

## Alma Satersmoen Oral Interview 1975?

Mrs. Satersmoen: ... animals, jumping, dancing, caterpillars.

Interviewer: And you were born in [inaudible 00:00:00] Rapids area-

Mrs. Satersmoen: Yes.

Interviewer: ... in the middle '80s. Where were you born?

Mrs. Satersmoen: Home and [inaudible 00:00:19] on a farm and [inaudible 00:00:19].

Interviewer: [inaudible 00:00:19]

Mrs. Satersmoen: My parents, sister and I are living there.

Interviewer: Your parents both came from Sweden?

Mrs. Satersmoen: My parents both came from Sweden, from different parts of Sweden.

Interviewer: Your father came over first?

Mrs. Satersmoen: My father came first, then my mother came in the early '80s. They met here and were married here.

Interviewer: You remember how they met?

Mrs. Satersmoen: They met in church.

Interviewer: Tell me about your mother's coming. She came to [inaudible 00:01:00].

Mrs. Satersmoen: She came to [inaudible 00:01:00] the second day, on the third it changed, came out from [inaudible 00:01:09] and she expected her brother, [Granston 00:01:12], to meet her.

Interviewer: This would be 1883 [inaudible 00:01:17]?

Mrs. Satersmoen: Yeah. And he sent another man, a bachelor, and he was very bashful. He took her all the way back to her brother's place, left his own place. He never talked to her and she cried and she cried. She didn't know [inaudible 00:01:36] her. It was getting dark when they reached [inaudible 00:01:45] came, and after setting up with [inaudible 00:01:48]. It was, I think, early part of the summer, I'm not too sure.

After a while he had invited his friends to come for a dance. Her brother came and [inaudible 00:02:01] went back to [inaudible 00:02:01].

Interviewer: She was surprised when they came. She didn't know until they got there-

Mrs. Satersmoen: No.

Interviewer: ... that it was a dance for her.

Mrs. Satersmoen: Just [inaudible 00:02:11].

Interviewer: What was her reaction to [inaudible 00:02:16] after being in Sweden? How was it different from her home?

Mrs. Satersmoen: Well, of course it's just everything was so new here. The town was the new and everything, where she came from, which was a seaport and the big ships came in and she said and you could have dances onboard. Had a lot of [inaudible 00:02:41]. She got here and then there's nothing here at first. No, she was depressed. She said when she got enough money she was going to go back home, but she never did. Of course, she married.

Interviewer: And your father came in '72. Now, what brought him in? [inaudible 00:03:03]

Mrs. Satersmoen: Well, I told him, so many coming to America as [inaudible 00:03:12] have both, you know?

Interviewer: Your mother worked for people here [crosstalk 00:03:22]-

Mrs. Satersmoen: Yeah, she worked here. I think for what they called a [Bogda 00:03:27] hotel at the time.

Interviewer: She spoke no English?

Mrs. Satersmoen: She spoke no English and there were two words that she couldn't quite understand.

Interviewer: And they made sign language to her to tell her that they wanted [crosstalk 00:03:47]-

Mrs. Satersmoen: Yeah, the arm, would go this way and-

Interviewer: Arm back and forth. That meant nothing to her. How about the stories that your family tells before your time, like the Indians [inaudible 00:04:03] memory of the Indians around here [inaudible 00:04:08].

Mrs. Satersmoen: Well, my father used to tell about in [inaudible 00:04:15] there was this Indian camp.

Interviewer: That's where the last collection was?

Mrs. Satersmoen: Yes, Uh-huh (affirmative). He used to tell us about this French grave on top of the island there, it was lined with birch bark and how we used to hunt for it. Because we grew up [inaudible 00:04:38].

Interviewer: What stories did he tell about the [inaudible 00:04:45]?

Mrs. Satersmoen: Well, he didn't tell much, otherwise only about the camp out there and how the little Indian children used one of the [inaudible 00:04:58]. There was a time when he had a place across [inaudible 00:05:01] and all he had done was leather, had skinned outfits with nothing under it. The jackets, whatever you call them, would flap up and just bare skin.

Interviewer: He had an Indian working for him?

Mrs. Satersmoen: He had an Indian, because I don't know anything about that. That's before my time. I don't know when he had the redskin, but ...

Interviewer: How [inaudible 00:05:35] Indian change the most?

Mrs. Satersmoen: Oh, that was [inaudible 00:05:35] and the mother was there with her brother. An Indian came one day and he was very [inaudible 00:05:42], came in and crawled back to the cookstove and they lay there and Granston gave him a drink of some kind and [inaudible 00:05:55] slept there a long time. Finally got up and left and the next he brought him a deer.

Interviewer: [inaudible 00:06:06]. There were Indians here when you [inaudible 00:06:12]. How about animals, stuff like bears?

Mrs. Satersmoen: Well, because then it was originally ... Still have bear and anything like that.

Interviewer: Your father told [inaudible 00:06:23].

Mrs. Satersmoen: My father told them, but I can remember the wolves howling in the evening, or at night, especially in the Fall, so I think there were a lot of wolves around.

Interviewer: How about the bear that came to [inaudible 00:06:37]?

Mrs. Satersmoen: Well, it was just that one bear that I can remember my dad telling about the [inaudible 00:06:46] on the house there.

Interviewer: And they had to shoot it [inaudible 00:06:52]?

Mrs. Satersmoen: I suppose, but ...

Interviewer: How about the fellow who was chased by a bear?

Mrs. Satersmoen: Was what?

Interviewer: Chased by a bear?

Mrs. Satersmoen: Oh, [inaudible 00:07:03]. Well, I don't know too much about that. I wasn't there. I remember it when dad tell me about it, it chased him around the tree, kept chasing him. I don't know how he got away from him, but evidently did.

Interviewer: Well, they influenced your father when he saw a bear.

The people in town seem to be isolated from other parts of town. Is this [inaudible 00:07:29] country people? [inaudible 00:07:31]

Mrs. Satersmoen: Well, as far as [inaudible 00:07:38] go, I think the [inaudible 00:07:39] friendly back and forth.

Interviewer: Did they get together for parties or informals?

Mrs. Satersmoen: Well, I don't know. Well, yes. I suppose so. But as far as I remember way back, the church was their biggest interest it seemed.

Interviewer: Did you have the young people community at the home or at the church?

Mrs. Satersmoen: Well, mostly at the church, I think. I don't remember too much about it, but some of the [inaudible 00:08:08].

Interviewer: Married Dr. Satersmoen in 1915. He'd come to town ... He'd come to Pelican [Plain 00:08:16].

Mrs. Satersmoen: 1912 he came to work with Dr. [Barnet 00:08:21] in the country. And then Dr. Barnet was [inaudible 00:08:30] for doctor [inaudible 00:08:30] who he was fascinated with. Then he [inaudible 00:08:38] taking over in his hospital in [Dinfus 00:08:39], it was 1914.

Interviewer: One year before you were married. Describe the hospital. The beds were on the top floor.

Mrs. Satersmoen: [inaudible 00:08:59] Well, we had eight, a room for eight [inaudible 00:09:05], of course, but there was room for eight. They had an operating room, and the nurse had a room, and the elevator, of course, from South Paris. That is [inaudible 00:09:06] and a dumbwaiter that could ... Yeah. Otherwise, just the [inaudible 00:09:06] wheel part they had to bring [inaudible 00:09:06].

Interviewer: And then on the main floor was the office?

Mrs. Satersmoen: Office and living room. We had the-

Interviewer: Living closet.

Mrs. Satersmoen: ... living closet. We had downstairs a [inaudible 00:09:16] a kitchen, dining room and all the things, all the rooms, furniture room and everything down there.

Interviewer: What did they burn?

Mrs. Satersmoen: Well, at first they burned the wood and then-

Interviewer: Who took care of that, kept the furnace going?

Mrs. Satersmoen: Well it's just automatic. Well, when they burned wood, of course, then of course they had ... I think back, did most of that. And then we have a filter for many, many years, there were only coals. Then, of course, we were a long time with that oil, of course.

Interviewer: That's so handy, okay. What did you do in the hospital after you'd married Dr. Satersmoen, what were your roles here?

Mrs. Satersmoen: Well, I don't know, just [inaudible 00:10:49].

Interviewer: That list, okay.

Mrs. Satersmoen: Downstairs I helped and I did all the mangling because we had someone do the washing for us, I did all the mangling-

Interviewer: They did the washing here?

Mrs. Satersmoen: Yes, part of the time and, rather, the last few years we had the laundry over in Dr. [Sammer's 00:11:14] office next door, in the basement. I was office girl with Dr. [Resault 00:11:23]. When he was out I used to work upstairs and [inaudible 00:11:31] town selected me [inaudible 00:11:37] train me so I could get ether and tried to raise two kids.

Interviewer: Did you help him set bones?

Mrs. Satersmoen: No, I don't think so. He used to have Dr. [Brinoff 00:11:54] come up [inaudible 00:11:55] and all. Dr. [Sherpin 00:11:56] way back, he was [inaudible 00:11:59].

Interviewer: What surgery did he do the most? You didn't have gall bladder operations in those days.

Mrs. Satersmoen: I couldn't you. A doctor really did quite a bit of surgery, so I forget.

Interviewer: Appendectomies?

Mrs. Satersmoen: Oh, yeah.

Interviewer: And tonsillectomies.

Mrs. Satersmoen: [inaudible 00:12:19] all, really. Yeah, he did quite a bit of surgery.

Interviewer: You had a telephone, so you heard about people who needed a doctor?

Mrs. Satersmoen: Yes. We often used to wonder why, when they were ill all day, they'd call him at 12:00 at night, so [inaudible 00:12:46] all night. And the, so very often, when he was [inaudible 00:12:50] he'd wake up at [inaudible 00:12:53] around [inaudible 00:12:55] Lake and the neighbors would hear he was in neighbor and then badger him along the way.

Of course, he lost [inaudible 00:13:06] storms on the lake because [inaudible 00:13:11], he said all kinds of tides running every direction and he couldn't see, so he'd drive around, spend hours driving around the lake. One time he had a [inaudible 00:13:24] with him then, had a [inaudible 00:13:27] and the horses went through the lake, through the ice.

Interviewer: How did he get the out?

Mrs. Satersmoen: Well, they got them out. Their heads were still above water, so it wasn't too [inaudible 00:13:37]. There were all kinds of things happening.

Interviewer: He traveled by horse and sleigh or horse and buggy?

Mrs. Satersmoen: Well, he did a first, of course, and then after they got the road improved so that he could follow the road, then he would sometimes have to ... Well, most of the doctors. We had Dr. Boyd and [inaudible 00:14:01], they'd have to leave their cars and then walk. Or, if they'd meet him, on the farm holds, sometimes you're way off from the highway too.

Interviewer: What happened in the hospital when you had an epidemic, do you remember, in 1919?

Mrs. Satersmoen: Well, I remember the flu epidemic.

Interviewer: You had all eight beds full.

Mrs. Satersmoen: Mm-hmm (affirmative). [inaudible 00:14:26] I stayed home at that time, when they had that epidemic.

Interviewer: That was really bad.

Mrs. Satersmoen: Yeah, it was. So many died.

Interviewer: But [inaudible 00:14:45].

Mrs. Satersmoen: Yeah. It seemed that [inaudible 00:14:46] women, very few recovered. I don't know what there is about us, but ... Yeah, that was really a hard year, or hard to whether, especially so much sickness.

Interviewer: Were there scarlet fever epidemics or typhoid? [inaudible 00:15:13]?

Mrs. Satersmoen: Mm-hmm (affirmative). There was an epidemic, but that's way, way back when I was so small because I remember. I think it was that diphtheria.

Interviewer: Did you have it?

Mrs. Satersmoen: No.

Interviewer: Did your family?

Mrs. Satersmoen: Not in the immediate family that I can remember. Family [inaudible 00:15:34] town had it. I think there were three or four children that died.

Interviewer: Were you terrified when you became ill when you were a child? Now we'll be cured of illnesses and [inaudible 00:15:54], but when you were a child were you upset by [crosstalk 00:15:58]?

Mrs. Satersmoen: I can't recall that I was.

Interviewer: Oh, I was. I thought maybe it went back.

Sulpha became very popular medicine in the '30s, and then penicillin after that. These were two cure-alls. What were the medications you used earlier? Do you remember was there anything people just used [crosstalk 00:16:09]-

Mrs. Satersmoen: [crosstalk 00:16:09] actually remember is we used a lot of liniment. I remember that. And then there was that cure-all called [Curus Cursal 00:16:09] and liniment had things like oils, or something like that, [inaudible 00:16:36] oils and it was powerful.

Interviewer: Was arthritis called rheumatism in those days?

Mrs. Satersmoen: I think so.

Interviewer: How about preventive medicine? Were there vaccinations?

Mrs. Satersmoen: Mm-hmm (affirmative). Yeah, we were all vaccinated.

Interviewer: Tell me about that.

Mrs. Satersmoen: Well, we came to the home and they had the neighborhood children come so they

were next and did them in groups.

Interviewer: This is for small pox?

Mrs. Satersmoen: Small pox.

Interviewer: Did they use other preventive medicine like cod liver oil or spring tonic?

Mrs. Satersmoen: I don't remember.

Interviewer: How about regular physicals? Are they quite recent or did people [crosstalk 00:17:24]-

Mrs. Satersmoen: I'd say so, mm-hmm (affirmative).

Interviewer: The only came when they were sick.

What was sold in the doctor's medicines shows, the bottles of cure-all if they had them? That cured all.

Mrs. Satersmoen: Medical shows in town that sell drugs of all kinds. I don't know exactly what they were, but ...

Interviewer: I'd like to get a doctor's picture of those. He put on a show that was a medical doctor was on the show and to get people to come, did he do-

Mrs. Satersmoen: Well, they had some ads, if I remember, because as I recall, they were some kind of more like [inaudible 00:18:18] or something [inaudible 00:18:21].

Interviewer: Okay. I would like to ask the doctor if these people came and tried to tell him, somebody that's bought a bottle of this marvel, to come and tell the doctor about it. Back to the hospital, who helped you here at the hospital? You had a cook.

Mrs. Satersmoen: We had a cook and we had a [inaudible 00:18:39]. We're lucky, we had girls that stayed a long time.

Interviewer: This [inaudible 00:18:56] was [inaudible 00:18:56] for you?

Mrs. Satersmoen: [inaudible 00:18:56]

Interviewer: Then you had somebody do the laundry?

Mrs. Satersmoen: Yes.

Interviewer: And to help?

Mrs. Satersmoen: Yes.



Interviewer: You did have one nurse helping you at a time?

Mrs. Satersmoen: No, we had to call in extra help.

Interviewer: Were there shifts of nurses like there are in the hospitals?

Mrs. Satersmoen: No, [inaudible 00:19:16] just in the ... Who was that? Otherwise, [inaudible 00:19:26].

Interviewer: This building, the hospital is two stories, and it's about a third at water level for the first [inaudible 00:19:36] [crosstalk 00:19:36]-

Mrs. Satersmoen: No, it's a little above water level, of course-

Interviewer: But it was one story below where it is now. They put fill in for the bridge.

Mrs. Satersmoen: Well, most of the street is a fill from the bank. And I don't know, all these buildings way up to the cross street are two stories, or have a river level, all the way up the street. So, I [inaudible 00:20:07] the whole street pretty much a field.

Interviewer: Then you used just used the second story for the main floor when the streets-

Mrs. Satersmoen: Yeah. That's [inaudible 00:20:22]. I also wondered why, but I think then it comes with the waterfalls over there, see, they had the flour mill and all that. So, I think that's why they're low [inaudible 00:20:24] in the town there.

Interviewer: Because [Hogan's 00:20:24] been built on a river with the waterfall here and the woods and the [inaudible 00:20:25], you know this place is covered with Indians. They were gone. Your story is one of the few I've heard about the early [inaudible 00:20:53], but they just cleared out. For malaise or?

Mrs. Satersmoen: Well, I don't remember any Indians living here. I can remember Indians would every summer come from Dakota and come visit the area and go ... I think the [inaudible 00:21:07] up there in [inaudible 00:21:10] Lake.

Interviewer: Right. But the Indians were pushed out of here-

Mrs. Satersmoen: Oh, they must have been, like they were everywhere else.

Interviewer: I wonder how that [inaudible 00:21:24]. That's not in the book, but how they negotiated with the Indians to get them out of here.

Mrs. Satersmoen: I don't know. [inaudible 00:21:31]

Interviewer: Only the Indians know that story themselves.

Mrs. Satersmoen: I don't know. I think we wore our hair just about they do now, long, wavy. And then it was then just the braids, the hair, and then bring it back here, so it wouldn't hang in our faces, but ...

Interviewer: That rule has changed. They like it in our faces now.

Mrs. Satersmoen: Yeah.

Interviewer: How about clothes. Did you wear long dresses and [inaudible 00:22:02]?

Mrs. Satersmoen: No longer than we wear them now, but I think below the knee.

Interviewer: Okay.

Mrs. Satersmoen: I can't remember too much. And long stockings.

Interviewer: Did you go through the tightly corseted stage?

Mrs. Satersmoen: Oh, yes. Had to have that.

Interviewer: That must have been really different?

Mrs. Satersmoen: I think stringent [inaudible 00:22:27].

Interviewer: What was it like when the corsets went out, when the [inaudible 00:22:31] went out and then the 1920s style came on before the shift, with a belt around the hips with no corset? What was that like?

Mrs. Satersmoen: I don't know, I [inaudible 00:22:45] much about it. We just took it for granted, I guess.

Interviewer: I thought it would be world [crosstalk 00:22:53]-

Tell me, in 1933 there's a [inaudible 00:22:58].

Mrs. Satersmoen: It was a rainbow in the highway to [Bukart 00:22:59] Lake and then up by [Prenon 00:23:01] Lake shore, had a shore there. I can remember well because Mr. Descartes was living at the time and then he was very into the [inaudible 00:23:14] about it. I was usually out there and watched him all the time. I think he found all but one foot. I supposed it was broken off or cut off when they were building the roads.

Interviewer: How soon were you aware of how important it was?

Mrs. Satersmoen: Well, I remember we were all very interested in it, but I don't remember just what I thought about it. I would like to see it. I read once that they thought that we had a museum and [inaudible 00:23:59] threw that in.

Interviewer: But they have a display up there going now. It's not the bones, but it's the [inaudible 00:24:06].

Mrs. Satersmoen: I think, does it have any in Saint Paul, though?

Interviewer: I saw it in Saint Paul some time ago, but then it seemed like they've moved it to [inaudible 00:24:13].

Tell me your reaction to World War I when it broke out. Did you know it was coming?

Mrs. Satersmoen: I know that they called that and all, but I remember that many of our friends were called and many, of course, never did return. My husband had his [inaudible 00:24:42] called, but then the war ended so he never got to go.

Interviewer: Would people have disagreed with that more [inaudible 00:24:51]?

Mrs. Satersmoen: No, I don't remember. [inaudible 00:24:55].

Interviewer: In World War II, my war, I guess I do remember one family now used to come ... How about World War II, would that ... Now, since we've had this war where so many people disagreed with, was the fact that there were wars and everybody was for it is interesting to hear about. You remember about World War II? Did you [inaudible 00:25:21]?

Mrs. Satersmoen: No, I can't remember. Actually, [inaudible 00:25:27] glad they had another war in another country.

Interviewer: World War II.

Mrs. Satersmoen: One man told me one time, "The [inaudible 00:25:37] Second World War in Europe, they [inaudible 00:25:43] had a trench and that's too far away," I don't know how far, but Germans [inaudible 00:25:50] have that trench and during the time they were not fighting, the guys [inaudible 00:26:00] with each other and go back and forth and visit. Then they had orders, finally, to shoot each other.

Interviewer: [inaudible 00:26:10]

Mrs. Satersmoen: Yeah, [inaudible 00:26:14].

Interviewer: Mail must have been important to most of the [inaudible 00:26:17].

Mrs. Satersmoen: Well, as far as ... I don't remember when they started doing delivery. I don't remember that. But that's a long time ago.

Interviewer: What magazines, when you were a child, came to the house?

Mrs. Satersmoen: I can't remember just the magazines. I can remember missing [inaudible 00:26:39]. My mother had The Story Magazine that we used to get. I can remember that. And we had a newspaper. I remember when they delivered. I don't remember the name of it. I think it was [inaudible 00:26:57] paper [inaudible 00:26:59].

Interviewer: The Fergus Newspaper or [crosstalk 00:27:03]-

Mrs. Satersmoen: [crosstalk 00:27:03] had the Fergus paper and we always had a lot of books to read.

Interviewer: Where did you get the books? There was no library.

Mrs. Satersmoen: No. I don't remember how we got them. I think we got a lot of them through church, if I remember. I'm not too sure.

Interviewer: [inaudible 00:27:23]

Tell me about the Civil War veteran [inaudible 00:27:31].

Mrs. Satersmoen: Had a home of well, kind of across the street in [inaudible 00:27:41] church where Matt is now. He was a Civil War veteran and he died here in our hospital and he had a picture frame that had his parents' picture in them.

Interviewer: Did he march in the Memorial Day Parade? Did you have Memorial Day Parades back after World War I.

Mrs. Satersmoen: Well, we did way, way back, but I can't remember. I used to [inaudible 00:28:20].

Interviewer: His uniform [inaudible 00:28:20].

Mrs. Satersmoen: I suppose [inaudible 00:28:27].

Interviewer: Tell me about when the doctor went out to help deliver babies.

Mrs. Satersmoen: Well, once [inaudible 00:28:34], the men had made a simple bed this way, but it just tread on the floor, so my husband had to kneel on his chest, knee to delivery the baby.

Interviewer: He spent lots of nights out in the country out there [inaudible 00:28:58] his people.

Tell me about your reaction to the [inaudible 00:29:09].

Mrs. Satersmoen: Well, it just seems like the bottom fell out of everything and that there was no money and no [inaudible 00:29:17] has the whole day off and he'd come back and say, "What am I going to pay? I have nothing," so we use to get some meats and we'd get some vegetables. Spend a lot of time. We could have had [inaudible 00:29:37] like that, but we still didn't get it. Difference in paying [inaudible

00:29:43] got a little bit better.

Interviewer: How about the '30s. It took a long time to come out of that.

Mrs. Satersmoen: Yeah, it did. It was several gray years.

Interviewer: And all the countries in the world are shapen from there. Hitler got his start because Germany was still in such a disaster after. [inaudible 00:30:08] all the things changed in your lifetime. Pollution is something that you didn't know about.

Mrs. Satersmoen: No, never thought of such a thing. We had that thought that there might be a [inaudible 00:30:25] wood.

Interviewer: Anything that [inaudible 00:30:27]?

Mrs. Satersmoen: No. Well, nobody else ever gave it a thought because [inaudible 00:30:48] thing.

Interviewer: That the earth had limits?

Mrs. Satersmoen: No. All that's [inaudible 00:30:48].

Interviewer: We thought it was ours for the taking.

Mrs. Satersmoen: That's what I'm saying, we never gave it a thought.

Interviewer: How about the change in morals? Or what's important? We used to think that what people thought rule us. Has that changed, that we still care as much about [inaudible 00:31:10]?

Mrs. Satersmoen: I don't think so.

Interviewer: Do some people still?

Mrs. Satersmoen: I suppose there are people that do. There's a whole ... I don't think they feel necessary, quite the way that we feel about it.

Interviewer: What criteria did they use?

Mrs. Satersmoen: I don't know. Just [inaudible 00:31:34]. (silence)