

Eau Claire Wis dec 19. 1888

Dear Brother-in-law;

Having received your very welcome letter, I will sit down right away and answer it. I am so happy every time I get a letter from our old fatherland, and get to hear about so many things.

I want to first tell you that we are all well and active up to this time, for which we ought to thank the almighty God. We are now completely alone at home. This summer we have had nine men here with us whom we call "boarders." They have work at the sawmills in the summer but in the winter they are in the woods so it is just my wife and two boys, but after Christmas I shall also go to the woods which is the custom and practice here in Wisconsin. Of the people who live in the towns so it is in the mills during the summer and in the woods during the winter. There is not much woods traffic yet because it has been almost like summer the entire autumn, but after Christmas we hope there will be snow so that there is a better chance to go to the woods. I must tell you that I am expecting some great company for Christmas. Beret Langfald had a letter from him, namely Ole Eskelsen, and he said that he and Sivert Redoine and his wife would come and visit me and Per Langfald at Christmas if we were at home.

And then I must tell you that an Abstinence Society has been started here in town and both I and my wife have joined, and likewise both my boys. And then I must tell you that I have sent you several newspapers so that you can see how it went with our Presidential election. It is namely, the Republican Party which has won.

We have it very pleasant here with church services and worship. We have two ministers. The one is known as Pastor G. Hoyme, who has been here for fourteen years. And the other is Pastor Tangjerd. He came this summer and had just married. They are both good ministers and the first one is President over the entire conference congregations.\*

You are sent many greetings from Mikal Hansen and his family, and from the old mother, but mostly from me, my wife and children. Greet everyone who wishes to be greeted. Also to Moan from Anna langfald. She is often here with us.

(There is no signature to this portion, but it was obviously dictated by Elling, and written by son Gustav.)

To Jakob and Anders.

As there is room for a few lines more I will say a few words to the little boys. I want to tell that I have gone to the Norwegian school during the summer but now it has stopped, and after Christmas I will be starting at the English School. And I wish that you were here so then you could also learn to speak English. I have recently begun "going to the minister".\*\*

Gustav Andersen

We wish you all a good New year.  
You are greeted from my sister Anna also.  
Greetings from my brother Karl.

\* There were several Norwegian Lutheran synods at the time, one of which had come to be known as the Conference. In 1890 three of them merged to form the United Norwegian Lutheran Church of America, of which the Rev. Gjermund Hoyme was the first president also. One of the two meetings in preparation for the merger was held at First Lutheran Church in Eau Claire, the other in the ancestral congregational home of this translator, namely, at Scandinavia, Wis.

\*\* a way of expressing the two years of weekly classes with the minister in preparation for "confirmation", a reaffirmation of one's baptismal covenant.

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