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Israel Jorgensen and Anne Dorthea Henriksen were born in Medkile, Trondenes, Troms, Norway. Israel, born 19 Oct 1829, the son of Jorgen Tollefsen and Ellen Marie Hansen, was one of seven children. He had five brothers and one sister. His twin brother Lucas died at four years of age. Anne Dorthea, born 29 June 1845, the daughter of Henrik Olsen and Nicoline Andersen, had two brothers and one sister, however one brother died when he was a few weeks old. Nicoline was born on Vikna, an island far south of the Trondenes area.

Israel and Anne Dorthea were members of the Lutheran Church and were married 23 Oct 1863, and then moved twenty miles south of Kasfjord. They owned a home in Kasfjord and a barn across the street; the top half was used for hay and the bottom half served as a stable for cows, sheep and goats. One piece of their land ran from the barn down to the road or about one block. They had another piece, where they had a summer stable, for cows to graze, and also some land where hay was gathered for the stock. They raised potatoes, barley and hay.

Israel was a fisherman, as most of the men were. He was considered well-off because he also owned land. Usually two or more boats would sink their large nets and if fish were running good, the nets would be so full it would fill the boats. Sometimes a small whale would get into the net and, if this happened, the whale would tear it letting all the fish swim out. Then the nets had to be taken ashore and mended. The boats used were sail or row boats. Some of the fish were salted and some were hung to dry on large pole fences. Israel was, later on, made Sea Captain of the fishing boats.

Anne Dorthea, a very pretty girl, also worked hard in Norway. Israel was away so much fishing, she had to care of things at home. It was usually the woman's job to care for the animals, feeding, and hoeing the potatoes. There was enough room under their home so they could open a wide door and drive right in with the sleigh or wagon. Their cattle were also kept under the home with the hay and other produce. Anne had a side saddle and sometimes rode a horse.

In the winter Israel would go up into the mountains back of Kasfjord and get wood to burn. His daughter, Mary Jorgensen, remembered taking his lunch up into the hills to him and also her older brother, Tellef, taking her up on the slopes, putting on skis and, with her on behind him, skiing down from the hills to the ocean. Since they lived in the land of the midnight sun, the sun would never set in the summer and during the winter months they had 128 days of darkness. In the long evenings the young people would get together and go sleigh riding or skating. The fresh water, just below the school house, would freeze over with good thick ice and old and young alike would skate. The boys would trim the thin layer of birch bark from the trees and light it. It would light up very pretty and burn a long time. There was no community dancing allowed since it was considered a sin, but the young people would go down to someone's home where there was a big room and dance. There would often be an accordian or mouth organ for music and always good things to eat. The Christmas celebration in Norway lasted at least a week. A beautiful cloth covered the table and was kept decorated and set with pretty dishes and ornaments, and goodies were served to each guest who came to visit.

During the year 1883, Tellef J. Israelsen, while traveling in that country as a missionary, brought the L.D.S. Gospel message to Israel's home, where they later held many of their meetings. Israel and Anne began to study and investigate the Church and later became converted to it's truths, however they were not able to join at that time because there were no Elders in that locality. Years later their son, Nicolai, returned to Kasfjord, Norway as a missionary for the Church and converted the family of Andrew M. Nielsen whose daughter, Nannie, was to become the wife of Nicolai's brother John. Many people were coming to America as converts to the Church and also because they realized it was a very prosperous country. Anne wanted to get her boys away from having to go on fishing trips and worried of their being lost at sea. Sometimes the men would be gone a month at a time and it was a constant worry which boats would get back safely.

Israel sold all of his belongings in the year 1885, took his wife and seven children and sailed for America. Anne loved sightseeing, but was sea sick the entire trip. They had left Kasfjord on the 22nd day of May with their children: Tellef Jorgen-20 years old, Hans Nikolai-16, Eilert Martin-14, Johanna Elisabeth-11, Maren Dorthea-8, Nicolai-6 and Inga Amalia-2. John Wilford was born 2 years after they arrived in America. It was a great undertaking to leave their native land in Norway and come to a new land where the language and customs were so different and new to them.

Their daughter Mary had to quit school while in the fourth grade and do housework in other homes to earn her board and keep. Inga, another daughter, quit school in the fifth grade because she had to wrap her shoes and feet in rags, consequently the other children laughed at her. Israel was very fond of children and would stop and talk to them. Even though he didn't know the language he could make them understand.

When they arrived in Omaha, Nebraska, the children saw and tasted apples and oranges for the first time in their lives. They arrived in Ogden on the 4th of July 1885. Brother Anthon L. Skanchy met the train and took them to a real Norwegian dinner and from there they went to Logan where they had dinner with Hans and Rachel Petersen who gave them a real warm welcome. Then the Tellef J. Israelsen family came to Logan, the same evening, and brought the Jorgensen family to their home in Hyrum where they stayed that night. That was the first time they had seen a pie. They moved into the Edison home where they lived a short time and later moved to a dugout and shack that stood where Lars Peter Christiansen's home stands on 210 South Center Street.

Several months later they bought a house from Hyrum City (308 South Center) and began to remodel and lay brick on the outside. While Israel was building this house, where they would live for the rest of their lives, five of their children became sick with Typhoid Fever, a rather common cause of death at that time. The eldest son, Tellef, died in 7 days at age 20 from this dreaded disease. Anne was unhappy when she realized she was to have another child when she was 43 years old and Israel was 59, however, another son, John Wilford was born who brought joy into their home. Later on a very sad accident occurred when their son, Eilert at age 24, was brought home dead, having been crushed to death by the caving in of a gravel bank.

Anne was baptized in 1886 and was the only one in her father's family who joined the Church. After coming to America she grieved because she didn't know where her mother came from and therefore couldn't do the temple work for her people. With modern microfilming, the records were later found and all ordinances were done. They were great readers of the Bible, especially Anne. She would read the Norwegian Bible aloud in the evenings and some of the children would sneak out to play while she was reading.

Israel was baptized later in 1889. It was in the winter time so they had to break the ice for him to be baptized. Israel, according to his son John's history, was a small, wiry man, about 150 pounds, 5 feet 10 inches in height, with blue eyes and brown hair. He was a hard worker, always busy and liked to build. He was not a public man, but the language could have had something to do with this since he and Anne did not master the English language very well. Israel was a good, honest man and attended church and paid tithing by bringing a load of hay to the tithing office since that was the way they paid tithing in those days. According to their Family Group Record it appears that about 3 months after Israel's death Anne did their endowment and sealing work in the Logan Temple--she passed away about 3 years after Israel.

Israel also did his share in building the First Ward meeting house when he was about 70 years old. He mixed mortar-mud and did the other things such as mixing cement and laying bricks. He was a small farmer. He owned five acres of very good land north of town, eleven acres where the Hyrum Dam was built and four acres below the Dam. He built a barn, a very good one, where he had a team of horses, a few cows, pigs and chickens. Anne had a little brooder house and kept hens and raised pullets.

Israel had taken up land in Pocatello Valley, Idaho but it was discovered he had filed on the wrong piece of land. His daughters, Mary and Inga, were then over twenty years old and eligible to homestead. In order to save the land Inga, along with her brother John, went to Blackfoot, Idaho to the land office. Then Mary and Inga went out to the farm to homestead it. Israel worked very hard at whatever jobs he could get; such as spring cleaning of the town's water ditches, haying and threshing of grain. He was paid one bushel of wheat a day or about seventy-five cents. He also worked in the canyon getting logs out for building and firewood. This work was very hard and John tells the story of how one time he was so cold coming home he couldn't even talk and had to be lifted off the wagon. Another time, he went for mahogany up Big Hollow in Blacksmith Fork Canyon and a large bear was in the road. The horses were very nervous and since he didn't have a gun all he could do was shout to frighten the bear away. This went on for some time and finally when he got home he was so hoarse he could hardly talk.

Also, according to John, he bought an old horse which had been a racer and he didn't know it. He got on to ride from the field where another man knew the horse and he asked Israel if he wanted to have a race and Israel answered "sure" His horse took off and Israel got the fastest ride of his life. He was so sore afterwards he could hardly walk, but he stayed with the horse.

Israel had good health most of his life and was active until he got blood poisoning in his leg when he was 84 years old. He had been wearing heavy boots with broken, rough eyelets that cut into his leg and had walked a mile and a half to the North field. He was very sick for a couple of months that fall, therefore his daughter Inga moved in to help nurse him. John left his farm and went home to help with his father's care. He later explained, in horrifying detail to his children, how he tried to take care of the terrible infection. In spite of much nursing and loving care from the family this poisoning took Israel's life.

Anne kept a nice orderly home and always had a full cookie jar. Nannie, John's wife, commented what a dear she was to help them all she could when she and John were first married and had moved into the front part of their home where, incidently, John & Nannie lived the rest of their lives. "Oh, how me and Grandma Jorgensen shined our stoves! The black had to be very shiny and black and the chrome just as shiny, also the tea kettle which was always on the stove and kept very bright." Anne was gently, very refined, neat in appearance and neither she nor Israel had many gray hairs. She loved pretty dishes and had lovely Bavarian china. Some of the pieces are now treasured by her granddaughters. The family also remembers how she especially loved to have birthday parties and must have been good at sewing since she made beautiful buttonholes for the public. She was often sick with severe headaches. Her daughter, Mary, told about her tying a cloth or ribbon very tight around her head to ease the pain. Some time the doctor was called and the Elders were sent for to administer to her and such was her faith she would fall into a good, restful sleep and soon was up and around again. During her last illness (the result of a broken hip) her daughter Mary came from Salt Lake to help nurse her, but as with Israel and in spite of much loving care she also left them at the age of seventy.

Note: Much of these accounts of Israel and Anne were taken from the histories written by John and Nannie Jorgensen in 1966.



FAMILY REUNION OF ISRAEL JORGENSEN FAMILY ON
ANNIVERSARY OF ISRAEL'S 100th BIRTHDAY