

Make Your Treasure Ship Come Home

The Ole Sundsmo Story

By Constance Sundsmo Weikart

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Introduction:

This narrative of my father's life is in response to inquiries from siblings, grandchildren, and other relatives. Since it is written for my family, I need not apologize for my lack of literary skill or style. The material was garnered firsthand as my father and I sat alone at the dinner table. After the meal and our conversation, I would hurry to my desk to put his words to writing. It is only now after I have put the stories in some chronological order that I realize I should have asked more questions. However, they are small details, such as the type of roof and siding of the Norway home, the last name of Aunt Henrietta, and the first name of the baby. Such information might have added more color and thereby more interest to the story. However, the essential data is here. Any member of the family interested in genealogy now has a place to start.

The last chapters, on Amanda and the later years of commercial art, are from my own recollections. They may seem to some to leave out a great deal, but sometimes I did not have details and sometimes I felt it less interesting than the early years.

Constance S. Weikart, December 1980

Art is the child of nature; yes,
Her darling child, in whom we trace
The features of the mother's face
Her aspect and her attitude;
He is the greatest artist, then,
Whether of pencil or of pen,
Who follows Nature

Longfellow: Kéramos

Digitized by Rachel Cogent in 2005, <http://Gnarlodious.com/Genealogy>
Donated by Sundsmo historian Richard Schwartz, Stillwater, Minnesota.
Ole Sundsmo's Illustrations are omitted as they had been reproduced in poor quality.
Some corrections and historical information have been added.

The full Sundsmo genealogy online:

<http://wc.rootsweb.ancestry.com/cgi-bin/igm.cgi?op=GET&db=sundsmo&id=I1>

Chapter 1 - Boyhood

Halfway up the coast of Norway, somewhat west and north of Namsos, lay three small islands, side by side. In the late nineteenth century, the time of this tale of the Sundsmo family, these islands were called the Vigtins. Vikna Islands is the present name. Andreas Henrik Oleson, his wife, Ane Elise Olesdatter, and their sons, Ahnfelt Cornelius, Ole Sivert, Casper and John S.S. lived on the southern end of the middle island, on the west coast of a sound. The contour of their land gave it the name of Sundsmo. In Norwegian, Sundsmo literally means "sound by the knoll".(1) From the sound the land sloped gently upward behind the house. It rose to an outcropping of rock about one hundred and fifty feet high and then dropped again to sea level. This was the knoll where Andreas and Ane lived most of their married life.

Andreas and Ane gave Rørvik as their birthplace, but the sons were born Indersund (2), Vigtin Island, Nærøy Bishopric (3), North Trond District, Norway. Ahnfelt, later called Albert, was born in 1872. Ole was born on May 12, 1875.

Ole said the acreage on which they lived was rented. It was, for the most part, rocky and poor. A few linden trees grew around a peat bog and at the foot of the rock outcropping. The land where the cattle were pastured had some sparse growth of grass where the family grew garden crops and grains, such as oats, rye and barley. A small cottage with a living room, kitchen, one bedroom and a loft where the children slept provided their living quarters. In addition there was a small out-house used for storage.

On this Island, most of the men had some sort of trade; one was a tanner, another a mason, one a carpenter. Andreas was a tailor. All these people rented land from the same landowner and each tenant kept a few cows, some sheep or goats. Not many animals were kept through the winter, however, for there was not enough feed. The landowner had kept the best land for himself. He and his two sons lived in a valley where glacial ice had once pushed a deep crevasse through the rock. With time, the erosion of rock and rubble moved by the glacier had created a deposit of rich, fertile soil. None of this good land was ever for sale.

The peat bog was a boon on the parcel of land the Olesons occupied. It provided the fuel for heating and cooking. An uncle, who lived on one of the other islands, had to haul wood for fuel. This was done by boat from the mainland to his home. The peat bog could be mined to a depth of ten or twelve feet, so there was no worry about shortage as long as the Olesons lived there. During the summer months, Albert and Ole cut the peat and stacked it to dry. The spade used was one especially designed for the purpose. The peat was cut in squares six by six inches and about one inch thick. The grasses on the top provided tinder; so these slabs went into one stack to dry. The rest were stacked separately; when dry, they burned like coal.

Andreas tilled his forty acres with one of the two oxen he kept hitched to the plow. Seeding was done by hand, and with this chore, Albert, Ole and their mother assisted. They also helped with the harvest. Their garden was planted with potatoes, carrots, rutabagas and other root crops. Ane Elise grew a tomato plant in a window box, but the fruit was believed to be poisonous if eaten.

One of the two oxen was a milk cow. In summer there was no way to keep the milk fresh. So a main dish served at every meal was filebunka. This was clabbered milk and yogurt, made by simply setting small bowls of milk on the shelves of a cupboard near the fireplace. The morning meal each day was oat gruel. This provided a light task each day for the older boys. The oats, hull and all, had

to be ground. This was done with a small sand mill. The mill consisted of a round granite slab about two and one-half inches in diameter and three inches thick. This bigger slab had an indentation of one and one-half inches into which a second slab fitted. The whole was encased in a framework of maple wood with a handle for turning. (Ole said no child was ever bothered by constipation).

Another task that Ole and Albert helped with occurred in the spring when the fishing fleet came in. It is said that every Norseman loves the sea and that every able-bodied man takes to a boat when the cod come north to spawn. Here was food without cost and cash for the surplus. All of one month was spent in washing and drying the fish, for in the off-season either dried or smoked fish was served at one meal every day.

The winds in March were cold, raw, and damp, but everyone who was able went to the sea to wash and stack the fish for drying. The workers wore gloves, which permitted the tips of the forefingers and the thumbs to be exposed. The fish had already been gutted and scaled. They were then handed to the washers who stood in shallow water. They took the fish and with their fingernail removed the black vein along the backbone and any scales that had been missed. After the washing, the fish were stacked in circles with the tails on the inside of the circle and the flesh side down. Early in the morning, the fish would be spread out to dry, the flesh side up this time. At about two o'clock in the afternoon, the fish were restacked in circles again, tail in and flesh down. This drying process took several days; longer if the days were cloudy; less with lots of sun. Ole said there were no flies or other insects to despoil their product.

In summer there were the customary garden chores. Because there were no girls in the family and because he was less strong than Albert, Ole was given many of the household duties. One job was the shrinking of woolen cloth used for the sturdy coats and trousers his father tailored. The cloth had to be submerged in water of varying temperatures, again and again, until the fibers were so tight that neither rain nor snow could penetrate. To the touch, the cloth seemed hard as leather. The tailoring, except for those items for family use, was done in the customer's home. In winter, Andreas would live in a customer's home until he had made all the items needed by that family. Then he moved on to the next customer. So sometimes he would be away for long periods of time. But, Ole did learn from his father how to make a buttonhole and how to sew on a button properly. Ane Elise spent many hours at her loom in the winter months. The Olesons did not keep sheep, but wool was available from neighbors who did. With all the household chores, meal preparation, baking of bread, churning, sewing, and tending babies or others who were ill, the only time left for knitting and weaving was the evenings. And, in winter, darkness comes early and lingers long in the morning; at the peak of winter there might be as little as three hours of daylight. Daylight was never wasted.

For those growing young children, there was never time for idleness and very little for play. Ole did recall that sometimes in winter they could climb the hill behind the house and coast down on the little sled Andreas had made for them. A few times, in summer, Ole went with his mother to visit Aunt Henrietta, his father's sister. Henrietta and her husband lived on the outer island. The crossing of the deep water to reach the outer island had to be made by ferry and then only when the tide was out. Timing their arrival to low tide, Ole and his mother would reach the crossing point and hail the ferryman. The ferry was a rowboat. With great strength the ferryman rowed against the current until the boat reached midstream. Then, guided a little by oars, the boat was allowed to drift downstream to the landing site. This was quite an excursion.

The farm where Aunt Henrietta lived was one of five located on a promontory jutting out into the sea. On the seaward side of the peninsula, the rock was quite sheer. Ole loved to climb to the top to

stand and to look far out to sea. He, no doubt, wondered what lie beyond that vast body of water, never dreaming that one day he would go there and find out.

The summer Ole was ten years old he lived with Aunt Henrietta. This gave him the opportunity to go to this favorite spot, but usually only on Sundays. On weekdays he had to care for his little cousin, only a few months old. His uncle needed Henrietta's help in the fields. Ole had to prepare bottles for the baby and feed her. Sometimes she cried, and if she still cried after he had attended to her needs, he rocked her in her cradle. When she continued to cry and he didn't know what else to do, he simply rocked the cradle harder. In later life, he said, "I sometimes rocked that cradle so hard, it's a wonder the poor child did not become seasick". When the baby slept, Ole helped the hired hand herd the cattle or tend the sheep. The hired hand was crippled in early youth so that one leg was much shorter than the other. Thus his hip grew very tired. So any help Ole could give was greatly appreciated.

Children from the other farms often climbed the rocks to Ole's favorite lookout. When the tide was out, there was a footpath that led around the base of the cliff to a rock most natives called "preacher's stool". It jutted out of a mass of earth and rock known as a simleness. Our English language has no word corresponding to this. In Norwegian, simle means conglomeration and ness means result or effect. A simleness, then, is a deposit pushed into the ocean by a glacier. Among the children Ole met there was a "clownish" fellow who liked to stand on the "preacher's stool" and mimic the minister, making light of religion. Ole was shocked and shamed by such sacrilegious behavior because he said all the religious folk he knew were good folk.

Schooling in those early years must have been haphazard, as it was in those years in the United States. It is not known whether or not a school existed on the island. If, on the mainland or on one of the other islands, children would need to go by sailboat or they could walk but only at ebb tide. Later in Ole's life, when he was filling out a genealogy brochure, he stated that his father and mother had completed grade school. He said this also of his own schooling, and school may have been held in a church. Ole's children recall his story of his father's conversion to the Baptist faith. In the reign of Oscar II, King of Sweden and Norway, the state religion was Lutheran. Church and school were not separate and citizens paid a tax to the church just as they paid taxes to the state. When Andreas became Baptist, he took his children out of school and refused to pay the mandatory fee. The local lensman, a combination of tax collector and justice of the peace, called on Andreas to ascertain the reason for such unorthodox behavior. When the lensman was given the reasons, he insisted that the schoolteacher should test the children. This was agreeable and the testing took place. The scores of the Oleson children were higher than those of other children their age.

But education was not in high regard with the majority of this rural population. One day when Ole was walking to the village, he approached a group of boys near his own age. One large bully, as though he were spitting out an obscene epithet, said, "Here comes one of those reader boys". If there was a little envy in the expression, the "reader boy" only felt the scorn, although this was a term in general use.

Norsemen in this cold and rugged climate grew hardy sons and daughters, but babies were born and some accidents did occur. Some ailments did not disappear with the use of home remedies. The local midwives practiced some sort of medicine in addition to delivering babies. Ole was in a neighbor's home one day when a man was being treated for backache. The man sat astraddle an armless chair with his arms resting on the back of the chair and supporting his head. His back was bare. The midwife had an instrument with a small sharp blade. With this knife, she nicked the man's skin in several places across the sacroiliac region. A small cup was then placed over one wound. The cup was made of a horn tip about one and one-half inches long and almost as transparent as

glass. The end of the horn cup bore a small opening to which a small skin tube was attached. The midwife put the tube between her lips and drew on it, thus creating a small vacuum. Blood flowed into the cup and filled it. The cup was emptied and placed on another wound. After all the wounds had been bled, the midwife repeated the process a second time. Ole did not stay to learn whether or not the man's backache was relieved.

There was an episode in Ole's early life when he may have had the care of a physician. He was about four and one-half years old. There had been a very rainy day that autumn so that the ground was very soft. Cattle came into the yard and left their footprints in the soft mud. Following the rain came a sudden drop in temperature to below the freezing point. Ole, looking out a window, saw thin ice in the hoof prints which shimmered with iridescence as the sun hit them. Clad only in a thin nightshirt, he ventured out in the cold to explore. With his forefinger he tapped the ice on the nearest footprint. The ice shattered with a musical tinkling which entranced him. Lured by the sound and the shimmering colors he crawled from one track to another, breaking the ice and enjoying the play of colors and musical tones. His next memory is that of clawing and scratching at the door of the house. He probably lost consciousness; for when he awoke he was on a hard surface he thought was the floor, though it may have been a table. His father and a man he had never seen before stood over him. His nightshirt was raised to his chin and the man was rubbing his chest and abdomen. With every breath, the boy felt agonizing pain, pain which made him scream. After that he remembered nothing more until a time, which may have been days or maybe weeks later, when he sat by a window looking out. He was not permitted to go outside and was kept indoors until the sun was very high and very warm.

Andreas, too, at one time had a very close brush with death. He was returning by boat from a fishing trip. Much fishing in the Norwegian Sea is done off or near shore rather than in the open sea. But even here a blizzard can make the waters hazardous. On this particular trip, a blizzard blew in very unexpectedly, capsizing the boat and tossing all the fishermen into the sea. Raging waters kept the would-be rescuers from venturing out. Some bodies were washed ashore and some were recovered after several hours when the storm subsided. Andreas had lashed himself to the mast at the onset of the storm, and was washed ashore on the broken mast. He was believed dead so his body was stretched out on a plank floor of a hut. There was a slow fire in the wood stove near him, so that its heat served to gradually thaw him out. His recovery was gradual, though after this aches and pains always plagued him.

Another accident befell Andreas, but whether it occurred before or after the one at sea, is unknown. He was crossing a pasture to shorten his route homeward when an angry bull attacked him. He was gored severely, but sturdy Norseman that he was, he recovered without the aid of a physician.

Such injuries did much to worsen Andreas' disposition. Discontent and worry gnawed at him. The children thought him harsh and unduly critical. Ole remembered a time when he had been given a small coin, about the equivalent of a quarter. It was before Christmas when the village shop window was filled with enticing toys. After much deliberation, young Ole chose a small woolly lamb replica. His father was incensed; he called his son thoughtless and selfish; he should have bought something for his mother. At another time, when Ole was still coughing from a bout with whooping cough, his father insisted that he accompany the family to church and threatened him with punishment if he coughed in church.

The latter incident must have taken place prior to Andreas' conversion to the Baptist faith, for after that Andreas did not attend Lutheran Church. Furthermore, he refused to pay the church fee. One day the pastor came with the lensman to exact payment. When Andreas learned the purpose of the

visit, he said, "My religion is between me and my God. I need no intercessionist". The lensman seemed inclined to agree, but the pastor led him to understand on which side his bread was buttered. Andreas had to pay the tax and a fine.

Time did not alleviate this unrest, particularly when a letter came from a cousin who had emigrated to the United States six years previously. Cuthbertson, the cousin, was living in the state of Wisconsin near Rice Lake, where he had bought land for two dollars per acre. He told of his trip by rail across the great sparsely settled land and said there was much land to be had cheaply. With rails now strung across the country from east to west, territories were anxious for immigrants so that they could qualify as states because of their population.

There was no land to be purchased on the Vigtin Islands. Although the landowner was now elderly and ailing, he had two strong sons to take over the land. By this time there were four sons in the Oleson family. In three years, the eldest would be eligible for military training and this was compulsory. And then there was that "infernal" church tax.

Then came a winter unlike any other in their lifetime. Snow came early. Of the two cows Andreas had, one was traditionally butchered before Christmas and the meat used during the thirteen days of Christmas festivities. This year, the cow was butchered early for snow covered the pasture and there was not enough fodder to keep both cows.

Ane Elise's loom was taken out of its summer storage in the outhouse and set up in the living room. The task of weaving began early that autumn. However, Andreas' tailoring jobs did not materialize as in other years, so there was little cash for purchases.

Norwegian summers are short at best, but crop failures that year were severe. It may have been some change in the flow of the Gulf Stream, which warms the waters in the fjords and around the islands, or the cold winds out of the Arctic Circle only a few degrees north of the islands. In any event, the cod and herring were in short supply, too.

Peoples of this northern latitude are, of necessity, prudent and conservative. So food was never wasted. But no one could foresee the shortages developing from the longest winter on record. Christmas festivities were held as usual: the beef was prepared and served to visiting relatives and neighbors; white flour was purchased to make the fatiman, a delicacy only served at holidays. Ole remembered a day the minister paid a call. Ane Elise had baked fatiman which she served to him. The children got none. As the winter wore on, the oat supply for the morning gruel gave out and other grains for bread baking gradually diminished. When the last of the dried fish was gone, the second cow was butchered. This meant no more milk for fillebunke, but there was no longer feed for the cow anyway. The root crop dwindled and finally gave out. All neighbors were in the same plight. Even the few who had money found there was no food to be bought. Ole, who in normal times said there was never enough to eat, suffered severely. Probably in an answer to a prayer, a neighbor came one day with a small basket of frozen potatoes. For days, that was all the Oleson family had to eat. Thin and malnourished from lack of food, pale of skin from lack of sunshine, they survived to see spring and fresh hope arrive.

Andreas' decision was made. They would head for the new land, a land where food was plentiful, where men could worship as they chose, and where young men were not conscripted for military duty. Andreas went again to the landowner, not to ask about purchase, but to terminate his lease and sell his house and those personal belongings he did not plan to take with him.

1) I've left it original for historical reasons even though it is erroneous. Sund = strait, mo(en) = (the) meadow. Sundsmoen means "the moor on the sound", named from the definite singular form of mo, from Old Norse mór, 'moor'. From the description it was more like a peat bog than a meadow. "Sundsmóren" was a "cottage place", which meant "a cottage leased to farm laborers".

2) Innersund the farm lies on half the island on middle (Mellom) Vikna Island between Dragspøyta and Sundsvågen. The farm borders Stangring and Drag in Northeast, and Settenøy in the south. The farm name Innersund is from the location in the sound between inner and middle Vikna Islands west of Rørvik.

Map of Vikna Island:

<http://maps.google.com/maps?ll=64.897774,11.115074&z=12>

Photos of Mellom Vikna:

http://reuber-norwegen.de/NordTroendelag/BilderTab_NordTroendelagViknaMellom.html

3) Bishopric was an archaic administrative term. Due to social and spelling reforms the place was formerly known as Indersund, Vigtin Island.

Municipalities past and present:

No 1750 on the list (17xx is Nord Trondelag). From 1800 until 1910 municipality no 1750 was known as Vikten municipality, from 1911 it has been known as Vikna municipality. Municipality no 1751 Nærøy (Naeroey) existed from 1800 until 1875, when about 54% of old Nærøy was merged into municipality 1750 (Vikten). The Old Norse form of the name was Njarðey (Njörd's-Isle), found anglicized as Njardey or less often as Njarthey. Vikna was an important coastal centre during the Viking Age, judging from the numerous burial mounds on its three principal islands: Indre Vikna, Mellom Vikna, and the Ytre Vikna.

Footnotes updated Feb 2011.

Chapter 2 - Preparation for Journey Shipboard

While the boys and their mother were busy with sorting and packing, Andreas had another trip to make. This trip was to the nearby village of Nærøy, to the lensman. Nærøy was on the inner island close to the mainland. It is known as the town of Naeroey today.

In Old Norwegian script, the lensman wrote the following:

"This certifies that Andreas H. Oleson Lunde Sundsmo of Nærøy in Vigtins Thinglag Utre Namdalen has behaved himself in this district where he has lived his whole life in a satisfactory manner wherefore he has earned the respect and confidence of his fellow men. This also refers to his wife, Ane Elise Olsdotter.

The couple intend to move to America and with them go their children, namely;

Son, Albert K.E. Andreas - 15 years

Son, Ole Sivert - 11 years

Son, Casper - 8 years

Son, John S.S. - 2 years

Nærøy in Vigtins Sheriffs office (Lensman Kontor)

Apr. 30, 1887

Signed: Ingbre. Ostrup

The same carpenter who had made Ane Elise's loom came to make boxes and trunks for the belongings that were to go to their new home. Ole recalled the time the loom was made. It had been put together with wooden screws about three-quarters of an inch in diameter and about four inches long. The carpenter had a special tool for making the screws. This tool had four holes, the first of which rounded the piece of maple. The last hole contained a metal piece in the "shape of a plow". That hole cut the thread on the screws. It was this same carpenter who had built the shelved cabinet that held the bowls of clabbered milk and other foodstuffs.

When the boxes were all packed and the lids nailed down, a rosemaler came to paint the boxes for identification. Rosemaling simply means rose painting or rose carving. The name of the family was painted on each box and was embellished with scrolls and flowers in all the primary colors. This art is almost as old as the Stone Age and is still practiced in Norway and even in Norwegian settlements in the United States. Travelers to this part of the Scandinavian Peninsula say that even the plainest of homes in remote regions will have some painting or carving on or in the house. Wooden bowls, chests for storage, chairs, cabinets, beds, stools may all be decorated with rosemaling. And, it has been said that through the ages, Norwegians have always had the desire and the ability to incorporate charm and attractiveness into the utilitarian implements of ordinary life.

It might seem that Ole's future occupation may have had its inception here. When asked if his drawing began as a child in Norway, he said he did not have colored crayons until he bought them himself when he was twelve years old.

As the preparation continued, the father, mother and the older boys talked of the name they would use in the new country. On the island they were known as the Sundsmos. But, should the boys use the surname of Oleson as they had learned was the custom in the United States, or should they

follow the time honored custom in Norway using the first name of the father, and thus be Andreas' sons, or Andersons (when condensed). It appeared to be illogical to enter a new country with names different than the father and mother. So all were agreed it would be best to adopt the name they had been called for so long: Sundsmo.

It was May 1887 when the Sundsmo family set sail from Trondheim, the capital of their country at that time and the largest seaport. The small sailing vessel crossed the North Sea safely and docked at Edinburgh, Scotland. They crossed Great Britain by rail. On the west coast they were herded with hundreds of other immigrants on board a steamer. Prior to 1850, steamers had begun to ply the waters of the North Atlantic; the first ones also carried a full rigging of sail. In 1850 the Inman Line was founded with the intent of improving immigrant service. German and French companies followed suit after noting the opportunities afforded by swift transportation of the great numbers of émigrés. By 1887, travel by steam was relatively safe.

Ole became twelve years old on May 12 when the ship was in midocean. The sea was rough and the deck awash. The only thing he remembered of this momentous day was that he was deathly seasick.

An incident he vividly recalled happened on the first day. The passengers were asked to queue up for meals. They helped themselves to tin plates and cups stacked before them. The Sundsmo children noticed that they were to have bread made of white flour. This was exciting, for at home little wheat was grown and the bread they usually had was made from oats and rye. Now each person was to have TWO whole pieces of white bread.

The boys took their plates of food and hunted for a secluded spot where they could sit down. The first mouthful of the white bread brought surprise because it was so salty. As they continued to chew, the bread became a gummy mass with no particular flavor at all. What disappointment! The boys in talking about it afterwards became suspect of the saltiness and presumed the bread was made with seawater.

Chapter 3 - Wisconsin

Wisconsin, a name adopted from the Indians for the "black waters" of the river, which flows down through the middle of the state and empties at the western border into the Mississippi, was already a state when the Sundsmo family came to make it their home. In northwestern Wisconsin, east of St. Croix and only forty miles from the border between Wisconsin and Minnesota, is the small town of Barron. In 1887, the population of Barron was about twenty-three hundred. After the purchase of land, Andreas' biggest project, trees were cut and the building of a log cabin was begun. The older boys helped to clear the land and to debark the trees. In the latter part of May and through June, the work progressed quickly. Most of the cooking and all of the laundry could be done out-of-doors. The boys could sleep outdoors although the family was invited into the Cuthbertson home until such time as the cabin became habitable.

Some of the clearing was tilled and seed put in the ground. The purchase of a cow was imperative. The lakes in the environs furnished fine and abundant fresh fish, when there was time to fish. There were no laws to prevent trapping or netting the fish and no regulations to prevent spearing of fish in winter when ice froze on the lakes. So, though they would never again have the stockpile of dried or smoked fish, the family was soon assured of plenty to eat.

When autumn came, Andreas opened a small tailoring shop on the main street of Barron. Near the front window of the shop a long table was placed. On this, Andreas sat cross-legged, with his work spread out around him. Ole was useful to his father in threading needles, sewing on buttons and making buttonholes. When he was thirteen years of age, he was considered old enough to learn a trade. Andreas was eager to have him become a tailor, but the family needed whatever money he could earn by working for someone else.

His first job was in a barrel stave workshop. The cooper had plenty of business, for every home needed a rain barrel as well as barrels for other storage purposes. The work Ole was given to do was too heavy for one of his frail physique, so the next summer he stayed on the farm. The second winter he went to work in a woolen mill. Here he was taught to operate a carding machine. This job was not much to his liking because the lint flying around in the room irritated his nose and throat.

Barron, in 1888 and 1889, with twenty-five thousand in population, had two weekly newspapers. The one with the larger circulation was the Barron Democratic Shield. The other was the Barron Republican, owned and operated by Jay Williams. Between the ages of fourteen and fifteen, Williams took on Ole as a printer's devil. He was given room and board. A cot in the print shop provided the room and he ate meals with Mr. and Mrs. Williams.

The printer's devil was first put to cleaning and inking the rollers. Then Jay and his wife, Libby, taught Ole the case, which meant that he had to put the letters and spaces back in the case in the proper places so the typesetter could grab a letter or space quickly and with scarcely a glance have it in hand to place in a word or sentence. The letters were on small individual pieces of lead, and after they were used, they were knocked down, scrambled, sorted, and put back in the case. This took quick work, and Ole learned quickly and became very fast. Even so, mistakes sometimes occur. Once the letter 'o' was misplaced in the 'a' case. An ad was set up for the town confectioner which read, "Don't eat stole candy; we make it fresh every day". Libby Williams, the proofreader,

missed the mistake and the ad was printed. Mr. Haskins, the candy maker, was so infuriated that he withdrew his business with this newspaper. However, in this small, simple town, the ad became a big joke. When Ole walked down the street, bystanders would call to him, saying, "Have you had any stole candy lately?" Haskins candy store drew more business than it had previously. On this job, Ole soon became the typesetter and, at age fifteen, he became a printer.

Often, in spare moments, he would sketch a scene or practice a head or a figure. This had been his main hobby since he first had crayons at age twelve. Williams noticed him at this occupation and one day, asked him if he thought he could carve on wood, such as was used for engravings. Ole's reply was that he would like to try. Soon after this, Williams went to St. Paul, Minnesota, on a shopping trip. On his return he brought a few pieces of boxwood, all about six inches square. One end of each block was highly polished. A drawing was made with ink on the polished surface, after which all the wood was cut away around the inked lines.

Ole's first published engraving was a cartoon. In this small village, there were three saloons. A revivalist movement to oust the saloons came into existence. One saloon was across the street from the printing office. It was named the "Why Not". A revivalist leader came to the Barron Republican one day to talk to the editor about the movement and to seek his aid in some publicity. This gave Ole an idea for a picture. It so happened that the marshal of the town was also the lamplighter. In the latter calling, he would walk about town carrying a stepladder. He would go from post to post using the ladder to climb to refill the lamps, light them, reset the chimney, and close the casing around the lamp. Ole drew a picture of the saloon across the street with its name "Why Not" above the door. Leaning against the lamppost, sound asleep was a man with a badge on his breast. The implication was clear.

The drawing caught Mr. Williams' fancy; he entitled it "Shall we oust the saloon?" and printed it. The marshal was very angry, naturally, but Ole had some slight fame in his hometown at age sixteen.

One person who became very interested in Ole and his future was a man named Rockman, who had come to Wisconsin, a Norwegian emigrant, during the period of government land grants to railway companies and to individuals. His farming was so prosperous that when his sons were old enough to manage the farm, he entered politics. At the time Ole knew him he was the county treasurer. After his term as treasurer expired, Rockman talked to other prosperous farmers and convinced them to pool their savings. They became the founders of the Normana Savings Company. It was said of Rockman that he was energetic, shrewd and tough in his dealings. It was also said of him that he would foreclose on a mortgage the moment a payment was overdue. The son, Julius, who succeeded him, continued the same policy. Rockman, his son Julius, and two brothers whose name was Coe, represented the wealth of the community; they owned the finest homes in town and were much respected. It was Mr. Rockman who suggested that Ole study law. In that day, law could be studied under a lawyer or a court clerk. When he was able to pass the state bar examination, Ole would be qualified to "hang out his own shingle".

Jay Williams, Ole's boss and friend, thought Ole's capacity for drawing should be a profitable asset. It was he who suggested the study of lithography, a new art form. It was possible to learn this promising trade by apprenticeship under a practicing lithographer. So Williams spoke to Ole's father about the possibility of his going to Minneapolis to learn the trade.

Andreas was now almost crippled by arthritis. He was unusually "crotchety" as the old timers said. The tailoring business was now negligible but he did not foresee its demise. Albert, the eldest son, was now twenty-two years old, "strong as a bull," and still at home. Casper, aged fifteen, was strong and capable of handling many of the farm chores. Even John at age eleven carried his share of the workload. Ole, living with the Williams, had been away from farm labor for more than two years, but

he was the one Andreas had expected to take over the tailoring business. Like so many other fathers of that day, he considered that what was good enough for him was good enough for his son. Furthermore, he was unable to help financially. But Ole was soon to be of age and in this year had become a United States Citizen by virtue of his father's taking out his naturalization papers. Andreas was very proud of his citizenship and showed his certificate to Williams. Such documents were not unusual because there were so many immigrants, but Williams read it to please the old man.

CERTIFICATE OF NATURALIZATION

"Be it remembered, that, at a term of the Circuit Court, held at Barron, for the County of Barron, in the State of Wisconsin in the United States of America, on the 27th day of September, in the year of our Lord, One Thousand Eight Hundred and Ninety-two, Andrew Olson Sundsmo, a native of Norway, exhibited a petition praying to be admitted to become a Citizen of the United States, and it appearing to said Court that he had declared on oath before the Circuit Court of Barron County, Wisconsin, on the second day of November, A.D. 1888, that it was bona fide his intention to become a Citizen of the United States, and to Renounce Forever all allegiance or fidelity to any foreign Prince, Potentate, State, or Sovereignty, whatsoever, and particularly to OSCAR 2nd, KING OF SWEDEN and NORWAY, of whom he was at that time a subject: and the said Andrew Olson Sundsmo having on his solemn oath declared, and also made proof thereof by competent testimony of T.O. June and Henry Olson, citizens of the United States, that he has resided one year and upwards in the State of Wisconsin, and within the United States of America upwards of five years immediately preceding his application; and it appearing to the satisfaction of the Court, that during that time he had behaved as a man of good moral character, attached to the principles of the Constitution of the United States, and well disposed to the good order and happiness of the same; and having, on his solemn oath declared before the said Court that he would support the Constitution of the United States, and that he did absolutely and entirely renounce and abjure all allegiance and fidelity to any foreign Prince, Potentate, State and Sovereignty whatever, and particularly to OSCAR 2nd, King of Sweden and Norway, of whom he was before a subject: Thereupon the Court admitted the said ANDREW OLSON SUNDSMO to become a citizen of the United States, and ordered all proceedings aforesaid to be recorded by the clerk of said Court; and which was done accordingly. In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto affixed my hand and seal of said Circuit Court, at Barron, this 27th day of Sept. In the year One Thousand Eight Hundred and Ninety-two".

H. Radermacher, Clerk.

The old man being well pleased with Williams and his visit then told him that he had no objection to his son's leaving for Minneapolis to adopt a new trade.

Chapter 4 - Minneapolis

In the spring of 1893, Ole was eighteen years old when Mr. Williams took him to Minneapolis. The Rockmans, the Coe brothers and Jay Williams financed the trip and tuition for the art school to the extent of thirty dollars. Minneapolis was then the largest city in the Midwest. There were two lithography shops there and Williams and Ole went to both. At each interview Ole was asked to exhibit a sample of his artwork. Having come unprepared for this, he sketched from memory the bust of Abraham Lincoln.

It was at the Diamond Lithographing Company that he signed a five-year contract for apprenticeship. During the first year he was to receive no salary. The second year he would receive two dollars each week. Thereafter, the salary was to increase yearly until after tile apprenticeship was over when he would receive twelve dollars weekly. After assisting Ole to find a boarding house, Williams returned to Barron. Mrs. Johnson, his landlady, gave Ole a room with another young man. It would cost only one dollar weekly. For this price, however, he was to receive two meals daily, breakfast and supper. His noon meal, Ole learned later, might be had at a tavern close to his work. It would consist of whatever the tavern was offering with a nickel mug of beer. Sometimes it was a sandwich; sometimes a bowl of soup, and often it was both soup and sandwich.

The bedroom at Mrs. Johnson's house had no heat. The whole house was heated by a baseburner in the parlor and a cook stove in the kitchen. Often, in winter, Ole had to crawl under the bedcovers until he warmed up enough to practice his artwork. That first winter, somehow an over-heated stove caused fire to the house and the young men's clothing was damaged. Ole had little more than enough clothing to cover his back but his roommate had a sizeable wardrobe. Mrs. Johnson's insurance covered the losses and from this source Ole received another thirty dollars. This enabled him to pay for another semester at the art school and for some other needs.

At the art school, Ole's work was outstanding and won acclaim from its finest teachers. One teacher, also named Williams, was a native of England and had studied many years in Chicago. It was he who taught the figure class. Models in that day were not professional. They were simply people brought in from the streets. The teacher would pose the model and this pose would be held for twenty minutes. After the model had a break, a rest period lasting ten minutes, he or she would come back for another fifteen minutes of modeling. On the second sitting or pose, it was almost impossible to get the model in the exact position held before. Therefore, the student had to learn to work very fast; in the first twenty minutes, he must get the proportions of the figure, the placement of the figure and the placement of all features, such as nose, mouth and eyes. If he made good use of his first twenty minutes, the succeeding poses need only to serve as fill-in or detail embellishment. The classes lasted two hours, and in the time allotted, some detail was usually incomplete. It was Williams who said of Ole's work, "There is not as good figure work as this student's even coming out of Chicago".

Williams, himself, went on to New York City where he made a name for himself. He was a member of many honorary societies, becoming a historian for one, and a teacher for a noted art school.

Ole's work experience was not proving very satisfying. The manager of the Diamond Lithographing Company was named Estabrook. Mr. Goldschmidt was the superintendent and artist, and Paul Pauley was the number one apprentice. Goldschmidt favored his first apprentice, and so gave Ole

such menial tasks as gluing standards on the backs of charts or rolling up school maps. Charts and maps had to be stacked in small piles of twelve. The dozen would be rolled into a cylindrical heading and fastened there. Mr. Estabrook befriended Ole and often insisted that Goldschmidt begin Ole's lithographic training. This condition existed for two years. Finally, Estabrook made a big issue of it whereupon Goldschmidt's temper flared and he resigned. Goldschmidt had an offer in Ohio, which he accepted. He took Paul Pauley with him.

Estabrook then hired a new superintendent by the name of Schmerler and took on another apprentice named Bauer. Schmerler was directed to give Ole a chance at the artwork. He was glad to comply because he no longer had a steady hand.

One early drawing of Ole's was used to illustrate calendars. It was composed from a couple of photographs submitted by the customer. One was of the client's little daughter, the other of a cat carrying a dead mouse. Ole placed the girl figure sitting on a stack of hay in a barn. She holds a kitten, which feeds on a slice of bread held in her other hand. A little boy sits nearby, holding and petting a kitten in his lap. Feeding from a saucer on the floor are other kittens while mama cat sits nearby with the mouse in her mouth. Among the picture's obvious flaws is a pitchfork set at a slant, which makes the composition erroneous. However, this drawing was accepted and used. Years later, when Ole was showing a black-and-white copy of it, he said, "The straw stack I got out of my own head, of course".

It was not long before Ole was doing all the important artwork. After three years on the contract, he began receiving the wages of a journeyman, which was twelve dollars. Thus, he felt that some of his lost time had been made up.

The process of lithography at the close of the nineteenth century was as follows: when a drawing was complete it was submitted to the client for approval. If approved, the picture was placed before a mirror and the reflection was then etched on stone. Limestone, which is beige in color, was imported from Bavaria, Germany, the birthplace of lithography. The limestone was very fine, textured, quite soft, and was cut into slabs about four inches thick. It came in crates, very carefully packed so that it would not shift and fall as it came by ship across the Atlantic and by rail across the states. Etching was done by grease crayon, after which the stone was treated with nitric acid. The acid ate away the stone except for the areas the crayon covered. After the panting was done and dried, young women who sat along a long table applied colors. Each girl applied one color, then passed the print to the next worker and so on down the line. A coarse type of stone could be used for roadside posters or any picture that would be viewed from a distance. For postcards, Christmas cards or calendars, a fine-grained stone was used. The crayons used by the artist for etchings were not round, as we know them today, but square. They were about three-eighths of an inch at the head and about three inches long.

There was a profession at that time known as noodling. When lines were needed to define the edge of anything, the artist used a sharp crayon. But, if there was a cloud, or mass of clouds, the artist simply broke the crayon and swished the broad side of it within the lines defining the cloud. The stone was then turned over to the noodler, who would work the cloud, or mass, into a fine grained shading. The artist was not supposed to waste his time working on this portion of the operation. Ole had little patience for it and was glad not to have to do it. A top salary in this type of work was eighteen dollars a week, though few noodlers reached the top.

Ole became head draftsman and the company obtained much poster work because of his ability to draw exact likenesses of the actors, actresses, vaudeville troupers and light opera stars who were their customers. His meeting with these people of the stage drew him to the theater, a luxury he

could now afford. The music of the opera gave him special pleasure. He bought a guitar and taught himself to play it. During this time he changed rooming houses and here he met other young men who played string instruments. His study of art continued also. Several aspiring artists joined with him in a Saturday afternoon sketching class. Some of the sketching was done out-of-doors, on the banks of the many beautiful lakes in Minneapolis.

Just when everything seemed to be going so well for him, the Diamond Lithography Company went into receivership. Ole returned to Barron to the home of his parents. Brother Albert was still at home and the two youngest boys were now young men of virility and strength. The three brothers were quite capable of handling all the farm work. The only job Ole could tackle was chopping wood for the stoves. That winter month passed slowly for him as he brooded over his future. The work he had been trained to do was possibly on its way out. A new screen process had been developed, a process with which he was unfamiliar. In odd moments, he even wondered if he could make a living with his music.

All his friends thought him very talented. He was extremely good on the guitar and some friends even thought he should try out for show business. The whole United States was suffering aftershock from the 1893 panic, and the outlook did not seem bright for young Sundsmo. There was no prospect of a future in Barron, however, so he returned to Minneapolis. There he found that his old boss, Mr. Schmerler, and the apprentice, Bauer, had started a new company called the Bureau of Engraving. He was immediately hired as draftsman.

In the new process of engraving, the drawings were made on paper, but at first only in black and white. The fledgling company was able to regain most of the poster work they had with the Diamond Lithographing Company. There was another company competing for the business but the traveling actors said Ole was the only artist who could draw a faithfully exact copy of the photographs they submitted. An enlarged copy he made was usually twenty-two by twenty-four inches. Some Norwegian vaudeville troupers expressed their great pleasure because he was also able to tint the faces on the posters with the fair complexion and the high rosy cheekbones characteristic of the Scandinavian people.

It was not long before a change came about in the company partly because Schmerler became an alcoholic. His hands were too shaky for drawing so Ole was made head draftsman. With this new title, his wages were increased. With renewed confidence in himself and hope for his future, he resumed some social life.

Between the age of twenty-one and twenty-five, Ole roomed at the home of a Mrs. Anderson. His room was off the living room, also without heat. The range in the kitchen was expected to heat all the downstairs rooms. Mrs. Anderson frequently opened the door between the living room and his bedroom so that heat could get to his room. When Ole had a pay raise, he voluntarily raised his own room rent. The first time, Mrs. Anderson protested saying that he should not do so as she was not asking more. Ole insisted and after that he raised it voluntarily every six months.

There were about six young men who roomed there; the only women were Mrs. Anderson and her daughter Calla. The women provided two meals a day for their six male roomers. Mrs. Anderson had another daughter who was married and lived down the street. This daughter's husband, Ole Simpson, became Ole's best friend. Ole Simpson played guitar and young Anderson, the landlady's grown son, played mandolin. Another mandolin player was soon located and these four young men got together often to practice their music with the two Ole's on guitar. The large front room, separated from the other rooms by a sliding door, was thrown open when any entertainment took place. One evening, when the quartet was engaged in a little musical festivity, a Mrs. Johnson came

to call. Mrs. Johnson and Mrs. Anderson were good friends and close neighbors. That particular night, Mrs. Johnson brought her daughter, Theresa, and her niece, Amanda Nelson. This meeting led in time to the marriage of Amanda and Ole.

Sometime in the early Twentieth Century, change came to the Bureau of Engraving. The Federal government ruled that the name Bureau of Engraving was the designation of the government agency that printed paper money, located in Washington, D.C. The name was not to be used by any other engraving company. So Schmerler and Bauer changed the name of their company to the Bureau of Design and Engraving and then later to just Bureau of Design.

Then, Schmerler hired a new manager, a man named Buckbee. Buckbee turned out to be a good addition to the company for he was energetic in bringing in new accounts. One of the new accounts was a contract with the Napoleon Flour Company of St. Louis. In keeping with their name, this client wanted ads depicting Napoleon in his campaigns. Ole spent many hours in the library reading history of that era and hunting illustrations and background material. When he decided on an idea, he drew it first in miniature, three by four inches. The small picture was submitted to Mr. Buckbee who checked if such a likeness had been copyrighted. If not, the drawing was submitted to the advertising manager of the flour company. If approved, a larger drawing was made. The Napoleon management used one drawing each month for at least a year. Then the company was sold to the Washburn-Crosby Company of Minneapolis. Their advertising manager was Benjamin Bull who continued the use of the Napoleon Flour name and ads. The account was not discontinued until after the death of Benjamin Bull.

Another important account was with the Northern Pacific Railway, the first railroad to the Rocky Mountains. During the land grant days, the Federal government had given so much free land to the rail companies that by this time there were three railroads reaching the west coast. Competition among them was keen, so spurs had been put out every which way and many excursions were offered. The Northwest Pacific Railroad was offering excursions to Yellowstone Park, the first National Park. Every two weeks, the Railroad had published a black-and-white illustration done by Ole, which appeared in Harpers Weekly. These two big accounts brought Ole a nationwide reputation as a commercial artist.

Unfortunately, that account was also discontinued, shortly after the Washburn-Crosby contract ended. The loss of the accounts was a serious blow to the Bureau of Design, but Buckbee was already involved in a new pursuit. An artist, who lived in Des Moines, Iowa, was teaching art by mail. When Buckbee learned of him, he tried to hire him as a representative for the Bureau. The artist was not interested in the position, although he was in need of funds for his plan to expand his mail-order art teaching into a school. Buckbee liked the idea so well that he aligned himself with the art teacher. And so the Federal Art School was spawned with Mr. Buckbee as its sponsor.

During these upheavals, Ole had been receiving offers from other advertising firms. Ole had never been dissatisfied with his salary. At the time of his marriage in 1900, he was receiving twenty-five dollars per week. Ole Simpson, married and father of three only received twelve dollars weekly. This was the average. Ole Sundsmo's salary had been increased automatically; he never had to ask for a raise until after he reached thirty-five per week, which was considered the top. When he was doing all the color work, he asked for an increase to forty dollars, which was granted.

With substantial offers coming his way, Ole began to feel the need for new ground, bigger opportunity. An offer came from New York City, which was exciting. By now he was a homeowner and the father of a son and two daughters. He considered New York a place he did not want to raise his children. But, he was only thirty-five years old and it might prove disastrous to be "stuck" in one

spot. Then a good offer came from Indianapolis, and his decision was made. In the summer of 1910, Ole Sundsmo and his family moved to Indianapolis.

Chapter 5 - Amanda

Amanda Nelson was born in Madison, Wisconsin, on May 17, 1881. She was wont to say that she had come to the United States under her mother's apron.

Anders and Methe Nelson, Amanda's father and mother, met in Hegra, Norway. Methe Trøan was born in Hegra. Anders Wilhelm was a native of Sweden, having been born in Sødra Vi Smaalund on January 29, 1852. Anders and Sanders, his brother, were boot makers by trade. With the excitement of a railroad being built from Stockholm, capital of Sweden, to Trondheim, capital of Norway, the two adventuresome young men obtained work there.

When the rails reached Hegra, the young fellows rented a cabin together with another worker. They hired Methe to cook and keep house for them. This she did for more than a year before her marriage to Anders. The railroad was completed in August 1880. Anders and Methe were married on August 12th, Methe's birthday. The following day, they, together with Sanders, set sail for America. Trondheim was the largest seaport of that time. From there they went by ship to Hull, England; by rail they crossed to Liverpool; and by ship again to New York City.

The first railroad across the United States was the Union Pacific, which was completed in 1869. The land grant railroad carried many immigrants to the undeveloped lands of Kansas, Nebraska, North and South Dakota. Here, homesteaders could get quarter sections of land.

Sanders chose to stop in Chicago. There he opened a shoe shop. When Amanda and her children visited him and his wife in later years, Sanders was reduced to earning his living by shoe repair. He had no children and his life seemed bleak and lonely to his visiting relatives.

After Amanda was born and as soon as the little family could be moved, they went on to Redfield, South Dakota, where Andrew got a homestead through United States preemption right. He, too, opened a shoe shop; but with the advent of factory made shoes, no one cared any longer for the handmade. Children came along quite regularly, seven in all, and Andrew realized he had not enough land for adequate farming. Furthermore, land where they had settled was then valued at thirty dollars per acre, a sum he could not afford.

Andrew then went east to Wisconsin and Minnesota. In the north of Minnesota, he found a half-section of land (350 acres), which could be had for two dollars per acre. The land was stony, covered with birch and pine, but there was a lake on it; it was much like the homeland and there were other Scandinavians nearby. Amanda was about fifteen when the move to Deerwood, Minnesota, was made. The girls, baby Carl and Methe went by covered wagon driven by Oscar, the eldest boy. Two other sons and Andrew went by train to oversee the cattle and horses. The family in the covered wagon stopped overnight sometimes with people who lived along the way. Selma, who was five years old, said she remembered that her first task in the morning was to shake out their clothing and the bedclothes so as to be sure they had not picked up bedbugs. When they arrived in Deerwood, there was no home waiting for them and there was no hay to be had for the stock. The winter was spent in St. Cloud while Andrew and Oscar, with the help of a neighbor named Malvick,

built a house. Amanda went to Minneapolis to visit her mother's sister, Aunty Johnson. While there she went to work in a bakery. It was in Minneapolis that she met and married Ole Sundsmo.

Chapter 6 - The Later Years

Ole S. Sundsmo and Amanda Nelson were married in Minneapolis at the home of Amanda's aunt, Mrs. Johnson, on May 30, 1900.

Amanda was nineteen on May 17th and Ole was twenty-five on May 12th. Amanda had never been in a large city before this time and she had not been away from her immediate family for very long. She was very beautiful and very shy. She was so timid that when it came time for the married couple to leave the wedding party, she could not bring herself to go to the apartment Ole had rented. No amount of persuasion, gentle though it was, could change her mind; so Ole went home alone. Having taken a week's vacation, Ole was troubled to know how to handle the situation. Next day he rode his bicycle to her Aunt's house and during his visit he asked her if she would like to learn to ride. Adventurous, though shy, she thought she would. So Ole bought her a bicycle and she caught on quickly. They spent the week riding through the beautiful parks surrounding the lakes in Minneapolis. By the end of the week, she accompanied him to the new apartment.

Ole, with a salary of twenty-five dollars per week was doing so well that he decided to build a home. The two lots he bought on Queen Ave. North became the site of their new frame house. A son was born on August 7th, 1901 named Waldo Everett. At this time, Amanda's sister, Selma Nelson, then twelve years old, came to make her home with the Sundsmos. On the farm in Deerwood, Minnesota, she had completed eighth grade but there was no high school. In Minneapolis she could attend school and also assist Amanda with the children. A second child was born on March 30th, 1904, a girl, Myriel Constance. Selma afterward recalled that she had gone home to Deerwood for the Easter vacation and when she returned the baby girl was there.

A second daughter was born March 12th, 1906. During these peaceful, fulfilling years, Ole abandoned his practice of guitar and engaged in a new hobby. Photography was still in its infancy and Ole was entranced with its prospects. He and two interested friends set up shop in the basement of the Queen Ave. home. They built their own cameras and Ole designed and made the first set of bellows any of them had ever seen. The bellows were made of leather, which was difficult to crease to make the graduated folds. I remember the occasion when he showed his first attempt to Selma and Amanda; they stood around the kitchen table and laughed and laughed. This same idea, however, was later incorporated in the Graflex Camera developed by the Eastman Kodak Company.

Social life was very satisfactory for Amanda. Many of her brothers and her sister from upper Minnesota and Ole's brother from upper Wisconsin were frequent visitors. Anne, Amanda's sister, was married to Sam Dyr Dahl at the Sundsmo home. However, Selma felt her social life was negligible. She had completed high school at age sixteen and had a secretarial position. Here she met young women who were somewhat older than she and they were going to California and other points west. This she envied. She said she had no male companionship except when brother or cousins took her to the theatre on rare occasions.

The gold rush in Alaska had started in 1906. Andrew Nelson, father to Selma and Amanda, had a friend, whose name was Larsen, who had gone to Nome in 1906 and was reputed to "have made a fortune". He had come "outside," as the Alaskans said, in the winter of 1910 and paid a visit to the

Sundsmo home. It happened that he was hoping to take a young woman back with him to be his secretary. So, with parental and sisterly blessing, Selma set out for Nome in June 1910.

It was about this same time that Ole was feeling a trifle bored with the work he was doing. With the reputation he had gained from the national ads for the Washburn-Crosby Co. and the Northern Pacific Railway, he had many offers from printing and engraving companies in the east. When he had an offer from New York City, friends urged him to go there where he would surely make a "big name" for himself. With three small children, he felt that the big city was not the place to rear them. Then, a good offer came from Indianapolis.

The prospects of the Indianapolis firm sounded good. Ole was then thirty-five years old, still a young man who might have a great future. It was a challenge he could not turn down in view of the prospect of being "stuck" with a small firm for the rest of his life. In the summer of 1910 he moved the family to Indianapolis.

One year in Indianapolis, one year in Hamilton, Ohio, and then back to Indianapolis. These frequent moves remain unexplained now. On June 10th of 1913, another daughter was born. She was named Pauline Marian in honor of a new friend and business associate whose wife was named Pauline. Selma, whose marriage to Lloyd Scott in Alaska was faltering, returned and lived with the Sundsmo's that summer. Harvey Roemer, the new business associate, and Ole moved their families to South Bend, Indiana, in the autumn of that year. They rented a large building, which had housed the Muessle Brewery and was located on the St. Joseph River. Their new enterprise was named the Catalogue Service Company, Incorporated. Their brochure read, "Once, two men of rare cleverness, one with the capacity of intuitively sensing important sales points, the other, with the power of presenting them with artistic businesslike skillfulness joined forces to produce business literature different from the usual clamorous efforts, and to establish themselves as an organization in the field of printing who understood the value of a promise and would fulfill it".

Whatever happened to the beautiful dream, no one is quite sure. Maybe it was the entrance of the United States into the war in Europe; maybe it was overexpansion; maybe it was too great indebtedness. It certainly must have been great disillusion. But, during the time Roemer was out scouting for printing jobs, Ole painted two portraits in oil of secretarial workers at the Catalogue Service Company. One of the models was named Clara Harper.

Evenings and Sundays were now taken up with the hobby of photography. He taught himself to develop the film, or plates as they were at that time, and enlarge the photographs and make his own equipment to do so. Many hikes with the children and Amanda were taken on Sundays. During the winter he painted a portrait of his elder daughter. He also painted her at the piano and this he later used as an ad for a piano company. In about two years of occupancy in the Muessle Building, Harvey Roemer and Ole took offices in the Farmers' Trust Building. A young fellow by name of Troniss was hired for secretarial work. Business did not pick up, however, and then Roemer wanted to move to Cleveland. There was some friction between the partners, so the relationship was dissolved and Ole was left without work.

When the family took off for Deerwood, where they had spent every summer since leaving Minnesota, Ole went with them. Amanda's brother, August, was running the farm since the death of their father three years previously. An extra hand was needed and welcomed because the hired hands had all been drafted. The older children were put to work also, picking strawberries and red raspberries, the chief cash crops, hoeing corn and pruning the berry bushes after the harvest.

Two accidents occurred that summer, one of which ended in fatality. August fell from the hayrick. His neck was broken and he died before the family could get him to the hospital. The other accident occurred when Ole was driving a team of horses. One of the horses kicked him on the shin, breaking the skin over an old wound and causing an injury so great as to keep Ole off his feet for many months.

Another child had been born to the Sundsmo family on August 13, 1919, named Oliver Frederick.

On March 6, 1919, Ole received a job offer from Mr. Adolph Jahn of the Jahn & Ollier Engraving Company based in Chicago. This was a prestigious firm and Ole took the job. His family remained in South Bend. Ole commuted by train, coming home only on weekends. In that year, Waldo enlisted in the Navy, the day he was eighteen. The war in Europe was then over. The next winter all the girls developed scarlet fever, which quarantined the family for six weeks. The baby also was ill. The house on Cushing Street in South Bend, which Amanda and Ole now owned, was heated by a coal furnace. The bookstore was also fired by coal. It was a very trying time for Amanda with all the children sick, no persons allowed in to help, and she had all that work to handle alone.

After so much trouble at home, Ole resigned the Chicago job and took one in South Bend with the McDonald Advertising Co. He made eighty dollars weekly on this job and was satisfied that he would remain in South Bend from then on. This was not to be.

In a short while, the owner and the sales manager of the General Printing Company in Fort Wayne paid him a visit. As he told it afterwards, they wined him, dined him, and drove him around in their big car, talking of the opportunity he might have with General Printing. Ole did not want to move his family again. Because of this he countered with propositions, which he presumed they would not meet. In all his employment he had worked many hours overtime without salary, so he stated that he would only work forty-four hours weekly. Then, too, he wanted a salary of \$144 per week. All was agreed.

The first few months in Fort Wayne, Ole lived at the Baltes Hotel. Housing was scarce at the time but Amanda finally located one she thought suitable. They moved in 1920, in time for the opening of school. Selma's marriage had ended in divorce long before this so she was again with the Sundsmos. She took all three girls by train to Fort Wayne. After the truck with the household furnishings was on the way, Amanda and the baby also came by train. Ole met both trains and brought the family to their lodging after a sumptuous meal at the Baltes.

So the years flowed by. Waldo came home from the Navy but left in a couple of years to join a dance band. Pauline took up dance lessons at a very early age. The family changed houses three times; every time Amanda found a more suitable house or a better neighborhood. The printing company changed ownership, after which Ole's salary was decreased to one hundred per week. The type of work was less interesting and there were times when there was no work.

It was not customary at that time for employers to pay employees for sick leave, for vacations, or for days or weeks of unemployment. Ole began to fear that the camera, which he loved and used for recreation and pleasure, might one day supplant the commercial artist. Color film was not yet on the market, so some of the output of General Printing were the color charts by paint companies on which houses and their interiors displayed the paints they were trying to sell. This was the dullerest work Ole had ever had. He might have become completely unhappy except that some commissions came in and these he could fulfill at times when there was no work.

In those dull times, Ole strove to perfect techniques with watercolor, painting landscapes in and around Fort Wayne. His work was much admired and Amanda sought to help by private exhibits in their home.

In 1930, Adela, who was newly married and living in California, was killed in a motor accident. In January 1939, Amanda died of cancer. Pauline and her husband were living at home until Bob went into the army. Pauline continued to live with Ole; she was working for Wolf and Dessauer at the time. In 1940, Ole retired from the General Printing Company. He received no pension and his Social Security check was \$47.00 monthly.

With a small savings he had, Ole decided to take a trip west. It no doubt not only got him away from his cares and troubles, but helped to ease his sorrow. So, with watercolor paints, brushes, pencils and paper he took off by Greyhound bus. Buses stop at all towns and cities, so this enabled him to stop over at any point he wished. Also, there was not the interstate highway system, as now, so bus windows revealed fine scenery in some localities.

Most of Ole's sketching was done on small 8 x 10 paperboard, with color notations made on the back. Painting on the spot was difficult to achieve, especially for large papers, because of the preparation made on the paper. Other times there were days like the one he wrote about to his daughter: "I am spotted as if with pox over my lower legs, bites from sand flies, mosquitoes, sand ants and myriad carnivorous 'hellnivora' from sitting on sand bluffs while trying to sketch. Have done very little as a consequence". His attempts with oil and canvas were completely abandoned after an occasion when sand flies had lighted on the canvas and stuck to the oil paint. "And this was to have been my masterpiece," he wailed.

At another time, writing from Hudson, Wisconsin, he said, "One result of this humidity has been a translucent light effect in the haze which would stump most artists, but I've caught it! 'This time I have something for my bug bites". Sometimes on this trip he would "hole up" in a hotel room and spend the time painting until he finished that locality; or he was tired and felt he must move on. On his return home, he spent months in his small studio painting from his small sketches.

Time flies and, as we all know, wounds heal, and there was peace in his heart and happiness in his work. Peace came to the world again with the end of World War II. Selma was repatriated from a concentration camp in Shanghai, arriving by the Swedish Luxury liner, the Gripsholm, in December 1943. Pauline gave birth to a baby girl, Amanda Constance, in January 1944. Robert E. received discharge from the United States Army and returned to his wife and baby daughter. With the surrender of the Japanese on August 14, 1945, peace returned once again to the world. Oliver F. arrived home from service in England and eventually his English wife and their son John arrived. The home on Ramsey Court was filled again.

The house didn't stay full for long. Pauline and her husband bought the Ford agency in Wabash and they, with their little daughter, moved there. Then Oliver F. and his family moved to Lafayette where Fred took a job and also re-entered college. Both couples were gone by 1948. Ole, with his small savings and diminutive Social Security payment realized he could not stay in the big house alone. He then sold his house, having already given much of the furnishings to the children to help them start their new homes. Cedar Lake, outside of Columbia City, was his next move, into the home of his elder daughter.

Exhibits of Sundsmo watercolors had been and continued to appear quite regularly. Wawasee Art Gallery hung two of the paintings in 1943; a one man show was held by Morton Galleries in New York City on April 1944; Civic Theatre Gallery, Fort Wayne on April 1947; Civic Theatre, April 1948;

Coterie Club, Columbia City, October 1948; one-man show at Lyman Brothers on Monument Circle, Indianapolis, October 1949, one man show Progress Club, South Bend, 1951; one-man show Honeywell Memorial Center, Wabash, Indiana, 1953; Fort Wayne Women's Club, 1954; and Northern Indiana Artist, South Bend, 1955.

Ole continued his artistic career to age eighty-four. A massive stroke in 1961 crippled his right arm. He died peacefully and without pain on March 9, 1961.

Critic's Comments

Critics said of Ole Sundsmo and his art:

"There is something fine and heart warming in this gentle silver-haired man who does not fit into any category of art but who gives us a poetic quality and sincere honesty in his brush expressions. He seems to invest his interpretations with a haunting atmospheric truth and certain lyrical beauty that demands one's admiration". - Fort Wayne art critic, April 6, 1947.

"Sundsmo explains his manner of painting by stating that form and color have never seemed entirely sufficient, that he wants to tell about the soul of Nature in his painting". - New York art critic, April 26, 1944.

"He has the ability to capture subtle loveliness in modest, unpretentious but delicate, sensitive and fluid papers". - New York art critic, April 29, 1944.

"One detects immediately in the fluent reportage this artist's ardent love of nature, his fascination with light effects and atmospheric truth". - News Sentinel art critic, 1949.

"The canvases reflect the artist's motto to make people happy through his paintings". - South Bend Tribune, 1952.

"Nature's moods are constantly changing and few artists have been more observant of these changes than Sundsmo". - Indianapolis Star, Oct. 1949.

"Ole could make water really look wet". Anonymous.

A critic who never met Ole said this: "His paintings show that he must have a marvelous character and peace of mind as it shows through in them".

Quotes from Ole, of himself, of his art, and critiques of other artist's work:

"If I am a child of God, I ought to help God to make this a lovely world".

Returning from a visit to New York City via Chicago, he was asked his opinion of the big cities. "Chicago is just a smutty joke compared to the tall stories of New York".

Report of a book he'd read about the life of an artist, "The author's knowledge of colors is poor. He spoke of chrome yellow and vermillion being used as a medium. Students only use these colors as they are not permanent. Vermillion is made with mercury as an ingredient. Mercury is often accompanied by iron in the earth. As for instance, Sweden, which has a large export trade in iron, has an equally as large export trade in mercury. Now, as for chrome yellow, it has lead in it. Lead changes in just a few years. Today, paint manufacturers no longer make these colors".

Speaking of use of colors and techniques in criticism of a certain painting, "This artist has not known how to use his paper or what his colors will do. These clouds, you see? They look like clouds of sand, they are grainy. That is the texture of the paper you see. It looks as though this artist has used the same color in his sky that he has used in his ship. It is either an iron red or a cadmium red. Any mineral color, and that includes the iron oxides, cobalt and lapis lazuli, is heavy color. These rocks, or glasses, are pulverized and put with a medium such as gum Arabic. Then when the color is thinned with water and washed across the paper, the mineral strikes into the texture of the paper. This is never good for any sky effect, though it is excellent for certain ground effects and can even be handled in water effect". Another criticism of the painting; "The water can not reflect more light than is in the sky. Also the light ruffling of the water should be the light part of the water while the deeper tones of the ship nearby would only show in the depth of the water. This is absolutely contrary to natural law. So much of art is just a lie like this".

About paper:

"Linen is the best paper for watercolor painting. Paper made of woodpile or cotton rag behaves as does a blotter. It sops up the paint before it can be spread as desired. England has long had the market on linen paper".

"Linen is the base in paper (the kind I use) as well as in canvas. Canvas is woven from linen threads; paper is made like felt, as in a man's hat, only of purest unbleached linen. Both absorb a small amount of moisture in extremely damp weather, but canvas does not show this because it is stretched tightly on a frame. Paper, in a painting, seldom is and therefore may show a slight buckling. No damage results from this. I have my own system for framing watercolors, which entirely does away with buckling and makes them even more permanent than oil paintings. I cannot get framers to do it my way because it takes more time and runs up the cost. All the frames I buy I reinforce and back my way, when I can get the material which has been extremely scarce during the war".

"The pigments of the paint are the same in watercolor as in oil. Oil is the binder in one, a tiny bit of gum Arabic in the other. This gum does not darken with age in watercolor, as is the case with oil and varnish; nor is there any heavy body color to crack with ageing in the case of watercolor. After fifty-three years, the only slight change I see in a couple of my early ones is a dainty creamy tint of the paper and that adds to the richness of the tones. Therefore, with proper care, watercolors are every bit as permanent as oils and there is no danger of holes being punched through a properly backed watercolor painting as frequently happens to an oil painting on canvas".

"What am I painting now? I am creating natural effects rather than representing actual places. I know now that had I the means to follow high art life rather than using my talent to make a living during my earlier years, I would be at least well known if not famous. This is a statement, not brag. I have developed a technique that enables me to paint rapidly yet with a finish that many of those who have seen my work of the last year particularly think was only brought about with painstaking effort. They admit however that the spontaneity displayed in my work could not be had if it were

labored in the manner of the old masters or our modern illustrator, Norman Rockwell, painter Lugioni of Vermont and others"

"Three ladies spent the evening with me viewing my pictures. I have never had such an appreciative audience. They seemed surprised that I had so much knowledge about the various elements that make our earth what it is. One voiced the thought that she had supposed artists painted what they saw without asking questions about it. Had to explain to her that portrait and figure painters had to be well drilled in anatomy to be able to effect solidity in their work. So, also, with landscape; air is one thing, water another, and earth, vegetation and rock something else altogether. If the realities of nature are not understood by the artist, fairy tale work will be the result of his effort".

"The only result of my painting, other than the pleasure it gives me, that gladdens my heart is to find someone occasionally who loves the great outdoors enough to read into my work the spirit I motivate even so feebly".

"One of the many wonderful things that makes life interesting is that each generation must have its adventures and discover its own world and formulate its own philosophies".

"When I studied art the term rhythm was only sparingly used in musical circles. We were schooled in composition or composed harmonies, which is only another way of saying rhythm, or swing, or motion (suggested motion or spiritual awakening of it). Enclosed are some samples. The one from artist Corot's time tells of the slower motion of that day. The modern one by artist Karfiol (year 1937) suggests the modern (jazzified) rhythm of today. I am emboldened to include one of my own which in a simpler way also has its rhythm consistent with the wider spaces of the west. Do you get the feeling of the hills moving towards the left as would be the case if you were on a pony that is going to the right? Look at your pictures (Ole's paintings) on your wall. The mountains have an arrangement that though realistic are nevertheless intended to suggest movement, not earthquake, but in your soul you want to travel on them. Nature is the greatest stimulant to this thing we now term rhythm. When I am hiking or sketching I invariably hum a tune which may be something I've heard but frequently is only a jumble of notes suggested to me by what I see".

"The movement of water in stream or on sea, the wind in tree tops or driving clouds are countless things in Nature that suggest this thing, rhythm. That is one reason why I, for one, will not go in for so-called modernism or abstract painting. Nature is, and will be, greater than our ego".

"A few words about pictures: I have learned that high quality painting is appreciated only by artists who are sincere in their work or by lay people who are also sincere in their attitude toward life and beauty. Art critics are dependent upon income derived from art reporting and so naturally follow the trends, whatever they may develop into, in order to have new material to write up for their papers. The average picture-viewing person is therefore more or less guided by the critics and probably very few buyers pick up what they really would take if they dared to be independent".

"There will never again be any Great Art".

"Painting requires emotion, a religious emotion which is the highest emotion of all. Today critics and teachers say the painter must paint as he feels, and his feeling seems to be just a stir. The artists of today are becoming too sophisticated to experience true simple emotion. So we will never have an age of Great Artists again".