IVER AMUNDSON

Iver Amundson and Syverine Bilden were married at McIntosh, Minnesota, Polk County, on March 2, 1896, by F. S. Reishus, Lutheran pastor. Iver was born in Nordland, Norway, on June 24, 1865, of parents Amund and Aletta Sorfjord, Vesteraalen. Since he was a son of Amund his name became Amundson. Syverine Bilden was born in Hadeland, Norway, on July 10, 1874, of parents Gulbrand and Anne Haugen, who changed their name to Bilden after arriving in America. They lived in a two-room log house, which was later enlarged. To this union ten children were born: Oscar; Anna, Mrs. Soren Smith; Gustav; Helen, Mrs. Gilbert Fosse; Godfred; Mabel, Mrs. Alfred Gravos; Ingeman; Otto; Eunice, Mrs. Vincent Rhodes; and Roald. They had 23 grandchildren. All the children were born and raised on the 160-acre farm in Badger township about five miles north of Erskine. The Amundsons were charter members of Saron Lutheran church where all their children have been baptized and confirmed.

Iver was active in community affairs, being a member of township, school and church boards. He was custodian of Saron church for many years, serving without salary, as his special service to the Lord.

In January, 1908, Iver met with a painful accident, which nearly cost him his life. While sawing wood with a circular saw with the help of neighbors at his home, he slipped on the ice and his right knee cap was cut badly. After suffering many weeks at a Crookston hospital, he returned to his home with a stiff knee. Later he got around as well as anyone.

Another disaster which took place on his birthday, June 24, 1947, was a tornado which destroyed most of the farm buildings. Fortunately they saw it coming, so they lay down under some low bushes and plum trees, where nothing happened to fall. Iver talked often about watching the barn taken up and exploding all over the place. Many animals were killed and machinery smashed. Much of the contents of the second floor of the farm house were scattered over a wide area. How they appreciated the help of kind friends and neighbors at times like that!

On their farm, the Amundsons raised cattle, hogs and chickens, oats, barley and hay and a large garden. They also kept bees, and honey was a welcome substitute in the sugar shortage during the first World War. Eggs and cream supplied most of the money for groceries and clothing, much of which was purchased at the little country store at Cisco, and at T. K. Berges at Erskine.

Mr. Amundson never drove a car, but often talked about earlier pioneer days when he and neighbors walked to Crookston and back, to get necessities. This was a distance of 45 miles. What an advantage when later they owned oxen and horses. In spite of hardships and privation, theirs was a happy home! The doors were always open for friends and neighbors, church groups such as Ladies Aid, choirs and prayer meetings. All were welcome especially in winter when it was not practical to heat the church. They never owned keys for their doors.

Mrs. Amundson's hobby was raising flowers. Many of her lovely bouquets found their way to sick neighbors, and to the church at funerals. When young, she had studied dress-making, which came in handy with so much sewing to do. She corded and spun wool into yarn and knitted all the socks and mittens for the family. She was never known to sit down to rest without her knitting. All the children learned to read Norwegian before starting school.

Mr. Amundson passed away in 1939, and his wife in 1945. They were buried near Saron Lutheran church.

Pioneer log house of Mr. and Mrs. Iver Amundson 1896. With them is Iver's Mother.

A. G. CAYLER

Allen G. Thurman Cayler settled in Polk County in 1903. He was born in Webster County, Iowa, in 1876. He traveled to northwestern Minnesota from Iowa in a covered wagon pulled by a team of horses and leading a saddle horse. He made his living by farming, digging wells and threshing. He loved to work with gas engines and steam threshing rigs. He later worked for the Great Northern Railroad at the Crookston roundhouse repairing steam locomotives.

He was married to Laura Louise Mitchell in 1909. Laura Mitchell was a school teacher and was born in Woodside township, a daughter of Henry G. Mitchell. Mr. and Mrs. Cayler raised a family of four children: Myrtle Grace, the oldest, married Russell Moline of Lansing, Iowa. Allen, the second child, married Marian Rude, a daughter of the Martin Rudes. Marian died, leaving a family of six small children, five boys and one girl. Allen now lives in Alpena, Michigan. Russell, the third child, lives at Mentor, Minnesota, and Donald, the fourth, lives at Erskine, Minnesota.

Mr. Cayler died in 1954. Mrs. Cayler is 90 years old and lives at Riverview Nursing Home in Crookston. Mrs. Cayler has 32 great-grandchildren and 14 grandchildren.

When I was very young, we lived on a farm approximately ten miles north of Crookston. Mother made a lot of butter and took it to town with a horse and buggy, taking my brother and me along. One time a car came up behind us frightening the horse, so that she jumped toward the water-filled ditch but, luckily, we stayed upright.

Mr. and Mrs. Iver Amundson and Family: Top row: Oscar, Anna, Otto, Helen and Ingeman. Seated: Mabel, Mr. Amundson, Roald, Mrs. Amundson and Eunice.