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Recollections of a Norwegian Pioneer in Texas

Translated and edited by C. A. Clausen (Volume XII: Page 91)

The 1840's were stirring years in the history of Texas. The Texan war for independence from Mexico which had broken out in 1836 went on with intermittent skirmishes until 1845. In that year, after lengthy negotiations, the republic of Texas was finally admitted to the Union as a state. Both as an independent republic and as a state, Texas carried on a vigorous campaign to attract settlers to her vast but sparsely inhabited areas. Since emigration from Norway was rapidly increasing during this period, it is not strange that several little Norwegian settlements were established in Texas. {1} The man primarily responsible for leading Norwegians into that region was Johan Reinert Reiersen, a liberal journalist from Christiansand. In 1843-44 he traveled widely in America, trying to find suitable locations for Norwegian settlements. He was favorably impressed with Texas and wrote enthusiastically that relief was in sight for thousands of his countrymen then "gathering crumbs from the table of the aristocracy." The article translated below was written by Knudt Olson Hastvedt, a member of an immigrant party which left Norway for Texas in 1846. Though it was composed years afterward, it gives a vivid account of the passage across the Atlantic and of the hardships encountered in the new land. It also helps to explain why Texas, in spite of its many inducements, failed to attract any great number of Norwegian settlers.

Recollections of the Journey of the First Norwegian Immigrant Society to Texas and of the First Six Years of Pioneer Life There {2}

Year by year many of the old settlers are gathered to their graves and with them much of our immigrant history is lost. This ought not to be. Everyone who can relate experiences of the first years in this country ought to do so, because such recollections will be of great interest to coming generations.

In the year 1843 a society in Lillesand sent Johan Reinert Reiersen on an exploring trip to America to find a suitable location for Norwegian emigrants. He traveled through Indiana, Illinois, Wisconsin, Iowa, and up to St. Joseph, Missouri, thence down to St. Louis and on to New Orleans. From there he went up the Mississippi and Red River to Grand Ecore in Louisiana and further on to Nacogdoches in Texas. There he fell in with some Germans who were celebrating because of the war with Mexico. He was introduced to several high military officers. Reiersen spoke both English and German well and acquainted them with the object of his journey. He was well received by them. Among others, there was a surveyor named Hoff, a Pennsylvania German, who befriended him and accompanied him to the Kickapoo River in Henderson County, about fifty miles from Nacogdoches, where government land was available. Reiersen secured half a section and hired an American named Sullivan to put up the necessary buildings. These consisted of two one-story log houses, sixteen feet square, with a twelve-foot walk between them. Lumber for the floor Sullivan had to saw with a handsaw out of fir logs which were plentiful in this area. This happened in the fall and

winter of 1843-44. Reiersen then set out for home by way of the Mississippi and came to Galena in March. A marvel among other marvels of this trip was that twice he had summer and twice he had winter during one and the same year.

He came back to Norway in the summer or fall of 1844. Then he wrote the famous book which he called Norge og Amerika {3} (Norway and America). The distribution of this book gave the most powerful impetus to emigration from southern Norway. He remained at home until the fall of 1845 when he again set out for America, this time directly to New Orleans. With him went his parents and his brother Gerhard, and Christian Grøgaard and his family from Lillesand. This Grøgaard was the son of Dean Grøgaard, the author of Grøgaard's Reader. There was also a blacksmith from Christiania in the group by the name of Stianson. All of these went with Reiersen to Texas. But there was also a large number of people from Setersdalen, Omlid, Hjartdal, and other parishes who came along to New Orleans, but, for reasons I do not know, they went northward to the Fox River settlement in Illinois, where they arrived the next spring. The hardships they went through would nearly fill a book, but I will merely mention the fact that their boat froze fast in the ice some twenty-five miles south of St. Louis, where they had to remain until almost spring.

In New Orleans Reiersen took passage to Natchitoches, Louisiana. Because of low water the boat ran aground near Alexandria and sank. As a result old Mr. Reiersen (Johan's father) lost most of his goods, but some of them were recovered by Johan, who, in diving for them, almost lost his life. In spite of it all, Reiersen reached his destination all right and took possession of his house. Of those who left Norway with him, only his family and parents went to his new home with him. Stianson settled down as a blacksmith in Natchitoches, while Gerhard Reiersen, who was a watchmaker by profession, enlisted in Natchitoches to fight against Mexico. Grøgaard started back for New Orleans but died in Grand Ecore. He had intended to buy up a stock of goods and start a store in the new settlement. His widow and children remained in Natchitoches.

In the fall of 1846 Christian and George Reiersen also came to Texas accompanied by a whole group of people, among them your narrator who was the son of Jørgen Olson Hastvedt. Of those who came along all the way to Texas, the following were from Hjartdal: Jørgen Olson Hastvedt and family; Aslak Terjesen Hastvedt and family; Ole Gunstenson Askland and family; and the schoolmaster, Aslak Nielson Smeland. From Tovdal: Ole Aslakson ¯veromsei and family; his son, Sven, and his son-in-law, Ole Olson, and also their families; Salve Knudtson Kasene and family; Knudt Gunstenson and his wife. From Treungen: Torge Ormson Tvedt. From Omlid: Gunder Evenson Engenes and a young girl named Aslaug. From the parish of Holden: besides the above-mentioned Christian and George Reiersen, Ole Gunleikson and family, Tjøstøl Berge, a bachelor, and Reier Roa. This Reier was something of a poet, and here are some fragments from his eulogy of Texas:

> We shan't run up bills for the food that we use,
> We shan't be the bond slaves of merchants.
> If mackerel, potatoes, and mush we must lose,
> Instead, we'll have fowl sweetly roasted –
> And newly baked cakes will be our fare,
> Oh, my, how tasty, delicious, and rare!

From Nittedal: the schoolmaster Tollev Johanson. From Lillesand: Andreas ¯rbek, the son of a merchant. From Christiansand: Osmund Røraas. Others who accompanied us were Jeruld Tvedt from Tovdal; Ole Hastvedt and family from Hjartdal; Kittel Svartland and family; the widow, Christie Graver, and family; and Herjus Osmundson and his wife from Fyresdal. These set out from New Orleans.

Jeruld Tvedt seemed to be especially blessed with the wanderlust. He traveled through Wisconsin and Illinois, then back to Norway, and thence to Texas in 1850. Here he remained a summer but was sick most of the time and struck out for the North again. He had on this occasion traveled through these settlements. {4} In Norway he had secured some goods which he "peddled" about, among other things, genuine Norwegian horseshoe nails, some of which my father-in-law, Hellik Førli, bought. He made still another trip to Norway and came back again in 1861 or 1862, I believe, and settled down in a daughter's home in Manitowoc, Wisconsin.

The people from Hjartdal and Fyresdal intended to leave for the Fox River settlement in Illinois, especially Ole Hastvedt, whose parents-in-law had gone with Reiersen the year before. They took passage to La Salle on the Illinois River and from there went by wagon into the country, where, by a remarkable coincidence, they found the people who were staying in Elling Eielsen's "meetinghouse." Svartland, Mrs. Graver, and Osmundson went to Chicago, while Ole Hastvedt with his father-in-law, Nicolai Omland, went to Wisconsin.

But to get back to our journey. We sailed from Christiansand on the schooner "Flyvende Fisk," which belonged, if remember correctly, to the Torkelson line. The previous winter we had been in Arendal to register and to make a deposit for sailing on a German ship from Bremen, which was also called "Bremen." This ship was supposed to come past Arendal and take the emigrants aboard. Consequently we left for Arendal to await the coming of the "Bremen." When we had waited a couple of weeks and it did not come, we demanded and received our deposit money back. And since it was said that ships left from Christiansand for Havre, France, we sailed to that port in an open boat. There we also had to wait two or three weeks until the "Flyvende Fisk" was ready to sail. The journey to Havre de Grace was uneventful except that a child belonging to the aforementioned Ole Gunstenson died under way. In France our company was joined by Anders ¯rbek, who had been in Bremen to see what had happened to the ship "Bremen," and by Osmund Røraas. We stayed in Havre about two weeks before we secured passage on an American cotton packet from New Orleans. Orbek served as interpreter and guide. He had graduated from Latin school and talked French and German fluently, as well as Latin. He was in charge of the distribution of water both among the Norwegian and German emigrants. I cannot highly enough praise his helpfulness to each and every one, and he deserves historical fame for his kindness to his fellow travelers.

The trip from Havre to New Orleans took seven weeks. Nothing of importance occurred except that during a storm the cookhouse, which was on the deck, caught fire, causing quite a panic. This happened on a pitch-dark night while all the emigrants were in bed. A terrible tumult arose, and, of course, I rushed up on deck to see what was happening. By that time, the cookhouse had gone overboard. To show how greatly the ship listed, I will merely state that, when I stood beside the bulwark, I could easily reach the water, while normally it was fourteen feet from the surface of the ocean. The terror must have been much greater among the Germans because they stayed up all night praying, with

the Catholic priest in their midst. But all of us escaped with merely the shock. When we entered the gulf we believed firmly that we were pursued by Mexican privateers. The ship's crew believed the same. This we learned from one of the sailors named Meyer, who was a German but who could also speak Norwegian. Three small ships which appeared, some distance apart, had lights on deck at night and seemed to be signaling each other. They came nearer until a storm drove two of them away. The third came clear up on one side of us, then sailed ahead and let itself drift back on the other side. It was a small ship which we could look right down upon from our high deck. It made no sign of violence but sailed away, to our great satisfaction. When we came farther into the gulf, past Santo Domingo, we ran onto a sand bar, but came off again so quickly that we hardly had time to become afraid. It was in the gray of the morning and soundings were taken continually, but all of a sudden we stuck fast. The captain came up in a hurry, and all men took to the rigging. He himself took the rudder. The sails were quickly rearranged and the ship slid off the bank, which lay in such shallow water that we could easily see it.

When we arrived at New Orleans, we met Gerhard Reiersen, who had just been mustered out of the army because of sickness. He stayed with us all the time and helped us by word and deed; so did a Norwegian sailor from Arendal who was named Even Olson but later went by the name of Even Nielson. He also joined the company. There was in New Orleans at that time a Norwegian merchant from Bergen by the name of Tromse, who carried on an apparently flourishing business. He helped us to secure contracts with the steamship companies for passage to Alexandria, and, when he bade us farewell, he gave us much good advice, especially about being careful of the steamboats, a precaution which we soon found to be necessary. The boats usually passed over the falls at Alexandria at high tide, but, since Reiersen had been so unfortunate there the year before, we were not allowed to attempt this and had to proceed by land from that point.

Well, we came to Alexandria, and after equipping ourselves we took to the road in real fashion. Here toils and troubles began which will scarcely find their equal in the history of immigration. We stayed there [at Alexandria] two or three weeks, but this time was well spent. A horse was bought for each family, and harnesses were patched together out of old material which we could buy cheaply in the livery stables. Those who could afford it bought ready-made carriages. Others bought wheels and added the rest by their own efforts, while others, among whom I will mention Ole Olson and Salve Kasene, literally built everything from the ground up. Wheels, axels, shafts -- all were made of wood and were as free of any iron reinforcement as if they had been built thousands of years ago in the Bronze or Stone Age. Nevertheless, these wooden carriages were so well constructed that they not only survived the rough trip for which they were built but also served as farm wagons several years after we reached our destination. It was fortunate that Roa, a wheelwright, was with us and that he was equipped with tools. Of course all of us took part in the work. It goes without saying that these carriages were not like the delicate, elegant equipages which are seen nowadays, but it is a question if wagons ever did better service than did these carts.

At last we are ready and load onto the carriages everything we can find room for. The rest must be carried on our backs. The Norwegian chests looked quite stately atop the hand-made vehicles, but quite a bit had to be carried since there was not room in the wagons and the horses were not able to pull any more. The first day we covered five

miles and later from five to twelve miles daily. We were a whole month on our journey, but it must be remembered that no traveling was done on Sundays. Then we gathered together, and someone would read a sermon from a devotional book, such as our custom had been in old Norway.

The road was still in its infancy. There were no bridges, and when, as often happened, the rain came down in torrents, it was impossible to cross the fords over the swollen streams. But instead of settling down and waiting until the water had lowered, as the Americans usually did, we built bridges as rapidly as we could. How many bridges we constructed in that manner I am unable to say, but it was a great number. The road, such as it was, passed through the almost impenetrable forest areas of the South, so one can imagine the difficulty of the journey, but even the wildest fantasies would be tame compared with the reality. While we were still in Louisiana, Birgit, the daughter of Aslak Torieson Hastvedt, died. The funeral took place on a Sunday while we rested. After that nothing of importance happened until we had crossed the Sabine River which is forty miles from St. Augustine, Texas. There my father, Jørgen Olson Hastvedt, died after a long and painful illness which he contracted by drinking river water. The long and unpleasant trip in the wagon also aggravated his condition. Since he became very sick and it was plain that his end was near, we stopped in town four or five days. The people there were very helpful to us both during his illness and during the funeral. Everything took place in a quiet, peaceful manner. I should mention that the rest of the company left, so we were alone in town, I, my mother, my sister, and Aslak Smeland, who for awhile had driven our wagon since I was too young. When everything was finished we continued our laborious and now mournful journey through St. Augustine to Nacogdoches, Texas, where we found some of those who had arrived the year before and some of our own group who intended to settle there. Among these were Christian Reiersen, who planned to set up a store, and Aslak Nielson, who was a tailor and wished to follow his trade. Here we secured a new driver, the afore-mentioned Even Olson, who took us to our destination on the Kickapoo River, where Johan Reiersen had settled down.

I must mention still another occurrence on our trip. The last day, we passed the Neches Saline saltworks and crossed the Neches River. When we were about to cook our food in the evening, we found that we had no matches and consequently had to resort to the Norwegian method of using steel and flint. But we were as bad off as ever, since there was no dry material to catch the sparks which were struck off. Even Olson, however, was equal to the occasion. He took out his powder flask, which was made of copper. Out of it he intended to pour a few grains on the sparks. I then was to be at hand with my coat and keep the wind from disturbing the tiny flame in its first flickers. Well -- it went as you might expect. The powder flask exploded and struck me in the face so that I was terribly scorched, and I became dizzy. My eyes swelled shut, so that I was stone-blind. But fire we got aplenty, as, in the excitement, it spread unchecked through the whole forest. My mother had bought some milk, and with this she washed my face all night as it seemed to be the only thing which brought relief. The next day when we reached the Kickapoo River -- this was Christmas Eve -- my sister had to lead me by the hand all the way. On Christmas morning a Mrs. Croft came over to us. When she saw my sad condition, she went home to get some sweet oil and a thin piece of cloth. This cloth was smeared with oil and placed over my whole face. When this had moistened the skin, which was quite scorched by the powder, it all peeled off without leaving a scar.

Undoubtedly it was the presence of mind and resourcefulness of this woman which kept my face from being disfigured by this accident, which might well have caused my death. And now at last we had reached our destination; but for my mother the prospects were not bright. My father lay buried among strangers, and I, her only son, between thirteen and fourteen years of age, had almost been killed by an explosion. The day after Christmas Johan Reiersen and his wife came down to pay us a visit. For a fee of two dollars each, he promised to provide the newcomers with titles to 320 acres of land at a cost of fifty dollars, which he claimed to be the regular price. There were four families and all accepted the offer, my mother buying a double tract of land, namely 640 acres. This might seem like a great favor to us, but it was later discovered that the titles cost only thirty dollars; but unfortunately this difference was never credited to us.

The newly bought land was located in this vicinity. A farm belonging to a certain Mr. Cook was leased on "share" for a year by my mother and three other people, all of whom lived together in one house. We each got a hundred bushels of corn in the fall. We thus raised eight hundred bushels all told, but half of it went for rent. We had bought a hand mill in New Orleans. It was attached to a tree outside of the door and fitted with two cranks, Two men could grind to their hearts' content. Real "patent flour" it did not produce, but, nevertheless, we were well satisfied with it. Another type of mill was also much in use. It was of the most primitive type as it was entirely homemade, and, like the afore-mentioned carriages, was entirely free of iron reinforcements. A tree would be found at the proper distance from the house and cut down, leaving a stump of the proper height. This stump was then hollowed out until it was shaped like a mortar. To a near-by tree, and about ten feet from the ground, a horizontal pole, long enough to reach to the stump, was fastened. The crusher, which was to do the milling, was then attached to the horizontal pole. Handles were made by putting two pegs in the crusher. The milling was done by dashing the crusher down on the grain in the hollow stump, while the spring in the horizontal pole pulled it up again. This was repeated until the flour was fine enough. It may sound unbelievable, but there were many families who used these mills for years, and they were not as bad as many might believe.

Since all of us had more or less cash after reaching our destination, we secured land, as already mentioned. Everyone was optimistic and remarkably well satisfied, both during the hardships of the trip and after our arrival. All of us saw the vast plain with its rich, beautiful land, and its delightfully mild climate even at that time of the year. But the next fall, 1847, when the "climate fever" broke out among us, our experiences were not so pleasant. The ague usually started in the latter part of July and kept on until cold weather set in. Several deaths occurred: the wife of Ole Gunstenson, Knudt Gunderson, and another grown-up lad. In the fall of 1847 Wilhelm Waerenskjold and Elise Tvedt came from Christiania. Some years later they were married and settled on Four Mile Prairie in Van Zandt County. {5}

I want to mention that we were sixteen miles from the nearest settlement southeast of the saltworks, from which our provisions had to come the first year. In the other directions it was probably fifty miles to the nearest settlement except toward the north. In that direction I do not know how far it was -- probably a hundred miles or more. In the fall of 1847 my mother bought from Johan Reiersen the farm I have already mentioned on which Mr. Sullivan had put up the buildings. We thus came into possession of the first Norwegian farm in Texas.

In 1848 Cleng Peerson came from Illinois. He stayed with us two or three weeks and then went to Four Mile Prairie where Reiersen had settled. He stayed in Texas awhile, then returned to Illinois, and came again to Texas in 1850. He brought along a whole bundle of Bibles and New Testaments. I bought a copy of each on February 10, 1851. He had got these in Illinois from the Bible society; and much of the way, probably most of the 175 miles from Shreveport, Louisiana, he had to carry them on his back since he usually rode shanks' mare. He now stayed a long time with Reiersen, then moved to Dallas County, where he lived with a Norwegian by the name of Nordbo. {6} This man belonged to the same religious sect as Cleng Peerson. The basis of their faith was a book published in Copenhagen called Jesus og fornuften (Jesus and Reason). I suppose it is unnecessary to remark that the teachings of this book harmonized poorly with Cleng Peerson's zeal in providing us with Bibles and New Testaments. {7} The above-mentioned Nordbo immigrated originally from Hedemarken but came to Texas from Illinois. He had lived in Neches Saline in 1843 and 1844 during the Indian uprisings and had also taken part in the wars against the savages. Presumably he then removed to Dallas County, where he set up a woolen mill driven by water power. I learned to know Cleng Peerson well. He was a small, rather insignificant-looking man, whom scarcely anyone would have suspected of being the pathfinder for the Norwegian people in this country and of being the man who followed in the footsteps of Leif Ericson and again turned the attention of the Northmen toward the New World. But he himself did not reap any rewards for his services because he lived and died poor. He spoke frequently about his travels and experiences both in this country and in Norway, and especially about the strife he got into with the authorities when he agitated in favor of emigration and stressed the advantages which the poor would gain by coming over here. But unfortunately, because of my youth and of the fact that none of us then realized that his adventures would be of any value to later generations, I am now unable to recall the details of his experiences, which at the present time would constitute a priceless part of Norwegian immigrant history.

We were without a minister while I was in Texas. We negotiated with the Reverend Stub about securing a Norwegian Lutheran minister from the North, but nothing came of it. People would usually gather on Sundays, and some person would then read a sermon from a devotional book for our edification. In this manner our love and respect for the Lutheran church were maintained. Schools, such as the ones we have up here at present, were not found. In order to remedy this we built a schoolhouse on the hill near Ole Gunsteinson's place. I helped build it and later also attended school there. We hired a schoolteacher by the name of Brenley from Cherokee County and paid him two dollars for every child enrolled. As I remember, the school that time lasted one month. This was my first and only English schooling. The schoolhouse was built of pine logs cut in the neighborhood. The benches and desks were made of split pine logs. The roof was made of clapboards four feet long, which were held in place by means of long poles placed across each row, and some blocks of wood between the poles kept them in place. There were no windows, doors, or floor in the house. It was all completed in one day, as everyone who felt the need of a school joined in and helped.

Torge Tvedt and I built a house for a Mr. Synder, who later set up a sawmill where Brownsboro is now located. This was the first house in Brownsboro. We were to be paid twenty dollars. We provided ourselves with all the materials and put everything in shape, but I do not remember that there were any doors or windows. It is quite probable

that these items, so necessary up North, were lacking, since there were numerous houses down there without them, and the walls were often so cracked that dogs and cats could squeeze through any place. When it stormed, people would generally hang a blanket in front of the door and window openings. But we did lay a floor, which also was lacking in many dwellings, in Mr. Snyder's house. It was what is called a puncheon floor, and was made of split logs with the flat side up and so long that they reached from one joist to the other. In 1849 Torge Tvedt and I went to Four Mile Prairie to build a house for Mr. Waerenskjold. It was not long before Torge bought half a section of land from him. There was prairie around here and more open land, so we liked it better. Many people began moving to this neighborhood, especially members of an emigrant society which arrived in 1851. Several of these came directly to Four Mile Prairie. About this time my mother and Aslak Nielson Smeland, who was now married to my sister, also came.

For us Norwegians, cattle raising was the most important activity. Besides that, as already mentioned, we raised corn and some wheat. One year we had on my mother's farm two crops -- first winter wheat, and, when it was harvested, a crop of corn. Some rice was also raised, but as the necessary machinery to thresh with was lacking, it did not amount to much. The Americans, on the other hand, produced cotton which was very profitable. Our bread was usually made of corn meal ground in the manner already described. Wages usually ran to ten dollars a month, or fifty cents per day for ordinary work. As this was on the frontier, so to speak, no one had slaves, but in older settlements people had them. We were received with much good will by the Americans, and neither life nor property seemed to be in danger. As in many places neither doors nor windows were found, there was no possibility of locking the house. I traveled around very much and met nothing but kindness, and it often happened that nothing was asked for food and lodging. In the older settlements, where people kept slaves, it is said that they were not so kindly disposed toward the poorer classes.

The ague had from time to time been hard on each and every one of us; but those who lived on Four Mile Prairie the last year (1852) were hit the hardest. Why the ague was so much worse there than down on the Kickapoo I do not know, unless it could be ascribed to the great drought. Rain did not fall for four months; and probably the disease is worse in open country than in forest areas. During the last year, 1852, there was much illness, and so many deaths that we could scarcely do anything but care for the sick and bury the dead. My sister Margit, Aslak Nielson's wife, died of congestive chills, and when I had dug her grave I was so exhausted that the same sled which brought her to the grave had to take me home. All the illness and the many deaths made us uneasy about thc future, and, as we occasionally received letters from Wisconsin saying that they were in good health and that they got along well up there, we decided to move North. This we did in the spring of 1855. We left Texas on May 11 and arrived here on June 11. There was no delay during the whole journey, but we did not move quickly in those days. The group which came up here in 1855 consisted of my mother, myself, my sister, and my brother-in-law, Torge Tvedt, with his wife and one child. All of these, except the child, belonged to the original Texas group which had left Norway together. With us came also Ole Fladland and Anders Wehus, who had come to Texas in 1850. Of this group the writer and Anders Wehus live in Brigham, Iowa County, Wisconsin. Torge Ormson Tvedt and his brother Ole, who came along from Texas, live in Jackson County, Minnesota. Ole Fladland moved to Iowa, served in the war {8} and died there. My mother and two sisters are also dead.

Notes

<1> An account of the Norwegian settlements in Texas can be found in Theodore C. Blegen, Norwegian Migration to America, 1825-1860, 177-189 (Northfield, 1931). See also Lyder L. Unstad, trans, and ed., "The First Norwegian Migration into Texas," in Studies and Records, 8: 39-57 (Northfield, 1934).

<2> The original of this document, written in longhand, is in the possession of the Texas State Historical Association at Austin. A typewritten copy has been placed in the archives of the Norwegian-American Historical Association at St. Olaf College, Northfield, through the courtesy of Mrs. Burr Knatvold of Albert Lea, Minnesota, a granddaughter of the author.

<3> The title of Reiersen's book was Veiviser for norske emigranter (Guide for Norwegian Emigrants). Norge og Amerika was a monthly magazine published by Reiersen for the purpose of arousing interest in America. The first issue appeared in July, 1845. For discussions both of the book and the magazine, see Blegen, Norwegian Migration to America, 1825-1860, 183, 243-248.

<4> The meaning is not clear. The original merely states: "Han havde den gang gjennemreist disse settlementer." Evidently the reference is to the Norwegian settlements in Texas.

<5> The Waerenskjolds were well-educated people and their writings did much to make Texas well known in Norway. For information concerning their activities, see Blegen, Norwegian Migration to America, 1825-1860, 184, 186-189; and Unstad, in Studies and Records, 8: 89, 48, 49-51.

<6> For information concerning this individual see Arne Odd Johnsen, "Johannes Nordboe and Norwegian Immigration," in Studies and Records, 8:23-38 (Northfield, 1984).

<7> Peerson's attitude toward religion seems to have changed radically during his later life. Judging from a letter written in 1824 he seems to have been quite pious, as he urged his friends "to grasp the ' need of help and salvation from the hand of the Almighty,' and to heed ' His call and admonitions.'" But O. Canutson, an intimate friend of Peerson from 1850 to 1865, wrote of him that he "was the most pronounced freethinker I have ever known. . . He believed little or nothing of the Bible, especially of the supernatural part thereof." Theodore C. Blegen, "Cleng Peerson and Norwegian Immigration," in Mississippi Valley Historical Review, 7:312, 328n (March, 1921).

<8> Presumably the Civil War.

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