

Eau Claire, 26th April 1880

Mr! A. Solem.

Your letter I have received, for which I hereby give you my kind thanks. It pleases me much to receive a letter from whomsoever in Soknedal, but much moreso from a sender completely unexpected. Yes, my dear old Anders, that you wanted to write to me again was much appreciated. I shall of course accept your writing with good intentions; you must not think otherwise. My well-meaning thoughts will then make my words understandable to you. I will therefore get to the subject itself as your letter in one way demands an answer from me. It can of course be said in all brevity and simplicity that that which regards our little Anders who is here, in as far as I have learned to know him, is as reliable and good as he can be; and if he will continue in this manner-as he has been, and is now-then there is no risk for him. And if God will grant him health and vitality then he can make it much better here than he could ever have done in Soknedal. There is none who knows the future, but as said, if he remains healthy, then it is self evident that he will make it better in America than in Soknedal. It can be said straight out that in the future there will be much reward for him, and he will be a joy to his very concerned family and acquaintances at home. But I want to tell you one thing, that you can be happy to hear that the boy is in truth as respectable as a person can possibly be. That is all I can say to you, and I talk with him every day as he works at the same mill as I. What goes on in America in general I know very little about as I don't travel much among the people. At any time in the newspaper one can always see some departing. All that I would say is that America is to a high degree better than Norway; I mean particularly for the common person. Here a man can work himself forward at any time, and has his daily opportunity-as a person says, but that one cannot do in Soknedal or other places over there. I for one, have never regretted that I came to this country, for I know with certainty that I would not have done as well if I had yet been in Soknedal. Excuse the haste. With heartfelt greetings from my wife and two children. We live as customary, so there is nothing we lack, but with respect for whatever happens, as far as that goes. Anders is healthy and doing well in all respects. Write again.

Mr!

A Solem

Most friendly greetings,

Elef Eriksen Hanshus\*

\* Elef E. Hanshus was born to a neighbor friend of Anders Olsen Ertshus after he married the widow Marit Arntsdatter Solem, so he (Elef) was in his middle years. (He seems to have been a leader of the Soknedalens in Eau Claire (see letter of 15 June '79)). It is of interest to note that our Anders P. Solem was known as "Little Anders" whereas his step-grandfather was "Old Anders."