

## Translation of Ole Throndsen Tørstad Ellingbøe's letter from America

*Ellingbøe Worth County Iowa the 16th of September 1866*

*Dearly beloved and unforgettable parents, parents-in-law, grandparents and siblings, kin and friends, in our Old Norway. Your precious letter of April 17th this year was indeed received by us and from this, to our delight, we learned that you are in good health and all right, and the same happy news, God be praised, we can send to you that we and our children are in good health and doing well, for which we cannot thank enough the almighty God, who directs everything for the best, and the same happiness we wish you, with God's earliest possible help for you. I also gather from your letter that you tended for our daughter<sup>[1]</sup> in the best possible way during her days of illness, as if we ourselves had been there, for which we couldn't thank you enough, we would really gladly pay for your trouble, but because the distance is so great, we must include you in our prayer to God that he will reward you for your great kindness to her in her last struggle on earth and then with the necessary arrangements for her funeral. Your God will repay you in this world and the next, and should any of you desire to come over here you must write to us a bit ahead so we can pick you up in Calmar, where the train stops. Dear brother<sup>[2]</sup>, you say that your daughter Guri<sup>[3]</sup> wants to come over here and that you ask us what we think about it and if it could be worthwhile for her. As to that, we can answer that in case she wishes to do so, it would no doubt be worthwhile for her, but she can certainly have it as good as she wishes in Norway as well, because they don't have more than the two girls and because she has the right to the farm, so she can certainly find a lot of good opportunities there, but if any of you decide that you really want to come, there are much better prospects here than in Norway, both for poor and rich when God grants them health and gives them success, so the working class here lives better than the upper class in Norway, as one says. I see also from your letter that Tollef Ellingbøe<sup>[4]</sup> set out for America and that he arrived healthy and sound in Chicago, but where he is or where he is living, I don't know, and the book that you sent with him for us hasn't been received, but I hope to get it eventually, and if one of you comes, I wish you would bring along a 10 and a 12 basme somskaar<sup>[5]</sup>, and in case someone travels nearby and can loan Helge Olsen<sup>[6]</sup> as much money as he needs to come over, I, Ole Throndsen, his step father, promise to pay back every single cent with interest as soon as they come here, and if it is reported that Helge Olsen died on the voyage, I am prepared to pay what he agreed for the loan. This is confirmed by my handwritten signature in the presence of two witnesses. Ole Throndsen Ellingbøe*

*Witnessed by Ole Olsen Bøe<sup>[7]</sup> and Daniel Bertelsen Nepstad<sup>[8]</sup>.*

*We don't have any news to send you other than many greetings to you all, especially to my dear parents who I thank for the prized psalm book, and likewise to my brother Endre<sup>[2]</sup> and his family, to Anders Grøv<sup>[9]</sup> and his family, to Johannes Norland<sup>[10]</sup> and his family, to Gudmund Remme<sup>[11]</sup> and his family, to Endre Hóle<sup>[12]</sup> and his family, and then to relatives and friends with affection.*

*Respectfully Ole Throndsen and Ingeborg Anders Datter Ellingbøe and children send many greetings to our son Helge<sup>[6]</sup> and to our daughter Marit<sup>[13]</sup>, and we ask you to send us her address as soon as you write to us.  
With affection, Ole T. S. Ellingbøe*

*I, Ole Olsen Bøe<sup>[7]</sup> send many greetings to you all, and also to John Qvalle<sup>[14]</sup> with his wife and children, we send many greetings.*

### Footnotes:

1. Sigrid Olsdatter (1842-1865). Her widowed husband Andris Nilsen Skogstad immigrated to Minnesota with their two young children in 1869.
2. Ingeborg's brother Endre Andrisson Ellingbøe (1822-1907) was married to Marit Helgesdotter Ellingbøe (Nordigarden)(1826-1916). Their only children were Guri (1845-1915) and Sigrid (1852-1951).

3. Guri Endresdotter Ellingbøe (1845-1915 became the second wife of Tomas Tomasson of Haugen on Nedre Kvåle (1835-1886). She married in 1867, just one year after this letter was written, and moved to Haugen on Nedre Kvåle. Otherwise, she would have inherited her father's farm, as was indicated by Ole in this letter. Instead, her younger sister Sigrid inherited the farm. Sigrid was engaged to Ola Andrisson Kvåle, who drowned in Vangsmjøsa. He was the father of Sigrid's only child, Marit.
4. Tollef is also mentioned in Christopher Helgesen Ellingbøe's Amerikabrev from Two Rivers, Wisconsin, in 1854 (see *Budstikken* 39:6-9, 2009). He is listed among others in the Vang church book as a bachelor intending to emigrate in 1866. In the 1900 U.S. Federal Census, he and his family are listed at Deer Creek Township, Worth County, Iowa.
5. A "*basme*" is a group of warp threads on a loom. The "*somskaar*," now called a "*vevskje*," is a sort of comb that is used to hold the group of threads and separate them while weaving.
6. Helge Olsen Ellingbøe (1835-1915), Ingeborg's illegitimate son by Ole Helgesen Ellingbøe, never emigrated.
7. Ole Olsen Bøe was probably Ole Olsen Sparstad, who took over Bø (Klukkargarden) in 1850, but then emigrated to America in 1853 at the age of 38.
8. Daniel B. Nepstad [Nefstad ?] appears with no family in the 1870 U.S. Federal Census for Silver Lake, Worth County, Iowa, as a farmer, born in Norway, age 30. Although there is a Nefstad farm in Vang, his parentage and place of birth have not been determined at this time.
9. The parents of Anders Grøv (1841- ) were Sigrid Andrisdatter Ellingbøe and Andris Torleivson Ellingbøe. Anders (Andrew Grove) and his family emigrated in 1877 and were found in the 1880 U.S. Federal Census in Bridgewater, Rice County, Minnesota. At that time everyone in the family had anglicized their names.
10. Johannes Andrisson Nordland (1821-1904) was born on Nordland 57/2 Nordigharden. He married Ragnid Andrisdatter Ellingbøe (1826-1928) from Ellingbøe 33/1 Nigharden.
11. Gudmund Jonsen Remme (1820-1907), from Remme 65/2, was married to Guri Torsteinsdatter Ellingbøe (1831-1891) from Ellingbøe 33/1 Nigharden.
12. Endre Knutsen Holien (1818-1885), from Holien 18, was married to Ragnhild Gudbrandsdatter Bø (1827-1907). One of their daughters, Sigrid, Married Torstein Helgesen Ellingbøe, proprietor of the Fagerlid hotel.
13. Marit was born 16 Jul 1840. Her twin sister Sigrid died 27 Oct 1840. Although Marit is listed among the family members who intended to emigrate, it is likely that she stayed in Vang, as indicated by this letter.
14. John Qvalle was probably John Person Kvåle, born Jan 1862, who married Marit Torsteinsdatter Kvåle, whose mother was Ingeborg Helgesdatter Ellingbøe. John was a third cousin of Ole Olsen (Sparstad) Bøe.