

*Temaet i årboka for Telemark historielag 2000  
var utvandringshistorie  
Artikkelen under er ein smakebit frå boka  
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*English version on page 18*

## Leif Skoje: Ole Andrewson - Husmannsgut og pionerprest frå Sauland

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### Innleiing

Pioneremigrantane frå dei øvre telemarksbygdene var av dei mest dominerande talmessig i tida før masseutvandringa frå Norge. Likevel finn vi ikkje så mange enkeltpersonar herfrå som har markert seg i denne historiske tida.

Nokre blir kjende som leiingar av emigrantgrupper (Rue og Luraas). Ein markerer seg som påverkande brevskrivar (Olav Trovatn). Ein blei landets mest kjende postmann (Snowshoe-Thompson). Ein raulending skal visstnok ha vore med på å slå i hel Joseph Smith, grunnleggaren av mormonerkyrkja, og dyktige handverkarar og forfattarar fanst. Ein blei kongressmann (Kittil Halvorsen Kjeldahl), og mange ofra liv og helse for det nye landet sitt i borgarkrigen.

To jamaldringar, heddølen Nils Johnson Kaasa og saulendingen Ole Andresson Aasen, blei foregangsmenn i kyrkjeleg organisasjonsarbeid dei første åra. Sistnemnde skal vi bli nærmare kjent med her. Ole Andresson Aasen, eller Ole Andrewson som han heitte i USA, er ofte nemnd mellom anna i E.Clifford Nelson og Eugene L.Fevolds "The Lutheran Church among Norwegian-

Americans" (Minneapolis Augsburg Vol.1 1960), sjølve standardverket om norsk-amerikansk kyrkjhistorie. Likevel treng han ei fylldigare omtale.

Som husmannsgut frå ei lita Telemarksbygd hadde han begrensa teologisk utdanning. Men med sunt bondevett og papir på at han var godkjent prest, måtte han i vaksen alder ofte konfrontere universitetsutdanna norske prestar som hadde generasjonar av intellektuelle embetsmenn bak seg i slekta.

Det var bare tre personar som blei ordinert til norske prestar i USA før Ole: Haugianaren Elling Eielsen, den "moderate" dansken C.L.Clausen og den kompromisslause statskyrkjepresten J.W.C.Dietrichson.

Sjølv om han må regnast som ein biperson saman med desse, er Ole sentral i den svært kompliserte norskamerikanske kyrkjhistoria. Frå 1842 til han døydde i 1885, var han eit viktig element i å tilpasse det norske immigrantsamfunnet til eit amerikansk kyrkjeliv.

Dette var eit krevande nybrottsarbeid. For den norske kyrkja, som meir eller mindre blei med over, var ikkje grei bagasje å pakke opp i det nye landet. Noko var kanskje øydelagt alt på reisa og ved ankomsten. Noko viste det seg at var ubrukeleg i det nye samfunnet og heller skulle vore lagt att heime. Oles jobb blei å hjelpe immigrantane med å pakke ut og ta vare på dei rette tinga, samtidig som også nye saker måtte skaffast der dei kom.

Artikkelen vil følge Ole frå beskjedne oppvekstkår i ein enkel husmannsheim, gjennom ei typisk emigrantreise i tidlegaste pionertid, der han kan representere dei hundretals første telemarkse-migrantane. Etterkvart blir han ein aktiv deltakar i amerikansk kyrkjhistorie, der han får betydning for tusenvis av immigrantar. På denne måten får vi gjennom livet hans eit blikk inn i kyrkjhistoria i det norske Amerika fram til 1880-talet.

## Bakgrunn, bustad og familie

Tidleg på 1800-talet blei det rydda ein plass under garden Myljom-Bø i Sauland. Plassen fekk namnet Åsen og låg nokre hundre meter ovanfor garden, oppunder Kleppefjell ved vegen til Tuddal. Heile Bøgrenda hørde på denne tida til ein rik trelasthandlar som heitte Jens Ørn, så bebuarane i grenda var leigendingar og husmenn.

På Åsen var det husmannen Andres Tollekson som dreiv i åra

rundt 1820, kanskje var det han sjølv som hadde rydda og bygd plassen. Han var fødd i 1766 og blei gift med Ingebjørg Olsdatter. Henne klarer vi ikkje å identifisere nærmare. Dersom fødselsåret er rett, var Andres heile 50 år da første barnet, dottera Kari, blei fødd i 1816. 2.mars 1818 kom sonen Ole, i 1821 kom Anne og i 1825 Helge (jentenamn, uttalast Hælge - med tjukk L), i 1828 Tollev, og i 1833 Ingebjørg som døydde samme året.

Anne blei gift med Hans Larsson Skårset og Helge med Ola Kjetilson Nord-Listul. Tollev kom truleg etter til Amerika. Dei to eldste blei av dei mange saulendingane blant dei aller tidlegaste pionerane i historia om utvandringa til USA.

Kari skal ifølge "Hjartdalsoga" ha gift seg i 1841 med Halvor Torbjørnsen Omnes og utvandra samme år, men det er truleg samanblanding med Torkel Bjørnson Omnes f.1820. (Vi finn Torkel Bjørnson på same båt som Kari, men dei er ikkje registrert som ektefolk der. Hjartdalsoga seier at Torkel også er gift med ei Kari Andresdatter f.1815. Halvor Torbjørnsen finn vi ikkje på passasjerlister i denne tida).

Dette kunne vore eit godt gifte for husmannsjenta, for Omnes var av dei større gardane i bygda. Men det var ikkje nokon odelsgut ho blei gift med, og løysinga blei dermed utvandring. Ole og systera reiste, og vi må tru at dei såg for seg ei betre framtid i eit nytt land.

## Utdanning, utvandringsplanar og utreise

Som eit av mange barn i ein fattig husmannsfamilie, måtte Ole tidleg ut i arbeid og var gjetargut i fleire år. Men folk i bygda må ha merkt seg denne guten og dei boklege evnene han må ha vist. Vi får tru det var presten Finkenhausen som såg til at han kom på "Kosa-skulen" i Brunkeberg.

Dette seminaret i Kviteseid var forløparen til lærarutdanninga i Telemark, og der gjekk fleire kjende menn gjennom tida skulen eksisterte. Knud Gislesen Løkslid, ein kjent skulemann, prest og biskop frå Hjartdal hadde gått der. Olav K.Trovatn frå Øyfjell, som utvandra og blei ein kjend brevskrivar, gjekk der. Og omlag samstundes med Ole gjekk Aasmund Olavson Vinje på same skulen

Korleis Ole kunne få råd til å gå der, veit vi ikkje. Men han gjennomførde utdanninga og kom i arbeid som omgangsskulelærer i heimbygda. Dette dreiv han med frå 1838 til 1841.

Denne oppvakte unge mannen følgde nok godt med i alt snakk som var om Amerika i den tida. Det gjorde sikkert eit sterkt inntrykk på folk at 36 Hjartdølar i 1839 reiste frå heimbygda og til Amerika, ei reise folk knapt kunne tenke seg omfanget av. Og dette blei ikkje eit eingongsfenomen heller, for året etter, i 1840, gjorde Anund og Aslaug Uvås med fire born samme turen.

Det blei fort kjent i bygda at folk kom vel fram, og at det var jord og framtid for mange fleire i dette landet. Denne store tidlege utvandringa frå Hjartdalsbygdene var inspirert av Tinnutvandringa i 1837 og numedølen Ansten Nattestad. Ole var kanskje av dei som skaffa seg trykte beretningar om emigrasjon, og kunne lese og formidle til andre nyttig kunnskap om det dei kunne oppnå. Han kan ha fått tak i Ole Rynnings "Sandferdig Beretning om Amerika", som Nattestad fekk trykt i 1838.

Barken Emilie, som Uvås-familien hadde reist med frå Drammen om Gøteborg til New York, skulle sommaren 1841 gå samme ruta. Dermed blei vinteren og våren 1841 ei uroleg tid i Hjartdal og Sauland. Det var mange som la alvorlege planar om utvandring, og da kaptein Thomas Anchersen på ettersommaren førde "Emilie" ut frå Drammen havn, var det 92 passasjerar med. Av desse var heile 27 frå Hjartdal og Sauland. Mellom passasjerane var Ole og systema Kari. Der var også Lonar-, Skårnes-, Skårdal- og Bøe-folk frå Sauland, så dei hadde nok av kjenningar med på reisa. Resten av passasjerane var også landkrabbar - frå Sigdal og Numedal og frå fleire bygder i Øvre Telemark. I det heile emigrerte 169 frå heile landet det året. Nokre få var frå Voss, elles var alle frå dei nemnde bygde-  
ne.

Kaptein Anchersen, som sjølv eigde "Emilie", var ein dreven sjømann. Han kunne vere vel dristig til å overlaste det 150 år gamle skipet med passasjerar, men til gjengjeld tok han seg godt av dei. Han hadde med medisinar mot dei vanlegaste sjukdomane, og han heldt gudstenester om søndagane og religiøse samlingar elles. Han ordna også med vidare transport innover i USA.

Skipet kom til New York 5.august, etter ca 10 veker på sjøen. Deretter følgde den vanlege reiseruta opp Hudson River til Albany nord for New York. Herfrå fortsette reisa på lasteprogram langs Eriekanalane til Buffalo ved Eriesjøen, og vidare over dei store sjøane til Milwaukee eller Chicago.

I samme reisefølge var det ein familie frå ytre Hjartdal. Det var

Torgun Haraldsdatter Tveiten, som hadde med seg to døtre frå eit tidlegare ekteskap, Ragnhild og Anne Paulsdatter, døtrer av Paul (Pål) Jonson Aasen. Den nye mannen i familien var Johannes Olsen frå Heddal. Ein dag fall den 17 år gamle Ragnhild overbord frå kanalbåten. Ole presterte da å redde jenta, og sjølvsgat er det den samme Ragnhild som han blir gift med eit par år seinare, fortel oldebarnet til Ole, Frederic Rognald Matson.

## Arbeid og ekteskap i Wisconsin

Ole kom altså til Wisconsin i 1841 og skaffa seg gardsarbeid i Racine county. Dette vil seie at han må ha halde til i, eller i nærleiken av Muskego-settlementet. Dette er velkjent frå emigranthistoria, men her er ein kort repetisjon:

Cleng Peerson førde dei første norske emigrantane i 1825 til Kendall i staten New York og seinare til Fox River-området sørvest for Chicago i Illinois. Denne retningen tok også dei første emigrantane frå Austlandet, dvs. Rue-følget i 1837. Da Lurås-følget i 1839 kom til Milwaukee, blei dei nærmast lurte til å slå seg ned på landet ved sjøen Muskego i sør-aust Wisconsin, lenger nord enn dei tidlegare emigrantane. Trass i mange vanskar, blei Muskego eit nytt utgangspunkt som markerte retninga for ny settling i retning vest og nord, vidare i Wisconsin og mot Minnesota og Dakotaterritoriet. Når i tillegg Nattestad og sambygdingane hans frå Numedal slo seg til på Jefferson Prairie litt lenger vest i Wisconsin, markerer dette slutten på Cleng Peersons styring av utvandringa.

For ein fattig nykommar som Ole, var gardsarbeidet sikraste levebrødet. Men etterkvart som han fekk etablert seg, skjøna han at det var bruk for dei "akademiske" evnene han hadde. Om han hadde hatt planar om å bli ein kyrkjas mann, veit vi ikkje, men etter ei sterk religiøs omvendingsoppleving i 1842, ser han dette klart. Han startar ei karriere som lekpredikant, dei første åra i Racine county.

1843 blei også eit viktig år for Ole. 29.juni gifte han seg med Ragnhild. Ho var fødd 23.mai 1824 og levde heilt til 1918. Paret kom til å få seks døtrer og fem søner. Alle utanom yngste sonen kom til å vekse opp. Ragnhilds namn blei amerikanisert til Rachel. Dermed beholdt ho forbokstavane frå Norge og skaffa seg samtidig eit namn i sterk bibelsk tradisjon.

## Starten på eit liv i kyrkjjas teneste - til Jefferson Prairie

I fire år dreiv Ole som lekpredikant. I samband med dette må han ha møtt haugianarleiaren Elling Eielsen. Samtidig kom han igang med farming og må ha lese og studert alt han hadde anledning til, ikkje minst skulle han lære språket.

I 1844 flytte han til Jefferson Prairie-settlementet og kom til å bu litt sør for småbyen Clinton i Rock county heilt sør i Wisconsin. Han slo seg ned på ein farm og var lærar og framleis predikant.

Første dottera blei fødd samme året, og namnet blei Isabelle, ei oppkalling etter Oles mor, Ingeborg. Isabelle fekk ei betydeleg rolle i samfunnet, særleg som kona til Canute Matson, sheriff i Chicago i ei svært dramatisk tid i 1880-åra, men det er ei annan historie.

Jefferson Prairie er, som Muskego, svært viktig i denne tidlege utvandringshistoria. Det var her grunnleggarane av utvandringa frå Øvre Telemark og Numedal - Ole og Ansten Nattestad frå Rollag - slo seg ned. Ansten var heimatt i 1838-39 og "henta" ei stor mengd nye emigrantar, ved hjelp av eigen agitasjon og boka "Sandferdig Beretning om Amerika" av Ole Rynning. Manuskriptet hadde han med, og fekk trykt boka i Oslo. I mellomtida fann broren Ole fram til Jefferson Prairie. Dit drog også ein stor del av følget til Ansten, mest numedølar, i 1839, medan dei frå Øvre Telemark slo seg til i Muskego.

I "History of Clinton, Rock county" står det om Ole at "he went to a seminary for three years". Det er ingenting elles som tyder på at Ole tok slik utdanning i USA, så det er nok rett og slett seminaret i Kviteseid som var Oles bakgrunn og ikkje annan formell teologisk utdanning.

Men prest blei han. O.J.Hatlestad, ein mangeårig prestekollega skriv: "...Da kristelige Venner i Illinois og Wisconsin bleve opmærksomme paa de Naadegaver, som Gud havde betroet O.Andrewson, blev han 1846 kaldet til Præst i LaSalle co., Illinois..."

I pionermenighetane såg folk på offisiell ordinasjon som svært viktig, særleg med omsyn til utføringa av nattverden. Sjølv om mange immigrantar var letta over å komme vekk frå alt som heitte prestar og religion, var det blant andre tungt sagn av prestar i den første tida.

Som den fjerde presten mellom nordmennene blei Ole ordinert. Han starta med førebels årlege lisensar frå eit amerikansk luthersk kyrkjjesamfunn. Etter å ha amerikanisert namnet sitt, var han der-

med Rev. Ole Andrewson, og kom snart til å stå midt i det teologiske virvaret som det norske Amerika må ha vore i nesten 100 år. Ein kan få inntrykk av at mest all intellektuell kapasitet mellom norske lærde dreide seg om diskusjonar og konflikter i teologiske lærespørsmål. "Et aandelig Humlebol" er eit uttrykk som er brukt. Mange ulike kyrkjesamfunn eller synodar blei oppretta og nedlagt, splitta og samla - som vi skal sjå etterkvart.

## Kyrkjesplitting lokalt - og over heile det norske USA

Med å slå seg ned i Jefferson Prairie, plasserer Ole Andrewson seg, også geografisk, midt i den striden som tok til å oppstå i kyrkjelivet mellom nordmennene i USA. Alt i 1844 hadde folk i Jefferson Prairie delt seg i to kyrkjelege leirar, etterkvart med kvar si kyrke - East Church og West Church. Alt her ser vi dei to hovudlinene i norsk-amerikansk luthersk kyrkjetradisjon:

Den eine sida hadde som mål å føre den norske statskyrkja vidare i USA. Første drivkrafta i dette var den universitetsutdanna norske presten J.W.C Dietrichson (1815-1883), som kom til USA i 1844. Dette måtte bli vanskeleg, for store delar av det tidlegaste emigrantfolket hadde som eit av måla med utvandring å komme unna denne sterkt embetsmannstyrte norske kyrkja, med stor vekt på ytre og formalistiske ting. Men andre ønskte denne tradisjonelle kyrkjeautoriteten som dei var vane med. Og etter mykje om og men, blei så kyrkjesamfunnet - Den norske synode - grunnlagt i 1853 i eit møte på Rock Prairie, ikkje langt frå Clinton. Seinare blei Koshkonong, det store norske settlementet litt lenger nord, hovudbase for Dietrichson.

Eit av læreproblema for denne "norske statskyrkja" i USA utvikla seg seinare da mange av prestane skulle utdannast i St.Louis i Missouri, ein stat der slaveri var tillatt. Påverknad derifrå, og ei svært bokstavtru bibeltolking, førde til at denne kyrkja faktisk ikkje greidde å ta klart og utvetydig avstand frå slaveriet i tiåra som følgde. Vi høyrer ikkje om at nokon av prestane var for slaveriet, debatten gjekk på om slaveriet bibelsk/teologisk var "synd i og for seg".

På motsett side stod frå første stund lekmannsrørsla/haugianismen svært sterkt mellom norske immigrantar. Hauge-rørsla braut aldri med den offisielle lutherske kyrkja, men verka som ein folkeleg opposisjon innanfor denne. I USA blei Elling Eiel-

sen, som kom frå Voss i 1839, den som kom til å vidareføre denne lina. Også han blei ordinert til luthersk prest - i 1843. Eielsen var omtrent alltid på reiser, men Jefferson Prairie var hovudbasen hans mesteparten av livet.

Ole Andrewson var frå først av ein tilhengar av Eielsen og kjent med han frå Muskego/Racine. Det kan ha vore i samråd med Eielsen at Ole drog til Jefferson Prairie. I alle fall blir han sentral i "West"-kyrkja der. Historikaren Flom seier at han grunnla menighetene der, men det var først i 1850.

I 1846 blir det arrangert eit historisk møte i Jefferson Prairie. Tilstades er Elling Eielsen, Paul Anderson - ein radikal prest frå Valdres, Ole Andrewson, og "en del af de vidt adspredte troende". Her grunnlegg dei "The Evangelical Lutheran Church of America", oftast kalla "Eielsens Synode", i april 1846. På møtet fungerte Andrewson som sekretær. "Jeg dikterte og Andrewsén skrev", fortel Eielsen om korleis vedtektene for organisasjonen kom istand. Eielsens Synode var altså ein realitet sju år før "Den Norske Synode" blei endeleg organisert.

## Brot med Eielsen - og tilnærming til amerikansk kyrkjeliv

I 1853 var altså dei to hovudlinene i norsk-amerikansk kyrkjeorganisering nedfelte i kvar sin synode. Men innan den tid hadde Andrewson og fleire andre gått sine egne vegar.

Elling Eielsen var ikkje ein mann med sans for organisasjonsarbeid. Kristus førde ikkje protokoll da han gjekk rundt på jorda, uttalde han ein gong. Han var dessutan svært "norsk" i grunnsynet sitt, mangla samarbeidsevner og var generelt konservativ. Snart såg Andrewson, Anderson og ein tredje ung og radikal prest, Ole J. Hatlestad, at tida var inne for å bryte ut av Eielsens synode. Dette skjedde på eit møte i Middlepoint (Fox River), Illinois i 1848. Andrewson var igjen sekretær og kalla inn til møtet. "Man forhandlede 1) om Klagemaal mod E.Eielsen 2) om intrædelse i Franckean Synoden".

På møtet las Andrewson opp eit langt "synderegister" mot Eielsen. Meir konkret om innhaldet er det vanskeleg å finne, men uttrykk som slapphet og uorden blei brukt. Elles var det nok generelle samarbeidsproblem som låg bak, sjølv om det også kunne gå ein del meir banale rykte om ein person som Eielsen. I alle fall enda det med at Eielsen "grep hatten og forlot møtet".



Eielsen og tilhengarane kom til å arbeide vidare i Eielsens Synode, medan dei andre drog seg ut og slutta seg til den tysk-amerikanske såkalla Franckeanarsynoden, som hadde base i New York. Det var særleg Paul Anderson som hadde skaffa seg kjennskap til amerikansk kyrkjeliv. Han hadde utdanning frå eit seminar i Beloit, ein litt større by ikkje langt frå Clinton. Likevel var det altså Andrewson som blei ordinert til presteteneste først, nettopp i dette franckeanar-samfunnet.

Franckeanarane var lutherske og pietistiske, men liberale, for ikkje å seie likegyldige, i lærespørsmål. Det var plass for norsk "børnelærdom" innanfor organisasjonen. For Andrewson og dei andre var det særleg viktig at Franckeanarane var sterkt imot slaveriet. Her ser vi altså eit initiativ til deltaking i amerikansk kyrkjeliv og samfunnsdebatt frå representantar for norske immigrantar. Dette er ikkje så ofte vektlagt. Heltane er oftast dei som vil ta vare på norsk levemåte i det nye landet. Men det er amerikaniseringa som vinn fram litt etter litt etter som tida går.

Kontakten med amerikansk kristenliv kom også gjennom "American Home Mission Society", eit misjonsselskap i Chicago som støtta misjonsarbeidet mellom innvandrarar generelt. Bak dette selskapet sto dei presbyterianske og kongregasjonalistiske kyrkjene. Dette var ganske folkelege og demokratiske kyrkjesamfunn. Paul Anderson og Andrewson, oppretta med hjelp frå dette selskapet, den første norske og skandinaviske kyrkja i Chicago i 1848.

Dette selskapet støtta arbeidet til både Andrewson og Anderson i desse åra. For 50 dollar i kvartalet blei det kravd skrivne rapportar, 30 slike manuskript etter Andrewson finst i selskapets arkiv frå åra 1852-58. Her fortel han om kva han har å kjempe med i gjerninga si: Likegyldighet, overtru, formalisme, og konkurrerende trusretningar. Heile tida sto kampen mot det ekstreme på begge sider: Amerikansk "Revivalism", dvs. mormonarar og andre sekter på eine sida, og konservative, formalistiske norske synode-prestar på andre. Mormonisme og fanatisme hadde herja som ein prærie-brann i Fox River, skreiv han ved ein anledning.

I "Hjartdalssoga" står det at han ein periode (frå 1856) fekk fast løn for å halde minst 36 preiker i året for kyrkjesamfunna i Wisconsin og Illinois. Dette må også ha vore i samband med arbeidet for American Home Mission Society.

Det var Andrewson som først fekk trykt ei norsk salmebok i Amerika. Dette var ei utgåve på 784 sider av Harboe og Guldbergs Salmebok. Ei stund redigerte og trykte han også bladet "Norsk luthersk kirketidende" som han håpte "ved Guds velsignelse skulle vise seg å vere til nytte mellom landsmennene mine". Som prest, og i stor grad misjonær, var han også moralsk vegleiar, alltid i kamp mot alkohol, banning, søndagsarbeid og andre laster. Det er nemnt i fleire kilder at alkoholmisbruk var særleg utbreidd mellom mange av dei første norske immigrantane. Dette var eit stort samfunnsproblem også heime i Norge, men organisert avhaldsarbeid retta etterkvart på dette både heime i Norge og mellom nordmennene i Amerika.

I denne perioden, fortel F.R.Matson, at Andrewson opplevde å sjå ein stor flokk av Illinois-menigheta si dra samla til Iowa. Dette kan ha vore i samband med metodisten Nils Johnson Kaasa frå Heddal - og grunnlegginga av Washington Prairie-settlementet i Chickasaw co. med byen Decorah.

Ole er også med i skuledebatten. Nordmennene var ikkje fornøgde med den religionsfrie offisielle amerikanske skulen, og oppretta iblant eigne skular. Andrewson såg heile tida verdien av at barna gjekk på amerikansk skule, men godtok også ein lokal "norsk" skule, sålenge det ikkje gjekk utover den offisielle skulen.

## Presteteneste

I 1847-48, da han som nyordinert prest framleis samarbeidde med Eielsen, var Ole i LaSalle co. i Illinois. Han organiserte menighetar i Indian Creek, Leland, Fox River, Lisbon og Mission Point. Dette var i området der nordmenn hadde slått seg ned så tidleg som i 1834-35, leia av Cleng Peerson.

I 1851 blei han igjen kalla til Racine county, og han betjente menighetane i Muskego, Racine (by) og Milwaukee ein toårsperiode.

Etter det var han tre år i Fox River, LaSalle county, der han reiste rundt og arbeidde i mange menighetar - som såkalla circuit rider minister - for så å slå seg meir fast ned i Clinton/Jefferson Prairie frå 1856. Han kjøpte nå eigen farm 3 miles sør for byen og hadde heimen sin der resten av livet, med unntak av eit par år i Leland, LaSalle county i 1875-76.

Han betjente The Evangelical Lutheran Church i Clinton og budde 3 miles sør for byen. (Huset hans ved Highway 140 brann i

seinare tid.) Han var dermed tilbake i si gamle West Church, som også fekk nytt kyrkjebygg på denne tida. Ole kjøpte forresten den tidlegare kyrkja. Vi veit ikkje kva han gjorde med den, men trevirket er framleis i bruk i heimen til etterkommarar (Mike Ligmans).

## Innsats både av kone og mann

Samtidig med at Andrewson var engasjert i kyrkjelivet og teologiske debattar på høgt nivå, var det altså som vanleg menighetsprest han gjorde si daglege teneste.

Som prest var det lite løn å få, for folk var fattige, og han måtte drive med mykje praktisk arbeid for å underhalde den veksande familien. Nå var ikkje dette noko som skremde den tidlegare gjetarguten og gardskaren, og som Hatlestad seier: "Han arbeidde uførtødent til Guds Ære og Sjæles frelse".

Ein kan spørje seg korleis menneske har kapasitet til alt dette arbeidet, særleg utan våre dagars kommunikasjonsmiddel. Rachels innsats må ein regne med låg bak heile tida og gjorde Oles arbeid mulig. Ho bar fram 10 barn mellom 1844 og 1867. Påkjenninga da yngste sonen døydde i 1870 måtte ho, som middelaldrande kvinne, også leve igjennom. Samtidig tok ho seg av arbeidet med hus, heim og barn. Ho var svært streng i oppdragargjerninga, men alltid rettferdig - og ho var ikkje utan sans for humor.

Truleg sto ho for mykje av gardsdrifta også, for det ser ut til at farming heile tida blei drive parallelt med alt det andre. Farmen blei etterkvart på den vanlege størrelsen - 160 acres. Og vi veit at dei alltid måtte slite økonomisk. Veldig mykje av tida må Ole ha vore på reiser mellom dei ulike menighetane han var knytt til.

Rachel måtte drive med alt av typisk kvinnearbeid for si tid, heilt til dei siste åra. Ikkje minst arbeidde ho med dyrking av lin. Ho gjorde alt frå å så frøa til å veve dei ferdige linplagga.

Det blir til og med fortalt av Hatlestad at Ole kosta reise til Amerika for den gamle mor si og ein helselaus bror, og at "...i hans Hus nød de Pleie og sorgfritt Ophold til sin Død".

Barna til Rachel og Ole var: 1. Isabella f.1844 d.1909, Paul f.1846 d.1918, Andrew f.1848 d.1931, Anne Turina f.1851 d.1936, Oliver f.1853 d.1926, Carolina f.1855 d.1942, Hellen Rebecca f.1857 d.1937, Anne Lovisa f.1859 d.1932, Emma Chaterina f.1862 d.1921, Henry f.1864 d.1954, Oscar Norman f.1867 d.1870.

Rachel døydde i 1918, 94 år gammal.

## Nye splittingar og nye kyrkjesamfunn

Etter tre år i Franckeanarsynoden fann Anderson, Andrewson og Hatlestad tida inne til å trekke seg. Saman med engelske, svenske og norske lutheranarar danna dei nå i 1851 Nordre Illinois Synoden. Dei avsluttar dermed forbindelsen til Franckeanarsamfunnet, som dei vel hadde regna med ville bli eit mellomspele. Dei såg nå at det var nødvendig med ein klarare luthersk teologi. I Nordre Illinois Synoden blei Andrewson endeleg ordinert, etter fleire år med tidsbegrensa lisensar.

Dette blei også eit mellomspele, for i 1860 drog skandinavane, leia av dei samme tre prestane, seg ut og danna Den Skandinaviske Augustana-synode. Namnet understrekar enda meir vekt på ortodoks lutherdom. Men striden var mykje omkring presteutdanninga.

Omsider hadde nordmennene i Amerika eit kyrkjesamfunn med noko tyngde, i tomrommet mellom Den norske synode og Eielsens Synode. Den skandinaviske Augustana-synode samla 17 prestar og 36 menigheter. Eigen presteskule blei også oppretta - her blei det utskild ei "norsk" avdeling, Augsburg seminary, i 1869.

Dette samfunnet kom ikkje til å samarbeide med dei andre etablerte lutherske kyrkjesamfunna. Og det kom heller ikkje til å forbli samla. At presteutdanninga var skilt ut var ein ting. I tillegg var det nye innvandrarar, inspirert av Gisle Johnsons teologi, som førte til at dei norske i 1870 trekte seg ut for å danne sin eigen synode.

Dette skjedde "efter vennskapelig overenskomst" med svenskanene. Men Andrewson og nokre andre var ikkje glade for denne delinga. Etter mange år som "amerikanar", ser han påverknad frå eit meir moderne Norge som framand. Det er eit skriv frå Andrewson, Jefferson Circular, som understrekar motsetnadane som frå første stund finst i den nye organisasjonen.

På årsmøtet der delinga skulle gjennomførast, bad han om å få stå i den svenske avdelinga, noko han ikkje fekk lov til.. Dette kunne tyde på at han nå som eldre mann viser ei trassig og stivbeint haldning, men det er nok heller ein demonstrasjon - eit nytt teikn på motvilje mot å organisere seg på for nærsynt, norsk grunnlag. Reaksjonen frå møtet er å "venligt formane" dei motvillige til å bli med i den nye synoden.

På fleire møte prøver ein å komme til enighet i den nye syno-

den, utan å lykkast. Den danske pionerpresten frå Muskego, C.L.Clausen, blir nå ein sentral person i diskusjonen. Han endar som president for eit fleirtal som bryt ut. Dette fleirtalet kom til å kalle seg "Den norsk-danske Konferentse", og blei eit av dei betydelegaste kyrkjesamfunna mot slutten av 1800-talet i det norske USA. Sjølv om Konferentsen heller ikkje unngjekk avskaling og splitting, blei den ein periode det sterkaste alternativet til den konservative norske synoden. På mange måtar var "Konferensen" på line med nye politisk liberale straumdrag heime i Norge, som venstrepolitikk og generell nasjonal og demokratisk utvikling. At ordet dansk var med i namnet, kom av at Clausen opprinneleg var frå Danmark, og at eit lita gruppe danskar mellom immigrantane skulle kjenne seg heime.

Andrewson blei att i eit heller beskjedent mindretal. Han fekk mellom andre med seg sin gamle samarbeidspartnar Hatlestad og ein annan som hadde følgd han frå Franckeanartida, Andreas Aslaksen Scheie.

Nå ser vi også ei generasjonsmotsetjing. Yngre, dynamiske og velutdanna prestar dominerte i Konferentsen. Andrewson og fleire med han, mangla den formelle akademiske bakgrunnen og den meir moderne stilen som nå blei rådande. Og sjølv om vi har definert Andrewson-kretsen som radikal, så var dette på det teologiske og organisasjonsmessige planet, i forhold til Dietrichsons stivna statskyrkjeformer og Eielsens fundamentalistiske haugianisme. I haldning til adiafora - dans, drikk, spel mv. - var han klart konservativ. Det er mellom anna dette han understreka i "Jefferson Circular", som førde han på kollisjonskurs med dei seinare konferentsprestane.

Trass i Andrewsons amerikanske haldning, var det hans organisasjon som kom til å gå under namnet "Den norske Augustanasynoden". Andrewson var sjølv øvste leiar frå 1880 og hadde mellom anna som oppgåve å ordinere nye prestar. I 1883 hadde synoden 21 prestar og 55 menighetar. Totalt var det 310 lutherske prestar og 1185 menighetar mellom norskamerikanarane på den tida. Over halvparten tilhørde "Den norske synode" (statskyrkjesynoden).

Andrewson arbeidde dei siste åra meir og meir for samling av norske kyrkjesamfunn. Mellom anna prøvde han å få istand ei forening med haugianarane. Men som det står i Berghs kyrkjehistorie:

"...der var den skjønneste Harmoni i alt undtagen det at en af Augustanasynodens prester, O.Andrewson, havde nogle Tanker om det tusenaarige Rige, som forkom Hauges Folk adskillig betænkelige. Sagen var nok den, at Hauges Synode ikke var meget interesseret i denne Forening."

Innanfor Konferentsen, og mellom denne og Den norske Synode (statskyrkjesynoden), fortsette motsetningane, og ei samla "Norwegian-Lutheran Church in America", såg ikkje dagens lys før 9.juni 1917. Etter dette går amerikaniseringa sin gang, kanskje meir i tråd med Ole Andrewsons idear. "Norwegian" blei sløyfa i namnet frå 1946, og etterkvart samarbeidde ein for fullt med andre lands lutherske kyrkjer. I 1988 var det endeleg ei samla Evangelical Lutheran Church i Amerika.

## To saulendingar

På sine mange reiser rundt i Illinois og Wisconsin kom Andrewson fleire gonger til Muskego. Der trefte han på ein tidlegare kjenning og sambygding. Dette var Halvor Nelson Lonar. Syskena hans hadde vore på "Emilie" samman med Ole. Halvor hadde frå første stund gjort seg gjeldande i dette nybyggerstrøket. Han hadde hatt hand om tømrararbeidet da kyrkja der, den første norske kyrkja i Amerika, blei bygd i 1844. Nå var han farmar, og dreiv både med treskjæring og tømring på si. Og han var aktiv i samfunnslivet, ja, han hadde vore nære på å bli vald både til sheriff og skrivar der i den norske nybygda.

Det finst ei historie om da Halvor, som var enkemann, skulle gifte seg på nytt. Det blir fortalt at han ikkje kunne godta Andrewson, presten med Franckeanarsynet, sjølv om det var ein sambygding. Ja, Andrewson gjekk til og med under namnet Ola Saulending. (Nå blei det likevel bryllup, for Halvor hadde ein medhjelpar i treskinga, og denne hadde juridisk utdanning og kunne gje Halvor og den nye kona ei godkjent borgarleg vigsle).

Heile historia om bryllaupet er skreven ned i Telesoga (eit blad for Telelaget i Amerika) og er lagt til 1862. Ho fortel oss at farmarane kunne ha klare syn i kyrkjedebatten. Sjølv om kveiteprisane var det vanlegaste samtaleemnet, må vi tru at diskusjonane om kyrkjelege spørsmål kunne gå høgt, både ute på "fielden" og i festlege lag, særleg mellom dei meir samfunnsengasjerte norske immigran-tane.

Det korte mellomspelet i Franckeanarsynoden var i det heile ei belastning for Andrewson og dei andre. Det tok lang tid før kollegaer og lekfolk innsåg at dei var ganske tradisjonelle og moderate prestar, som hadde hatt bruk for ei amerikansk kyrkjeleg tilknytning den gongen det ikkje fanst noko norsk alternativ.

## Død og gravferd

Ikkje lenge før han døydde, hadde Ole vore i Chicago på eit synodemøte, eit fellesmøte der arbeid for forening var det sentrale. Der pådrog han seg ein alvorleg forkjølelse som svekka motstandskrafta hans mot nyrebetennelsen (Bright's disease) som han leid av. Ole Andrewson døydde 23.februar 1885 - kl.2 om dagen.

I begravelsen 1.mars var det ein stor skare av venner, slektningar og kjende med. Enka Rachel, som nå var 60 år, og alle dei ti barna stilte sjølvsgatt opp. Det kom folk frå dei mange menighetane der han var kjend, og fleire prestar hadde innstilt gudstenestene sine den dagen for å vere med i gravferda som foregjeikk i hans eigen menighet i Jefferson Prairie.

O.J.Hatlestad, som var med i begravelsen, skreiv også minneord om han i Decorahposten 18.mars. Han sluttar med å referere frå seremonien:

Den avdøde Broders egen Menighed besørgede hans Begravelse. Pastor Rasmussen talte i Sørgehuset; i Kirken leste Pastor Om-land et Afsnit af Guds Ord og holdt Bøn. Undertegnede talte da over Philip.1,21. Efter Sangen talte Pastor Lund fra Milwaukee paa Engelsk over den 116.Salme, og (vers) 15 som lyder saaledes: Det er kosteligt for Herrens Øine når hans hellige dør. Pastor Rasmusen forrettede Jordpaakastelsen.

Saman med mange andre tidlege pionerar er han gravlagt på Jefferson Prairie Cemetery. Andrewsonfamiliens gravstad er markert med ein granittprekestol med ein åpen bibel inngravert. Teksten på gravstøtta har rett nok feilstaving av namnet hans, der står:

Sacred to the memory of Rev. O.Anderson  
Born March 2, 1818  
in Norway  
Emigrated to  
America in 1841.  
Died Feb. 23, 1885  
Aged 66 yrs. 11 mos.

21 days.  
"Blessed are the  
Dead that die in  
the Lord.

## Etterord

Nokon samla biografi om Ole Andrewson finst ikkje. Men Hatlestad skriv nokre sider om han i boka "Historiske Meddelelser om den Lutherske Kirke i Amerika" (Decorah 1887). Kven han eigentleg var, må vi lese ut av dei sporadiske innslaga om han i ulike bøker og skrifter. Han blir ikkje nemnt som den store leiaren og initiativtakeren, likevel er han alltid tilstades i kjeldene og litteraturen. Han skal ha vore ein flink talar. Det han mangla av utdanning tok han att ved alltid å vere svært godt førebudd til talene sine. I det kyrkjelege sentrumslandskapet arbeidde han nært, men i skuggen av den meir skolerte og utadretta Paul Anderson. Ole var ein hardt arbeidande kyrkjas tenar og verka gjerne som sekretær og arbeidde mykje i bakgrunnen med praktisk-organisatoriske ting.

Han har ikkje mange skriftlege arbeid etter seg. I "Luthersk Kirketidende" er det nokre artiklar av han om kyrkjelege spørsmål. Han er nemnd som radikal i fleire kjelder. Det gjev han den noko uvanlege rolla å vere ein radikalar i sentrum, noko som vanskeleg kan føre til eit roleg tilvære i organisasjonsarbeid.

Dotterdottera, Isabelle Matson Hofman, seier i ein privat biografi at han var ein høg, vakker mann med langt kvitt skjegg som nådde han nesten til beltet. Ho hugsar at han som gammal mann kunne setje seg på golvet og leike med barnebarna, ho nemner ein barneleik - "The little worm creeps on the ground". Bildet av han viser utvilsomt ein mann med høg autoritet, lite er att av gjetarguten under Kleppefjell i Sauland.

Vi veit ikkje kva slag arv han hadde med seg heimanfrå. Truleg var det ei frigjerung å komme bort frå norsk underklasseliv. Om han heime hadde opplevd noko av den nasjonalkjensla som på den tida grodde fram mellom breiare lag av folk, har han sett klart nødvendigheten for immigrantane å gå inn i det amerikanske samfunnet. Poenget for han var ikkje å skape eit nytt Norge i USA. Mykje kunne og burde leggest att heime, ikkje minst den høgkyrkjelege embetsmannsteologien som hadde dominert kristenlivet - i alle fall før Haugerørsla - og ei sterk sosial klassesdeling.



Ikkje for det at alt i Amerika skulle takast imot ukritisk. Ole var i motsetnad til enkelte prestar i Den norske synode, heilt klar i slavespørsmålet. Og han såg enkelte amerikanske sekter som absolutt ute på viddene.

Trass i at han var aktiv og delvis skuldig i fleire av splittelsane i norske kyrkjesamfunn, var han den som kanskje mest ønskte saming. Han plasserer seg ganske konsekvent på sentrumsalternativa, ein eller annan plass mellom Eielsens linje og statskyrkjeprestane, samtidig som han orienterer seg mot eit felles amerikansk luthersk syn. Og framtida kom til å vise at lina hans var den som skulle overleve inn i det moderne USA.

### Bakgrunnsstoff/kilder - og tips til vidare lesing:

- Stephanie Matson / Frederick Rognald Matson: Diverse private skrifter, bl.a. biografi om Ole Andrewson og Ragnhild Paulson g.Andrewson og notat frå Andrewson's familiebibel.
- History of Clinton, Rock county, Wisc. (Utdrag): The history of Jefferson Prairie Lutheran Church
- Odd S.Lovoll: Det løfterike landet
- Blegen: Norwegian Migration to America 1825-1860
- Nelson/Fevold: The Lutheran Church among Norwegian Americans
- Bergh: Den norsk lutherske Kirkes historie i Amerika
- Norlie m.fl.: Norsk Lutherske Prester i Amerika 1843-1913
- Gjertrud Kleveland Karlsrud: Hjartdalsoga (Band 2 og 3b)
- Gerhard B.Naeseth: Norwegian Immigrants to the United States I-II
- O.J.Hatlestad: Historiske Meddelelser om den Lutherske Kirke i Amerika
- Sandvin: Elling Eielsen Sundve (Trykte forelesningar frå Eielsen-seminar på Voss 1979)
- Telesoga Nr ?
- An Immigrant Shipload of 1840 (C.A.Clausen - NAHA)
- Decorahposten 18.3.1885: O.J.Hatlestad: Om Pastor O.Andrewsons Livsførelse, Død og Begravelse.

*English version — translated by Roger Bond 2004*

*The Theme in the Yearbook for  
Telemark History Group 2000  
is Emigration History.  
Article below is a Sample from the Book*

## Leif Skoje: Ole Andrewson Crofters Boy and Pioneer Pastor

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### Contents

- Introduction
- Background, residence and family
- Education, emigration planning and departure
- Work and marriage in Wisconsin
- The start on a life in the Church's service – at Jefferson Prairie  
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- Break with Eielson – and the approach to American church life
- Pastoral Service
- Contributions - Both of the wife and the husband
- New separations and new church communities
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- Epilog
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### Introduction:

The pioneer emigrants from the upper Telemark townships were some of the most predominant number in the time before the mass emigration from Norway. All the same, we don't find so many individual persons from here who have marked themselves in that historic time. Some were known as leaders of emigrant groups (Rue and Laraas), one marked himself as an influential letter writer (Olav Trovatn), one was the country's most known

postman (Snowshoe Thompson). One Rauland person would certainly have been a participant to the killing of Joseph Smith, the founder of the Mormon Church, and proficient craftsmen and authors were to be found. One was a Congressman (Kittel Halvorsen Kjeldahl), and many offered their lives and health to their new country in the Civil War. Two contemporaries, Heddaler Nils Johnson Kaasa and Saulander Ole Andresson Aasen, became forerunners in church organization work in that first great effort. The last mentioned, we shall become better acquainted with here. Ole Andresson Aasen, or Ole Andrewson as he was known in the USA, is often mentioned among others in E. Clifford Nelson and Eugene L. Fevolds, *The Lutheran Church among Norwegian Americans* (Minneapolis Augsburg Vol. I 1960). This is the standard work itself on Norwegian-American church history. All the same he needs a complete discussion.

As a crofter's boy from a little Telemark township, he had little theological training, But, with sound farmer intelligence and a paper upon which he was approved as pastor, he had to, in adult life, often confront university trained Norwegian clergy who had generations of intellectual officials behind them in their lineage

There were only three persons who were ordained as Norwegian pastors in the USA before Ole. The Hauganist Eiling Eielsen, the "moderate" Dane C. L. Clausen, and the uncompromising state-church pastor J. W. C. Dietrichson. While he must be regarded as a minor person together with these, Ole was central in the very complicated Norwegian-American church history. From 1842 until his death in 1885, he was an important element in adapting the Norwegian immigrant community to an American church life. That was a demanding, pioneering work. Because, the Norwegian Church, which more or less came over, was not easy baggage to unpack in the new land. Perhaps some were already spoiled on the trip and by the arrival. Some were realized to be unsuitable in the new community and rather should have been left at home. Ole's job was to help the immigrants to unpack and to take care of the right things, simultaneously some new things, which also must be obtained at where they had come.

The article will follow Ole from the modest youth environment in a simple crofter's home, through a typical emigrant voyage in the adventuresome early, pioneer time. There he could represent

hundreds of the first Telemark emigrants. Afterwards he became an active participant in American church history; there he provided meaning for hundreds of emigrants. In this manner we get, through his life, a glimpse into the church history in Norwegian-America up to the 1880's.

## Background, Residence and Family

Early in the 1800's, a spot was cleared right up to the farm Myljom-Bø in Sauland. The place got the name Åsen and lay some hundred yards above the farm, up under Kleppe mountain, on the road to Tuddal. In this time the whole Bø neighborhood belonged to a rich timber dealer who was named Jens Ørn, so all the inhabitants there were tenant farmers and crofters.

At Åsen it was the crofter Andres Tollevson who farmed in the year 1820, perhaps he was he, himself, who had cleared and built the place. He was born in 1766 and was married to Ingebjørg Olsdatter. We cannot clearly identify her closer. If the birth year is correct, Andres was all of 50 years when the first child, the daughter Kari, was born in 1816. The 2nd of March 1818, the son Ole came. In 1821 Anne came, and in 1825 Helge (girl's name, pronounced Hælge – with thick L), in 1828 Tollev, and in 1833 Ingebjørg who died the same year.

Anne was married to Hans Larsson Skårset and Helge to Ola Kjetilson Nord-Listul. Tollev came probably after to America. The two older were of the many Saulenders who were among all the adventuresome pioneers in the history of the emigration to the USA.

Kari should, according to the Hjartdalsoga, have been married to Halvor Torbjørnson Omnes, and emigrated the same year, but there is evidently a mix-up with Torkel Bjørnson Omnes, born 1820. (We find Torkel Bjørnson on the same boat as Kari, but they are not registered as married there. Hjartdalsoga says that Torkel also is married to Kari Andresdatter born 1815. We don't find Halvor Torbjørnson on the passenger list during these times).

That could have been a good marriage for a crofter's girl, for Omnes was among the largest farms in the township. But it was not the heir to whom she was married, and the solution with that was emigration. Ole and the sister left, and we must believe they saw for themselves a better future in a new land.

## Education, Emigration Plans, and Departure

As one of many children in a poor crofter's family, Ole, early on, had to work and was a shepherd boy. But people in the township must have noticed this boy and the literary faculties he must have shown. We must believe it was the local Pastor Finkerhagen that helped him become a student at the Kosa School in Brunkeberg. This small seminary in Kviteseid was the forerunner to the teacher training in Telemark, and a number of well-known men studied there during the time the school existed. Knut Gislesen Løkslid, a well-known educator, pastor and bishop from Hjartdal had gone there. Olav K. Trovatn from Øyfjell, who emigrated and became a well-known letter writer, went there. And simultaneously with Ole, Aasmund Olavson Vinje went to the same school.

How Ole could afford to go there, we don't know, but he accomplished the instruction and went to work as a teacher in an ambulatory (or traveling) school in the same township. He was engaged in that from 1838 to 1841.

This bright young man must have been able to keep himself informed in all the talk of America during this time. It surely made a strong impression on people that 36 Hjartdal people in 1839 left from the home township; a trip the dimensions of, folk could hardly imagine. And that was not a one-time phenomenon either, for the year after, in 1840, Anund and Aslaug Uvås with four children made the same trip.

It was quickly known in the township that the folk came out well, and that there was land and a future for many more in that country. This large, early emigration from Hjartdal townships was inspired by the emigration from Tinn in 1837, and the Numedaler Ansten Nattestad. Ole was perhaps one of those who got for himself, printed accounts about the emigration, and could read and arrange to others useful knowledge about what they could obtain. He could have got hold of Ole Rynnings "Truthful Account about America." Which Nattestad had printed in 1838.

The barque Emilie, which the Uvås family had sailed with from Drammen and Gøteborg to New York, would take the same route the summer of 1841. With that, the winter and spring of 1841 was an anxious time in Hjartdal and Sauland. There were many who laid serious plans on emigrating, and when Captain Thomas

Anchersen late in the summer guided Emilie out from Drammen Harbor, there were 92 passengers aboard. Of these were in all 27 from Hjardal and Sauland. Among the passengers were Ole and the sister Kari. There were also Lonar, Skårnes, Skårdal and Bøe folk from Sauland. So they had plenty of acquaintances along on the journey. The rest of the passengers were also "landlubbers"-from Sigdal and Numedal, and from more townships in Upper Telemark. In the whole, 169 emigrated from the whole country that year. Some few were from Voss, otherwise all were from the mentioned townships.

Captain Anchersen, who himself owned the Emilie, was an experienced seaman. He was, to be sure, daring to overload the 150 year old ship with passengers, but in return he took good care of them. He had along medicine for the most usual sicknesses, and he held church services on Sundays with religious meetings otherwise. He also organized the further transportation to the interior in the USA.

The ship arrived in New York the 5th of August after about ten weeks at sea. Thereafter they followed the usual travel route up the Hudson River to Albany north of New York City. From there they continued the trip on cargo barges along the Erie Canal to Buffalo on Lake Erie, then onward over the Great Lakes to Milwaukee or Chicago.

In the same travel group was a family from Southern Hjardal. It was Torgun Haraldsdotter Tveiten, who had along with her two daughters from an earlier marriage, Ragnhild and Anne Paulsdotter, daughters of Paul (Pål) Jonson Aasen. The new man in the family was Johannes Olsen from Heddal. One day the 17 years old Ragnhild fell overboard from the canal boat. Ole performed the rescue of the young woman, and it was, of course, the same Ragnhild he married a couple of years later; so tells the great-grandson of Ole, Frederic Rognald Matson.

## Work and Marriage in Wisconsin

Ole, therefore, came to Wisconsin in 1841 and gained farm work in Racine County. That says that he must have stayed in, or in the vicinity of, the Muskego Settlement. Which is well known from emigrant history, but here is a short repetition:

Cleng Peerson guided the first Norwegian emigrants in 1825 to

Kendall in New York State and later to the Fox River area southwest of Chicago in Illinois. That course, the first emigrants from the eastern parts of Norway also took, that would say, the Rue group in 1837. Then the Lurås group in 1839 came to Milwaukee; they were in a way lured to settle down nearby on the land by Lake Muskego in southeast Wisconsin, further north than the earlier emigrants. In spite of many difficulties, Muskego became the new departure point, which marked the course for new settling in westerly and northern directions – further in Wisconsin and towards Minnesota and the Dakota Territory. When, in addition, Nattestad and his fellow towns people from Numedal settled in Jefferson Prairie a little further west in Wisconsin,. That marked the end for Cleng Peerson's control of the emigration.

For a poor newcomer like Ole, the farm work was the surest livelihood. But afterwards as he became established, he realized that there was use for the "academic" faculties that he had. Whether he had planned about being a churchman, we don't know, but after a strong religious conversion experience in 1842, he clearly sees that. He starts a career as a lay preacher that first year in Racine County.

1843 was also an important year for Ole. The 29th of June he was married to Ragnhild. She was born the 23rd of May 1824 and lived all the way to 1918. The couple had six daughters and five sons. All except the youngest son grew up. Ragnhild's name was Americanized to Rachel. By that she held on to the first initial from Norway, and simultaneously gained a name in a strong biblical tradition.

### The Start of a Life in the Church's Service – In Jefferson Prairie

For four years Ole carried on as a lay preacher. In connection with that he must have met the Hauganist leader Elling Eiel-sen. Simultaneously he got started farming and must have read and studied everything that he had access to, not least would be he learned the language.

In 1844 he moved to the Jefferson Prairie settlement and came to live a little south of the little town of Clinton in Rock County - all the way south in Wisconsin. He settled down on a farm and was a teacher and still preacher.

The first daughter was born the same year, and the name was Isabella, a naming after Ole's mother Ingeborg. Isabella had a considerable role in the community. Surely as wife of Canute Matson, sheriff in Chicago in a very dramatic time in the 1880's, but that is another story.

Jefferson Prairie was, as Muskego, very important in that early emigration's history. It was here the founders of the emigration, from Upper Telemark and Numedal – Ole and Ansten Nattestad from Rollag, settled down. Ansten was back home in 1838-39 and brought a large number of new emigrants with the help of his own agitation and the book *The Truthful Account about America* by Ole Rynning. He had the manuscript with him, and he had the book printed in Oslo. In the meantime the brother Ole found his way to Jefferson Prairie. A large part of Ansten's company also went there, mostly Numedalers, in 1839, while those from Upper Telemark settled in Muskego.

In *History of Clinton, Rock County* it says about Ole that "he went to a seminary for three years." There is nothing else that indicates that Ole took such instruction in the USA, so it was quite simply enough that it was the seminary in Kviteseid, which was in Ole's background, and not other formal theological education.

But pastor he was. O. J. Hatlestad, a longtime ministerial colleague writes, "when the Christian friends in Illinois and Wisconsin became aware of the Grace which God had entrusted in Ole Andrewson, he was called in 1846 as pastor in La Salle County, Illinois."

In the pioneer congregations people were particular about official ordination being very important, certainly with regard to the performance on Communion. Even if many immigrants themselves were relieved to get away from all which was called pastors and religion; it was among others a painful privation of pastors in the first times.

Ole was ordained as the fourth pastor among Norwegians. He started with a provisional annual license from an American Lutheran Society. After having Americanized his name he was then Reverend Ole Andrewson, and quickly came to be in the middle of the theological confusion which Norwegian America must have been during the next 100 years. One can get the impression that most all the intellectual capacity among the scholarly Norwegians revolved around discussions and conflicts in theological doctrinal



questions. “A spiritual bumblebees nest” is one expression which was used. Many different church organizations or synods were established and discontinued, divided and united – as we shall gradually see.

## Church Dividing Locally – and over the Whole Of Norwegian USA

By settling down in Jefferson County, Ole Andrewson placed himself, also geographically, in the midst of the struggles, which began to arise in the church life among Norwegians in the USA. Already in 1844 people in Jefferson Prairie had divided themselves in two religious camps, gradually each with their own church – East Church and West Church. Already we see here the two principal lines in Norwegian American Lutheran Church traditions.

The one side had as their objective to lead the Norwegian State Church into the USA. The first driving force in this was the university educated, Norwegian pastor J. W. C. Dietrichson (1815-1883), who came to the USA in 1844. It must have been difficult for large parts of the early-going emigrant people who had as one objective to get out from under this strong bureaucratic governed Norwegian Church with its great weight on external and formalistic things. But others wanted this traditional church authority which they were used to. And after much beating around, the church society – The Norwegian Synod – was founded in 1853 at a meeting at Rock Prairie, not far from Clinton. Later Koshkonong, the large Norwegian settlement a little further north, became the principal base for Dietrichson.

One of the teaching problems for this “Norwegian State Church” in the USA later developed when many pastors would be educated in St. Louis, Missouri, a State where slavery was permitted. As a consequence of that, and from a very literal bible interpretation, it led to this church actually not able to take a clear and unambiguous distance from slavery in the decade which followed. We don’t hear about any of the pastors being for slavery, the debate went on if slavery biblically/theologically was “sin in and of it self.”

On the opposite side stood, from the start, the layman movement/Hauganists very strongly among the Norwegian immigrants. The Hauganist movement never broke with the official Lu-

theran Church, but worked as a popular opposition within it. In the USA, Elling Eielsen who came from Voss in 1839 was to get the chance to continue this line. He was also ordained a Lutheran pastor in 1843. Eielsen was almost always traveling, but Jefferson Prairie was his principal base the greater part of his life.

Ole Andrewson was at first a follower of Eielsen and was acquainted with him from Muskego/Racine. It could have been in consultation with Eielsen that Ole went to Jefferson Prairie. In any case, he became central in the “West” Church there. The historian Flom says that he founded the congregation there, but it was initially in 1850.

In 1846 an historic meeting was arranged in Jefferson Prairie. Present were Elling Eielsen, Paul Anderson – a radical pastor from Valdres, Ole Andrewson and “a part of the widely spread-out believers.” Here, in April 1846, they founded ‘The Evangelical Lutheran Church of America,’ often called “Eielsen’s Synod.” At the meeting Andrewson functioned as secretary. “I dictated and Andrewson wrote,” was how Eielsen told of the by-laws for the organization got started. Eielsen’s Synod was therefore a reality seven years before “The Norwegian Synod” was finally organized.

Break with Eielsen – and Rapprochement to American Church Life

In 1853 there were two principal lines in the Norwegian American church organization, each falling into their own synod. But prior to that time Andrewson and several others had gone their own way.

Elling Eielsen was not a man with a sense for organizational work. “Christ didn’t keep records when he went around on earth,” he declared one time. He was moreover very “norsk” in his basic viewpoint, lacking a faculty for cooperation and was generally conservative. Andrewson, Anderson, and a third young and radical pastor, Ole J. Hatlestad soon saw the time had come to break out of Eielsen’s Synod. That happened at a meeting at Middlepoint (Fox River), Illinois in 1848. Andrewson was again secretary and called for the meeting. “They discussed 1) about complaints against Eielsen 2) about entry in the Franckean Synod.”

At the meeting Andrewson read out loud a long “list of sins” against Eielsen. A more concrete substance of the contents is more difficult to find, but expressions of laxness and disorder were

used. Otherwise it was probably the general cooperation problem, which lay behind it. Also it could itself go into more banal rumors about a person such as Eielsen. In any case, Eielsen “grabbed his hat and left the meeting.”

Eielsen and his supporters continued to work in Eielsen’s Synod, while the others moved out and associated with the German-American, so-called Franckean Synod, which was based in New York. It was surely Paul Anderson who had gained familiarity with American church life. He had training from a seminary in Beloit (Wisconsin), a little larger town not far from Clinton. Nevertheless, so it was Andrewson who was ordained to pastoral service first, just in that Franckean Synod.

The Franckeans were Lutheran and Pietist, but liberal, yet not saying indifferent to doctrinal questions. There was a place for Norwegian “children’s education” within the organization. For Andrewson and the others it was exceptionally important that the Franckeans were strongly opposed to slavery. Here we see actually an initiative to participation in American church life and community debate from representatives of Norwegian immigrants. It is not often that importance is attached to that. The famous people are often those who will guard the Norwegian mode of living in the new country. But, it is the Americanization, which advances little by little as time passes.

Contact with American Christian life also came through the American Home Mission Society in Chicago, which supported mission work among immigrants generally. Behind that Society stood the Presbyterian and Congregational Churches. This was a quite decent and democratic church society. Paul Anderson and Andrewson founded, with help from that society, the first Norwegian and Scandinavian church in Chicago in 1848.

This society supported the work of both Andrewson and Anderson during these years. For 50 dollars per quarter it asked for written reports. 30 such manuscripts from Andrewson were found in the Society’s archives from the years 1852 through 1858. Here he tells about what he had to contend with in his mission. Carelessness, superstition, red tape, and competing creeds.. The whole time the battle against the extremes on both sides. American “revivalism,” that is to say, Mormons and other sects on one side, and conservative, bureaucratic Norwegian Sy-

nod clergy on the other. Mormonism and fanaticism had raged like a prairie fire in Fox River, he wrote in one report.

In the Hjartdalssoga it states that during one period he got firm payment for delivering at least 30 sermons before church organizations in Wisconsin and Illinois. That must also have been in cooperation with the work for the American Home Mission Society.

It was Andrewson who first printed a Norwegian Hymnal in America. That was an edition of 784 pages of Harboe and Guldbergs' Salmebok. For awhile he edited and printed the paper Norwegian Lutheran Church Times, which he hoped "with God's blessings would turn out to be of use among my countrymen." As a pastor, and to a great degree a missionary, he was also a moral example, always in battle against alcohol, cursing, Sunday work and other vices. It is mentioned in several sources that alcohol abuse was certainly widespread among many of the first Norwegian immigrants. This was also a large community problem back home in Norway. But organized abstinence work gradually corrected this, both in Norway and in America.

In this period, F. R. Matson tells, Andrewson saw a large body of his Illinois congregation leave for Iowa. This could have been in cooperation with the Methodist, Nils Johnson Kaasa from Heddal. - and the establishment of the Washington Prairie settlement in Chickasaw County by the city of Decorah.

Ole also took part in the school debate. Norwegians were not satisfied with the religion-free official American school, and at times established their own schools. Andrewson always saw the value of the children going to American schools, but also approved of a local Norwegian school, so long as it didn't interfere with the official school

## Pastoral Service

In 1847-48 when he, as a newly ordained pastor, still were cooperating with Eielsen, Ole was in La Salle County in Illinois. He organized congregations in Indian Creek, Lisbon and Mission Point. This was in the area where Norwegians had settled down as early as in 1834-35, led by Cleng Peerson. In 1851 he was again called to Racine County, and he served congregations in Muskego, Racine (city) and Milwaukee in a two years period.

After that, he was three years in Fox River in LaSalle County; there he traveled around and worked in many congregations – as a so-called “circuit rider minister,” – before settling down firmly in Clinton/Jefferson Prairie from 1856. He now bought his own farm 3 miles south of the town and had his home there the rest of his life, with the exception of a couple of years in Leland, La Salle County in 1875-76.

He served the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Clinton and lived three miles south of town (the house, by highway 140, burned down in later times). He was, at that time, back continuously in the old “West Church,” which also got a new church building during that time. Ole bought, moreover, the earlier church. We don’t know what he did with it, but woodwork is still in use in the home of his descendant , Mike Ligmans.

## Contributions of Both Wife and Husband

Simultaneously while Andrewson was engaged in church life and theological debates at high levels, there were also the usual daily services, which he did as the congregational pastor. As pastor there was little pay to receive, because people were poor and he has to engage in much useful work in order to support his growing family. Now this was not something that frightened the earlier shepherd boy and farm hand, and as Hatlestad said, “He worked tirelessly for God’s Glory and Souls Salvation.”

One can ask themselves how people had the capacity for all this work, especially without our present communication resources. Rachel’s contributions one must reckon as being behind him the whole time and making Ole’s work possible. She bore 10 children between 1844 and 1867. The stress of the youngest son dying in 1870 she had to, as a middle-aged woman, also live through. Simultaneously, she took care of the work with the house, home and children. She was very strict in the handling of their children, but always fair – and she was not without a sense of humor.

Probably, she was in charge of much of the farm work too, for it appeared that the farming was going on parallel with all the other things. The farm gradually became the usual size – 160 acres. And we know that it always had to struggle economically. Very much of the time, Ole must have been traveling between the different

congregations by which he was employed.

Rachel had to work with all the typical woman's work for her time, all the way to the last years. Not least, she worked with growing flax. She did everything from sowing the seed to weaving the finished linen garment.

It appeared, according to Hatlestad, that Ole paid for the voyage to America for his elderly mother and an invalid brother, and that for them "...in his house was the needed care and carefree support until death."

Children of Rachel and Ole were: Isabella , born 1844, died 1909; Paul, born 1846, died 1918; Andrew, born 1848, died 1931; Anne Turina, born 1851, died 1936; Oliver, born 1853, died 1926; Carolina, born 1855, died 1942; Helen Rebecca, born 1857, died 1937; Anne Lovisa, born 1859, died 1932; Emma Chaterina, born 1862, died 1921; Henry, born 1864, died 1954; and Oscar Norman, born 1867, died 1870.

Rachel died in 1918, 94 years old.

## New Separation and New Church Organization

After three years in the Franckean Synod, Anderson, Andrewson and Hatlestad found it was time to pull out. Together with English, Swedish and Norwegian Lutherans they now formed in 1851 the Northern Illinois Synod. They concluded with that action, the connection to the Franckean Organization, which they had well reckoned would be an interlude. They now said that it was necessary for a clearer Lutheran theology. In the Northern Illinois Synod, Andrewson was ultimately ordained after several years with time-limited licenses.

That was also an interlude, for in 1860, the Scandinavians left, led by the same three pastors, and formed the 'The Scandinavian Augustana Synod.'" The name emphasized still more weight on orthodox Lutheranism. But the struggle was mostly about clerical education.

At last the Norwegians in America had a church organization with some solidity. In the void between 'The Norwegian Synod' and Eielsen's Synod, the "Scandinavian Augustana Synod" united 17 pastors and 36 congregations. Their own pastoral school was also established – here it was a separate "Norwegian" department, Augsburg Seminary, in 1869.

This organization didn't get a chance to cooperate with the other established Lutheran church organizations. And it didn't come about to remain connected either. Clergy training being cut out was one thing. In addition, it was the new immigrants, inspired by Gisle Johnson's theology, which resulted in the Norwegians in 1870 moving out to form their own synod.

That happened "after a friendly arrangement" with the Swedes. But Andrewson and some others were not happy about this partition. After many years as "Americans," he sees influence from a more modern Norway as foreign. It is a manuscript from Andrewson, the Jefferson Circular, which underscores the opposition, which right from the start, existed in the new organization.

At the annual meeting where the division was to be carried out, he asked about staying in the Swedish department, something for which he did not get permission. This could suggest that he now, as an older man, showed a defiant and inflexible attitude, but it was probably rather a demonstration – another sign of opposition against organizing themselves on a nearsighted Norwegian basis. The reaction from the meeting is on "friendly admonishment" of his reluctance to go along in the new synod.

At several meetings they tried to come to agreement in the new synod without succeeding. The Danish, pioneer pastor from Muskego, C. L. Clausen, was now a central person in the discussion. He becomes president to a wide number which broke out. That majority came to call themselves "The Norwegian-Danish Conference," and was one of the important church organizations towards the end of the 1800's in the Norwegian USA. Even if the Conference itself didn't avoid shedding and splitting, it was in one period the strongest alternative to the conservative Norwegian Synod. In many ways the "Conference" was in line with the new liberal political thoughts at home in Norway., as the liberal politics and general national and democratic development. That the word "Danish" was in the name stems from Clausen, who was originally from Denmark, and so a small group of Danes amongst the immigrants could feel at home.

Andrewson was left behind in a rather small minority. He received, among others, his old cooperative partner Hatlestad, and one other who followed him from the Franckean times, Andres Aslaksen Scheie.

Now we also see a generational contrast. Young, dynamic and well trained pastors dominated in the Conference.” Andrewson, and several with him, lacked the formal academic background and the modern style, which was now prevailing. And although we have defined the Andrewson-circle as radical, that was on the theological and organizational level, in comparison to Dietrichson’s rigid State Church forms and Eielson’s fundamentalist Hauganism. In relationship with adiafora – dance, drink, card playing, et cetera, he was clearly conservative. It was among other things that he emphasized in the Jefferson Circular which led him on a collision course with the later Conference clergy.

In spite of Andrewson’s American stand, it was his organization which happened to go under the name “The Norwegian Augustan Synod.” Andrewson himself was the top leader from 1880, and among other things, had as a duty ordaining new pastors. In 1883 the Synod had 21 pastors and 55 congregations. Totally, there were 310 Lutheran clergy and 1185 congregations amongst the Norwegian-Americans at this time. Over half belonged to “The Norwegian Synod” (State Church Synod).

Andrewson worked more and more these last years for the unification of the Norwegian church community. Among other things he tried to bring about a union with the Hauganists. But, as it states in Bergh’s Church History, “there was the most beautiful harmony in everything except that one of the Augustana Synod’s pastors, Ole Andrewson had some thoughts about The Millennium which Hauge people found quite serious. The story was probably that the “Hauge Synod” was not very interested in that union.

Within the Conference, and between them and “The Norwegian Synod” (State Church Synod) the opposition continued, and a united “Norwegian Lutheran Church in America,” didn’t see the light of day before the 9th of June, 1917. After that, the Americanization was on its way, perhaps more in line with Ole Andrewson’s ideas. “Norwegian” was omitted from the name from 1946, and gradually they cooperated more fully with other countries’ Lutheran Churches. In 1988 there was finally a united “Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

## Two “Saulanders”

On his many travels around Illinois and Wisconsin, Andrewson se-



veral times came to Muskego. There he met an earlier acquaintance and “fellow villager.” That man was Halvor Nelson Lonar. His siblings had been on the “Emilie” in company with Ole. Halvor had, right from the start, asserted himself in the pioneer area. He had headed the construction work when the church there (the first Norwegian church in America) was built in 1844. Now he was farming and engaged in woodcarving, and did carpentering on the side. And he was active in the community life; yes, he had been close to being chosen both as a sheriff and judge in the Norwegian new township.

There is a story about Halvor, who was a widower, that he would be married again. It was said that he could not “acknowledge” Andrewson the pastor with the Franckean view point, even if he was a “fellow Saulander.” Yes, Andrewson even came, with the name of Ole Saulending. (Now, it was a wedding all the same, because Halvor had a helper in threshing, and he had legal training and could give Halvor and the new wife an approved civil wedding).

The whole story about the wedding is written down in Telesoga (a paper for the Telemark association in America), and is assigned to 1862. The story tells us that the farmers could have a clear vision of the church debate, even if the price of wheat was the most usual conversation subject. And we must believe that the discussion about the church problems could get intense, both out in the fields and in social circles – certainly between the more community engaged Norwegian immigrants.

The short interlude in the Franckean Synod was, in the whole, a hereditary weakness for Andrewson and the others. It took a long time before colleagues and lay people understood that they were quite traditional and moderate pastors, who had had a use for an American religious connection on those occasions when some Norwegian alternatives were not to be found.

## Death and Interment

Not long before he died, Ole had been in Chicago for a Synod meeting, a joint meeting where the work for unification was central. There he contracted a serious cold which weakened his power of resistance against nephritis (Bright’s Disease) from which he suffered. Ole Andrewson died the 23rd of February, 1885 at 2

o'clock during the day.

In the funeral, the 1st of March, there was a large flock of friends, relatives and acquaintances. Widow Rachel, who was now 60 years old, and all of the ten children were lined up, of course. People came there from the many congregations where he was known, and many clergy had cancelled their own services that day, and accompanied the internment which all took place in his own congregation in Jefferson Prairie.

O. J. Hatlestad, who was at the funeral, also wrote a memorial to him in the Decorah Posten the 18th of March. He closed by reporting from the ceremony.

The departed brother's own congregation took charge of his funeral Pastor Rasmussen spoke in the "mourning house;" in the church Pastor Omland read a section of God's Word and gave a prayer. The undersigned, (Hatlestad) spoke on Philippians 1, vs 21. After the hymn Pastor Lund spoke in English on the 116th Psalm, and verse 15, which runs like this, " It is priceless in the Lord's sight when his saint dies." Pastor Rasmussen performed the grave side ceremony.

Together with many other early pioneers he was buried in the Jefferson Prairie Cemetery. The Andrewson family's grave site is marked with a granite pulpit with an open bible engraved. The text on the grave monument has straight out, a miss-spelling of his name; it stands,

Sacred to the memory of Rev. O. Anderson

Born March 2, 1818

In Norway

Emigrated to

America in 1841,

Died Feb. 23, 1885

Aged 66 yrs. 11 mos.

21 days

"Blessed are the

Dead that die in

The Lord."

## Epilog

A collected biography of Ole Andrewson is not found. But Hatlestad has some pages about him in the book Historic Reports on the

Lutheran Church in America (Decorah, 1887). Who he actually was, we must read from the sporadic references to him in different books and documents. He was not mentioned as a great leader or initiative taker, nevertheless, he is always present in the sources and the literature. He was a competent orator. That which he missed in training, he made up for by always being very well prepared in his speeches. In the Churches central province he worked closely, but in the shadow of the better-trained and outgoing Paul Anderson. Ole was a hard working servant of the Church, and worked generally as secretary, and worked primarily in the background with practical, organizational things.

He didn't have many written works by him. In the Lutheran Church Times there are some articles by him on churchly questions. He is mentioned as radical in various sources. This gave him the unusual role of being a radical in the center; something which could hardly lead to a peaceful existence in organizational work.

The granddaughter, Isabella Matson Hofman, says in a private biography that he was a tall, handsome man with a long white beard, which reached nearly to the belt. She recalled that he, as an old man, could set himself on the floor and play with grandchildren. She mentioned a child's game – "The little worm creeps on the ground."

The picture of him shows a man undoubtedly with high authority. Little is left of the shepherd boy under Kleppefjell in Saudland. We don't know what sort of heritage he had with him from home. It was probably a liberation to come away from Norwegian lower class life. At home he had experienced some of the national recognition which in that time sprouted forth among a broad social stratum of people. He has clearly seen the necessity for the immigrants to go into the American community. The point for him was not to create a new Norway in the USA. Much could, and ought to, be left back home, not least the high churchly, bureaucratic theology which had dominated the Christian life – in any case before the Hauge movement – and strong social class divisions.

Not that all in America should be received uncritically. Ole was, opposed to some clergy in the Norwegian Synod, completely clear on the slavery question. And he saw some American sects as absolutely "out of this world."

In spite of that, he was active and to some extent guilty in several of the breakups in the Norwegian church community, he was the one who, perhaps most of all, wanted unification. He placed himself in the entirely consistent, central alternative; one or another place between Eielsen's line and the State Church clergy simultaneously, as he oriented himself towards a common American Lutheran vision. And the future came to show that his "line" was that which would survive in the modern USA.

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