

To Siri and Marit Solem\*

Meridean 21 September 79

Good Friends!

I have planned for a long time to write to you, but it hasn't been done because I have written a letter almost every Sunday though not all home, but the greatest part to your neighbor, so I think you have heard how it is with me here; this must do as my excuse. I am well as usual, getting along fine and in all respects everything is good with me, and for that I have our dear God to thank. Now I want to ask how is it with you? I see by Grandfather's letters that you, Siri, are very sad over my leaving, but you must not grieve over that because for me there should be no concern. I do not regret at all that I came here and the work has not been hard up until now either, something that I imagined while I was still in Norway. Of course, it can be difficult when a person must always be prepared to begin work when the mill (whistle) blows for then one does not have to wait long before it is in full swing. But then one also is prepared to quit when it blows, so it is good with one here at the mill that he gets to know when he shall begin and quit with his work. The working hours here are 12 hours daily and continue from 6:00 in the morning until 7:00 in the evening with a 1 hour's rest for dinner, so supposedly it is 6 hours between meals during the day; but a person gets to eat unchallenged what he needs in the morning before he begins with his work and this is so for every single meal, and he can also stick a bite of food in his pocket if he thinks it is a long time between meals, so a person does not need to go hungry in America, because although it is long between meals, the food is good besides, so a person can well get along with 3 meals a day. I see by the first letter I received from Grandfather that I should greet Nils Sneen and his wife and family and Knud. 14 days ago I met Anders Sneen, son of Nils. He was here in Meridean on an errand. I brought him ~~the~~ greetings, and I heard at the same time that everything was well with all of you. Knud asked me when we parted that I should greet you and Aspeggen\*\* when I wrote, which I promised (to do). I will quit this time with affectionate greetings to you and everyone in the house.

A.P.Solem

You will obviously have to study much before you can read this letter as I am writing fast so it is not very legible, but I think with time you will read it.

(In the margin) You must write some words to me and put in the letter when Grandfather writes and at the same time tell me how it is with you.

\* Siri and Marit were the servant girls at Nord-Solem. Siri came from the Aspeggen farm, and Marit from Oyeggrinda, but because they were living at Solem they are referred to by that name. *Marit emigrated to Eau Claire in 1882 and married Anders in 1883.*

\*\* Referring to Knud's family at Aspeggen.