig was out of sight and the accident was unavoidable. It was butchered immediately.

The disc wheel jobs on both a bicycle and a motorcycle were done in the open, Irene – right in the open furnace room. I don't believe Dad cared too much as long as we kept busy (and didn't hang around the restaurant in Lanyon).

I remember the old Model T Ford that I felt needed a later-model body. Dad allowed me to take the body off and build a racer body on it – two bucket seats and a box for tools behind. Em and I and another kid went to Des Moines to see the auto races (at the State Fair). As one car passed us a guy stuck his head out the side and said, "Got her entered?"

I remember following the corn picker to pick up the knocked-down ears and throwing them back into the machine. Also the times when we could only pick from about 4 a.m. to 10 a.m. because after the sun began to thaw the ground the picker would fail to work.

Remembering the old telephone system and the "rubbering," listening in on the conversations. When enough unauthorized receivers came off the hook the signals were quite weak. Once Justus Carlson made a call and as usual the extra listeners caused him difficulty in hearing, so he stopped short and said, "OK, let's all hang up and start over again."

<u>Ruth</u>

- We used to "play house" in the area behind the garage. Irene and I would stake out a space with sticks and twine and furnish the house with boxes, etc.
- Irene and I would play at being secretaries. We'd set up our "office" in the little room upstairs and be very efficient. We'd slice up Mom's buns and butter them for our lunch.

- On Sunday afternoon, if we had no visitors or were not visiting, we'd get together in the kitchen to make candy. It would be fudge or butterscotch, and it would taste good whether it turned out right or not!
- On cool fall Sunday afternoons we would sit under the apple tree east of the house. We would eat the little red apples that were very sweet and juicy.
- We had several hills of peonies and they always bloomed for Memorial Day – I don't think they ever failed.
- Grandma would have all of her relatives come for a Sunday picnic about once a year, usually in June. We'd walk over after church and the tables would be set up outside on the lawn under the trees. I especially remember the delicious spring fried chicken.
- I'll never forget the odors of Grandma's pantry. It smelled of cleanliness and baking.
- I remember a May Day program at school. Some pupils sang "Welcome Sweet Springtime" and Ev and some other girls skipped rope to the song. The program was held outside, in front of the high school.
- On summer nights when the bedrooms were so warm, we would take quilts out on the lawn and sleep there until 2 or 3 a.m. I remember the brilliant stars and very few mosquitoes.
- We all went barefoot in the summertime. After a rain, it was fun to go "squish" in the mud.
- On some July Fourth's, the church picnic would be held at our place under the trees near the road to Lanyon. I remember it was a combined picnic.
- Irene and I entertained the Ladies' Aid with a violin duet of "Barcarolle." I can't imagine how it sounded!
- We had one of the first Edison phonographs, that had to be wound up to play. We had records of Galli Curci and lots of Sousa marches. Caruso?
- Saturday morning was the time for cleaning and baking. In the afternoon, we made a big crockful of fruit jelly and put it in the "fruit room" in the basement. That was dessert for Sunday dinner and it was good.
- I remember a motorcycle that Gil and Obed had. It had a nifty side car and they would give us rides in it. What a thrill!
- I remember pancakes for breakfast. They'd be big and little and even animal-shaped, with a dab here and there for head and legs.
- When the phone was for Dad and he was far from the house, Mom would summon him with a whistle – loud and clear – her own.
- Before Christmas we would have a little money to spend for gifts. The General Store in Lanyon had long tables set up and covered with gifts and trinkets for 10 cents and 15 cents. You could do a lot of shopping there. I especially remember the "cheap" perfume.
- There was always a Christmas program in church a night or two before the 25th. I remember two decorated trees, and after the program each child got a bag of hard candy.
- How hard it was to get up to go to Julotta! But we staggered up and got through it and what fun it was to step out into the crisp cold and wish everyone "Merry Christmas" after the service.

- Jenny Johnson had the same birthday as I did. Every year Mom had me bake a sponge cake, frost it and deliver it. Then we'd have coffee and cake together.
- One summer I designed a blouse for myself. It was red and white organdy, with big puffy sleeves. It was a hit.
- I remember my first "bought" dress. It had three shades of blue – dark blue skirt, lighter blue middle and pale blue shoulders. I was 12 or 13.
- For haircuts we'd all go to the barbershop in Lanyon on Main Street. The boys would have theirs cut "straight ahead" [without a part, like a "bowl" cut].
- Pauline Mossberg, Helen Johnson, Ruby Hedberg, and I were a foursome. Once, at a class picnic, we ate so much we thought we'd pop, so we stopped at Mrs. Hartquist's and she gave us Tums.
- Early in the morning, or in the afternoon, you could hear the cooing of the mourning doves outside the upstairs windows.
- I remember the smell of the wild roses growing along the country roads near the farm.

Em

I remember as if it happened yesterday the time I first attempted to drive the old Buick. Dad was operating the tractor out in the field and had run out of gas (sounds unreasonable). He walked home and after filling a five-gallon can asked me if I knew how to drive – could I drive him out to the tractor? I confidently assured him I could. The car was in the garage. He got in the back seat with the can of gas while I took the driver's position. After starting it, I put it in reverse, "gunned it," and as I think of it now we fairly leaped backwards! It was obvious that this son was talking nonsense about his ability to drive. Quick as a cat he reached over the seat, and with his hands on the steering wheel managed to manipulate the car between the two evergreen trees that stood directly west of the garage on the lawn side of the drive. (Or was there just one that was squarely in line with the garage?) At the same time that he grabbed the steering wheel he also pushed up the gas lever. It was on the inside of the steering wheel. As I recall it chugged to a halt on the front lawn. I don't know who drove him to the field – I didn't! I must have been about 11, or at the most 12, when it happened.

Threshing time was a highlight in my young life. We would get up unusually early – 5 or 5:30 I believe. It seemed to me that nature was unusually beautiful that time of day. After doing the chores we would go to Justus Carlson's, Martin Carlson's, Emil Rohden's, or to the place where the threshing machine had been left the night before. I was "engineer" of the tractor and occasional "grease monkey." My young ears picked up a lot of what was going on and I learned that one of the farmers on the threshing circuit was delinquent in what I gathered was about a five-year-old bill. Enough was enough, and Dad informed him that unless the bill was paid before we reached his place, he would simply bypass him and go on to the next farm. As I recall we did bypass that place. The bill was paid that night. After finishing the current job, we returned (1/4 mile) to thresh the no-longer-delinquent's oats.

I remember the practical convenience of the old Lanyon telephone system. When Dad or someone else would drive to Lanyon and we would remember there was something else that didn't get on the list to be brought home, we would call Mrs. Hartquist. The

switchboard was right by the window and she kept an eye on the activities on Main Street. "Have you seen Dad around there?" "Yes – he just went into the hardware store!" So she would connect us there. Quite a convenience.

And speaking about the old telephone: I heard once that George Selim came home for Christmas, and knowing how many rubber-necks there were, rang the Selim number –

two shorts and a long or some such – then listened for all the clicks: "I just wanted to wish you all a Merry Christmas!"

I remember sleeping in the "south bedroom" on the farm and being lulled to sleep by the sound of Mother's sewing machine. True, she sewed for us but she did a lot of sewing for others in need. Especially the Haas family who lived straight west of us in the run-down house on the south side of the road. Mother could well sing from her heart:

"Others, Lord, yes, others,
Let this my motto be:
Help me to live for others."

<u>Irene</u>

During the month of May we used to hang May baskets. We made May baskets and we filled them with candy and set out for neighbors' homes in the evening. We would hang a basket on the front door knob, ring the doorbell or knock. Sometimes we would "scoot" – sometimes we would wait and say hello to the recipient. These May baskets were sometimes woven from strips of construction paper; others were made of colorful crepe paper. I remember one, constructed of crepe paper, made to resemble a folded umbrella. Can you imagine?

Ruth, the "little" room where we played at being secretaries was the "corn" room, next to the bathroom. We put flour, ordinary flour, in fruit jar covers, then powdered our faces now and then with an old powder puff. I remember too, that we used curriculum books from Iowa State College in our play. We pretended we were studying the books, made notations and thought we were pretty grown up.

One day Ruth and her pal, Imogene Shoop (she lived with the Paul Gustafson's for a time) were each reading a book in the south bedroom. I joined them and picked up a book, pretending to read. I thought I had them fooled until Ruth discovered that I was holding the book upside down. I was four or five at the time.

When I started school, Roy was pretty lonesome – no one to play with during the week. Mom said Roy would stand by the dining room window – sometimes he started this hours before the end of the school day – look toward Lanyon and say, "When are they coming home, Mom?" She said he asked that same question over and over again.

Em, do you remember the good homemade bread topped with butter and brown sugar that we used to eat when we came home from school? It tasted so good and it certainly gave us energy.

How many of you remember riding in a bobsled, so cold Dad covered the entire wagon with an old quilt, on Christmas Eve to have dinner at the Justus Carlson home? Poor Dad had to brave the cold as he drove the horses, but we snuggled in the bottom.

I remember the many evenings we gathered around the piano and sang after the supper dishes were washed and dried. Gene usually played the piano.

And who could forget the trips to the State Fair, when we camped out, sleeping under a canvas stretched from the car roof to the ground. It was the highlight of the year.

I remember walking out in the field one day to take Dad a jar of cold water to drink. He lifted me up on the horse-drawn corn cultivator and let me ride down one row and back!

During the winter months Mom would have supper ready to serve at 4 o'clock! We were starved when we came from school and instead of spoiling our appetites for supper with bread and butter, cookies, etc., Mom hit on the idea of filling us up with supper at 4:00! Then we had the whole evening to study, read and play.

Remember the disk wheels Obie and Em put on one of the bicycles? Seems to me all this was done in secrecy in the coal room. Perhaps the boys thought Dad wouldn't approve too highly – but if it was already finished by the time he first saw the wheels he wouldn't object too much. Am I right?

Remember the Nash Dad bought in Boone? It was really neat. It had a trunk on the back with a small, musty ice box. I thought it was the greatest in automobiles. And do you remember the Buick with the oval window in the back – and painted <u>green</u>?

We played basketball in the furnace room, using empty oatmeal boxes (both ends removed, of course) for baskets and a smallish rubber ball. Em and Roy coached me in guarding, overhead throws, one-handed throws, etc. We used to rollerskate too, hours on end in the basement.

Remember the ellipse covered with white cotton, with gold lettering, topped with lighted candles – the Christmas decoration at the front of our church.

Ruth wrote of the Christmas programs. I remember Julotta and the beautiful, big white candles burning in every window as we drove toward the church at 5:30 a.m.

When I was a sophomore in high school, Carol Reedholm and I entertained at a bobsled party. I wrote a poem (I can only recall the first two lines) and pasted it on the bulletin board so the fellow students could sign up. The invitation read:

"At the Lindgren home of Saturday night
Come dressed up warm and wrapped up tight," etc.

About 20 teenagers came. Dad and Albert Reedholm took us for a bobsled ride – we needed two bobsleds for the gang. We had a great time. Then we returned to our farm, where Mother and Mrs. Reedholm served us pancakes and sausage. I remember the fun we teenagers had and I recall the good time Mother, Dad and the Reedholms had, too.

I remember how poignant the scene was when Roy left for North Park College in Chicago one autumn. He was the last to leave the nest. I recall Dad giving Roy some "words of wisdom" before he left that morning. Among other things, Dad reminded Roy of the importance of choosing the right friends when he got out in the world. Mom and Dad must have felt quite lonely, with their "baby" leaving home for the first time.

Roy

I remember when Mother would rock me in that big leather chair with the curved wooden arms (my very earliest recollection) and the weather would be warm and I would put my hand on the back of her arm and her arm would always be cool.

I remember at a very early age "helping" Dad in the basement when he mechanized the old barrel churn: built a frame to hold it and added a pulley so it could be run with an electric motor. At that age he called me "Peter" and Irene "Honey." I remember how Mother would make rice pudding in the oven of the big old stove. The rice took so long to cook that the top of the pudding would get brown and have to be skimmed off two or three times before the pudding was done. How I loved to eat that brown crusty top. Then I remember the huge metal pan which Mom used when she made the dozen or so loaves of bread plus cinnamon rolls and biscuits every week. The pan was designed to hold the dough while it was rising and had a dome-shaped lid to match the shape of the dough as it puffed up into a big mound. I remember the big bread drawer in the kitchen, which in the summer also held long sticks of summer sausage and hunks of home-cured dried beef.

I remember, at the age of seven, driving Mother to Lanyon in a Model T with the intention of picking up Grandma and taking her with us to Rohden's [Esther Rohden, Amy's sister]. Needless to say, Mother and I drove on to the Rohden's by ourselves. [Roy's later note: His mother could not drive. The early cars had to be cranked and were not easy, and since there were always lots of people available to drive, she never learned. They used the car for hauling things on the farm and Roy could drive it at age 7, although Grandma did not want to ride with him.]

I remember how spry Grandma was in her early 80s. She would walk "up town" but it was reported that when she reached the turnoff at the church on her way home, she would be more or less running.

I remember the "fruit room" [in the basement], cool and damp because of the brick floor. The potato bin which was piled high with spuds every fall. Also huge stone crocks which held the corned beef and the hams cured with "smoked salt." It seems to me Mother

always aimed to can no less than 100 quarts of tomatoes each summer. Also, peaches, pears, rhubarb, corn, and the greatest treat of all – grape juice made by cooking the grapes and squeezing them in a square towel (flour sack) hung by the four corners over a broom stick held across the back of two chairs.

I remember the coolest spot in the house, before the first ice box, was the basement floor next to the big water tank. That's where the milk, butter, and root beer were stored. But nothing was as cool as a pitcher of water pumped by hand from the old well. I remember that heavy glass pitcher – how it survived all those trips to the well in the hands of all of us is a wonder.

I remember that at about 6 a.m. every cold winter morning Dad would shake the house. There was a long iron handle on the side of the furnace which was pulled back and forth to let the ashes fall through the grates. Since the furnace was connected to the pipes and the pipes to the radiators, the whole house seemed to be vibrating.

I remember the big garden west of the house with horseradish which we never ate growing over against the side of the machine shed, asparagus all across the lower end, two rows of rhubarb and a very large strawberry patch. The long row of grapes which we took to school in our "dinner pails" in season. Then there was the smoke house and just south of it a flowering almond and an old-fashioned yellow rose bush.

I remember that every fall as cold weather approached we would go through the ritual of catching the chickens. All summer they took to roosting in the trees and on the machinery in the sheds. We had to apprehend them somehow or other and lock them in the chicken house for the winter. It was a job that was kind of fun for about the first five minutes.

I remember when we had quite a few cats who used to like to take their ease behind the stove in the kitchen. When Mom wanted them out she would take the broom, open the door, and poke around vigorously behind the stove until they got the general idea. Later, it was only necessary for her to pick up the broom, open the door, and stand back out of the way.

I remember all of those potluck picnics over the years and how Mother usually made corn pudding and salmon pudding – still my favorite dishes when made the way she made them. We also had sliced tomatoes which we wouldn't have dreamed of eating without a liberal application of sugar.

I remember many a Sunday afternoon in the summer when, at Mother's instigation, we would go "to the woods," meaning a certain spot more or less directly east of Lanyon near the Des Moines River. I remember the incomparable sunsets in the late fall after the corn was picked, and I would see them when I went out in the 40-acre corn fields to get the steers home for the night. I remember blizzards so blinding that you couldn't see the barn from the house, and how one January the temperature never went above zero for two solid weeks, and was minus twenty every night. I remember that the first rites of spring consisted of sowing the peas – two horses and the "lumber wagon" with the spreader on the back.

I remember the incredible amount of patience that Dad exhibited in the face of some of the absolutely incredible things that I did and didn't do in those growing up years.

I remember when Aunt Nellie and Uncle Ernest lived in Lanyon [1928 to 1953], their immaculate house, the cow named Susie, how fascinated I was with their egg cups, and how after the folks moved to Lanyon [when they retired in 1941], there was a path worn through the tall grass which represented the shortest distance between those two houses.

I remember that I was taught to say grace in Swedish at a very early age and continued to say it as I had learned it for many years. About 30 years later, I learned how the words were really supposed to be pronounced and it was quite a surprise.

I remember the Christmas programs and how, believe it or not, Irene and I [ages about 10 and 7] sang a duet and what do you think we sang? "Let the lower lights be burning"! [Irene and Roy's later note: This was surprising because this song is a hymn, not a Christmas song at all.]

I remember when we put candles on the Christmas tree and lighted them! And how the best part of the Christmas Eve feast every year was the creamed lutefisk on mashed potatoes.

I Remember Mother
(1985)

Gene

- One of my earliest recollections of Mother is of her sitting beside the kitchen stove (before furnaces) with the oven door open for warmth, bathing a baby on her lap, wash basin on the oven door. After the job was finished, there were many gentle kisses.
- Mother was artistically inclined as well as creative. I remember a book of drawings done with colored pencils. In particular I recall a page done of a rose, another of pansies and a third done of the weeping willow tree which may still be standing on the old Frank I. Johnson farm, which was our grandfather J. P. Johnson's farm.
- Mother was the milliner in her family, trimming hats for her sisters as well as even making some for herself.
- One kitchen we had I recall had stenciling around the doors and windows. Dad did the painting under Mother's direction. She also did wall papering.
- Mother loved flowers and tried to grow roses in a round bed on the farm. Not much luck, but she was fabulous with house plants.
- Sewing was another hobby. I must have been in the eighth grade when I got my first "store-bought" dress. But there were not many of those, because by then I had learned to make my own.
- My best friend Violet Reedholm's mother made the remark that "Amy Lindgren's children are the best dressed in the community."
- I remember waking up to religious music on the radio every morning.
- I also remember the response when we asked permission to do something questionable: Instead of "yes" or "no" for an answer, it was usually, "Do you think that is the wise thing to do?", putting the responsibility where it belonged.
- Some of her favorite quotations and sayings were: "We are wonderfully and fearfully made." "Public opinion is never very far from wrong." "I suppose she (or he) was made that way," in response to someone's criticism of another person.
- We apparently were good about arguing because I recall her saying, after listening to her limit, "I'm sure that you are <u>all</u> going to be Philadelphia lawyers!" What Philadelphia had to do with it, I don't know.
- Mother loved to travel, which meant riding in the car or taking the Interurban [the local one-car electric train] with Anna Kullberg to Des Moines. And she was ready to go at the slightest suggestion. In later years she flew.
- Not totally senile at 100, we were sitting in the living room the night before I was to leave in the morning after a two-week visit. Out of the clear she asked me, "Do you think you'll go home to a perfectly clean house?" I always had after every trip and she knew it.
- When I was visiting her in her later years she said once, "I really like this house (301 K Street in Fort Dodge), it is so homey." [She and Frank moved there in 1950 when she was 72. It was one of three houses which Frank had built on lots he owned on K St.]

Gil

- Gilmore and Hazel want to say about his Mother, that she was way ahead of her time. She could correct a college graduate's English. [Gil's wife Hazel wrote these comments.]
- She was kind to the more unfortunate in the community and often sewed for them. She also was very intelligent.
- After church she or Dad often invited people for Sunday dinner. These were often visiting pastors and missionaries and also widowers.
- She also helped Hazel with patching and sewing and did mending for some other people. There are few like her.

Ev

Where did I hear that when Dad had proposed, Mother wanted to be 25 when she was married. Hence the wedding was April 21st [1902], the day after her birthday. [Amy was born April 20, 1878, so she was actually 24 plus one day into her 25th year on her wedding day.] I asked her once if the emerald and pearl engagement ring was Dad's idea. She said they both picked it out and it was bought in Dayton.

Mother and her brother Frank [known as "Frank I."] were married in a double ceremony [to Frank Lindgren and Esther Carlson]. For her wedding, Esther was told by her mother (concerning a gown), "You can have anything you want," and she did have (I suppose) a great dress. Mother wore Aunt Lizzie's wedding dress after a bit of altering and "adding to." Said Aunt Nellie, "And it looked better than Esther's!" I remember the fancy front bodice in the wedding pictures. No doubt Mother designed and added it. [Lizzie and Nellie were two of Amy's sisters.]

Recently, I looked at my Baptism Certificate, and Eveline Anna Christina (my full name) was signed by Dad and Mother, Grandpa and Grandma. Mother's signature was: Clara Naemi, not Naomi.

When we lived on the farm near Kullberg's [east of Lanyon] and I was probably 4 [in 1911], Gil and I were playing on the green-painted stoop when a covered wagon full of gypsies drove into the yard. Mother came from somewhere in the area and told us to go into the house. She then went out to talk to the "visitors" and probably gave them whatever they asked for – usually grain, corn and oats, for their horses. They would camp in the country school yards overnight.

I remember riding with Mother in the one-seated buggy with our horse Barney hitched to it. The road was muddy and we were riding in the grass. Came time to take the incline and get back up on the road, the buggy tipped at such an angle that I was sure we were going to tip over – but Barney kept pulling and up we went, safe and sound. I thought, "Good old Barney."

This I heard from one of my siblings: Aunt Esther Rohden [Amy's oldest sister] had a habit of "heckling" Mother about her friendship with the Plants, and her concern for Louise, who wasn't considered all that bright. After just so much, Mother made Esther back down for good by saying, "Do you think that in the eyes of God, Louise is any different than you are?" I can imagine the issue was closed.

At one of Grandma's "get-togethers" I remember wearing a white organdy dress. Undoubtedly, I was too young to realize I'd outgrown it. I heard Grandma say to Mother, "Hon är alta ben" ("She is all legs"). I suppose the hem was soon let down. ["Grandma" was Amy's mother, Johanna Dorothea Johnson.]

I remember the dresses Mother sewed for me, especially one two-piece rose-colored wide-ribbed corduroy. Others: a black with rust-colored panel in front; a dark red silk, shot through with nubby black thread; a crisp orange organdy; a lavender voile with ruffles; and a black velvet hat with wide brim trimmed with a bunch of purple grapes.

<u>Obed</u>

- I remember Mom for the flat bread she used to bake with the small holes on top made with a fork. Both top and bottom had a genuine crust.
- I remember Mom, after Dad had butchered a hog, would always make fresh side bacon, gravy and bread. I can still taste it.
- I remember Mom for the half-gallon fruit jars of lemonade made day after day in the hot Iowa summers.
- I remember Mom for the lack of critical statements. She apparently looked for a little good in everyone.
- I remember Mom for the ability to spell words that seemed to stump others.
- I remember Mom on auto trips in the 1920s: when a flower or stone was spotted, she would have Dad come to a quick stop (from about 30 mph) to get out and make the collection, and then we would go on.
- I remember Mom, after her second fall down steps, saying to the ambulance driver, "Well, I did it again." [This was unrelated to her final fall when she broke her hip in 1981.]

<u>Ruth</u>

- When I was 8 or 9, I wanted a new school dress – pink. Mom bought a piece of material in a small check, pink and white, and made a dress with a bolero jacket. It was trimmed with black rickrack and was a sensation – so different. She never used a pattern – she just used another dress as a guide.
- I remember waking up at 11 or 12 at night and hearing the sewing machine going at a good speed.
- When we had a poem to memorize for school, Mom would go over it with us just before we went to bed and she said we would know it in the morning. I guess it worked.
- When we fell and skinned a knee or elbow, she's clean it up and say how much worse it <u>could</u> be. True.

- I always got a laugh from Mom when I told about the farmer who heard a noise in the chicken house at night – "Who's in there?" he called. The answer came – "Nobody but us chickens."

- " 'We are fearfully and wonderfully made' – who said that?", Mom would ask.
- Mom made an apple cake – apples, covered with a cake batter, baked golden brown, and served with cream. In one cookbook it is listed as a French apple cake.
- Dad liked beef soup – lots of beef and homemade noodles. It was always cooked with a bay leaf and smelled so good.
- When we were young, I remember the good, crispy fried chicken in the spring and summer. I also remember Dad's favorite old-fashioned rice pudding, baked two or three hours in the oven. In those days the wood or coal stove was going all the time.
- Mom loved hearing solos in church and would say, "He (or she) can really sing."
- Mom had a milk pitcher with a handle in the shape of a cat. Linnae loved cats and admired the pitcher. One summer when Linnae was 10, Mom gave her the pitcher.
- Sitting on the deck in Fort Dodge [the house at 301 K Street, where she lived 1950-1981], Mom could see the old oak tree next door and would wonder how old it was and how tall. She could see Attler's tree from the window inside even when her eyesight was failing, and say, "That must be the tallest tree around." This was another tree on the other side of the house.
- The woman across the street cared for a 7- or 8-month-old baby. She would come over and Mom would have a good time holding the baby.
- Esther [Mocklebust] told me that Jon Lindgren [Gil's son] said he remembered his Grandma saying, "Do things well or not at all." He used that in a speech once as mayor of Fargo, North Dakota.
- Mom said many times, while in her 90's, "I feel so sorry for blind people." She didn't consider herself so, although her eyesight had become so poor that she was legally blind.
- On the day of Mom's funeral, it rained. People said, too bad it's raining. She would have said, "We need the rain." Bless her heart.

<u>Em</u>

I remember Mom's comments after we came home from the Dayton Covenant Church, having heard an address on raising children. The speaker was Dr. Peter Person (professor at North Park College in Chicago). Among other things, he had said, "If Johnny wants to slam the door in anger… let him slam it." Person was a bachelor at the time and Mother knew it. Her clear and deliberate comment has not faded from my memory in 50 years or more. "Pshaw, what does he know about raising kids… He's never had any."

I have often used the following as a sermon illustration: One day Dad picked out a runt from among the many hogs [piglets] we had. It was always being edged out at the feeding trough and would surely never have grown much without some special attention. [The agreement was,] I would raise it apart from the other hogs, and then when it was

marketed, we would go halves. It was very small and Mother allowed me to keep it behind the stove in the kitchen where it was warm and feed it milk. (There were always plenty of newspapers.) One day she graciously took it down to the basement and scrubbed it good in the big round tub. Eventually, of course, it had to live outside. When I turned it loose it was still quite clean, but it headed for the first mud puddle it could find. That was "the nature of the beast." Except for the Grace of God our lower nature leads us away from Him.

Many of us remember Annie Engquist from Lanyon. Some would say she was "different." And she was in one sense at least. When J. Theodore Johnson [pastor 1927-1934] would say something from the pulpit which warmed her heart she would sound forth with a rather loud "Amen." I distinctly recall that none of the women of the church wanted her as a partner as they served the goodies during the Ladies Aid meetings at church or, I suppose, at other such functions. So, who volunteered to serve with her? None other than our good Mom.

I remember so well the times we would complain about the food not being good. I can still hear her say: "Remember the starving millions." And may I add this: Ruth and I started a Children's Home in Alaska in about 1946. I verily believe that it was her influence on me that was at least part of the motivation for the beginning of that Home.

I remember the horror that Mother had for anything that seemed even the least bit shady. I think Ob and I were discussing the technique of throwing a curved ball (as a baseball pitcher) so the batter couldn't hit it. I don't recall her comment but she gave me the impression that any such act in her book would come very close to being a felony!

To Mother on Her 90th

[Written by Em and presented at Amy's 90th birthday party in Lanyon, April 20, 1968.]

It's not so very often I compose poetic rhyme,
But the spirit moving in me said that this might be the time
To put in verse some pleasant thoughts about our lovely mother,
For whom we've gathered here today to show both love and honor.

I must be careful what I say on this unique occasion,
A lot of flattery won't do, nor too much approbation;
Our mother's always been that way, not wanting self-esteem,
A humble life that's genuine has rather been her theme.

There is a verse that well describes a person such as Mother,
You'd think it was composed for her, much more than many another;
"Others, Lord, yes, others. Let this my motto be,
Help me to live for others, that I may live like Thee."

Yes, that's been Mother's motto and she's lived just what she taught,
She's given her best for loved ones, the poor, and the distraught.

And that's no doubt the reason that her inner light still glows,
For the law of God says clearly that man reaps just what he sows!

I speak now for the family when I add these words of praise,
You've been the best of mothers and you've done it with much grace;
Thank God for people such as you, so full of love and kindness,
Our lives are full and oh so rich, because of things you've taught us.
Each day the sun sinks in the West, a sad but glad reminder
That our lives too will spend their day; then move to realms out yonder.
And in that Land I picture Dad just waiting at the portals,
To welcome us who by God's grace will share that life immortal.

So thanks again dear Mother, we're so glad we could be here
To celebrate your 90th – a milestone rather rare.
Your witty mind and youthful soul belie the age you claim
You really should be entered in God's special Hall of Fame!

Irene

Hopefully every child has a golden moment or two to hold forever in his or her memory. This is one of mine, as vivid today as it was when it happened. I must have been a pre-schooler and perhaps Roy [3 years younger] was taking an afternoon nap, Dad working in the fields and other siblings in school. I believe it was autumn with pumpkins and squash and leaves turning yellow and brown. Mother and I were in the big garden west of the house and it seems she was sitting on a kitchen chair and I was playing nearby. It was a warm, sunny wonderful afternoon. I had Mom all to myself and my little world was A-Okay – a golden world to remember forever.

Mother was wise and patient so often and so understanding. One day (I was a pre-schooler) I was eating baked navy beans and I noticed the tiny sprout on one bean. I said, "A little worm! I'll never eat baked beans again," and I meant it. Mom found a small clay flower pot, filled it with soil. Then she had me plant a couple of navy beans. Every day I watered the soil and every day I watched anxiously. The pot was in the full sunlight on the south window sill. Finally the beans sprouted and as the plants grew I saw for myself that the tiny "worm" was really a part of the growing bean. I ate lots of baked beans from then on.

Mother really did have the patience of a saint, but one day she was – "ready to give me away – to any taker." I was about seven and wanted to use the sewing machine. And what did I know about such things – I didn't know one end of the bobbin from the other end. So the bobbin went in backward and I started to peddle. The bobbin stuck and I called for Mom. She was furious. "Wait until Dad comes home. When I was your age I sewed by hand," etc. I cried, I wailed, I pleaded and I begged and I promised that I would never, ever use the machine again without her permission. Mom relented, did not tell Dad, and believe me I kept my promise.

I remember Mother was my private tutor. I hated arithmetic! So, after sobbing for many an evening over long division, etc., Mother had to find a solution. Thereafter – home from school, clothes changed, and after downing some milk and cookies, I was ready for my session. How Mom found the time, I don't know. Being wise, she made the time. On the front of my tablet she wrote out the simple rules and then she drilled me over and over again. I really became fairly good in arithmetic as time went on and the family was spared my sobbing day after day. Thanks, Mom.

I remember Mom, on a very rare occasion, smoking a cigar! If one of us developed an earache while Dad was away on a trip to Chicago (to sell cattle), Mother would light a cigar and blow the smoke into the aching ear. The relief was almost instant and oh, so soothing.

Mother could really surprise one every now and then with an uncharacteristic comment. I once remarked about a cousin, that she was so tall and so slim. I thought it admirable – not so with Mom. Her terse comment: "Built like a boy." Period.

Mother "served" at Ladies Aid meetings with Anna Engquist for years when other women felt Anna too odd for them. Then when Mom and Dad moved to Fort Dodge [in 1950], Mother found Ida, who lived two doors west and across K Street. Mother baked casseroles and took them to Ida and then Mom brushed her hair. And Mom visited Mrs. Lindeen, too; she lived across the street on K. And when everyone else gave up on Mrs. Gustafson (one block east on K Street), well, it was Mother who had the patience and kindness to visit her every other day and take a sandwich or a package of dried beef to Mrs. G. Mom seldom bought the dried beef for herself since it was a bit costly, but she would buy it for Mrs. G. And for years after Mrs. Gustafson died, Mother received thank you letters from the daughter Ella who lived in California.

I remember Mother as the highest example of a Christian lady. She could find some good in everyone. And while others talked of helping, she acted! How much she influenced the Haas family one can only guess. And then she found the Bailey family, living in a type of covered wagon near the railroad tracks in Lanyon. Before long she had food and some clean, old clothes gathered for them. Aunt Nellie once said, "It was a lucky day for the Bailey family when they came to Lanyon."

During World War II we heard that Hitler's birthday was April 20 (the same as Mom's). Mom didn't want any association with that character, so during the war years she said her birthday was April 21.

Years ago Mom and Aunt Nellie made a well-worn path in the tall grasses between their homes in Lanyon. One summer evening Mother visited with her sister and returned home 'ere darkness approached. Dad asked, "Where have you been?" and Mom told him. "I don't want you running around nights," he said. In sweet, little Lanyon – I thought it was so cute. [Amy and Frank lived in the town of Lanyon after retirement, from 1941 to1946, then moved to Fort Dodge. Nellie and her husband Ernest lived in Lanyon from 1928 to 1953.]

A few months before Dad died (in 1953) he said to Obie and me, "Promise me that you will never sell this house while Mother is alive. Even if she wants to travel a lot and visit the children she must always have a place to come home to." And Dad told Mother that if anything happened to her, he did not want to go on living.

Mother send Bruce into convulsions one evening in Minneapolis. We were having a hot political discussion. Suddenly Mother stood up and moved from the dinner table to a more comfortable chair and said, "I don't know if it is really warm in here or it's the hot air we've been generating, but I have to move to a cooler spot!" Bruce doubled over with laughter. Then he said, "Grandma, you're the greatest!"

Mother wore many hats, one of them, "Private Eye." New-bright, new garbage cans kept disappearing from Friendship Haven some years ago. [Friendship Haven was a retirement home where Aunt Nellie worked in the 1950s and 1960s, while she was living with Amy after they were both widowed.] One of the kitchen employees at Friendship Haven lived on K Street, on the block east of Mother's home. This man was a very conscientious worker, so much so that he almost always worked overtime. And those garbage cans kept disappearing! Sherlock Holmes alias Amy entered the picture. Mother took a casual stroll one day down the alley behind the conscientious worker's home, and as Mom strolled she took a good look in the man's garage. Sure enough – there were many bright, new garbage cans! Back home again and Mom wrote a letter, To Whom It May Concern: and she told her story and signed it "Anonymous." An investigation followed and the employee was fired. And to this day Friendship Haven does not know who did their police work for them. P.S.: But Aunt Nellie had recommended this kitchen worker to the Personnel Department at Friendship Haven. Don't know if they ever asked Nell for additional help in recruiting workers.

Years ago Mother was in the hospital and longing to go home. Obviously she wasn't very ill and so she asked a couple who were visiting another patient to drive her to her home. They did – and Mother didn't even check out, just left! I wonder what the nurses thought when they saw the empty bed – the empty room! Maybe Florence Ecklund was on duty that day, and she had an inkling and knew where to check.

One summer visit I told Mother and Aunt Nellie to plan their itinerary for the next day and we would take off. We drove to Uncle Erickson's farm first – sort of Gowrie way [west of Lanyon]. [Uncle Erickson married Amanda, "Aunt Mandy," who was Amy's mother's sister.] Mom and Nell almost got into an argument over the length of the barn that their uncle had built on that farm. One said it was 90 feet, the other, no, it is 120 feet! Well, we found the farm after some searching, and though the house was abandoned we managed to get inside and the two relived some memories. Aunt Nellie told of Aunt Mandy (on a Sunday morning) calling up the stairwell [to her children], "Gust!", "Reuben!" – not getting much of a response, and 15 minutes later a repeat of the same. Nell was so good in her imitating that I laughed until I thought I would burst. Then Mother told of Aunt Mandy beating the egg whites for meringue to top the lemon pie for Sunday dinner. We had a wonderful day, the three of us – went to Spring Lake, to

Jefferson and back to Paton Place for pie and coffee. A great time. We still don't know the length of that barn.

During a visit to Iowa I used the word "exquisite" – however, pronouncing it with the accent on "qui." Mother spoke up ever so tactfully, saying, "I believe it is EX-quisite" – accent on the first syllable! I said, "Oh, dear, all of my life I have been saying it wrong." Mother shot back, "Do you mean to tell me that Carl has never corrected you?" I turned to the east, cupped my hands to my mouth and said, "Carl, you're getting it." I told Carl about it later and, of course, he got a big kick out of it.

To celebrate Mother's 80th birthday [in 1958] Verona, Obie, [and their sons] Bruce, David, Steve, and I drove to Fort Dodge for a Sunday afternoon party. Ev called during the afternoon but Mom wasn't available. She was in the woods nearby pointing out the wildflowers to Steve. How typical of Mother.

[Another time,] after a visit with Thelma and Roy and a celebration of Mother's birthday, complete with Ruth making the trip from New York for the festivities, Mom, Aunt Nellie and I returned to Glen Ellyn on TWA. [Irene and her husband Carl lived in the Chicago suburb of Glen Ellyn, Illinois, from 1963 to 1984.] Approaching O'Hare International Airport, the flight attendant announced, "Fasten your seat belts and prepare to land," etc. Aunt Nellie to Mom: "Are we there already!" Quick as a wink, Mom to me: "She doesn't think she is getting her money's worth." What a sense of humor.

One Christmas season when Mother and Aunt Nellie came for a visit [to Glen Ellyn] and the festivities were over, Carl said he would drive the two to Iowa. So, after the two wakened from their afternoon nap, I told them the good news – no long bus ride, we would drive them to Iowa. Mom said to Nell, "Well, let's not lie here then, let's get up and have some coffee to celebrate." So, Carl, our dog Smokey, Mom, Nell and I started for Iowa. It was 20° below zero. Nell complained that her one foot was <u>so</u> cold. Mother commanded her to take off her galosh and her shoe and put that foot in Mother's lap. Mom rubbed the foot with her bare hands and the problem was solved. We had so much fun on that trip despite the cold – laughed a lot and we did make it despite the horrendous weather.

Another Christmas season that Mom and Aunt Nellie spent with us in Glen Ellyn, a terrible sleet storm arrived the night of the 24th. We had planned to take the two to the Julotta Service in the Covenant Church. Carl and I were up very early and Carl said to me, "Tell your Mother and Aunt Nellie that I will still take them to the Julotta Service if they want to go but it is treacherous out." And our flagstone walk was uphill and several steps uphill as well, really treacherous with ice. I told Mom and Nell the situation and Carl's offer if they wanted to go. Mother settled it fast. "Tell Carl, thanks, but we'll stay right here in bed!"

Mother wanted me to dig up a small self-seeded oak tree, take it back to my home in Glen Ellyn and plant it there. Somehow every visit to Iowa was so busy I just could not find time for that tree. Then one afternoon my doorbell rang at 175 Bryant. There stood the postman with a big grin on his face. He handed me a large plastic bag tied around the roots of a small oak tree, the trunk and leaves sprouting from the bag. He obviously

wondered what this was all about so I told him. He grinned even more, seeming to enjoy the episode. In the bag along with the roots were: lilac and apple blossoms, and a sprig of Creeping Charley. That sense of humor again!

Mother said to me once, "There were times when I didn't think that I could stand it to have my children all over the world, but I had to stand it." Well, she was lucky at that. We all came home safely and she was loved as few mothers have been loved and treasured.

During another of the Christmas seasons that Mother and Aunt Nellie spent with Carl and me, Uncle John [Carl's uncle John Lessing] and Aunt Ethel treated us to lunch at Plentywood Farm. Later, upon returning to Glen Ellyn, I served coffee and cookies. Ethel visited with Nell and John with Mom. From the kitchen I heard this: "How old is your sister?" "She is 81." "And how old <u>you</u>?" "Not old enough to be her mother and not young enough to be her daughter!" At age 90 yet – what a sharp mind!

Mother made her acting debut at about age 90. She was Grandmother in a play put on by the ladies of the Covenant Church. She was to sit in a rocker. She did not have a speaking part – just look grandmotherly and rock. Anyway, one afternoon she rocked patiently through two rehearsals when the director decided – one more rehearsal. No way! Mother simply said if she had to go through another "run-through" she would not appear in the performance the next day. That did it. No more rehearsals and Mom appeared the next day, making her acting debut.

We surely all love to do things for people who are appreciative and grateful. Mother was one of those people. Esther [Esther Moklebust, who cared for Amy at home during the last nine years of her life] told me that Mom at bedtime would often say, "Thank you for all the nice things you have done for me today." And during the day it was "Tak, tak, tak" (Swedish for "thanks, thanks, thanks").

[After Amy's eyesight failed, she kept busy crocheting small rugs.] We all know that Mother enjoyed giving her crocheted rugs to family and friends, but once a total stranger was almost included. A nice lady rang the doorbell and asked to use the phone since her car had a dead engine. Esther was very careful about admitting a stranger into the house but she saw the stalled car and the lady looked like a lady. So while the stranger was phoning, Mom whispered to Esther, "Should we give her a rug?" Can't you hear her? Esther suggested that perhaps that wasn't really necessary and Mother agreed.

I have one of Esther's letters from a few years back and I quote: "I said, 'Shall we get up now, Amy?' 'Oh, we can lie here and gab'."

August, 1972 [Amy was 94]: Esther wanted to help Mother eat her lunch and Mother just wasn't very hungry and would not eat very much. Mother to Esther: "I wish you would resign so I wouldn't have to impeach you." Watergate time, natch.

The night following Mother's fall in September 1981 [shortly before she died], she called out several times during the night, "Where is my Frankie?" We wondered if she called Dad "Frankie" while they were courting.

"The most basic culture in which we develop is the culture of our family, and our parents are its 'culture leaders.' Moreover, the most significant aspect of that culture is not what our parents tell us about God and the nature of things but rather what they do." -- from The Road Less Traveled by M. Scott Peck, M.D. How fortunate we were to have had a Mother and a Dad who lived their Christianity; they didn't talk about it as much as they truly lived it. Bless their memories.

A few years ago I kissed Mom goodnight and told her that I loved her. "I love you too, one-eighth – I have to keep it equal," she said. Esther said once, "It was a perfect love she had for all of you."

Roy

I remember Mother as a magician at distracting fussy babies and small children.

I remember Mother as an incredible discipliner – or was it just that we were such incredible disciplinees? I remember occasional mention of the possibility that she would have to use the "shaving strap" but it never once came off the hook in the broom closet to my knowledge.

I remember (don't we all) Mother's standard Sunday morning breakfast – "gravy bread." The bread was home-baked white and the gravy was white, made with milk in the drippings from lots of thick-sliced uncured or maybe salt-cured bacon. Fortunately cholesterol had not yet been invented so we were able to enjoy it thoroughly.

I remember Mother as the inventor of an instant and absolutely sure-fire way to dispatch any chicken destined for the frying pan. It involved the use of a steel rod laid over the neck of the chicken, etc. She did it herself until I became old enough to take over.

And I remember, "Remember the starving millions." (Or was it, "Think of the starving millions.") For the grands and great-grands, those were code words that meant, "Don't leave food on your plate" (Don't waste food).

I remember hearing the words a hundred or a thousand times over the years: "Look it up." I think Mother wore out at least three dictionaries looking things up. Once in later years I believe Irene put her to the test. "How do you pronounce c-o-m-p-t-r-o-l-l-e-r?" The answer, without hesitation, "controller."

I remember hearing about someone explaining to Mother that they needed to build a new church, because the old church was on a side street where people couldn't see it. She said, "They find it when we have a Swedish supper."

I remember how in later years someone was complimenting Mother on her family, about this and that and the other, "and none of them have ever been in jail." Mother said, "Not yet."

I remember her plants, when she was age about 75 or 85, were everywhere [at 301 K Street, Fort Dodge]. The "greenhouse" room off the hallway was like a jungle including, even, the famous night-blooming cereus which really did bloom from time to time. (Grands and great-grands, "Look it up.")

I remember being home (for, I believe, one of Mom's birthdays) when she was in her 90s. There were five or six of us there. She had a music box in the kitchen, a present from Ruth, which she would put on the dining room table and play to call us to dinner when we would come visit as adults. When dinner was over, she picked up the music box and carried it back to the kitchen, saying, "I'll take this – I don't want it to get broken." As Obie observed at the time, there wasn't a soul in the room under the age of 50.

I remember Mother correcting herself when she was reminiscing about something. "When we were little, us kids used to… we kids used to…" This happened sometime after her 100th birthday.

I remember Esther [Mocklebust] telling how, sometimes when Mother wasn't feeling too great, she would say, "I feel like I'm a hundred years old." After she passed 100, she changed it to, "I feel like I'm two hundred years old."

Growing Up in Iowa
(1987)

Introduction (Ruth)

We are the generation that has gone from the horse and buggy era to the moon walk. When those Iowa roads were too muddy for the car, we would go to town by horse and buggy. As a kid of 10 or 11, I remember hearing a plane – we'd run out in the yard and yell, "airplane!" and everyone would come out to see this thing in the sky. This was in the 1920s. Then in 1969, we saw the "moon walk" on TV – one big step for mankind. Man landed on the moon, walked, and rode the moon buggy, then took off and returned to Earth. From buggy to buggy.

Dad left Sweden when he was 19, never to return. That took courage, to go to a new land, new language, new everything. Mom was born in the U.S., had some schooling, but most of her education came from reading and good use of the dictionary. They taught us independence and we have spread from coast to coast, and north to south of the USA. We all met in June 1986, and the eight of us started this project of remembering "Growing Up in Iowa."

Dad	1873-1953	Gene	1903	Obie	1910
Mom	1878-1981	Gil	1904	Ruth	1913
		Ev	1907	Em	1915
		Edwin	1909	Irene	1917
		(died in infancy)		Roy	1920

Gene (Regina)

One of my earliest recollections of growing up was of spending some time in the living room with younger siblings while Mother scrubbed the kitchen floor – growing tired of babysitting, then saying so. She said, "Wouldn't you rather be playing with them than doing what I am doing?" I complained no more. Mother mentioned something in later years about me carrying the brunt of babysitting, but I never really felt put upon, and told her that.

I can remember spending a night with our grandmother [Amy's mother Johanna Dorothea Johnson] in Lanyon and taking the Interurban (a one-car electric train) with her back to the farm near Kullberg's where we lived then (several miles east of Lanyon). It was around the time Grandmother's son, Uncle Obed, went to China as a missionary. While waiting in the Lanyon depot with Grandma, "old man" Kullberg stopped in and said to Grandmother in Swedish, "I don't understand how you can let Obed go to China." Said she, also in Swedish, "Well, it isn't easy, but if it is God's will, then I certainly won't stand in the way." I had to be six years old at the time because Uncle Obed went to China in 1909. Grandma was precious. A quarter from her at Christmas time was always used for something really special.

I remember Aunt Nellie [Amy's sister] coming to the farm via horse and buggy [in 1909] when our brother Edwin died (at age 6 weeks), to babysit for Gil, Ev and myself, while Mother and Dad went to the burial. I remember them leaving via horse and buggy, taking the casket with them. Dad made the casket and Mother padded and covered it inside and out with lavish use of white satin, shirred and artistically draped.

I remember going to our grandfather's funeral [J.P. Johnson died in 1910]. In those days they lowered the casket somehow by hand and then the men started shoveling dirt right then and there. Aunt Nellie grabbed me by the shoulders and said, "Look what they are doing!" I was not old enough to "dwell on death."

I remember starting country school at age 8 [in 1911] because the school was two miles away and walking was the only way to go. But when we moved to another farm [south of Lanyon, in 1915] and went to the "Burgh" school I was promoted two grades in one fell swoop. The first school was someplace in Greene County, probably Paton Township.

One year in country school I was the only girl and there was a man teacher yet – J. Fred Burgh. At recess time I rushed out with the boys to play ball, hearing Fred say, "Be good to her, boys." The next year the district boundaries were changed to include the Rydmans, and so then there was Mildred Rydman.

The Lanyon community was rather progressive. We did have Swedish school each year for a few weeks following the regular school year (taught by the preacher) so we could become bilingual, but that was soon dropped and the sessions became "Bible school." The Lanyon Church was dedicated in 1877 with our grandfather J.P. Johnson being the first chairman. He continued in that post for some 12 years according to Aunt Nellie.

After we moved from the farm near Kullberg's to the one south of Lanyon it was no surprise when coming home from school to find Grandma there. She would walk the one mile from town to spend the day and then walk back after 4 o'clock coffee and the goodies that always went with it. On one occasion Mother was baking bread – putting <u>eight</u> loaves in the oven at once. Grandma said, "You can't do that and bake them right." "Yes, you wait," Mother said. Halfway through the baking time Mother changed top pans to the bottom of the oven and proved that it could be done. Delicious bread. This Mother told me in later years.

I don't remember any of my brothers fighting (physical contact) but we must have been good at arguing because once Mother said in exasperation, "I am sure that you are all going to be Philadelphia lawyers" – apparently they were tops in those days.

Winters were a time for hog butchering, which meant lard rendering. The crisp cracklin's were so good for munching. Some pork was cooked and preserved in lard in a large jar kept in the "fruit room" in the basement. Some lard was used in making soap. It

was mixed with water and lye and cooked. When just right it was poured into a wooden box, left to harden, then cut into squares. This was used for washing clothes.

Threshing time was a big affair. All the neighborhood men would help, going as a group from farm to farm. Of course each farm household would feed them at noon. When our turn came, I remember driving to Harcourt, some five miles, at 13 or 14, to the meat market for a "steamship round" of beef, which somehow always got cooked by noon. Wash basins and towels were put under the shade trees so the men could wash up before eating.

Farming was hard work. We "women" always took coffee, lemonade and goodies to the men in the fields at 4 o'clock. As hot as some days were it still was nice to get out in the air – from the hot kitchen.

We were not without music. We had a piano, which meant lessons for anyone who showed any interest. We had an Edison record player with probably a dozen thick records. The one I remember the most was John Phillip Sousa's March. A number of us sang in the church choir – Roy, Em, Ruth and me.

It was customary to hold winter midweek prayer meetings in the homes of the parishioners. Our parents always hosted one of the meetings, which meant an extra clean house and more goodies with 4 o'clock coffee. There were not always enough chairs, so a table leaf was put between two chairs for more seating.

Kerosene lamps were the evening light and with them the everlasting job of cleaning "smoky" chimneys every morning. After that came Coleman lamps with delicate things that lighted up after pumping.

When Ruth was about four [in 1917] she was hospitalized for hernia surgery in Des Moines. I (at age about 14) was driven down to keep her company – installed in a rooming house about a block from the hospital. I remember the two of us singing church hymns, probably at the top of our lungs, because nurses would stop in and comment about how nice our songs were to hear.

About 1917, I was confirmed. The confirmation class was in Swedish. I still have the Swedish Bible which was presented to each confirmand. We girls were taught early on to sew. I made my own confirmation dress, probably without a pattern. The lace trim I thought was rather expensive and Mother surprised me by not objecting. She probably thought it was a lot cheaper than hiring a seamstress, which is what most of the other girls had.

The winter of 1917-18 was the time of the dreadful flu epidemic which felled thousands all over the country. Doc Waddell came every morning – everyone in the family was sick except me. One morning he said to Dad, "Frank, I wouldn't give money for a nurse if I had a girl like that," which surely gave me a boost. One morning he walked over to where Gil was bedded down and said, "Frank, I didn't expect this one to come through the night." That shook me up. During the epidemic we all slept in the <u>big</u> living room in the old house and I remember Mother sitting – it seemed like all day – beside Irene (then about five months old) and holding her little hand. Fortunately for me, Dad didn't like to

milk so I had learned early. There were, I think, only two cows to be milked, enough to keep the family supplied. I was then 14 going on 15, and I milked! Our neighbor Mike Bjork was well enough and I thought might offer to milk, but no! – the fear of catching a bug was too great. That winter our cousin Melvin Lindgren [son of Amy's sister Lizzie and Frank's brother John] died (of cancer), but no funeral was held, only a graveside service for their family. Everyone who wasn't sick was afraid to venture out.

In school we were not pushed to make A's in our studies, but we'd better never come home with less than an A in "deportment." "You can at least behave," said both parents.

The early school buses were horse-drawn. About 1918 or thereabouts there was a tornado. Cousin Dagmar [daughter of Frank's sister Selma] recalls that Harold Anderson was driving their bus then. When he saw the tornado coming, he had the kids all lie down in the ditch along the road. When it was over, the horses and bus had been lifted over the fence and into the field and were left standing upright. No casualties. Only a few trees were broken on the farm out near the road. Gil and I, and maybe Ev, got as far as Emily and Claus Johnson's (halfway to the farm) and spent the time of the storm in their basement, where Mrs. Johnson moved from window to window praying vociferously.

After country school came a consolidation of several country schools [built in 1916], where I started eighth grade. Mine was the first class to graduate from high school in Lanyon, in 1921.

High school came with many extra-curricular activities, among them 4-H Club work. Three of us represented the county at the Iowa State Fair – Imo Stotts, Mildred Anderson and I demonstrated canning corn and peaches by the "cold pack" method. First we won in the county, then we placed 14th in the state. Not bad. And there were declamatory (public speaking) contests. I took part every year – received two firsts and two seconds. One time I did a piece on Christians being thrown to the beasts in the arena in Rome. Said Oscar Kullberg, "It is too bad we couldn't clap, that was so well done" – no clapping permitted in church. And there was basketball (girls). I played guard. And then there was a popularity contest – some called it a beauty contest – whichever, Regina won in 1921.

After high school came college – two years for me – Augustana College and then Iowa State Teachers, and a teaching certificate. My first job was in Garwin, Iowa, for the grand sum of $1300 per year. Then after three years I went on to Letts, Iowa, teaching eighth grade and cooking and sewing. After five years, Iowa was not offering enough excitement so I moved on to Ironwood, Michigan, where I taught my specialty, home economics. In that system there were as many teachers as Lanyon had population. Very heady.

In the meantime though, in 1925 I spent the summer in Colorado, working in the dining room at the YMCA Camp in Estes Park, now Rocky Mountain National Park.

Conferences would be held, then would come a lull of a few days when after cleaning silver we were on our own. It was then that 13 of us started out to climb Longs Peak. Five of us made it to the top. That was heady, too – just because Longs Peak is there. It was truly exhausting even though we climbed the easy side. I don't know the altitude offhand.

All in all life was fun and well worth living.

A few more little remembrances:

- Dad said he aimed to start oats planting on Mother's birthday (April 20) and corn on his birthday (May 4).
- Grandmother made small cheeses – kept them in her brick-floored basement.
- One spring I was allowed to take care of the chicken egg incubator, which meant turning the eggs once a day. The little chicks were so cute (after three weeks incubation). I would help break the shell to make it easier to emerge.
- Mother cooked and sewed with no recipes and no patterns.
- When we moved to the farm south of Lanyon [in 1915], the driveway was located downhill apiece where it never dried out. The very first thing our father did was to make the entry on higher ground directly in from the main road.
- For some winters we lived with "an apple a day." A big barrel was purchased and kept in the "fruit room" [in the basement].
- One of our staples was canned salmon. Only red salmon would do. Dad had grown up in Sweden where only good fish was tolerated.
- Mother once said, "Never criticize anyone for their actions or words when he or she is in deep grief or very ill." Another time Mother said, "Never wear your emotions on your sleeve." Also said she, "Be neither the first to accept the new nor the last to cast the old aside."
- Mother made us "think." She was never one to say, "Yes, you can" or "No, you can't." Instead came the answer in the form of a question: "What do <u>you</u> think?"

<u>Gil</u>

On the farm, I remember when Grandpa Johnson died [in 1910] and he was in his casket at the house [where he lived] in Lanyon. I was about six years old then. I can remember, too, walking with him when they visited the farm where Verner and Jennie Lindgren lived for years, in the section where the "John Lindgren" place is now. [Verner was a son of John and Lizzie Lindgren]

I remember when Uncle Ernest and Aunt Nellie [Amy's sister] were married [in 1912 – Gil was 8]. The wedding was in the Johnson home back of the church and they went to church afterwards. Paul Burman said he remembers slightly when "Frank and Amy" (our parents) and Frank I. and Esther were married in a double wedding at the old J. P. Johnson home east of Lanyon, which became known as the Frank I. Johnson place. Did they go to Fort Dodge for a wedding trip? That would be quite a thing with horses.

[Amy and Frank were married in 1902 in a double ceremony with Amy's brother Frank I. Johnson and Esther Carlson. The wedding was in the house on the Johnson farm.

After marriage, Frank I. took over the farm from his father, J.P. Johnson. J.P. and his wife retired to a house in town. Aunt Nellie and Uncle Ernest were married in this latter house in 1912. Paul Burman was Amy's cousin, son of John Burman, Amy's mother's brother.]

We had two horses that we used the most, Barney and Bill. Bill was black. They were all-purposes horses of medium weight. They were used for the buggy and for field work. Once we had a horse named Prince, who tried to pull a two-row cultivator by himself while the other two horses pulled a little and walked along.

The Interurban went every two hours to Rockwell City, Fort Dodge, and Des Moines beginning at 6 in the morning and running until 8 at night, except the train to Rockwell City, which ran from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. The tracks are mostly torn up now.

In about 1914 we got our first car – a Model T Ford. The same year Dad built the barn [on the first farm they owned, east of Lanyon]. It is still standing – the farm is now the C. P. Anderson place where "Corp" Anderson lives.

I can remember when the first drainage tiles in the fields of our present farm [south of Lanyon] were put in. Some of the ditches were dug by hand. Some of you can remember when we moved to the farm in 1915. The first part of the Lanyon School was built in 1916.

The house on the present farm [south of Lanyon] was built about 1920. Some lumber from the old house was used. Some was hauled from the Lanyon lumber yard with horses and wagon. [They bought the farm in 1915 and lived in the original house until 1920 when the new one was built and the old one torn down.]

Many of you can remember Adolph Anderson [pastor of the Lanyon Covenant Church from 1907 to 1920]. He did well to stay 13 years as pastor. Maybe he had something in common with Billy Graham – showmanship. In those days preachers received some respect. Now we are on a first-name basis the first day.

In confirmation class there were about 28 or 29 under Adolph Anderson. In the summer we went to Swedish school in the Bishop school house near Rohdens for about two weeks.

There were dirt roads most places. Whole families went to church in bobsleds in the winter and carriages in the summer. The church was the center of the community. Some of you remember the church a mile and a half west of Lanyon. Some of the families built stalls for their horses. [In 1910 a new church was built in the town of Lanyon.]

I can remember going to country school. We spoke Swedish at home, so it was a problem for some because they spoke English in school of course. Jennie and Fred Burgh were teachers for awhile. There were all eight grades and maybe 15 students in the school.

Until about 1916, when the Consolidated school was built, the preacher was the only "contact" with the outside world. Then [after the new school was built] teachers came from such distant places as Rockwell City and Dayton. Principal Means came from Rockwell City by the Interurban train.

When the high school boys played basketball, we went on the Interurban to Harcourt and took the train to Stanhope and stayed overnight in a hotel and then took the train back to Harcourt. As we were leaving Stanhope once, the hotel owner came to the depot. Several salesmen were getting ready to leave town. He had given too much change to someone and he tried to find out who it was, but all had excuses like, "I put it in my pocket and never looked at it."

One time we took the Interurban to Boxholm to a ball game. Each boy paid his own way. There were a lot of pennies involved and we had to stop at Hope to get the change straightened out.

David and Gust Carlson [who were brothers] were so against basketball, that games were held in Lanyon in the daytime. Even in the '40s and '50s they were against the preacher going to basketball games, but Pastor George Schirmer went anyway.

If an insurance company had held the mortgage on the farm in the '30s, they probably would have foreclosed [because Frank could not make the payments during the Depression]. But kind-hearted Mr. McLaughlin [who sold Frank the farm and held the mortgage] said, "I don't want the farm, Frank." I overheard Dad tell this to someone. So he suspended payments until things got better.

<u>Ev</u>

After high school, while in Des Moines for a year going to Des Moines University (long since bankrupt) and taking a business course, I used to go home weekends on the Interurban train. Dad would meet me in the green Buick at the "Hope" intersection a few miles east of home. One spur from Hope went to Fort Dodge. The one I was on continued to Rockwell City. Part of the journey went over a high trestle. The Interurban car would slow to a crawl and I'd sit with bated breath until we got across. "How I'd love to stay on all the way to Rockwell City," I used to think. Now, I'm wondering if I was "born with the wanderlust"! There certainly wasn't anything to see, I suppose, in Rockwell City. There was just that yen to go and see for myself.

Memories of Lanyon – a small town by the name of Lanyon lies 20 miles south of Fort Dodge. In its day it boasted a post office, bank, grocery store, lumber yard, hardware store, restaurant, telephone office, garage, school, grain elevator, and a Covenant Church. As time went by one by one these places closed their doors. Today the grain elevator is still in business and the Covenant Church is on its way to becoming one hundred years old.

One of the area's farmers was Mr. Frank Lindgren (our father), who, with his wife Amy had eight children, four boys and four girls. All eight are living (1987). Recently, a reunion, which was one of many, was held in Des Plaines, Illinois, bringing together all of these siblings. They came from California to Maryland, Florida to Minnesota and Iowa. A

two-day gathering was held, and among other things discussed was the longevity of these sisters and brothers, the oldest being 84 years of age and the youngest 67 years. Adding up the ages came to six hundred plus years of living. All are retired senior citizens, two are living in retirement complexes, not from infirmities, but of their own choosing. Two of the couples have been married 57 years and 53 years, and another couple will celebrate their Golden Anniversary in 1988. All agree their unusual longevity is inherited, perhaps from their mother, who lived to 103 years of age.

A Round Robin letter has been in circulation for 57 years among the members of the family and has been invaluable as a means of keeping up with family news items. Frank Lindgren passed away in 1953, Amy Lindgren in 1981. They lived for many years, after retirement from farming, at 301 K St. in Fort Dodge, Iowa.

"Camelot"

[An original poem written by Evelyn Lindgren Winblade. The poem was inspired by her many happy memories of living on the family farm where all eight children grew up.]

Once there was a place called Camelot,
Its memories are pressed between the pages of my mind.
A beautiful place was Camelot,
Where lilacs bloomed and evergreens grew, flowers of every kind.

The fleur de lis and cypress vine
Were planted for all to see,
Portulacas' glorious colors
Were red and yellow with leaves of green.

Cockscomb and Snow-on-the-Mountain
Grew outside the door.
Hens cackled, little chicks peeped,
And roosters crowed at four.

The fields were green at every spring
In this peaceful place called Camelot.
The gentle rains and the summer sun
Ripened the grains of my Camelot.

Wonderful, wondrous Camelot,
You're pressed between the pages of my mind.
Moonlit nights, starry skies, the sunset hue,
These are the memories you so deftly designed.

A black walnut tree stood all alone,

The cedar-lined driveway let up to our home
In due time, my dear Camelot,
From you I did roam.

Camelot, oh, Camelot,
Fail not my fading memory.
Can it be, was it only yesterday,
I partook of your ecstasy?

"Camelot: A time, place or atmosphere of idyllic happiness." – Webster

Obed

When I was about 6 years old, we had a wooden sidewalk to the house made from the pieces from an old stock water tank. Someone gave me a small hammer and a lot of small nails. Some of those pieces of wood had at least 3 or 4 nails per square inch.

The new school in Lanyon was there when I started first grade [in 1916]. I can't remember first or second grade teachers, but from about third grade on there were these: May Stark, Mrs. Davies, Mr. Peterson, Mr. Huizinga (math, tennis coach, etc.).

In the winter we brought sleds to school and ran fast and slid down the slope in front of the school. Once someone was not alert and got clipped about 6 inches from the ground and was hurt quite badly. I don't remember his name (it was not one of us).

In the first gym (later the lunch room), Ed Carlson and I were running after the same ball one day and his head hit me just above the eye. It swelled so I could not see out of it.

As for basketball, in the basement on the farm in the winter we removed both ends of a large coffee can, nailed it to a wall, and used a ball about the size of a tennis ball to play. In the summer, we had a basket on each of two machine sheds.

When the barn was full of alfalfa hay we had a diving board up near the top. It was not daring to turn a somersault then but by spring it was, when the stack was down about 15 to 17 feet.

I think I learned to swim in the creek just west of the house. The water was about 18 inches deep and there was a mud bottom. You had to use the breast stroke or get a handful of mud if you used the crawl.

Firecrackers were legal in those days so I had a shoe box nearly full, 1-inch up to 3-inch sizes, also some sparklers and Roman candles.

The driveway needed evergreens to line each side and I dug up seedlings for Dad to plant at 5 cents each.

I remember that when we moved to the present farm [south of Lanyon], they used one or two rooms of the old house to build the new one [in 1920]. I think they moved one section right onto the foundation after the floor joists were in place.

When the new house was being built and only the basement was in, Mom and Dad were gone one day, and some of us and the neighbor kids had a mud fight half in the basement and half on the outside. When Mom and Dad got home there was mud everywhere and – you guessed right – we cleaned it up.

I recall the small room upstairs where the seed corn was kept in the winter. We had a hand sheller with a big heavy fly wheel and a big crank. I cranked that many an hour shelling the corn (taking the kernels off the dry cob).

I put up a chinning bar in the east room at home and I believe I could chin myself 21 times. The bar is still there.

When crystal radio sets came on the market, I ordered one by mail. It was mailed to Langdon, Iowa (up near the Minnesota border), and I waited and waited before it finally arrived. I think Des Moines was the only radio station.

Once riding a horse to Lanyon I met a car. The horse got scared and reared up and fell backwards on his back. I slid off and was lucky to have no bones broken.

Some years we went to Grand Junction to shop for Christmas presents. There was a 10 cent store where most of our gifts were bought.

The Christmas programs, Julotta (early Christmas morning church service), and lutefisk I remember well. The big arch where the pulpit usually stood. Real candles in the windows. Real candles on the Christmas tree in the church and on the farm.

When I was about 12 and Gil about 18 we went to the Fort Dodge County Fair to show the hogs. We slept right in where the hogs were kept. I believe the fair had a big swimming pool and a big (midway) Ferris wheel, etc.

Before you could enter any athletic program at school you had to have a physical, so I went to Paton to see Doc Waddell. He was a nice guy. He always smelled like cigar smoke. We thought it might be to remain germ-free. When he came out to the farm it would be $7.00, which figured to be $1.00 per mile.

The declamatory contests were fun. I don't remember the name of the lady who came to Lanyon just to coach for a few weeks.

When I was about 17, I had a school bus route. I used a Model T Ford car, and in the winter a bobsled pulled by our horses Bill and Barney. I kept them in the stalls behind

the school. I picked up the Roos kids. [The Roos kids were the grandchildren of John Burman, brother of Amy's mother Johanna Dorothea.]

In the fall, school let out for about two weeks during corn harvest. We drove the wagon next to the tractor and corn picker and when full, into the crib. It was miracle no one ever got a hand in all the gears and chains. Dad had a threshing machine and one year I was the "engineer." I sat on the tractor and if necessary shut it down quickly if trouble developed.

At about age 17, I did not like Henry Ford's body design on the old Model T, so Dad allowed me to take the body off and built a racer (red), with two bucket seats and a box on the back. On the way to the State Fair with Em on the box (there were no seat belts), a car went by and a guy stuck his head out and asked, "Got her entered?" There were auto races at the fair that day.

The hill going into Fort Dodge looked so big. Somebody made it in third gear going up and he was a hero. I think it was one of the Hedberg boys.

I played in the Gowrie band a couple of years. Russell Swanson and I rode a motorcycle over there twice a week. There was no side car yet. I think I had a saxophone and he had a trombone. There was also a band in high school which I joined. I don't remember the band leader – maybe his name was Serenius. Later, I put a sidecar on the motorcycle. I built a trunk on the back to hold a battery. I probably had $25 in the whole rig.

Once when Dad was in the hospital in Omaha [for a fistula operation, in 1932], I think I was in charge of about 150 pigs. They got cholera and Dr. Patton the veterinarian came and vaccinated them all. It was very tense wondering it if was the right thing to do.

In about 1932 I found a job at the Cornhusker Hotel in Lincoln, Nebraska, as a bus boy. After awhile I was made a waiter, later a cashier, and finally the floor manager. The hotel manager was a German-Jewish fellow named Abe Schimmel. He lived up on the seventh floor and really put in a lot of hours. Once they said he was not out of the building for 10 days. Easy to see why the place did business all through the Great Depression. As floor manager I went to work three times a day – 11:30 to 2, 5 to 7 p.m., and 9 p.m. to 1 a.m. I lived about two blocks away. I was hired on the spot after the manager, Andy Anderson, was fired for being late too often and drinking too much booze. I got along very well with Abe because I worked hard, did not ask for a raise – only fools did during those days – and of course there was no booze problem.

I do not like the word "bum" but there were many in that era. Most were "winos" and they would come in and ask for a quarter. At first I was naive and would give them a quarter, until a lawyer walked in and recognized a fellow he had gotten out of a jam. He told me to never, never give any of them a dime because it all went for booze. Then I told them to go to the Salvation Army and they would be given food. One said, "I've been saved, redeemed and sanctified a hundred times – I want money."

On weekends there were hundreds of students in the place, and after closing we would find many food checks under the seats on the floor, so Abe and I decided to collect at the booths. Abe said to tell the waiters not to get anybody angry over the new policy – and it worked fine.

Each corner of each booth had a really nice ear of corn carved out of wood, and many people hung their coats on them. When some left they broke the ear off and carried the souvenir out under a coat.

Em came to Lincoln to visit for a couple of weeks and I'm not sure if he worked there or not. I remember that many times we had some goodies about 1 a.m.

Ruth

I was born in Iowa in 1913 and grew up there. The old house [on the farm south of Lanyon] is a hazy memory – the long, steep stairs to our parent's big bedroom, with a chimney in the middle and old trunks around it. The new house was built in 1920 and we all grew up there.

I don't remember my early teachers but have never forgotten my fourth grade teacher – Miss Kinney. She was tops. I know we got to school by bus, but I don't remember much of that. I know in the spring, it looked so warm, but the wait at the end of the driveway was windy and cold.

All of the boys played basketball – they were the "stars" in Lanyon and we all went to see them play. In high school, the girls made fudge to sell at the games to make money for school projects.

In high school my friends and I had a foursome: Pauline Mossberg, Ruby Hedberg, Helen Johanson and me. We ran around together and had some good times. We were all in the same confirmation class on Saturday mornings. One Saturday evening we found a window open in the girls' restroom in the schoolhouse. We climbed in and played basketball in the gym awhile. We were caught – I forget the punishment.

There was a general store in Lanyon. You could buy almost everything there – groceries, dry-goods, gifts. Vinegar was kept in a barrel – Mom had a brown jug and got it filled there. We bought only staples as we had a big garden and our own meat.

On some Saturdays we'd go to Fort Dodge to shop for other things. It was a 20-mile ride. The Boston Store had everything one could ever need and there was a 10 cent store, too. I remember "Denver Mud" – we always had it on hand. It was a gray clay in a metal box. Did it come from Denver? And was it for pimples? It seemed to be a cure-all, as was Watkins Liniment.

If we were visiting Grandma in Lanyon on a Sunday evening, a bunch of us would ask Dad if we could get ice cream. He'd give us a bill ($1.00?) and we'd get cones (5 cents each) at a little store across from the hardware store.

I remember the Sunday Des Moines Register. We'd spread the "funnies" on the floor and take turns reading them.

In the summertime we'd go to Gowrie some Saturday nights to the band concert. Obie played saxophone in the band and there were crowds of people.

I got to high school and graduated as valedictorian. I don't remember our graduation, nor do any of my classmates, but I remember my dress – a coral silk with hemstitched cape collar and hem, that Mom designed and made.

The "Crash" came in 1929, but we had food and clothing so Mom and Dad did the worrying. I wanted to go through nurses training but there was no money. The Depression was on, so I worked a couple of years in Chicago as an au pair (mother's helper) for a family with five children. When I finally got into training, Ev helped me with money when I was low and I think I repaid every dime. After graduation I was charge nurse on the men's surgical floor and later did public health nursing in Chicago. I don't remember my first plane ride, but on vacations I took the City of Denver train (a fast train) from Chicago to Boone and Mom and Dad met me there.

Em

When Christmas came around we all had our Sunday School "pieces" to memorize. We helped each other at home and as we practiced we eventually seemed to learn the other pieces as well as our own. Sure enough when the big moment in church arrived – you guessed it, I recited Ruth's! Or was it Irene's? I don't know what happened when their turn came. And do you remember the rainbow of candle lights that arched over the platform of the church. To me it was nothing less than dazzling.

Why I had put shoes right by the door that led from the kitchen outside I don't know. At any rate, some time later I found myself cruising around and around the round dining room table with Mother after me with a broom. Some mischief had brought it on I'm sure. Whether in a playful mood, or half serious, I don't recall – but we were going at a pretty good pace. After a few rounds I made a quick exit through the dining room door, pausing long enough to grab my shoes and long enough for Mother to gain an extra step or two. I was free! I ran out to the wood fence that ran between the barn and the old water tank. There I perched myself triumphantly as if to say: "Now try to get me!"

With not too much imagination I can still hear the mellow voice of Pat Gustafson (the Gustafson's lived about a half-mile away) wafting through the air on a still summer evening singing some Gospel hymn or a currently uplifting song. (I was not there, but I believe he sang at Dad's funeral.)

But something else comes crowding into my mind just now. Pat Gustafson's hogs had gotten out of the yard and he was trying desperately to get them back in when I

happened along. We finally succeeded in the round-up. It may have been the same day or a few days later that he and I were in Sanders store together and he called me over to the stand that was loaded with luscious pears just right for eating. He told me to pick one out and it would be mine for helping him with the hogs. Surely we had pears at home quite frequently but somehow this one stands out above all others in being so delicious! (I was about 10 or 12 years old.) I think that it was the kindness of this good neighbor which added to the sweet taste that still lingers in my mouth and memory.

I suppose Mother and Dad hoped there might be a real musician among their offspring (and maybe some of you do better than I am aware). I don't know how many of us took piano lessons. At any rate, Mother got me started with one lesson a week. I stayed at it three weeks, but the fourth week I was nowhere to be found. I was hiding behind the machine shed – seems like I heard them call for me. I don't know that there was any confrontation later in the day. I do know that there were no more lessons, and I was relieved. In retrospect I wish now that Mother had given me the works in some form or fashion. A thousand times I have regretted that I cannot play the piano, or at least handle a few chords. Now it is too late, although I made a serious effort some years ago. I have often told Ruth that one of the reasons I married her was her ability at the piano – and what a help it has been, especially during those years in Alaska.

I think the teacher's name was Miss Jacobson and I was in seventh grade. In the back of one notebook I had the habit of writing down certain current song hits, such as "Bye, Bye, Blackbird," as well as some of the current goofy sayings, like "go lay an egg." For some strange reason the teacher called for our notebooks (I must have had just one). I decided that before she came to my desk I could try to hide "go lay an egg." So, I quickly cut a piece of paper a half-inch wide and 3 inches long, pasted it at both ends and stuck it on expecting to pull it off when I got the notebook back. But sure enough, when it came back she had torn off, or lifted off, that slip and it read – "go lay an egg." I don't recall that there were any repercussions. It seems like it happened yesterday.

I suppose I received permission: at any rate I decided to raise some turkeys. How or where I got the eggs or the hens or the tom I have no idea. I do remember that at that time eggs sold for 25 cents each. One hen had made her nest in a brush pile quite near the road north of the garden. Dad knew nothing about it and decided to burn the brush. He may have noticed when the hen left the pile but thought nothing of it – but I certainly did! I was very upset and had the audacity to charge him 25 cents an egg. I suppose I estimated how many there were in the nest. I have often wondered what he whispered to Mother about that third son.

More about turkeys – I must have had several hens (or maybe it was the same one) that decided to lay her eggs on the upper deck at the south end of the barn, the area that extended over the cattle pen below. I noticed that she was doing OK with her production and I wanted her to keep on, in other words, not to be satisfied when she had produced, say, six eggs upon which to set. There happened to be a crack about 3 inches long very near or almost under her nest. I deftly moved the straw in such a way that when the next

egg was laid it would fall through the crack. And underneath the crack I tacked an empty small gunny sack to catch the egg. I had to check the sack every day to remove any egg that had dropped into it, the reason being, of course, that if another fell into the sack and hit the one already there they might both crack and my whole project would cancel itself out! I don't recall if it was successful but in retrospect it seems like skullduggery. Doesn't the Bible say that we are born with "original sin"?

I guess I can never erase from my memory the look I saw on Dad's face! The Great Depression was moving mercilessly across the country and taking its toll on almost every household. The moment had arrived for Mother and Dad and they were now going to Henry McLaughlin, the man from whom Dad had purchased the farm. Would our parents see all of their hard work and dreams (and their children's) dashed to smithereens? McLaughlin apparently had it within his power to foreclose. I think I am correct in saying that Henry and his wife lived in or near Storm Lake. Dad and Mother were slowly leaving our house and Dad's dejected look told me that his world might soon be crumbling. (I would have been about 15 years of age [about 1930].) I'm sure they came home later that afternoon, and Dad's face was now all aglow! Either he said it to those of us who were around or I heard him repeat it someone else: "Henry told me – Frank, you're not going to lose that farm!"

The Watkins man (who sold spices and small household articles) used to come around to the farm on a regular basis and Mother would often buy something, maybe just to satisfy him. Once he came just at noon and Mother had some hot pork chops on the table waiting for the hungry men to devour. She went to the bedroom to get some money and he went to his little truck to get what she had ordered. He must have hesitated until she had disappeared because when he returned she noticed that he was chewing on something. You guessed it! When it came time to eat they discovered that one pork chop was missing. I remember Mother telling someone about it and getting a big laugh out of it.

I think it was some kind of hog cholera that was making the rounds and some of our hogs had died. The vet was called out. He took one sickly looking pig, konked it on the head and immediately opened the chest. There I saw the heart still beating. Vivid memories.

I often felt that Dad had a good sense of humor and he repeated his jokes often enough that one sticks at least hazily in my mind. Man to barber: "I think you cut my hair the last time." Barber: "No, I don't think so, I've only been here seven months." And that reminds me of the time Ob and I went to Gowrie to get hair cuts. Ob went first and I followed. Barber to me: "How do you want it parted?" Response: "Straight ahead" [that is, a "bowl" cut without a part]. I doubt Ob remembers but he gave me a mild lecture – after that it was either the right or left side or the middle!

I am sure that it is with some bias that I say that Lanyon often had good basketball teams, at least for the size of the school (32 in high school when I was there). I think Dad went rather grudgingly to the games, thinking that surely there was enough work on the farm to expend that kind of energy, though undoubtedly a bit proud of his agile sons. Putting heart and soul into the game I would often not sleep too much Friday nights (games were always held those nights) but would replay the game in my mind,

remembering the good shots and always the errors. I'm glad Did didn't frown too much on it because our team went to the semi-finals in Fort Dodge. (May I add modestly that I was the captain that year.) After the finals were played in the evening the officials announced the winners for the All County Team. That simply meant that they picked the best players from all the teams that participated – Gowrie, Otho, Harcourt, etc. I was comfortably seated in one of the upper-level seats when the names were called out. I don't think the thought even entered my mind that my name might be called – but it was. I must have been in a state of shock as I made my way all the way down to the gym floor – it seemed like a mile – and received my trophy. (Wish I knew what happened to it.) It was one of the most thrilling moments of my life! I've used the event as a sermon illustration a few times under the topic: "Play to Win!" (I Cor. 9)

Irene

Do I remember my first day of school? Yes, in some great detail! I wore a new lavender and white gingham dress that Mother had made, and I was so shy I went to my assigned seat and never left it until morning recess. I remember that we "little ones" sat on small chairs arranged in a circle in front of the room and had our turn to read. I can still recall the difficulty I had with the word "there" and when sister Gene visited our class later in the year, sure enough, I stumbled over that word when called upon to read. Miss Zinser was our teacher.

Having just learned to read, I read "Uncle Wiggly" to Roy sitting on Mom and Dad's bed. Roy was about three and invariably he fell asleep before I finished. I was kind of disgusted with him for doing that!

I can still feel Dad's cold palm on my fevered brow when I was sick in bed and Dad came from working outside to see how I was feeling.

Ruth took piano lessons from Elsa Hall [daughter of George Hall, Sr., Lanyon pastor from 1920 to 1927]. At times I was allowed to tag along and I sat quietly in a big chair at the parsonage while Ruth played.

I recall coming home from school and seeing a freshly scrubbed kitchen floor that had then been freshly varnished (or waxed) – a job Mother and Dad worked on together.

I remember how much Dad enjoyed (or at least listened carefully, then pondered) the occasions when we four youngest siblings presented our feelings regarding the way we thought some task should be done. We thought our way was an improvement on the way Dad had taught us to do the job. We usually had Roy, the youngest and most appealing one, present the "facts." I think Dad really "got a kick" out of our analysis of work methods and often let us change the procedures.

Remember nice Dr. Waddell and visits to his Paton office for vaccinations? He smoked a cigar, a new aroma for us "kids."

Roy and I packed a light breakfast and walked to the farm on the south side of the road opposite the Paul Gustafson farm and the Emory Gustafson farm (both north side). Roy loved to birdwatch in the early morning, not my interest, but I felt Roy needed company. I was really interested in the hot chocolate and sandwiches, and couldn't wait to eat!

I'm sure we all recall the "funny paper" (comic strip pages) of the Des Moines Register. When we got home from school, the first one to put even a finger on that section (printed on peach-colored paper and easy to find) was the first one to read the "funnies," and no one disturbed that privileged reader until he or she was finished. No fighting over the funnies – we knew better!

Fee, fi, fo, fum,
I smell the blood of an Englishman,
Be he alive or be he dead,
I'll grind his bones to make my bread.

We read that poem in the comic pages and we loved to repeat it. Mother hated to hear it and tried to get us to stop, not with complete success however.

I had many beautiful dresses that Mom made for me. I recall her saying, "I would rather sew than eat." She designed patterns for many dresses.

Gene asked me (in later years), "Did you ever feel not loved?" I said, "No, never."

At Christmas time the beautiful cut-glass bowl was filled with wonderful hard candies and locked in the dining room buffet. However, when Mother and Dad were away for a few hours, well, we know where the key was "hidden." So – we got to the candy but we didn't eat too much, just enough to satisfy the sweet tooth. Then we put tissue paper in the bottom of the bowl, candy on top so the level was the same. I don't know when Mother saw through that ploy.

I loved hanging wet clothes on the line for Mother. I'm sure she enjoyed the help on wash day.

Yes, we had some wonderful records for our phonograph, including Galli Curci, no less. Our introduction to opera! But one record had a swear word and Mom and Dad really did not want us to hear that. So – when they left for a few hours, what record did we pull out, crank up the "Edison" and play? And always we put the record back in the storage area before the folks returned. Just normal kids!

My favorite teacher by far was Mildred Jacobson, my fifth and sixth grade teacher. She was a beautiful brunette and she wore lovely clothes and she was so understanding. We all just loved and respected her so. She could leave the room and we went right on with our studies until she returned, not quite the case with Miss Anderson, our seventh and eighth grade teacher. I think Miss Anderson may have given up teaching after two years with "our bunch" – can't say I blame her.

When the Reverend Backstrom was in Lanyon [pastor 1932-1937], Leonard Carlson was president of the Young People's Society, and I was vice president. Leonard was in the hospital one time so I, at age 14 or so, presided at a business meeting, my first. Backstrom was so impatient with me. "Hurry things along," he said. I tried, then he scolded me because I didn't take time! Mother and Dad came to pick me up after the meeting and I was in tears. Dad was ready and more than willing to tell Backy what he thought of one who should know better how to guide young people. (Dad probably had more patience with "kids" than the preacher.) Mother calmed Dad and we drove on home.

Yes, I too, played in the Lanyon High School Orchestra. I played the violin and so thrilled was I it was like the Fourth of July fireworks going off. I wonder what that orchestra really sounded like though.

Roy

On New Year's Day of 1936 (I think), I had finished "cleaning the barn" as we euphemistically put it. There was snow on the ground but it was sunny and very pleasant. I was idly looking out the south door of the barn where the "maneuver" pile was (as John would say) when I saw a robin. I distinctly remember thinking to myself, "The winters just aren't what they used to be." Two weeks later the temperature dropped to 20 below and never went above zero again for about two weeks. During this time we had some snowfalls which required shoveling and I remember starting out in a sheepskin jacket and ending up peeling off everything but the flannel shirt which I was wearing over my "union suit," because, after all, it had warmed up to zero. Of course, the air was dry and there was no wind. Some time during those two weeks our dog strayed off and ended up at Martin Carlson's place, which was one mile east. I know Irene and I walked over to get him but I can't actually remember the trip.

Most people don't realize that I helped put Em through North Park Seminary. He had quite a hair cutting business going – people would stop him on the sidewalk or wherever and say, "Can I get a haircut this weekend?", and he would consult his little book and say, "How about Saturday at 3:30?" He was very much in demand. My point is, he didn't get that good without practice, and who do you think he practiced on? Oh, how I hated those hand clippers on the farm. I flinched every time he picked them up. When Em went off to college I breathed a sigh of relief and got my haircuts in Harcourt at 25 to 35 cents a pop.

The greatest school lunch in the world consisted of salmon sandwiches made with homemade white bread and red Alaska sockeye salmon, plus "rocks" (a drop cookie with raisins and nuts that Mother made) and Concord grapes from our own vines. I imagine a can of red salmon cost about a dime because we had it very often. Today I guess it's about $3.50.

Memories of Alaska

By Emory Lindgren

Our sister Ruth, the organizer, has asked me to include something about our days in Alaska.

After I had gotten permission from the Covenant office in Chicago to build the Children's Home in Unalakleet, Alaska, I realized that we would need a tractor for a number of things, including getting trees to fuel the furnace to keep the place warm. All I could think of was a "Farmall" tractor of the type we used on the farm. As I recall I rather boldly wrote home to the Lanyon Church and asked if they would underwrite the cost, which they said they would. I believe the tractor was already on order when there was a turn of events.

I can't answer a lot of baffling questions as to how the Good Lord works in certain situations, but there are times when He obviously steps in. One day missionary Paul Carlson from Nome told me that the U.S. Army Surplus Office in Nome had some "D 4 Caterpillar" tractors for sale. (D stands for diesel and 4 for the number of cylinders.) I think you gals know that it's the kind that lays down its own tracks – ideal for snow and sand and what not. Of course that would be ideal so I cancelled the Farmall order and we had the Cat shipped over by barge from Nome. The Farmall would have been utterly impractical and I would have been chagrined to say the least. I still remember the cost: $1157. The Cat had been in service out on the Aleutian Islands, I was told, and it had one big hole where a bullet had pierced the heavy sheet metal. It was very functional. In time it needed some major repairs and there was no one within 150 miles to tackle it, so I did the job. I was scared, but it was more simple than I had anticipated. Thanks again, Dad, for the experience of the farm! I should add that the Lanyon Church paid the $1157 (which was used for the Cat instead of the Farmall). What would that be in 1986? (This happened in about 1951.)

The Eskimos are a very friendly people and they enriched our lives more than they ever knew, I'm sure. However, when it came to liquor, it was sad. They could drink a few beers and they were out. The only law enforcement officer in town was Stephan Ivanoff, who was appointed U.S. Commissioner, and this gave him authority to hold court and prosecute. He was one-fourth Russian and a highly respected man in Unalakleet. However, he had very little education and could not really comprehend the procedure very well. He would occasionally ask me to assist him when he "tried" some cases.

There was no commercial fishing up north at the time we were there, so the canneries further south would regularly send a big plane up to our village and pick up men to work for the season. They would pick up 30 to 40 men in June and return them in late August. Usually they came home with a few thousand, which if prudently used would get them through the winter months. Some would drink their money away very quickly, or spend it foolishly.

In late August one year the men returned and "Fred," age 35, came off the plane completely soused. A half hour later he was staggering around the village (pop. 500) crazily carrying his 30.06 rifle. It was a powerful gun used for hunting, of World War I vintage, I think. I thought for sure he might kill some people and I tried to have him arrested. No one would sign a warrant for his arrest, so finally I did. (Almost everyone in the village was related, so you can understand their reluctance.) It seemed so cowardly not to have him arrested when lives were in danger. Ivanoff had him brought into "court" immediately in the grade school building. I had not only signed the warrant, but now Ivanoff asked me to assist him in the proceedings. I had no legal right to do this but there are times when you must take the law into your own hands. It was an open-and-shut case of course. Ivanoff leaned over to me and whispered, "How much time should I give him?" I thought for a moment and then whispered back: "Six months." Looking Fred squarely in the eye, he said emphatically, "You go jail six months in Nome."

Six months later Fred was back and I met him on the "main drag," a 15-foot-wide graveled path though town. I greeted him heartily. (It was a rather common occurrence for men to be sent in for drinking, and of course common to welcome them home.) Fred's response to my greeting was simple: "Lincren (they had a hard time with d's and g's), you stay out of my business and I'll stay out of yours." I knew how angry he was, and could be violent, so for the next several weeks I feared somewhat for my life. In all honesty I must say that as I walked around the village I felt there was a possibility that he might take aim at me. And let me say immediately that I had perfect peace (Isaiah 26).

Later, Fred and I became very good friends. I have sometimes wondered if I did the right thing. But I have found comfort in the actions of Jesus when in anger He went into the temple one day, dumped over the tables of the money-changers, made a whip and drove them out. A rather unorthodox thing for a "man of the cloth" to do. I have always revolted against the paintings of Christ as "the pale Galilean."

Old Glasses

By Emory Lindgren

Except for an occasional time for rest, the dogs had kept a steady pace all day, but now at sunset they were slowing down as we entered the Eskimo village of Elim. Nashalok, the dog-team musher, took good care of his huskies. "I feed my dogs and find good place for them to rest; after that I stay with my friend, Zacheus, for the night. How 'bout you? Stay with white-man school teacher maybe?" I agreed that I would see the teacher. Hopefully he would have an extra bed. As an itinerant missionary, this was my first visit to this village. As Nashalok drove the pointed steel rod (the sled's brake) into the snow-covered frozen tundra, I was soon on my way to the teacherage a half a block away.

Jim, the bachelor teacher, answered my rap on the door surprised to see another white man fresh off the trail. We eye-balled each other for a moment, and then in answer to my request for a bed for the night, he reached out his hand and gave me a warm welcome. He was cordial and accommodating. I took off my snow-covered parka and shook it off in the porch entrance, then settled into the make-shift easy chair, glad to rest after a long day. Part of the day I had ridden in relative comfort inside the sled, but about half of the time I had "pumped" along standing on one runner of the vehicle. (The sled runners always extend out behind some two feet to allow the driver to manipulate the sled and give a clear signal to his team.) Often the driver and passenger share the runners, each keeping one foot on a runner and giving an occasional push with the other foot. This both keeps you warm and gives a little assistance to the working dogs.

My new friend, Jim, was glad to have someone of the same culture to chat with and seemed even more pleased to share his reindeer roast and canned corn for dinner. "Where do you hail from?" I asked. He had grown up in a small town in Indiana and now for the past two years had taught under the ANS, the Alaska Native Service. The salary was good, but the long winter nights and little social life left much to be desired. His Eskimo students did well and he could see a lot of potential. This was rewarding.

After a breakfast of the usual sour-dough hotcakes, he invited me to come into the classroom, one room with 23 students. There were animated discussions and the students apparently were quite thrilled to have another white man watching and listening to their attempts to learn English and gain more knowledge. Jim asked one of the girls to read something written on the blackboard. She automatically reached out her hand to her teacher. Without hesitation he gave her his glasses so she could read. Then she handed them back to him again! A bit later he told me that she was a very good student but could not afford glasses, even if they were available.

During the day I made a number of pastoral calls in the small log cabins which often accommodated large families, but the image of the girl who needed glasses kept bugging me. Suddenly my thoughts traveled 5000 miles back to Iowa. I could see a drawer in my mother's sewing room with at least two dozen glasses, as useless now as old cars in a junk yard. Finally home after two weeks on the trail, I immediately wrote to Mother and asked her to send them. I told her of my experience in the village of Elim.

"And collect as many pairs as possible from the people at church." Three weeks later I picked up a package at the post office with Mother's handwriting marked "fragile." I knew what it contained.

Here they were, two cigar boxes full of glasses of every description imaginable – some with heavy dark rims, and others rimless; some with small corrections and others that made you dizzy just looking through them for a second. The next day I wrapped up half the glasses and sent them to Jim with the following note: "Dear Jim: The doctor in Nome says you should be careful in distributing these. The wrong prescription could do a lot of harm. It seems like it would be the part of wisdom to take a chance that they be used if at all possible rather than limit the knowledge otherwise acquired. Suggestion: check at the end of the day and ask if they experience any eye-strain. Hope they do some good. Sincerely, and thanks again for your kind hospitality, Emory."

The next Sunday morning in church I made an announcement: "Anyone needing glasses please come to the mission home tomorrow morning." At 8 a.m. there were at least 15 people standing at the kitchen door waiting. I kiddingly told Ruth I should put out my shingle: "Dr. Lindgren, Optometrist." By chance, we had an old newspaper from Anchorage, The Anchorage Times, which I laid on the kitchen table and then spread the glasses close by. It was a sort of polite free-for-all! They would read for a bit and then (especially the men) would look out the window for distance. One by one the glasses disappeared. I kept telling them to be careful! These old specs likely were not exactly what they needed. Still, there was always that meaningful and warm "Koyanukpuk," literally, "thank you plenty." This all happened in the month of March.

A few days after the "mayor" of the village had gotten his glasses he stopped by. He had not been able to hunt for three years because of poor eyesight. He beamed as he related: "Yesterday, I go out on ocean ice for seal hunting; after only one hour I see big ugruk and I shoot him dead! My family so happy, just feasting with all that good, fresh meat. And neighbors feasting too. Everybody happy!" Again, "Koyanukpuk!" And a few days later a great-grandmother came by. She too had poor eyesight and had given up sewing some years ago. No more sitting around waiting for time to pass. Now, she was busy again sewing skin parkas and mukluks. And there were many others also who were helped.

I wrote Mother again in detail of the happenings. "You would have felt so good had you been here last week. You can't believe how delighted the folks were to get those glasses. Some of the women even hugged Ruth and the men were profoundly thankful. Here's more work for you – please try to get some more glasses at church, and if there are none why not call the neighboring churches and see what they can do. Thanks, Mom."

From an obscure community in Iowa (Lanyon) to an equally obscure village in Alaska, some old discarded glasses were back on track again. Those old glasses were literally worth their weight in gold!

Grandma Johnson

Written by Ruth Lindgren Coss soon after her grandmother's death in 1930

There she was, in the picture, just as I remember her. The sun glinting on her silver-rimmed glasses and an impish smile on her face, at 80. Grandmothers were supposed to be serious and buxom, but not mine – she was wiry and agile, scarcely 100 pounds and 5 feet tall. In the picture, she was wearing her Sunday outfit – a blue serge coat to her ankles and a blue serge skirt with which she wore a white blouse. She had just come from church, I guess – it was just across the street – and had pulled off her hat, what a bother!

Grandma was born in Sweden and spent her girlhood there. But America called – it was excitement and opportunity. So with a sister, and a brother to keep an eye on them, they came to see the Statue of Liberty at dawn. They did not tarry long in New York but found their way to Iowa where other Swedes had gone. There she met her future husband, who had arrived a year or two earlier. After marriage, they set up housekeeping in a small house with many acres. Thin and wiry, she helped her husband with the farm labor and who is to say if he or she made the farm prosper? In due time, she had a family of six – four girls and two boys. This was without the help of a doctor. What doctor was to be had in that remote area? So she was alone – and that tiny body.

There were Indian visitors, and later Gypsy bands, but she dealt with them cunningly, as there was never any harm done. The children grew to adulthood and married. Her husband met an accidental death (he was hit by the Interurban train in Lanyon) but the wiry body did not bend. All but two children lived nearby but she lived in her own house, as that's how she wanted it. We would go to visit her after school and her pantry was heaven. Come in and taste a cookie, she'd say, and lead us into the scrubbed, immaculate pantry and we'd select three or four from the jars on the counter.

As she grew older, a daughter and son-in-law (Nellie and Ernest) came back from living in Sweden for 15 years and moved in with her. But she was still independent. She'd go to the store nearby for a few supplies, and it is said, she didn't walk, but ran as she hurried home. One Sunday she invited all of the children and grandchildren for a picnic after 11 a.m. church. That meant 25 or 30 people. It was June and a beautiful bouncy day. The grass was trimmed and her flower beds were all blooms and order. Tables had been set up under the trees and we bounded over from church for the feast of fried chicken and baked beans. My Aunt Nellie had set her alarm for 5 a.m. to help get things going before the heat of the day, but Grandma had been up since 3:30 and things were humming. The food was fit for the gods.

Grandma was not indestructible. She fell ill one summer – such an ache. The headache would not let up. Loving daughters sat with her day and night and every painkiller was tried, to no avail. One morning she awoke after such a good sleep, such a wonderful night's sleep, and felt so much better and had no pain. But it was not to be. The blood vessel that had caused the pain had burst and relief from pain came. But death also came on that June day that was so bright and bouncy. It was almost a fitting day for her to

go – if any day could be fitting. She was thin and wiry to the end and only the pain bothered her and then deceived her in its final absence.

She was adored in life and adored now as I see that impish smile in the picture, and the glint on her glasses.

Aunt Nellie's Memories
(1988)

Introduction (Linnae)

[Aunt Nellie Anderson was Amy Lindgren's youngest sister, nine years younger. In 1953, Amy's husband Frank and Nellie's husband Ernest died within three months of each other, and Nellie moved in with Amy at 301 K Street, Fort Dodge. Nellie lived there until the mid or late 1960s. Even after she moved to Friendship Haven retirement home, she was a frequent visitor at Amy's.

Amy's son Roy began to keep a loose-leaf notebook at her house, where he, Gene and Ruth would write down Aunt Nellie's family memories when they went to visit. Amy died in 1981 at age 103. Nellie died in 1986 at age 99. This information was assembled as a document in 1988. Roy wrote the main narrative here, with notes by Gene and Ruth.]

Memories

(Aunt Nellie speaking:) Our father, J.P. Johnson, was born in the town of Frinnaryd in the province of Småland, Sweden, on February 24, 1834. His father's name was Göran Swensson [Svensson in Sweden] and his mother's maiden name was Fredrika Jonsdotter. According to the custom of that time, Father was named Johan Peter Göransson (Göran's son). But when he came to this country in 1866, he found that most people couldn't pronounce his name properly, so he took the name John Peter Johnson. (Yohnson, as the Swedes pronounced Johnson, is pretty close to Yer-ahn-son, which is the correct pronunciation of Göransson). Because there was another John Johnson in the community, he was always known as "Pete" Johnson.

He was the oldest in a family of three boys and five girls. All except sister Charlotte came to the United States. His other sisters were: (1) Christine (Mrs. J. A. Renquist), (2) Johanna (Mrs. John Castenson), (3) Matilda (Mrs. John A. Burman), and (4) Clara (Mrs. John S. Main), all of whom lived in Iowa. His brothers were Frank, who married but had no children and lived in Galesburg, Illinois, and "Uncle Johannes," who was a vagabond and never married.

Eventually my grandparents Göran and Fredrika Swensson also came to the United States with Charlotte's son David. (Gene's note: There is some question about this. Pauline Johnson, our cousin, probably can tell more from Uncle Frank's account than Aunt Nellie remembers.) After a time Grandfather returned to Sweden and the family here more or less lost contact with him. (Gene's note: Mother [Amy Lindgren] said that her grandfather became ill in Sweden and died there.) We are fairly certain that Grandfather is buried in Frinnaryd cemetery. Grandmother (who had remained in America) stayed with one or another of the children until her death, which came soon after she broke her hip in a fall in 1901 [when she was 87]. She is buried in the Lost Grove Cemetery [west of Lanyon].

Father [J.P. Johnson] was killed in an accident shortly after Thanksgiving in 1910. In those days you could flag down the "Interurban" (a single-car electric train which ran through the countryside) at any road crossing. Father had gone to the intersection a mile east of Lanyon to take the Interurban. (Gene's note: He was going to Fort Dodge for rheumatic treatments.) At about six in the evening in late November it was already dark and it was thought that he was blinded by the lights and was struck by the car. (Gene's note: Paul Gustafson told me it was about 10 a.m.) The church in Lanyon had just been completed, and it was recalled at the time that shortly before his death, he had stopped by the church and sat on the step and said to one of the builders (in Swedish), "I wonder whose will be the first funeral in this church." His was the first funeral. It was also recalled that something he had said when he offered the blessing at dinner on Thanksgiving Day indicated that he had a premonition of death at that time.

Our mother [Johanna Dorothea] was born in the village of Buggryd in Sandsjö Township in the province of Småland, Sweden, in 1846. She was told that she was born "six weeks before Christmas" and therefore concluded that November 6th was her birthday. Her father's name was Anders Johansson [he changed his last name to "Burman" when he came to the U.S.] and her mother's maiden name was Anna Stina Magnusdotter. As was the custom in Sweden in those days, she was given the name of Johanna Andersdotter (Ander's daughter). In those days infants were taken to the church by the godparents as soon as possible after birth to be baptized. On the way to the church Mother's godmother decided she ought to have a middle name so she had her baptized as Johanna Dorothea Andersdotter. She was the oldest child in her family and had one brother and two sisters: (1) John A. Burman (who married Father's sister Matilda), (2) Helen (Mrs. George Lundeen), who lived in Altona, Illinois, and (3) Amanda (Mrs. Charles Malmberg), who after being widowed married her second husband, Alfred Erickson, and lived in Iowa.

Mother probably came to this country in 1867 at the age of 21. Father came one year before that, in 1866. They were married in 1869 in Altona, Illinois, presumably in the Lutheran Church there. Their children Esther Christine, Anna Elizabeth, and Frank Isaac were born in Altona, and then when Frank was 20 months old [March 1876] they moved to a 160-acre farm 1¾ miles directly east of Lanyon, Iowa (on the south side of the road). Clara Naomi (Amy), Obed Simon, and I [Nellie Rebecka] were born there. Since there was another Frank Johnson in the community, brother Frank was called "Frank I." to distinguish him from "Frank O." Likewise I was known as "Nellie Pete" so as not to be confused with the other Nellie Johnson known as "Nellie CA." Mother was known as "Mrs. Pete."

The trip from Altona, Illinois, to the farm east of Lanyon was made by train from Altona to Gowrie, Iowa, and then it was 10 miles by lumber wagon to the farm. The driver, Mr. Swan Dahl, was so considerate of his fine team of horses that he would not make them run one step – they walked every step of the way despite the fact that it was the dead of winter and freezing cold.

The house that was waiting for them was added to from time to time but the original portion is still in use after nearly 100 years. At one point a 16x16 foot sitting room was added. That room was carpeted from wall to wall with red and black carpet, a piece of which is hanging on the living room wall at 301 K Street in Fort Dodge [Amy's home].

This is how the carpet was made: We had sheep on the farm so we always had plenty of wool. One winter Mother had Mary Sandholm (before she was married) live in and Mary and Mother carded and spun the wool for the carpet. Edith Rohden [a daughter-in-law of Nellie's sister Esther] has the spinning wheel that this yarn was spun on. After the yarn was made, some of it was dyed red by dipping the skeins into a wash boiler of dye and then drying them. The carpet was woven by a lady in Dayton in sections about a yard wide. The red is dyed wool, the white is natural wool, and the black is cotton. To make a carpet 16 feet square the sections were sewed together so the squares matched and so the carpet could be used on either side. The carpet was put down with a layer of straw underneath for padding. Then it was stretched "tight as a fiddle string" and tacked down to the floor all around the edge. You can imagine how hard it was to get the carpet down over the layer of straw without bunching up the straw in spots. There was no carpet sweeper in the house so the carpet was cleaned with a broom. Every spring the carpet was taken up and aired out and the straw was changed.

We walked ¾ of a mile to school (east of the farm where we lived). One of Amy's first teachers lived in Lanyon and walked to and from school each day (for her it was 2½ miles each way). The teacher had to be there early to build a fire and warm the place up before the children arrived. Her name was Hannah Johnson, the daughter of the other John Johnson and the sister of George E.Q. Johnson [the famous prosecutor of gangster Al Capone in the 1930s]. Years later the teachers' pay was $25 a month, so her pay was probably less than that.

There was no well at the school. A couple of boys would go every morning to the nearest house with a bucket to get water for drinking. Everybody drank from the same long-handled water dipper. School lasted from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday through Friday for about eight months of the year. Each fall there was a one month "corn husking" vacation which was about November, when the corn was dry enough to store. Summer vacation started in May. Many of the schools were named after the people who lived nearest to the school, but ours was called the Republic School.

The folks [J.P. and Johanna Johnson] left the farm and moved to Lanyon soon after Frank I. was married (April 1902). Frank I. took over the farm with his new wife. Mr. Alstedt from Harcourt built the folk's house in Lanyon with certain frills such as colored glass in the front entrance and fancy gables. I was 14 at that time and Obed [her brother] was already attending Tobin College.

When the folks were living in Lanyon, Mother decided to get rid of the mites in her chicken house (which was a part of the barn). This she did by rolling up a newspaper, lighting it, and running the flame under each of the roosts. Somehow the hay caught fire and the barn burned down. Luckily Father was home and got the horse and the cow out. I

was visiting at John Lindgren's [Frank Lindgren's brother] and could see the fire from there.

Ernest [Aunt Nellie's future husband] worked on John Lindgren's farm for two years for $25 a month. For this amount of money he started the day at 4 a.m. and finished at 10 p.m. This was seven days a week.

[Ruth's notes on what Aunt Nellie told her:]

Aunt Nellie's mother, our grandmother [Johanna Dorothea Johnson], could find water. She was a "dowser." She would cut a willow branch with two handles and one point (in the shape of a "Y"). She'd then walk around the area holding the two branches of the Y, and when water was directly below, the point of the willow branch would point down with a strong pull. Aunt Nellie said her mother found water for many people who needed to dig wells.

More about the carpet. Aunt Nellie's mother made the design – squares were separated by a band of white with a design in the center of every other square. She would take rug or carpet material to the lady in Dayton in her one-seater buggy drawn by her horse "King." Nellie went with her sometimes when about 10 years old and King galloped most of the way to Dayton. Then they shopped and galloped back again. Nellie was born in 1887. The carpet was made in 1897 probably.

Before the town of Lanyon was built, the site was farmland. The Hartquist house (where the telephone switchboard for the area was located) was originally the old farmhouse for that farm. John Johnson (George E.Q.'s father) was the farmer. The old barn stood just northwest of the Covenant Church. C. J. Carlson and A. Arvidson (Annie Kullberg's father) started a general store. The depot for the Interurban helped make the start of the little town.

Frank Lindgren rented a farm about four miles north of Harcourt and lived alone for a year before he married Amy. Frank I. [Nellie's brother] and Esther [Carlson], and Frank Lindgren and Amy, were married in a double ceremony in the parlor in Aunt Nellie's father's house on the farm. It was cleaned and polished. It was April so they moved the heating stove to one corner, put up a pole cornerwise in front of it and hung a flowered drapery. They were married in front of this drapery. Rev. Oscar Palmberg married them. The wedding dinner was given there and Amy got a slight nosebleed but it was not bad and she used a hanky discreetly.

I Remember My Grandparents
(2004)

By Richard D. Lindgren, grandson

My grandfather really did a lot of work and accomplished a lot after his retirement from farming in 1941. One could tell that he liked machinery. My father Gil Lindgren said that Grandpa Frank and his brother, John, had two one-cylinder tractors, and used them to run two belts to a threshing machine and do threshing for the neighbors. There were very few threshing machines, and they would thresh for several months. Those tractors were Moguls and had no radiator. To change gears, my father would have to take a back wheel off. The next tractor was a Titan, and had two cylinders. I have seen them, and they had a radiator, instead of a water tank, but had an open crankcase and had grease cups on the connecting rods. The first tractor was made by the McCormick division of International Harvester and the second was made by the Deering division.

In the thirties, Frank had one of the first combines around (used to harvest oats and soybeans) and also a corn picker. My father bought one of his F-20 tractors as well as a combine and corn picker when he started to rent the farm in 1941. (He rented for a year before he bought the farm from Frank in 1942.)

After they retired in 1941, my grandparents moved to Lanyon and had a house built north of the church. I think Frank had George Selim do most of the work. After that, he built a shop in the back, and started to build the loaders that he had designed while on the farm. The loader was a lower version of the stacker (used to stack hay) that is shown on the patent which he obtained.

He had some arguments with Mr. Coates, a manufacturer of farm machinery who also built loaders, and apparently there was discussion about whether Frank had copied his clutch. I don't think anything ever came of it. He gradually changed from mechanical lift to hydraulic cylinders on the loaders.

There was a shortage of lawn mowers during the war years, and Frank made a few rotary mowers with a horizontal shaft engine; the motor would turn a belt and used a front wheel car bearing to hold the blade.

For a while he had a corn sheller (removes the kernels from the cob) that was mounted on a truck. After it was in place by the corn crib, he would have to go under the truck, and change the drive shaft from the axel to the belts to run the sheller.

Near the end of the war, Gus Carlson, one of the bankers in Lanyon, wanted to buy the Lindgren's house, so they sold it and moved to Fort Dodge, to a one-story brick house on the west end of K Street. Frank then bought three lots on K Street and built three houses. I think he sold one before it was finished. They were one and a half story structures, and it must have taken some planning to build around the stairs and to do the dormers. One of the three was 301 K Street, where the Lindgrens moved in 1950.

Grandpa Frank had two heart attacks, and died quite suddenly when I was in my first year in medical school. That would have been in 1953. He was about 10 days from his 80th birthday.

Grandma Amy was always pleasant and sometimes would say funny things with typical Swedish-style humor, or say something that was funny because you were not expecting it. She was known for reading a lot, which would be unusual for a person with an eighth-grade education. I remember that she would make crocheted throw rugs from scraps of fabric. She never learned to drive. There were always cookies, and good things to eat, at her house.

She was alert until she was about 97, and seemed to have some dementia at 100. I remember seeing an X-ray film on her when she was over 100 and had back pain [Dick is a radiologist]. There was a lot of osteoporosis and it must have been painful at times. There was a lot of calcium in the blood vessels, so she did not escape some of the usual problems of ageing. She broke a hip, and then there was the problem of whether to operate to help the pain, or if that would be too dangerous. They did operate. We had the same problem when my mother broke her hip.

Grandma Amy lived to 103 and lived to be older than any of her siblings. When she died, I was over 50. She was married in her 20s, and my father married at 26. It seemed unusual that I was telling people that my grandmother had died at that stage of my life.