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The Children of

HERMAN AND EMMA BRUTLAG

REMEMBER

ADELINE'S MEMORIES OF HOME. . . .

Our Mom and Dad were very good to all of us and we can thank our Lord that they were Christian parents and brought us up to be Christians too. We always lived above the store so we had to go up and down stairs all the while we were home. It's no wonder all of us girls got fat legs with so much walking up and down.

In winter, when the evenings were long, Dad would play games with us and we had spelling bees, sometimes we would pronounce the states and we would have to give the name of the Capitol of that state. It was fun, and we learned by it. Mom would be darning socks or knitting mittens when we were playing games.

We always had music. It was a big thing at our home. Everyone would sing and then Dad had special songs he would sing to us and play his autoharp. Everytime he sang one song about a little girl, Olga would always cry, cause it was a sad song. When Ruthie was just a little girl, she would sing too. I remember I was playing the piano one time and she ~~came and stood beside the piano to sing.~~ She didn't know the words to the piece I was playing, so she sang her own song - she sang it all the way through, and never got mixed up even when I was playing a different song. Hilma and I used to play duets on the piano. Walt played a violin and I played the piano with him. Dad sold pianos at one time, so we had one in the store. Playing and singing down in the store, we even broadcast our music. Dad made a megaphone out of cardboard and put it on the mouth-piece of the telephone. We were on a party line then, and he called up some friends of theirs and they all listened to us.

We didn't have a phone upstairs, so we had our own signal system when we wanted to contact Dad. The pipe that brought the water upstairs from the cistern (to pump water upstairs) was right by the desk in the store, so if Dad wanted someone to come down to help him or whatever, he would pound on the pipe with something metal and we could hear it all over the house, and someone would go down. We pounded on the pipe when dinner was ready, or when we wanted him to come up. We would just say someone should "pingle" on the pipe so Dad would know. We all knew what "pingle" meant, but no one else did.

ADELINE (continued)

Whenever we had a storm in the night and had wind too, Mom would wake us kids and tell us to get dressed cuz many times we had to go into the store - when the wind blew so hard we could feel the house swaying.

Mom had parties for us too. One time Dad ordered 25 pounds of raw peanuts in the shell and Mom roasted them in the oven. It was a treat and was quite a big party, so I guess the peanuts were a big hit since they were all gone by the time the kids went home.

Dad used to order a special barrel of apples for our family use in the winter time. We had Northern Spy apples one year, great big ones, real juicy.

Does anyone remember the old Waterbury ???

HILMA'S MEMORIES OF HER CHILDHOOD, LIVING WITH HER MOTHER AND DAD - -

I can remember how we hated to pick all the green and yellow beans, washtubs full at one time, and then helping get them ready for Mom to can.

One time Dad was telling a salesman how he shot ducks, also showing off his gun, and he picked up the gun, aimed towards the door, and the gun shot - Dad didn't think it was loaded.

When it stormed real hard, Mom made us kids get dressed and we all had to go downstairs.

When Walt wanted more coffee, he'd turn his cup around and round, the noise was the signal that Addy or I should bring the coffee. We thought he should get it himself - HA!

Our mother always wanted us kids to have nice clothes, several times she had a seamstress come from Perham to stay a week just to sew. Our general store had lots of materials, dress trimmings and buttons. I used to help Mom in the millinery department trimming hats - Mother designed fancy bonnets for elderly ladies.

Sometimes I missed one-half day of school to help wash clothes - can just see that old wood washing machine with the handle on top. We'd push it back and forth to stir the clothes around. It had a round wood plug

HILMA (continued)

on the bottom - once after the hot water had been poured in, I was standing near it when that plug popped out and I got a real bad burn on one leg - had to go to our old Dr. Knight. In the healing process, proud flesh started growing in the tissue, so I had a really bad time.

Our Dad was an outdoor person. He'd take us kids swimming. One of my best times in Ottetail Lake was when Dad took us when it was windy and the waves came splashing over our heads - we screamed with laughter. He took us in the woods to pick wild raspberries, there were lots of those berries those days. Mother canned many, many quarts. Dad would compliment Mother when she baked all the good bread and Kaffee-Kirchen. When she made a white round layer cake, covered all over with whipped cream, he called it a Schönwibarts (mustache) cake.

I went with Dad several times when he delivered groceries to the Preacher's Camp at Ottetail Lake in a one-horse buggy. The horse was named Apple Tanta - she'd eat the half-rotten apples.

HERBERT'S COMMENTS

Most of the activity occurred due to the store and other businesses. Oh yes, we had a good family life with the usual activities such as birthday parties, visitors, including the five sisters' boyfriends. The store was open from 8 A.M. until 9 P.M. so you can see that this was where I spent most of my time. Until that time that we were allowed to go out nights (at about 16), we would gather in the dining room to play cards or whatever. About 10 or 10:30 we would have a devotion, Dad would wind the clock and we were off to bed. Lloyd and Adeline could sit on the davenport in the living room. Don't know when he went home. I remember one time when we were papering the walls in the living room there was a dark oily spot back of the davenport on the west wall. We figured out that it had got there from Lloyd resting his oily black-haired head on that spot. He must have spent quite a little time on that davenport.

My sisters were all good cooks, especially so on desserts. Mother must have been a good teacher. We always made all types of sausage in the winter, beef, pork and blood sausage. Must say we were never out of food. In the summer time we always made beer, Home Brew we called it. I developed a taste for it and havn't really ever lost it. It's something like coffee cake, just sticks by you.

When Hilma and Alvin got married, they had to sleep in the casket room until their apartment over the bank was ready. How would you like that on your honeymoon?

STORE HAPPENINGS - - Store hours, 8AM to 9 PM - Closed Sundays & Holidays

Brutlag's cat had kittens in the prune box. Prunes came to us bulk in 40 pound wood boxes. After the box was empty, we threw it in the warehouse and our cat had kittens in it. The word got out to our customers.

We had just made a display of a new item, soap chips for laundering. Before that everyone used P & G or Fels Naptha bar soap. Deaf John, who lived on the Ottertail Lake peninsula, came in, saw the barrel display and the sign, thought it said soup chips, took a big handfull and tossed them in his mouth. Needless to say, he was spitting soap and bubbles for some time.

HERBERT (continued)

We had a pot-belly heating stove in the store and in the evenings six or eight people would sit around it and tell their happenings of the day - I'll always remember Oscar Lewis, the game warden, and Hank Bartels eating peanuts, throwing the shucks on the floor while telling something about the farm. Oscar Lewis usually had a good story to tell too.

REMEMBRANCES OF EDGAR (By Ken)

In his younger days my dad was known as one of the better fishermen in the Ottertail area. A sportswriter for the Minneapolis Tribune, Ed Shave, came to Ottertail and went fishing on Ottertail Lake with dad - they caught an 8 pound walleye.

There were many good times hunting with dad on Gourd Lake. On one hunting trip dad shot 10 greenheads and I had 7 greenheads and 3 hens.

Once dad and Emil Buntrock went fishing on Ottertail Lake - in order to make the afternoon more comfortable, they brought along beer, in bottles (before the throwaway can era), wrapped in newspapers to keep it cold. The only opener available was one dad carried on his key ring, the ring that had all the important keys on it - for the creamery, the car, the house, etc. Anyway, upon opening the top, imagine the problem created when dad threw the keys into the lake, and put the top in his pocket.

Dad was Justice of the Peace in Ottertail. He married Tim and Tina Pikkaraine in Brutlag's Store beside a DeLaVal cream separator.

REMEMBRANCES OF EDGAR (by Ron)

Sitting in the airport waiting out a two hour delay and then again sitting alone in a half filled plane I had ample time to sort out my emotions and to prepare myself for my mother's funeral. Death had now taken both my parents. After a five year separation they were once again united but now in heavenly bliss. Both were now with their Savior. This fact

EDGAR (by Ron)

alone took the sting of death away for me. My mother's last words to her pastor were, "I have my Jesus," and indeed she now has. Jesus in her heart has now become Jesus before her eyes. I mourn the loss but must celebrate the crown of eternal life.

In the hours and days following the funeral, as the family met to comfort each other and to reminisce, I couldn't help but think about the treasures which my parents left each one of us children. Material possessions were meager but what they gave us has multiplied abundantly. The first treasure was being brought before the Lord to be baptized. Next came Christian training in the home which included teaching us to pray and taking us to church regularly. Another treasure was our formal Christian education in the Christian Day School. Confirmation was a solemn vow which we made to reaffirm our faith, not just a graduation from Catechism class. We were taught to lead and live a Christian life. No obstacles were placed in the way of the work of the Holy Spirit. The Jesus my parents had in their hearts was their greatest possession and the greatest possession that we children inherited. I thank the heavenly Father for my Christian parents and I thank my parents for bringing Christ to me.

Thank you mom and dad!

REMEMBRANCES OF EDGAR (by Lowell)

My remembering dad is to remember how he enjoyed people, liked to tell jokes - on the whole, he was just a jovial person.

The last time I went hunting with dad was a bluebird day, and the ducks weren't decoying at all. A flock of northern mallards had landed down from us and after watching them awhile from our comfortable blind, dad decided we should sneak up on them. I told him I'd get out of the boat and stay put, as he'd never get close to them anyway. Dad took the push pole and glided out. I kept peeking through the flags, still thinking it was useless - but he got in range before they spooked, fired one shot and 5 big greenheads dropped.

He also liked to net whitefish. I've heard that he and Schuracher could be known to sneak a walleye or two home from their nets!

REMEMBRANCES OF EDGAR (by Arlette)

Dad wasn't only a good fisherman, but a good fish "smoker" too. It was always a real treat to come home on a weekend and Dad would just be taking the fish out of the smoker. Then he'd spread newspapers all over the table (that was a must) before we could dig in - that way when done you could just roll it all up and straight to the garbage -- along with a few beer cans.

One of my fondest memories is Dad singing 'Old Tannebaum' in German on Christmas Eve. He'd sing while getting ready for Church.

Dad used to say I was harder to raise than all 4 boys put together. I'm sure it was just that he worried more about me being the only girl. (I couldn't have been that bad). Anyway, whenever I was out late, he'd be sitting there playing solitaire when I came home. I often wondered if the lecture I got was more severe when he'd been losing!

If they gave prizes for "Best Hugger", I'm sure Dad would have a blue ribbon. He gave the best hugs and seemed to know just when you needed them most - both in happy and sad times. He was never selfish with his material possessions or his love for us - I can see that part of Dad in each of my brothers and this is something I'm really proud of.

REMEMBRANCES OF EDGAR (By Don)

I remember the many hunting trips to Tamarack Lake. Once about twenty-five mallards were coming into our decoys. I got so excited I shot way too soon. Dad had to teach me how to wait.

I also remember how when dad had a plymouth Fury he always called it a Plymouth "Furry".

One time dad took me pheasant hunting to Breckenridge. This was a big trip for me. We left early in the morning and it was still dark when we left Fergus. I remember how far and high you could see on that prairie from just the car lights. When we got to Breckenridge, the pheasants were so thick. They were like crows roosting in the trees. When the hunting opened we flushed out some corn fields and they were still so thick like crows. It was really good hunting.

I remember once when Ken, Chuck Frederick, dad and I had gone pheasant hunting in Elbow Lake. We stopped and bought a pint of boot-leg booze. We got a little "tooted" up and on the way home we saw a pond with white ducks on. We all jumped out of the car and shot. We got four. When we got home, we told mom we got some snow geese. She said, "These look like tame ducks to me!" We couldn't pull wool over her eyes.

Ron was fishing with dad on Ottertail Lake and he was always monkeying around asking for pop and whatever else he could get into. Dad was getting a little angry with him and said a few words to Ron. Then dad had trouble with the anchor rope and said he would probably have to cut it. So to get back and dad, Ron said, "You do and I'll tell Schumacker on you!"

OLGA'S THOUGHTS ABOUT THINGS AND PEOPLE IN OTTERTAIL.

How can any of us ever forget our years up above the store. Now I wonder how we ever made it, and according to today's standards, we really were poor in things, but we were all so busy and happy, we didn't have time to moan about what we didn't have. I remember the kerosene lamps and how we had to shine up the globes and fill in the kerosene. And washing our clothes with the hand pulled washer - the white things first, then the light colored and ending up with the dark and dirtiest things. All this in the one machine full of water - guess we'd have to add some, sometimes, and we'd rinse in 2 tubs of water - had a hand wringer. We were a big family and always had lots of good food. Mom baked bread and lots of cookies, cake and coffee cake. Canned lots of vegetables and always had to can any fresh fruit that was too ripe in the store.

I shall always remember my mother's pretty white hair, and I used to set it for her in waves, she looked so nice. Also that she and Mrs. Leaders (Otto's mother) used to sing at funerals at St. John's. One sang alto and the other soprano, I don't remember which one. They mostly sang "Safe in the arms of Jesus."

There was a group that used to get together and play cards, Rook & Shaf's 7-up - the Ehlers, Bartels, Menzes, Cordes, and our folks. They had lots of fun. Everyone made wine in those days and they enjoyed that too.

About my dad - he would talk like the customers in the store - if it was a Finn, he'd talk with that brogue, or Norwegian, or Swede. His favorite thing for Missions was the Church Extension Fund. One time we had a fire in the cement block garage and he didn't carry insurance on it, but there wasn't too much damage (the volunteer fire department was good in those days also). But dad was so thankful that he sent an extra donation to the Church Extension Fund. That has always been in my memory and so we too have that as our pet mission. Also when dad had his heart attack and knew he was dying, he was not afraid. His faith showed forth as he said, "The blood of Jesus Christ, God's Son, cleanses me from all sin." (I John 1:7). That was used in his funeral sermon.

OLGA (continued)

Whenever the ministers used to have a conference at St. John's, all the members would take a minister as their guest, and we usually got an old one who had a long beard down to his waist. We kids used to be fascinated watching him eat at our meals - but he always found his mouth. We always made our own horseradish (and it was potent) and one time he took a big fork full and put it all in his mouth - guess our mouths flew open and our eyes popped. We were sure he would gasp, but he didn't blink an eye and ate it. We talked about that a long time after.

I always remember one morning early we were out in our big garden picking green beans for canning (had it across from the school grounds, on the block with the block building - there used to be a church there also). Anyway, we left the smaller kids sleeping. When one of us looked up, here comes Ruth (5 or 6 years old), stark naked, walking to the garden. Guess someone took off their apron and wrapped her in it & took her home.

I used to have to take Val out in the buggy on nice days and my friends would be with me. One day we ran with the buggy and we tipped it over and Val rolled down in the weeds. We never told our mom and he didn't seem to be hurt, so no one ever knew - guess he was so fat, he just rolled.

I can remember when it was either Val or Nona being born - I think it was Nona. We kids had to go to Aunt Gustie Johnson for the night whenever mom had a baby. (Johnsons lived in the red brick house). Anyway we were dumb and never knew anything about baby's coming, at least I didn't at that time. Edgar and I were behind the counter in the store, filling our pockets with peanuts from the big peanut drawer, and I said, "We must be going to have another baby cuz we have to go to Aunt Gustie's to sleep." Edgar gave me a push and said "Shut up and don't talk so loud." So he must have known more than I did. But sure enough, when we got home the next A.M., there was the baby.

I also remember that when Val could talk good, we taught him the answers to alot of questions like..... Who was our first president? Or

OLGA - (continued)

Who freed the slaves? Anyway, we'd show him off to the traveling salesman and customers who came into the store, and he always answered them correctly. Of course, we would beam.

I always felt a loner among my brothers and sisters. Hilma and Addy had each other, Ruth and Nona had each other, but I was in-between by myself.

When one lives in a big family, there are many remembrances, and that is the joy of a large family. Kids nowadays miss alot. We all had to work and we used to fight, but we belonged together, and stuck up for one another. Our mother used to tell that her parents had a minister picked out they wanted her to marry. But she told them she didn't want to marry a minister cuz they always had such big families. So she married our dad for love and had a big family anyway.

RUTH'S MEMORIES

Our parents both liked to sing and they taught us to sing and to like music. Our dad loved to go swimming in Ottertail Lake. Mom taught all us girls to cook and keep house. Of course, as we grew up, we all had to take our turn at working in the store for awhile. Nona and I grew up together, had to learn to do the dishes together and clean the house. One Saturday she would scrub the steps & the next Saturday, my turn, etc.

I especially remember one Christmas at home, we two were maybe 6 & 8 years old, we got the prettiest dolls ever. The dolls had those glass breakable heads, arms and legs, with stuffed bodies, sleeping eyes with eye lashes. When we came home from church Christmas Eve, we all had to go into the store to wait until we could hear Santa Claus (Walt) get through stomping around upstairs, then dad said we could go up to see what he had left for us. Nona and I had to go into the folks' bedroom, on the bed the two dolls were laying. We each picked one up. They were dressed so pretty. One had dark hair and the other light hair, one a

RUTH (Continued)

blue dress, the other pink, real little slippers and socks on. Each one had a grey checkered coat with black velvet collar and cuffs and even black velvet trim on the pockets and a belt. I never did find out who made those pretty little coats, but I know I won't ever forget what they looked like. Did Hilma make them, she was the dressmaker in the family you know?

In winter we always would dress and undress behing the stove in the dining room cuz our bedroom was usually pretty cold.

Also remember how we all liked to visit Uncle John and Aunt Lena. We would all be in the car waiting for dad, but he always had to go into the store the last thing and bag up peanuts and some candy to take along. This was always a real treat for their kids.

Remember when Shoemaker Otto Lange lived next to us, we could always see everything down there from our kitchen window. Mrs. Lange would throw everything out the back door instead of carrying it to the "slop-pile", her slop-pail or peelings and even the "minnow bucket" which everybody got quite a bang out of.

In winter we would slide down hill in "Butchers Hollow" between the creamery and John Wiebe's farm. And in spring when there was a pond on the bottom, we would skate on that pond too.

Of course we all had to walk to our school, cold days or warm. We didn't really like it but guess we all had good times walking with all the other kids everyday. Can also remember Nona and I always had a new dress and shoes for Christmas Eve and Easter too. Can also remember our dad taught me to drive the car when I was about 15 years old.

It seems like Herb was the one to split wood and keep the wood box filled in our kitchen and then he kept a row of chunk wood on the landing up the steps for the other wood burning stoves we used in winter. Also remember all the ashes that had to be taken down the steps again and dumped on the ash pile in the back yard. You know everybody had a "slop-pile" and an "ash-pile" in their back yards those days. All of our family never knew what it was like to live downstairs until we got married and had homes of our own.

**SOME OF THE THINGS REMEMBERED BY
VERONA (NONA)**

Our dad singing "Lift Up Your Heads, Ye Mighty Gates" as he was dressing for church on that first Sunday in Advent.

Eating bread and corn syrup for breakfast. (Seems we never had toast much).

The blue kitchen range which the boys split wood for.

Dad giving us a nickel on Sunday afternoon so we could go to the cafe and buy an ice cream cone.

Mom in those percale sunbonnets she sewed for herself. She always wore one when she was out in the garden.

One time when the family was making metwurst. Herb went downstairs to the store to get some saltpeter. When he came with it, he said "I've got the peter" and Ruthie said, "I'll say you have."

VALENTINE'S NOTES ABOUT EACH MEMBER OF THE FAMILY

My Dad - your grandfather-

1. Free reign of the store and candy counter.
2. Exploring all the junk in our garage.
3. The times when Dad would take me swimming with him to Donald Lake for early September Sunday morning bath.
4. The sunny late September, early October Sunday afternoons duck hunting trips to Tamerac Lake to shoot Gwendalow/Lake Emma mallards.
5. The chance to drive my Dad around the countryside when he would go out selling cream separators, milking machines, grave stones, and whatever to whomever. Yes, even Model T's and A's.

In addition to many other things I think I inherited my Father's positive attitude and his 12-gauge Remington shotgun. Didn't get to do all these things with my Dad long enough. He died in 1934 when I was 15 years old.

VAL (continued)

My MOM -

1. She was always loving. She was also a worrier with a pessimistic attitude. I was always going to get hurt somehow. Guess I might have, had I not listened to her to be careful.

2. Mom was my slave when I was a teenager. She did them all - 8 shirts a week, 6 pairs of slacks, plus sweaters and jackets. Sometimes a patch or two, but always clean.

3. Always good food and plenty of coffee cake.

Just another note - Saw my Mom and Dad argue only one time. I had done something bad. My Dad spanked me with the first thing handy - a saw - and cut the seat of my pants and me. When Mom saw the blood, she and Dad had words.

WALT -

1. Walt was just another one of my brothers until my Dad died. Then he became my big brother. One thing I'll always remember. He would never tell me what to do without telling me why. I learned a lot from him and was able to tell him so before he died.

2. I was Pete Jones carpenter's helper when Walt and Bertha built their house in Ottertail. Guess this is where I gained the confidence/knowhow to do the amount of building we did in California.

HILMA -

1. Got to go along with Hilma, Alvin and Duane on Sunday drives. Sometimes we went as far as Detroit Lakes.

2. Hilma liked to hunt ducks and shoot Dad's ~~shotgun~~. I have fond memories of walking down the SooLine tracks to Donald, Portage, and Long Lake to get a pot shot. She could hit them on the wing too. This must be why Duane got to be such a good shot. The four of us did a lot of fishing on Donald Lake too. Duane and I played together a lot, also had many fights. One time he ended an argument by hitting me over the head with a board, which he left hanging from my head by two nails. Guess this accounts for my head problems?

VAL (continued)

ADELINE -

Quite often she would pick me up at Parochial School with Schultz's "90" Overland touring car. One time she stopped off at the Schultz farm and their dog bit me. I must have been teasing it or running after or away from the sheep buck with the big curled horns.

I remember one peculiar thing - Addy and I have the same shaped hands, right down to the curve in our little fingers.

In those days when I was a kid, we had no milkman in town. Addy used to bring home skim milk from Gust Schultz's farm. Drinking lowfat/no fat milk was 50 years ahead of time in Ottertail and I liked it then but not now. When there was some skim milk left, our Mom (Grandma) made her own cottage cheese and smear kaze.

On one of our many trips to Minnesota after Muriel and I retired, Addy gave me a gift in a box, not to be opened till we returned to California. It is treasured very much (the "little brown jug"), a gift from Mom to Dad for wine. It's over 50 years old now and still plays, "Ho, Ho, Ho, You and Me, Little Brown Jug How I Love Thee."

EDGAR -

When I was eight he let me drive a Model "T" to the filling station. He stood on the running board beside me while I drove up to the then brand-new George Lueders air vending machine. It stood 5 or 6 feet tall. I didn't drive up to it, I drove over it - smashed it to the ground. Edgar took the blame for it. I just couldn't stop the car.

Edgar used to thrill me by putting on the "coaster switch" on his 27 Chevrolet, going really fast down "Haugens Hill" (big hill then) on the way home from Henning. The car would coast nearly all the way to Leaf Lakes.

He used to take me with him to Pleasure Park, where he would have a spiked "near beer" and I would have a soda pop while he would visit with Henry Meyer.

VAL (continued)

OLGA -

She used to dress up in her brothers' clothes - even a boy's cap. She looked pretty cute.

I helped build Olga's and Smick's little house (the one that Tim lives in now).

Muriel and I stayed with Olga and Smick in the "Frag Town" section of St. Paul in 1945 before we rented our own place.

After Althea was born, Olga gave me her almost new 7½ foot skis. Smick gave his to his brother Bill. This was the only pair of skis I ever had.

We came to California the end of 1946. Olga and Smick, Althea and JoAnn came out in the Fall of 47. Smick's brother Walt and Ann were living in San Leandro then.

HERB -

Herb played centerfield and I pitched or played third base (Jack Busch and I would trade off positions) on the Ottertail baseball team.

Used Herb and Elsie's home many times while in the Army Air Corps. Flew into Wold Chamberlain Field and always stayed with them.

Muriel and I were with Herb and Elsie when Herb had his bypass surgery at Loma Linde Hospital.

Stood up with Laurie Grefe (Lien) for Herb and Elsie's wedding. Just for meanness, I padlocked a cow bell to their bedspring on their wedding nite.

Inherited from Herb the job of splitting wood for and carrying out ashes from Mom's blue kitchen range.

RUTH -

When we were small, I slept with Ruth and Herb slept with Nona in the double bedroom. You guessed it, the dry ones in one bed and the wets in the other bed. I was a dry one.

Will always remember Ruth's good cooking. Dad always said, "Eat good food and you won't have to pay the doctor." He told Ruth that she could use anything in the grocery store as long as she would prepare it for eating. Ruth did, and we had and enjoyed a lot of new dishes.

VAL (continued)

NONA -

After Herb and Ruth married the Luhnings in the big double wedding ceremony, Nona, Mom and I were left by ourselves in the rooms above the store. Enough room for eleven - too much room for three. Many happy memories, good times, the next five years before I went to work for Butler Brothers in Minneapolis.

Over the years, Nona and Don's kids and Muriel and my kids saw each other many times. Our kids and theirs still have a strong bond.

Found among the papers of

WALTER

(A brief, handwritten history of Herman Brutlag from school age to the move to Ottertail)

Dad went to Parochial School a year or two later. After he was confirmed, he went to Onargo College to take a business course. Upon completion of this course, he went to St. James, Minnesota, with one or two other young men to purchase land. Dad himself went up as far as Winnipeg, Canada, where he could have bought some land where a good part of Winnipeg now stands, instead he bought some land at or near Crookston, Minnesota. He settled in Henning where he was in the R. Estes home with Anton Thompson. Also worked in the bank for a short while and then he went into partnership in the general store business with the firm known as Brutlag and Hoff General Store. They operated this store until 1904 or 1905, when they dissolved the partnership and Dad bought a farm 2 miles east and 1 mile north of Almora. This farm he operated until the fall of 1907 when it was sold and he bought the store from Schulz Brothers at Ottertail and we moved there in October, 1907.

WALTER remembered by Joyce

My earliest remembrances of my Father are synonymous with the "Store". Dad often went back to the store to do bookwork in the evenings. Calling him there when it was about time for him to come home, my mother would turn the telephone crank handle one long ring - or was it two? and

WALTER (continued)

dad would answer. My request was always the same "Will you please bring a treat (a candy bar)?" He would be very evasive and teasing and never said that he would, but he always did. I used to love standing on the big, open furnace grate toward the rear of the store while waiting for him to "bank" the coal fire. What a good feeling it was to have the warm air on the feet and wherever. I'm told I spent alot of time in the store as a toddler, disrupting the order of the lower shelves - I used to shake the cans of condensed milk, the small ones with the black and white cow pictured on the label - so much so that customers returned cans curdled from the shaking. My father, however, remained tolerant. I do remember him going into the big "Ice Box Room" with the heavy, latched door. He would remove a long cloth coat from a peg near the door, a coat with W A L T embroidered over the pocket, and would put it on to go into the 'Ice Box.' As I grew older, I could wait on the customers, writing down each item on the order in a sales book, adding the total, giving the customer one copy and putting the other in a file box to be billed at the end of the month. Dad always checked my arithmetic, would have a good word for me if the total was correct. I would help him at inventory time, counting cans, boxes, and cases, as he wrote in a ledger. Dad would sometimes send me to the creamery to pick up butter. There was a wooden carrier with a handle, especially built to carry 20 pounds of butter. The creamery always was wet and shiny clean, with a wonderful smell. Usually Edgar would fill the carrier, teasing me as he did so, but it was worth it to hear that wonderful deep lough, coming all the way from his belly. Always seemed like a long way back to the store and up a hill yet too! Once in awhile I would ride with dad to Detroit Lakes in the evenings to pick up fresh fruit and produce - this was always in the old greenish, blue pickup. Once a lady fainted in the store, and quick as a wink dad had her up on sacks of flour, with her head down.

When I think of my father relaxing, I see him reading - he always read newspapers, periodicals, and magazines from front to back. A sure sign he was not yet done was to see a magazine lying somewhere rolled back to an open page. All the Brutlags must have had much exposure to musical instruments and singing, as our family is the "singingist" and

WALTER (continued)

"playingist" one I know. Addy told me once that a piano teacher would come by train, give lessons, and depart again by train. My father had a wonderful bass singing voice, and always sang in choirs wherever he was. He also played the violin, and loved to be coaxed to play it for us. Guess the ritual of the coaxing was as much fun as the playing or listening to him play. I know my father was a good dancer, everyone talked about that, especially my mother. Dad and mom met at a dance, and after that first evening, mom said dad told her, "You will be my wife and the mother of my children." I only danced once with my dad, at Arnett's wedding, long after my mother died. I had to coax him, but he did finally take me out on the dance floor, and it was pretty special.

Dad liked to hunt and fish, especially winter ice fishing. He let me go with him to the fish house. I say let because I'm sure I was more trouble than I was worth in help. The ritual was always the same, ski out to the fish house, chop the kindling for the little stove, start the fire, clean out the ice from the hole, unwind the decoy string, and sit back and enjoy the warmth and wait for a chance to spear a big northern. The only time he took me hunting, he had to turn right around and take me home again - I began crying from fright at the coldness of the lake at dawn, getting into the wobbly little duck boat, and steering it into the tall cat-tails and reeds. I'll just bet he was more than a little angry about that time, and rightfully so. We went swimming at Ottertail Lake, especially on Saturday nights after the store would close for a "bath". Dad always wore a grey woolen swimsuit, which the moths had managed to put several holes in - this mortified my mother.

All in all, my father was a pretty special guy - after all, he was my dad.

I'M PROUD WALT BRUTLAG WAS MY DAD (by Keith).....

I remember . . .

- sitting on his lap (my earliest remembrance) trying to grab his false teeth as he would stick them out from his mouth
- looking out the window and waiting to see him walk home...flat hat, long gait, swinging arms

WALT (continued)

- his sitting at the roll top desk behind the counter on that raised platform at the store, visor cap on, working on the books
- his putting a nickel in my hand each Sunday just before the offering
- singing together in the men's choir at church
- his encouraging my baseball by coming to the games
- sawing wood with the swede saw..my side crooked, his side straight and the frustration it caused both of us
- the one time he was really angry with me
- the notes he would send with mom's letters when I was in Italy
- his support for decisions regarding ministry...becoming a teacher, D.C.E. and pastor
- his grinding horseradish (what a smell) in Springfield
- his stately manner of walking to church - hymnal in hand
- his telling me that my ministry helped his faith grow
- the day he had his stroke
- the memories we shared those last ten days of his life on earth... many of them shared above, others intense and personal
- praying with him that the Lord would take him home
- finding this verse underlined in his hymnal the day he went to be with the Lord . . .

If thou be sick, if death draw near,
This truth thy troubled heart can cheer.
Christ Jesus saves thy soul from death,
That is the firmest ground of faith.