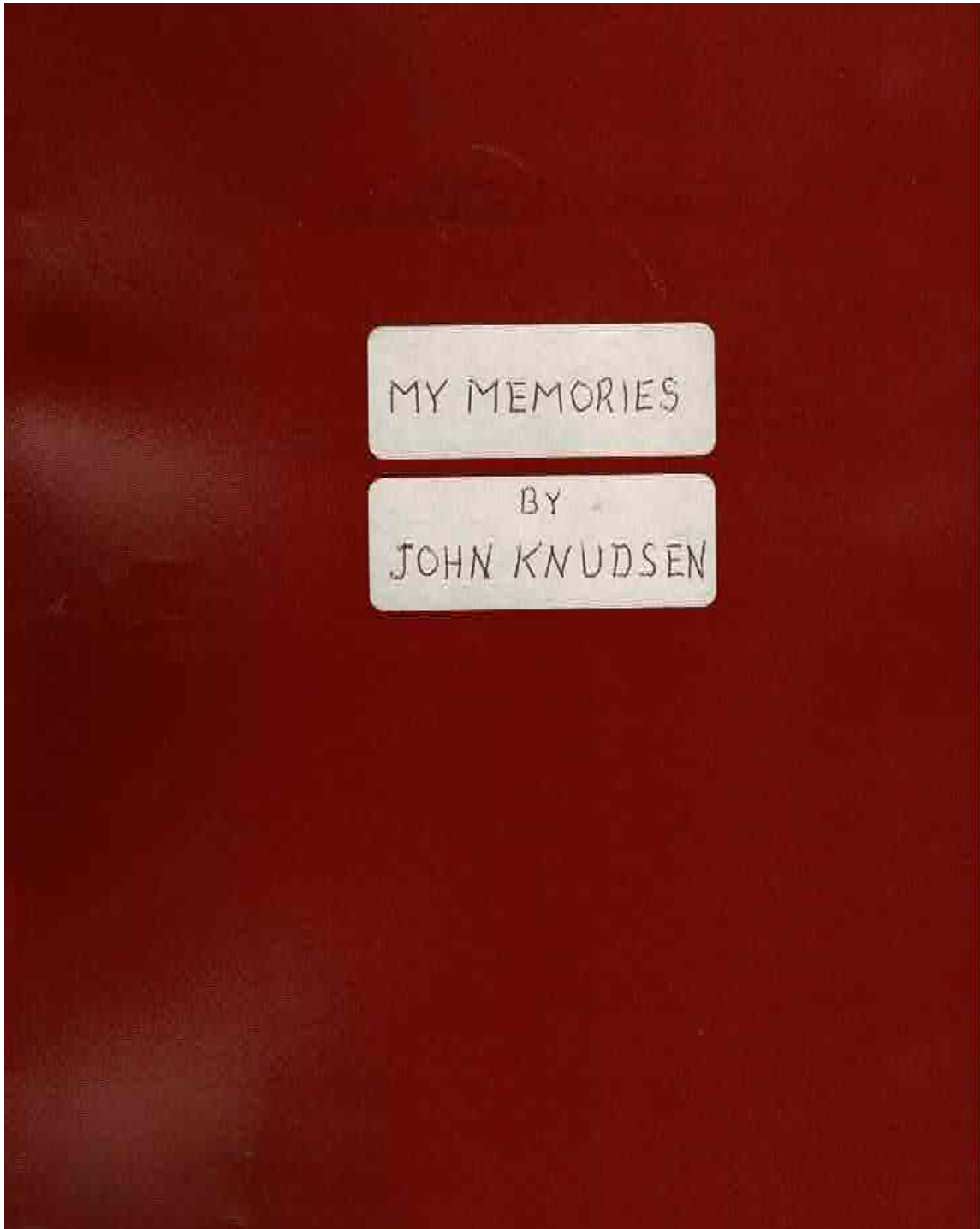




# Gaaser By 28

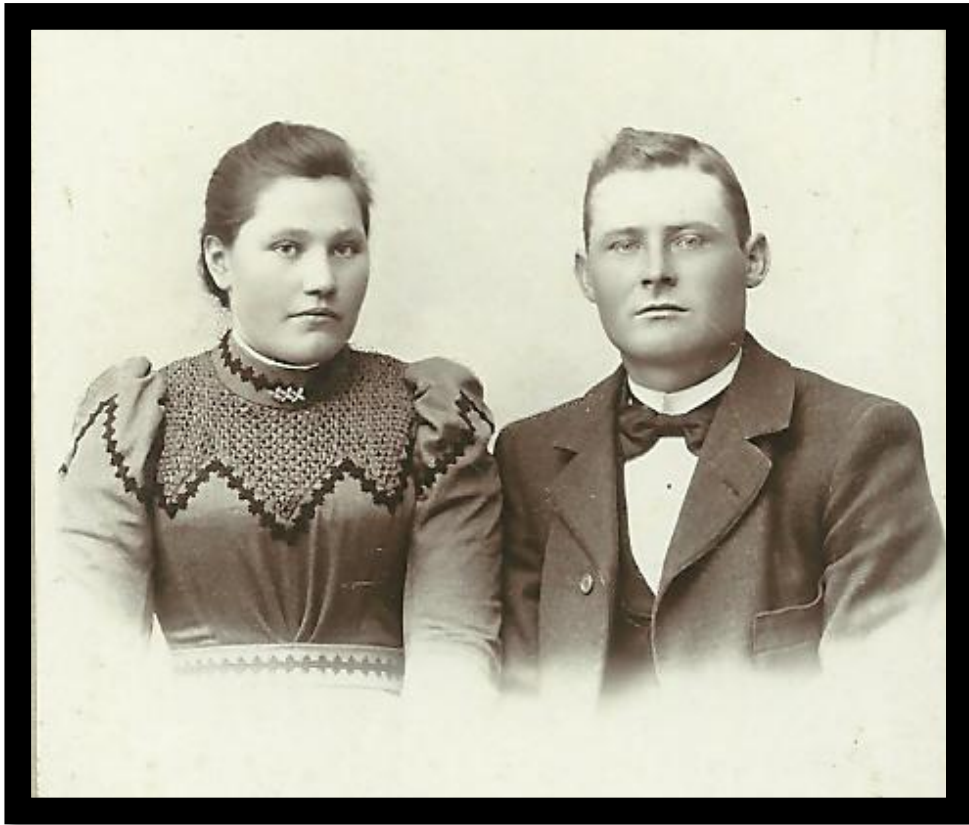
Johannes (John) Knudsens erindringer.



My Memories  
From Both Sides of the Atlantic

Dedicated to my family and friends who  
are interested in hearing about an emigrant  
who lost faith in to get ahead in his native  
country.

John Knudsen



Sigfred & Fransine Knudsen på Østergaard i Gaaser (matr. 33 L)  
Gaaser Engvej 11, 9362 Gandrup



Familien Knudsens børn: Bagerst Johannes (John) f. 15/9 1901, i midten fra venstre: Olga, f. 14/12 1904, Thorvald, f. 7/12 1905 og Marie, f. 5/4 1903. Forrest: Jens, f. 29/11 1910 og Svend.

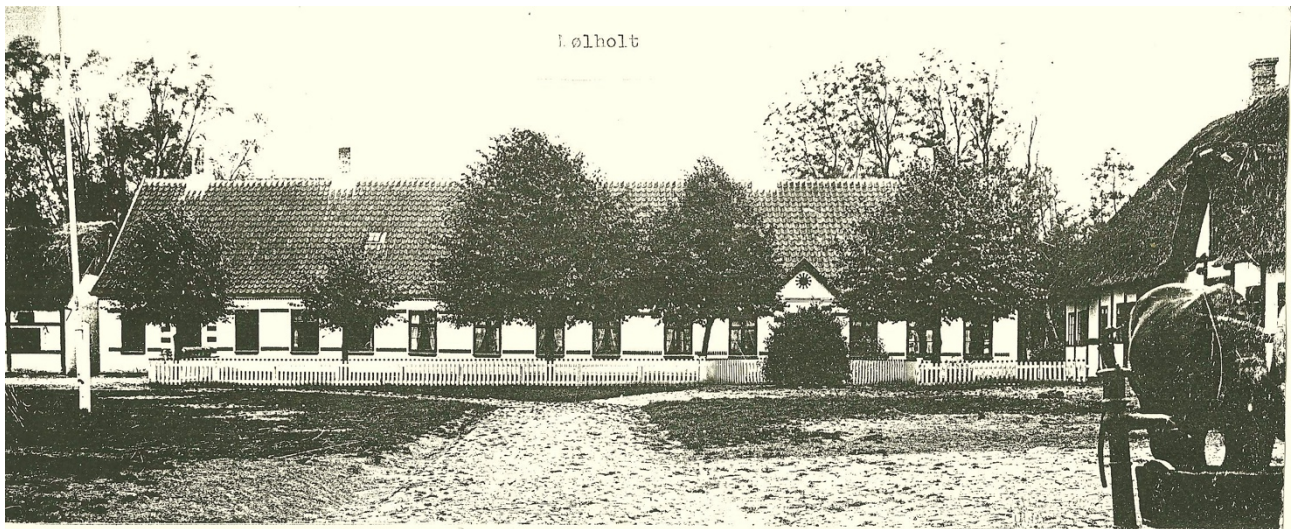
Familien flyttede til Østergaard i Gaaser i 1903, hvor de overtog Fransines forældres ejendom. De solgte igen i 1915 og købte i stedet en ejendom i Egense. Den ældste dreng Johannes (John) emigrerede til Canada og fik følgeskab af sine brødre Thorvald og Svend.

John har nedskrevet sine erindringer på engelsk (169 sider), hvoraf de første 11 sider omhandler barndommen på gården i Gaaser.

Flere unge danskere kom til hans gård i Meaford, Ontario som medhjælpere, heriblandt Ulrik Mortensen på Holtetvej, og det er igennem ham, jeg har læst disse erindringer. Han var en husmandssøn fra Mølholtvej, der i nogle år opholdt sig i Canada for at samle formue nok til at blive godtaget af svigerforældrene på Søndergaard. ( se Gaaser By 8)

De sider, der omhandler barndommen på Østergaard, findes på de følgende sider på engelsk, - og derefter oversat til dansk.

Hvis man vil læse hele historien må man henvende sig til Ulrik Mortensen, Holtetvej 52, tlf.98254157 ( Hals Arkiv).



Mølholt, - gården hvor Fransine og Sigfred arbejdede og lærte hinanden at kende.

It all started in the year of 1900 when my dad and mother got married. They did not have much more than their love for each other to start with. Dad worked as the foreman on his uncle's farm located between Gandrup and Hals in Denmark and mother was a maid working in the big house. After marriage they rented a small house near Hals. Dad kept working on the big farm and mother stayed at home looking after the garden and a goat which was the only animal that they had. When the usual nine months was gone I came along and started to make life more difficult. Mother tells me I never gave her peace. I was crying a lot and mostly when she should rest. I wanted to be awake. At last she got so tired of me so she took me to a doctor. He told her it was the food that wasn't right and I was unusually spoiled. It was all she got out of that but I have the feeling it helped. After a couple of years I started to explore the surroundings and I would always sneak over to my Aunt Stine, who lived close by. When I went along a rye field I didn't think mom could see me, little did I know that my red hat could be seen sliding along the top of rye. Then my visits got controlled more. My memories from that time are few, one thing I do remember though. When my father came home at night, mom took me in her arms and we went to meet him.

Det hele startede i året 1900, da min far og mor blev gift. De havde ikke meget mere end deres kærlighed til hinanden i begyndelsen. Far arbejdede som forkarl på hans onkels gård (Mølholt) mellem Gandrup og Hals i Danmark, og mor var pige, der arbejdede i det store hus. Efter de blev gift, lejede de et lille hus nær Hals. Far fortsatte med at arbejde på den store gård, og mor blev hjemme og passede haven og en ged, som var det eneste dyr som de havde. Da de sædvanlige 9 måneder var gået, blev jeg født og begyndte at gøre livet mere vanskeligt. Mor fortæller, at jeg aldrig gav hende fred. Jeg græd meget og for det meste, når hun skulle hvile sig. Jeg ville være vågen. Til sidst blev hun så træt af mig, så hun tog mig til en doktor. Han fortalte hende, at det var maden, som ikke var rigtig, og jeg var usædvanligt forkælet. Det var alt, hvad hun fik ud af det, men jeg har fornemmelsen af, at det hjalp. Efter et par år begyndte jeg at udforske omgivelserne, og jeg ville altid snige mig over til min tante Stine, som boede tæt ved. Da jeg gik langs en rugmark, troede jeg ikke, at mor kunne se mig, jeg anede ikke at min røde hue kunne ses glide hen langs toppen af rugen. Derefter blev mine besøg bedre kontrolleret. Mine erindringer fra den tid er få, men en ting husker jeg. Når min far kom hjem om aftenen, tog min mor mig i sine arme og gik ud for at møde ham.

-2-

My mother's home was located between Gadser and Hals and it got decided that mom and dad could buy it. It was an old farm with about fifty acres of land, sandy soil. It had been ocean some long time before and we could plough sea shells up nearly all over. Anyway there was a big apple orchard and in the fall before they took possession my father went over a Sunday morning to get a bag of apples. It had been raining a lot and the brook and ditches were filled with water. One of the brooks was quite wide. My father had been in the army and learned to jump. But he had the bag of apples on his shoulders so he misjudged the distance and fell into the water close to the other side. He got hold of the apples with a piece of wire and came home with the bag. Then the time came to take possession of the farm, which got to be my home until I was thirteen and one half years old.

One of my first experiences at my new home could easily have cost my life. It was a cold day and my mother had given me a big overcoat on, so I could go out and play. Just outside the house was a brook with some small stickleback in, and I would try to catch them. There was a bridge over the creek and on the one side there was a whirlpool in the water and the fish came to the top, but not quite enough for me to reach them, so the result was I fell in the water. I remember yet

Min mors hjem var mellem Gaaser og Hals, og det blev besluttet, at mor og far skulle købe det. Det var en gammel gård med ca. 50 tønder land sandet jord. Det havde været havbund for mange år siden, og vi kunne pløje strandskaller op næsten overalt. Der var en stor frugthave med æbler, og om efteråret, før de købte stedet, tog min far over en søndag morgen for at hente en sæk æbler. Det havde regnet meget, og åen og bækkene var fyldt med vand. Åen var ret bred. Min far havde været i hæren og lært at springe. Men han havde sækken med æbler på sine skuldre, så han fejlbedømte afstanden og faldt i vandet tæt ved den anden bred. Han fik fat i æblerne med et stykke tråd og kom hjem med sækken. Så kom tiden, hvor vi flyttede ind på gården, som blev mit hjem, indtil jeg var tretten et halvt år gammel.

En af mine første oplevelser i mit nye hjem kunne let have kostet mig livet. Det var en kold dag, og min mor havde givet mig en stor overfrakke på, så jeg kunne gå ud og lege. Lige udenfor huset var en bæk med små hundestejler i, og jeg ville prøve at fange dem. Der var en bro over bækken, og på den anden side var der et hul lavet af strømmen i vandet, og fiskene kom op til overfladen, men ikke helt nok til, at jeg kunne nå dem, så resultatet var, at jeg faldt i vandet. Jeg husker endnu

I was floating around there, my heavy coat holding me up. I don't know how I got out, but soaking wet I walked in to mother. She got terrified when she heard what had happened. It was my first fishing trip and I was three years old.

-3-

As a four year old I was looking for birds nests one day and I was frightened so much that it is still in my mind. It was a nice day, the larks were singing high in the air, and the Lapwings were screaming when they were running around me. The sheep flock of four was grazing beside me. Now I don't know if the ram thought I was a competitor to the flock but just as I was walking past I felt a bump on my back, so I fell flat on the ground and I did not feel like getting up right away. I stayed lying with my face toward the earth, then he came and was standing on my back stamping with his sharp hooves and bumping me. He kept on with that for a while and I could not do anything. Each time I tried to get up I got knocked down again. How long I was lying there I will never know but my mother missed me at lunch time and started looking for me. She found me under the ram and he would not let her get near me but she found a good stick and gave him some good raps in the head before she could get me up. The blood was running from my nose and mouth so she had a lot of trouble before she got me home. There she and the hired girl got me washed and put to bed. When I awakened I was not hurt so much bodily but



at jeg flød rundt, min tunge frakke holdt mig oppe.  
Jeg ved ikke, hvordan jeg kom op, men gennemvåd gik jeg ind til mor. Hun blev forfærdet, da hun hørte, hvad der var sket.  
Det var min første fisketur, og jeg var tre år gammel.

### 3

Da jeg var 4 år gammel, kiggede jeg efter fuglereder en dag, og jeg blev så bange, at det stadigvæk sidder i mit hoved. Det var en dejlig dag, og lærkerne sang højt oppe i luften, og viberne skreg, når de løb rundt om mig. Fåreflokken på fire græssede ved siden af mig. Nu ved jeg ikke, om vædderen mente, jeg var en konkurrent i flokken, men lige da jeg gik forbi, følte jeg et stød i ryggen, så jeg faldt fladt på jorden, og jeg havde ikke lyst til at rejse mig lige med det samme. Jeg blev liggende med mit ansigt mod jorden, da han kom og stod på min ryg og stampede med sine skarpe klove og puffede mig. Han fortsatte med det i et stykke tid, og jeg kunne ikke gøre noget. Hver gang jeg prøvede at komme op, blev jeg puffet ned igen. Hvor længe jeg lå der, finder jeg aldrig ud af, men min mor savnede mig ved frokosttid og begyndte at kigge efter mig. Hun fandt mig under vædderen, og den ville ikke lade hende komme nær mig, men hun fandt en god kæp og gav den nogle gode slag i hovedet, før hun kunne få mig op. Blodet løb fra min næse og mund, så hun havde stort besvær, før hun fik mig hjem. Der fik hun og tjenestepigen mig vasket og lagt i seng. Da jeg vågnede, var jeg ikke så meget såret på kroppen, men

I looked terrible, red, yellow, and blue in the face, so in the afternoon when one of my friends came to visit he got so scared, he would not play with that strange boy. After a while I came to look like myself again, but for a long time I was scared of both chickens and geese. My sister had to look after me so that nothing would hurt me. She was a year younger than me and it made her feel important. It took me a while to get over that experience.

This little story happened a half a year later and I was frightened so much that it is still in my mind. My home was old fashioned and dad was more modern in farming. We needed a cistern to contain the urine from the barn to a time when we brought it on the fields in a tank wagon. Dad and the hired man had been digging the hole and it was about five feet deep. It was in the noon hour. There was nobody around and my sister and I saw the hole and as we were curious I let myself slide down in it. My sister did not wait before she slid down too. So there were we, how would we get up. Now we had to wait to the noon hour was over and it was a long time so we decided to scream all we could. How long it took I don't know but father came and helped us up. He was very serious and his voice was far from gentle when he told me I had led my sister astray and we could easily had to stay there much longer if he hadn't heard us.

-4-

The Christmas 1906 started in the middle of December with home butchering of a pig. My grandfather had been a

jeg så frygteligt ud, rød, gul og blå i ansigtet, så om eftermiddagen, da en af mine venner kom på besøg, blev han så forskrækket, at han ikke ville lege med den mærkelige dreng. Efter et stykke tid kom jeg til at ligne mig selv igen, men i lang tid var jeg bange for både høns og gæs. Min søster måtte passe på mig, så jeg ikke kom til skade. Hun var et år yngre end mig, og det fik hende til at føle sig betydningsfuld. Det tog mig et stykke tid at komme mig over den oplevelse.

Denne lille historie skete et halvt år senere, og jeg var så bange, at det stadigvæk sidder i mit hoved. Mit hjem var gammeldags, og far var til mere moderne landbrug. Vi behøvede en beholder til at opbevare ajlen fra stalden til en tid, hvor vi kørte den ud på marken i en vogn med en ajle tønne. Far og daglejeren havde gravet et hul, og det var ca. fem fod dybt. Det var i middagstimen. Der var ingen tilstede, og min søster og jeg så hullet, og da vi var nysgerrige, lod jeg mig selv glide derned i det. Min søster ventede ikke, før hun også gled derned. Så der var vi, hvordan skulle vi komme op. Nu måtte vi vente til middagstimen var forbi, og det var lang tid, så vi besluttede at skribe så højt, vi kunne. Hvor længe det tog, ved jeg ikke, men far kom og hjalp os op. Han var meget alvorlig, og hans stemme var langt fra blid, da han sagde til mig, at jeg havde ledt min søster på gale veje, og vi havde let kunnet blive der meget længere, hvis han ikke havde hørt os.

4.

Julen 1906 startede i midten af december med hjemmeslagting af en gris. Min bedstefar havde været

butcher in his young days so when he retired he began again. It was every day in the time before Christmas he went from place to place so he was spoken for a long time in advance. Nearly every body had a nine to ten month old pig they had reserved for Christmas and it was good and fat. The fatter the better. It was a whole event when the pig should be butchered. First we had to have a couple of neighbours over to help getting ~~the pig~~ on a special bench, the pig, then tied on all four legs and around the snout so grandad could hold him tight when he stabbed it in the throat with the knife. The blood would come out in an easy stream into the pail and the hired girl stirred it as she mixed rye meal in it. Later it got made into blood pudding and sausages. After the pig died it got scalded, scraped and cut up. The guts got cleaned and made into sausages. It was all a big job for the whole family and took half a day. When it was over we got our lunch which was usually fried liver. Then Grandad left to go to another farm but he came back later to cut up the pig in the different portions, the fat got melted into lard and the dry part of the fat was very good eating with syrup and bloodpudding. All pork got salted down in wooden vats and usually lasted until next Christmas.

When it came closer to Christmas we should have some sheaves put on poles for the birds to feed on outside of the windows. Everything in the house got a good cleaning and we

slagter i hans unge dage, så da han trak sig tilbage, begyndte han igen. Hver dag i tiden før jul gik han fra sted til sted, så han var forudbestilt i lang tid.

Næsten alle havde en ni til ti måneder gammel gris, de havde reserveret til jul, og den var god og fed. Jo federe, jo bedre. Det var en stor begivenhed, når grisen skulle slagtes. Først måtte vi have et par naboer over for at hjælpe med at lægge grisen på en speciel bænk, og bundet på alle fire ben og om trynen, kunne bedstefar holde den fast, når han stak den i halsen med kniven. Blodet ville komme ud i en strøm i spanden, som tjenestepigen omrørte, mens hun blandede rugmel deri. Senere blev det lavet til blodbudding og pølser. Efter grisen var aflivet, blev den skoldet, skrabet og skåret op. Tarmene blev rensset og brugt til pølser. Det hele var et stort arbejde for hele familien, og det tog en halv dag. Da det var forbi, fik vi vores frokost, som sædvanligvis var stegt lever. Så tog bedstefar hen til en anden gård, men han kom tilbage senere for at skære grisen op i forskellige portioner, fedtet blev smeltet til stegefedt og den faste del af fedtet var godt at spise med sirup og blodbudding. Hele grisen blev saltet ned i træ kar og holdt sig som regel indtil næste jul. Da vi kom tættere til jul, skulle vi have nogle neg sat på pæle til fuglene, så de kunne spise udenfor vinduerne. Alt i huset fik en god rengøring, og vi

should have a large baking done in the clay oven. It got heated with burning dry brush in it until it got hot enough. We baked twenty loaves of rye bread, ten to twelve of white plus a few cakes and spiced nuts. The nuts were made of a string of spiced dough cut in small pieces half an inch long. We kids used to play cards about them in the holidays. Around Christmas should we also have all the implements under roof; else the Jerusalem Shoemaker would come to them and then there was bad luck with them. It was said when Jesus was carrying his cross and fell under it the shoemaker was asked to carry it and he refused. Then he got sentenced to walk everyday to doomsday. He was only to rest ten hours on Christmas Eve and then he would rest on whatever was close to him. We should also feed the elves in the hayloft. They should have a dish of rice pudding and it was always eaten but I had the cats suspected for the disappearance of it.

At Christmas Eve we always had roast goose or pork roast to eat before we went into the Christmas tree which had been decorated by father and mother in the afternoon. We children were not allowed to see the tree before it was lighted but we took turns looking into the keyhole in the door while they were decorating. Then when it was lighted the door was opened wide up and there was the beautiful tree, a delight for every eye. We took each other in the hand and walked around the tree singing hymns about Christmas to we got tired. Then we got candies and only one gift to

skulle have en stor gang bagning i ler ovnen. Den blev opvarmet med brændende kvas indtil den var varm nok. Vi bagte tyve stykker rugbrød, ti til tolv af hvidt brød plus nogle kager og pebernødder. Nødderne blev lavet af en pølse af krydret dej skåret i små stykker af en halv tommes længde. Vi børn plejede at spille kort om dem i ferierne. I juletiden skulle vi også have alle ting under tag, ellers ville 'Jerusalem Skomageren' komme til os, og det ville bringe uheld. Det blev sagt, at da Jesus bar sit kors og faldt under det, så blev skomageren bedt om at bære det, men han nægtede. Så blev han dømt til at gå hver eneste dag indtil dommedag. Han skulle kun hvile ti timer juleaften, og så ville han hvile, hvor som helst han var. Vi skulle også fodre nisserne på høloftet. De skulle have en ret af risengrød, og den blev altid spist, men jeg havde katten mistænkt for dens forsvinden.

Juleaften fik vi altid gåsesteg eller flæskesteg at spise, før vi gik ind til juletræet, som var blevet pyntet af far og mor om eftermiddagen. Vi børn fik ikke lov til at se træet, før det blev tændt, men vi skiftedes til at kigge gennem nøglehullet i døren, mens de pyntede. Da det så var tændt blev døren åbnet på vid gab, og der var det vidunderlige træ, en fryd for ethvert øje. Vi tog hinanden i hånden og gik rundt om træet og sang sange om julen til vi blev trætte. Derefter var der juleknas og kun en gave til

each member. A toy or an animal which could be wound up or pulled on a string. It was not like now where children get dozens of gifts, but we were happy for what we got.

After we were rested a little we were served coffee and all kinds of cakes and cookies. Now most of us were tired of all the work before the evening in the last fourteen days so were ready to go to bed. We had to get up Christmas morning to go to church with horse and sleigh and ringing bells or go to our families for a visit. It was the same the next day, however, there was always the animals to look after and feed. The hired man and girl should also have some days to go home. It was very much like a celebration for many days like it said in the song. Christmas last all the time to Easter.

-5-

My first car I got from the hired man who felt sorry for me because I was crying so much when things were not going the way I liked them. He gave me a car, a wind-up car, if I would quit crying for fourteen days. It was going all right to the day he went to town to buy it. Then I was disobedient to my mother and she gave me a rap of the broom she was using at the moment. It was more than I could take, so I cried again. When the man came home and heard me he found out what happened and kind of excused me and felt there had been a reason for my shedding tears so I got the car anyway. When this man left us he bought a ticket to the United States. When I came here many years later and to



hvert medlem. Et stykke legetøj eller et dyr der kunne trækkes op eller trækkes i en snor. Det var ikke som nu, hvor børn får dusinvis af gaver, men vi var glade for, hvad vi fik.

Når vi havde hvilet lidt, fik vi serveret kaffe og alle slags kager og småkager. Nu var de fleste af os trætte af alt arbejdet før aftenen og i de sidste fjorten dage, så vi var klar til at gå i seng. Vi skulle op julemorgen for at gå i kirke med hest og kane og Klingende bjælder eller på visit til vore familier. Det var det samme næste dag, der var imidlertid altid dyrene, der skulle passes og fodres. Tjenestekarlen og pigen skulle også have nogle dage fri, så de kunne tage hjem. Det lignede en fest i mange dage, som det siges i sangen. 'Julen varer lige til påske'.

5

Min første bil fik jeg af tjenestekarlen, som havde ondt af mig, fordi jeg græd så meget, når tingene ikke gik, som jeg gerne ville. Han gav mig en bil, som kunne trækkes op, hvis jeg ville holde op med at græde i fjorten dage. Det gik godt indtil den dag, han tog til byen for at købe den. Så var jeg ulydig mod mor, og hun gav mig et rap af kosten, hun brugte i det øjeblik. Det var mere, end jeg kunne tage, så jeg græd igen. Da karlen kom hjem og hørte mig, fandt han ud af, hvad der var sket og syntes, at jeg var undskyldt, og der havde været en god grund til mine tårer, så jeg fik bilen alligevel. Da denne mand forlod os, købte han en billet til De Forenede Stater. Da jeg kom derover mange år senere og tog

a trip to Florida. I found some relatives of his. Well now I was six and one half years old and it was time to start school. My mother took me there and we met the teacher in the garden where he was hoeing his potatoes. He asked me if I didn't think they were good potatoes and wise as I was I replied, "Just because the tops are vigorous in growth does not mean the potatoes are so big." He never forgot that all the time I was going to school. He was a good teacher, we only had four grades. He and a woman teacher had two grades each.

The farm we got from my grandparents had very old buildings then one day the hired man was in the barn thrashing grain with a flail on the clay floor and had the sheaves laid out ready to start, he was standing up against the wall looking at it. My dad was in the cow barn besides, and I was playing in the yard, when we heard a big crash and when I started to look, it was the barn caving in. My first thought was the man in the barn, and I called to him. He was standing with the wall with a smile on his face, nothing had hurt him. He was only surprised over the whole thing and I was glad he was not hurt. But I did not feel so glad the next day in the school when some of the children were kidding me about being so poor our buildings fell down on us. Such remarks I never forgot.

-6-

When my dad's father died we had relatives from Funen, an island in Denmark, visiting us when they came to the funeral.

en tur til Florida, fandt jeg nogle af hans slægtninge. Nå, nu var jeg seks og et halvt år gammel og det var tid til at begynde skolen. Min mor tog mig derhen, og vi mødte læreren i haven, hvor han rensede sine kartoftler med hakke. Han spurgte mig, om jeg ikke syntes, det var gode kartofter, og klog, som jeg var, Svarede jeg: "Bare fordi toppene gror kraftigt, betyder det ikke, at kartoflerne er store". Det glemte han aldrig hele den tid, jeg gik i skole. Han var en god lærer, vi havde kun fire klasser. Han og en kvindelig lærer havde to klasser hver.

Gården vi overtog fra mine bedsteforældre havde meget gamle bygninger, så en dag, da karlen var i laden og tærskede korn med plejl på lergulvet og havde negene lagt ud og var klar til at begynde, lænede han sig op ad muren og kiggede på det. My far var i kostalden ved siden af, og jeg legede på gårdspladsen, da vi hørte et stort brag, og da jeg kiggede så jeg, at det var laden, der brasede sammen. Min første tanke var manden i laden, og jeg råbte til ham. Han stod ved væggen med et smil på ansigtet, han var uskadt. Han var bare overrasket over det hele, og jeg var glad for, at han ikke var kommet til skade. Men jeg var ikke så glad den næste dag i skolen, da nogle af børnene drillede mig med at være så fattig, at vores bygninger faldt sammen over os. Sådanne bemærkninger glemmer jeg aldrig.

6

Da min fars far døde, kom slægtninge fra Fyn, en ø i Danmark, på besøg hos os, da de kom til begravelsen.

There was my aunt and her husband. They came with the train to the station Gandrup where we met them with horses and wagons to take them home. When they had to leave my dad had to take his turn in the milk gathering to the dairy so we had to call a taxi which was new at that time. I was going with them down to my grandmother in Dronninglund. It was a trip of about twenty-five kilometres and I was both scared and excited. I had never seen a car before so it was my first ride and it was fun. All that cracking and exploding while it was running so fast. But it wasn't fun for the people who were driving horses, they had to hurry down a sideroad or get out of the wagon to throw a blanket over the horses head and lead them quietly past the monster which came against them. Yes even the people on bikes got out of the way while we went past. But the most fun for me was when I got to school the next time and I could tell my friends about the trip. Yes when I think back on those days and see the roads now full of cars and no horses, we can really see what differences have happened in a generation. Our forefathers organized with many things we can name such as the transport of milk when the dairies started and should have the milk processed every day. In the village one man was hired to take all the farmers milk to the dairy but our farm was located outside so we had the choice either to deliver the milk ourselves or take it to the village for the man to pick up. We had a good herd of dairy cows so dad

Der var min tante og hendes mand. De kom med toget til stationen i Gandrup, hvor vi mødte dem med heste og vogne for at bringe dem hjem. Da de skulle afsted, var det min fars tur til at køre mælk til mejeriet, så vi måtte ringe efter en taxa, hvilket var noget nyt dengang. Jeg kom med dem til min bedstemor i Dronninglund. Det var en tur på ca. 25 kilometer, og jeg var både bange og spændt. Jeg havde aldrig set en bil før, så det var min første køretur, og det var sjovt. Al den raslen og eksplosionerne mens den kørte så hurtigt. Men det var ikke så sjovt for de folk, som kørte med heste, de måtte skynde sig nedad en sidevej eller hoppe af vognen og kaste et tæppe over hovedet på hestene og føre dem stille forbi uhyret, som kom imod dem. Ja, selv folk på cykler fjernede sig, da vi kørte forbi. Men det sjoveste for mig var, da jeg kom i skole næste gang, og jeg kunne fortælle mine venner om turen. Ja, når jeg tænker tilbage på de dage og ser vejene nu fulde af biler og ingen heste, kan vi virkelig se hvilke forandringer, der er sket i en generation. Vore forfædre organiserede mange ting vi kan nævne, så som transporten af mælk, da mejerierne begyndte at skulle have mælken behandlet hver dag. I landsbyen var en mand ansat til at bringe alle gårdenes mælk til mejeriet, men vores gård lå afsides, så vi havde valget enten selv at aflevere mælken på mejeriet eller køre den til landsbyen for at blive samlet op. Vi havde en god besætning af malkekøer, så far

wanted to have the big wagon sent out to pick up our milk too. At the farmers' meeting he said that he was a small man but he had a big herd of cows and that if they did not pick up his milk then he wanted out of the dairy. The president would not give in and said that the dairy would not go to pieces if he quit and that a small suit looked best on him, so we had to take our milk to the dairy.

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After a year or so we began to build new buildings, cow barn, hay and horse barns. The neighbours were willing to help hauling bricks and timber home from Gandrup about eight kilometres away. It was the usual way to help one who is building new houses and we got all new farm buildings in a short while. In the spring we got quite a few new fruit trees and bushes so the garden was made larger. We kids had our own little garden plot by that we got an interest for our home and garden. Then came World War I and it did not look good for Denmark and my dad with the debt he had run into got scared he could not manage it so he wanted to sell it and get one smaller. It was really too bad because we children were old enough to be of big help and found interest in doing so. I could both plough and harrow and thought I could make up for the hired man who got called in to the army. We still had a hired girl to help but dad could not see how we could manage to pay all the debt so he began looking for a smaller

ønskede, at den store mælkevogn skulle sendes ud for også at hente vores mælk.

På gårdejernes møde sagde han, at han var en lille mand, men han havde en stor besætning af køer, og at hvis de ikke hentede hans mælk, så ville han melde sig ud af mejeriet. Formanden ville ikke give efter og sagde, at mejeriet ikke ville gå nedenunder og hjem, hvis han meldte sig ud, og at han skulle blive i det tøj, der passede til ham, så vi måtte selv køre vor mælk til mejeriet.

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Efter et år eller sådan begyndte vi at bygge nye bygninger, kostald, hønse og hestelader. Naboerne var villige til at hjælpe med at køre mursten og tømmer hjem fra Gandrup ca. otte kilometer væk. Det var den sædvanlige måde at hjælpe den, som bygger nye huse, og vi fik alle nye gårdbygninger på kort tid. Om foråret fik vi en del nye frugttræer og buske, så haven blev gjort større. Vi børn havde vores egen lille have lod, hvorved vi fik interesse for vores hjem og have. Så kom Første Verdenskrig, og det så ikke godt ud for Danmark, og min far med den gæld han havde skabt blev bange for, at han ikke kunne klare det, så han ønskede at sælge og få noget mindre. Det var virkelig trist, for vi børn var gamle nok til at kunne hjælpe og var interesserede i det. Jeg kunne både pløje og harve og mente, at jeg kunne erstatte tjenestekarlen, som var indkaldt til hæren. Vi havde stadig en tjenestepige til at hjælpe, men far kunne ikke se, hvordan vi kunne klare at betale al gælden, så han begyndte at kigge efter et mindre

place. He found one with nineteen acres, good soil which he liked and made the change. Both mother and we children were crying. We did not want to move from our nice home as it was now, but it did not help, we made the move. When we came there, we soon found out it was a bad deal, the buildings were new but not made to last and all the cows and pigs were sick with tuberculosis. We had to dispose of them all and get the barns fumigated before we could put new stock in. The fields were all fields of weeds, so after a while we were poorer than we were before. This resulted in I got a job near Ebbesup on Funen on kind of a hobby farm with a big garden and fishing ponds. Half of the ponds got emptied every year and new stock put in them. The family there was a man his wife and three sons, the youngest of them nineteen years old was very good to me "The little Jutlander" as they called me. It was just like a home to me and a hired girl. I stayed there for a year and a half. In that time I changed my mind from a wish I had from when I was a small boy about learning to be a gardener to studying to manage a large farm. I got a job as a student helper on the farm "Rynkebygaard" near Ringe on Funen. It was owned by the Baron Schafelitsky de Muckadel.

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"Rynkebygaard" was a comparatively new built up farm with meadows, garden and parks going right into the forest of



Sted. Han fandt et på nitten tønder land god jord, som han kunne lide og lavede handelen. Både mor og vi børn græd. Vi ønskede ikke at flytte fra vores dejlige hjem, som det var nu, men det hjalp ikke, vi foretog flytningen. Da vi kom derhen, fandt vi snart ud af, at det var en dårlig handel, bygningerne var nye men ikke solide, og alle køerne og grisene var syge af tuberkulose. Vi måtte skille os af med dem alle og få husene rensede, før vi kunne sætte en ny besætning ind. Markerne var fulde af ukrudt, så efter et stykke tid var vi fattigere end vi var før. Dette resulterede i, at jeg fik et job på Fyn.



Østergaard fotograferet fra luften i 1946. Men husene er sandsynligvis de huse, som blev bygget af Sigfred Knudsen inden Første Verdenskrig. Vi ser også den store have med frugttræer og – buske som beskrevet af sønnen John (Johannes). Det må have været et meget stort projekt og betydet store lån og megen gæld, og man forstår godt Fransines og børnenes sorg ved at forlade stedet, so de selv har bygget op.



Knudsen familien til Sigfreds fars begravelse, som Johannes (John) fortæller om, hvor hele familien kom på besøg, og hvor han første gang så en bil og prøvede at køre i den. Faderen Sigfred står i bagerste række nr. 2 fra højre.

Personerne på billedet i øvrigt er forklaret i min historie om 'Mølholt', - Gaaser By 17

En sommerdag omkring 1975 standsede 3 ældre herrer i deres bil på markvejen ud for vores have på Nygaard i Gaaser og spurgte mig om vej til deres gamle fødehjem, Østergaard. Det var de 3 'canadiere', der ved en fejltagelse var drejet op ad vor vej i stedet for Gaaser Engvej, hvor gården ligger som nr. 11.

Stor var deres forbavselse, da jeg kunne fortælle dem, at jeg havde mødt deres kusine Alma (fra Bødkegaard), og havde et billede af både dem selv som børn og af deres forældre.

Senere blev jeg med min kone inviteret på frokost i Hjallerup af Svend, der her havde fundet en dansk veninde, - i øvrigt en søster til en kollega af mig på skolen. Svend sendte mig også en beskrivelse af livet på hans fars onkel Niels Knudsens ejendom (Mølholt).