

AUSTIN and ANNA FOSSE RISJORD

(Dear Sharon Tiffany

I hope you can read my writing. This is the information that I have about my grandparents. If you have any questions please call me:

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Austin and Anna Fosse Risjord immigrated to America as young adults. Austin was 16 years old when he immigrated with his brother, Ole. Their oldest brother, John Risjord, was the first in the family to come to America. He became a doctor in Minnesota, then sent for his brother Gullick and sister Julia in 1884, then Austin and Ole in 1888.

Austin Nels Risjordet (the “et” was dropped from Risjordet when he registered in America) was born June 6, 1872 in Tinn Telemarken, Norway. Austin and Ole first farmed in Minnesota, then moved to Stevenson, WA.

Anna Foss (no middle name) was born may 25, 1883 in Hardenger, Norway, and immigrated with her uncle, John Fosse, in 1904. She was 21 years old. Anna didn't speak English, but with her Norwegian/English cookbook she got a job cooking at a hotel in Portland, OR, then she got her job at the Samson Hotel in Stevenson. Austin came to Stevenson to get supplies and ate at the Samson Hotel where he first met Anna. They then realized they had grown up across the Fjord from one another in Norway, but met, married and settled in Stevenson.

The couple had four children: Norman Henry, born May 15,

1913; Melvin Severt, born Dec 21, 1914; Alida Seneva, born Jan. 21, 1917; and Julia Isabelle, born May 18, 1918.

Austin supported his family by farming and cutting wood for the Stevenson Court House and the Camas paper mill. In the summer months all of the family, with Ole's family, traveled and camped, clearing land for roads to be built with their two teams of horses. While clearing the road to Tillamook, Ore., little Julia drank from a stream and got typhoid and almost died. She started the second grade late the next year as she was still recovering.

During the Depression Austin and Anna took care of their family with their hard-working Norwegian heritage and always had enough food to share with others. Many people, including little children and babies, would ride in the railroad box cars, many on top of the cars. Those who came to their house asked for work for food and all were given food.

Entertainment for the family was gathering with family and friends to picnic, often at the Soda Springs in (*north of*) Carson, Wa. The children remembered swimming in Rock Creek and climbing Beacon Rock. The dances at the Highland Pavilion in North Bonneville were also very popular.

Norman left school to help his father built roads full time. He later married Sylvia Holdenbrand, the little girl from next door who had suddenly "grown up." They had two children: Austin Samuel and Alice Evelyn. Norman had a successful excavating business in Stevenson. He worked on the new Stevenson High School, projects at Stevenson Co-Ply and Hegewald Timber Co. Norman passed away Feb. 11, 1963 from a heart attack.

Melvin served in the military, then returned to Stevenson and got a job for the railroad. Melvin died in an accident while inspecting track in April of 1948 at Wind River.

Alida became ill in her teenage years with kidney disease

and passed away at age 21 on April 21, 1938.

Julia married the “new” neighbor boy, Clifford Mofford, on April 3, 1935. They have five children: Curtis Marvin, Jerry Austin, Phyllis Julia, Cynthea Ann and Peggy Jean. Clifford and Julie moved to Battle Ground, Wa., and in 1843 started Mofford Electric Co. They celebrated their 75th wedding anniversary April 3, 2010.

Anna passed away on March 22, 1944, from thyroid and heart disease. She was 61 years old.

Austin spent his later years with his daughter, Julia, and son-in-law Clifford in Battle Ground, and passed away Aug. 8, 1960, at age 88.

DOLL, c. 1910

This doll was given to Alida and Julia for Christmas from their Aunt Josephine and Uncle Gullick. Gullick became a judge in Minnesota. When their daughters, Marian and Isabel, outgrew the doll they sent it and a buggy and clothes in about 1920. A wonderful gift.

The patent is stamped on the back, but I can't see it very well. I know the doll is very old, but was restored.

VIOLIN

The violin was given to Alida by their neighbors, the Lillegards. It was made by N. C. Skaar, and given to the Lillegards, who in turn gave it to Alida. The violin has “N.C. Skaar, 1896” on the inside under scroll work.

PICTURES

Austin was 16 years old, Anna 21 years old. We believe they were taken before coming to America. On family picture: Risjord; one picture of Samson Hotel in Stevenson, where Austin and Anna met.