

**THE SKAVLEM AND ÖDEGAARDEN
FAMILIES: BEING A GENEALOGICAL
RECORD AND PIONEER HISTORY OF
THE SKAVLEM AND ÖDEGAARDEN
FAMILIES FROM THEIR EMIGRATION
FROM NORWAY DOWN TO THE PRESENT**

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The Skavlem and ÖDegaarden Families: Being a Genealogical Record and Pioneer History of the Skavlem and ÖDegaarden Families from Their Emigration from Norway down to the Present by Halvor L. Skavlem

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HALVOR L. SKAVLEM

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Being a
Genealogical Record and Pioneer History of the Skavlem and
Ödegaarden Families from Their Emigration from
Norway down to the Present.

With Ninety-nine Portraits and
Other Illustrations.

Written and Compiled by
HALVOR L. SKAVLEM
1915
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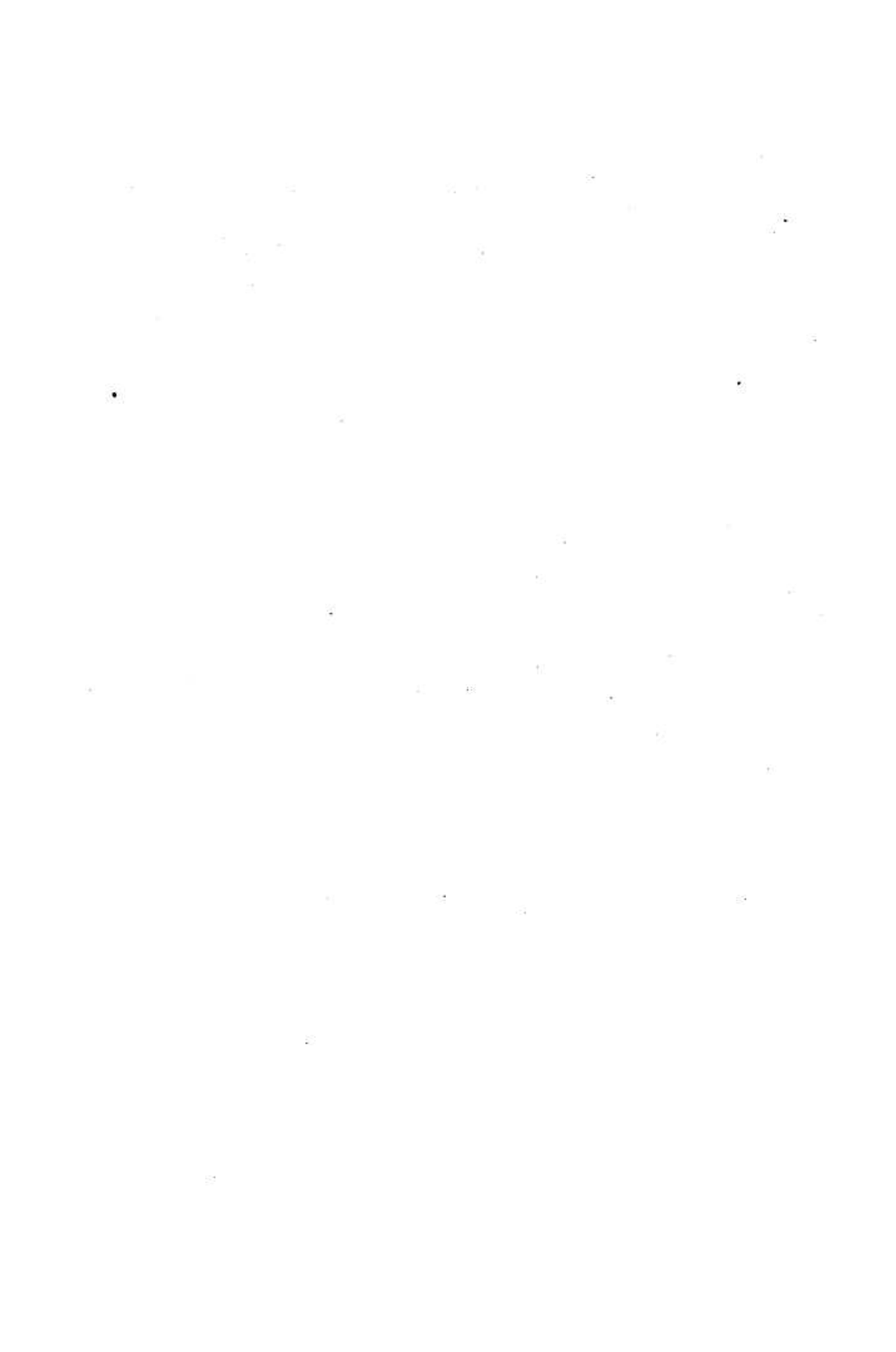
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TO MY VALUED FRIEND,
RASMUS BJÖRN ANDERSON KVELVE,
FATHER OF NORSE LITERATURE IN AMERICA—STURDY CHAMPION
OF TRUE DEMOCRACY, WHOSE LIFE WORK IS NOW DRAWING
TO A CLOSE, HAS DONE MUCH TOWARDS KEEPING GREEN
THE MEMORIES OF THAT RICH INHERITANCE—THE
SPIRIT OF FREEDOM—TRANSMITTED TO THE
ENGLISH-SPEAKING PEOPLE BY THEIR AN-
CESTORS FROM THE NORTHLAND,
THIS VOLUME IS AFFECTIONATELY DEDICATED BY THE
AUTHOR.



FOREWORD

"How our fathers toiled, and how much they suffered, we their descendants who are now enjoying the fruits of their labours, can never realize or know, and we owe them a debt of gratitude which we can never pay. The best we can do is to live worthy lives, and try to keep green the memories of those who did so little for themselves and so much for us."—R. B. Anderson.

The above beautifully expressed sentiment, so appreciative of the simple but earnest lives of the pioneer immigrants is a most appropriate eulogy, tendered worthy subjects.—"They who did so little for themselves and so much for us"—simple words, yet so rich—so full of meaning. Conscious of our debt of gratitude, and desirous to "keep green the memories" of ancestors who were worthy members of that band of pioneer immigrants, we have gathered material for these historical sketches and memoirs.

It has taken much time and a voluminous correspondence, extending over several years. The lives of our immediate ancestors were cast in pioneer days. They were not *writing* history—they were *making* it, leaving it for others to preserve the records. This, I am sorry to say, has been sadly neglected, and now much is irretrievably lost, the pickings up of fragmentary bits of data often coloured and distorted by traditional transmission—and sifting out the facts, is a work requiring both time and patience; at best it can only approximate accuracy.

No one can be more conscious of the short comings of this work, nor more deeply deplore the inevitable presence of errors than the author; he has done the best he could with the material at his command, and it is hoped that, with all its defects, it will still help to "keep green the memories of those who did so little for themselves and so much for us."

The making of these records what they are could not have been accomplished without the hearty co-operation of nearly all of "our Folks," for which I wish here to express my full appreciation. Special mention is due cousin Tosten Holverson for his unstinted aid and financial support in the prosecution of this work; in fact the production of this work is largely due to his enthusiastic support.

Louis Blakestad is another cousin who has spent both time and money to make these records a success, and it is largely due to his aid, that this large branch of our family—the Blakestads, is so fully recorded; to Mrs. Gertrude (Skavlem) Holme, Mrs. Mary (Gravdale) Inman and Mrs. Gunel (Gulack) Helgerson, I am also indebted for valued aid and assistance in this work, all of which

is fully appreciated. For myself and all "our Folks," I wish to tender all these valued aids and assistants our most sincere thanks."—Cousin Halvor.

Just a word to the reader. Were these records intended for the general public only, there is much herein of a trivial nature that would have been eliminated, but this work is primarily for *our families*, our own "Mutual Admiration Societies," it is *our* "Tales by the fireside." If it is tinged with family pride this concerns only ourselves and our people, and is not intended for public consumption.

Be assured that there is no intention of boasting of any superiority of our folks over others, or that we have the conceited idea that our people are any different or any better than thousands of early pioneers who lived the same lives and accomplished similar results, be their nativities as varied as that of the Palm and the Pine. The records of Ole Gullik and Herbrand, of Gunnil, Gjertrud and Guri, are typical of hundreds, aye, thousands of Norwegian immigrants to this country.

We have done our best to gather for permanent preservation the records of our people. Very little of this work has been done by Norwegian-Americans,—in this line of effort we are pioneers, the field is large and almost untouched. Go thou and do likewise, ere it be everlastingly too late, and the records of your pioneer family be totally lost.

Long after the finish of my life's work, I hope through the medium of this book to be present at the tales by the firesides of our descendants, and thus help to "keep green the memories of those who did so little for themselves and so much for us."

H. L. SKAVLEM.

Janesville, Wis., May, 1915.

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