

To begin with I suppose it will be in order ~~that~~ to tell that I was born in Skiboten Lyngem fjord - September 14th 1877 — moved to Skjervøy when I was 2 years old and I was raised there.

My father was a blacksmith and a fisherman — at the age of 12 years my father took me along to Finnmarken (På Loddafiske) I did not go out fishing that year: but was left ashore bundling codfish heads for Quans also doing some of the cooking. Mostly fish.

That Spring I made 40 kroner in 3 months — I never felt so rich — after that I went to Finnmarken until 1897 — I then went to Kristiania where I got work at akers mekaniske verksted for a few months, then I moved to C. F. Andersens Kunst Dekorations snie verksted there I made my spendestykke.

after 18 months in Kristiania my father wanted me to home to Skjervøy to work in the shop.

In 1899 we read a good deal about the discovery of gold in the Klondyke, and that fall Gafet Lindberg returned from Nome Alaska, with his pockets full of nuggets and great bundles of money. As I remember the largest of his nuggets was worth about 500 dollars, of course this set us young fellows wild to go to Nome.

This is for the (Polar-boken) only and for no other publications without my permit
Frank and Sep-pala

Four of us joined him and left Norway in March 1900. The trip from Norway to New York was rather interesting especially the rough handling the emigrants got going through the formalities of Ellis Island. It was disappointing the way the way those poor emigrants were treated - in those days.

We stayed in Seattle about six weeks. took a few lessons in English, then took a boat the (Ohio) for home. Seattle was crowded with people leaving for Alaska. Dozens of ships of all sizes were loading, taking more passengers than their capacity. the (Ohio) had 800 people, which was more than plenty for a 4000 ton boat. More than 20,000 people landed on the golden beaches of home that summer.

When we went to the heavy ice pack in the Bering sea, we had to turn back to Dutch Harbor. Spent a number of days waiting for the ice to clear out of Bering sea. We eventually sailed in to the Bering sea, full of ice packs, it took us several days to get through - we saw hundreds walrus, sleeping on the ice flows when the ship came to close they rustled into the sea.

on the 14 of June we arrived in the roadstead of Home, but could not land, Small port was reported on the ship, the health authorities sent the ship to Egg Island, where we were in quarantine for 10 days — the 800 passengers were desperately anxious to get to Home — we finally landed, The gamblers established themselves ashore, did a great business with all kinds of games to clean the suckers — there were gun plays and serious troubles of all kind.

Many of the gold seekers had sold good businesses their homes, and invested the money in mining equipments and supplies — I knew of one who shot himself in a tent in Home when he discovered that it was not so easy to become rich, one man jumped overboard in the storm we saw his hat floating for a while he had already disappeared.

There were people from all corners of the globe and a confusion of languages, as we stood on the beach we saw some men from the smaller ships slide down on ropes over the sides, intending to swim to the beach, miles away they were finally picked up by small boats and taken ashore for ten dollars per head —

After 3 days in Rome we were given a job at Anvil Creek - It was a hard game hundreds of idle men looking for jobs. The beach for miles at Rome was lined with people washing out gold of the beach sands, thousands of dollars were taken out every day, ^{at work} ^{was} full blast.

My first job was to fill a slip scraper pulled by 2 horses - ten hours a day of filling and dumping, I had done no hard work for months so I was soft and the very first days of this labor was real punishment. But if I could not keep up, he was sent to the office for his time. I remember the very first day of work I was so damn tired, I had to rest on the tailing pile before I got to the bunk house for supper.

The driver of the team had a friend whom he wanted to have my job, there for he drove me so hard, hoping I would quit, so his friend could step in.

Later I was put on the shovel gang and that was the time my experience handling the big sledge in my father's shop helped me. I could never have stood 10 hours a day of that hard work - I was the smallest man in the gang, there was always a number of men standing around looking for a job, if some one played out in the cut I

The next summer I got a job collecting royalties from miners who had leases on the Pioneer Company claimers. I had to carry a six shooter (revolver) night and day. I lived in a small tent some distance of the mines. I had thousands of dollars of gold dust to watch over and it was generally well known that some tough guys carried guns while snooping to pick up gold here and there. I had also my big dog yack 120 pounds with me in the tent all everywhere -

After 3 years I became foreman in the mines in the summer. In those years we started to mine under ground in the winter, the ground was frozen to the depth of hundreds of feet and had to be thawed with steam, shafts had to be sunk to the bedrock, where the gold is found and tunnels and drifts had to be thawed out - the dirt hoisted to the surface on a cable that was supported by a high mast, from where the dirt was dumped in to a high pile which was sluiced and washed in the spring when water started to run -

Dogs

My first experience with dogs in Alaska was during the winter in 1901-1902 a gold strike was reported from the Kougarok interior of the Seward Peninsula the rush started immediately.

all available dogs in Nome were bought or stolen sleds were bought and built - Lindberg bought 11 fine Malamutes (estimo dogs) and two big Mongrel outside dogs, they weighed 120 pounds - they were all wonderful workers. I was given the task of driving and caring for the 2 big dogs - We were four men, 3 Swedes and myself, the Swedes had a good deal of experience from the Yukon Country - John Johnson was the boss, I was the inexperienced kid, those men came from Skione never had seen a pair of skis and could not understand why I added the weight of my skis to those already over loaded sleds - a couple years later those boys got a lease on a claim, washed out 100⁰⁰⁰ dollars each in 3 months, they went to Seattle got married and bought fine homes -

In a few years they went broke and they and most of the men who struck it in Alaska are dead many years ago -

We started out in November there was little snow and no use for skis - the purpose of the trip was to go to the strike, stake claims and prospect them - We were a number of dog teams all headed for the strike, all rushing to get their first - one afternoon late we came to an abandoned Eskimo Igloo, we found a dead eskimo inside -

The boys just took him out and put him on the round top of the Igloo, that year good many Eskimos died due to the change of diet to that of the white man.

Dogs became scarce in Nome. My friend Pete Berg had a bitch in season ^{heat}, he had only 3 dogs he to was going on the stampede.

He got everything ready then he drove his team of 3 dogs through the timber and went home, result the next morning a bunch of Inabutes around his cabin he had extra harnesses, so he picked up the best of them and was on his way with 9 fine dogs!

We stayed out two months got into terrible blizzards lot of snow and I needed my skis; but I was forced to leave them behind and as a result we got into deep moflows and I froze my feet very badly. We ran out of food and had to return to Nome we found no gold the whole thing was a false or fake alarm one may call it.

The Pioneer Company built some ditches to bring water to the mines for sluicing.

The ditches were about 35 miles long, every few miles there were several small camps where ditch tenders and repair crews stopped. Those camps had to be supplied in April and May. So I was given the job and a dog team of eleven dogs.

That work was heavy hauling of freight mostly food supplies - a few years after I was given charge as Superintendent of all 3 ditches and subsequent water supplies -

In 1906 I met Roald Amundsen the first time when he came to Nome on the Gjøa after navigating the northwest passage - Nome gave him a fine reception and banquet.

In 1908 the first of the great all Alaska Sweepstakes races from Nome to Candle and return 408 miles was started across the Seward Peninsula and back. John Regnier's from Trondheim won it that year with Alaska Malamutes.

In 1909 a trader from Siberia arrived with eleven little Siberian Huskies to Nome they weighed about 45 pound each.

We entered the 1909 race with those little dogs, they were well furred - Coosak was the man's name - He was up in years so he got a Danish sailor to drive for him! people laughed at the little dogs the other drivers had larger and more long legged animals between 60-70 pound dogs.

In the gambling the odds were 50 to 1 on the Siberians if they had won they would have broke the town. Great excitement prevailed in Nome during the races -

a pan of dirt is just one heaping
shovel full of dirt - Speaking of gold
mining my brother Sigurd and a young
Swede found the largest nugget ever
found in Alaska -

It was worth 3,300 dollars at 16⁰⁰
dollars per ounce

Now gold is worth 35⁰⁰ dollars per ounce
the largest nugget I ever found about
the same time was worth 1350 dollars
at 16⁰⁰ per ounce.

The courthouse, schools and other public buildings were closed 4 days. The miners crowded the town to celebrate and bet on the races.

Few people had time to sleep while the race was on. In order to raise money for the purse which went as high as 8000⁰⁰ dollars for the first prize, there was a Queen contest between the young ladies of the town and it surely was hotly contested.

The girl who got the most votes which were sold for 10 cents per vote became the Queen.

My wife and I were living at the mines 4 miles from Nome, the miners choose my wife as to represent them. She was a young woman then.

Nome was very prosperous at that time, the rich ancient Beach line had been found $3\frac{1}{2}$ miles from Nome on the flats back of Nome — from 45 to 80 feet under the tundra. It stretched about 5 miles parallel with the beach. The highest pane ever panned out in Alaska was washed out on a claim called Portland Beach on the third beach line, it was 3000⁰⁰ dollars.

During the races there was lot of betting going on thousands of dollars changed hands. As the years went by the ground got washed out, the prizes in the races got smaller, the last race I won in 1917 paid only 1400⁰⁰ dollars.

Scotty Alau drove mixed breeds weighing 65-70 pounds - There was some bird dog blood and Malamute blood in his dogs - They were longer legged, rather short fur and needed flank protection, the Siberians Huskies have plenty fine fur and particular strong feet, I have traveled in blizzards in 40 below zero, never had to use any protection on them -

The Malamutes are more inclined to fight than the Siberians - and have not the endurance of the Siberians.

My believe is that all Polar or Arctic dogs are related that is the Greenland Labrador the Arctic Alaskan, Malamute - I also believe that the Samoyeds belong to the same group -

In 1914 Roald Amundsen had planned a Polar expedition through Bering Straits via Nome. In 1913 Josef Lindberg brought a bunch of Siberian puppies descendants of Fort Ranney. He told me to train them and when Amundsen came he would make him a present of the complete team with sled, tow-line and harnesses -

As soon as the pups were 7 months old I broke them to the harness I had a good leader for that purpose -

In 1914 the first world war prevented Captain Amundsen from making the planned trip so those dogs became mine -

That year Scotty Allan the King of the trail talked me in to go in the 1914 race with the pups - they turned out to be a fine bunch of dogs, but to go in for a race, Scotty knew I could not win but he just wanted another scalp to his belt. But that year John Johnson a (Finn) won the race with Siberians -

When I went in with the pups we had not been over the Canale trail, we got in to a terrible snow storm lost the trail and nearly drove over a bluff hundreds of feet high, that was the closest I ever came to losing my life -

In 1915 my dogs were a year older, I started training early. We had a 80 mile long railroad to the Kongarok that was build on the tundra in 1901-1903 - owing to lack of business it went bankrupt and fell out of repair so I built a small car that fitted the tracks and used my dogs for pulling power - that construction became known as the (Pup-Mobile) it was good training for the dogs - not to safe crossing the high washed out bridges -

During the winter of 1914-1915 I made long trips taking passengers I also drove over the Candler trail to acquaint the dogs and myself, and to study where the best stopping places were to rest while in the race, and deposit food for the dogs.

I could depend on my good old Leader Suggen once he had gone over a trail Blizzards or sunshine he never failed to hold the trail -

On April 12th 1915 the race was to be run. My wife had won the Queen Contest the night before in a very exciting contest which was Miners versus the Home Merchants - each woman who ran for Queen had a manager which with his friends sold the votes. Surprisingly how many hundreds of dollars were picked up that evening. They counted the votes every hour finally it summed down to two women. The last counting was at midnight and told the tale who had won, and was proclaimed Queen.

The next day at 9 a.m. the great race was on - on a platform erected on the ice of the Bering Sea stood my wife Queen Constance with the officials. Each time she raised the flag a team would leave and

was on its way - I was the last to start and the first to return after 78 hours on the trail 408 miles.

That day I drove 110 miles stopped 4 hours in a tent massaged and fed the dogs, then towards morning I heard Scotty drive by so I got going to.

That day I drove 90 miles to Caudle and returned to Gold Run cabin 30 miles on my way back.

That night Scotty and the other rested at Caudle Creek 4 hours later I heard and saw Scotty pass by I pushed my dogs into the harness and was on my way. there was a old telephone line along the trail from home to Caudle. It was built after the discovery of Caudle Creek Mines in 1901.

Through that line the progress of the race was reported to the headquarters at the Board of Trade saloon in home - where the gamblers and book makers were on the job night and day as the racers were reported in at the various stations.

At Council city 80 miles from home I passed Scotty he almost overtook me at timber, he was so close I could hear him shout to his dogs I seemed to be the stronger I got away from him, I arrived in home 1½ hours ahead of him he got second prize - It was his last race -

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That race was my first big race - I was happy for my dogs and their victory. (I won again 1916 - 1917) which was the last of those great races -

As to Roald Amundsen we met him several times once he was to go to Point Barrow and attempt a flight from there across the Pole, I arranged sled, dogs, towlines and harnesses, and escorted him across Seward Peninsula, this trip however did not materialize and he gave it up, and he came back to home he lived in our house, in town as we ourselves were at the Mining Camp.

The summer he flew over the South Pole with the Gorge, he and his crew stopped in home after they came from Teller where the Gorge crashed -

I had his crew with me for a weeks visit at one of my ditch camps 25 miles from home - over the railroad. Those men were Piser Larsen, E. Heorgen - Captain Gotwalls, Fredrick Raim, Storm Johansen, Finn Malmgren and Oskar Omdal - Lincoln Ellsworth -

Amundsen and some of his crew came to home in a small motor boat at 5 o'clock in the morning. My wife and I were the first to meet him on the beach when he stepped ashore -

I shall try to answer your questions about the words we use to guide the leader (Firehund) to the right we say (Gee) In Innuiguit it likely will sound like (ji), for going left it is (chaw) pa hosh (ha) for stop heta det (woa) pa hosh huda det nerrest tom (ho) for go we just let these be the ~~snobline~~ some of the Siberians I imported how ever had a different way of listening to the drivers Command - (luda was Gee) and left was a very loud gargle sound which came from the throat - (Put. Put) means go. We tie the sled up to a post or some solid object while we hitch up - the number of dogs is optional - I drove 16 dogs in the big race - the sleds were made of hickory, Birch - or ash - the runners are about 9 feet long - the basket 5 to 6 feet - the driver stands in the extensions back of the basket -

We know make the sleds of Aluminum - the sled is 20 inches wide between the runners and 8" to 12" high - the dogs are hitched in pairs along the towline about 5 to 6 feet apart between sets.

In 1925 we had a diphtheria epidemic in Nome serum was needed very bad - the board of health picked me to drive up to the Yukon to meet the serum

and the rest of the Serum drive you will find in my book.

Because of that drive I got a chance to go on exhibits with my dogs, for the Kansas city Star newspaper, Kansas, Grand Rapids Michigan, Detroit, Providence Rhode-Island, Madison Square Garden New York, etc.

I brought with me 44 Siberian huskies which were unknown in the States at the time.

After my exhibits I went to New England where they had started dog racing. 3 years in succession I won the 133 mile New England sled dog race, The Lake Placid race, the Placid Spring race, and in 1929 I also won the Eastern International dog race in Quebec Canada 123 miles, and broke their record. Those races established the superiority of the Siberian huskie. Now they have hundreds of these dogs in New England and Eastern Canada they use the Siberians for racing in those parts.

In New England and Canada they also had mixed breeds up to 75-100 pound - they felt very sorry for me with my little dogs. They changed their minds after the races, now they desire nothing but Siberians, all off-spring of my dogs. They are so pleased with the dogs they have made me Honorary Member of their many Siberian husky clubs.

What they appreciated in those races, was that I showed them that races could be won without whips.

The first mention of the Siberian dog I found in an old book in a library in Boston. It said that those dogs were used 500 years ago, by traders who hauled Mammoth and Mastodon ivory from the new Siberian Islands toward the South to be sold to the Potentates of the Middle East - to be used as ornaments for the inmates of their harems and their queens -

Lieutenant von Wrangell made his exploration of Northern Siberia in 1820 - He was completely dependent on teams of these dogs, the expedition used hundreds of them - 12 dogs to the team - von Wrangell praised them highly for their intelligence, endurance and good disposition -

The Siberian dog was also used during the planned construction of the Russo-American telegraph line to run from Europe through Siberia over Bering Straits and through Alaska to the U.S.A. in 1865. The dogs were used on the Siberian side and highly valued.

In 1867 that plan was abandoned because the Atlantic Cable had proven a success -

Samoeyede dogs are not used in Alaska or the States they are too slow - I don't know if all of this be interesting enough to you, I am enclosing some clippings that I would like you to return - I am also enclosing some pictures, some of which you can probably use I like to have them returned, unless they are marked no return -

I don't know how to type - hence long hand - being that you have to translate it anyway - you may not care, hope you can read it -

The name Siberian husky came about this way:
 When I introduced that breed in the States and
 Canada in 1927. They had to be registered in the
 American Kennel Club in New York - which is the
 authority for dogs of all breeds - and if breeds are
 genuine - if they must be recognized by that club,
 they keep care of registration and pedigrees -

So they asked me what I wanted to call
 them - I suggested (Siberian husky) and that
 is the only husky which is recognized by the American
 Kennel Club -

This breed of Siberians are found from Kamchatka
 all the way around Eastern Siberia to Anadir -
 Kolyma Rivers - west to Indigirka river: In
 Western Siberia I believe the Samoyede is pre-
 dominant -

The name husky is said to be taken from the husky tribe
 of Indians or Eskimos, who are supposed to inhabit
 the northern part of Alaska or Yukon territory -

The Canadian Police uses a dog called Mackenzie
 river husky - I saw a few in the early days in Nome
 they were of the malamute type - they were about
 70 pounds as far I remember -

About the Eskimos in 1917 we had the Influenza in Nome, and it became very alarming due to shortness of doctors at that time, it certainly raised havoc with the Eskimos - they were not used to high fever, result was they went outside to cool off - also removing their fur parkies - they became very sick and died - so many in Nome and around died that they pile ^{them} up like cord wood - due to so many sick ones among the whites, help was limited - Finally some of us with dog teams brought medicines to the out lying districts.

I went west of Nome to a small settlement of natives - most had passed away - I went in several Igloos, in one I found a nine year old girl sitting on the floor, covered with furs, it was very sad she spoke little, showed me a little infant, which she had nursed in several days and kept alive by cow milk which she held on her body, to keep warm and so feed the little sister, as I looked around her father and mother were both dead - I wrapped them both with more furs and brought them in to Nome and hospital - there were many heart breaking cases of similar nature, both the little girl and sister survived -

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Another experience during the Influenza, on the next trip with medicines I came to a Igloo out in the Seward Peninsula the door was closed when I opened it, an Eskimo was sitting there with his rifle pointing to the door I jumped back expecting the gun to be fired, but nothing happened. I went back the second time stood still and discovered the Eskimo was dead and frozen solid. I have often wonder if he felt himself dying, and took the gun for protection from the couple of dogs he had lying around his Igloo.

I know a lot of Eskimos when I lived in Alaska and sometimes stopped in their Igloos, I had some working for me, most say they were fine people and in most cases fine characters, got spoiled when they came in contact with the white men, - Some stayed good, others got the greed and vices and diseases of white men.

I am inclosing some clippings and pictures some of which I hope you can use, in my book you will find some of my early experience which are already translated into Norwegian. I am now retired and do not go to Alaska any more. - The articles and pictures I want you to return by ordinary mail.

I belong to the Pioneers of Alaska - other organizations such as - Sons of Norway - Nord - Mannforbundet - Norwegian Commercial club. I am honorary member of several dog clubs in the East - our racing sleds weighed about 30 pounds. I always carried a 3 foot long riding whip in case I had to stop a fight among the dogs or in meeting another team.

Most drivers use long 12-15 feet long Bull whips - I have always advocated if a dog is not willing to work leave him home, but don't abuse him.

Leonard Seppala