Slektforskningklubb
Fjelldalen Lodge #6-162
Highlands Ranch – Fjelldalen.com

SONS of NORWAY

Fjellheim Slektforskning Presentation
11 November 2026





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Fjellheim Slektforskning Presentation



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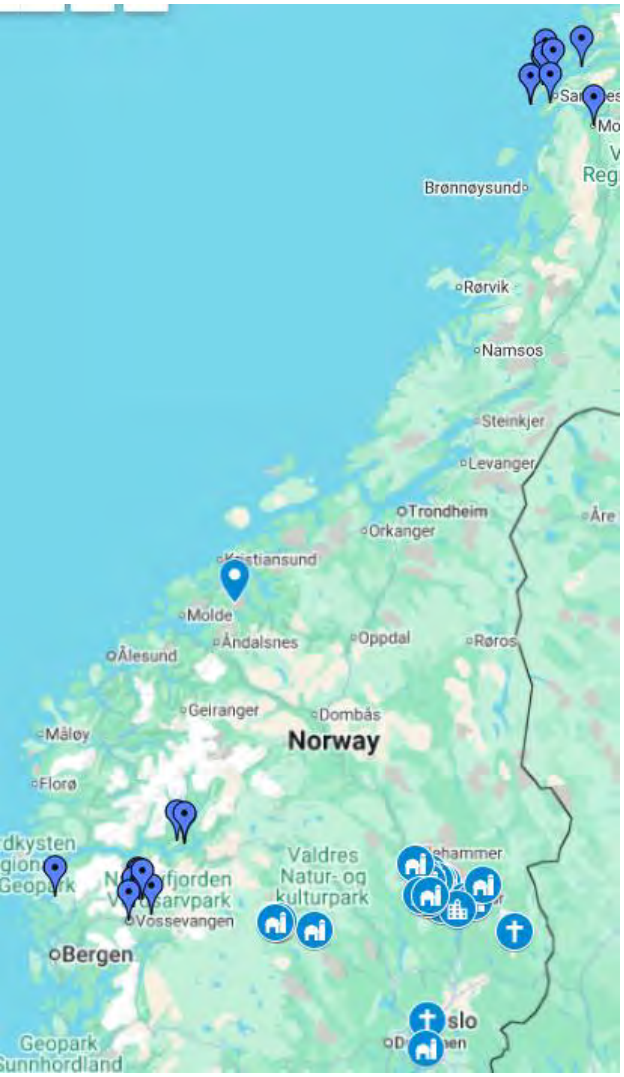

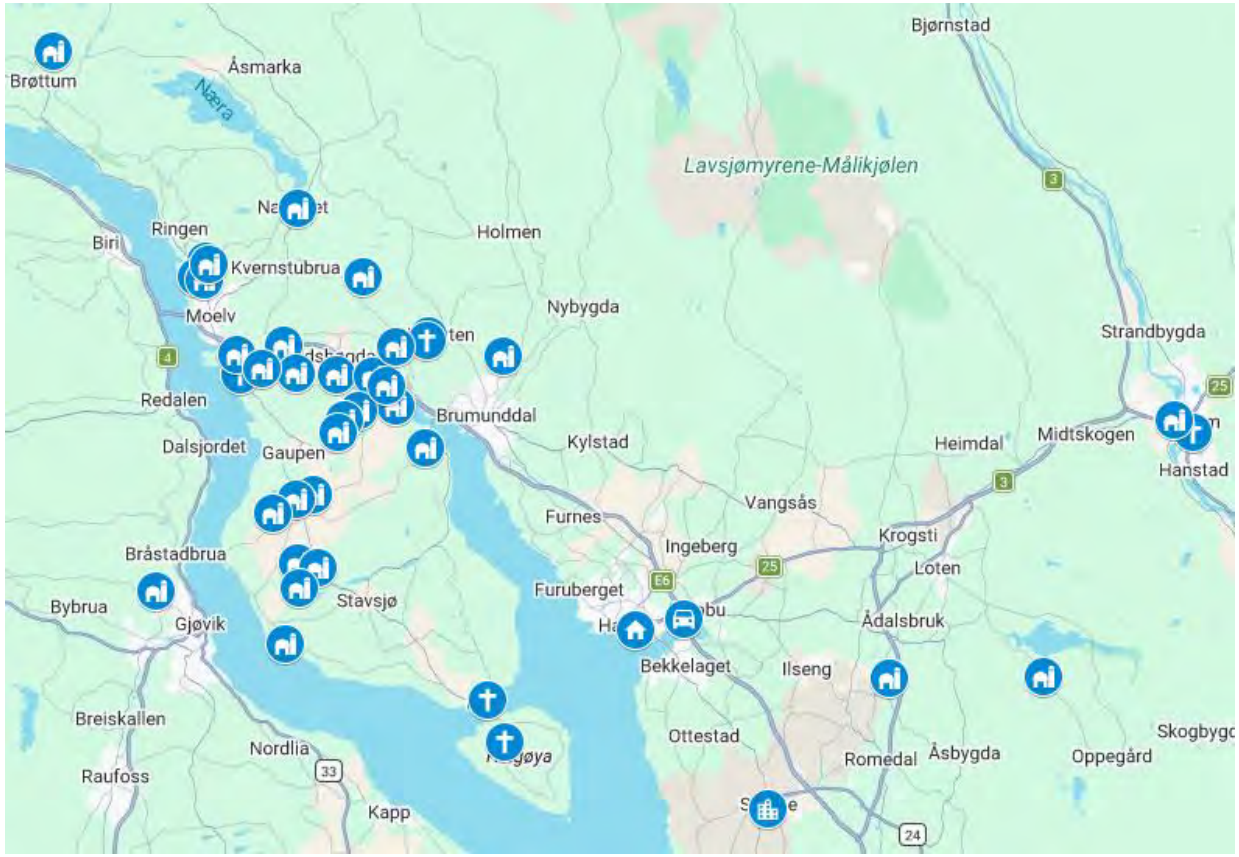

Fjellheim Slektforskning Presentation

- Housekeeping:
  - This is an overview of how to be successful at tracing the correct ancestor to Norway
  - This is designed to take about 40 minutes
  - Ask questions at any time – I may defer answering if the is coming later or the answer is too complex
  - Actual detailed presentations on each step are available at
    - https://www.fjelldalen.com/zoom-videos-of-previous-classes

Fjellheim Slektforskning Presentation

Why Is It So Hard to Find Our Norwegian Ancestors?

- **Tracing your family to Norway can be a challenge—even when you know your ancestor's name!**
- **Four common obstacles**
  - **Patronymic Naming**
  - **Farm Names as Surnames**
  - **Spelling Variations**
  - **Many Norwegians saw the U.S. focus on names as an opportunity to change theirs**
- **The key lesson:** One person may appear under several different names in historical records.

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How do we overcome these challenges?

- Start with what you know from American records.
- Compare multiple records and follow family relationships across generations.
- Identify your ancestor's Norwegian birthplace, parish, or municipality whenever possible.

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How do we overcome these challenges?

- Start with what you know from American records.
  - **Work the U.S. Censuses backward**
    - 1950, 1940, 1930, 1920, 1910, **1900, 1880**
  - **If a farmer, find the homestead record**
  - **Find the Naturalization record**
  - **Find the Passenger and Immigration Records**

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- Censuses
  - By tracking your ancestors back, you establish both the names and a family.
  - Using the family members and the census information, you can verify it's your relative and then move back to the previous one.
  - Various censuses asked questions such as:
    - how long in the U.S.
    - Where were your parents born

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- Censuses
  - 1950 – State or country of birth
  - 1940 – Birthplace and parent's birthplace
  - 1930 – Birthplace and parent's birthplace
  - 1920 and before
    - Birthplace and parent's birthplace
    - Year of immigration, naturalization status, and year of naturalization
  - 1880 – Birthplace and parent's birthplace
  - **Don't forget many states also completed censuses!!!**

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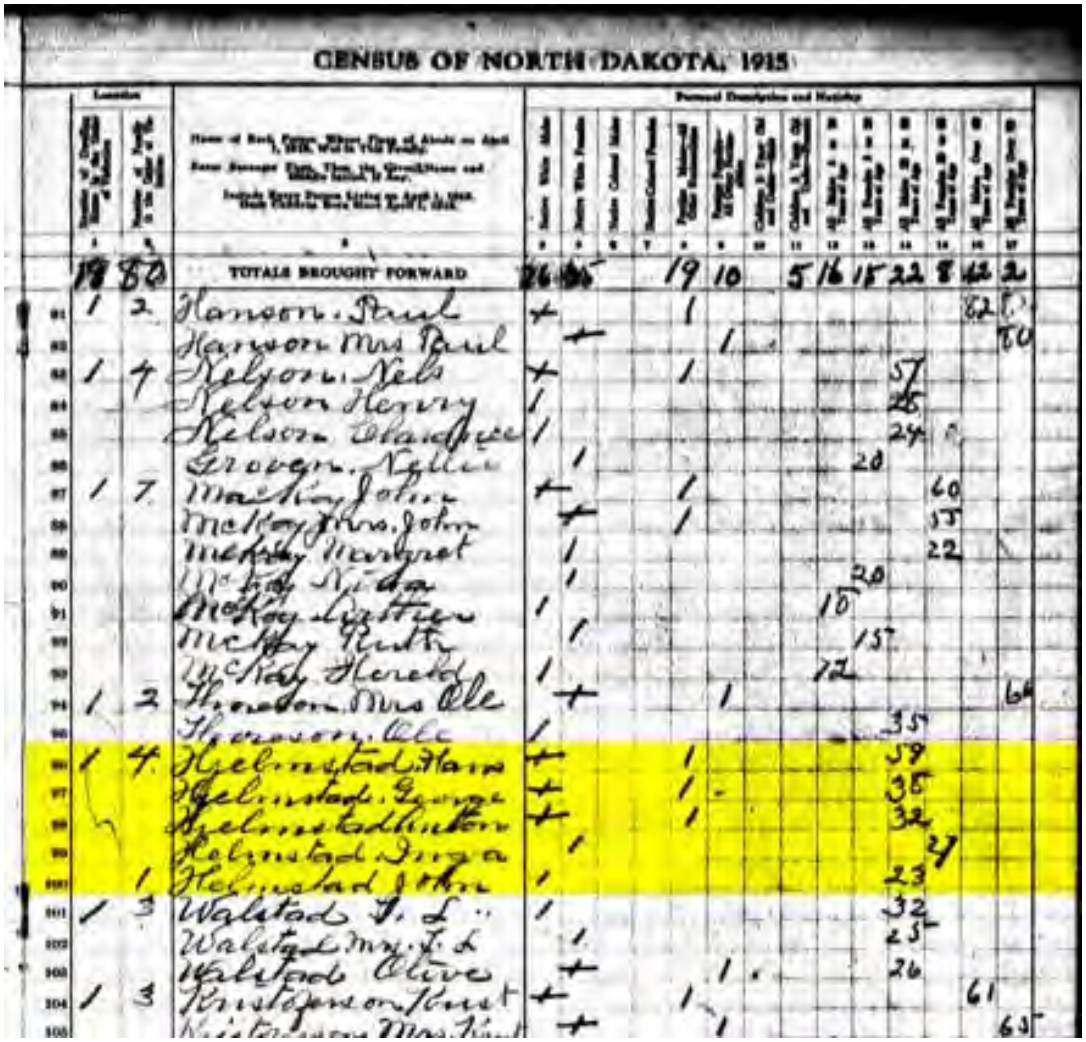

CENSUS OF NORTH DAKOTA, 1915

| | | |

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The two key records for starting across to Norway are:

- **the Naturalization record**
  - **After 1919 has**
    - Date and place of birth, Country of origin, residence, date of immigration, port of arrival, and ship's name, spouse, names and birth dates of children, place of naturalization**.**
  - **Before 1920, may have**
    - Country of origin, residence, occasionally - date and place of birth, arrival information, spouse

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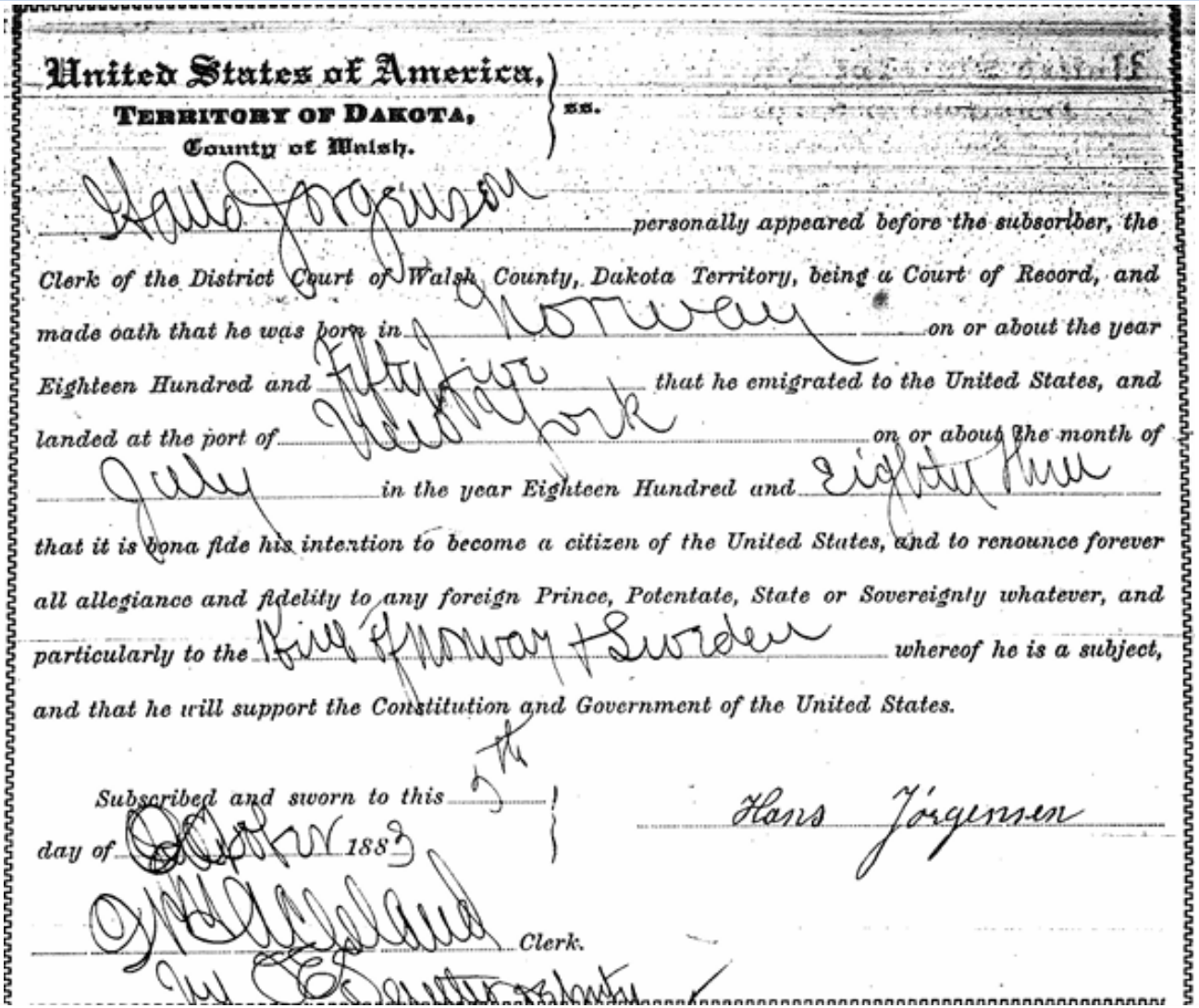

United States of America,
TERRITORY OF DAKOTA,
County of Walsh. } ss.

Hans Jorgensen personally appeared before the subscriber, the Clerk of the District Court of Walsh County, Dakota Territory, being a Court of Record, and made oath that he was born in Norway on or about the year Eighteen Hundred and fifty five that he emigrated to the United States, and landed at the port of New York on or about the month of July in the year Eighteen Hundred and Eighty two that it is bona fide his intention to become a citizen of the United States, and to renounce forever all allegiance and fidelity to any foreign Prince, Potentate, State or Sovereignty whatever, and particularly to the King of Norway & Sweden whereof he is a subject, and that he will support the Constitution and Government of the United States.

Subscribed and sworn to this 5th day of October 1883

Hans Jörgensen

Clerk.

Fjellheim Slektforskning Presentation

The two key records for starting across to Norway are:

- **If a farmer, the homestead record has**
  - Full name, Age, birth date, Country of birth or nationality
  - State, county, land description: section, township, and range
  - Spouse, children, or other household members mentioned

Fjellheim Slektfo

[4—063.]

HOMESTEAD.

[AFFIDAVIT.]

Office of Clerk of the District Court for Cavalier Co. DT

~~Land Office~~ at Langdon DT

June 9, 1886

I, Hans Jorgensen, of Cavalier County DT

having filed my application, No. 9791, for an entry under Section No. 2289, Revised Statutes of the United States, do solemnly swear that I am the head of a family and have declared my intention to become a citizen of the United States

that said application, No. 9791, is made for the purpose of actual settlement and cultivation; that said entry is made for my own exclusive benefit, and not directly or indirectly for the benefit or use of any other person or persons whomsoever; and that I have not heretofore had the benefit of the homestead laws. That I am now residing on the land I desire to enter and have made bona fide a improvement and settlement. That said settlement was commenced on July 10th 1883. That owing to distance I am unable to appear at the District Land Office to make this affidavit

Hans Jorgensen

Sworn to and subscribed this 9th day of June A.D. 1886 before

W. J. Mooney

Clerk of the Dist Court of the Land Office.

NOTE.—If this affidavit be acknowledged before the Clerk of the Court, as provided for by Sec. 2294, U. S. Revised Statutes, the Homestead party must expressly state herein that he or some member of his family is residing upon the land applied for, and that *bona fide* improvement and settlement have been made. He must also state why he is unable to appear at the Land Office.

[19014—100 M.]

☞ See note, which Clerks of the Courts and Registers and Receivers will read and EXPLAIN THOROUGHLY to persons making application for lands where the affidavit is made before either of them. (See directions to Land Officers on Duplicate Receipt.)

Tony Hjelmstad
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Find the Passenger and Immigration Records

- **Most Norwegians emigrated between 1875 and 1910**
- **Most of the passenger records and immigration records for that time period exist and are available online to search**
- **BUT – you need a good guess at the name used and a rough guess as to the date**
- **AND – knowing the port helps**

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Find the Passenger and Immigration Records

- **Family Search and Ancestry have most of the passenger and immigration records indexed.**
- **Most major libraries have free access to these two research facilities.**
- **You can get to most Family Search immigration and passenger records from home by creating a free account.**
- **Ancestry requires a paid subscription**

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- **Immigration Records**
  - Most Norwegians came in through
    - New York, Boston, New Orleans, Duluth, and Seattle
  - But many came in through Canada
    - Quebec City, Montreal, Halifax, Saint John, and Vancouver
  - U.S. Customs handled immigration
    - New York was handled by Castle Gardens and Ellis Island
    - Canada was handled by St. Albans
    - All others are covered by various immigration lists

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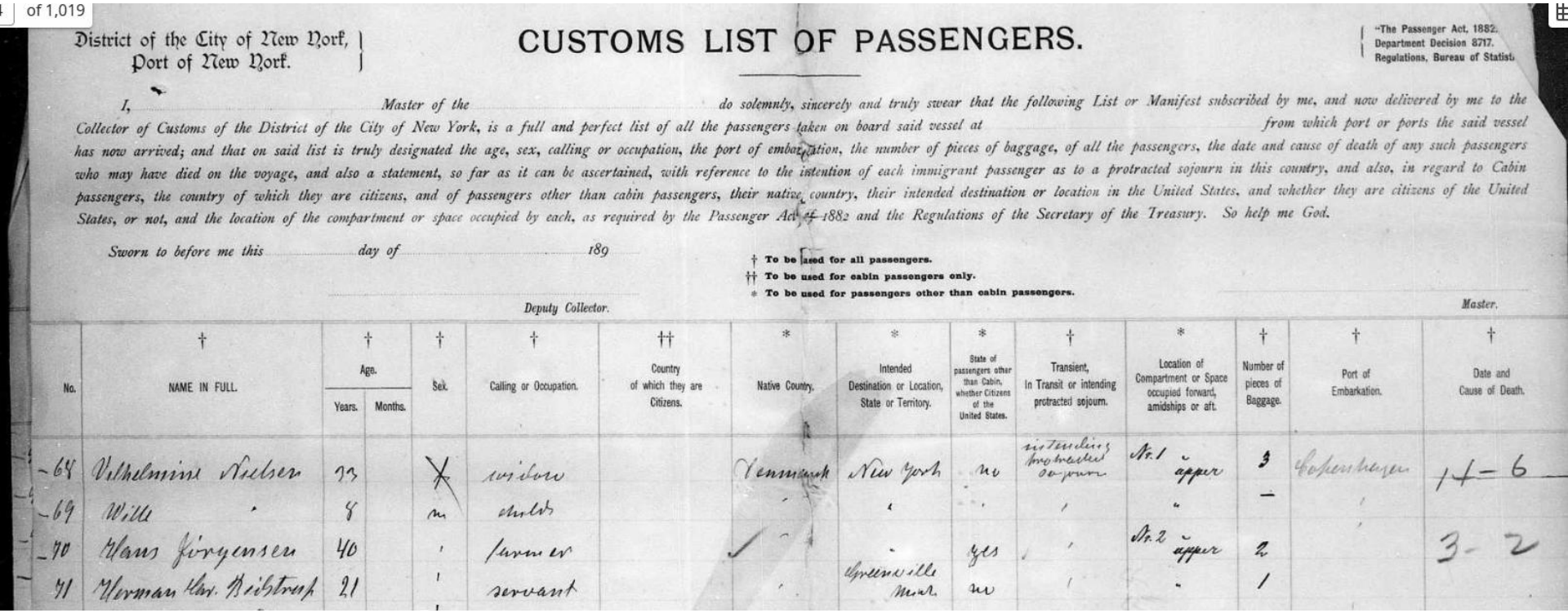
- Not My Hans Jorgensen



District of the City of New York,
Port of New York.

CUSTOMS LIST OF PASSENGERS.

"The Passenger Act, 1882.
Department Decision 8717.
Regulations, Bureau of Statist.

I, ... Master of the ..... do solemnly, sincerely and truly swear that the following List or Manifest subscribed by me, and now delivered by me to the Collector of Customs of the District of the City of New York, is a full and perfect list of all the passengers taken on board said vessel at ..... from which port or ports the said vessel has now arrived; and that on said list is truly designated the age, sex, calling or occupation, the port of embarkation, the number of pieces of baggage, of all the passengers, the date and cause of death of any such passengers who may have died on the voyage, and also a statement, so far as it can be ascertained, with reference to the intention of each immigrant passenger as to a protracted sojourn in this country, and also, in regard to Cabin passengers, the country of which they are citizens, and of passengers other than cabin passengers, their native country, their intended destination or location in the United States, and whether they are citizens of the United States, or not, and the location of the compartment or space occupied by each, as required by the Passenger Act of 1882 and the Regulations of the Secretary of the Treasury. So help me God.

Sworn to before me this ..... day of 189

† To be used for all passengers.
†† To be used for cabin passengers only.
* To be used for passengers other than cabin passengers.

Deputy Collector. Master.

No.	† NAME IN FULL.	† Age. Years.	† Age. Months.	† Sex.	† Calling or Occupation.	†† Country of which they are Citizens.	* Native Country.	* Intended Destination or Location, State or Territory.	* State of passengers other than Cabin, whether Citizens of the United States.	† Transient, In Transit or intending protracted sojourn.	* Location of Compartment or Space occupied forward, amidships or aft.	† Number of pieces of Baggage.	† Port of Embarkation.	† Date and Cause of Death.
68	Vilhelmine Nielsen	33		X	widow		Denmark	New York	no	intending protracted sojourn	No. 1 upper	3	Copenhagen	14-6
69	Wille "	8		m	child		"	"	"	"	"	—	"	
70	Hans Jørgensen	40		"	farmer		✓	"	yes	"	No. 2 upper	2		3-2
71	Herman Chr. Beistrup	21		"	servant		"	Greenville Mich.	no	"	"	1		

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- **Passenger Lists**
  - These were maintained by the port Harbor Masters
  - Most – but not all – are indexed and originals of many are available at Family Search and Ancestry
  - Knowing the ship name and the year if not actual arrival date really help in searching these records

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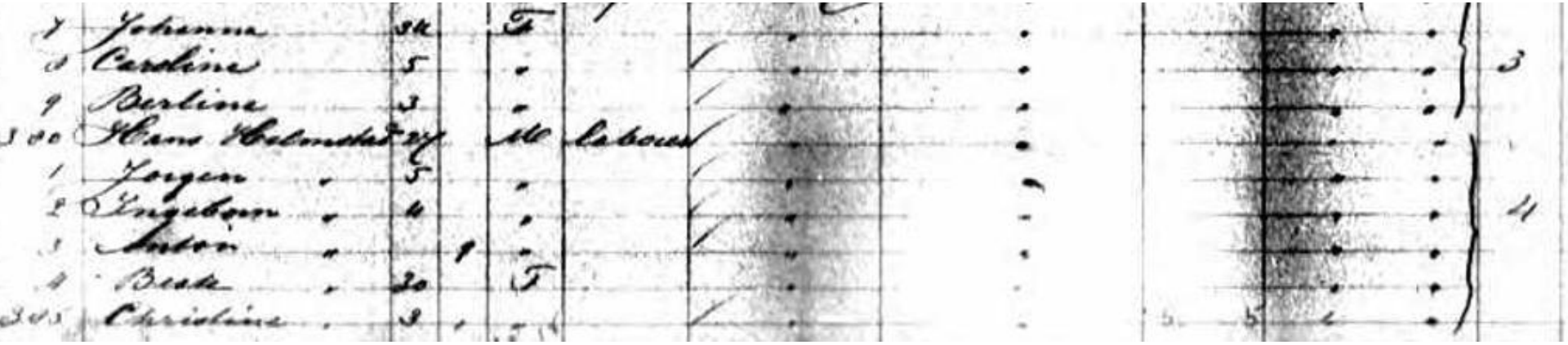

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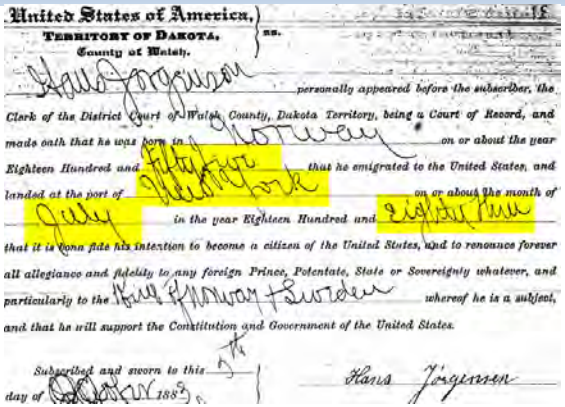

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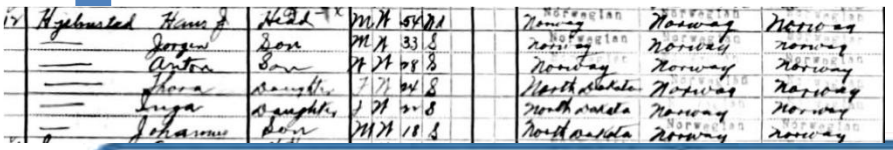
Subscribed and sworn to this ... day of ... 188?

Hans Jorgensen

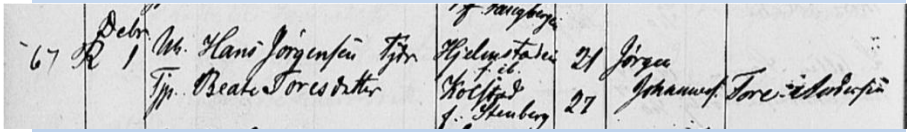
Mr. Hans Jorgensen having paid the fees, has this day filed in this Office his Declaratory Statement, No. 6615 for N½ SE¼ and NE¼ SW¼ section 26 township 160 N, of range 57 W, containing 120 acres, settled upon July 10" 1883, being offered.

in such case made and provided; that as appears from sa
Distribution the above named decedent Hans J. Hjelmstad,
a resident of East Alma Township, Cavalier County, North
that the residue of said estate consists of the followin
real estate situated in said County and State, to-wit:

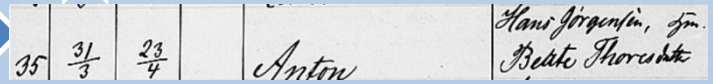
SE¼NE¼, Section 35, Township 160, Range 57
NE¼SE¼ Section 35, Township 160, Range 57
SW¼SW¼ Section 24, Township 160, Range 57
NW¼NW¼ Section 25, Township 160, Range 57
NE¼SE¼ Section 26, Township 160, Range 57
NW¼SE¼ Section 26, Township 160, Range 57
NE¼SW¼ Section 26, Township 160, Range 57
NW¼SW¼ Section 36, Township 160, Range 57
SW¼SW¼ Section 36, Township 160, Range 57
SE¼SW¼ Section 36, Township 160, Range 57
SW¼SE¼ Section 36, Township 160, Range 57



17	Hjelmstad	Hans J.	Head	M	M	54	M	Norwegian	Norway	Norway
		Jorgen	Son	M	M	33	S	Norwegian	Norway	Norway
		Anton	Son	M	M	28	S	Norway	Norway	Norway
		Thora	daughter	F	M	24	S	North Dakota	Norway	Norway
		Inga	daughter	F	M	21	S	North Dakota	Norway	Norway
		Johannes	Son	M	M	18	S	North Dakota	Norway	Norway



67 Dekr 1 Mr. Hans Jørgensen fjtr Hjelmstaden 21 Jörgen
Fjr. Beate Thoresdatter Hoelstad Sjenberg 27 Johannes Thoresen



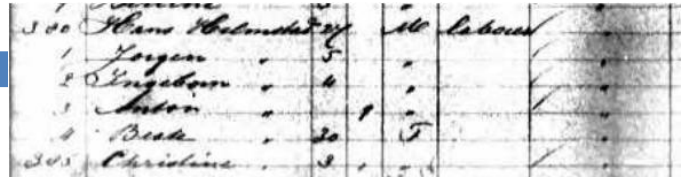
35 31/3 23/4 Anton Hans Jørgensen, fm. Beate Thoresdtr



Emigranter over Kristiania 1871-1930 ny

	År	Side	Linjenr	Lp nr.	Ny fam.gr.	Kontr.dato	Reisedato	Fornamn	Etternamn	Sivilstand	Fam. stilling	Yrke	Kjønn	Alder	Heimstad
71127	1883	142	1	5427	1	08.06.1883	09.06.1883	Martin	Anders.			Barber	m	19	Drammen
71128	1883	142	2	5428	1	08.06.1883	09.06.1883	Beate	Hjelmstad	g			k	30	Ringsaker
71129	1883	142	3	5428b		08.06.1883	09.06.1883	Kristine	Hjelmstad		B.		k	3	Ringsaker
71130	1883	142	4	5429	1	08.06.1883	09.06.1883	Svendine	Peders.	g			k	28	Osen
71131	1883	142	5	5430	1	08.06.1883	09.06.1883	Peder	Peders.	g		Arb	m	27	Osen
71132	1883	142	6	5431a	1	08.06.1883	09.06.1883	Hans J.	Hjelmstad	g		Arb	m	27	Ringsaker
71133	1883	142	7	5431b		08.06.1883	09.06.1883	Jørgen	Hjelmstad		B.		m	5	Ringsaker
71134	1883	142	8	5431c		08.06.1883	09.06.1883	Ingeborg	Hjelmstad		B.		k	4	Ringsaker
71135	1883	142	9	5431d		08.06.1883	09.06.1883	Anton	Hjelmstad		B.		m	11m	Ringsaker
71136	1883	142	10	5432	1	08.06.1883	09.06.1883	Johannes	Hans.			Skom	m	27	Kr.a. Torvbakgd

To Norway,
Finally



Fjellheim Slektforskning Presentation

So how do you get to Norway

- Start with what you know from American records.
- Identify your ancestor's Norwegian birthplace, parish, or municipality whenever possible.
- Compare multiple records and follow family relationships across generations.
- Then use Norwegian church books, censuses, and farm histories to confirm the connection.

Tony Hjelmstad
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Fjellheim Slektforskning Presentation

So how do you get to Norway

- **Remember:** The goal is not simply to find someone with the right name—it is to build a chain of evidence connecting your ancestor in America to the correct person and place in Norway.

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Slektforskningklubb – **GENEALOGY MEETING**

Meets on Zoom the First Thursday at 1:00 pm MT

https://www.fjelldalen.com/genealogy-class

The Fjelldalen Slektforskningklubb - the Sons of Norway Genealogy Club - is involved with both Nordic and general genealogy and discusses how to find and use research tools while working on practical examples. Each meeting is a group discussion with a general theme. The group will help with roadblocks, problems, and give hints and help.

2026 Meeting Schedule:

November 5th	***Digitalarkivet searching***
December 3rd	***Theme – Bygdeboks***

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Fjelldalen Lodge #6-162

Slektforskningklubb
GENEALOGY MEETING
https://www.fjelldalen.com/genealogy-class



- ***2027 Spring Meeting Schedule:***
- **December 3rd** — **DigitalArkivet round 2**
- **January 7th** — **DigitalArkivet – court records**
- **February 4th** — **Bygdeboks**
- **March 4th** — **Norwegian Censuses**
- **April 1st** — **Classes of people - farms**
- **May 6th** — **Classes of people - trades**
- **June 3rd,** — **Naturalization**
- **July 8th** — **Passenger records**

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Fjelldalen Lodge #6-162



ZOOM

Slektforskningklubb

GENEALOGY MEETING

November 5th, 1:00 PM MST

Click Here to Join ZOOM Meeting

Join Zoom Meeting
https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86052291262?pwd=Vm9vR3F6dnNOcHhWNXNENlpXZjM3UT09