

ENGLISH WORKING DRAFT

Translation and layout review in progress.

Some manuscript passages remain in Norwegian pending transcription.

The untouched source PDF is retained separately.



My dear
Margarethen!

By
Jens Otterbech

*My dear
Margarethen!*

**A collection of Anna Louise de Seue's letters to her sister Margarethe
from 1862–1876, placed in the wider context of their family history**

Jens Otterbech
Anna's great-grandchild

A few words about the author of this family history

Put simply, this is really about the question: "Who am I?"

The answer is simple. I, Jens Otterbech, am a great-grandchild of Anna Louise de Seue who has grown old enough to take an interest in his ancestors.

My journey through life began on Hisøy, near Arendal, on 2 September 1933. After my school-leaving examinations, commercial college, military service and the Business School (HSG) in St. Gallen, Switzerland, in 1959, I married my Edith. The result was two girls (Renée and Synøve) and a boy (Trond), and thus a small, happy family that is still alive and well.

Outside the home, my path led to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. In all, I spent 12 years serving at home. My 30 years abroad were divided among Norway's diplomatic missions in Berlin, The Hague, Paris, Geneva, Singapore, Cape Town/Pretoria and Hanoi. Much of my work concerned Norway's trade-policy relations with Europe and individual European countries, as well as global free trade, development aid, establishing two new Norwegian diplomatic missions (Pretoria and Hanoi), and Norway's relations with half a dozen countries in Southeast Asia. It was never dull.

I retired as an ambassador in 2001 and have since found time to do other things. This project proved to be a major challenge, requiring a great deal of time and patience. But goodness, how fascinating it became. I would like to think that other family members, too, will find things of interest here.

Jens Otterbech

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I Anna Louise de Seue

26.07.1841 - 07.03.1891

Dear Great-grandmother Anna

I have long wanted to send you a few words. Now the moment has come. You passed on long before I began my own journey. You never got to know me. Yet, little by little, I have come a little closer to you. How did that happen?

You left behind no fewer than 80 letters, written to your elder sister Margarethe in the years 1862–1876. She carefully kept every one of them. One day they landed on my desk. Reading them left many powerful impressions. Why? Well, here and now you shall hear a little more about that.

Through your letters, you also took me on a journey through some of the most important years of your life. Your mother and father had already died. Five siblings were left alone, somewhat scattered to the winds. You yourself lived with your aunt and uncle on the farm Houggard in Rakkestad. You are already engaged when we first meet you in the spring of 1862. Five years later come three years of married life with Ingvald in Talvik. Jens and Wilhelm are born. Then, as a widow and single mother, we follow you through the next six years, which you again spend with your aunt and uncle at Houggard.

But who were you, really? Part of the answer lies, of course, on, between and beyond the lines of your many letters. Perhaps there is also something to be found in the footsteps of those who came after you. We shall never, of course, have a complete picture. But here, at least, I shall try to bring you a little further into the light.

I think I can say that you may have been a good sister to have. You also seem to have cared about your foster parents, both then and later in life. I know nothing about how you met Ingvald. It seems that you must have been a good companion in the few years you had together. As far as we can follow you through the letters up to 1876, Jens was probably, in many ways, the child closest to your heart. We hear less about Wilhelm. We know just as little about how things developed later. What we do know is that you eventually moved to Christiania, that the boys continued their schooling there, that you died in 1891, that Wilhelm left for Australia only a little over a year later, and that Jens began his ministry in Kistrand in 1894.

In your letters you are clearly very cautious about raising difficult family matters. The closest you come seems to be some concern over your sister Helga's choice of

husband, and your brother Werner's choice of a life at sea. In your eyes, he had somehow rather disappeared. Why did he write so seldom?

You never say a bad word about Ingvald, but you nevertheless let it show that you probably felt a little lonely at times when Ingvald was away on his many long pastoral duties. Yet later you make no secret of the fact that those very three years up there became the happiest of your life. You clearly loved your Ingvald. His standing as a pastor gave you good contacts in the local community. Some of these became lifelong friends.

Financially, things were probably all right. You got your pianoforte, but journeys home to the south were not on the cards. That came only when you were a widow, in the autumn of 1870. You liked to play when no one else was in the house. You took an interest in clothes, but probably had to sew everything yourself. We hear a great deal about your flowers inside and outside the house.

There is much about your role as a mother that we would like to know a little more about. We get a strong impression that Jens remained very close to you. I read there that he loves you and that God will surely look after you. We hear nothing of similar conversations with Wilhelm. Perhaps he was simply still a little too young, or had a somewhat different nature. Your two boys' later paths in life may perhaps suggest something of that. But we shall probably never quite get to the heart of the matter. What made Wilhelm leave, never to return? You died before he left, and perhaps you would not have known why either.

Yet it says a great deal that both your boys passed on their mother's name, "Anna", to their firstborn daughters. Jens's Anna lived to be 18 months old and is buried beside the steps to the vestry of Kistrand Church. Wilhelm's Anna lived to around 70 and is buried in the cemetery in Suva, Fiji.

I would so gladly have come to know you better, but that will have to wait for another time. Thank you for being who you were. Through your many letters and pictures, I have come close enough to you to love a great-grandmother I never met and whom I shall never meet.

But through you, your life continues in all of us who followed, and in those who may yet come.

Peace be with you!

With love from your great-grandchild

Jens

Stabekk, All Saints' Day, 1 November 2014

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I Foreword

1. The principal figures

This calls for an introductory explanation. It concerns two of our female ancestors who wrote to each other in the 1860s and 1870s. The eldest sister, Margarethe Christiane de Seue, kept no fewer than 80 handwritten letters that her sister Anna Louise wrote to her between 6 February 1862 and 22 October 1876. These original letters have since been carefully preserved by a couple of descendants. In time, it would seem natural to gather them in one place and make them available to a wider public, for whatever interest they may hold. Typed transcriptions of all the original letters will be collected in one place and made available to interested descendants. In this account, see Chapter IV, a smaller selection of these, together with some other letters between siblings, will form part of the very core of this expanded family history.



Anna Louise de Seue



Margarethe Christiane de Seue

2. A portrait of everyday family life

Both on and between the lines, the letters tell us much about Anna's everyday life at that time. There are also a couple of letters from two other members of Anna's family at the time. Insofar as their respective handwriting can be understood, these too will be included in the collection. This little jewel of ours has opened a fascinating window onto something that once was. Naturally, it holds a very special interest for us descendants. But in many ways it also gives a good picture of an ordinary middle-class family in eastern Norway in those days. Relationships between people are often described in cautious terms. Yet, little by little, as one of Anna's many descendants, I came to know quite well someone I have never met and will never meet, but who is very much a part of me and mine. During my

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work transcribing the handwritten letters into clear text, I gradually came, in a way, to know a person of whom I became genuinely fond. I would so dearly have liked to meet her. She is my great-grandmother on my father's side and could surely have told me much about many things. But perhaps I was not necessarily meant to know everything.

3. Structure and content

Of the letters we have, Anna wrote her first at age 21 and her last at age 35. These were



*Anna Louise de Seue
during her engagement*

some exceptionally eventful years, beginning with five years of engagement, followed by nearly three years of marriage as a pastor's wife in Talvik (Porsanger), and finally as a widow and single mother of the two little boys Jens and Wilhelm at Houggaard farm in Rakkestad, where her aunt Karen was married to sheriff Karl Severin Krefting. It is natural to divide the collection of letters into the three periods referred to here.



*Anna L. de Seue
A pastor's wife*



*Anna L. de Seue
as a widow*

4. A little family history

As the letters were transcribed into fair copy, I increasingly saw the need to place everything within a somewhat broader framework. The advantage was that we had a great deal of other family-history material to draw upon.

The challenge was to gain a little more insight into all of this and, moreover, to know one's limitations regarding what should be included and what could advantageously be omitted. Whether I have succeeded in that respect, I leave to each reader's own judgment. But on one point I feel confident. I wanted to use these letters as the very core of a somewhat broader presentation of the family members who went before us.

On Anna's side, we are speaking of the de Seue family, whose life in Norway began with Nicolas de Seue (1637–1706).



Nicolas de Seue

He arrived in Bergen early in the 1660s, perhaps as a Huguenot refugee from France. He already had military training behind him.

As will become clear from what follows, he continued his military career in Norway and eventually became Commandant at Akershus. Anna and Margarethe are his descendants in the sixth generation. Very many of his descendants in Norway pursued military careers that several times carried them very high in the corresponding ranks.

For those who may later have the inclination and time, it is probably entirely possible to trace the family's roots further back in France. We know that this may concern a French noble family that probably bore the name Flechier de Sevennes or de Seve and lived in Langedoc, in a county that may have been called something like "Venaissin." On Ingvald Mathias's side, it is the Otterbech family that I will examine a little more closely here.

Appendix 1 contains a family tree that reaches very far back in time and may well contain some errors. It is nevertheless by no means uninteresting. For what follows, however, it will be more natural here and now to focus on the somewhat later generations.

Taking the farm name Østre Oterbæk in eighteenth-century Nøtterø as my starting point, I will continue by tracing the lines from that time to the present day.

Already we can at least discern the outlines of a typical clerical family taking shape. But, as though that were not enough, through our own Hanna Otterbech (née Krogh) from Bergen we acquired an even more substantial clerical lineage.

It is interesting, at any rate, to note that through Ingvald Mathias and Anna Louise two prominent and very different branches of Norway's official class had come together: the clergy and the military.

5. Family tree and gallery of people

In addition to the family trees discussed here, we are also fortunate to have at our disposal a large number of relevant photographs. We will endeavour to include them wherever they may fit.

6. Concluding words

I freely admit that it has been demanding to keep a steady course and not lose myself in digressions involving unnecessary and irrelevant information. I would also like to believe that I have got most of it right, but of course I cannot give an absolute guarantee on every point. Even so, I hope I have been able to fill certain gaps in our knowledge of something that concerns all of us descendants—namely, our forefathers and foremothers. Perhaps it may also inspire other descendants to offer new contributions or otherwise continue the investigation.

But the very core of it all is, of course, still the truly exceptional collection of letters that our Anna wrote to her sister Margarethe about her daily life over nearly fifteen years in the 1860s and 1870s.

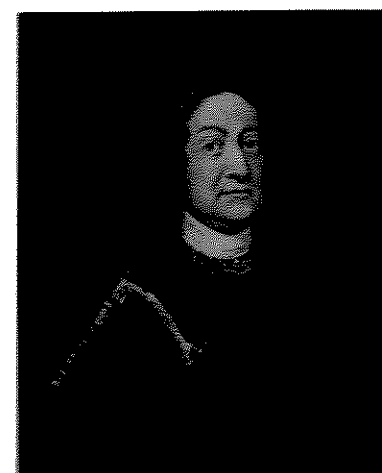
III Anna Louise de Seue

26.07.1841 – 07.03.1891

1. Ancestors

Founding ancestor Nicolas de Seue (1637–1706). Commandant of Akershus. Colonel of Infantry. Married Margarethe Christiane Mecklenburg (1660–1708) in 1680. Eight children.

Arrived in Bergen from France with military training in the 1660s. Captain in the Vesterlenske Infantry Regiment in 1674. In the Viceroy's Life Regiment of Dragoons in 1675. Adjutant General in 1677. With the Bergenhus Infantry Regiment in 1679. Discharged at the end of the Gyldenløve War in 1679. Commandant in Trondhjem in 1681. Commandant of Akershus from 1689, with the rank of colonel.



Nicolas de Seue

Concerning the French ancestors, another of Nicolas de Seue's descendants, Major General Werner Nicolai de Seue, wrote the following on a loose sheet on his 73rd birthday, 29 August 1813:

“As promised, the following is related concerning the family of Major General de Seue. The family's former name was Fléchier, and it was settled in Languedoc in the County of Venaissin. One branch of it styled itself Fléchier de Sevennes or de Seve; but the Seve where the porcelain factory is situated does not concern this family, nor the Seve from which it takes its name. The first member of this family who came here most certainly

did not descend from any cardinal, since there has been no cardinal of this family, and cardinals moreover may neither have nor acknowledge their children. Nor is there any archbishop in Nimes, only a bishop; Esprit Flechier, who died at the age of 78 in 1710, was bishop. A brother or cousin of his was the de Seue who first came here. I believe I am able to procure more information about this family; but I do not do it free of charge.”

At the end of the sheet was the following:

“To my dear solitude: Pleasant retreat, abode of innocence, where, far from the vanities of magnificence, my repose begins and my torment ends. Valleys—meadows, garden, pleasant solitude! If in the past you witnessed my anxiety, henceforth be witnesses to my contentment. Solitude, 29 August, my 73rd birthday.” (Signed De Seue, Major General).

The family tree continues as follows:

Christian de Seue (1693–1771), Lieutenant Colonel, 1st Akerhus Infantry Regiment, married Anne Marie Schjøller (1708–1793), daughter of Councillor of Commerce A. Schøller, Trondhjem. Two children.

Wilhelm Andreas de Seue (1731–1807), Colonel and Battalion Commander in the 2nd Akershus Infantry Brigade, married his cousin Margarethe Christiane de Seue (1732–1810), daughter of Major General de Seue (1694–1772). Three children.

Peter de Seue (1770–1855), Captain, 2nd Akershus Infantry Regiment, married Hellehus Werenskiold de Seue (1774–1851), daughter of Christian Werenskiold of Trosvik. One child.

2. Parents and siblings

Wilhelm Christian de Seue (15.09.1803 - 14.06.1851), lawyer. Drammen Customs District. Married Karen Dorothea Hvidt (1793–1835) in 1832; the marriage was childless. Married Gertrud Maria Olsen (1816–1863) in 1838. They had the following seven children:

1. Margarethe Christiane (22.07.1839 - 1906). A teacher, including in Haugesund. She spent several summer holidays with the pastor Peter de Seue at Fjelberg in Sønholdland. It was she who preserved her sister Anna's many letters, which form the very backbone of this document.

2. Anna Louise (20.07.1841 - 07.03.1891). Married the parish priest Ingvald Mathias Otterbech (29.06.1841 - 27.07.1870) on 15.08.1867. Two children: Jens (18.08.1868 - 16.12.1921) and Wilhelm (26.04.1870 - 1951) in Fiji.



Anna Louise Otterbech (de Seue)



Ingvald Mathias Otterbech

3. Helga Emilie Frederica (Frederikke) (03.05.1843 - 21.02.1884). Married Lieutenant Edmund J. Feiring. Three children: two boys and one girl.

4. Marthine Elisa (11.02.1845 - ?). Housekeeper for Doctor Schaft at Kværnes, Normøre.

5. Werner Nicolas Christian (1846–1850).

6. Wilhelmine Marie (Mimi) (02.09.1848 - 19.02.1906). Housekeeper in Rakkestad and Hemnes in Nordland. Teacher in Holmestrand.

7. Werner Nicolas Christian (22.11.18 - ?), ship's officer. Married Sophie Kongrud (17.04.1869 -) on 16.08.1891. Five children. Emigrated to America. Contact was lost. The five children are: Wilhelm Arthur de Seue (10.06.1892 -), Nicolas de Seue (31.07.1894 -), Helga Werenskiold de Seue (11.02.1897 -), Sigurd Werner de Seue (08.11.1899 -) and Claude Wilhelm de Seue (10.07.1902 -).



Marthine Elisa



Wilhelmine Marie (Mimi)



Werner de Seue and family

3. Her own children (Read more about this in Chapter VII)

1. Jens (18.08.1868 - 16.12.1921). Married Hanna Marie Krogh (29.04.1873 - 02.04.1953) on 03.08.1894. Six children: Haakon, Werner, Anna Louise, Ingrid, Gunnar and Evy. Parish priest in Kistrand (1894–1902), Øre (1902–1907) and Hetland (1907–1918). General Secretary of the Norwegian Lutheran Finn Mission Association (1918–1921).



Jens, age 3



Jens, age 12



Jens, age 5, and Wilhelm, age 3



Jens, age 8, and Wilhelm, age 6

2. Wilhelm. (26.04.1870 - 1951).



Wilhelm, age 12

Emigrated to Australia in 1893. Cattle farmer. Lost everything during a period of drought. Emigrated to Fiji. Began producing bananas in an area without roads and dependent on river transport. Difficult and barren years. He was later employed as a cattle overseer on a Dutch cattle farm outside the capital, Suva. He lived with a local Fijian woman, Lanieta Vakaluma. Two children: Anna and Ellen.

Anna was married twice and had six children with Lepani Vosalevu and three children with Ratu Emanueli Roseru. Ellen was married to Sam Rounds and had nine children. Many descendants have followed since. We have the names of all eighteen children, together with their respective large families, updated through 2001. See also Chapters VII.2 and VIII.2, and Appendices 4–9.

IV Ingvald Mathias Otterbech

29.06.1841 – 27.07.1870



Ingvald, about age 15



Ingvald during his student years



Ingvald during his student years



Ingvald, about age 25



The parish priest in Talvik

1. Ancestors

First, a few words about where Ingvald Mathias came from and what may have been the origin of the family name. Nøtterøy is the starting point. In its very old form, the name first appears in 1398 in its earliest form as Otrebekkr, which later became Oterbæk and then Oterbek. Before the seventeenth century, the property in question had already been divided into an eastern, Østre Oterbek, and a western, Vestre Oterbek. It lies on the eastern side of the island and was then divided into two halves by a small stream. It was apparently Østre Oterbek that gave rise to the later family name.

Another explanation suggests that the name may also have had a different origin. It is said that around 1540 two German immigrants came and settled in Tønsberg. They established themselves respectively as a ferryman and a merchant and ran the Brenderius Distillery by the Canal. They are said to have bought a farm on Nøtterøy and adopted the name Østre Oterbek there. In what follows, it will be natural to take precisely that name as the starting point.

Kristen and Gjød ran Bjønnes farm on Nøtterøy from 1614 to 1635. After Kristen's death around 1640, Gjød married Erik Villassøn (1614—about 1675). Their daughter Kirsti Eriksdatter married Anders Andersson in 1687.

Their eldest son Erik (1687–1766) took the name Erik Andersson Bjønnes. After ten years in the navy, he moved from Tønsberg to Østre Oterbek, which he ran from 1717 until 1754, when he moved back to Tønsberg. In his second marriage, he married Anne Kaspersdatter Bergsøen in 1729.

Their son Anders Eriksen Oterbek (1731 - ?) married Elisabeth Kristine Mathiasdatter Tokenæs in 1764 and settled in Tønsberg as a merchant and ship's captain. They had the sons Lars and Mathias.

Mathias Andersson Otterbech (1764–1829) sailed as captain of a grain ship between Denmark and Norway during the war against England and Sweden. He married Ingeborg Maria Jensdatter Hovland (1779–1865) on 03.01.1800, and they had five children in all, with Jens the eldest. Ingeborg Maria was the daughter of ship's captain Jens Olsen Hovland (1752–1801) and Maren Ivarsdatter Gunnestad. The name Hovland comes from the farm of the same name on Nøtterø. It came into the family's possession in 1722, when it was purchased by Klemet Hansøn. The eldest son Jens became known as Jens Hovland Otterbech and is thus the first to bear the family name as we spell it today.

The following information is available about Talette Pauline Budde's ancestors:

Grandparents: Christian Ditlev Adolf Arenfeldt (1754-1833), General, Kristiansand, and Pauline Charlotte Marie Harbou (1764-1836).

Parents: Ole Christoffer Budde (1774-1849), Captain in the Navy, and Andrea Frederikke Ottoline Arenfeldt (1790-1825). (Pictures 17 and 18: Members of the Arenfeldt family. Probably Talette's mother and/or grandmother.)



*Unidentified members of the
Arenfeldt family*



2. Parents and siblings

Jens Hovland Otterbech (21.01.1801-1863). In 1826 he married Johanne Katrine Knop, daughter of customs officer Rasmus Knop and Johanne Harris. They had a daughter, Hanne, who married parish priest Kjøning. Her mother died young. Jens then married Talette Pauline Budde (1814-1891). They had 6 children: Christoffer, Ingvald Mathias, Thrane, Marie, Julie and Richard.



Jens Hovland Otterbech



*Jens Hovland Otterbech &
Talette Pauline Otterbech (Budde)*



Talette Pauline Budde



*Talette Pauline Budde
& Maria*

Among other things, the Andebu parish chronicle records the following about him: His parents had little means. Local benefactors helped with his education. He passed his theological professional examination with the grade Laudabilis at the age of 23 and became parish priest of Hvaløyene in 1824. He was parish priest in Andebu from 1829 until his death in 1863. In many ways he became a leading figure in Andebu, serving as priest, mayor, chairman of various municipal commissions and member of Parliament for the so-called Farmers' Party in 1842, 1848 and 1862. His passion for card-playing, often involving weekly visits to a card club in Tønsberg, was not equally appreciated everywhere. He was known as a particularly authoritative but also helpful person. His monument, erected by grateful residents of Andebu, still stands near the entrance to the old Andebu Church. It reads: "JENS HOVLAND OTTERBECH, Born 21 January 1801, Died 28 July 1863, Parish Priest of the Andebu congregations for 33 years. Gratitude raised this memorial to him." For fuller information, see Appendix 2, "Extract from the Andebu parish chronicle concerning Parish Priest Jens Hovland Otterbech."

For fuller information, see "Extract from the Andebu parish chronicle concerning Parish Priest JENS HOVLAND OTTERBECH" in Appendix 2.



Nora places flowers on the grave of her great-great-great-great-grandfather Jens Hovland Otterbech

JENS HOVLAND OTTERBECH
Born 21 January 1804
Died 25 July 1863
Parish priest of Andebu congregation for 33 years
"Gratitude raised this memorial to him"

3. His children

See Chapter VII

V A selection of Anna's letters from the years 1862 - 1876 Written by Anna Louise Otterbech to her sister Margarethe Christiane de Seue

1. Engaged, 1862-67



Anna in her early twenties

Andebu Parsonage, 4 July 1862

My dear Margarethe!

Seldom has so much time passed between my letters to you as it has now, and thank God I am happier now than when I last wrote to you. It will be really good to talk confidentially with you for a while.

First I should tell you that I am well here. Everyone is kind to me, but I do not yet know them well enough to confide in anyone except Ingvald, and that is why I sometimes wish I were in Rakkestad. All the same, I am glad I can be here this summer, both so that I can really get to know them and for Helga's sake, because while I am away she can at least remain undisturbed at Houggaard. Afterwards Uncle would probably not like her to stay there; you know how peculiar he is.

I spend many anxious moments worrying about Helga, my Margarethen! It is so hard that she, so young and childlike and knowing so little of the world, should suffer so much, but our Lord surely has His wise purposes in it. If only Hilmar were as he should and ought to be; but he has long since returned to his old ways. I noticed it even before Helga was properly well again. Now Aunt writes that he has been there once on business since I left, and behaved towards her in such a way that, if Aunt were Helga, she would soon dismiss him, because this can never turn out well, Aunt says; and I certainly think so too. Helga must realise it again now, but, as before, she will probably keep it to herself, and then she suffers doubly.

Aunt is so fond of Helga and says she is both a help and a comfort to her. Nathy has not arrived yet, but when she comes Helga was to visit Eidskog for a few days, and she was surely looking forward to that. The Kohts showed much sympathy in her sorrow and illness, and I think most people did. In Holmestrand Anna Wærnæs had reported that the engagement was over. Their hearing of this was not quite accidental, but I imagine they know the circumstances.

I was only in Holmestrand from Friday to Tuesday, as Ingvald came to fetch me already then. On Sunday I spent the whole day with the [Holts?] It was pleasant there; they asked after you immediately and sent their greetings.

Sara is staying at Grefsen now. They were to take a sixteen-year-old Miss Møller into the household; I cannot remember where she comes from. They received letters from Johan that day, and he called her his foster sister. Ingvald has told me a story about Johan that you may not have heard; [Molates?] must surely know it. It happened one day last winter when he travelled by stagecoach to Drammen and was alone

with a Miss Keyser, whom he took to be a singer, since it is unusual for ladies to travel by stagecoach. He behaved so badly towards her that Ingvald would not describe it outright. She got out at Asker and hired transport, and when she reached Drammen she told her brother-in-law, who then went to Christiania and reported it to the commanding officer. Johan was nearly expelled from the Military Academy, but got off with fourteen days' detention. Mrs Holst spoke at length about how hard a school of experience he had to go through, poor fellow.

It is rather empty here now, as Mother, Father and Marie are in Christiania, and Hanne and Pastor Kjøning are visiting his family. They left on Tuesday; Father returns today and the others in fourteen days. They are buying Hanne's trousseau at the same time, as she is to be married this autumn. Perhaps you do not know that she is engaged to... the curate here, Kjøning. They will live on a neighbouring farm.

Mother looks very young, although she is 48 and has had 10 children. She really has a noble manner, but none of the children has inherited it. Hanne is the only child of the first wife; she is in her thirties. The others are Christoffer, 24; Thrine, who turns 23 on the same day I turn 21; Ingvald, 21; Richard, 16; Julie, 12; and Marie, 6. Christoffer completed his degree in mineralogy this spring, but will probably take the examination again, as he received a Haud. He attended the students' end-of-term celebration and enjoyed himself immensely. Many students came home engaged; the refined ladies were said to have been less than decorous, but ladies always become flustered in such circumstances, they say. Christoffer is now travelling, as he usually does every summer.

29 June was Ingvald's and Marie's birthday. That day we went to a neighbouring church and heard a young Dean Møller, who is almost worshipped around here.

Houggaard, 10 May 1865

My dear Margarethe!

I do not like spending the morning writing letters, but I only just heard that Elise intends to write today, so I must do it at the same time.

Today I have gained a new pupil, Marie Strandenes, though only for needlework. Christine has not been here this week; I hear she has a bad leg. Otherwise, we suspect that her father intends to forbid her to come here because he is angry with Uncle about something.

Many thanks for your letter! Elisa has finally arrived here; yes, you have heard that from Helga. Poor thing, she must economise in every way, so it was understandable that she used the Drammen steamship service, as she could then reach Horten for 1 [unit omitted in printed source] instead of 1 Spd. She probably also wanted to stay in Holmestrand as long as Werner was there. You and Helga have surely had letters from him by now too. I received such a lovely farewell letter from him last Wednesday. On Saturday Elisa and I wrote to him at Norkøping, hoping the letter would find him there, where they were to stay a little while. I so wish I had a photograph of Werner like Elisa's; it is so good. If we come to Christiania, I shall have a copy made, though it will probably not turn out as well.

I hope Elisa will come to Eidskog too. [Sch...] could hardly object if it involves no extra expense for them. I may accompany her to Christiania in June, and it would be lovely if I could stay until Elisa came back down, so that I could say goodbye to her at the quay. I do not know when the steamship on Øieren will be ready, but gentlemen from Eidsberg often come here and I shall ask them about it. I think it connects with the railway at Strømmen; it presumably comes this way in the afternoon, as it goes to and from town every day. As soon as I find out I shall give you proper information, you may be sure of that. If only you and Helga could travel that way this summer, I should have a long, happy summer! It began when Elisa arrived; if I then go to Christiania and later have you here, I must be satisfied even if Ingvald does not come. That is what he is now considering, to make the best possible use of the remaining time before his examination. Everyone else says he will come, but I shall certainly not encourage him to do so; rather the opposite. Do you not think that reasonable, my Margarethen? Mrs Otterbech has been out a little now and stays up all day, thank God. What did you receive from Birkrem? You must tell me.

(Some of the letter has been cut into pieces here.)

I now have a large framed portrait of Ingvald, which I am very fond of, although it has the great fault that he is not looking at the viewer. Christian has just come over; I am going to beat an egg-and-sugar mixture for him. He will soon go into town to study again; if only he can stand it. An acquaintance of Ingvald's, a junior doctor at Rikshospitalet, recently said that there was nothing dangerous wrong with C.'s heart, but he must lead a very healthy life to avoid consumption. Aunt is still well and sends her greetings, as does Christian.

Farewell, then, my Margarethen. Greet Helga, and may you both be well.

Your Anna

Tuesday evening, 26 March 1867

My own dear Margarethe!

It is only at half past nine this evening that I get to write; our guests have just left. Uncle de S., Grundt and Miss Ofstad have been here today, the last two in connection with an inquiry.

Many thanks for your last dear letter, which made me very happy. Well, all anxiety about Finmarken has now been laid to rest for the time being, my Margarethen. I have heard several people express surprise that Ingvald did not get the post, but we are not very sorry about it. With God's help, I hope we can live well on what Ingvald receives as a personal curate. As far as I know, it is not yet decided where he will be, but he expects a letter from Heyerdahl any day. Once it is settled, he will come out here and stay a while. Konow will probably not leave Aurdal until May. Heyerdahl told Ingvald that his father had helped him there both with money and in kind, but rich people have so many needs. Heyerdahl thought Ing. could count on 40 Spd. in offerings, which will help alongside the 300 Spd.

Thank you for praying for me, dear Margarethe; I need it so much. As soon as our wedding can be fixed, you shall know immediately, even if I do not owe you a letter then. I knew that Solborg had a son last autumn, but not that Louise is engaged. I saw Carl Gjør a couple of years ago; he is handsome, but small and slender.

The rose you gave me is flourishing splendidly, and my other flowers also attract several people's attention.

Ugh, how tiresome Mrs S. must be! Poor Helga, she surely has quite a lot to put up with there. I am so glad she has Edmund to comfort her.

Yes, a sewing machine would be useful now, but I shall not even mention it to Uncle, as he is always complaining about his great expenses. Yet he does not economise when there is something he wants. For example, he has now raised a clerk's [half-yearly?] salary from 100 to 200 Spd. to keep him, as he could otherwise have obtained a better position, and Uncle would find it difficult to get a new man who suited him. He has no desire at all to give up the office, however much unpleasantness it often causes him, so he must earn well from it. Peder Schie, a farmer here, is meanwhile expanding his work as a debt collector, and it greatly annoys Uncle that those earnings are slipping away from him.

Mama is still well, thank God; she is so cheerful and capable. Grundt said today that Doctor Koht believes he cannot live long and is afraid of dying suddenly, as he has a

heart condition. That would truly be sad for many people. Pastor Kiær's father died recently; they received word by telegram on Saturday and did not know he was ill. It is very hard for them, poor souls. Kiær has gone there; Sima remains here with her little boy, who looks pale and weak. They are probably much too cautious with him. I had better go to bed now and write a little more tomorrow.

Wednesday morning. I received a letter from Mrs Otterbech by messenger today and learned from it that Heyerdahl has been appointed to Ringsaker. It is therefore probably unlikely that Ingvald will join him now, as there has been talk of establishing a parish curacy there, and Wille is the obvious choice for it, Mr Syversen says. Ingvald will probably now approach Pastor Hall in Ringebo, where he has also been offered a curacy, though perhaps Hall has already found someone else. God will surely give Ingvald something too, when His time comes. If only we stood in the right relationship to Him as His children!

Mother also sent me other news which deeply moved me: Pastor Müller in Stokke has lost his wife, Clara Landstad, in childbirth. I wonder how he is bearing it; he is the most wonderful preacher I have heard. Perhaps he too will soon be allowed to die, as he is said to be so weakened by overwork. Last summer he was not permitted to work; first he was at Grefsen, and afterwards with his parents in Grue for a while. The child is said to be alive and well.

Mrs Otterbech is so much stronger now that she walked into town last week. The doctor is determined that she should spend this summer in the country too, but she does not think she can afford it unless she can let her flat in town for the summer months.

I have now had my confirmation shawl dyed black and think it looks very respectable. I can easily wear it in town once I have a somewhat more lively hat.

Of course I cannot know either when Ingvald will come or how long he will stay here, but I have been wondering whether I might be able to accompany him if he leaves here in May, and then visit you as well while I am in town.

It began raining here yesterday, so the winter travelling conditions will probably disappear now. Mama feels less well in such weather.

God grant that we soon hear something of Werner. I am almost afraid he may be ill, since he does not even write.

Last night I read "The Two Towers", which I had not read before, though I know the family from "Waldemar the Great and His Men".

Mama sends you greetings, my Margarethen! Farewell, then; may God look graciously upon us all for Jesus' sake! Thank God that we brothers and sisters love one another so much!

Your Anna

A sample of my wool-and-cotton dress fabric, with which I am very pleased.

2. A pastor's wife, 1867 - 1870



Anna (late 1860s)

Tromsø, 24 September 1867

My dear Margarethe!

I must write a little to one of you from here as well, otherwise it will be so long before you hear about us. We arrived here on the 18th as planned. It was a terribly tedious steamship journey, although the weather was so favourable that there was scarcely any seasickness. But the timetable was so [spacious?] that we often reached our destination for the day in the morning, and the ladies' cabin was so cramped that one could hardly breathe there in the mornings. From Throndhjem we travelled with two families from here, Dr Nissen's and the merchant Pettersen's, who were very kind to us. Still, it constantly troubles me to be among strangers for so long. Tonight we are to board the same steamship again, now returned from Hammerfest, and travel to Ibestad, where we arrive tomorrow afternoon. Ingvald is to officiate there until the middle of November; then he is to go to [Lenvik?] and must be prepared to serve at the winter fishery, the Bishop said.

Ibestad is one of the best places up here. It is beautiful, there are several families, and it is easy to obtain meat and borrow what one needs. In Lenvik, by contrast, [wording unclear] it is half a Norwegian mile by sea to the nearest people, apart from a tenant farmer. We went ashore at Ibestad on our way here and met members of three families, so we are already somewhat acquainted there. It is a large congregation, and I am quite afraid that Ingvald will not be able to take on all the work awaiting him. He will also have confirmation candidates, whom they teach here every day for six weeks; during that time they lodge around the parsonage. How will he then find enough time for his sermons and addresses before confession? We have been out a great deal here in town, besides paying calls: one evening at the Pettersens', an evening party at Headmaster Knap's, and Sunday evening at the Bishop's, where there were only a few people and it was very pleasant. Last night we visited Dean Jensen's family, who live a little outside town, but the journey home was dreadful, with storm, clay, darkness and mud.

I do not know how I shall fare in winter when I already feel so cold now. It snows here every day, and the snow remains on the mountains. We have also received visitors here: today the Bishop's family and the Director of Schools, and one day the cathedral dean. One day we also went ashore at Vivelstad. Later, at Tjølø, I sent greetings to Adelaide with a Miss Gregers, who was going there as a teacher. The next morning we passed Tjølø again, though the parsonage could not be seen; the church was large and handsome. On Sunday morning we came to Bodø. We went to church and spent the rest of the day at the parsonage, where we were invited along with the Nissens, who were related to the Schønnings. The church was welcoming and the surroundings beautiful. The parsonage was old but quite cosy, and in a couple of rooms there were paintings on the walls. Along most of the coast we saw only bare

rocks. A little nearer Tromsø it began to look greener, so perhaps it is beautiful here in summer, but we must prepare for nine months of winter, they say. Dean Jensen advised Ingvald to persevere for a long time as a diocesan curate, so that he might obtain a reasonably good parish rather than accept one such as Karlsø or Loppen, of which the Bishop said that those who apply do not know what they are doing.

This year there has been a complete crop failure here. The hay is not brought in, and there is no grain, no potatoes and no berries to be had at all. Meat is cheap, but milk will probably be difficult to obtain. I have bought six bottles of cherry juice here, together with the most essential foodstuffs and household utensils. We shall probably live at the parsonage in Ibestad, but it is empty, so we shall have to borrow a couple of chairs and a table. Jensen was diocesan curate for three years; his wife accompanied him only at Ibestad. Otherwise he lived here in town and had a sister with him. I have bought a brazier here for my tin kettle, which I am so fond of, and a Britannia-metal teapot on your advice. Now I can set a pleasant tea table, but the best thing is missing: someone to drink the tea. I am thinking of visiting the south in a few years. If I travel alone and while the steamship follows its summer route, it will not be so terribly expensive. Oh, how wonderful that would be!

But now it is surely high time to pack. We receive no mail except when the steamship comes every fortnight, and in the darkest season every three weeks. Please write to me often, my Margarethen! Give my dear Helga my warmest greetings; she shall have a letter by the next mail. Ingvald sends you all his best greetings. It is so hard now to end a letter to any of my loved ones. Yet Ingvald says I am braver than he expected. Farewell, then, my dear Margarethen; may God be with us all! Tell me about Werner. I am so sad that I did not get to see him.

Your own Anna.

Talvik Parsonage, 12 January 1869

My dearly beloved Margarethe!

Imagine, I am not quite sure whether it is your turn or Helga's for a letter, but I hope I have not made a mistake. If I have, Helga must forgive me. I have so much to think about, especially now that Ingvald is soon leaving.

A thousand thanks for your dear Christmas letters! I cannot say anything about the gift yet, as the eagerly awaited box has still not arrived. I so hope it will come on the next steamship, so that Ingvald can also see its contents. I have not written to you from here before. Yes, we now have comfortable days, warm rooms and enough space and furniture, since we were allowed to

use the Bruuns' furnishings. There is a stove and water in the kitchen, and everything is well arranged. The big house will simply be so desolate when Ingvald leaves. Unfortunately, my maid has proved unreliable. She is now to sleep in the house with me while Ingvald is away, so at least she will be home at night, but she can offer none of the support I so badly need.

Two days before Christmas Bruun left with his seven little ones, Miss Holmboe and a maid. We have not heard from him yet; I miss him very much. We moved up here the same day and had a much cosier Christmas Eve than you probably imagined, my Margarethen, since you pictured us in the old house. One of Bruun's maids stayed until after New Year. When the bells rang in the holiday, we first sang and read; then we had a Christmas table with a [moderator?] lamp and two candles, wine, cake, nuts and presents. I gave Ingvald fabric for a waistcoat. Madame Juul gave us both white gloves and Jens a lovely bright-yellow woollen scarf with black borders. We gave Jens a fur garment and a sponge, and Madame Huhr gave him stockings and socks. Our maid received a scarf, and Bruun a sewing box with two reels. Earlier we had received from [M.r?] the book "[Become?] Holy" by Nitsch. Jens recently received a candlestick from Miss [Alm?] which looks like silver but is glass. We have eaten rice porridge and [M...?] on the holiday evenings. "He really is handsome too," Ingvald just exclaimed as he sat looking at Jens. Yes, thank God, he is making great and delightful progress.

No, I certainly do not take your remarks about babies amiss, dearest Margarethe; I thank you very much for being so concerned for me. I now have a book, "On the Care of Infants", from which to gather wisdom, and its advice is almost the opposite of Mrs E.'s cautiousness. My dear, one does not usually wrap a child as old as Jens, or even younger, in a blanket or shawl, and I think it is quite wrong to [word missing] the poor little things both night and day for more than half a year. Jens would not keep his clothes on like that during the day now either, as he often kicks himself free at night. The doctor here also said that restraining children in that way was unnatural and based on prejudice, and that I could have left Jens unwrapped long before I began doing so. I started when he was three months old. Now you shall hear how he is dressed: shirt, stockings, socks, [B..], and underneath a triangular woollen cloth, like half a scarf, on [M..]'s advice; a white woollen petticoat with a woollen bodice, a bright-red and black patterned woollen petticoat without a bodice, and a jacket on weekdays. On Sundays a dress, always a bib, and only at night a cap and then wrapped up. I also take walks with him when it is calm and mild. The doctor in Tromsø recommended it, and it was remarkable how well small children tolerated the cold there. Every morning I wash Jens all over with cold water, and on Wednesday and Saturday evenings he has a lukewarm bath. None of this is my own idea; I should not dare. I had intended to wait until he is half a year old before giving him food, but I notice that he is draining my strength now.

But really, that Mrs Engelhart should be like that! I had thought quite the opposite of her; I liked her letters to you and Helga so much. You have a remarkable talent for arranging Christmas gifts, my Margarethen! Thank God, you surely made a pleasant Christmas at Matrand? But what was wrong with your hands? You have not written about that before.

Yes, dear, our days are darker than yours, but it is beginning to grow lighter again, so we leave the lamp unlit for three or four hours. It is not full daylight all that time; indeed, it is not really daylight at all while we have no sun, and it does not appear here until 10 February. Yes, it is lovely that things are moving forward again. If only you could visit us this summer, my Margarethen! You would surely enjoy a Finmark summer. One can make the journey for 30 Spd., meals included. If only I could send you 30 Spd. towards it, then [some words missing] you surely... for the food yourself.

I wonder whether Ingvald will return here from Lofoten. He is now also applying for Maalselv, and the other parishes have not yet been advertised as vacant. He is sending his application through the Dean and Bishop, and asked the Dean to return it if he thought it presumptuous of him to apply.

I look forward to having flowers indoors once I am settled; surely I should be able to have them, even from [Senæs?] Please, you and Helga, be so kind as to plant some for me this spring, which I could take north if I am fortunate enough to visit the south next year. We are to give a dinner party on Sunday for the parish clerk, the assistants, Storkro, Madame Juul, [M...?] and Miss Alm. I shall serve fish balls in curry sauce, roast hare and ptarmigan, and ["Ple... No 1"?] and wine. Ingvald was to leave on Monday, but the steamship failed to keep to its timetable this time too. I am also busy getting his clothing ready for three months.

[Unclear illness, including the word "throat"] is still widespread here, and typhoid fever is beginning to appear. I am a little anxious about illness too while Ingvald is away, but the Lord surely provides what is best for us, so I ought to be entirely comforted. Yet, sadly, I could not gladly give Jens back to Him. I must ask Him to bend my heart to His will.

We were invited to dinner at a wedding during Christmas, where the parish clerk gave his toast in improvised verse; he is so Grundtvigian and rooted in the people, this parish clerk. On New Year's Day I wore my new wool-and-cotton dress for the first time at a christening at [Sturkro's?] Ingvald and I were godparents. I also received a Christmas gift from Elisa: a red apron with white borders, I suppose crocheted from coarse yarn, but it looks so skilfully made. Perhaps it is one of the kind you have made so many of? Jens sent him his "hereditary horse", a little wooden horse which you may remember we found among the paper strips in the lamp box; Elisa received it then. She is so sweet and amusing, dear

Elisa. Ingvald and I wish you both a happy New Year. Jens is asleep; I long to hear what you thought of him. He has changed a great deal since he was six weeks old. Farewell, my Margarethen! Greetings from your Anna.

I received your letters on the morning of the second day of Christmas.

Talvik Parsonage, 12 May 1870

My own dear Margarethe!

I was already sitting up on the last mail day and thought I would write to you too, but only managed a letter to Mama. I very much wanted you not to wait too long for fuller news from here, which I know you are longing for.

Yes, praise and thanks be to God. Everything here is now as well as can be again, and I feel completely strong. I moved back in from the room off the large sitting room on Saturday, but had little strength the first few days, so it... [words missing] a little to manage the kitchen alone on Sunday, when I let Martha go to church because she had not been there for two Sundays.

Little Brother is good and healthy. He had an inflammation of the eyes from his first day, but now there is no trace of it left, and I hope his sight has not suffered. We have treated his eyes carefully according to the doctor's instructions, which we only received eight days later, because Madame Moe said there was nothing wrong. But then a messenger went to the doctor and Ingvald wrote anyway, fortunately. The doctor sent eyewash and said it was an illness that must not be neglected. Jens is very fond of his little brother, strokes and kisses him, and holds out his food to him, saying, "Bite, bite!"

We now want to have him baptised soon. Ingvald may be coming on Monday evening and will then discuss with the Dean when the christening can take place and ask them to be godparents. We want to call him Wilhelm after Father. Ingvald would prefer just one name, and I too think any others are unnecessary.

Many thanks for your letters! I read them in spare moments before Little Brother arrived and over the weekend afterwards, on the same day. Thank you for telling me all your thoughts about your future, my Margarethen! Getting everything as we wish seldom happens in this world and would probably not be good for us either. So it was, no doubt, with that teaching post in town for you. Still, I should think it would be lovely to live with a sister, and in Christiania, where there is more to refresh the mind. Franziska Aubert has such an evening-school position there and has had it for a long time, but I

remember her saying that it was sometimes arduous. For example, she had to slap children for rude and impertinent answers and send them home to wash, and so on. Such things would surely be very distasteful to you now, my Margarethen, but you would no doubt ask God for patience and surely receive it to overcome them.

I hardly think my journey will come to anything, but even if it did, I could not possibly attend Helga's wedding if it is not until late September. She surely does not know what the autumn storms up here mean if she thinks I could then travel with two small children. If the Bishop were not expected next year, perhaps it would suit better to travel then; perhaps I [words missing] would find many of my family gathered in Christiania, making it easier to visit you. My poor Mama, will she not have any of us with her this summer? For her sake I should so indescribably love to go. I hope God will show me clearly what I ought to do.

I thought so much of my Helga on 3 May; I wonder whether she will still accept my congratulations. Ingvald is pressing so hard for the mail to be sent off, and I still have a shopping list to write, so I am quite dizzy. Dinner time is approaching too. Still, I hope this letter is a little better than nothing for you. It is a hand-operated machine [words missing] that I have. It was [Haalems'?] guest who ate so much, Helga once wrote. [Mother?] wrote later that he was [words missing], but that the mother still had to leave him to teach [words missing] I felt so sorry for her about that.

I now wish the christening were safely over. I can say that I manage everything alone, so it sometimes seems rather too much. The gardening is also waiting to be done, but the air has turned cold again these last few days. On Sunday I hope to go to church.

Farewell, my dearest Margarethen! Your letters do me indescribable good; I always long for them. Give my warmest greetings to Helga and Mrs E. You can believe that I am glad and happy now; if only I could also be truly thankful! Ingvald sends you his greetings!

Your Anna.

2. Widow, 1870 - 1876



Anna (in her late thirties)

Christiania, 30 August 1870

My Margarethen!

It has weighed heavily on me that my dear sisters have not received a word from me for so long. But you will understand that time and strength have allowed no more than the most necessary writing, even though I arrived here on Sunday evening. In His grace, the Lord has strengthened and helped me on the journey too, so that the little ones came through it well. Berith accompanied us as a maid, but was not much help, faced as she was with so much that was unfamiliar.

On the evening of 17 August I left my dear Talvik and the spot on earth I love most. Dean Lied's family accompanied me to Tromsø; there we were at Headmaster Knap's on Thursday, and then arrived in Throndhjem on Tuesday. On Wednesday the journey here by road began, with good company and favourable weather. Mother and the children were in Rollag, but are expected home as soon as Mother can manage. The unexpected sorrow made her ill, poor thing. I am staying in her lodgings but spend my days with the Bruuns, who are so very kind to me. I am now getting rest such as I have not known for a long time, so perhaps God does not intend me to become ill this time, as I have constantly expected, though I have been granted the grace not to fear it. My comfort is the firm hope that Jesus carried my faithful Ingvald home, even through the terrors of death, and that I shall see him again in blessedness. I cannot now tell you everything about the illness, my dearest Margarethen!

My birthday was the worst day. That evening the terrible convulsions came so unexpectedly. That morning I had received your letter. Heartfelt thanks for it and for the necktie, whose use I know you will not mind: it was tied as a ribbon around a bouquet on Ingvald's coffin. And many thanks for the generous gifts for Jens and me; they were so beautiful and useful. How kind you are, my Margarethen! When shall I see you? I do not know whether you are still at Matrand, so I am addressing the envelope to Helga, who I hope is not thinking of postponing the wedding for my sake.

Nothing has yet been decided about my future. Mother has offered to share her home here with me, but that would hardly be possible unless she rented additional space, so I think it is out of the question for that reason. In my old home, on the other hand, I think I could make myself useful in return for my keep, and the pension would then be more than sufficient for clothes and other things. I am apparently to receive 120 Spd., but people think it will be 200 Spd. Riddervold had said that I would certainly be provided for. We had no debts now, thank God, and there will be a little left when everything has been sold. I was fortunate enough to sell the pianoforte and most of the furniture immediately for ready money.

I have had only one letter from Mama, but am now writing to her from here, so I shall probably soon hear her and Uncle's opinion; though, yes, I already know Mama's.

Dear, write a little soon. Perhaps Helga will come while I am here; I happened to hear that the camp ends on Friday. There is much more to write, but unfortunately I must write to so many people, and it taxes my strength.

Farewell, then, my dear Margarethen! You surely often think of your poor Anna.

Houggaard, November 1872

My own dear Margarethe!

May God's grace and peace truly be yours in the home and sphere of work in which I hope you will have settled by the time you receive this letter: that is my heartfelt wish for you, my dearest Margarethen! God grant that the illness in that district may now have subsided. I hope the storm and clear weather will do good. Your wish for fine weather during your last days in Vinger was probably not fulfilled. At any rate, we have had almost unbroken rain or fog for a long time, apart from these last few days. On the other hand, we have heard that Mimi had good weather throughout her journey to Thronhjem. Birgit has had letters from Bergen and Thronhjem; I shall tell you the little I have heard from those long letters. There had been heavy seas, but Mimi was not seasick and otherwise felt well too. The scabs had fallen from the sores left by the injection. She spent an afternoon in Bergen and visited the Jansens, Edmund's relatives. She saw a little of the town and found the town, the people and everything there pleasant. She travelled from Christiania to Thronhjem on "Kong Sverre". There was a pianoforte aboard, and she and a Miss Jensen had played "The Caliph" as a duet. She also travelled with a Mrs Gram from Thronhjem, who invited her to visit; she stayed there from Monday midday until Tuesday evening. Mrs Aas's relative, who was to receive her there, was unmarried, so he simply directed her to lodgings in a hotel and asked whether she wanted more money, which she did not need. He also called on her the next morning, but the visit evidently embarrassed them both because the room was not in order. From there she was to travel on "Kong Carl", on which I too have travelled with Papa in Finmark. Mimi had to change steamships once more at the beginning of [words missing] where "Helgeland" connects with the large steamships. She expected to arrive on Friday or Saturday last week, so we shall probably soon hear what impression her new home has made on her. The beauty of the place must appeal to everyone, and Mimi has always loved mountains and sea. My letters from Talvik at this time are only thirteen days old, so hers will probably take scarcely a week. Elisa apparently could not accompany her. She does not mention it, but only says that the steamship lay outside Christiansand for a few hours. Grandmama says Birgit had previously read of the value of letters; she surely understands it now, since she writes to Mimi every week. I wrote to her last week too.

I think Werner arrived in Rochefort on 16 October. The captain's name was admittedly different; from there they were to go to New York. I feel it is no use writing to him, as I have so often done so in vain. The expensive letters have been returned after a long time because he was not where they arrived.

Thank God, Grandmama is still fairly well, and so are the rest of us. Many say Wilhelm looks stronger now. Jens put a kiss in this letter for you. One day when he put his arms around my neck, he said very mischievously, "Oh, the good arms and those blue eyes." I gathered that he had picked that up from you. Otherwise, Wilhelm is better behaved. I think Nathy would blame worms for Jens's crying fits, but that would not always be deserved. He has hardly been outdoors in the rainy weather and gets bored. He has begun playing "Haarlug" with Berith, which amuses him greatly when he wins. Do you remember how much we used to play it in the old days?

The children's upbringing lies very close to my heart. May God give me what I lack for it: wisdom and love that never grows weary. Berith often puts me to hard tests, but I still hope that the good in her will prevail with God's help. She had her first school examination this week, but apparently did not know to be frightened as other children usually are. Søren now attends Birgit's school, which has eight pupils, and grades of one are now the order of the day. The opposite was the case with Mimi. But Birgit gives rather lenient marks, I could see while I taught for her when she was in town with Mimi.

Helga is probably comfortable in her new home; I have had only a few words from her. I can no longer send messages to her with the farmers, since she lives so far out of the way, so she can hardly remain my means of communication.

Christian and Aaga were married as planned on 26 September and arrived in town some time ago. Perhaps you heard from Helga that Uncle and Aunt intended to give them a Bible and a beautiful foliage plant, for which Helga had been given 8 Spd. Aunt Thea drew this information out of Mimi, then sent word asking Helga to postpone the purchase because she thought the gifts unsuitable. She suggested damask table linen, a mirror, a clock, a painting and so forth instead. What do you think? She evidently thought it a large sum. Aunt wrote that they were displeased with the delay, since the gift could then not be in the newlyweds' home when they arrived. She was now asking Helga to send her the 8 Spd., so that she could buy whatever she pleased, as they would have nothing more to do with it. We have heard nothing from them since.

You have surely heard that Grandfather has submitted his application to retire. We are all glad, as it will spare him many annoyances and unpleasant experiences, and he will still have enough to live on. I hope your journey went better than you expected; the weather here was fine on Tuesday. I very much hope that you take part in family life, my Margarethen. Even if it leaves much to be desired, it seems to me far better than constantly being alone with one's own thoughts; that is certainly not beneficial. Who is the other teacher? Perhaps you may find companionship in her if she also lives with the Bryhns. How are things with

Augusta's family now? That advertisement for an experienced governess has certainly appeared many times. It is strange that they [words missing] should find it so difficult to get someone. Elisa wrote that Miss Ellefsen, who was there before, had praised them highly, but it was probably just as well you did not go there.

I do hope you brought some flowers with you, dear Margarethe, as there is companionship in them. Will your myrtles follow in the spring? I think mine is dying completely now; it is so ugly and covered in pests. Your double pelargonium is now in bud. I have put it, the palm and the foliage plants down here in the sitting room so that they will do better. We have a single rose with many flowers now, and a flowering fuchsia and heliotrope. The palm is doing well, as are my other flowers after the shock Mimi gave them by overturning the flower table in the hall, on which most of mine unfortunately stood after being outside in the rain. It looked dreadful, Inger said; some even landed right inside the sitting room. I was at Vestby. Mimi had to climb up to reach her gloves and pressed too hard on one side of the table. She was very upset, but that is the kind of sorrow one must not take too much to heart.

It was lovely to hear of Nina's engagement. It does one good to hear of a sailor being such a man that a cultivated lady wants him as her husband. He is surely not the son of the pastor in Hedrum?

The municipality here has allocated a salary for a needlework teacher, who is also to teach straw-plaiting and basket-making. I am very pleased about it for Berith's sake. What kind of black dress did you buy? I am thinking of an all-wool one for Christmas, as I find wool-blend dresses become shabby so quickly. But the all-wool ones are so expensive that one must think carefully for that reason.

I recently received the first letter from Hanna Lied at Strand. They are pleased with the change, find the place beautiful, and are only one Norwegian mile by steamship from Stavanger, where they have old acquaintances for company. I also recently had letters from Talvik and a photograph of the man who was so kind in helping me during the illness. Laura Strømme often visits the grave. She writes so often: we look downwards, but would find more comfort in the opposite direction. She is surely right, but unfortunately it is so human to cling to earthly things.

I have now sewn the bookmark for Uncle Bruun from your pattern. I had not got far before discovering that the silk was too coarse; it would have been impossible with that, so I wrote for finer silk. But long before it arrived I discovered that, surprisingly enough, silk as fine as hair was available at Broen. The cloudy days were bad for that work, and I was heartily glad when it was

finished. Everyone thought it pretty, and Mrs Riis, Mother's friend, considered it a work of art. But she probably could not see well. It might have been one; I could see perfectly well that mine was not, but could not put it right. Talette and Marie had each received 36 confirmation presents, many substantial things; Talette received a gold watch and chain. They had spent a pleasant day together at the Bruuns', with not many guests in the evening. The Kjønigs and Julie were with them.

Well, I must say farewell, my dear Margarethen! May God let me hear good news from you soon. Grandmama sends her kindest greetings.

Your Anna.

Hougaard, 22 October 1876

My dear Margarethen!

Today I shall really try to write you a proper letter. It has been a busy time lately, as you can understand, but the worst is now over. The funeral was on Friday. Christian and Melbye came out for it, which was very comforting. The coffin stood in the north sitting room, where everything had been cleared away and the room decorated with heavy curtains and wreaths. The doors outside were decorated too, with an avenue of shrubs and spruce branches strewn all the way down to the gate. The same decorations were arranged up by the church. Inside the church there was only a covering over the stands, with wreaths around them. Hansen gave the address there, as he felt too much of a stranger to speak in the house. Birgit and I did not accompany them to church this time. Those who did were served broth and chocolate with white bread, and then a full dessert afterwards. The family returned for dinner and stayed for a while into the afternoon.

Peter leaves again tomorrow, and we shall then see how things will be for Birgit, poor thing. She is keeping the same bedroom, since the north side is colder. She can have plenty of work, of course, and school will begin again soon.

I am letting Jens remain with Miss Bjørnevall until Christmas, and Wilhelm with me; then both can begin with Birgit after New Year. Jens has behaved better at school since he acquired companions there. At least I have heard nothing since, and I think he would tell me if he had been naughty. He gets exceptionally good marks. My heartfelt thanks for what you wrote about that matter; it did me such good to hear your opinion. You must not think that I write to others about it. They do not know about it at the parsonage either, I believe. Miss

Bjørnvall is probably not one to tell such things. She is very fond of Jens and is willing to take the blame herself if she did not know how to establish respect from the beginning.

Monday. I was interrupted here yesterday by Birgit and Peter's arrival, and meanwhile received your latest letter this morning, for which many thanks. No, that misfortune with Miss Ramstad surpasses all the Feirings' mishaps of that kind. It is no joke for them either to throw away 40 Spd. When I began reading your account, I thought it had turned out that she was in the same condition as Helga. What sort of maid have they found to replace her? I have had a letter from Edmund, but he wrote only about Helga and Finn. I only wish she would remain in bed, as Professor Hjort advised. Edmund wrote that she found it troublesome to lie down when she felt well, but they agreed that she should stay in bed until the midwife came and gave her opinion. Had she not been lying down during the attacks she has had, it might all have been over again already. Yes, poor Helga, she too has much to contend with. If only the expected woman would come and prove capable and agreeable, then I believe that with God's help it will pass safely, whether she comes prematurely or at the proper time.

Yes, I have now heard from Elisa too. She is very busy and anxious about falling behind, but things apparently go well for her. The last letter from Mimi to Birgit sounded better, she said. Mimi recently wrote to me that she had spent 6 Spd. on medicine this autumn and was glad she had done what she could for her health, though she had no faith in any improvement. She had visited the Fegths at Alstadhoug Parsonage and been warmly received, as Mrs Fegth had known Mother; later she also visited Mo Parsonage. They are not afraid of neglecting school up there. I have not yet heard from Werner in Antwerpen.

Did I tell you about the confirmation? It was pleasant both in church and at home that day. Berit was able to be reasonably well in church, thank God; otherwise she suffers daily with her chest. It is probably chlorosis. The doctor gave her pills, but did not promise that the first box would make her well. She was also to have a mustard plaster once a week and follow a diet; she cannot bear to have her dresses fastened. In the evening she received several presents: an old little gold brooch from Mrs Otterbech, a bottle of eau de Cologne from Trine, an embroidered [Hips?] from Julie, a linen collar from Mimi, a Testament from Grandmama, a hymnbook from the boys, and a black silk scarf with fringes from me. The confirmation addresses are the only sermons I have yet heard from Pastor Hansen, and I liked them; they were on Matthew 7:13-14 and 1 John 2:28. The next day the Hansens visited us. His wife seems sensible and agreeable. We are to visit them soon. This afternoon we intend going to the Strandenæs family to congratulate them about Johan.

Next Sunday there will be Communion here for the confirmation candidates. Berit ate indoors with us on her confirmation day and was quite overcome from time to time, poor thing. I asked whether she missed her mother; she said no, and that she was sure I loved her.

I feel so sorry for the poor Bishop's family, and especially Mrs Kobro, who was alone there on Karlsø with her two small children for three days after the terrible news of her husband's drowning, before the family in Tromsø could reach her. May the Lord help them and all who grieve; there are enough of them in this world. It was his last official journey that year. He was said to have always been so afraid of the sea.

There is also a hole on the underside of the sewing-machine plate which you may not have noticed. Otherwise I oil wherever anything moves and wipe away the oil after the machine has run a little. Your [Elverumsten?] was pleasant, Margarethe. That Doctor Møller, whose daughter is from Rakkestad, lives at Hægdehougen, I think. Christen had an excuse for not coming to the funeral: he and Borghild recently drove [words missing] and Christian injured a leg, so he must lie down. He probably would not have come otherwise either. Christiane's little girl is called Aaga; she was baptised [Lagesine?]. They live at Hægdehougen now. Wilhelm remarked of Christian, "He talked so much about my little daughter." So it is some of the doctor's children you play with; perhaps you almost get paid for it? You are very welcome to borrow 1 Spd., but will that help you? I hardly dare send it without writing it on the envelope. Yes, you ought not to sleep alone when there are so many thieves around you. Could not a boy or one of the sons sleep in the schoolroom? No, I cannot forget that Miss Ramstad. And they do not miss her either; she must [soon?] have changed, for at first she was so capable. What strange people one meets, after all.

There is so much talking around me that I must finish. I recently bought three bulbs in Sarpsborg and, on the gardener's advice, planted them in small [word missing] and buried them in the garden with some evergreen branches over them. They were to remain there for five or six weeks. What do you think of that? It was quite cold last night. Farewell, then, my dearest Margarethen! God be with you!

Your Anna.

Sample: skirt fabric, for Berit and me. Dear, please send me instructions for a knitted cap like the one you knitted this summer.

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From Margarethe's mother to her daughter (1800s)

Since E Gulli has [unclear character] been so kind as to offer to enclose a little letter from me in hers, I wish to thank you heartily, my dear Margarethe, for your last welcome letter. I was delighted to see from it that you were well and had been given a patch in the garden, which I imagine you are pleased with.

Anne came here on Friday the 13th and had decided to stay for at least eight days, after which she was to write to Otterbech asking him to fetch her [words missing]. On Monday at midday he came [words missing] from home, and there was nothing for it but for her to accompany him the following day. I liked him very much, and we had a pleasant time together. In the evening we all went for a long walk, and [word missing] about you, wishing you were with us, as I well remember how much you enjoyed our outings together. We gathered quite a few flowers. Werner drove a long way with them.

I had a long letter from Helga, with an address. She hopes to come here for a short visit this summer if she can leave [word missing]. She said she had been invited to his parents, and I told her she should certainly let nothing prevent her, so that they would have no cause to complain about her. But, as far as I am concerned, she may do as she wishes.

Anna had also had a rather lively letter from Lisa, who praises her aunt so much for all her kindness to her while she was ill.

In your next letter you will surely tell me whether or not you intend to travel this summer. Have you quite decided not to visit your dear ones in Drangedal? But you know that also costs a great deal. Can you not have a dress sewn in Kongsvinger? If you wish to buy fabric, you can safely ask Aunt Camilla; she will buy whatever you want, if only you can get a message to her. If Helga comes, I shall let you [words missing] it so that you could obtain the same; that would be [words missing] for both of you.

Werner is also to [word missing] be allowed to come [word missing] to Hougggaard and to Grundt, so you can imagine how happy he is. Anna said that now he is not home, she cannot say anything about Mimi, so she must accept being [word missing] with me. My pleasures will consist of sewing [incomplete word] for other people, which is hardly promising. But we must thank God for everything and pray that we may be content with what He sends us.

Farewell, then, my dear M., and receive loving greetings from everyone here, together with your devoted

Mother, M. De Seue.

From Aunt Krefting (partly illegible)

Hougaard 30.08.1856

My dearest Margarethen!

(Page 1): A thousand [thanks? for?] your lovely letter. I was so glad to hear from you so soon and to receive such a long and complete letter; you can believe I have read it many times. And many thanks for your postcard. I [think?] [words missing?] it was good. You [sound?] somewhat [sad?], but that does not surprise me in the least when I know [words missing] you [words missing] it [words missing] you were in Björn. It was [word missing] unscrupulous of Aunt to behave [words missing], and it pains me that [words missing] your celebration and [words missing], since I know so well that it is only [envy?] [words missing], that Anna and [words missing] far too much good [words missing], [word missing] poor so good [words missing], and I [word missing].

(Page 2): [missing] [explain?] [the letter's?] [missing] oneself [missing] insignificant

From Elisa to Margarethe

Houggaard, 10 May 1865

My dear Margarethe!

Now I finally get to write to you and thank you so much for both your letters. I am deeply sorry and terribly distressed that you have waited so long for a letter from me. But it is not my fault, as I received both your letters only when I arrived here last Tuesday. So you see I am excused.

First I must ask you to thank the Fearnleys most warmly for being so kind and willing to have me. You can imagine how terribly I long to see you, my dear Margarethe, and Helga, and I do hope to come up there too, though it is far from certain. Had I not received five daler from Kaja, I could never have considered it, as I would never mention it to Uncle. But there are several little things I need for the journey, and the money runs away like sand. I ought to have another dress too, but that is out of the question. Still, one can manage if one is respectable, even if somewhat plainly dressed. So please thank them very warmly. As soon as it is decided, you shall receive fuller information. It was very kind of them to offer to fetch me at Kongsvinger too. Oh, how lovely it would be, my Margarethen!

I am having such a lovely time here, you can believe. How wonderful it is to be with one's siblings! Every morning Anna and I go for a walk before we eat. We are

with the Westby family almost every day; either we are there or Kaja or Christian is over here. Christian will probably leave this week, I think.

I had a very pleasant time in Holmestrand. Werner and Mimi seemed much changed to me. Mimi is very peculiar, but Werner is sweet, so sweet, I thought. God preserve him, the dear boy. He left a couple of days before I did. It was such a fine, large ship he was on. They were carrying cargo to the Baltic and were to go from there to England. The Stangs were so fond of Werner, and Stang said he hoped Werner would become a good young man. We all hope so; we must pray diligently for him.

On Sunday Anna and I went to church, and in the afternoon everyone from Westby and Madame Stranden was here. Yesterday we also had visitors: the parish clerk with his wife and daughter, and Kaja.

I will gladly pick flowers for you, dear Margarethe, but I cannot press them neatly, as I have no practice at it. The fields are still quite yellow here, so there are no wildflowers yet, but I shall do my best. Yes, I did read about wildflowers in the newspapers, but I remember nothing of it; I only know I thought of you as I read.

I was so frightened when I saw in the newspapers that Lunderbye had defaulted, but I have heard from Anna that it may not be so serious. Yes, God grant it.

This is terribly written, but Anna and I are sitting on opposite sides of a little table, so I am very uncomfortable. Please excuse it. Anna has probably told you about her new pupil Marie Strandnes. She is here for the first time today. This must be enough for now, dear Margarethe. Perhaps you will write to me soon. Fare very well, and receive the warmest greetings from

Your devoted Elisa

From Wilhelmine to Margarethe

Houggaard, 01 August 1866

Dear Margarethe!

Many thanks for your letter. I was glad to hear from you again so soon, and as Anna is writing to you today, I should also like to write a little at the same time.

The weather is lovely during the day; in the mornings we go for walks. Aunt and I sometimes go together, but today I went alone. A new bathhouse has been built down by the works,

and I have bathed there once, but I do not like it very much; it is only a shower bath. In Holmestrand I bathed every day towards the end of my stay, and it was so lovely.

Charlotte Nysom gave me tickets; was that not kind of her? Before I left, I bought a couple of useful things: an umbrella and a travelling bag. I bought the bag with the money Miss Holst gave me for doing arithmetic with Emilie. Do you not think those were two good purchases, dear Margarethe? I have also received a fine hat, which I am very fond of.

We have been out catching crayfish once. It was great fun; we caught 308. We were up by Dørje Bridge, as usual. At least I have never gone anywhere else, but I think it is so beautiful there.

We have also been to Tøften. It was a Sunday, and in the morning we all went to Digernæs Church, which I think is very beautiful; the drive was lovely too, as you can imagine. It was very pleasant at Tøften. The Volls are there, but Christine Smith is not home; I think she will return in about a fortnight. We went in to greet old Mrs Smith, who is not quite well. I do not really know when I shall move to the Smiths', because after the Volls leave, other visitors will probably come.

The two little girls I am to teach cannot read, and Anna thinks the boys' reading is probably poor too.

You received quite a lot for your birthday, dear Margarethe, which was lovely. I am often at Vestby. The summerhouse up in the big tree has been put in order, so it is very pleasant to sit there. The hop arbour here in the garden is also in beautiful order.

I think we ought to hear something from Werner soon.

Have you had a letter from Miss Holst? She said she would try to get it written. Now I must write a little to Helga too. Farewell, then, and receive kind greetings from your

Wilhelmine de Seue

From Wilhelmine to Margarethe (from sister Wilhelmine)

Tøften, 5 November 1866

Dear Margarethe!

Thank you for your letter. I was at Houggaard when the mail came from Vestby, so I received it immediately. Anna said she would write to you on Wednesday, so I must begin a letter to you today if I am to finish it.

I stayed at Houggaard until today. Yesterday we went to church and afterwards to the parsonage. Birgith and Christian went to Frederikshald on Saturday and will probably return tomorrow. They were to attend a ball there on 4 November.

Mrs Smith is better now. Yesterday she came into the sitting room again for the first time, and today she is lying there on the sofa too. There have been many visitors lately, as all her children have been here to see her.

I do not think my eyes are much better, but at least they are no worse. I shall probably not finish my bloomers by Christmas; it is already so dark. I would like you to send me the skirt-border pattern you mentioned. When the days are lighter and longer, I shall be able to see to sew it. On Wednesday we had a letter from Elisa. She was well. If only we could soon hear something from Werner; I have not yet seen that they have sailed from Constantinopel. Aunt and Anna have now been in Christiania. Anna bought me a new cloak, which I think very pretty. It costs 8½ Spd., and she also bought dress fabric which is pretty too. You can believe how fond I am of my cloak; I have never had a really pretty one before. I have not been at Vestby since last Saturday. They then had visitors from Frederikshald: Mrs Stine Askehoug and her son.

It will not be long before you go to the wedding either, and you will surely enjoy yourself. We shall probably hear nothing from you until all that celebration is over. Have you many flowers now, dear Margrethe? I truly wish I could visit you in your room sometime; you must have it cosy there! Oh, if only I were with you tonight. I feel I would have so much to talk to you about, but it is so different when one writes.

My room at Tøften is not particularly pleasant: small and dark, and the worst thing is that it is almost always smoky, which surely cannot be very healthy for the eyes. It is somewhat lighter now, which is a good thing, as four large panes have been fitted instead of the small ones that were there before. While the work was being done, Christine and I slept downstairs in the room off the large sitting room.

So you like Lampe too. Yes, I certainly do, and I think Elisa does as well; she saw him in Holmestrand last year. I wish I could hear him speak once again. Madame Hansen at Brække has now died of pneumonia. Do you remember when we were there last year? I think school is going fairly well; they are quite good. This past week they have known their [lessons?] very well, so if they continue like that, teaching them is a real pleasure. Today both Marie and Lina are ill and in bed. But now I must finish, as I have to write to Helga too. Farewell, then, and receive loving greetings from your devoted Wilhelmine de Seue.

From Wilhelmine to Margarethe

Tøften, 19 May 1867

Dear Margarethe!

You must not be angry with me for not having written sooner. The last time Anna wrote, I was to enclose something with her letter, but did not remember until it was too late. I did think of writing to you afterwards, but truly I did not have so much as four skilling. Anna scolded me for not writing, but I would not tell her the reason. Thank you for your letter, dear Margarethe; it is certainly not too soon to answer it now. If only I could manage a long letter to you too! But I feel I have nothing to write about. I cannot understand why. When I write to Caroline Bøe or Miss Jansen, I always have something to say. Yet I should surely be more intimate with my sisters than with them; I am so fond of you all. Are you fond of me, Margarethe? Do not be angry because I joke about it. I feel so useless and so far beneath everyone else that no one can love me. If only I were with you now, it would be so good. It is good that I have Houggård to go to, but I am never quite right for Anna. It will probably not be long until her wedding either, and it will be lovely for us all to gather then. Can you not suggest something I could give her, dear Margarethe? I have so little skill at making anything pretty, and cannot afford to buy anything expensive. I am knitting points for a bedspread for her now. If only I were a little better at sewing, I could help her; she has so much to finish. It is very good that she is not going to Finmarken.

We have been waiting so eagerly to see Werner here, but we neither hear nor see anything of him.

Now I am going to begin keeping flowers. I shall buy some flowerpots and obtain some cuttings. I have a calla in my room which belongs to Marie and which I am looking after for her. There is quite a lot of sunshine here, so I think it will do well. My hyacinth has finished flowering now too; it was such a lovely pale pink. My sincere thanks for it, dear Margarethe. The crocus has not flowered yet, but I hope it soon will.

On Saturday I was at Vestby and saw a portrait of Peter which they had recently received. It is a very good likeness.

School is still going well. The little boys and Marie read tolerably well now, if only they would learn their lessons better.

Madame Smith is so pleased that they are making progress, but I do not feel I notice much of it. Mrs Smith and Madame Smith ask me to greet you. Finally, receive the most loving greetings from your devoted

Wilhelmine de Seue.

From Invalid Mathias to Margarethe (from brother-in-law Ingvald Mathias Otterbech)

Talvik, 27 April 1870

Dear Margrethe!

Anna had a son yesterday at midday. Today both are doing quite well. She was able to read your letter yesterday. May God, who has been so good to us, also grant that you may soon safely emerge from your worries about the future!

Warm greetings,

Your I. M. Otterbech

From Mimi to Margarethe

Tøften, 22 May 1872

My own dear Margarethe!

A thousand thanks for your last dear letter. As always, I was happy to hear from you this time too. I ought to have answered long ago. Last Friday I was at Houggård, and we spoke about it then, but I preferred to wait. There was some knitting I was determined to finish, and I always prefer writing here at home with my own things; it goes best that way. Anna did not mind waiting either. I thought she had written on Tuesday, but only today did the son bring a letter for me to enclose in mine. Now I am getting down to writing, as I have plenty of time during the midday break.

Yes, I received the letter in which you tell me about your Christmas. It arrived on the very day I sent you my first letter of this year. My dear Margarethe, how glad I am that you have copied out some of Lampe's sermons, and how I look forward to reading them! I wonder whether any are among those he gave in Holmestrand. I am sure I would recognise them, but perhaps you have sermons from later years.

My own dear Margarethe, how sorry I am that you are so unhappy. I can well understand how painful it is for you, as I think my situation is much the same. Here too, this

world's possessions are valued most highly, lately almost more than before, I think. Mrs Smith seems to feel the same, for the other day she told me there was no difficulty now: they had acquired the king for an uncle. Oh, I grow so tired of hearing about balls, ball gowns, parties and all such things that I scarcely know what to do; yet at times I almost find it comical.

If only Kristine were away! She encourages them, and everything she does is right. Marie is also to be confirmed this year, although she could well need years more schooling. Now she is to be fitted out with clothes and made still vainer than she already is. It is quite distressing to have to see and understand how they are spoiling her and be unable to prevent it. But I comfort myself that God sees it too, and will find a remedy when His time comes. I can only do what I can and leave the rest to Him. You must do the same, dearest Margarethe; perhaps then you too will be more content. It is God who has brought you into that house, and when you work in His name, your work will not be wasted, though it may seem so to us. I firmly believe that, and it is my comfort. The good things the children learn at school may only enter their memory now, but one day their power will make itself felt in both heart and deed. Do you not think so too?

Apart from K., everyone here is very kind to me, and Anna is so pleasant towards me now too, so I am more content than before.

Unfortunately our trip to Kristiania at Easter will not happen now. I would so much have liked to talk to Voss, but must rely on Birgit for the time being. I am so glad to have Birgit; she can make up for much unpleasantness. I am also glad to be teaching English to Hansine and Nils, so I earn a little more. [Løren] is income too. This year I shall finally get a raincoat as well. Have I not much to be glad about? Oh, if only I could be as grateful as I ought to be!

If Werner could then pass his examination, I should have one more thing to be glad about. I am busy knitting for him now. It is not very much, but I would like it finished by Easter. How lovely it is to know that his clothes are being properly put in order. Will you go to Matrand at Easter, dear Margarethe? I am happy at the thought that you may have a pleasant time then.

Old Mrs Smith sends you her warmest greetings. Imagine, last week she first spent a day at Vestby, and later a day at Bergenhus and Rakkestad.

I have now had my cloak altered, and it is very pretty. Have you roses now? Mine have not come that far yet.

This must be enough, dearest Margarethe. Farewell! A happy Easter is wished to you by your devoted sister

Mimi

From Werner to Margarethe

Houggaard, 26 September 1876

Dear Margarethe!

Anna is writing to you today, and I too will not fail to send a few lines and thank you for the letter I received from you in Calais, which told me how you spent your holiday. I left "Solphide" in Calais and came home on the barque "Asynja", Captain Cappelen, in order, as you have probably heard, to make a long voyage on a new ship belonging to Richon Peterson at Moss. I have now been there about it and learned that it is very uncertain whether I can join after all. A letter I wrote to Peterson from Kotka did not arrive, and as a result they thought I was no longer interested and hired someone else. As you see, this upsets the plan, but perhaps it can be settled another way. I expect a letter from the shipowner any day. In any event I am now making a voyage to Antwerpen on "Asynja" and returning here.

You probably know how things are here, or will at least learn from Anna's letter. I shall only add that there is a tremendous commotion today, as they expect the new pastor and his family to visit. I met them at Sten's at Vestby today while I was there on an errand, and reported this when I got home. Good heavens, what an effect it had! There was running to and fro, in and out, up and down, to the cellar, clothes room, sitting room and kitchen such as you have probably never seen. That was at midday, and now it is almost three o'clock without their having appeared.

I shall probably leave for the ship tomorrow, so you must be content with this, dear Margarethe. Farewell, and think from time to time of your devoted brother.

Werner de Seue.

VII Their children

Of Ingvald Mathias Otterbech & Anna Louise de Seue

Jens Otterbech
Wilhelm Otterbech



1. Jens (18.08.1868 - 16.12.1921)

Their two children, Jens and Wilhelm, were both born in Talvik, Porsanger Municipality. After only two years as parish priest there, their father died of typhus contracted during a visit to a sick person. In the autumn of 1870, their widowed mother Anna took the two boys back to the farm Houggaard in Rakkestad. For several years she lived there with her aunt Karen, who was married to the district sheriff Krefting. The two boys' paths through life would prove both eventful and different. The next two subsections are therefore somewhat longer than they otherwise would have been. But I consider this absolutely necessary for a better understanding of the whole story. In any case, it is certainly not boring to accompany the two boys for a while on their journeys through life.



Jens at about 2-3 years old



Jens at about 16 years old

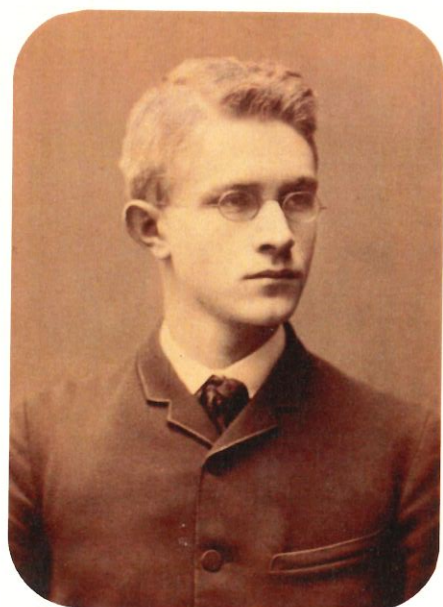
From the many letters Anna Louise wrote here, it may perhaps seem that Jens became something of a favourite child. But of course we know nothing about how this developed later. Nor do we know whether anything in this may subsequently have influenced the two boys' choices of paths in life.

Their childhood in the rural surroundings of the district sheriff's farm in Rakkestad naturally left a strong mark on both Jens and Wilhelm. At that time, further schooling was not possible on the basis of elementary school alone, without additional private tuition. They received this from their aunt on a neighbouring farm.

At the age of 12, Jens was admitted

to a middle school in Christiania. At first he lived with his paternal grandmother Thalette in St. Hallvardsgate in Gamlebyen. The 1885 census shows, however, that he later lived at Frognerveien 65, Christiania, together with his mother, his brother, and Karen and Karl Severin Krefting.

He passed his school-leaving examination in 1886. This was followed by his degree in theology in 1891. That same year he lost both his mother and his paternal grandmother. After a year teaching at Nordstrand Higher School, he continued his university studies and in 1893 passed a university examination in Lappish, as Sámi was then called. He then spent a year as superintendent of the Vardø Fishermen's Home, and in 1894 was appointed parish pastor in Kistrand. That same year Jens married Hanna Marie Krogh from Bergen. They had six children in all; little Anna, named after her paternal grandmother, died after only 14 months. See more on this in Chapter VII below and Appendices 12–15.



The following brief account of his life is taken from the periodical "Samenes Venn", no. 16 of 25 August 1968:

"JENS OTTERBECH. Born 18 August 1868 at Talvik Parsonage. Parish pastor in Kistrand, 1894–1902. Parish pastor in Øre, 1902–1909. Third pastor in Hetland, 1907–1909. Then resident curate in the same parish until 1919, when he resigned to devote himself entirely to the Norwegian Lutheran Sámi Mission Association, which he founded in 1910. In 1899–1902 he edited the periodical "Sami Usteb" together with parish pastor Gulbrand Tandberg. After

the "Finneforbundet" had been founded, he edited the periodical "Lappernes Ven" for several years. Died 16 December 1921 and buried in Vår Frelses cemetery in Oslo."

Jens clearly wished to carry on where his father Ingvald Mathias had been forced to stop. Both his ministry and the struggle for Sámi rights were to shape his entire adult life.

At the Sámi Mission's general assembly in Kristiansund on 2 July 1960, its secretary gave a comprehensive presentation of "Pastor Jens Otterbech". I shall take the liberty of reproducing some of its passages here:

"The most distinctive traits in Otterbech's character were his integrity, straightforwardness and down-to-earth nature, his fearless courage, and his pronounced sense of justice. He could be sharp and reproachful both in the newspapers and from the pulpit. Yet, while he was sharp, his preaching was warm and centred on the essentials.

The last time he spoke in Randaberg Church, he said: 'I hope I may never speak in such a way that everyone speaks well of it, for then the salt has lost its savour. Fire into the worldly person, grace poured out over the sinner: that is Jesus' way. May that preaching always live.'



Jens at 25

In many ways he was a distinctive personality. He did not follow well-trodden paths, but found his own and walked them, even though he often walked alone. Over the years he became increasingly radical, both in his views on society and politics and in his view of the church.

In 1918, Otterbech received the most votes in the election for bishop. Minister for Church Affairs Jørgen Løvland wanted him appointed, but before the appointment Otterbech travelled to Kristiania, called on Løvland, and set out his views both on the language question among the Sámi and on the military question. He later repeated these in a letter to Løvland dated 21 June 1918.

The letter to Minister Løvland:

Mr Minister Løvland, Kristiania

Following my conversation with you, Mr Minister, I take the liberty of communicating the following concerning my position on war and military service.

The precise expression of my view is that stated in the statutes of the Danish Peace Association: 'War of every kind is contrary to the spirit of Christianity.' When I find myself unable to make any exception for 'defensive war', this is because 1) as a rule, all who wage war claim to have been attacked, and 2) even in a defensive war one aims to take the enemy's life. When a country's authorities command something contrary to God's word, the duty to obey them ceases. The consequence of this view is that I personally must refuse military service, and that I consider it a good thing when more people, moved by Christ's gospel, come to see clearly that this is the Christian's path in working for world peace.

On the other hand, I have never so much as thought of passing judgment on the work of those who support national defence, since only after many years of reflection have I myself come to understand clearly what I believe to be right according to God's word. I only expect anyone who, bound by the spirit of the gospel, clearly sees decisions by force of arms as wrong, to follow that conviction through completely.

I find it entirely understandable that it is difficult in our society to appoint a man holding views such as those expressed above as briefly as possible to a position of ecclesiastical authority. Personally,

I have considered it my duty to acquaint you, Mr Minister, with this. Stavanger, 21 June 1918. Respectfully, Jens Otterbech.



Jens at 25

Løvland had misgivings, and Otterbech was not appointed. The matter closest to his heart, however, was that Sámi young people should have a youth school of their own. He tried to get it started as early as 1911. He did not succeed then, nor did he succeed later. But from his deathbed in 1921 he sent a strong appeal to his missionary friends not to forget the cause. As a result, the Sámi youth school was named “Jens Otterbechs Minne” (In Memory of Jens Otterbech) and opened in Karasjok in the autumn of 1936. A somewhat fuller account of Jens’s life follows below.

Hans Smith: Pastor Jens Otterbech in memoriam

Trond Gabrielsen; Porsangerfolket, Porsanger yearbook 2010, pp. 66–71.

Pastor Jens Otterbech (1868–1921) was parish pastor in Porsanger, then the parish of Kistrand, from 1894 to 1902. He was last featured with a picture in Porsangerfolket last year, in the article “The inauguration of Kolvik Children’s Home in 1920”.

Otterbech had been the driving force behind the building project at the time. The pastor’s family received much attention when the 100-year-old letter by his wife, Hanna Otterbech, was opened and read in Kistrand Church on 19 May 2002, and reproduced in that year’s yearbook. The letter concerned their little daughter, Anna Otterbech, who lived to be only 14 months old (not 14 years, as stated there) before she died. Her mother’s wish was that the pastor’s wife of that time would look after Anna’s grave 100 years after the Otterbech family left Kistrand.

This year marks 89 years since her father, Pastor Jens Otterbech, died. Here I would like to highlight the obituary of Jens Otterbech that Hans Smith wrote in *Norvegia Sacra* in 1922. I myself have revised the language and supplied subheadings to make the text easier to read.

Hans Smith’s memorial account from 1922

On his mother’s side, Jens Otterbech was descended from the French Huguenots, who had been forced by persecution to flee their homeland. Old Budde at Østraat (near Sandnes), who did so much for agriculture in our forefathers’ time, was his great-uncle. His father, Ingvald Mathias Otterbech, parish pastor of Talvik in Finnmark, died quite young. During a

typhus epidemic, there was a sick man who had no one to care for him. The pastor therefore took him in and nursed him, but contracted typhus himself and died. Jens Otterbech himself gave us the outline of his life up to 1911 in the 25th-anniversary volume “Studenterne fra 1886” (The Students of 1886). He says there:

Autobiography from 1911

I was born on 18 August 1868 in Talvik in Finnmark, where my father, Ingvald Mathias Otterbech, was parish pastor. He died in 1870 and is buried in Talvik. My mother, Anna Louise, née de Seue, was a blessed mother to my brother and me. She died in Kristiania in 1891.

I took the classical school-leaving examination at Gjertsen’s School, then the Hebrew examination in 1887 [theological degree, 1891], and the Sámi examination in 1893. From 1 January 1892 to 30 June 1893, I was

a teacher at Nordstrand Middle School in Kristiania, worked for a time in the Kristiania Inner Mission, and was superintendent of the Vardø Fishermen’s Home in the spring of 1894.

Appointed parish pastor in Kistrand on 30 May 1894, I became parish pastor in Øre [Aure] on 15 February 1902, third pastor in Hetland on 7 August 1907, and resident curate there on 16 April 1909.

During this time I have been chairman of the school board, chairman of the poor-relief board, conciliation commissioner, electoral delegate (in 1900), chairman of the guardianship council, and so on.

In 1893 I travelled abroad to Germany for four months, attended lectures in Berlin and Leipzig, studied with particular care the work for the destitute in Bielefeld, Neuen-Dettelsau, Berlin and Hamburg, and observed religious instruction at secondary schools in Berlin and Dresden. During my student years I was a member of the Student Choral Society and, for part of that time, of the Student Society.



Hanna Marie Krogh



Jens & Hanna Otterbeck

For four years, together with my friend, parish pastor Gulbrand Tandberg [b. 1869], I edited the Sámi-language monthly "Sami Usteb", and I am currently editor of the periodical "Lappernes Ven", published in Stavanger. In addition, I have published a couple of sermons and a number of newspaper articles in the north and the south.

I was married in Bergen on 3 August 1894. My wife is Hanna Marie, née Krogh. She was born in Bergen on 29 April 1873. Her parents were chief clerk Jonas Anton Krogh and his wife Jakobine, née Berentsen.



*Hanna & Jens with the children (from left)
Håkon, Gunnar, Evy, Ingrid, and Werner*

Our children are Håkon, born 25 June 1895; Werner, born 23 May 1897; Anna, born 17 September 1900, died 19 November 1901; Ingrid, born 17 November 1902; Gunnar, born 4 June 1905; and Evy, born 17 June 1909.

My chief interests have concerned the life of our rural people: the language cause, forestry, farming, and temperance. The farmers among whom I have had the opportunity to live have won my deepest respect. But one special interest, which for me towers above all the others, concerns the part of Norway called Finnmark: its people, its history, and its language cause. Finnmark is making tremendous progress; it is the land of the future. And when you, my friends, celebrate your 50th anniversary, you will all know the fragrance of Finnmark's alpine rose.

As an addition to this outward outline of his life, it may be mentioned that his mother was instrumental in his religious conversion. In 1919 he resigned his pastoral office to devote himself entirely to work among the Sámi, taking over as leader of the newly established Norwegian Sámi Mission Association. He remained in this work until his death on 16 December 1921.

“He radiated energy”

Jens Otterbech was a man of integrity, straightforward and down-to-earth, little concerned with formalities, and a determined enemy of all humbug, boastfulness and self-importance. One of his friends said of him: “He could radiate energy.” He could not bear to look on at anything that was not right.

Fearlessly he tackled it, without worrying about the resistance he might meet. I [Hans Smith] was once present at a sermon in which he sharply criticised the village’s poor-relief board. He took a firm stand against disreputable cinemas. In connection with them he called mass meetings, which gave

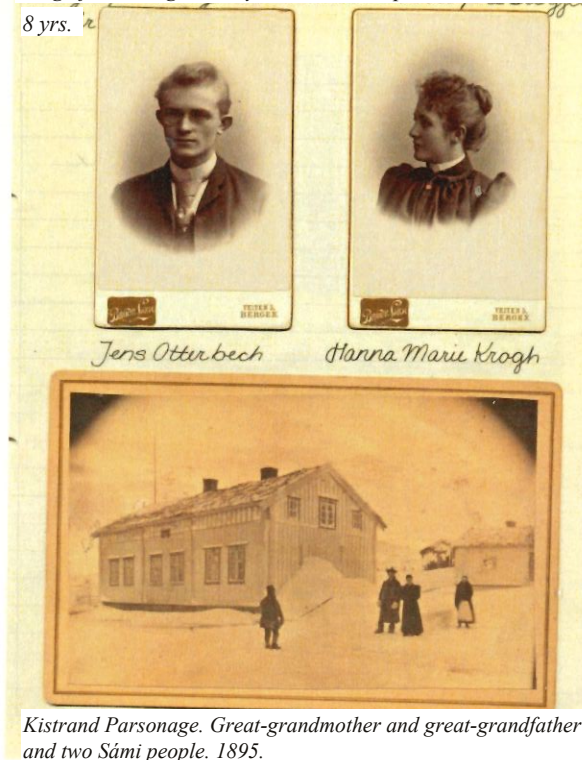
the impetus for bringing cinemas under supervision. A freethinker had announced a meeting to which he also invited the pastors. Otterbech attended. When the freethinker had launched a sharp attack on Christianity, Otterbech fearlessly answered with a moving address to the assembly. At the same time he was open-minded and kind-hearted, strongly emphasising that all God’s children must stand together.

He loved nature. He delighted in going skiing in the mountains with some of his friends. It was not uncommon for him to teach his confirmation pupils out in a birch grove instead of in the church. And he loved music. Everyone in his home was musical. He himself played the piano and sang. His wife and children played piano, flute, cello or violin.

“His positive preaching”

He was an exceedingly industrious pastor. On his bicycle or in his motorboat he was constantly on the move, either to hold meetings or to visit people in their homes. He was a much-loved speaker and generally drew a full house. He used to write out his sermons in considerable detail, but did not take them into the pulpit. He was not a systematic thinker, and his sermons may sometimes have wandered a little. But he understood how to meet people where they were. His preaching was practical, awakening and inspiring. He always spoke the truth unreservedly

*That same year he married Hanna Mari[edge cropped]
Krogh from Bergen. They served in this parish*



*Kistrand Parsonage. Great-grandmother and great-grandfather
and two Sámi people. 1895.*

and plainly, and for that reason some people took offence at him. His preaching was decidedly positive. He once said in a sermon: “Jesus has left us two things: his blood and his footsteps.” That was the main substance of his preaching. He gave his last address to a packed church at Randeberg in the middle of the haymaking season, on Philippians 3:12–21. In this address he directed an urgent warning at those who had come merely out of curiosity to hear a sermon they knew would be the last he would give in his life.

What especially gave weight to his words was that everyone knew he lived as he spoke. Someone who had lived in his house and helped there for a long time said of him: “I do not believe there are any faults in Otterbech. At any rate, I cannot see any.” One of our pupils at the mission school was once aboard a steamer with some men who, in conversation, spoke quite hostilely about Christianity. Then one of them said: “There are no true Christians in the world. The only one would have to be Otterbech.” His closest friends particularly emphasise that he was exceptional in giving to those who needed help. As chairman of the school board in Hetland, he accomplished much for the advancement of education. In particular, he worked to establish continuation schools.

Otterbech’s writings

Among his writings may be mentioned: 1) Three chapters in the book he published, “Cultural Values among Norway’s Sámi”. 2) Two chapters of “Finnmark for Christ”. 3) A number of hymns translated into Sámi and published with Norwegian and Sámi texts. 4) A number of sermons in the Luther Foundation’s book of family devotions, and various pamphlets and articles in periodicals and newspapers (also in Sámi). 5) Three chapters of “Norwegianisation in Finnmark”, a book he published with Johannes Hidle, the present secretary of the Norwegian Sámi Mission Association. 6) A number of religious tracts translated into Sámi. 7) His final literary work is a “History of the Kingdom of God” [1922], to which Pastor [Einar] Amdahl and missionary pastor Birkeli also contributed. It was published after his death and is intended for use in youth schools.

As we saw from his autobiography, he was interested in the temperance cause. He took a particularly firm stand against liquor dealers and maintained that “the freedom that gives unscrupulous people the right to corrupt their fellow human beings must be restricted. In this matter,” he said, “it is by no means the desire to drink that we chiefly have to fight. The real opposition is the dreadful financial advantage that many, many people gain from the trade in intoxicating drinks. That is the enemy. For every new drunkard’s home in Stavanger, the dividend at Tou Brewery rises a little.” And he added: “It may be that it would have been wiser for me to use ecclesiastical padding, speaking softly and cautiously. But not every boil can be cured with a poultice. Some require the knife.”

The bishopric that slipped away

And he took up the struggle for peace. The occasion for his taking it up publicly was an invitation from his friend, Director Natvig in Stavanger, to lecture on the Christian's relationship to war. This led him to study war more closely in the light of the Bible. His work for peace cost him the position of bishop in the diocese of Tromsø. In 1918 he received the most votes for this post, but because of his views on war and military service he was passed over, and Dean Johan Støren was appointed instead. Among Otterbech's surviving papers is the draft of a letter he wrote to Minister Løvland shortly before the episcopal appointment. For it sheds light on Otterbech's views on war.

Otterbech left a great deal of written material, in books as well as various periodicals and the press more generally. Some are mentioned here:

Work for the Sámi

But the cause closer to Otterbech's heart than any other was the work for the Sámi (the Finns/Lapps) in our country, particularly the effort to enable them to retain their language. It seems to have been especially during confirmation teaching that he realised how little many Sámi children understood of what they had memorised in Norwegian. He therefore championed "the Sámi language cause".

In several of his writings, but particularly in his previously mentioned book "Norwegianisation in Finnmark", he confronts the Norwegian people with the injustice committed against the Sámi. He stressed very strongly that the Sámi mother tongue must be honoured, or the Sámi national spirit would die. To suppress it, or to cause the Sámi language to die, is unworthy of the Norwegian people. I shall again quote his own words ("Norwegianisation in Finnmark", pp. 26-27):

The open wound of Finnmark's schools remains that Christian instruction is not given in the mother tongue. In 1915 I spoke with a Sámi mother and her 11-year-old daughter. With tears in her eyes, the mother said that the child had now attended school for three years without any benefit whatsoever to mind or heart, because her teacher did not understand Sámi, the only language the child understood. Such things happen in free Norway in 1915, and presumably in 1917 as well. The situation in the schools today is this.

1. The Sámi are not taught in their mother tongue at all. "Sámi" does not appear on the timetables of Sámi schools.

2. The instructions stipulate that Sámi and Kven are to be used as aids in explaining what pupils do not understand. But since not all the male or female teachers understand Sámi, or understand it only very inadequately, this provision is largely illusory.

3. Not even religious instruction is given in the child's mother tongue. On this point we Norwegians are even more brutal than the Germans in Schleswig and Poland.

4. The Sámi themselves wish to receive help in learning Norwegian, but not at the expense of their children's deepest feelings. To complete this account of the harsh conditions we have offered the Sámi, brief mention should be made of the Act of 22 May 1902. It concerns the sale or leasing of state land in Finnmark. Since the state owns most of the land in Finnmark, this law deeply affects the people's circumstances.

To implement this Act, regulations dated 7 July 1902 were adopted, in which section 1c states that "the disposal [of state land] may take place only to Norwegian citizens, and with particular regard to promoting settlement by a population suited to the district, its cultivation and other utilisation, who can speak, read and write the Norwegian language and use it in daily life."

Thus the economic thumbscrew is applied to the Sámi through laws and regulations in order to make them sacrifice their mother tongue. Notice that the mother tongue is also to be eradicated from daily use, so that even a father speaking Sámi with his wife and children may suffer financial loss as a result.

On page 61 of the same book he quotes a German, Erik Slaikjer, who, outraged by his compatriots' conduct, writes: "The system of coercion has been carried through with a dreadful, hard-hearted consistency. One cannot think of it without feeling the deepest indignation and the deepest contempt." And Otterbech adds: "These words are equally apt as a description of our Norwegianisers' conduct towards the Sámi of our country."

As might be expected, this bold stand of his drew opposition from many quarters, and among his surviving papers are several letters to him containing fairly sharp comments on the subject. Some have thought that his work for the Sámi language was also one reason why he did not become bishop. But, according to Pastor Otterbech's own account, Minister Løvland told him this was not the case. The minister was himself a supporter of the Norwegian language movement.

Otterbech ill with cancer

In the final months of his life, Otterbech was able to glorify God through suffering. He developed cancer, wasted away, and suffered. Here on his sickbed, too, he showed that God's kingdom is not words but power. The last time I [Hans Smith] visited him, I had just returned from a pleasant outing with my pupils. I had told him about the lovely excursion. Then the contrast between my lot and his struck me so strongly: I, fit and well, had been able to enjoy the outing with my young friends! He, sick and suffering,

there in bed! So I involuntarily blurted out: "And you, who have had to lie here so sick and weak while we have been having such a lovely time!" Then his whole face shone, and he said: "Me! I lie here rejoicing." I shall never forget how his face lit up when he said those words.

Missed by the Sámi

Now that he is gone, he is missed by many, not least by his beloved Sámi. One of them writes about him ("Lappernes Ven", 1922, no. 2).

Otterbech once wrote of Thomas von Westen: "This man may be said to have sacrificed everything for the Sámi: he sacrificed the bishopric of Kristiansand; he sacrificed his health and his fortune; he sacrificed his pride as a Norwegian and became a Sámi among the Sámi, spoke their language and shared their hardships." This praise could almost equally apply to Pastor Otterbech himself. Yes, this unselfish and self-sacrificing pastor has now passed away. We feel it as an irreplaceable loss.

And another Sámi, H. O. Heika, writes ("Lappernes Ven", 1922, no. 3).

Pastor Otterbech saw eternal value in every Sámi soul. All the destitute wretches, all the neglected and forgotten beings in the poorest Sámi turf huts, are precious, eternally precious, and were also bought with the greatest sacrificial price God required: the blood of Jesus. Otterbech saw this. He saw with Jesus' eyes. Therefore he stooped down to the poor and destitute. A mighty expression of

Christ's love. A living Christianity in practice.

In Pastor Otterbech, a great shining star has been extinguished in the firmament of church history. Yes, and in the Sámi national firmament too. The loss weighs heavily... We feel we needed him so much. Just now, we were expecting something great and extraordinary from him for the restoration of the Sámi. But suddenly the spark of hope fails, and there we stand, weak, wretched, bewildered souls... No one understood them as he did... But now he is gone. Who will fill his place? A very great place stands empty. Let us pray to God, let us pray with sincere hearts that he will give us a new Otterbech, a second Otterbech...

God bless the memory of our dear Otterbech!



Pastor Jens Otterbech

2. Wilhelm (26.04.1870 – 1952)

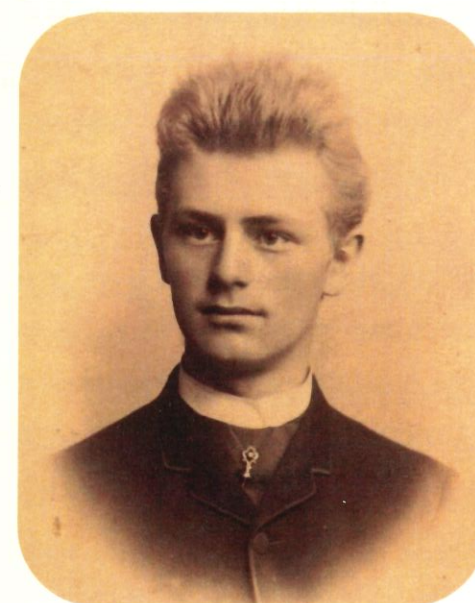


Wilhelm, aged 7



Jens and Wilhelm in Sámi dress

We know considerably less about Wilhelm. In the last letter we have here from Anna to her sister Margrethe, he was still only six years old. On several occasions Anna gives us pictures of Jens as an exceptionally good boy in both word and deed. We find less about Wilhelm. It is difficult today to form any opinion about what that might mean. Perhaps he was simply still too young.



Wilhelm, aged 16

We know very little about Wilhelm's further journey from childhood to adulthood. There is, however, reason to believe that the information that he pursued further education at the agricultural school in Aas may be correct. In any case, this was the field in which he later found his livelihood in Australia and Fiji.

The question of why, in 1892 at only 22 years of age, he decided to emigrate to Australia will probably remain unanswered forever. He disembarked in Melbourne on 23 July 1892 as Wilhelm Otterbeck. We cannot make sense of the fact that, according to the register, he disembarked together with a Thomas Otterbeck who was two years older.



Wilhelm, aged 20



Wilhelm, aged 21



Wilhelm, aged 24, in Australia

We know nothing about where his path led farther into Australia. We do know, however, that he went into cattle breeding, probably using money he had brought from Norway. A couple of years later, the great drought is said to have struck and deprived him of his entire herd. In any event, Wilhelm suddenly found himself with nothing but the clothes he stood up in.

A little later he turned up in Fiji, where he was to remain until the end of his days in 1951. The two brothers must have maintained some contact by letter, and I believe I once learned that Jens gave him some financial support through difficult years.

We know little about his beginnings in Fiji, but in time he is said to have earned his living growing and selling bananas. (Here goes the picture of him out harvesting bananas with some of the local people.)



In Fiji

A few years later we find him again, as cattle overseer for a Dutch landowner in the highlands inland from Suva, Fiji's capital. There he remained until the end of his days in 1952. (Here come some of my pictures from the 1980 visit.)

I was granted the privilege of visiting the place twice. The first visit took place on 23–24 November 1980. Eight years later, in 1988, my Edith and I had another opportunity to get to know our close relatives better on this far side of the globe. The accompanying accounts from that time follow here as separate appendices.

An article in the local "Fiji Times", recounting our happy meeting there in 1980, is attached. Also attached is a summary of Ingrid Jølbo's description of meeting our family during her visit to Fiji in 2001.

What follows now is a brief account of the last three or four decades of Wilhelm's rather long life. There is much to reflect on—he and his, we and ours. For my part, I must admit to carrying a little sadness within me at the thought that the two branches of the family never established closer contact while he was alive. Why did no one try to do something about that earlier?

In Fiji, Wilhelm ended up as overseer at Naduri Estate in the province of Naitasini, where he eventually got a little house of his own in an almost paradisiacal landscape. Crystal-clear water flowed gently in a small river around the house, which stood at the top of a low rise. Palm trees added to the harmonious, peaceful scene. A very simple farm track was the only connection with the outside world. The river could be crossed only in a very rudimentary homemade rowing boat with room for just a few people at a time. I have probably never come closer to an explorer's experiences, either before or since.

When we arrived, the walls and roof of the house were still standing, but its windows and doors were gone. The surrounding area was completely overgrown with wild plants and scrub. A barbed-wire fence had been put up around the whole place, effectively preventing access by people and livestock alike. Neighbours had erected it after Wilhelm died. I did manage to get inside, however, and it was with many strong feelings that I tried to make my way through the interior. In many places the floor was missing. Down beneath it lay Wilhelm's own personal safe, open and rusty. If only it could have talked. Now it lay there merely as a silent witness to something that once had been.



Anna Otterbeck

When I asked why the house had in a way stood untouched since Wilhelm died, I later heard that the very few neighbours said it was "haunted", and that no one went inside any more. This also explained why neither Anna nor Hellen had apparently felt any need to accompany me on my tour. They stood outside.



Hellen Otterbeck

During the ten-year period between my two visits, contact between the two families was maintained in various ways. Eroni, one of Anna's grandchildren, was able to fit in a three-week visit to Norway while serving with the Fijian Battalion in the Middle East. He was given free transport there and back in a Norwegian Hercules aircraft that was also on a mission in the area. Our aunt Evy also visited our newly discovered Fiji family. This led to a good deal of correspondence in both directions.

We on the Norwegian side were also able to contribute a little development aid by transferring about NOK 18,000 to help and support them there. It did us good, and it did them good. Their gratitude was palpable. Anna's letter of thanks is heartening to read and is attached. It gives a warm and powerful picture of a person one cannot help but love. Anna has since passed away. It says a great deal that Wilhelm gave his own mother's first name to his first daughter. We know nothing of the origin of the name Helen, his second daughter.

This leads me to go a little more deeply into what I learned about the background of Wilhelm's eventually very large family. The following summary is based on some private conversations I had with his mother Anna during my two visits to Fiji, in 1980 and 1988 respectively. Insofar as she knew anything, I learned some of the story in 1980 and a little more during a conversation my Edith had alone with Anna in 1988. Whether it provides any complete answer to why Wilhelm actually left is another matter entirely. Perhaps it is true, perhaps a little is true, and perhaps it is not true at all.

When I asked whether she knew anything more about why Wilhelm had left Norway in the first place, she initially answered rather evasively. But I did not let her off the hook. I was very conscious that this might be the only chance we would ever have to understand a little more. In a brief summary, I shall try to reproduce some of what she was able to tell us then and there:

"When I was about six or seven, I once sat on Daddy's lap and talked about many things. I also asked him what he had tattooed on his left forearm. He had a lot of hair on his arm, and it was not easy to see exactly what it was. He became a little irritated and said it was nothing to talk about. I also asked him why he would not marry Mummy properly. His answer was that he had once loved a girl in Norway very much, and still did. That was why he had left the country, and also why he could never imagine marrying anyone else."

Ten years later, she continued her account from where she had left off:

“I did not give up, however: I wanted to know what the mark on his arm really was. He grumbled a little, but then explained that he had had the initial of the girl he had loved, and still loved, tattooed there. He then showed me the tattoo, and I could read the letter ‘H’. I could not get him to say any more. Many years later, in 1952, I sat beside him on his deathbed. His last words there were: ‘Please God, take me away from these sufferings.’”

Of course, I know nothing of how deeply or how far back this final statement was meant to reach. But it cannot entirely be ruled out that it also referred to his life as a whole, and that perhaps he had really gone through his entire life unhappy for one reason or another.

For the last five years of his life, Wilhelm lived in a small house beside the same river mentioned above. The house stood alone, about one kilometre from a small village of thatched huts with roughly a hundred inhabitants. In his loneliness he often walked back and forth there, probably struggling with the effects of a broken leg. During our 1988 visit, the village authorities invited us to share a kava drink with them in the village’s largest thatched hut. There were still people there who remembered old Wilhelm.

Later that same day we went into the nearby woods to find Wilhelm’s grave. It was not easy, but with Anna’s and Helen’s help we eventually found it, quite alone and off the beaten track, overgrown with scrub and trees. We actually had to dig out the concrete edging ourselves then and there. I readily admit that it was saddening to think that this was where Wilhelm was to end his days, so far from his childhood home and perhaps the great love of his youth, whom he was never to see again. Whether Hanna had any connection at all with the ‘H’ tattooed on Wilhelm’s arm, history does not say. Or could it have been a Helen, which later proved to be the name he chose for his second daughter? History is silent on all of this, and perhaps that is just as well—even though we would naturally have liked to know more, perhaps to find the answer to why Wilhelm left in 1894, never to return to the old country.

For a little more detailed information on all this, please refer to the accompanying appendices.

My small, secret hope, after all this, is that we shall not again lose contact with our rediscovered family in Fiji. It was therefore with great joy that I later heard from Ingri Jølbo that she and her Per had spent some exceptionally memorable days there. May more people follow in her footsteps, and perhaps one day we can again join together in a new package of “development aid” for these very close relatives of ours in Fiji.

So that we can all picture a little more clearly whom we are talking about, a list is attached of all the family members living at the time of Ingri Jølbo’s visit in 2001. It was compiled by Helen’s son Thomas. Some photographs that Ingri took then are included.

VIII Hanna Marie Otterbech (née Krogh)

29.04.1873 – 02.04.1953

Hanna married Jens Otterbech in Bergen (St John's Church) on 3 August 1894. Her ancestors on her father's side have many connections with Bergen.



*Hanna Krogh with
her "nappy brother"
Andreas*

On her mother's side, the roots go back to Loshavn. A brief look back at these two branches of her ancestry is far from dull.

She developed into quite a personality: someone who went quietly about her life, yet left a deep impression.

After a brief presentation of her ancestors on both her father's and mother's sides, we shall follow her for a little of her journey through life.



Hanna Krogh, aged 12

For a fuller family tree on her father's side, see Appendix 10. For her mother's side, see the attached copy of a letter from her daughter Ingrid to the undersigned.

On her father's side we are dealing with one of Bergen's older families, the so-called "Truls branch of the Krogh family". A small, 71-page book on this branch, published in Kristiania in 1897–1902, was compiled by attorney Joh. K. Bergwitz. In many ways the Krogh family is a family of pastors, traceable all the way back to Lauritz Nilsson Krogh (1512–1617), curate in the Trondheim region and later parish pastor in Holmedal, Sundfjord.

After several generations, into which the Holberg and Arentz families also enter, we continue here with the more immediate ancestors of our own Hanna.

Shipmaster Jens Andreas Johan Krogh, born in Bergen in 1814 and died in Odessa in 1858, married Hanna Marie Jonassen in 1845. She was born in Loshavn in 1811 and died in Bergen in 1894.

In her day she was often called "The Beauty of Loshavn".

They had three children, of whom the youngest, lawyer and chief clerk Anton Jonas Krogh (1850–1878), married Jacobine Alette Berentsen (1851–1892), daughter of merchant Jacob Berentsen and his wife Bolette.

Anton and Jacobine had five children. Our Hanna Marie Krogh (29.04.1873–02.04.1953) was the third. Her elder brother Andreas Johan Krogh worked for the firm Joachim Hansen in Bergen and married his cousin Marie Antonette Magnus. He was Spanish consul. See also Appendix 10.

On Hanna's mother's side, the nearer family tree in Loshavn begins with Jonas Jonsen (1739–1812) and Olene Kristensdatter (1736–1794).

The Farsund parish register shows that their son, Captain Jonas Jonassen (29.09.1773–28.02.1835), married the maiden Maren Jansdatter (1775–1805) on 20 February 1800. The witnesses



Anton Krogh

were Capt. Ely and Capt. Ebbe Lund. Maren was the daughter of Captain Jan Jonsen (1773–1794) and Anne Serine Eylesdatter (1737–1797). Jonas's father and Maren's father were brothers, so Jonas and Maren were first cousins. Two of their three children died as infants, and the third died unmarried at a young age.

The widower Jonas Jonassen later married the widow Ane Willumsen (1807). They had six children together. It was the third, Hanna Marie, who later married Andreas Johan Krogh in Bergen. (See more on this under the Krogh family above.)

Of Jonas it may be said that, after being a sea captain, he later became chief pilot. He distinguished himself during the privateering war (1807–1814) as captain of the privateer "Veiviseren". For his service he was made a Knight of the Order of Daneborg. See also Appendix 11.

At only 21, and after just a few weeks of marriage, Hanna suddenly found herself a young pastor's wife in Kistrand in 1894, where she was to have three children and remain until 1902. Various events associated with this period will be described here.

This will concern a time and place very different from her own childhood years in Bergen. It will concern her third child, little Anna, who was named after her paternal grandmother and was

ill, died, and was buried by the entrance to the vestry. Last but not least, it will concern the letter she wrote to her successor 100 years later. It was opened on 14 May 2002 before a completely packed Kistrand Church, where her grandson Jens Otterbech, with his Edith and their daughter Renee, also took part in an experience they will probably never forget. A copy of Hanna's letter in its original form is attached as Appendix 12.

The 1900 census shows that Porsanger municipality (then called Kistrand district) registered 1,013 Sámi, 652 Kven, 104 who identified themselves as both Sámi and Kven, and finally 261 who stated that they were Norwegian.



*A little social gathering in Kistrand at the turn of the century (from left):
Telegraph superintendent Smith, Dr Mørch, Jens, Hanna, Mrs Smith; and in front,
from left:
Mrs Mørch, merchant Bye, Mrs Grape and Mrs Bye.*

Finnmark Dagblad (FD) of 18 May 2002 further states, among other things: "On ordinary days and festive occasions, the pastor and his wife could meet the small handful of leading citizens in the place. There were district physician Fredrick Johan Mørck and his wife Vilhelmine from Kristiania. There was also the 'immortal' district sheriff Erik August Grape, the Swedish Kven who served as sheriff in Kistrand for an incredible 60 years, and his wife Olava Margrethe from Hammerfest. Their adult son Hjalmar was the sheriff's assistant, while their daughter Sofie was a teacher and organist. Their daughter Hildur was also a teacher. In addition, shopkeeper John Lillebo from Røros ran his shop in Kistrand. He was married to Marie from the Kven-Sámi village of Muonioniska, where the well-known pastor Læstadius had once worked."

It may also be mentioned that telegraph superintendent Karl Johan Smith and his wife Laura Gunhilda Smith, and merchant Anthon Bye and his wife Indianne Bye, belonged to the same group.

There can hardly be any doubt that Jens had always felt drawn to this northern outpost, where his father Ingvald Mathias had begun his work in Talvik in 1867 and where Jens was born in 1868. Two years later his father died. His grave can still be found in the cemetery at Talvik.

The same FD article goes on to say, among other things: "For Jens Otterbech, working among the Sámi was a cause close to his heart throughout his life. This was at a time when official Norwegian policy was to eradicate Sámi culture... Otterbech was known for his very sharp tone, his reproaches, his down-to-earth manner, his courage and his sense of justice. He never held back in his criticism of the Norwegian authorities' treatment of the Sámi... He thundered both from the pulpit and in newspaper columns... Like his wife, he was a pacifist, and when the world war broke out in August 1914, he turned to the Bible. He publicly maintained that every form of war, whether offensive or defensive, was contrary to God's word. Hanna, always equally engaged in her husband's work and interests, worked zealously all her life for both peace and temperance. As a vegetarian she abstained from meat, and also worked eagerly to promote vegetarianism as a way of life. This led her to write a cookbook for vegetarians."

Hanna was also quite active as an author. In "Childhood Pictures for Adults", she writes a little about how children may experience the adult world, such as their parents' divorces—a subject that was probably particularly taboo at the time. In addition to several poems and hymns, her book "The Shadow" deals with young people and adolescence.

The FD article cited above also says of her: "It was said that she took up the cause of Stavanger's 'loose girls' in an attempt to help them... Hanna's interests in theatre and concerts were considered unsuitable for a pastor's wife or widow in Stavanger. It is said that she went to Oslo to give expression to her cultural interests."

The overshadowing event of Hanna's Kistrand years concerns little Anna's tragic death at only 14 months old, and the letter Hanna wrote before leaving to the pastor's wife who might be there 100 years later. What would come to be known as the "100-year letter" eventually attracted great attention in the daily press and on radio and television. The letter, dated 7 May 1902,

was fastened to the Kistrand parish chronicle with two red wax seals. It is almost a miracle that no one ever tried to open it, and that it was saved from the Germans' burning of Kistrand towards the end of the Second World War, when only the church was left standing.

The media coverage became so extensive that there is no room for all of it here. Some articles can nevertheless be found in Appendices 13–17. In many ways they give a good account of some very powerful and moving moments before, during and after the letter was read aloud at the Pentecost service from the pulpit in Kistrand Church by the pastor's wife, Inger Bækkevar.

“The pastor's wife's letter from 1902 read in Kistrand Church: ‘Perhaps we too shall meet there, where there is no evil.’”

An hour before the Whit Sunday service in Kistrand Church, people began pouring in. From all over Porsanger they came by car and bus to hear the reading of the letter from the pastor's wife, Hanna Otterbech. Kistrand Church was packed to overflowing when the hundred-year-old letter was to be read publicly for the first time.

The letter from the pastor's wife Hanna Otterbech to her successor Inger Bækkevar carried a sorrowful message.

Filled to the brim

At the start of the service it became clear that there were nowhere near enough seats for everyone. Benches were placed along the central aisle and extra chairs were put in the entrance area. Even so, many had to stand, and as far as we could estimate, more than 250 people were present. That is about twenty times as many as at an ordinary service in Kistrand Church.

Bishop and children's choir

The very full congregation experienced a dignified and moving setting for the ceremony.

Former bishop Ola Steinholt delivered the sermon, Lakselv Children's Choir sang, and for the first time we experienced applause in Kistrand Church.

The present pastor's wife in Porsanger, Inger Bækkevar, then read the letter from her predecessor of a hundred years ago. The letter is reproduced here in full.”

“Dear Madam,

It is strange to think that when this letter is opened, I and all my loved ones will be gone and long since forgotten.

And strange to think how many pastors' wives, before this letter reaches the right hands, will come and go in the parsonage, will rejoice and suffer; perhaps many of them will endure the same suffering that prompted me to write this letter.

And yet there is great comfort in the thought that everything must pass away, and that a person's time is, after all, so short.



Hanna and her daughter Anna



Werner and Håkon

And in the hope that one day we shall be together, and no one shall take our joy from us. How often I have wished to look inside the home of the pastor's wife who lived here a hundred years ago.

There is a picture in the church showing a family beside a little child's bier. It was surely grief that moved the pastor to paint it. He is said to have been Paul Qvist, who came here towards the end of the eighteenth century.

When you, Madam, read this letter, my little child's grave will probably have been levelled with the earth. It should lie right beside the steps to the vestry, towards the east. Anna Otterbech, fourteen months old. She was the loveliest child anyone could see. She died suddenly of a severe stomach illness that was going around here and took several small children. And now her mother sits here so heavy-hearted, so unhappy, and can never be happy again.

We have been here for eight years and during that time have had three children, two boys and the little girl. In a week we move to Øre near Kristiansund, and hope that suffering may have purified us to help others who also suffer.

The parsonage here is over a hundred years old, old-fashioned, with low rooms, and in poor condition, so there will probably soon be a new parsonage. It is inconvenient here.

In winter, water is fetched directly from the river, and most often the pastor himself must go to get it. During our time here we have had several pleasant families to associate with: Sheriff Grape, who has seven fine children; Dr Mørch, who has recently been transferred; and merchant Lillebo with six fine children. Telegraphist Smith with eight children, and parish cantor Arild. With them we have shared the small pleasures we could provide for ourselves, for example coffee outings to Lakselv and Skoganvarre.

There are almost no roads here; one is now being built from Kolvik to Lakselv, and people in Karasjok must come all the way here for their doctor. Nor do they have a telephone up there in Karasjok and Kautokeino. A ship and mail once a week. A journey to Bergen or Kristiania takes about ten days.

If you should find this little grave, would you be so kind as to care for it a little? And if such a heavy blow should strike you, remember that a hundred years ago an equally unhappy mother sat here, whose only comfort is that one day she will be reunited with her child, and who would ask you to be courageous in whatever struggle God sends you.

Perhaps we too shall meet there, where there is no evil.

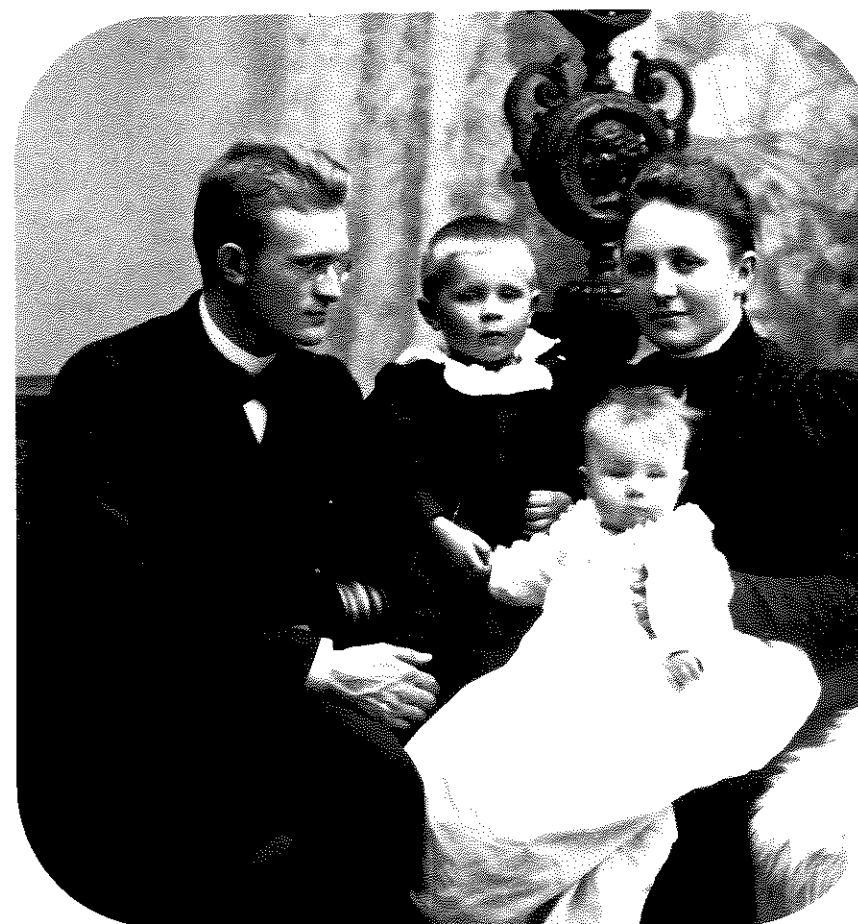
With loving greetings, yours, Hanna Otterbech.

My own impressions before, during and after the memorable service were many and powerful. I almost felt that Hanna, in one way or another, was taking part in it all. After this, Anna's little grave will probably endure for a long time to come. Somehow it seemed that everyone present felt a personal responsibility to ensure that it did.

I was deeply moved when a Sámi woman more than ninety years old, Josefine Fredriksen, from the other side of the fjord, came over to tell me that Pastor Jens Otterbech had once come and cared for her dear grandparents in the midst of their miserable illness. They had never been able to forget it.

Later in the evening, "the whole population" gathered in the municipal assembly hall to commemorate the great event that had just taken place. There was no shortage of speeches from those concerned. The local deputy mayor gave me a standing invitation to return whenever I wished. The memory of Hanna and Jens was still remarkably alive among the many people with deep roots in the Porsanger community on both sides of the fjord. Then, and often afterwards, Jens was referred to as their "Finnmark pastor".

It should also be noted that the event received very extensive coverage on both Norwegian and Swedish television and in other national media.



*Hanna & Jens with their children Håkon
and Werner Otterbech*

But Hanna's journey did not end there, of course. Five years followed as a pastor's wife in Øre near Kristiansund, fourteen years in Hetland parish in Stavanger until Jens died in 1921, and finally her remaining years as a widow until she too died in 1953. During the years in Øre and Hetland, Hanna and Jens had three more children, so that five children in all grew up: Haakon, Werner, Ingrid, Gunnar and Evy. The boys married and had children. Ingrid and Evy remained unmarried.

Before Hanna died, she had nine grandchildren in all. The love she gave all of us was returned in abundance. She was, quite simply, the best grandmother imaginable. Her blueberry pancakes were, of course, the best in the world. Among other things, she had set herself the goal of giving each of us a wristwatch as a confirmation present. During and just after the war, that was naturally an almost impossible task. But Hanna would not give up. It must admittedly have cost her the sale of a couple of very valuable Norwegian paintings, which may not have been easy to part with. But to her, the grandchildren mattered more.

During her Oslo years, Hanna was able to pursue her great cultural interests in many ways. She gradually had more time to develop her writing. That she, for example, may have published Norway's first vegetarian cookbook is rather impressive. A play, a book of children's stories, and various poems, hymns and so on were also among the things she left behind. Those of us who knew her not only loved her, but in time probably also

a little proud to have a grandmother with so many talents and resources, bringing joy to both her own time and the future.

Brief summary of Hanna Otterbech's literary and cultural activities

Hanna was deeply engaged in social causes throughout her life. At the same time she had wide-ranging cultural interests and a lively enthusiasm for music, painting, literature and theatre. Poetry was close to her heart. She was much in demand as a performer at various cultural and social occasions. She herself wrote several poems and hymns that appeared in periodicals and various songbooks.

Hanna published about three small books:

- Childhood Pictures for Adults — Oslo, 1931
- Vegetarian Dinners — Oslo (c. 1925–30?)
- The Shadow — a play

Hanna's interests and knowledge ranged from temperance and peace to the rights of children, young people and various vulnerable groups in society.

The struggle for healthy nutrition and a vegetarian diet was another subject that mattered greatly to her.

She was an active writer and participant in debates in relevant periodicals and the daily press about the social issues of the day.

Hanna was widowed early and had time to immerse herself in literary studies. After living in Budapest for a year, she had quite a good command of German.

Her interest in Goethe and Rudolf Steiner—the philosopher, Goethe scholar and founder of anthroposophy—led her to study R. Steiner and his educational ideas. But she also studied his research in other fields, particularly his writings on biodynamic agriculture and nutrition. Her daughter Ingrid became a teacher at Norway's first Steiner school in Oslo as early as its founding period in 1926.



Hanna Otterbech

IX Descendants of Jens and Wilhelm

1. Hanna and Jens

They had six children in all. Anna died at only fourteen months (see the account under section IV). The other five all grew up. The three boys—Haakon, Werner and Gunnar—started families of their own and each had three children. The girls, Ingrid and Evy, remained unmarried.

Haakon (1895–1985) married Johanna Theodora Lyngdal (1896–1972). Both are buried in the family plot at Vår Frelses Cemetery. Together they had the children Eli (1924–), Bjørg (1927–1990) and Ragnhild (1929–). All three married and had children. After graduating from NTH in Trondhjem, Haakon first worked as an engineer at the Telegraph Administration and later at NRK in Oslo. Eli married Leif Thorp and had the sons Stein Håkon and Bjørn Håvard. Bjørg married Johan Petter Haukenes and had the children Hege and Siri. Ragnhild was first married to Per Øynes and had a daughter, Elisabeth. She later married the Italian Pier Paolo Dari and had a daughter, Anita.

Werner (1897–1985) married Esther Louise Lyngdal (1900–1981). Both are buried in Eiganes Cemetery in Stavanger. Together they had the children Finn, Turid Lill and Jens Kjell. All three married, but only Turid and Jens had children. After graduating from NTH, Werner later worked as an engineer for the Public Roads Administration in Aust Agder. Finn (1925–2011) married Ellen Hedberg (1922–). Turid Lill (1928–) first married Yngvar Trøim (1923–2011) and had a daughter, Ingunn, who later took the surname Otterbech. Turid later married John Mørk (1927–2007) and had the children Truls Olaf, Jon Endre and Hanne Mari. Jens (1933–) married the Swiss Edith Dolores Bergada (1936–) and had the children Renée Edith, Synøve Esther and Trond Ramon.

Ingrid (1902–1990) lived with her mother in Oslo until the latter died in 1953. She then moved into her own flat nearby. She qualified as a teacher in Oslo and studied Steiner education at the Goetheannum in Basel. She helped establish the Steiner school in Oslo, where she continued as a teacher for many years. Later she also taught at Bjølsen primary school in Oslo.

Gunnar (1905–1979) married Eli Wølstaad (1906–1999). Together they had the children Inger Marie ("Ia"), Jorunn Helene and Håkon. Gunnar qualified as an engineer and worked as a valuer and driving instructor. Inger Marie (1931–) married Andreas Jølbo

(1928–) and had the children Ove, Eli and Hanna. Jorunn (1936–) married Njaal Fykse (1934–) and had the children Guro, Helga, Agnes and Gunnar. Håkon (1945–) married Astrid Johanne Vadla Otterbech (1946–) and had the children Aage, Helge and Siri.

Evy (1909–1991) also lived with her mother and sister until 1953. She continued living in the flat. Music—piano and organ—played a large part in her life. She qualified as an organist at the Oslo Conservatory of Music and was permanently employed as organist at Bygdøy/Ullern Church. For several years she also drove a taxi. She obtained a private pilot's licence for small aircraft. She was a vegetarian through and through. Altogether, she was a little different in many ways. At a relatively advanced age she travelled alone to Fiji to visit the family there. She maintained regular correspondence with them until her own death in 1991.

2. Wilhelm and Lanieta Vakaluma

It is natural to begin here with a few words about Wilhelm's two daughters, Anna and Hellen. I met them on two occasions, in 1980 and 1988 respectively. It was a powerful experience and deserves a few more words from me.

Anna, named after her Norwegian grandmother, had probably inherited a little more of Wilhelm's blood in her veins. She radiated a goodness and warmth that suggested great human wisdom. When we arrived, she could not hold back her tears of joy. At our departure, a tearful face was the last we saw of her. At that moment, we too struggled to hold back our tears.

It was also a very powerful experience to accompany her to the home place of her second husband. Far up in the island's interior, he was a minor local chief of a village population of about 200. They had apparently been told to stay in their own houses during the visit. But we did at least get to meet their children at close quarters. That was lovely. There, too, we had to drink their traditional, mildly intoxicating national drink, "kava".

Our visit with the two sisters to Wilhelm's grave, all alone far out there and overgrown in the forest, is difficult to describe in words. Please therefore see the attached photograph.

It all ended in a collection of very powerful and utterly unforgettable impressions. Afterwards, I often thought how incredibly fortunate I was to have had the great privilege of experiencing precisely this.

Anna is now gone. Through a mix-up, she was buried in the wrong place. Her surviving family decided, however, that they did not want to change this.

Helen was perhaps a somewhat simpler soul. But she too radiated a great deal of goodness and warmth. Joy was perhaps what, more than anything else, often characterised her outward manner. In her appearance she probably showed less of Wilhelm's Norwegian genes. Financially, she may have been a little better off than Anna. But with large families and many children, it was probably often difficult to make ends meet.

Their hospitality surpassed almost anything else I have experienced. There is probably something in the saying that blood will always be thicker than water.

If it is true that pictures can often tell more than many words, I would also refer here to the pictures from my visit to Fiji in 1980, Appendix 5, and from my and Edith's visit in 1988, see Appendix 7. See also Appendix 8 from Ingri Jølbo's visit to the same place in 2001.

My greatest wish, after everything I experienced here and the human warmth I encountered, is that we in Norway and our close families in Fiji may never again lose sight of one another.

X Afterword

It was the large collection of Anna's handwritten letters to her sister Margarethe from the 1860s and 1870s that, a couple of years ago, stirred something in me that demanded to be taken seriously. The contents of the letters had to be brought to light. Perhaps there were things there that we descendants ought to know a little more about. The conclusion was simple. Within a few months, all the long letters—more than eighty of them—had been transcribed into readable text. The handwriting and spelling of the time made great demands on patience and imagination. The collection is being published as a separate volume alongside this family history.

Her letters were sent primarily from Hougaard farm in Rakkestad and Talvik Parsonage in Porsanger. These two places are described more fully in Appendix 18.

In a way, I was taken on a journey that began in 1862 and ended in 1876. It was never dull. Gradually I came both to know and to love a person I had never met and would never meet—my own great-grandmother. It was a good experience that I gladly carry forward with me.

What I had not expected, however, was that all this would stir something more in me. Gradually I felt very strongly that the collection of letters somehow demanded to be placed within a wider family context. I had not really planned that. Yet I had more than enough material, thanks to much preparatory work done earlier by other family members. Tightening it up, combined with selecting various pieces of information, was in many ways the greatest challenge. The other major challenge was to weave everything together into a natural whole.

I therefore decided on a structure in which ancestors, contemporaries and descendants would form the setting for the treasure of letters we had been so fortunate to receive. The outline will make clear what I mean.

I owe great thanks to my own little family—my Edith and our three children Renee, Synøve and Trond—for their enduring patience with a father who constantly needed to think aloud with his nearest and dearest about one thing and another. The children's thoroughly professional computer and editing skills proved absolutely decisive for the form the work has now taken.

Without my sister Turid and the other generous contributors in the extended family, especially Siri Haukenes, but also others including Ingri Jølbo, the result would probably have been much thinner in several respects. My warm thanks and appreciation therefore go to all of them as well.

There is still much in and around all this that I would have liked to know more about. Many stones remain out there that I never had the time or capacity to turn over. That must be left to any descendants who may wish to dig a little further and a little deeper.

For my own part, I can only say that this journey stands out as a particularly fascinating part of everything I have otherwise been privileged to experience in a long life.

My thanks therefore go not least to my dear great-grandmother Anna Louise and her sister Margarethe for doing exactly what they did here. You will not be forgotten.

Jens Otterbech

XI Appendices 1–20

1. Family tree of the Otterbech family and more distant ancestors
2. From the Andebu parish chronicle, on Jens Hovland Otterbech
3. Jens Otterbech: Pastor and Organiser
4. Meeting Wilhelm's descendants in Fiji, November 1980
5. Family reunion in Fiji: front-page story in The Fiji Times, 1980
6. Letter of thanks from Wilhelm's daughter Anna for our help, 13.02.1982
7. Meeting Wilhelm's descendants in Fiji, November 1988
8. Summary of Ingri Jølbo's visit to Fiji, September 2001
9. List of Wilhelm's descendants in Fiji
10. The Krogh family, Bergen: Hanna Marie's paternal ancestors
11. The Jonassen family, Lodshavn: Hanna Marie's maternal ancestors
12. The "100-year letter" in Hanna Marie's own handwriting
13. Finnmark Dagblad on the approaching opening of the 100-year letter, 14.05.2002
14. Finnmark Dagblad on "Kistrand's radical pastor's family", 18.05.2002
15. Finnmark Dagblad on the reading of the 100-year letter in Kistrand Church, 21.05.2002
16. The Sámi newspaper Ságat on the reading of the 100-year letter in Kistrand Church, 21.05.2002
17. Aftenposten on the reading of the 100-year letter, 21.05.2002
18. Talvik in the 1870s. Brief introduction to Rakkestad, Anna's home for many years
19. An example of a randomly chosen letter in Anna's own handwriting
20. A copy of one of Anna's letters

Appendix 1

Family tree of the Otterbech family and more distant ancestors

Comment on the attached family tree

Towards the end of 1990, we received the attached family tree from Frank Otterbech, Blomsgate 32, 3500 Hønefoss.

In his letter he says of it:

"This autumn, however, I received an 'ancestral chart', which I have transcribed and copied. I cannot say anything about its accuracy, but the chart at least contains some family history that may have value. (Unfortunately, the copy of the chart I received contained some illegible passages, hence, among other things, the question marks.)

Up to item 30, our Ingvald Mathias and his elder brother Christopher share the same family tree. From there onward, the continuation is directed more towards Christopher and his descendants. This too may be of interest to us, and is attached in its unabridged entirety, as we received it from the aforementioned Frank Otterbech.

Jens Otterbech

An ancestral chart

Probably compiled mainly in the early 1900s. Later supplemented with some genealogical and historical information.

1. Harald Haarfagre (c. 850–933), Norway's first sole king. Married to Gyda Eiriksdotter (the proud maiden). Their eldest child was their daughter Ålov. Harald had many wives and many children (at least nine sons).
2. His daughter Ålov married Tore Jarl the Silent. Tore's father was Ragnvald, Earl of Møre, married to Hild. They had two sons: Rolv (Gange-Rolv) and Tore.
3. Bergliot. Daughter of Ålov and Tore. Married to Sigurd Håkonsson, Earl of Lade (c. 890–962). Sigurd was the son of Håkon Grjotgardssoon. Sigurd supported Håkon Adelsteinsfostre's kingship and, after Håkon's death, was burned to death in a house by Eirik's sons.
4. Håkon Sigurdsson, Earl of Lade, the Mighty (c. 935–995), their son, received help from the Danish king Harald Blåtann to defeat Eirik's sons. He defeated the Jomsvikings at Hjørungavåg. He was killed by his thrall Kark.
5. Bergliot, their daughter, married Einar Tambarskjelve Eindridesson (c. 980–1050). (She tried to raise a rebellion against Harraald Hårdråde, who had killed Einar and their son Eindride. See Bjørnson/Grieg.)
6. Ålov Einarsson, their daughter, married Tord Folessen, standard-bearer at the Battle of Stiklestad.
7. Gudrun Torsdatter. Their daughter. Married to Skofte Ogmundsson from Giske in Sunnmøre. According to Snorre, they had the children Ogmund, Finn, Tord and Tora.
8. Taal of Giske in Sunnmøre. Their son.
9. Ingeborg Taalsdatter, their daughter, married Guttorm of Rein in Fosen.
10. Bård Guttormson (killed in battle in 1194), their son, a Norwegian Birkebeiner chieftain of the Rein family, married Sigurd Munn's daughter Cecilia and was father of King Inge Bårdsson. Bård was also married to Ragnhild.
11. Skule Bårdsson (1189–1240), Norwegian earl, later duke. Their son was the half-brother of King Inge Bårdsson. He hoped to succeed Inge, but the Birkebeiners chose Håkon

Håkonsen, who married Skule's daughter Margrete. Skule had himself proclaimed king, but was killed by the Birkebeiners at Elgseter Monastery.

12. Margrete, their daughter, married Håkon Håkonsson (Håkon the Old), 1204–1263. Håkon was the son of King Håkon Sverresson and Inga of Varteig, and was brought up in the household of King Inge Bårdsson.
13. Magnus Laagabøter (1238–1280), their son, King of Norway, married Ingebjørg (c. 1244–1287), daughter of the Danish king Erik Plogpenning (1216–1250), son of Valdemar Sejr (1170–1241). Ingebjørg exerted considerable influence over the government after King Magnus's death. They had the sons Eirik and Håkon. Their youngest son:
14. Håkon V Magnusson the Elder (1270–1319), King of Norway, married Eufemia of Ruppín (1270–1312), born on Rygen. He tried in vain to curb the Hanseatic merchants' growing influence. He built several fortresses, including Vardøhus because of Russian and Karelian raids. With Håkon, the male line of the Fairhair dynasty died out.
15. Agnes, their daughter, married Hafthor Jonson.
16. Sigurd Hafthorson, their son, married Ingeborg, daughter of Erling Vidkunsson. Erling Vidkunsson of Bjarkøy and Giske (c. 1292–1355), Norwegian knight. As steward of the realm, he governed the country during Magnus Eriksson's minority (1323–1332).
17. Agnes, their daughter, married Jon Martinsen (?) Sørum.
18. ??? Jonsdatter, their daughter, married Alf ???.
19. Gro Alfsdatter, their daughter, married councillor of the realm Mattis Jepsen Rømer. Rømer (Reymare), a Norwegian noble family, appears in the mid-fourteenth century. Its best-known members are the councillors Otte R. (died 1411) and his son Svale Ottesson (died before 1428), the last member of the family. From Jan's daughter descends the so-called younger Rømer family of Austråt. Lady Inger Ottedatter belongs to that family.
20. Otte Mattissøn Rømer (died 1411), their son, married Ingeborg, daughter of Luder Struck.
21. Inger Ottedatter Rømer, their daughter, of Østeråt in Fosen. She was married to Nils Henriksen Gyldenløve. Gyldenløve, a Norwegian noble family from the beginning of the fifteenth century. Among its members, the knight and councillor Henrik Jensson owned Austråt around 1450. His son was Lord Niels Henriksson (died 1523), Lord High Steward, of Austråt.

Their five daughters married Danish noblemen, by which the family's landed estates passed to Danish noble families. The family died out in 1597.

22. Margrethe Nilsdatter Gyldenløve (that is, the daughter of Lady Inger of Austråt) married Vincents Lunge (c. 1486–1536). He was a Norwegian councillor of the realm of Danish ancestry, professor and rector at the University of Copenhagen. He was sent to Norway in 1523 to win northern Norway for the king. Killed in 1536. Their daughter:

23. Blancaflor Lunge, married Daniel Knutsøn Bildt of Næs and Morland (?). (Bildt, a Danish-Norwegian noble family that became Swedish when Bohuslen was ceded under the Treaty of Roskilde in 1658.)

24. Otte Danielsen Bildt of Næs, their son. (1616).

25. Vincentz Bildt of Næss, their son, colonel, married Else Friis. (1658).

26. Ida Sophie Bildt, their daughter, married Colonel Frederik Otto Budde of Næss and Voss.

27. Christopher Budde, their son, married Else Green, lived at Rørholt in Bamble, died 28 December 1745. Christopher's brother Frederik Budde was Tordenskiold's second-in-command. (Aschehoug's encyclopaedia states: Oluf Christophersen Budde (1682–1744), Norwegian naval officer. Served with distinction in the Great Northern War and in 1719 was Tordenskjold's flag captain aboard the ship of the line "Laaland".)

28. Christopher Budde, born 19 October 1725, baptised 4 November 1725, pastor in Tingvold, married Margrethe Holck. Christopher married twice and had twenty children. The descendants of several of these children remained in Denmark.

29. Ole Christopher Budde, their son, born 17 May 1774, died 1849, naval captain, married Andrea Fredrikke Ottoline Arenfeldt, daughter of General Arenfeldt and his wife Peruline Harboe.

30. Talette Pauline Budde, their daughter, born 9 September 1814, died 1891, married Jens Hovland Otterbech, parish pastor in Andebu. She had three siblings: Fredrikke, who died unmarried; Adolp Jan of Østeraat in Jæren; and Andrea, married to Bruun. Pastor Otterbech and Talette Budde had nine children: Christopher, Ingvald, Trine, Julie, Rikard, Marie, Julie and Talette.

31. Christopher Andreas Otterbech, their son, born 25 March 1838 (brother of Ingvald Mathias). Mining superintendent, married Gunhilde Hoffmann, daughter of naval physician Hoffmann and his wife Fredrikke Christine Heiberg Wirsching, on 16 October 1867.

Christopher and Gunhilde Otterbech had twelve children, of whom the following died unmarried: Jenny Talette, Talette Jenny, Richard, Jullie, Frederik and Frederikke.

32. Carl Adolph Otterbech, their son, born 21 November 1885, married Karen Margrethe Luja Pettersen, dentist in Aamodt, Modum.

33. Rolf Fredrik Christopher Otterbech, born 21 January 1913. Hjørdis, born 16 August 1914; child: Mette, who had Tom and Morten. Einar Budde, born 17 May 1920; children: Lillen, Erika and Lars. Lillen has the children Nils H., Jørgen and Christian. Erika has the children Stein and Erika. Lars has no children.

34. Rolf, Per, Jan and Ellen Otterbech.

35. Thomas and Fredrik (Sandefjord) Otterbech.

Jan Adolph Bugge, son of no. 29 above, naval captain Budde, born 1811, theology graduate. Landowner, married Berthe Lindbom, has two children: Ole Christopher and Frederikke.

Ole Christopher, married Inga Kahrs. They had eight children:

1. Adolph, married a daughter of Dean Berge (six children).
2. Fredrik, married Louise Gedde-Dahl, captain in Congo. Childless.
3. Christopher, clerk to the town bailiff in Drammen.
4. Bertram (four children).
5. Harald (two children).
6. Augusta, married parish pastor Godal (three children).
7. Andrea.
8. Magda.

Frederikke first married Schjötz, and later Schjel(v?)e; childless.

Mining superintendent Otterbech (see item 31 above) had the following children:

1. Thomas Haffermann Otterbech, born 30 January 1868, married Sarah Lie; childless.
2. Ingvald Mathias Otterbech, born 27.??1870, married Astrid Skogvold (?), has two children: Ingrid, born (?), and ???, born 14.???

3. Jenny Talette (1872–1872)
4. Jenny Talette (1873–1892)
5. Fredrik Christian (1875–1879)
6. Richard (1877–1896)
7. Julie Andrea (1879–1902)
8. Frederikke Christine (1880–1899)
9. Gunnar Christopher, born 1881. High Court attorney.
10. Paul Henrik, born 1883, electrical engineer, married Sofie “Soffen” Bjørnstad; no children.
11. Ellen Marie, born 1884, unmarried.
12. Carl Adolph. See item 32 above.

Christoffer Otterbech, see item 31 above, had three paternal uncles and one paternal aunt. The eldest of them left two daughters and one son. The other three died unmarried.

Andrea, daughter of Commander Budde, see item 29 above, married diocesan dean A.H. Julius Bruun, and has four living children and six deceased children (at the time this register was written). Talette (died 1938), Ingerta and Charlotte (died 1928) had no children. The son Adolf Arenfeldt Bruun (died 1936) has three daughters who are still unmarried. He is a major, a “brigade doctor in Fredrichshald”, and is married to Ingeborg Meltzer. The daughters are: Julie, born 1892, Agnes, born 1894, and Kattie, born 1900. Julie is married to resident curate Pharo. Agnes is married to chief engineer Biele. Kattie is married to attorney Rønnestad.

Lecturer Frank Otterbech of Hønefoss sent us the following summary of our somewhat nearer ancestors in 1990:

1. Anders Eriksen Otterbech (1731–1781), Nøtterø/Tønsberg, merchant and ship’s captain. Married Elisabeth Kristine Matiasdatter Tokenes (1736–??) in 1764. Six children, of whom Mathias and Lars are specifically mentioned here.
2. Mathias Otterbech (1764–1822), Tønsberg. Ship’s captain. Married Ingeborg Maria Jensdatter Hovland (1779–1865) on 03.01.1800. Son Jens (1801–1863), priest,

member of Parliament, Andebu. Married Talette Pauline Budde (1814–1891). The parents of Ingvald Mathias.

3. Lars Otterbech (1776–??). Married Maren Hansdatter. Son Andreas.
4. Andreas Otterbech (1805–1865). Tønsberg. Married Amalie Magdalena Kölner. Daughter Amalie.
5. Amalie Otterbech (1860–1896). Married Peder Otto Pedersen. Larvik. Tobacco manufacturer. Daughter Magda.
6. Magda Otterbech (1887–). Larvik. Horten. Married Carsten Christiansen (1888–1971). Drammen–Hamar–Horten. Mechanic.
7. Frank Otterbech (1924–2015). Horten–Hønefoss. Lecturer. Married Mali Svortdal (1924–). Hønefoss. Secondary-school teacher.
8. Rolf Otterbech (1962–).

Appendix 2
From the Andebu parish
chronicle concerning
JENS HOVLAND OTTERBECH

Extract from the Andebu parish chronicle concerning the parish priest

Jens Hovland Otterbech, parish priest of Andebu from and through 1831–1863, died in Andebu and was buried in Andebu churchyard. He was born in Tønsberg on 21 January 1801 to parents of little means. The pastors Münster and Tandberg, together with others in Tønsberg, took care of him and supported him so that he was able to sit the university entrance examination. After passing the theological professional examination with the grade *Laudabilis*, he became parish priest of Hvaløerne in 1824 at the age of 23. In 1829 he was transferred to the parish priest's office in Andebu, which he held until his death in 1863.

In this office he devoted himself zealously to the school and to confirmation instruction. In his home he taught several of the district's young people, who later became teachers in the parish's schools. He enjoyed great esteem among the old "Haugians", of whom not a few lived in Andebu in his time. They showed him great confidence. Yet he hardly had any closer pastoral relationship with them. In his spiritual outlook he did not understand them and offended them—and also others in the congregation—by his apparently extreme ... [wording missing in the source] ... of the Christian (He was a very keen card player—a regular participant in the weekly club evenings in Tønsberg).

There is no doubt that many took offence at this. But he must have been a man of robust health, for it is related that he could come home from the club in the morning after spending the whole night at the card table, then in the carriage or sleigh, and go straight to his clerical duties. What did much to soften the judgment was his unquestionable ability as a municipal official. He was of great use to Andebu municipality in ... [wording missing in the source] He thus helped to establish the savings bank that still exists in Andebu. In a year of grain shortage, he arranged for a large quantity of seed grain to be purchased, thereby enabling the farmers to obtain the seed they needed on lenient terms. He was entrusted with every position of trust in the municipality.

Throughout his term of office he was municipal mayor, chairman of the school commission and of the poor-relief commissions, and of the district's ... [wording missing in the source]. He was a member of Parliament twice, in 1842 and 1848, and attended the Storting in 1862 as a deputy. As a member of Parliament he belonged to the so-called Farmers' Party.

He was an authoritative man who commanded great respect. When he instructed the confirmation candidates, there were not only frequent slaps to the ears, but often very severe beatings as well. All the young people had to stand throughout the entire instruction, which took place in the church and generally lasted as long as five hours. Especially for those who had walked long distances, it was not easy to remain awake while standing, but fear of the strict priest was so great that it did not happen very often that anyone dozed off, whereas fainting was not uncommon.

Despite everything, he was nevertheless well liked in the congregation. [Wording unclear: the source appears to say that he was often paid generously], so together with his large fortune he had a good livelihood. During his term of office there was no question of collecting any of the office's revenues by force. In his later years he became sickly. ... [wording missing in the source] ... and, in order to provide the congregation with a fuller ministry of the Word of God, for which the great religious movements then taking place in the congregation created a need, a personal chaplain was appointed.

(The above information was obtained by former parish priest of Andebu Hans E. Hansen, from information supplied by Otterbech's son-in-law, parish priest Kjonig, who for several years was O.'s personal chaplain. Andebu, 08/6 1912. J.F.).

Appendix 3

Jens Otterbech: Priest and Organisational Leader

Norwegian Biographical Dictionary

Priest and organisational leader. Parents: parish priest Ingvald Mathias Otterbech (1841–70) and Anna Louise de Seue (1841–91). Married Hanna Marie Krogh (29.4.1873–2.9.1953) in Bergen on 3.8.1894; she was the daughter of office clerk Jonas Anton Krogh (1850–78) and Jacobine ("Bine") Alette Berentsen (1851–92). Maternal great-grandfather of Truls Mørk (1961–).

Nearly ten years as a priest in Finnmark, the region of his childhood, made Jens Otterbech a committed advocate of Sámi rights and a strong critic of the Norwegian authorities' Norwegianisation policy. He was active in organising the home mission among the Sámi in the decades after 1900.

Otterbech's father was parish priest in Talvik, but died when his son was only two years old. The widow moved with her two sons to Christiania, where Jens Otterbech passed the examen artium at Gjertsen's School in 1886. He wished to follow in his father's footsteps as a priest among the Sámi and earned the cand.theol. degree in 1891; two years later he took the university examination in Sámi. After a year as a teacher at Nordstrand Middle School, he made a four-month study trip to Germany in 1893 to study Christian social work. In the spring of 1894 he took up his first post in Finnmark, as manager of the fishermen's home in Vardø. In May of that same year he was appointed parish priest in Kistrand (Porsanger), where he remained until 1902, when he became parish priest in Aure in Møre og Romsdal. From 1907 to 1912 he was third priest in Hetland near Stavanger and thereafter resident chaplain there until failing health led him to seek retirement in 1919.

The final years of his life were far from inactive. He could now devote all his time to a field he had cared deeply about ever since his period as parish priest in Kistrand: Christian social work among the Sámi and questions of Sámi culture and society. It is above all his commitment to Sámi affairs that has made Otterbech known to posterity. He also distinguished himself in the temperance cause and as a pacifist.

Otterbech returned to Finnmark at a time of economic, social and cultural transition for the Sámi. Society was being modernised while Norwegian minority policy was being tightened. Full assimilation of the Sámi and Kven peoples was the stated goal, driven by nation-building, security policy in the north's "vulnerable border regions", and prevailing ideas of development and enlightenment. "Norwegianisation policy" was the official term for minority policy. The authorities also demanded the church's loyalty in the Norwegianisation effort. In Kistrand, Otterbech became deeply involved in the

Christian social work and helped, among other things, to bring about the construction by Norsk Finnmission (founded in 1888) of a care home there for elderly and sick Sámi people. Dedicated in 1903, it was the first of its kind in Finnmark. Toward the end of his time in Kistrand, he and parish priest G. Tandberg in the neighbouring parish of Lebesby assumed editorship of the Finn mission's Sámi-language periodical Sami Usteb (The Lapps' Friend). One aim of the Finn mission was to meet the Sámi in their own language, in accordance with Luther's command that God's word be given in the mother tongue. Through his work among and for the Sámi, Otterbech developed a more radical view of cultural and language policy, and in time he came to lead a circle of priests opposed to the prevailing minority policy.

After Otterbech came to Stavanger—to a low-church environment with a strong interest in mission both abroad and at home, and with a local home-mission movement deeply engaged in mission among the Sámi—he assumed an increasing number of responsibilities in this work. In 1910 he again joined the editorial staff of The Lapps' Friend. That same year he made a decisive contribution to establishing an alternative Sámi mission organisation, the Norwegian Lutheran Finn Mission Federation. Otterbech led the federation until his death. It was founded partly as a protest against the rather undemocratic organisation of Norsk Finnmission and partly in opposition to its moderate and conservative positions on Sámi cultural and social issues. (In 1925 the organisations merged to form Norsk Finnemisjonselskap, known from 1966 as Norges Samemisjon.) The Lapps' Friend became the new federation's organ and the voice of church opposition to the Norwegianisation policy. In 1917, in connection with the 400th anniversary of the Reformation, Otterbech and his colleague Johs. Hidle published the book Norwegianisation in Finnmark, a collection of contributions that subjected Norwegianisation to searching criticism—a policy pursued “on the Prussian model”, as the foreword puts it. In 1920 Otterbech followed this with the book Cultural Values among Norway's Finns (that is, the Sámi).

Jens Otterbech was put forward as one of the candidates in the 1918 election for bishop of the Diocese of Tromsø. He received a large majority of the clergy's votes, but the government chose to appoint another candidate, Johan N. Støren, after a heated debate over Otterbech's candidacy in which non-theological questions were the main focus: his critical stance toward state minority policy in the north and his clearly expressed pacifist views. Opinions have differed as to which of these two issues proved decisive in his loss of the episcopal election. Both probably weighed heavily against him.

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Appendix 4

Meeting with Wilhelm's Descendants in Fiji, November 1980

A brief summary of the first meeting of descendants between the families of Jens and Wilhelm Otterbech, respectively, in Fiji, 23–24 November 1980

We, a Norwegian shipping delegation, arrived at Nadi Airport, Fiji, in the very early morning of 23 November 1980. Warm, humid air met us at an airport that seemed rather deserted and empty of people. Behind a wire-mesh fence on the way into the waiting room stood a few dozen of the country's citizens, waiting for "theirs". It did not occur to me that perhaps some of "mine" were among them too. Once through, [the wording is syntactically incomplete in the source] those who had come to meet people watched the disembarking passengers with alert eyes. A few minutes later our two taxis were on their way to the Hotel Regent, where we were to spend the next two days recovering something of our daily rhythm after twenty to thirty hours in the air en route.

We arrived just in time for breakfast in the completely open dining area among the palms, with the beach, lagoon and coral reef directly before us. The impression was overwhelming.

When we were almost finished with breakfast, my colleague drew my attention to the fact that my name appeared on a board being carried around among the guests, with a message asking a certain Mr Otterbech to report to reception. Somewhat surprised and unsuspecting, I went over and was met there by a small group consisting of both adults and children.



One of the younger people came toward me and asked whether I was Jens Otterbech. When I confirmed that I was, the others came closer, and like a bolt from a clear blue sky I suddenly realised that descendants of Jens and Wilhelm were at last standing face to face, for the first time since the two men had parted ways in 1892.

I suddenly found myself facing Wilhelm's two daughters, their respective spouses, and some of their children and grandchildren. Before I had time to think, in accordance with an old Fiji tradition I had a beautiful flower garland around my neck, two warm handshakes and embraces that spoke plainly of human warmth and genuine joy. The same was true of the eyes in faces radiant with kindness. Their skin was darker than mine; the elder woman's hair was curly and grey, and the other's curly and brown. Their spouses remained modestly in the background but followed the event with the greatest attention. The elder introduced herself as Anna and the younger as Hellen. Their respective spouses were Emanuel and Samuel.

None of us had yet composed ourselves enough to say anything coherent or sensible, but I shall never forget Anna's first words. They remained as a radiant frame around everything that followed and were, in Norwegian translation: "At last. Thank God that the bonds have been tied again. Now I can pass away in peace."

The family had already decided that if her daughter, who was then expecting a child, had a boy, he would be christened Jens.

We sat down in the lobby, and I had my first—and for the time being last—opportunity to host our rediscovered family, who lived on the other side of the world. They had with them a fourteen-year-old daughter and a charming little dark-haired, dark-skinned eighteen-month-old named Wilhelm.

Time flew. News of what was happening here and now spread like wildfire. First the hotel director appeared with his own photographer. Less than an hour later, a journalist and a photographer from the country's largest newspaper, The Fiji Times, stood before us—ready for the day's great event.

The explanation of how the family had been traced can be summarised briefly as follows: fourteen days earlier, my Australian colleague at their embassy in Stockholm had informed his Fiji colleague about my challenge. The latter had then contacted

the newspaper's editorial office, which had published a short article seeking Wilhelm Otterbech's two daughters. The two families had read it and decided to appear at Nadi Airport early on Sunday morning. They later said that they had continued to doubt until the meeting actually took place. Thus, when the newspaper's representatives appeared with the opening remark, "We helped you fine [sic] your family. Now we have the story," there was nothing to do but tell the whole story again; and by the next morning, as the attached clipping shows, we were front-page news throughout Fiji.

None of us knew where to begin or where to end. Thoughts came and went. There was far too much to tell and ask for us to keep a tight hold on the thread. Gradually, however, the outlines of the earlier story began to emerge.

The fragments became pictures. Wilhelm spent only his first three years in Australia before moving permanently to Fiji. There he entered the banana trade, with a station far from any roads and dependent on river transport to and from the outside world. There he married an Indigenous woman and had first Anna in 1916 and then Hellen (Ellen?) in 1927. It never became a large business, but he was a good family man and gave the children a good upbringing. At this outpost he himself took care of medical treatment. He spoke little about the country of his childhood. He used some Norwegian with the children, but not enough for it to be retained by later generations. By way of explaining why he left Norway, he had only once briefly mentioned that it was due to an impulsive reaction when he returned home from studies in another part of the country and found that his brother had become friendly with his girlfriend. Later, he had never earned enough money for a return journey.

In his final years he struggled somewhat with the effects of a broken leg, and he died in the presence of his wife and Anna in 1952. His wife outlived him by ten years, and both are buried near their home area, where Anna was then living with her family.

Anna had six children with her first husband, who later died. She remarried and had a further three children. They were now all adults and, for the most part, married. She had twenty-three grandchildren and three great-grandchildren. She became a Catholic because she nearly died at birth and, in the absence of a Protestant minister, was baptised Catholic. Her parents promised to raise her in that faith.

Hellen also has nine children, but two died. She has three grandchildren, one of whom is little Wilhelm. They live in a house that is good by local standards and have all seven children living at home. She is Protestant. Both homes are marked by Christian faith. The two husbands also seemed

like very good fathers, with a pronounced appreciation of the importance of the family as an institution. There was clearly a very good relationship between parents and children.

But now back to the further course of events. We parted after the first meeting at around midday, agreeing that I would be collected the next morning. The event caused me to take time away from my delegation's planned official programme. We were to gather for a large family celebration at Hellen's home. I was collected by her husband and little Wilhelm. The journey took more than an hour, and on arrival I found a cosy but still somewhat unfinished house beside a peaceful canal, surrounded by palms and other tropical vegetation such as breadfruit, mango, cassava, bananas, and so on. My arrival was without doubt a major event. Children, children-in-law and grandchildren had come from near and far.

While the younger people prepared the celebratory meal—a whole roasted pig cooked on glowing stones, wrapped in palm leaves and buried beneath wet sacks for about two hours—I sat with the parents in the living room and used the time to fill gaps in our knowledge that had arisen since the two brothers parted ways in 1892. We all felt a need to stop time. Much remained unsaid. Anna and Hellen arranged both cakes and lunch while we awaited the great feast that evening. While the final preparations were being made, I was taken out to see the coast, with its impressive coral reef and equally magnificent lagoon.



Back at the house, the young people had finished the work and settled themselves around the covered terrace in front of the house (see the picture above). At the main table there was room only for us adults and the eldest son, Malakai. It began with grace, followed by Malakai's speech to me and the Norwegian part of the family on behalf of all the young people. It was powerful, warm and unforgettable. Anna and Emanuel discreetly made me aware that on such an occasion I too would probably have to speak, but that they would give me a signal when the moment came. First, however, we ate the meal that had been prepared with such enormous effort.

Earlier, [the subject is missing in the source] had been honoured by drinking from a special bowl containing a very traditional drink once offered by tribal chiefs when strangers arrived from far away. The drink, called kava, is made from a ground powder mixed with water, from a particular root that produces a mildly intoxicating effect.

After a meal that was both long and excellent, the whole family—now numbering a little over thirty people—gathered on the terrace, where it was my turn. I began with the earlier story, mentioned the results of my meagre investigations in Norway, and spoke of how utterly incredible it was that we had nevertheless managed to find one another. Malakai, speaking on behalf of the young people, stressed that the family's younger members would make sure that contact was never again lost.

But this day, too—a day so incredible to me—was now drawing to a close. Neither Anna nor Hellen would let me be driven the sixty kilometres back so late in the evening without company. With Samuel at the wheel, me beside him, and Anna, Hellen and little Wilhelm in the back seat, we returned to the hotel. The farewell was hard. We all knew that perhaps we would never meet again. Anna, who at once radiated genuine human warmth and goodness, broke down completely in tears as we parted; the last I saw of her was her grey-haired head bowed forward, weeping into her hands in the car's back seat. At that moment I too was deeply affected. Helen and Samuel were also greatly moved. Nevertheless, filled with a profound sense of enrichment and gratitude, I watched the car carrying the two of them disappear into the tropical night. I promised myself that one day my family and I would return. It is my heartfelt wish that the Norwegian part of the Otterbech family accept the gift we have suddenly received here: a numerous family of humble people, hardly wealthy, but in return strong and warm.

Attached is the newspaper article mentioned, together with the latest version of our family in Fiji, which has by now grown so large. Let us all do our part to maintain the connections for the generations to come as well.

Jens Otterbech

Appendix 5
“JOYFUL VISIT FOR JENS”
 News coverage in The Fiji Times, 24 November 1980

The Fiji Times

THE FIRST NEWSPAPER PUBLISHED
IN THE WORLD TODAY

FORECAST: Cloudy.

11th Year No. 258
MONDAY, NOVEMBER 24, 1980
28 PAGES 15c

LEADERS SLAM SUGAR TAX

Mae West is dead

HOLLYWOOD — Legendary Hollywood comedienne Mae West, who married six husbands, died yesterday at the age of 86, a spokesman said. At 10:30 am and about 10:40 pm, the actress was seen in her room and then was found dead.

Happy reunion

IT'S a moment of great joy for these three people...Mr Jens Otterbech, of Norway (centre), had a surprise welcome from his two Fiji cousins, sisters Mrs Anna Roseru (left) and Mrs Helen Rounds when he arrived at Nadi yesterday. Mr Otterbech did not even know he had any surviving relatives in Fiji after contact with his grandfather's brother, Wilhelm Otterbech, who had come to settle in Fiji early this century, was broken 48 years ago. The full story of this happy family reunion is on Page 3. — Picture by ARIN CHANDRA

Happy reunion

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JOYFUL VISIT FOR JENS

It has an element of fantasy and drama, but when the Otterbechs of Norway and the Otterbechs of Fiji were reunited yesterday after 48 years of no contact it was for real all right.

Norwegian civil servant Jens Otterbech was passing through Nadi on business and sent word before hand on that he had thought was a futile hope of catching up with the descendants of a relative who settled here before World War II.

But he got the surprise of his life when, while having breakfast at the Regent Hotel yesterday, his hope turned to reality as his Fiji relatives came up and gave him a joyful welcome.

His Fiji relatives had seen an item in last Tuesday's Fiji Times containing a message Mr. Otterbech sent to the Australian High Commission from Stockholm expressing the hope of finding his Fiji connection.

"I have 10,000 things to tell them and I don't know where to start," a beaming Mr. Otterbech, speaking at the

Regent in Nadi, said.

And one of his Fiji relatives, Mrs. Anna Roseru, chimed in, "If I had tail it would be wagging away full speed right now."

Sitting between Mrs. Roseru and his other relative, Mrs. Helen Rounds, Mr. Otterbech recounted the story of his "Fiji connection" as he had been told of it by his father.

It all began some time after 1910 when his grandfather's brother, Wilhelm Otterbech, an adventurer who never remained long in one place, left for Australia, where he set up a farm.

The family didn't hear much of him until 1932, when he sent a card saying he had settled in the Naduri area of Vanu Levu in Fiji and was trading in bananas.

He also said in the card that he had two daughters, Anna, now 64, and living in Nausori with her husband Manuelli, and Helen, now 53 and living with her husband, Sam, in Sigatoka.

Mr. Jens Otterbech said he remembered his father telling

him about his uncle in Australia, but they were never able to trace him after that last card 48 years ago.

Then last month Mr. Otterbech was told about the final Government trip he would be making to Fiji, New Zealand and Australia in his capacity as Deputy Director-General in the Ministry of Trade and Shipping.

"I thought that if I didn't succeed now, none of us will ever be able to do it because no one will travel this far out to make first hand inquiries", he said.

That was when he sent off his message through the Australian Embassy in Stockholm.

"But I thought it would be impossible to find it because the daughters would have married and the name of Otterbech would have been gone forever in Fiji," he said.

Mr. Otterbech, 47, married with three children, will go to Mr. Round's home in Sigatoka today while the head of the Government delegation goes to Suva to meet Government representatives.

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Appendix 6
Letter of thanks from Wilhelm's daughter Anna for
our help
Fiji Islands, 13 February 1982

Delailasakau
Waimatu, Naisioro,
P.O. NAWALI
SUVA, FIJI ISLANDS.
13.2.82

Dear Jens,
I would like to let you know that I have received the money you sent on the 12th of this month February 1982. I am writing this letter on the 13th. The money 18,300 worth \$2,737.98c in Fiji currency. I would like to express my very warm congratulations to you mostly, and all my relatives in Norway for this large sum of money. My family and me are very thankful to you all. Thanks very much for the great help. To us poor like my family, when we have some money like this we call ourselves rich, because this is the first time we receive a large sum like this in our life.

We will use this money to build a nice little house and we will use some to develop our land. We to just lease a piece of land 50 acres. The work will be much easier for us. We will make our house by buying shingles & cut local wood from the bush. It may cost us \$1,600.00. This will include roof, nails, doors & windows etc. Asaton and Ingrid wrote to me and they said that you are very busy indeed, travelling from Norway to other countries because of your work.

Jens I would like to let you know that you lift us from dead to life, from poor to rich. I am very happy indeed. I thank you again & all my relatives for the donation we just received. All our very best regard to your wife Edith to Renee, to Lynne and Thond. Before I stop I would like to thank you once again and please pass my very warmest regards to each one of my relatives, mostly all the Otterbech in Norway for the large donation which I just received. Thank you. I will write again. May our Heavenly Father Bless you & your family
Love from
Aunt Anna O. Rosen



Appendix 7

Meeting with Wilhelm's descendants in Fiji, 10.11-18.11.1988

Edith Otterbech's travel letter



Helen and Anna



Grandmother Anna with her grandchildren Ingrid & Jens

Saturday, 10 September 1988

It is five in the morning. Our aircraft has just landed at Nadi Airport, Fiji. As we crossed the International Date Line over the Pacific, we simply lost a day of our lives: the 9th.

September 1988. Sleepy-faced but inwardly excited about what we would encounter here, we went through passport control. Then came the customary wait for our luggage. Every time I am equally astonished when, amid crowds everywhere, a maze of counters and a sea of suitcases, bags and various sacks, our own suitcases nevertheless suddenly appear.

But at last we have come this far. We push the trolley with our suitcases into the arrivals hall. Behind the barrier stands a large group of people of all ages and both sexes who are clearly waiting for us. One after another, young and old embrace us. Flower garlands are placed around our necks, and there are kisses and hugs in abundance. It was almost as though they had always known us. Some young men take charge of our suitcases and, like queen bees surrounded by a swarm, we leave the building on our way to the bus. We get in, and one of our young male second cousins takes the wheel.

Thus begins our adventure journey in Fiji. The adults laugh and talk, while the children send us many shy, questioning looks. They are surely wondering what these rather strange-looking people are doing here. We travel along a country road through rolling terrain. Everything looks dried out, and I ask myself: where, then, is the much-discussed paradise? From time to time we pass simple clusters of small houses. They belong to ethnic-Indian farmers who lease the land from Fijians and cultivate it with great diligence. We are told that the country's Indian citizens are not permitted to own land. In return, the entire business sector is in their hands. They are generally very industrious, while the Fijians themselves are better known for living somewhat from day to day. I cannot help but marvel at these people's openness on this point.

After about an hour we arrive at the Reef Hotel. We are to spend the first night here, at only half price because, in a sense, we are regarded as Fijians.

First, however, I must introduce the person chiefly responsible for our stay in Fiji. His name is Malakai. He is the son of Wilhelm's eldest daughter, Anna. Malakai has taken the entire week off so that he can devote himself fully to looking after us. We retire to our room to catch up on some sleep. At twelve o'clock we will be collected again to go to the home of Helen, Wilhelm's second daughter. A large feast is being prepared. Helen is sixty-three and lives in a small town beside a broad river. Its bridge gives the town the status of a transport junction. The house has a beautiful view where it lies amid greenery on the slope down toward the river.

There we meet several family members. The young men sit in groups on the ground and drink beer from cans. Before our arrival they have been responsible for heating a collection of stones in an earth pit behind the house. The various dishes, including a whole pig carcass, are wrapped in palm leaves and cooked by being covered together with the glowing stones.

In the kitchen, which is assumed to be behind a curtain, are the women, including some of the household's daughters and daughters-in-law. The family's elders sit on the veranda and, according to local custom, are to eat first. The children dash incessantly from one group to another. Jens and I struggle to follow the many explanations of who is who, what everyone is called and who is married to whom. We soon give up and concentrate a little more on the different dishes that we will gradually eat. As guests of honour, we of course belong to the first seating group. The menu includes tomatoes, a kind of spinach, various salads, tapioca, chicken and pork, Chinese spaghetti, sweet potatoes and rice. Conversation is lively. The two oldest people at the table, the hostess's mother and her brother, are discreetly fed by another family member; both are over ninety. When the meal is over, the first seating group withdraws and is followed by the young men waiting on the veranda. I only hope that the women in the gathering also received their fair share during the meal. In any case, everyone looks well nourished. The conversation continues at length, but because of the time difference Jens and I gradually find it difficult to concentrate. This is met with great understanding, and by five in the afternoon we are already in our deepest sleep.

Sunday, 11 September 1988

Today the journey is to the capital, Suva. We are collected together with one of the young sons and both aunts. The road runs mainly along the coast. Very lush vegetation on every side increasingly confirms my image of a tropical Pacific island. We are told that the island's western side receives little rain and is therefore brown and dried out for long periods. The eastern side, by contrast, regularly receives abundant rain, so that something or other can be cultivated throughout the year. With nature this generous, no one in Fiji need starve. Whenever we look out toward the sea, we see the coral reef surrounding the island like a protective wall. No destructive waves ever reach the shore; the coral reef sees to that. Everywhere the vegetation extends right down to the shoreline, creating almost paradisiacal conditions. From time to time we pass a village. Almost everywhere there is some relative of the family living nearby. Of course we could stop and pay a visit, but somewhere we had to draw certain limits. In Suva there is, in the truest sense of the word, a kind of Sunday stillness. There is almost no one to be seen in the street. As passengers in a solitary car, we arrive at our hotel. The journey took three hours.

Jens and I spoke at length with our two aunts about their lives, their parents and Uncle Wilhelm. We are told that Wilhelm ran a cattle farm, which makes sense in light of his training in Norway. His employer was a Dutch farmer who at that time operated a cattle farm in the interior of the island. Wilhelm had built himself a pleasant little house there. His employer considered Wilhelm's loneliness unfortunate and sent him a local housekeeper

who was the widow of a Chinese man and had a daughter with him. In time, Wilhelm had two daughters with her. The first was born in 1917 and christened Anna, while the second was born in 1928 and christened Helen. Each of the two sisters had nine children and eventually had countless grandchildren and great-grandchildren. Altogether, the number of family members eventually came to be estimated at around one hundred. Wilhelm was very fond of his two daughters. He was a good father.

Wilhelm spent his last five years with his eldest daughter, Anna, in a smaller house on the other side of the same river. Some years earlier he had fractured his thigh bone. The leg became shorter and caused increasing difficulty with walking. The daughters also spoke of their father's exceptional ability to understand and accept Fijian culture and ways of thinking. In the final years of his life he often sat with the men in a nearby village. If people or animals fell ill, Uncle Wilhelm could often help with sound advice and, in some cases, obtain medicine from Suva. At that time, Suva could be reached only by riverboat. Although Uncle Wilhelm had integrated very well into the local community, he remained a lonely man. He surrounded himself with an impenetrable and mysterious wall. We clearly sensed how deeply the two daughters loved and respected their father. Unlike their mother, their father had never beaten them or treated them brutally in any way. Yet, despite the love and kindness he had always shown his two daughters, he nevertheless remained distant and unreachable.

Monday, 12 September 1988

From now on, our base in Suva was a hotel right in the middle of the city, where business travellers generally stayed. The entire hotel staff seemed especially well disposed towards the two of us. Word of the curious relatives from Norway had plainly reached this place as well. The day's programme was to become a little better acquainted with the city itself. Malakai lives in Suva. In the meantime, our two aunts, together with his wife and five children, had settled into his palace (as he himself called his house). Behind the scenes, preparations were meanwhile under way for our expedition into the interior. Since no telephone line ran there, the already well-tested bush telegraph had to be put to use. That is something the Fijians are particularly adept at. Quite early, we are installed in the foyer of an elegant beach hotel and enjoy ourselves. Meanwhile, Malakai drives around at full speed to get the various arrangements in place.

After two hours we are collected and make our way to the city's botanical garden. The weather is absolutely wonderful. A pleasant breeze provides the necessary ventilation as we enjoy the park's South Seas atmosphere. There is also a museum where hairpins, weapons and other objects introduce us to the local culture. On the way back, we are also introduced to the local beach hotel, which was built in traditional English colonial style. Everything is painted white, and in the spacious halls stand

old-fashioned wicker chairs with small tables scattered about, simply waiting for guests who might want a cup of English tea. Fans hang beneath the high ceilings and circulate the air through the room. The ballroom, reading room, bar and billiards room are all there. The reception desk with its till is relatively modest and is protected by a thick iron grille. The entire establishment evokes the atmosphere of bygone colonial times, with a worn and dusty aura.

The city of Suva is not particularly large. The various shops offer only the most essential necessities, such as clothing, household goods and tools. There is also a department store. At first glance, everything seems very cheap to us, but on closer inspection it often proves to be mostly goods of poor quality. Food, on the other hand, is bought at the city's market. It is full of life throughout the day. People meet there and learn everything that has happened since they last met. Every kind of tropical fruit can be found. Gigantic root crops, especially cassava, are arranged in row upon row. Large freshwater shellfish and all kinds of fish are also offered. The people are all very colourful in their dress, and most of the men wear a kind of skirt wrapped around the waist. It must be a descendant of the grass skirt. The traffic is lively and, compared with yesterday's streets empty of both people and cars, it seems as though the city has undergone a kind of resurrection.

It was the missionaries who, in their day, Christianised Fiji. Hindu Indians are now in the majority, which, the writer says, also contributed to the Fijians carrying out a coup d'état. For the same Christian reason, Sundays are now observed strictly as holy days, with no buses or taxis. Everything is closed except the churches.

Early in the afternoon, we say goodbye to Malakai for the time being. His brother owns a taxi. We shall hire it, and tomorrow we will set out early to travel up into the interior—to the place where Uncle Wilhelm once lived.

Tuesday, 13 September 1988

At nine o'clock the next morning, Malakai is ready outside the hotel with both aunts and his young son. His brother's taxi is also ready to set off. The journey takes us through the city and up a ridge with many beautiful houses surrounded by lush gardens. The sun has still not consumed all the morning dew. Along the roads we see several schoolchildren in their uniforms. Numerous dwellings, with curtains fluttering out of their windows, sit like cardboard boxes scattered at random through exceptionally lush countryside. A winding road slowly disappears into ever denser virgin forest. Soon there are no more people to be seen. Now and then, through a wall of leaves, we can glimpse a solitary little hut. Fortunately, we encounter an oncoming car only very rarely. The road is paved only in places and is really suitable only for one-way traffic. We ourselves are regularly shaken in every direction.

After another hour's drive, the forest gradually becomes more open and suddenly the landscape gives way to a little valley that is utterly idyllic. A fairly broad river meanders through a storybook landscape marked by small ridges along the way. We see grazing cattle everywhere. We stop, for here we have plainly arrived on 'holy' ground. In the distance we see a couple of isolated houses. Our attention is drawn especially to one of them. It stands quite alone on a slight rise in the landscape. It is their childhood home. In Wilhelm's time there was no road connection. Reverently, we absorb the area's beauty, stillness and peace. We agreed that our late uncle had found himself an exceptionally beautiful little place on this earth of ours.



Wilhelm's home during his time as an estate manager

Suddenly, two Fijian women appear on the road with enormous loads of vegetables on their backs. A mutual outburst of joy pulls Jens and me from our reverent mood. Two new relatives had appeared and naturally had to greet the relatives from the 'cold' island. After much commotion, the journey continued until, a short time later, we entered a small cluster of houses. Here everything erupts. Both of the vegetable women come from here, so it is not surprising that we meet still more relatives. We then continue on foot towards one particular house—or rather, a kind of hut. All the while we are surrounded by a whole crowd of children. The adults come out of the huts and greet us exceptionally warmly while talking in a torrent with our two aunts. In the meantime, we have learned our first word in Fijian. It is 'bula' and can be used in any greeting situation.

As we thus hand out 'bula' greetings to right and left, we slowly make our way up to the hut where the half-sister of our two aunts lives. She is the daughter whom the housekeeper had with her Chinese husband before the housekeeper, then a widow, came to Wilhelm's house and eventually became the mother of Anna and Helen. The half-sister sits cross-legged on her straw-mat floor and welcomes us with a radiantly warm and kindly toothless face. We are both very surprised that she speaks English as well. Our two aunts try to persuade her to tell us a little about the time when Wilhelm was alive, but her memory was probably no longer at its best. After about half an hour we leave, having gained nothing from the conversation, and Jens takes one last photograph of the three sisters. Their shared mother had spent the final years of her life in the same house. Wilhelm's own house is still visible in the distance. On the way down the hill from the house, there is ample opportunity to send 'bula' greetings in every direction as the journey continues to Wilhelm's burial place.

Along the way we pass several Indian farmers' huts. We also pass a school with children at play. It seems that Malakai and our two aunts know everyone. There is continual waving and conversation. Then we reach a large river and the road ends. On the other side we glimpse a small village of thatched huts.



The river forms an absolute boundary between electricity, roads, school and so forth on one side, and a way of life directly connected to the surrounding natural world and reaching far back in time on the other. The river winds between banks that are steep in places. On the far side we catch sight of the village's landing and washing place. A great commotion immediately breaks out in

the exchange between them, Malakai and the two aunts. We are told that a little girl in the village died during the previous night. All the men had therefore gathered for the traditional mourning ceremony with kava. Jens and I make it clear that of course we do not wish to intrude in any way at such a moment. Our Fijian hosts, however, will hear none of it, and a narrow riverboat is already on its way across to collect us. We understand that, among these people living close to nature, birth and death alike are part of everyday life. We have left the car beside the wall of the house of an Indian farmer who lives there. He and his family, too, are old acquaintances of our two aunts. The Indian family invites us to have something to drink. It is a pale pink drink and tastes absolutely excellent. The house is simple, but decorated and furnished with a great deal of love. The garden is exceptionally well tended, yet blends beautifully into the lush wilderness around it.

Across the river from where we stand, we catch sight of an isolated little house about one kilometre from the village we are now to visit. Anna lived there as a newlywed, and he was well cared for there during the last five years of his life. She sat by his side until the very end. According to



Anna, his final words there were: 'Please God, take me away from these sufferings.' We would never learn what may have lain behind those words.

Then the boat arrives. It is very long and exceptionally narrow, with a pointed bow at each end. We make our way down through the surrounding wilderness and out onto the riverbank. Boarding proves to be quite a challenge. One wrong

move and we would all have ended up in the river. Once safely aboard, we sit in single file during

the crossing. I sat with a strong feeling that we had now left civilisation's last outpost. A hundred years earlier, Jens and I would surely have ended up in the cooking pot, for at that time and in that place the Fijians commonly ate their enemies. But since we were relatives instead, such anxiety was of course entirely unfounded.

At first we travel a little way upstream. At the landing place we had to perform a delicate balancing act over a large rock and then continue up a narrow path, with local people surrounding us on every side. The path led up to the settlement's main hut. It too is built with reed mats. There is virtually no furniture. Along the walls, the settlement's men have already taken their places on the floor mats. We enter with bowed heads, cast friendly glances in every direction and sit down in the place assigned to us on the floor, directly opposite all the others. Malakai and the aunts modestly sit down by the door on the opposite side. Suddenly we are sitting entirely on our own before the population of a whole village that lives far beyond most of the modern world. To one side of us, a young man sits before a very large hollowed wooden bowl on four legs, all carved from a single piece of wood. It contains an indeterminate grey liquid. To me it looks very much like extremely well-used washing-up water. Reverently, the young man half-fills a coconut shell and, with several refills, passes it around the circle. After taking a mouthful, each person claps both hands together with a loud smack. We were plainly being accorded a great honour. Jens and I may both have looked a little worried, wondering how we should handle this. If we drank it, we clearly risked spending the rest of our stay in Fiji in bed at the hotel. Fortunately, without our having to do anything, our relatives evidently managed to talk us out of the situation without causing offence. We learned, however, that whenever something special happens in the village, the men gather in the main hut to drink kava together.

After a short while, our relatives rise to seek out Wilhelm's grave. The village itself consists of about twenty thatched huts. Each hut has an allotted plot of ground, mostly covered with grass. We leave the village enclosure and make our way into the jungle. There we find gigantic banana trees. Sugar cane and bamboo are also abundant. It is almost a little dark inside, where the sun often cannot penetrate all the way to the ground. Suddenly we stand before a small patch of earth surrounded by an almost overgrown and weathered rectangular masonry enclosure the size of a grave.



Wilhelm's grave

In the centre—right in the middle of the square—a fairly large, gnarled tree has taken root. We have arrived at Wilhelm's grave. It is almost as though the tree somehow recalls Wilhelm's own life. Probably driven by heartbreak, he travelled here to a remote group of islands on the far side of our globe. There he spent the rest of his life in secluded solitude. Jens takes a couple of photographs before we silently leave the hidden grave, sobered by the solemnity of the moment, far out in what the writer calls Fiji's last tropical forest region. We take great care not to disturb in any way the stillness that reigned there then.



Later, we once again board our challenging vessel to be taken back to where the car is waiting. Then we return by the same road, with Malakai at the wheel. He apparently likes showing us how one drives a car in Fiji. Late in the afternoon we arrive at the hotel, where we can enjoy both a shower and a cold beer before beginning to ask ourselves: 'Did we really experience all of this, or was it only a dream?'

Wednesday, 14 September 1988

Today we shall visit the interior again. As already mentioned, Helen lives in a small town by a bridge overlooking the river. After Anna was widowed by the death of her first husband, she remarried a village chief from the same area where she herself had grown up and lived. She often visits her children and grandchildren in Suva. Moreover, she apparently is not especially concerned with her present husband. Helen, for example, had not previously visited her sister Anna there.

The journey starts at nine in the morning, and once again we set out along the same road as the day before. Before reaching the open valley where Wilhelm had lived, however, we turned onto an even worse road. It led over rough ground. It must have rained heavily during the night, for in many places so much slippery mud had formed that we only narrowly avoided becoming stuck. It was still raining a little, so if the sun did not appear soon and dry out the most difficult stretches, we could forget about returning home for the time being. I could already picture myself sleeping on a mat in the middle of the jungle. The road slowly led into a narrow valley with high ridges rising on both sides. We never saw any bare rock because it was all neatly wrapped in lush jungle. An idyllic river flows through the valley, joined at short intervals by small streams from the sides. All of them are a remarkable sight. Their banks are covered with the most beautiful tropical plants and flowers. It could almost look as if secret gardeners had been at work. From time to time, a small dark-brown animal with a long tail darts across the road in front of us. We are told that it is a so-called mongoose. It is a rather voracious animal, with snakes as its favourite food. The writer therefore says that only one species of constrictor remains in Fiji. Venomous snakes, crocodiles and other 'difficult' animals are not found here. Anna says that in her village, for example, they have never seen a snake.

During the journey, I sat in the back seat with Anna, Helen and a young grandchild. Jens sat in front with Malakai. During the conversation it became clear how fond they had been of their father and how fond he had been of them. After a while, I asked what Wilhelm had been like as a person and as a father. Anna replied: 'My father was very kind and gentle. One day I asked my father why he does not marry my mother?' His answer was: 'I cannot marry your mother because I am fond of another woman.' Anna continued: 'Once, being a girl of only 7 years, sitting on his knees, I remember that under his long blond hair on his arm I discovered the tattooed letter of "H". The question bothered him and he never gave any explanation of what that was meant to be.' Whether it might have been the first letter in the name of the woman to whom he had referred above, history is silent. (His youngest daughter was given the name 'Helen'. Is there any connection here? Or does the H refer to our own Hanna?)

After travelling for about two hours, we arrive at a small cluster of houses. Apart from plants, not a single person is to be seen, and I wonder where they all might be. Then a young girl suddenly appears through an opening in the vegetation and greets us with a broad, radiant smile. She is Anna's granddaughter. Shortly afterwards, her young husband also appears. After exchanging the latest news on both sides, our journey continues along something that can scarcely still be called a road. With a final effort over rough ground, we at last reach the riverbank, where the road ends. Anna's village lies on the other side.



Anna's village

There we also glimpse some plantings of bananas and cassava. We must have been expected, for suddenly we see two women in their everyday clothing wading and swimming across the river, depending on how deep it is. They wave and

gesture, and we understand that they are searching for the boat. Malakai had brought a carton of food, which one of the women places on her head to carry back across the river. I also put my foot into the water and find that it is pleasantly warm, crystal-clear and clean. The air temperature is perfect too. By now the sun has also appeared and shines upon the many millions of water droplets still resting on the leaves and glittering like diamonds. One plant has leaves so large that for generations they were used as umbrellas.

Then a loud 'hello' is heard. The boat has been found. Two young men bring it very skilfully through a fairly strong current to our side. We climb into the exceptionally narrow craft and sit in single file, ready for the crossing. At precisely the right moment, the two men plant their poles on the riverbed. The boat turns almost 180 degrees and we run aground on a sandbank. From there to the far bank, we ourselves have the chance to try a little wading.

In the village itself, Anna's village chief awaits us in their house. Once again we sit on the floor in a large circle. Aunt Anna's youngest son, a powerfully built man, fetches the large wooden bowl and begins preparing the kava that has by now become so familiar to us. He

mixes the powdered root with water and stirs for a long time and with great care. We each receive a half-filled coconut shell. The drink has no particular taste. It may be a little bitter and perhaps might have benefited from being mixed with a little stomach tonic to make it more interesting. I notice that sensation in my tongue is slowly disappearing, as if it were being numbed. Since I drink only once, I naturally do not know how matters would have developed from there.

We also gradually understand that the two women who came to fetch us across the river are the daughters-in-law of Anna and the chief. We are served bread with fish and salad. The old man, the chief, explains to us how a Fijian village is organised. As chief, he lives in the house raised highest above the ground. The house stands on posts. Every other hut in the village must stand at a slightly lower level than the chief's house. When conflicts arise, everyone gathers in the chief's house to seek a solution to the problem. If the chief's final word is not respected, the person concerned will fall ill and die. That person may, of course, also ask the chief for forgiveness; if it is granted, the person will recover and not die. The authorities in Suva intervene only in cases of murder. In every other matter, the villagers settle things themselves. The division of land is also the chief's responsibility. The eldest son inherits his father's chiefly status. Whenever visitors come to the place, they must first pay a call on the chief. The village also has a communal house that can be used as a church and as a meeting place on special occasions.

After gratefully eating the bread and drinking the welcome drink, we set out on a tour of the village. Jens had of course already taken many photographs and let our hosts know that he would also like to take some pictures of the village children. All the huts stand in rows on allotted plots of land. The kitchen gardens are outside the village and are largely the women's responsibility. We also see a great many colourful hens. Small chicks swarm around most of them. In my imagination, being able to roam freely through the greenery in high summer all year round must be the most ideal life possible for a hen. We greet many villagers. After all, in one way or another we are a little related to most of them. They all speak some English, so we have no difficulty understanding one another.



Suddenly I see a large group of children at the far end of the village. They all stand there like little living pillars, with expectant eyes, gathered in orderly rows and ready to be immortalised. Jens had gone with the eldest son to the village's communal meeting hut

where he was being shown around and everything was explained to him. I hurry to fetch him so that the waiting children can at last experience the great moment. Jens comes immediately and is quite moved by the sight of all those expectant children's eyes. All the children were promised that they would later receive their own photograph, provided the pictures turned out well enough. They all appear to lead good and happy lives in their village. They are never alone, and there is always someone to look after them. The entire atmosphere is marked by a kind of community spirit. Grandparents play an important role for the children. The children are cared for by them while the parents attend to the daily tasks. Cooking is the responsibility of the adult women. Fijian men often seem a little lazy. Their women loudly confirm this to me. A couple of courageous men have even admitted to me that they probably are rather lazy. Ordinary clothing often consists of a dark piece of cloth that each person wraps around the body. The men are bare above the waist, while the women wear some kind of blouse. All children begin school when they are six years old. The journey to school can often be very long. At some point they are picked up by a bus. Many children remain at school for the entire week and return home only at weekends.

The moment of farewell has come, and, waving to our many new friends, we leave the village to cross the river once more and return to the car. Malakai, our driver, had probably drunk a little too much kava and had acquired a rather rigid and vacant expression. Anna therefore ordered Malakai to hand the driving over to his cousin, and so Jens took the wheel.

Our next objective was to visit Wilhelm's house, which we had seen in the distance the day before. It was said to have been sold to an Indian family several years earlier. In any case, our two aunts had not been there for several years. Once again we enter the idyllic valley. A light breeze is blowing, the cattle graze peacefully around us, and the whole area lies bathed in clear, pure sunlight.

On reaching our destination, we see that Uncle Wilhelm's house is empty and badly dilapidated. A barbed-wire fence has been erected around the house at a considerable distance, without any



kind of gate or entrance. Part of the wall has collapsed. In any event, we climb over the fence and force our way through the thorn scrub to the house. Inside, all the rooms are still clearly defined.

Uncle Wilhelm's safe is still there, but its weight had eventually caused it to fall down into the cellar.



Our aunts explain all the rooms to us and also show us the room where both of them had first seen the light of day. They have no explanation whatsoever for why the house stands empty or why it is surrounded by an almost impenetrable barbed-wire fence. We allow our imaginations to run a little wild and suggest that one possibility might be that Uncle Wilhelm's spirit is still present and has not permitted strangers to intrude. In any event, our

two aunts will try to ascertain why the house is in this condition.



The view from the house is indescribably beautiful. The slight rise on which the house stands is surrounded by an extraordinarily beautiful, quiet-flowing river with crystal-clear water. In time we must leave the place, still full of wonder and with many unanswered questions.

It is now five o'clock in the afternoon and we set out on the return journey to Suva. This evening we have invited both our aunts, Malakai and his wife to a fine restaurant in the city. The two aunts had never before gone out for such a restaurant meal. Everyone is looking forward to it!

Shortly before Suva, the traffic increases considerably and we notice that our car is attracting a great deal of attention. Malakai knows why. It is because of the blond taxi driver with a whole group of native people in the car. This highly unusual combination causes great amusement both in the surrounding cars and on the street.

In town with Anna, Helen, Esther and Malakai



In high spirits, we arrive at the hotel. All the new and powerful impressions whirl around in our heads. Jens and I are in complete agreement that few people are granted, as relatives, such a unique opportunity to glimpse a world as unfamiliar as our little remote and almost forgotten village, with its many family connections. In Fiji, family blood is plainly much thicker than is usual elsewhere.

Thursday, 15 September 1988

Malakai is 52 years old. His wife is 35 and is also his cousin. Both have Uncle Wilhelm as their grandfather. She brought a son into the marriage. Their first child together had white skin and blond hair. Only in the face do we see certain Fijian features. They have another son, and six months ago they had twins—a girl and a boy—who were named Ingrid and Jens, respectively. We were invited to dinner at Malakai's home. His wife is a first-rate cook.

Today we leave Suva, but first we pay a visit to Malakai's family to say goodbye to his wife and children and, not least, the two aunts. Jens took photographs of all the children, both with and without the grandmothers. Then came the painful farewell. It plainly affects us all very deeply. Both aunts weep bitterly. We say that perhaps we shall return soon, but otherwise little is said. We ourselves cannot quite understand how such strong inner feelings can arise after spending so short a time with people who had been so unfamiliar to us.

Our next destination is the famous Fijian Hotel. It stands on an island in a large lagoon. It is a complete little tourist paradise. We are taken there in Malakai's taxi. He himself stays at the house of his

Aunt Helen on the other side of the river. From there it is not far to the airport either. Late in the afternoon we arrive at the hotel. Our room is an experience in itself, with a wonderful view over the sea. We are told that there are about 720 guests at the hotel today. The hotel is designed in such a way that it almost gives the impression of being empty. There are several restaurants, and various sporting activities are offered every day. We enjoy ourselves and also look forward to the next two days, with a little more relaxed time on the beach and in the water. But one thing we knew: we had already experienced the best of Fiji.



*At Esther and Malakai's, with
children and grandmothers*

Sunday, 18 September 1988

We get up at five o'clock and pack the last of our things into the suitcase. As agreed, Malakai collects us at six o'clock, 'Norwegian time' and not 'Fijian time', as he puts it. In Fiji, the writer remarks, people plainly do not treat time so strictly. The grandfather and one of the grandchildren are there as well. At the airport, our very heavy suitcases are accepted without difficulty. We eat breakfast together in the airport restaurant. The clock keeps ticking. Our Fiji adventure is inexorably approaching its end. We thank Malakai for everything he did for us. He was a truly good person to spend time with.

As Fiji disappears beneath us, our thoughts are filled to the brim with a mixture of melancholy, gratitude and joy.

Farewell to the next generation!



Until we meet again, Fiji! Thank you for everything! Our two families had finally found one another again! May we never lose sight of one another again!

Edith Otterbech

Appendix 8

Summary of Ingri Jølbo's Visit to Fiji, September 2001

After my first visit in 1980, my Edith and I made another visit in 1990. Below are some extracts from what Ingri Jølbo wrote after visiting our family there in September 2001.



Helen with William (formerly Wilhelm) in Sigatoka)

"We arrived in Fiji in the middle of the night on 9 September after a long journey. Because of a misunderstanding about the dates, no one came to the airport (they thought we were arriving the following day). After a telephone call to Esther, we arranged for Per and me to take a bus to Sigatoka. After some bumping along and various detours, we reached Sigatoka and the Rounds family's house. There we were welcomed by Doris's two young daughters, who cried 'Auntie, auntie...' and came towards us smiling. Helen was there, along with Doris and Thomas. A number of other family members also came to say hello, but it was a little difficult to keep track of everyone. We had an enjoyable time looking at photographs and talking about the families in Norway and Fiji. They received a number of small gifts from Norway, which were appreciated. In time we were accommodated at a resort where Doris worked.

Then it was on to Suva. Thomas drove, and it turned out that he actually lived in Suva. We therefore stayed with him while we were there. We met Esther, Malakai and their one daughter and six sons. We managed a number of visits to the homes of different relatives. Everyone was very welcoming and greatly appreciated receiving visitors from Norway. When Malakai received the family tree I had brought, tears came to his eyes. He himself has, after all, named some of his children after Norwegian relatives. Then we returned to Suva, where they arranged a large farewell celebration for us: a traditional Fijian feast, with food cooked 'underground' using heated stones. It was incredibly good. We received many gifts and everything was overwhelming. Eroni, who had visited Norway, was there, and I

was able to go home with him and visit his three daughters and two sons. The eldest son was called Even, named after Aunt Evy.

Then the two weeks in Fiji were over, and Thomas was to drive us all the way from Suva to Nadi. On the way we stopped at Anna's grave. She was not buried in the family plot, because of a tragic misunderstanding. After she died in hospital, Anna's body had been confused with that of another elderly woman. This other woman had no close family, and when her distant relatives arrived from New Zealand, the hospital confused the two elderly women. The other woman's distant relatives did not recognize the body they prepared for burial; in fact, it was Anna. So Anna was buried in this family's plot, and that is where she lies now. When Anna's family came to prepare her for burial, the misunderstanding was of course discovered, but Helen did not want any fuss, so they left Anna's body where she had first been buried.

Kind regards, Ingri — Ia's granddaughter through her son."



The Vosalevu / Otterbech family with the children Daniel, Ingrid, Malaikai, Esther, Paul, Luke, Jens



Namesakes Ingri and Ingrid, with shared ancestors

Appendix 9

Wilhelm Otterbech's family in Fiji with Lanieta Vakaluma

Their children were:

1. Anna (married first to Vosalevu and second to Roseru.)
2. Helen Rounds

A. Anna, married to Lepani Vosalevu, had these 6 children:

a. Aliti, b. Malakai, c. Mereseini, d. Lepani, e. Ilaisa, f. Tomasi

a. Aliti married Ali Raja. 8 children:

1. Halima m. Dike. Children: Koroi, Senimili, Tomasi, Sulveti, Aliti and Ben
2. Abhas m. Olivia. Children: George Vasenai, Abhas and Pita
3. Richard m. Adi. Children: Dike, Daniel and Henry
4. Safiq [spouse not given]. Children: Kristel and Trevor
5. Stino m. Christine. Children: Stino, Joseph and Keresi
6. George m. Marie. Children: Charlynne, Lawrence, Patrick and Simone
7. Margaret
8. Sam

b. Malakai married Esther. 6 children

1. William Otterbech (1979)
2. Daniel (1982)
3. Malakai Haakon (1984)
4. Ingrid and [ellipsis in source]
5. Jens. Twins. (1988)
6. Paul Truls (1990)
7. Luke (1992)

c. Mereseini married Tevita. 5 children

1. Eroni m. Emma. Children: 5
2. Kalesi m. Are. Children: 3
3. Save m. Mela. Children: 3
4. Mesake m. Liku. Children: 1
5. Anna m. William. Children: 4

d. Lepani married Maria. 4 children

1. Mere m. Ratu. Children: 6
2. Aca
3. Caqi
4. Maleli

- e. Ilaisa married Tiko. 5 children
 - 1. Ilaisa [spouse not given]. Children: 1
 - 2. Hellen [spouse not given]. Children: 1
 - 3. Mosese
 - 4. Apete
 - 5. Chris.

- f. Tomasi married Louisa. 4 children
 - 1. Roselyn Anna
 - 2. Henry m. Nika. Children: 1
 - 3. Margaret
 - 4. Lepani

B. Anna, married to Ratu Emanueli Roseru, had these 3 children:

a. Ratu Etuate, b. Ro Asela and c. Ratu Mikaeli

- a. Ratu Etuate m. Serevina. 5 children
 - 1. Mika [spouse not given]. Children: 1
 - 2. Dorote [spouse not given]. Children: 1
 - 3. Vika
 - 4. Ro Asela
 - 5. Ro Ella

- b. Ro Asela m. Livai. 1 child
 - 1. Strela

- c. Ratu Mika m. Naikata. 4 children
 - 1. Tu Lino
 - 2. Anna
 - 3. Tu Samu
 - 4. Ro Bai

C. Hellen, married to Sam Rounds, had these 9 children:

a. Trevor (deceased), b. Beverly (deceased), c. John, d. Fintan, e. Thomas, f. Esther, g. Philip, h. Paul, i. Doris.

- a. John married Vani. 4 children
 - 1. Esther
 - 2. Joan
 - 3. John
 - 4. Kimberly

- b. Fintan married Sherene. 3 children
 - 1. Sophia
 - 2. Fintan
 - 3. Whitney

- c. Thomas married Vika. 2 children

- 1. Thomas
- 2. Patricia

- d. Esther married Malakai. (Otterbech). 7 children
 - 1. William
 - 2. Daniel
 - 3. Malakai
 - 4. 5. Ingrid and Jens (twins)
 - 6. Paul
 - 7. Luke

- e. Philip married Marica. 4 children
 - 1. Hellen
 - 2. Trevor
 - 3. Philip
 - 4. Sam

f. Paul Unmarried

- g. Doris married Dike Joe. 4 children:
 - 1. Litiana
 - 2. Makareta
 - 3. Nanise
 - 4. Lanieta

This list was brought up to date during Ingri Jølbo's visit to Fiji in 2001. Much may of course have changed since then, when the total was no fewer than 103 family members.

Appendix 10

The Krogh Family of Bergen

Hanna Marie Krogh's Paternal Ancestors

Parts of the Krogh family are discussed in a book by High Court advocate Joh. K. Bergwitz, entitled "The Truls Branch of the Krog Family," Kristiania 1897–1902.

- The first person mentioned there is Laurits Nilsen Krog. Canon. Curate in the Trondheim region. Parish priest in Holmedal, Søndfjord, a post he held for about 60 years. He died at the age of 105.
- His son was Truls Lauritsen Krog, a priest in Kvinherred, 1577–1582. From 1589 he was parish priest of Bergen Cathedral until 1600, when he died during the plague. He was married to Synnøve, who came from a noble family.
- The daughter Adelus Trugelsdatter Krog married Thomas Hansen Ruus, Master of Arts and lecturer in theology, Bergen. They had 1 son and daughters.
- One daughter, Edel Thomædatter Ruus, married the burgher Christen Christensen. They had 2 sons. The elder was the ancestor of the families discussed in the book mentioned above.
- Truls Christensen Krog. Born in Bergen in 1637. Parish priest of Ørskog. Died in 1705. In his second marriage he married Inger Pedersdatter Finde, daughter of parish priest Peder Jørgensen Finde (in Førde) and his wife Anne Rasmusdatter Stoud, from Bergen. Truls and Inger probably had 4 children: Elisabeth, Jens, Karen and Sars.
- Jens, 1685–1752. First wife Catharine Magdalene Scheen. Had 6 children, including Thomas Georg Krogh, from whom we too descend. Theology degree in 1707. Parish priest in Rollag from 1733.
- As an aside, his sister Karen Trulsdatter Krog, 1688–1744, married Fredrik Christian Holberg, 1683–1748, who was Ludvig Holberg's brother. The Arentz family also descends from them. Fredrik and Karen's father, Christian Nilssøn Holberg, c. 1625–1685, was a lieutenant colonel and commander of Bergenhus. Their mother was Karen Pedersdatter Sem, 1647–1695.
- Thomas Georg Krogh, born in 1714 in Ørskog and died in 1785 in Vik, Sogn. Married 3 times, but had children only in his second marriage, to Mette Marie Hoff, 1717–1773. Held the posts of curate in Haram (Sundmøre) and at Korskirken in Bergen, parish priest of Daviken, and parish priest in Vik, Sogn. They had 3 children: Karen, Camilla and Jens.
- Jens Andreas Krogh, 1740–1783, in Bergen. Held the following posts: curate in Volda, parish priest of Daviken, priest in Nordfjord, and parish priest of Nykirken, Bergen.

Married in 1769 to Birgitte Margrethe Heiberg, born in 1744 in Gloppen, died in 1798 in Bergen. They had 1 child. We descend from the eldest, Gabriel.

- Gabriel Heiberg Krogh, born in 1770 in Daviken, died in 1857 in Bergen. Ship's captain. Married 3 times. A total of 5 children. In his second marriage, in 1813, he married Jenny Smith, from whom we descend.
- (Jens) Andreas Johan Krogh, born in 1814, died in 1858 near Odessa. Married in 1845 to Hanna Marie Jonassen, born 12.10.1811 in Lodshavn, died 18.01.1894 in Bergen. She was the daughter of chief pilot Jonassen in Farsund. They had 3 children: Jenny Gabrielle, 1846–1882; Anton, who died aged 1; and Anton Jonas.
- Anton Jonas Krogh, 26.06.1850–1878. Office clerk in Bergen. Married to Jacobine Alette Berentsen, 18.01.1851–1892. She was the daughter of merchant Jacob Berentsen, who died in 1894, and his wife Bolette, who died in 1857. Anton and Jacobine had 5 children:
 - Andreas Johan Krogh, born 12.04.1870, employed by the firm Joachim Hansen, Bergen. Spanish consul. Married to Marie Antonette Magnus (cousin), born in 1879 (Aunt Mimmi). Daughter of Bergen merchant Christoffer Magnus, born in 1845, and Mina Magdalene Berentsen, born in 1848, Jacobine's sister.
 - Hanna Marie Krogh, born 29.04.1873 in Bergen, died in Oslo 02.04.1953. Married Jens Otterbech in Johanneskirken, Bergen, on 03.08.1894.
 - Bolette Krogh, born in 1871, died in 1873.
 - Jacob Berentsen Krogh, born in 1874, died in 1878.
 - Jensine Dorothea Krogh, 07.01.1877. Aunt Dora. Married Tom Langford in England.

Our Hanna Marie grew up with her uncle and aunt in Bergen, Joachim Hansen and Augusta, née Berentsen. Hanna, Andreas and Dora were brought up in different places. Andreas lived with Jacob Berentsen at Haugen, and Dora with merchant Sivert Berentsen and Ervine, née Høegh. They had no children of their own.

Joachim Hansen's brother Hans Hansen was a sea captain and the father of Mrs. Westfal-Larsen, Helene Hartmann, Frithjof, Sverre and Hans. Hans was a senior secondary-school teacher in Arendal. Frithjof lived in Lillehammer.

Appendix 11

The Jonassen Family, Lodshavn

Hanna Marie Krogh's Maternal Ancestors

Below is an account of Hanna's maternal ancestors, compiled at one time by Hanna's daughter Ingrid. Apparently there is more to be found in the so-called "Lista Book." A former senior physician, Danielsen of Flekkefjord Hospital, was perhaps the person who then knew most about the various families in Lodshavn. We ourselves have various local newspaper clippings and notes for anyone wishing to investigate further. Here is what our Ingrid was able to tell us.

Family tree of Jonas Jonassen, Lodshavn.

Jonas Jonassen, 19.09-1773–28.02.1835. Lodshavn. Son of Jonas Jonsen, 1739–1812, and Olene Kristensdatter, 1736–1794.

The Farsund parish register records a marriage on 20.02.1800 between Captain Jonas Jonassen of Lodshavn and the unmarried Maren Jansdatter, 1775–1805. The witnesses were Capt. Ely and Capt. Ebbe Lund.

Maren was the daughter of Captain Jan Jonsen, 1773–1794, Lodshavn, and Anne Serine Eyelesdatter, 1737–1797. Jonas's father and Maren's father were brothers, so Jonas and Maren were first cousins. Their children were:

- Jan, 30.11.1800 — died 4 weeks later.
- Jonas, 03.01.1802 — died 3 weeks later.
- Ane Severine, 31.07.1803–04.09.1840. Unmarried.

Maren Jansdatter died in 1805, only 30 years old.

On 09.07.1807 the widower Captain Jonas Jonassen married Ane Willumsen, widow of the Danish Captain Sigmund Willumsen, with whom she had a son, Carl Adolf (1802). Ane was the daughter of shoemaker Hans Hansen Danielsen, Eikvåg.

Jonas and Ane's [Anna's?] children were:

- Maren Wilhelmine, baptized 26.05.1808, died in 1842. Married merchant Thomas Henning Grue, Christiansand/Farsund.
- Oline Juliane, 1809–[?]. Married Jan Jonassen.
- Hanne Marie, born 13.10.1811. Married Andreas Johan Krogh, Bergen.
- Edel Cicilia, baptized 01.08.1817. Died as a child.
- Christiane, 04-08.1819 — died [?]. Married Christian Cornelius Krohn.

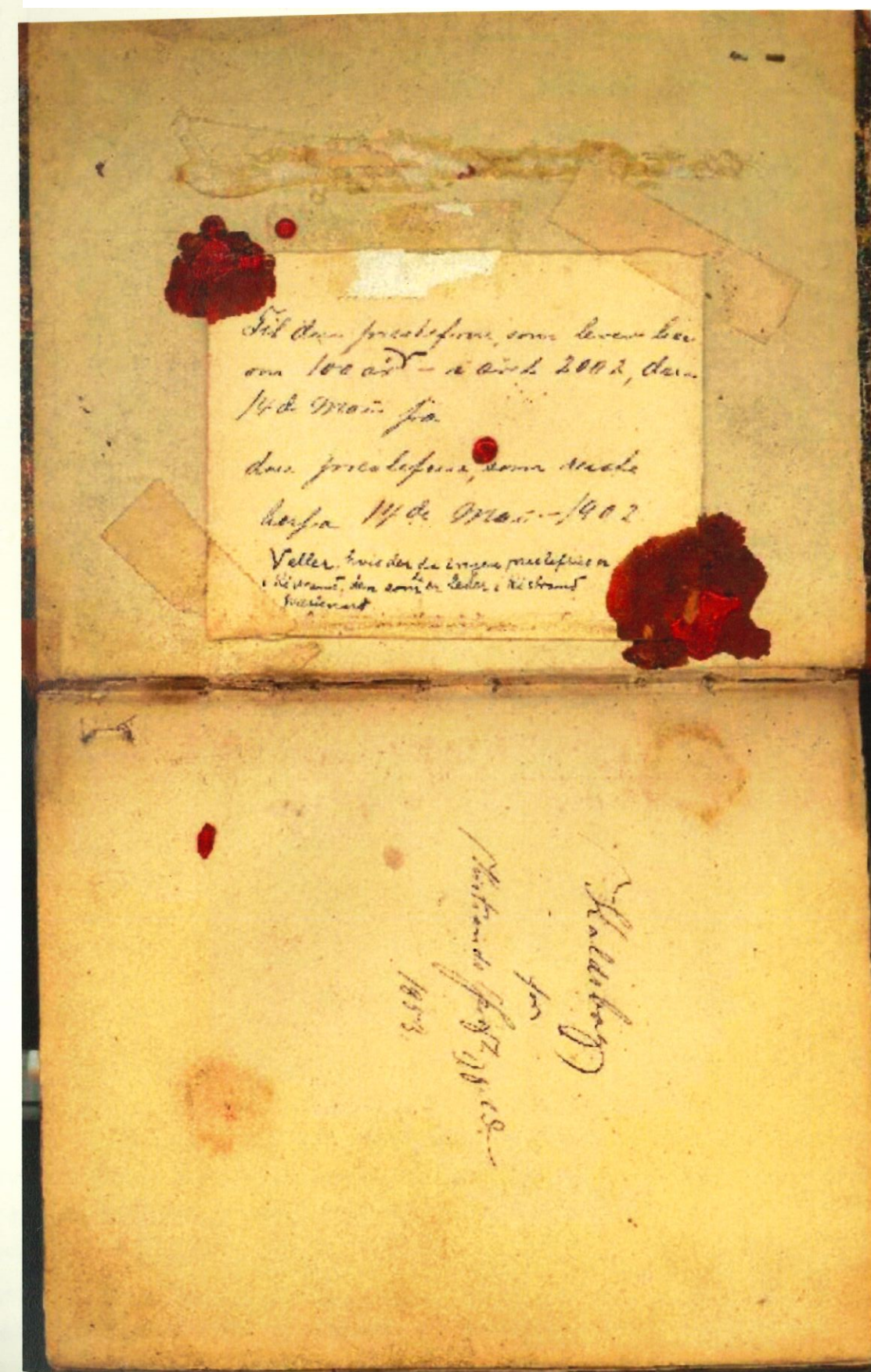
• Amalia, 16.01.1821 — died [?]. Married Abraham Tønnesen.

Anna, Jonas's second wife, died in Bergen at the home of one of her daughters. Jonas was a ship's captain, and later chief pilot. He distinguished himself during the privateering war of 1807–1814 as captain of the privateer "Veiviseren." For his service there, he was appointed a Knight of the Order of Danebrog. He was born on St. Michael's Day/Michaelmas, 29.09.1773.

Hanne Marie and Andreas Johan's son Jonas Anton Krogh married Jacobine Berentsen. Their daughter Hanna Marie married Jens Otterbech on 03.08.1894.

Appendix 12

Hanna Otterbech's 100-Year Letter



Facsimile inscription: Parish chronicle for Kistrand Parish, 1853.

Appendix 13

The Pastor's Wife's Secret

A 100-year-old letter from the pastor's wife Hanna Otterbech is opened in Lakselv today

[illegible][illegible]

Handwritten details: Kistrand, 7 May 1902. "Coffee outings up in the mountains and boat trips." The full letter is translated in the main text.

~ 2 ~



Article in Finnmark Dagblad, Tuesday 14 May 2002, page 6, by journalist Tor Kjetil Kristoffersen

At 15.00 today, the pastor's wife Inge Bækkevar in Porsanger opens the letter written to her exactly one hundred years ago by Hanna Otterbech, then the pastor's wife in Kistrand parish.

The letter, which has been shrouded in mystery, is to be opened today in the office of parish priest Arne Birger Gjestland. His wife, Inger Bækkevar, will open it.

From the pastor's wife.

This follows the wishes of the letter writer, Hanna Otterbech. On the small, faded envelope, in neat handwriting in black ink, it says:

"To the pastor's wife who lives here one hundred years from now — in the year 2002, on 14 May. From the pastor's wife who left here on 14 May 1902."

It seems that the pastor's wife Otterbech considered that there might not be a pastor's wife here in a hundred years, for she added in small writing:

"Or, if there is then no pastor's wife in Kistrand, to whoever is then in charge of Kistrand parish."

The letter is attached with two wax seals to the cover of Kistrand parish's record book. The book was first used in 1853. Jens Otterbech was parish priest of Kistrand from 30 May 1894 to 14 May 1902. On the day of her departure from Kistrand, the pastor's wife left a farewell letter for her successor a hundred years later.

Descendants present.

Finnmark Dagblad meets a slightly stressed present-day pastor's wife at home in the rectory in Lakselv. Inger Bækkevar is not only a pastor's wife; she also teaches at Lakselv Upper Secondary School. May, as we know, is the month of all-day examinations, hence the stress.

She says that Hanna Otterbech's grandson, Jens Otterbech, will be present when the letter is opened today. Named after his grandfather, he has recently retired from his work with the Norwegian foreign service in Hanoi. He is coming to Lakselv directly from Switzerland with his Swiss wife and their daughter.

Their son found an article about the letter on the Internet. They wrote to the then bishop, Ola Steinholdt, saying they wanted to attend the opening of the letter, Inger Bækkevar explains.

Publication being considered.

It is difficult to guess what the letter says. Perhaps it says something about why they left, or what their life in Kistrand was like? They lost a child while living there, so perhaps it says something about that, Inger Bækkevar wonders. The pastor's wife says she will first read the letter herself before letting the Otterbech family see it. She says they will decide together whether its contents should be made public. If so, the letter will be read aloud during the service at Kistrand Church next Sunday.

Respecting confidentiality

Historian Arvid Petterson in Lakselv says a decision not to make the contents of Hanna Otterbech's letter public must be respected.

First and foremost, this is a personal letter. It may contain personal remarks intended only for today's pastor's wife. One does not simply delve into other people's letters, Petterson stresses.

The historian says he knows that life in Porsanger was not entirely easy for the Otterbech family.

The letter may therefore contain personal matters concerning the loss of a family member that are no concern of the public, Petterson points out.

However, the historian hopes the letter will contain interesting things from the pastor and his wife, who did a great deal for Porsanger both in their own time and for later generations.

They made an invaluable contribution to Sami culture, and to some extent Kven culture as well, says Petterson.

Historian Arvid Petterson believes that any decision to keep the contents of the hundred-year-old letter being opened today confidential must be respected. (Photo caption)

A radical clergy family

- The Otterbech clergy family left its mark on Porsanger and Karasjok. They were a radical clergy family for their time.
- Jens Otterbech was born in Talvik in 1868, where his father, Ingvald Mathias Otterbech, was parish priest. His mother was Anna Louise de Seue from Bergen. Jens married Hanna Marie, born Krogh in Bergen in 1873. Jens was parish priest in Kistrand District, now Porsanger Municipality, from 1896 to 1902. At the 1900 census they had three children.
- The clergy family was deeply concerned about the Sami people's circumstances at a time of intense Norwegianization. They drove forward the construction of the children's home in Kolvik, and the couple worked hard for pacifism and temperance. She was also an active vegetarian. Both he and she wrote several books.

- Jens Otterbech established the country's first rural old people's home in Kistrand in 1902. He was also a driving force behind the establishment of a Sami upper secondary school in Karasjok in 1936. It was called "Jens Otterbech's Memorial" and, from 1939, was one of the country's first refugee reception centres, when the people of Petsamo fled the war between the Soviet Union and Finland.

- The Otterbech family moved from Kistrand to Øre in Nord-Møre, where he served as a priest for five years. Jens later became a parish priest in Rogaland and one of the driving forces behind the Finn Mission, later the Sami Mission.

- Jens Otterbech was a strong candidate to become bishop of Hålogaland in 1919, but his radical nature prevented the appointment. Otterbech died in Stavanger in 1921. Hanna Marie died in 1953.

Appendix 14

Kistrand's Radical Clergy Family

Hanna and Jens Otterbech left the rectory in Kistrand in 1902. They were two courageous radicals of their time — so radical that it probably cost Pastor Jens the bishop's staff in Hålogaland.



Article in Finnmark Dagblad, 18.05.2002, journalist Stein Torger Salamonsen

Kistrand rectory, 14 May 1902. Parish priest Jens Otterbech and his family are moving away. On the day of their departure, the pastor's wife Hanna Marie Otterbech does something unusual: she writes a letter addressed to the pastor's wife in Kistrand a hundred years later. The family leaving on this May day is still marked by grief. As the boat leaves Kistrand, they can see the entrance to the church vestry. Nearby, their youngest daughter Anna has recently been laid in her grave.

From Talvik

Parish priest Jens Otterbech was born in Talvik in 1868, where his father Mathias was parish priest. His mother was Anna Louise, with the French-sounding surname "de Seue," a Bergen name known as far back as the seventeenth century. She came from a French Huguenot family that had fled religious persecution in its homeland.

His father died when Jens was 2. Jens wanted to take over his father's work in Finnmark. After his university entrance examination in Kristiania, he studied theology before taking an examination in Sami.

During a hectic year he made a study trip to Germany, worked as a teacher, and spent time in the Home Mission before becoming manager of the fishermen's hostel in Vardø in 1894. On 30 May that year, he was appointed parish priest of Kistrand.

His wife Hanna Marie's maiden name was Krogh, and she was born in Bergen in 1873. Three of their children were born while they lived in Kistrand. On the day of departure, 14 May 1902, Håkon was seven and Werner five. Ingrid, Gunnar and Evy were born later.

Sami-speaking

Jens spoke Sami and began his ministry in a fjord with a predominantly Sami population. In the 1900 census there were 1,947 people in Kistrand District. Of these, 1,013 were Sami, 652 were Kven, and 104 were classified as both Sami and Kven. A further 261 identified themselves as Norwegians.

The small middle class that existed was centred in Kistrand at that time. The common people of Porsanger were considered poor, though not as poor as ordinary people in most Norwegian towns then. In Porsanger, people rarely lacked something to eat.

Besides the clergy family, teacher Amalie Thomassen and domestic servant Birgitte Aaselie Larsdatter also lived at the rectory in Kistrand.

Everyday life and celebrations

In everyday life and at celebrations, the pastor and his wife could meet the small handful of leading local citizens. There was district physician Fredrick Johan Mørck from Son and his wife Vilhelmine from Kristiania.

There was also the "immortal" district sheriff Erik August Grape, the Swedish Kven who served as sheriff in Kistrand for an incredible 60 years, and his wife Olava Margrethe from Hammerfest. Their grown-up son Hjalmar was an assistant sheriff, while their daughter Sofie was a teacher and organist. Their daughter Hildur was also a teacher.

General merchant John Lillebo from Røros also ran his shop in Kistrand. He was married to Marie from the Kven-Sami village of Muonioniska, where the well-known pastor Læstadius had once worked.

A cause close to his heart

Working among the Sami was a cause close to Jens Otterbech's heart throughout his life, at a time when official Norwegian policy was to eradicate Sami culture. He soon became known as a man who communicated well with ordinary people.

After eight arduous years in Finnmark, they moved to Øre in Nordmøre, where he served for five years. Then they went to Stavanger, where he was pastor of Hetland congregation while continuing his lifelong work with the Norwegian Sami Mission.

Always concerned about his home county, he worked tirelessly to establish children's homes and old people's homes in the north. The children's home in Kolvik was built, as was the old people's home, which initially took over the central telegraph building in Kistrand after the West Finnmark station moved to Hammerfest. Later, the Sami Mission built a new old people's home in Lebesby.

The cause of peace

Throughout his adult life he was involved in the causes of peace, language, land cultivation, forestry and temperance. Hanna stood by her husband through thick and thin and shared his interests.

But one interest, which for me towers above all the others, concerns the part of Norway called Finnmark: its people, its history and its language cause.

Finnmark is making great progress; it is the land of the future, Jens Otterbech believed.

From 1899 he worked with parish priest Tandberg in Lebesby, and together they edited the journal "Sami Usteb."

A sharp tone

Otterbech was known for his very sharp tone: reproving, down-to-earth, courageous and possessed of a sense of justice.

He never held back in his criticism of the Norwegian authorities' treatment of the Sami. He thundered from both the pulpit and the newspaper columns.

The system of coercion has been carried through with heartless consistency. One cannot think about it without being overcome by the deepest indignation, he raged about the Norwegianization policy adopted by Parliament.

In that context, he was no diplomat.

I hope I never speak in such a way that everyone speaks well of it, for then the salt has lost its savour. Fire into the worldly person, grace upon the sinner — that is Jesus's way, believed the parish priest, who was politically far ahead of his time.

Pacifist

He was a pacifist, like his wife, and when the World War broke out in August 1914, he turned to the Bible. He publicly maintained that all forms of war, whether offensive or defensive, were contrary to the word of God.

Hanna, who was always equally committed to her husband's work and interests, worked enthusiastically throughout her life for both peace and temperance. As a vegetarian she abstained from meat, and she also worked eagerly to promote vegetarianism as a way of life. This led her to write a vegetarian cookbook.

Bold

In another book of hers, "Childhood Pictures for Adults," she gives movingly perceptive descriptions of how children may experience the adult world. Among other things, she writes about how difficult it can be for children to experience their parents' divorce — a bold subject in her day.

Championing both the Sami cause and opposition to the military had consequences. When Jens Otterbech received the most votes in the election for bishop in Northern Norway in 1918, he went to Kristiania.

In a meeting with government minister Løvland, he fearlessly presented his views on the military and on justice for the Sami. Løvland did not appoint the Finnmark native Otterbech as bishop of the region.

For several years he edited "The Lapps' Friend" and co-authored books about the Sami.

General secretary

From 1919 he was general secretary of the Finn Mission, and around 1920 he visited his beloved Finnmark for the last time. In December 1921, the road came to an end for the nonviolent warrior whom his contemporaries called "the Finnmark pastor."

Jens Otterbech's strength was exhausted. His last great wish was not fulfilled until 1936, when the Sami youth school opened in Karasjok under the name "Jens Otterbech's Memorial."

"God bless the Sami. May He let them face a bright and rich future, with spiritual liberation in the Spirit of Jesus Christ," was his greeting to the people he loved and whom he had tried, to the best of his ability, to help in a difficult time.

His spiritual testament was published in 1923 under the title "To the Land I Will Show You" and consists of a collection of addresses and sermons.

Carrying on

Hanna continued her writing career. She published "The Shadow," devoted to young people and youth, as well as poems and hymns. It was said that she concerned herself with Stavanger's "loose girls" in an effort to help them.

Hanna's interest in theatre and concerts was considered inappropriate for a pastor's wife in Stavanger. It is said that she went to Oslo to pursue her cultural interests.

She was described as a gentle but strong woman. Hanna Otterbech died in 1953. Tomorrow, the present pastor's wife in Porsanger, Inger Bækkevar, will make public the letter Hanna Otterbech addressed to her a hundred years ago. This will take place in connection with the service at Kistrand Church.

Her grandson, also named Jens, believes it was a grieving mother's attempt to prevent the saying "in a hundred years, everything is forgotten" from coming true. Hanna and Jens Otterbech were not forgotten, and probably never will be.

The journalist's sources:

Arvid Petterson

Porsanger's local history books

Inger Bækkevar

Tromsø Museum

www.digitalarkivet.no

Evy Otterbech's biography of her father Jens

Appendix 15
A moving letter
Hanna Otterbech's letter from 1902 read to 250 people in Kistrand Church



Article in Finnmark Dagblad, 21 May 2002, by journalist Tor Kjetil Kristoffersen

In an overflowing Kistrand Church on Sunday, the contents of pastor's wife Hanna Otterbech's letter of 14 May 1902 were read aloud by the present pastor's wife, Ingrid Bækkevar.

Church attendant Helge Ragnvald Olaussen tells Finnmark Dagblad that an average of 15 worshippers attend a service in Kistrand Church.

A packed church

Last Sunday, he estimated that as many as 250 people were present in Porsanger's oldest church building. Every pew was full, and the gallery was crowded too. Some could not find room in the nave itself and had to fetch chairs from the parish hall and settle in the entrance porch.

What had brought people out in such numbers to this Pentecost service was the anticipation surrounding the contents of the letter from Hanna Otterbech, the pastor's wife who left Kistrand on 14 May 1902. The congregation was visibly moved by its contents. Everyone we spoke to after the service was deeply touched.

Moving

It was a very moving letter. Imagine sitting with the thought that the letter you are writing will not be opened for a hundred years. Sitting there, not knowing whether people will still live here or whether there will be a church here, says Asbjørn Andersen.

The sturdy fisherman from Smørfjord says it was extraordinarily powerful to hear of Hanna's longing for her child.

You think you are strong, but in moments like that you are really quite small, Andersen says quietly.

Grethe Liv Olaussen from Olderfjord agrees.

You cannot imagine a mother's feelings on the day when she has to leave her little child's grave, knowing she will never see it again. It must have been painful, she declares.

Local history

The teacher and farmer from Olderfjord also found it very interesting to hear about the pastor's family's social circumstances a hundred years ago.

Those who attended coffee after the service also gained a closer insight into life at Kistrand a hundred years ago. The two historians and writers Richard Bergh and Arvid Petterson gave two very interesting talks.

Appendix 16

“— And perhaps we shall meet there, where there is no evil.”
The pastor's wife's letter from 1902 read aloud in Kistrand Church



Newspaper article with photographs in "Sågat", 21 May 2002, by Lars Birger Persen

Kistrand Church was packed to overflowing when the hundred-year-old letter was to be read in public for the first time.

Pastor's wife Hanna Otterbech's letter to her successor Inger Bækkevar bore a sorrowful message.

An hour before the service in Kistrand Church on Pentecost Sunday, people began streaming in. They came by car and bus from all over Porsanger to attend the reading of the letter from the pastor's wife, Hanna Otterbech.

Filled to the brim

As the service began, it became clear that there were nowhere near enough seats for everyone. Benches were placed along the centre aisle, and extra chairs were set out in the entrance area.

Even so, many had to be content with standing room, and as far as we could estimate, more than 250 people were present. That is about twenty times as many as at an ordinary service in Kistrand Church.

A bishop and a children's choir.

The exceptionally large congregation experienced a dignified and moving setting for the ceremony.

Former bishop Ola Steinholt preached, the Lakselv children's choir sang, and for the first time we heard applause in Kistrand Church.

The present pastor's wife in Porsanger, Inger Bækkevar, then read the letter from her predecessor a hundred years earlier. We reproduce the letter in full.

lars@sagat.no

The letter from the pastor's wife, Hanna Otterbech

On the day the Otterbech family left Kistrand, 14 May 1902, Hanna Otterbech wrote a letter. It was addressed to "The pastor's wife who is living here in 100 years, on 14 May in the year 2002."

The letter was attached to the record book of Kistrand parish with two red wax seals. That no one in these hundred years had yielded to temptation and opened the letter before its time was a small miracle in itself, said the present pastor's wife, Inger Bækkevar, before reading the letter in Kistrand Church during the Pentecost service on 19 May 2002.

(The full text of the letter followed here. A clearly transcribed copy can be found in Chapter VII, "Hanna Otterbech".)

Captions for photographs 1 and 2.

"More than 250 present: Kistrand Church was filled to the brim during the Pentecost service, and people had come from throughout the municipality to attend the reading of Hanna Otterbech's letter. It was a splendid setting, with singing by the Lakselv Children's Choir (above) and a sermon by former bishop Ola Steinholt. Extra benches and chairs had to be brought in, but many still had to stand during the service on 19 May.

Caption for photograph 3.

Reading the letter from her predecessor a hundred years earlier: Inger Bækkevar read the letter from Hanna Otterbech that had lain unopened for a hundred years. It was a grief-stricken and moving letter from a mother who had lost her little daughter.

Caption for photograph 4.

At little Anna Otterbech's grave: Former bishop Ola Steinholt, the present pastor's wife Ingrid Bækkevar, Hanna's grandson Jens Otterbech, his daughter Renée and his wife Edith in front of the vestry, where little Anna was buried in 1901.

Appendix 17

“Would you be so kind as to care for the little grave”

Grief and longing. In a letter filled with grief, longing and hope, the pastor's wife Hanna Otterbech assumed that everything would be forgotten in a hundred years.

Read aloud. Yesterday, the sealed letter, written a hundred years ago, was read aloud in Kistrand Church.

[illegible]

Aftenposten, 21 May 2002, by journalist Ole Magnus Rapp

The beautiful church in Kistrand by Porsangerfjord was filled to the last standing place. Everyone wanted to be present when the hundred-year-old sealed letter from the pastor's wife Otterbech to "the pastor's wife in the year 2002" was read aloud.

Right beside the church wall was a little grave decorated with a wreath. Here rests little Anna, who died of illness at only fourteen months old. Her death was the cause of Mrs Otterbech's profound grief. In the letter, she asks the present pastor's wife to look after the little grave.

Inger Bækkevar, the wife of parish priest Arne Gjestland, will do so. She will also write a letter of her own to the pastor's wife in Porsanger in the year 2102.

A completely silent congregation listened as the present pastor's wife read. Inger Bækkevar also took the attentive congregation on a journey through the life of the Otterbech pastoral family. Jens Otterbech was the son of the pastor in Talvik in Finnmark.

Hanna, born Krogh in Bergen, married him and moved north in 1894, aged only twenty-one. They had six children, three boys and three girls.

A strong woman

Hanna is remembered as a strong woman. She was radical, took the children's side and worked for girls who had fallen on hard times. The causes of peace and temperance were close to her heart.

The pastor Jens Otterbech is remembered in Finnmark for his work among the Sámi. He learned Sámi, the "language of the heart", and worked against the harsh process of Norwegianization. Otterbech was also a man of peace and opposed the military build-up of his time.

After eight years in Porsanger, the pastor's family spent five years in Øre in Nordmøre before Otterbech was ordained as pastor in Hetland near Stavanger. In 1918, he received the most votes in the election for bishop in northern Norway, but was not chosen, largely because of his strong views on peace and his sympathy for the Sámi.

Remembering grandmother

Among the listeners in Kistrand Church is Jens Otterbech, grandson of the pastor Otterbech. His great-granddaughter Renée is also here.

Hearing the letter presented in church like this was a tremendous experience. A powerful letter, in which I recognize my grandmother, says the retired diplomat. Jens Otterbech remembers his grandmother Hanna.

I feel that she wants to share many of her thoughts with society today. Knowing her as I did, she would have taken great joy in what happened here in the church today, he says.

Photograph caption:

Remembering. Little Anna's grave is not forgotten. From the left: retired bishop Ola Steinholt, pastor's wife Inger Bækkevar, Jens Otterbech, his daughter Renée and his wife Edith. Ninety-year-old Josefine Fredriksen and many others from Kistrand also attended the special service.

Appendix 18

A brief introduction to Talvik and Rakkestad in the 1870s

In 1862, Talvik had 1,938 inhabitants. Before its merger with Alta in 1964, Talvik had 3,266 inhabitants. Below is an extract about Talvik in 1879 from Sophus Tromholt's Under the Rays of the Northern Lights: Sketches from the Land of the Lapps, 1885. (It gives a very readable account of the place where our Ingvald Mathias Otterbech had served ten years earlier.)



Talvik in the 1970s

Thus it was not until evening that we reached Talvik. Now we were all glad, which was hardly surprising, for we were all hungry and chilled to the bone. The sheriff's supper tasted excellent, and his warm sitting room was a far more agreeable place to stay than the one in which I had spent the whole day.

Talvik.

A small, beautiful semicircular bay; along it, green, gently rising hillsides, their upper parts covered with small trees that also creep up the dark, solemn mountains behind; down by the water, a row of houses, some small and plain, others large and neat — this is the welcoming scene in which Talvik presents itself to the stranger. The comparatively substantial settlement and the character of the whole landscape make this place far more reminiscent of Sogn and Hardanger than of Finnmark. If you walk a little way up the scrub-covered slopes, you come to the beautiful, large lake Storvandet, surrounded by luxuriant deciduous woodland. It drains into the fjord through a small river that rushes noisily along its deep bed, forming a little lively waterfall here and there. Stand here on one of the densely wooded high banks on a beautiful, quiet morning, alone with the solitude and grandeur of nature, while small birds twitter in the thickets, the river hurries foaming below and your eyes linger on the captivating view over the still fjord and the mountains beyond — and you may easily imagine that, by a stroke of magic, you have been transported to one of the enchanting places in the Scottish Highlands or Switzerland.

A little higher than the row of houses stands the church. As you can see in the picture, it was under construction during my stay here. About a year earlier, its predecessor had in fact been

violently forced to take a bath in the fjord. During one of the terrible hurricanes that ravaged Finnmark at that time, the entire church was overturned one night and blown out into the sea. Two other churches in Finnmark met the same fate that night.

A little above the church stands the large, comfortable parsonage, where I received a warm and hospitable welcome from the young pastor and his wife. I had a quite particular reason for wishing to spend a night here. The building is said to be haunted, and not only is this a widespread rumour among the people of Altenfjord, but I had indeed heard it confirmed by people who had themselves experienced such mysterious, nerve-racking, hair-raising occurrences in the parsonage. The present pastor has lived here only a short time and has experienced nothing very remarkable in that respect — only a few harmless tricks now and then, such as doors opening by themselves or invisible hands knocking on them — but just listen to what the sheriff of Talvik, my excellent travelling companion, has told me.

One night he slept in the parsonage, in the room said to be the haunting's particular playground. He has scarcely put out the light when, from an upper corner of the room, there comes a dreadful "Ha-ha-ha!" in such an infernal tone as only a provincial actor can produce when playing Asmodeus or some similarly amiable fellow from the underworld. The sheriff, a powerful man who neither believed in nor feared demons or ghosts, lit the lamp again and examined every nook and cranny of the room, inside and out. There was no one and nothing! He goes back to bed, puts out the light and lies in tense expectation. Suddenly the unpleasant voice sounds again: "Ha—ha—ha!" A tingling began to run down the sheriff's back, the situation felt rather strange to him and he hid beneath the duvet. A quarter of an hour passes in silence; his composure returns and he begins to smile at his foolish fear and imagination. He is just about to crawl out from under the duvet when, for the third time, it sounds: "Ha—ha—ha!" That was more than the sheriff could bear; he jumped so violently that the boards of the bed base fell out, and he himself dropped onto the floor with the bedclothes on top of him. There he lay buried, not daring to move, until sleep made him forget his terror.

When the maid brought coffee the next morning, she found the bed empty. They assumed the sheriff had gone for a morning walk. They wait an hour; they wait two — the sheriff does not come. The maid is sent in again; the bed is still empty. They wait another hour, but as the sheriff continues to play the invisible man, the pastor goes

into the room himself. There lay the sheriff's clothes, but where was the man? The pastor examined the bed — there on the floor, beneath all the bedclothes, lay the sleeping sheriff, dreaming of his nocturnal adventure.

Thus it happened in the year of Our Lord 1879.

I have a certain fondness for that realm of the inner life where the natural and the supernatural seem to meet, and have always had a burning, though unfortunately never satisfied, desire to experience a little haunting myself. I therefore asked to sleep in the notorious room, a wish the pastor readily granted. I examined the room, checking whether anyone was hiding in the cupboards, the table drawer or under the bed, but found nothing suspicious. After lying down, I stayed awake for a couple of hours, constantly waiting for something to happen; but not the slightest sound disturbed the silence around me, not the faintest breath from any supernatural world made itself known, and when I awoke in the morning, I was precisely as wise as before.

Some time after noon, I said farewell to my new friends in Talvik and continued south by boat towards Kaafjord at the southwestern end of Altenfjord. Such a determined headwind was blowing that even the most sanguine person could not have imagined the sail might be of any use. It therefore remained behind in Talvik, much to my comfort. Apart from that, nothing whatever worth mentioning happened on this journey. But it would also be excessively demanding to expect continually to experience events that deserve to be recorded for generations to come.

Rakkestad

The municipality has, since long ago, always been a typical agricultural district. It is counted among the largest of its kind in the country. Over time, it has undergone repeated changes in its boundaries and administrative affiliation. Some very ancient Stone Age discoveries have been made here. The oldest find dates back 9,600 years.

With the opening of the Østfold railway's Eastern Line in 1882, Rakkestad gained a rail connection to the capital.

Within the present municipal boundaries are the churches of Rakkestad, Degernes and Os. Rakkestad's neighbouring municipalities today are Sarpsborg, Skiptvet, Eidsberg, Marker, Aremark and Halden. Its present population is close to 4,500.

Anna's "Hougggaard" still exists, but today under the name "Hauggård". It has probably been extensively modernised since then. It should not be difficult to find, but any wish to visit would presumably need to be cleared in advance.

Appendix 19

An example of a randomly chosen letter in Anna's own handwriting

A random selection of three envelopes for Anna's letters

Handwritten text on a separate sheet of paper, dated Monday Afternoon May 26. The text is written in cursive and appears to be a letter or a journal entry. It begins with "Min gode Alergæst." and continues with a narrative about a journey and a meeting with a man named Peter. The text is somewhat faded and the handwriting is somewhat slanted.

Monday Afternoon May 26.

Min gode Alergæst.

Jeg har herat Torsdag skrevet mig
og i dagene ikke meget skrevet til at skrive,
men jeg har ingen anden Tid det. I den
Tak for dit Brev, og for Brevkønnen af
Brylluppet, som er meget morsomt at gaa
At se vist et godt (særlig) Bryllup, men
Peter var da borte. I den var rigtig borte
Torsdag's Aften, og jeg. I den se fandt nogen
Hvad der var. I den fortalte skoven i den
at Peter havde været af og har været og af og af,
hvor Peter var, da han havde meldt sig
efter hans afsættelse, og han havde da
sagt sin Mening om hans rent ud. I den
hvor Peter var der og af og af, at han
hvor da ikke var ham for meget, da fandt
han bedre, end han havde sagt. I den
fortalte han. Alle Mennesker fandt i
den og han i den i den end vidste. I den
som alle han havde til. Jeg fik end et Brev
fra ham, som han fortalte et Torsdag
hvor fandt Gjennemgang for Løbetiden efter

Til

 Frøken Margarete de Sene.
 Lier Gaard
 Kongsvinger.
 betalt.

Til
 Kjøb 25/3

 Frøken Margarete de Sene,
 Lier
 Kongsvinger.
 betalt.

Frøken Margarete de Sene.
 Afsigte Døktor Brønnen Løken Rommedal.

 Herimark




Appendix 20

A copy of one of Anna's letters

London, Efterm. 1366.

Mye Margerethen min!

Jeg vilde gerne have talt
 Dig for dit indelig kjære Brev, men
 Grunden til, at det ikke sket før den hvide
 af Helga. Jeg har først sendt lang, Tand-
 frækhistorie, som er over mig. Gud ske Lov, Anne
 er en adskillig flink. Jeg undrer, om
 Daender Breve hid samme Tidspunkt som
 Helga gjorde, Margerethen min, for de sidste
 har været over otte Dage gamle, men jeg har
 først dem. Hvor det glæder mig, at Du
 finder Dig en godt for Os. Nu, det
 er ikke ild at være tidlig op om Morgenerne,
 selv om Sommeren er det virkelig deilig.
 Ja, Du har Ret i, at det er meget at tabe Godt for
 at Helga er en lykkelig, men, at hun virkelig kan
 tro, Anger over hendes Kæmpehed; giv hende
 ikke værre fare for mange Ubehageligheder
 af at osse hemmelig forlovet, det kan blive
 kjedelig; det er rigtig nok ønskeligt for dem
 at osse sammen blandt en Menge. Jeg fik
 en glig Brev fra Minni med et meget fint Brev,
 som hun havde lovet mig i Tidsløp, det var
 et Brev af hendes af hendes Gens. Brevet fik
 Anger af hende til Tunde, og Helga var til sin Tidspunkt
 skus hende, en Minni var nok hende var det sig
 om hende.

ved det Arskide, slæbte Liden. Men har vel fortalt
 dig, og at hun nu farer & f. maanedlig som
 Hæspelerinde, det er nok blot i Tysk og
 fransk hun er Charlottes Elever, Else havde
 at hun kunde ill. lere hende mere Engelsk. - Jeg
 har tænkt paa, om det vilde ogsaa godt for Missen, om hun
 kunde komme til Tøften som Lærerinde; jeg kunde
 spørge hende, om de vilde have en billig Lærerinde, for
 de sige, at de ill. have raad til at holde en Lærin-
 nist engang, til Hørlærer. Der er 2 gutter og 2 hui-
 fruer foruden Christine, som kunde vedblive at gaa
 hos mig, da hun jo er Misses Lærerinde, den eldste af
 dem er vel 13 år snart, men hun nok rigtig lært at
 læse ordentlig, gutterne gaa nu paa skole, og
 det bleb vel en Talsmandshed for Missen og Liden
 Pige i Hæst vilde der ogsaa blive, men der havde hun
 fra Smith en merke og os har en længe det varers
 ønske det ogsaa var godt at nogle Missen bort fra den
 Hæst hun har i Holmestrand. Sig mig, hvad
 du tror herom, for end jeg gjør noget ved det.
 Da hun vel put af Boiserne, at Wernersson til
 Boston den 31^{te} Junii først, gid vi snart fik høre
 lidt directt fra hende, vi kunne vel ellers se af
 Boiserne, hvor de skulle hen den gang, og de skal jo
 rigtig skrive til hende, hvis det gaa an. Jeg undres
 hvordan det er med dem, slæbte Gut. -
 Antel Nils sælger Sommer af sin Skov for omtrent
 500 Spd. i Tøften, men det vil vel ill. forløbe længe,
 han har nok omtrent 4000 Spd. og Gjæld. Christian
 er nok flittig nu, for Tøft var han det ill., se Christian,
 men han bleb vel ill. færdig med anden Examen
 for til Tøft, det bleb vel for svært for ham at tage ill.

til Sommeren, men han kunde rigtig have klaret sig
 2 Tøft, til Tøft, derover der var nogen Tøft i hende.
 Mr. Linnemann lærer Physik frit med hende.
 Der kan to Kintners, Seng og Sager samt Hønde
 tegninger" ere nyttelige, at, der vil nogle Tøft, som
 er rent forføgende. Bjørnsens "maanedlig" er
 jeg ogsaa glad. Antel holder en Norsk "Tøft",
 det er et nyt Bled med Bjørnsen til Redaction,
 udkommer en Gang ugentlig og tegner sig, ill. an ill.
 ja. De gjender det ganske. Christensen er en rigtig
 til at samle Subskribenter dertil. - Vi have haft
 en gel Tøft her en 3-4 Mør, hun gik omkring, og Tøft;
 Commissionen agter da den smukke Tøft af hende,
 som nu kan de ill. for opsparet hendes Tøft,
 som de ere borte, de just hende; hun vil ellers tale
 om, hvor hun er fra. Hun kalder sig: "Constance"
 Laurence, Caroline, Louise, Sophie, Leri, fra London
 "Frankrig" hun siger "Du" til hende og mig, for hende,
 of samme Race, siger hun. Hende er saa flink
 til at strikke Tøft, hun har nu 100 Tøft færdig, og
 tænker at forere Tøft Tøft til hende Tøftledet
 i Sommer, det er en Tøft, da er hun vel
 næsten færdig med for mange, som, hvis ill.
 gaa godt. Hun er vel forlovet i Tøft vil jeg
 gjerne følge den 2^{de} rigtig over, Margretha min
 men som ganske kan blødt se ill. minns ender, det
 ville vel være bedst, om hende med ill. i Tøftledet
 Antel ønsker om at for mig i Tøft til Tøft, men
 det har hun jo ill. Tøftledet som indvillig gjerne
 have Brevlapp her, og Tøft, og Tøft, og Tøft, for hende
 maaned og læst det nu er nok nok slæbte hende.

