



Hólfríður Daníelson

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869 Garfield St.
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Rt. Hon Dr. Bjarni Benediktsson:
Prime Minister of Iceland.

Kæri Dr. Bjarni: (I hope you dont mind my typing in English, it is quicker)

Greetings and good wishes for a Good "New Year" and future years.

I am sending you a "skjal" which the people in Iceland might be interested in, as it pertains to historical events of some moment. For years my friends have been urging me to have a book published of my most important articles and speeches, - in fact two books, one in English and one in Icelandic. So many V. Islendingar have had their books published in Iceland, and I suppose I could do it too, if I gave myself time to do anything for myself. It seems that I am always up to my ears in ~~some~~ cultural activity that may be of benefit to some specific group or to the community as a whole.

However, Hjalmur is very "driftugur" in getting things done, and he is now in the process of gathering together some of my best articles in the Icelandic Canadian and other publication, together with a few that he has typed out from weekly papers, etc. He absolutely insisted on including the Historical Pageant that I wrote for the 100th anniversary in Utah, so he typed it up from my original copy, and I am sending you this rough copy, and ask you please to excuse the typing and errors. (I have no time to copy things over, as I am now running around the country, adjudicating drama and speech festivals, and getting ready for the "Þjóðræknisþing" being secretary)

Anyway I am sending this document to you, in the belief that it will interest some people. If it should be kept "for the record" it is easy enough for someone to re-type it, but if not it may be ^{be} consigned to the waste basket.

I have had a great deal of pleasure in doing all this extensive cultural work for Iceland and Icelanders, even if I have never made much noise about it. As I said I am too busy to be thinking about pushing myself forward, but perhaps it is not right to sit back altogether and let everything be lost and forgotten because one is too "modest" to speak up.

With our best wishes to you, and to Iceland.

Yours sincerely,

Holmfr. Danielsen

MRS. H. F. DANIELSEN

869 GARFIELD ST.
WINNIPEG, MANITOBA

THE SYMBOL OF ICELAND 1955

An historical pageant presented June 16, at Spanish Fork, Utah, during a three-day festival to commemorate the hundredth anniversary of the coming of the first Icelanders to Utah, who were converts to the New Faith, The Church of Latter Day Saints, (more commonly called Mormons).

Written and produced by Mrs. Holmfridur Danielson, of Winnipeg.

Commentary for the pageant*

Commentary: To-night we salute and pay tribute to the Fjallkona, that serene figure of the Maif of the Mountains, which is the symbol of Iceland, and typifies all that is best and noblest in the land and in the nation. The introduction in this song carries a challenge akin to that given in the well-known lines:
"Breathes there a man with soul so dead..... Who never to himself has said- This is my own, my native land...."

Song by the choir : Fjallkonan, in English translation by Mrs. Danielson.
1st. verse of song:

Should not the blood flow faster in the Norseman's veins
As joyous rings out the ancient wondrous strain:
Give ear!
Our ancient Iceland, b'loved, our motherland!
O, Mountain Maid,
Thou worthy goddess!
Our dreams' and daylight's star of brightness;
Thou standest tall and true, against the heaven's blue;
We pledge our word and deed,
We will thy glory speed,
Strive for thee, Mother with gleaming brow.
We thine shall be, to stay with thee,
Till life is done, and our souls set free.

(during the song the curtain is drawn, revealing ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~ a stage 40' by 22', with an alcove at the back, with figures of Fjallkona, flanked by four maidens doing the traditional work of Icelandic women, Spinning, weaving etc.) and one in front of this group and to the side are two people, a man and a woman who represent the emigrants, who later leave) *There are platforms of several levels.* (reading)

2. (commentary) The Fjallkona has looked on the struggles and triumphs of her people for a thousand years and more. She has seen the golden age of literature spread its bright glow over Iceland and over other lands. She has, also, seen her children oppressed by tyrants and harassed by natural disasters, but she has never seen them cowed or beaten. Always they have striven valiantly against desperate odds and inched their way along the path of progress and towards liberty.

3. Often in their extremity, the children of Iceland felt that their Fjallkona had an austere mien, but still they drew strength from her fine traditions. Tenaciously they clung to these traditions: the respect for law, the love of liberty; and reverence for good literature. Their inspired leaders in the fields of writing, and high ideals and statesmanship, were gradually lifting the nation to a united effort to break free from bondage. And as they strove to this end, they worked diligently at their daily tasks, and as they worked they studied, or in gayer mood they sang, and even danced. They sang about the hopes and aspirations of the nation, and about the beauty of the land- its mountains, glaciers, rivers,

* Following the commentary are given a few specific instructions for staging, but all the detailed instructions were given by Mrs. Danielson herself, who spent two weeks at Springville and Spanish Fork, before the presentation of the pageant, to direct and polish up rehearsals.

waterfalls, and lush green valleys.

SONG: "Pú bláfjallageimur." *Chorus*

4 5. Commentary (accompanied by soft music, a small string orchestra, or violin cello and piano, playing "Sólskrikjan" or other appropriate music)

It was during the twilight of adversity in Iceland that the sad eyes of the Fjallkona witnessed the emigration of thousands of her children to a foreign shore. But before that she said goodbye to a few of her beloved ones who, in faith and love and with matchless courage, had set out into a desert land to build a good life in the best traditions that she had given them, and to be embraced by a burning faith, a boundless courage, and unswerving perseverance of a new spiritual order. That was one hundred years ago when the few converts to the New Faith set out from her shores and she saw them fade across the horizon and vanish into the vast and arid desert. She could give them no dowry of material riches, but as they set forth into the uncertain future she gave into their ~~XXXXXXXX~~ keeping her most precious possession: Iceland's great literary heritage, together with a legacy of mental and spiritual fortitude which had been carefully nurtured throughout the years, and which had become, in spite of oppression and privations, the dominant influence in the life of the nation. (action on stage, the emigrants receive the Book from the Fjallkona and bid farewell)

And so she bid them farewell and thought they were lost to her forever.

5 6. The eyes of the Fjallkona strained after them as they trekked across the wastelands of this vast ~~XXXXXXXX~~ new Empire; this haven sought by a spiritually uplifted people who were being persecuted for their faith; these Latter Day Saints who dared to suffer untold hardships for their convictions and their freedom. The Fjallkona wept for them, her own, - but she rejoiced also, for were they not joining a people who had much kinship with her own traditions? She saw their total courage along the way. Night and day she saw them toiling across the vast, trackless desert to the new promised land. She saw them straining and carrying heavy loads and pushing awkward handcarts for hundreds of miles across the burning sands.

(action on stage: Two men and a woman depicting the first Icelanders, stumbling across the stage with a handcart and carrying heavy burdens, and before and after them other groups of people in the same straits, some carrying children (dolls) but the three Icelanders must be a little distinct from the others) (The action will continue as expressed in the commentary)

6 7. (incidental music here and various shades of lighting passing in *waves* ~~sweeps~~ over the group on stage. During this action the choir sings the beloved L.S.D hymn, which had sustained so many weary people on the long trek: "Come, come, ye Saints".)

7 Commentary She saw them fall and stumble, but they did not despair when they fell and bled from wounds; when they trembled and tottered from hunger and sickness they did not cry out; when they buried their dear dead ones along the trail they did not weep. No they did not weep nor bewail their fate; instead they prayed. Fervently and in simple faith they prayed to their God to lead them and guide them and guard them, not only from physical dangers which threatened them, but also from the foolish vanity of those who turn from true faith and think they can prosper without the love of God.

In the evening when camp was made the sturdy migrants to this Westward Empire of Deseret had to barricade themselves from attacks by Indians. They had to see to the needs of the whole company, minister to the sick, and prepare for the next day's trek. Each evening they gathered around the camp fire to duly worship God in prayer and song. (all kneel in prayer, then sing: "To-day we kneel at Jesus' feet - with choir")

Commentary: Then they relaxed from their physical weariness with gaiety and dancing. So the comforting glow of the campfire would reflect the whirl of gay figures dancing away their cares and building up those wonderful bonds of brotherhood and comradeship which ~~which~~ had become so dear to these hard-pressed but dauntless heroes.

(A group of 8 (4 men, 4 women) in costumes do a square dance with ~~with~~ *with* ~~background~~ *background* music)

8. The Fjallkona saw them, this handful of her children merged into a mighty throng of modern prosperous citizens of the new land. (action on stage: Brygham Young and other Elders come slowly out of the wings at L. and meet and welcome the weary travelers in appropriate fashion.) (they move off) And now she was sure they were not hers any more, that they were lost to her forever.

But they remembered their Fjallkona- their motherland. In the hearts of these emigrants who left for the long and toilsome journey to the Wastelands of Utah a hundred years ago, there was a tender affection for Old Iceland- in their minds a reverence for the fine cultural ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~ heritage, and in their ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~ spirits a nostalgia for the old land. This has been well expressed by an Icelandic American poet in the "Song of the Pioneers" which described so aptly the feelings of the emigrants;- that even if they should travel to the finest lands on earth, yet all the dear landmarks of Old Iceland would stand out in their memory and, in their absence be clothed in added glory.

Song by the Choir: Þótt þu langföruhl legðir :St.G.St. in Eng. translation. (during the song the Three Icel. emigrants come slowly out from wings L. followed by two descendants, children or teenagers, and raising their arms slowly towards the Fjallkona, lean forward a little and stand in this position during the song.)

Curtain down for a short while.

Scene II

(incidental music , by small orchestra or ensemble: "Norður við Heimskaut." (The large front curtain is drawn, but not right to the wings. At the left it still hides the final group: Uncle Sam and other figures. The Fjallkona Scene in the alcove at back of stage is the same as before, - not including the ~~two~~ 3 emigrant figures that had left) The four maidens still flank the Fjallkona, but their working equipment, spinning wheel, etc. has been removed. A thin gauze curtain is in front of the Fjallkona scene, and a moving blue light plays on the scene, making it appear in the far distance.) (A group of descendants of the Utah pioneers - three generations, grandparents, parents, and two children stand in a semi-circle at L. stage, around the Icel. pioneer monument(~~the~~ in the form of a lighthouse. This is a beautiful replica of the real monument, which was unveiled in 1938, and which was made specifically for use in the pageant and on one of the elaborate floats the next day, June 17, of the 1955 festival. The replica of the monument is draped with the Stars and Striped (the U.S. Flag) Behind the three generations may be more people, to witness the ceremony. But don't make it too cluttered or crowded)

9. Commentary : The pioneers had prospered and multiplied and made rich this new land of theirs. But fondly they remembered their origins, and now they gathered together with reverence and pride to honor the beloved pioneers of Icelandic stock who had come to Utah between the years 1855-57. It was only a small band of sixteen persons, lending their strength and courage to this new venture of building up this promised land for generations to come. And now their descendants were honoring them, as in love and pride they unveiled this monument to their memory. (The flag is removed from the monument). It is in the shape of a lighthouse, to show that these pioneers came from the little remote island of Iceland in the northern sea. Showing also that the beacon light of their courage and faith will never falter, but will shine forever to light the way for generations to come.

Song by the choir "We shall overcome" or some other appropriate selection)

Commentary On that day, as always the happy people remembered the rich heritage which their Fjallkona had bequeathed to them, and their eyes turned once more to the north where they could visualize her, in dignified affection watching them (all turn slowly towards the Fjallkona and stand gazing at her)

10. Commentary : (Background music, Þú bláfjallageimur, or other appropriate music) In Iceland, the struggle for freedom had continued, and then finally in 1944,

the ultimate step was taken and sovereign independence won, there was great rejoicing in all the land! And not in Iceland alone. The universal chorus of praise and commendation reaching her from powerful nations all over the world, could be heard one specific note of joy and thanksgiving (action on stage as the three generation start slowly toward the Fjallkona, - the male members coming from the R. wings, - the female from L. wing. They come to a halt in two lines V - shaped, - the grandfather and grandmother closest to the Fjallkona. The gauze curtain in front of the Fjallkona is drawn aside, and bright lights play upon the scene.)

Commentary That note was the united voices of Iceland's descendants in America. Even those who had left for Utah almost a hundred years before, still remembered her with affection and pride. Every year they would celebrate Iceland's Day with festive joy, and tell their children about the dear land in the North. No, they had not forgotten her. For a hundred years they too, had worked and struggled. Arriving in this new land with empty hands they had set to work to carve out careers for themselves and for their children. But they knew that in the classical literature of Iceland the Fjallkona had bequeathed to them a gift more precious than gold and ~~silver~~ jewels. They knew that the sturdy Icelandic tradition of honesty, liberty, law and learning had found a profound and worthy echo in their new surroundings, where these very qualities of character were so highly regarded by the followers of their new faith.

11. Commentary But they wish also to pass on to their children and children's children their own Icelandic heritage. "Assuredly" they said, "we should cherish our racial heritage, not only for our own spiritual enrichment, but also to the end that we may lay it with pride and loyalty in the lap of this, our great nation, to be woven into the strong and beautiful fabric of our own American national life." And so they set about to establish anew their contacts with Iceland, the land of their great-grandparents who had come to Utah a hundred year ago. In this their Church was a bountiful and hearty co-operator, and together, ^{they} devised many ways of building up a closer relationship with the Motherland of those early sixteen pioneers, and those others who had followed them in the next few years. They sent teams of experts to the old land to study the genealogical records in Iceland and to microfilm all available historical data for the erudition of future generations. They invited distinguished guests from Iceland to attend their festive days. They delved into their past so as to know themselves and so as to gauge their future.

"Who are we?" they said in effect, to themselves, "and what is our background? It is over there in that little Saga island that our cradle lies, and we must learn, we must clasp to our bosom that classical heritage that is offered to us. Throughout the ages this legacy has been passed from generation to generation of Icelanders (Music, while grandfather received the SCROLL from the Fjallkona)

Commentary continues: It has been cherished by their descendants here (music UP while grandfather passes the SCROLL to son) It has been transmitted to their children (Music UP while father passes the SCROLL to small grandson) And now they offer it with pride and affection to their own land America. (Action: Curtain at L. is fully drawn revealing Uncle Sam, Columbia and Miss Utah, one male and two female figure in appropriate costumes. The little boy steps forward and offers the SCROLL to Uncle Sam. Music accented,)

12. Commentary (during the following the music of "O, Guð vors lands" is played softly)

And as America received this gift we once again pay homage to the Fjallkona from whose had we received it. We pay tribute by singing the magnificent Millennial Hymn which was sung publicly for the first time at the Millennial festival in Iceland in 1874, and written for that occasion by the well-beloved poet, Matthias Jochumsson, with music by the eminent composer Sveinbjorn Sveinbjornsson. Never have the eloquent words of a poet and the grandiloquent tones of inspired music combined more harmoniously to add dignity and solemnity to a momentous occasion. On that day, after desperate years of disaster and privations, the Icelanders received from the hands of King Christian the Ninth, A CONSTITUTION, and thus

was won their first tangible victory in their long struggle for freedom.

The American poet, Bayard Taylor, who was present at the ceremonies in Iceland in 1874, describes the solemn service at the Cathedral in Reykjavik, and the humble spirit of thankfulness which reigned throughout the land:

"The Millennial Hymn produced a powerful effect," he said, "in which ever direction I looked, I saw eyes filled with tears..... the repetition of the refrain: "Islands þúsund ár", rang through the Cathedral in tones that were sonorous and solemn rather than proud, and gave expression to the earnest religious spirit in which the people had assembled."

"God of our Land! Our country's God!
 All praise to Thy hallowed, hallowed name.
 Thy crown in the heaven's bright system of suns
 Thine own hosts, ceaseless ages shall frame.
 Lord! to Thee is a day like a thousand years,
 A thousand years but a day.
 Eternity's flow'ret with tremulous tears,
 That, praising Thee, passeth away.
 Iceland's Thousand Years!
 Iceland's Thousand Years!
 Eternity's flow'ret with tremulous tears
 That, praising Thee, passeth away"

(during the reading of the poem the music plays the tune.)
Song, by the Choir, or soloist if the choir can not manage the Icel. words.

O, Guð vors lands. (use two or three verses) (all face Fjallkona)

13. Commentary As we thus salute the Fjallkona with deep gratitude, we also hail with loyalty and high hopes our own land, America. We pledge ourselves anew to make her "the land of the free", in spirit and in truth, and we give not only our physical resources to enhance her greatness, but we also lay our spiritual heritage of law, liberty and literature at her feet, so that she may use it ever wisely for her children and for the whole world's weaker children.

(all turn and faced Uncle Sam etc, while the choir sings "The Star Spangled Banner, or My America.

THE END.

Notes on the pageant

March 28, 1950 The Hon Sigurdson Chapter, I.O.D.E. presented a colorful pageant on the history and heritage of the Icelandic people, for the purpose of raising money for the Chair of Icelandic at the University of Manitoba. The pageant was written, produced and directed by Mrs. Holmfridur Danielson, and was presented in the concert hall of the First Lutheran Church, Winnipeg, Canada.

Following the presentation Dr. P.H.T Thorlakson, chairman of the Icelandic Chair Committee, and Dr. Gillson, president of the U. of Man. came to Mrs. Danielson and expressed the idea that in view of the excellence of this artistic production, they would like to see it made into a permanent record, by taking moving pictures of the pageant and putting the commentary with choir and incidental music on a disc, wire recorder or other sound recording equipment. He contacted Dr. Larus A. Sigurdson and entrusted the whole project to him and Mrs. Danielson - the effort of carrying out this recorded production.

After consultation Mrs. Danielson decided it would be effective to have the pageant filmed in a series of still pictures taken of the various tableaux in the pageant, rather than a moving picture.

It was a strenuous task for Mrs. Danielson to set up the whole operation once more, gather up all the costumes, properties etc. and contact all the per-

sons of the pageant: the endless phone class, trips and adjustments that have to be made when one is trying, at short notice, to get together a large group of people, all with various interest of their own. But Mrs. Danielson had good co-operation from the Regent, Mrs. Benson and the committee chairman, Mrs. Isfeld, so all went well with the small quota of mishaps one learns to expect, and handle as they come.

On Sunday, April 16, the stage was once more set up in the F.L. Church, a professional photographer was on hand and a series of 14 pictures was taken, both in color and black and white. The colored ones were then developed as slides to show at concerts in aid of the Chair in Icelandic, with the commentary, choir and incidental music (which was recorded the following Sunday). Dr. Thorlakson then suggested that the slides and recorded version of the pageant should be deposited in the archives of the University, pertaining to the Chair, and a complete copy sent to Iceland as a valuable cultural contribution in connection with the Chair campaign. After the full afternoon session on April 16, Mrs. Benson treated the whole group to nice refreshments.

The recording session with the choir etc. was held at the home of Mrs. Isfeld, who treated all to fine refreshments.

The pageant, in its recorded form, was then presented at Gimli and again in Winnipeg. Altogether the proceeds from all these showings almost made up the total of the thousand dollars that the Jon Sigurdson Chapter had pledged to the Icelandic Chair financial campaign, as the chapter is one of the Founders.

The presentation of the Pageant was a great success both financially and artistically, and did much to enhance the prestige of the Icelandic people of Winnipeg. In 1951 when the Y.M.C.A. was holding a three-day festival to celebrate their hundredth anniversary, various Ethnic groups were asked to participate, and Mrs. Danielson was asked to present her pageant, which she did. It was considered the outstanding esthetic performance of the whole festival.

The Utah Pageant.

In 1954, when the Icelandic Association was preparing for their momentous three-day festival to commemorate the Centennial, Mr. Bearnson wrote to Mrs. Danielson inviting her to bring the Pageant to Utah for the occasion. This was out of the question, owing to the tremendous expense, etc. So she undertook to write and produce a similar pageant for them, based of course on their own history and circumstances. In order to do this she studied up thoroughly on Utah history, the history of the Church of Latter Day Saints, and the history of the pioneer Icelanders in Utah.

Early in 1955 Mrs. Danielson sent to Utah, her script of the pageant, together with words and music of the songs, and requirements for personnel, choir, commentator, etc. Later she progressively sent instructions as required and asked them to pick the songs that would particularly be representative of their Church, and history. June 1st, 1955 Mrs. Danielson went to Utah to produce and direct the Pageant, and worked with the group for two weeks. It was a fabulous two weeks with wonderfully interesting activities.

All the papers of the near-by towns carried full coverage on the preparations for the Festival and big write-ups about Mrs. Danielson, the Canadian Dramatist who was coming to Utah to lend her time and talents to this joyous occasion. So did the Salt Lake City papers. Mrs. Danielson was invited to ~~WXXXXX~~ Salt Lake City four times for television appearances, with various sections of the groups participating.

Mrs. Danielson had supplies detailed cues for all aspects of the presentation: Light cues, music cues, movements cues, commentary cues, etc., so everything went without a hitch.

7

The Pageant was presented June 16, 1955 in the auditorium of the Palmyra Stake House in Spanish Fork, Utah. *With a huge stage 40 feet across and 22 feet deep, the auditorium is* It holds 2000 people and was full to overflowing. As the first tones of the Soloist who sang "O, Guð vors lands" broke upon the ~~XXXX~~ audience it was indeed an impressive sight (and sound) when that large mass of people rose spontaneously from their seats in reverent attention. The pageant was widely lauded in all the papers and innumerable pictures taken. Unfortunately most of the pictures had to be taken following the presentation as Mrs. Danielson asked the photographers not to disrupt the performance with continuous picture taking during the *presentation*. The costumes were most beautiful, the lighting was the most extraordinary and effective, the commentary was dramatically done by a very able man with a beautiful resonant voice. The large choir was stationed below the stage to the right, and the singing was glorious.

Altogether it was a most satisfying and beautiful production, and the people on the committee of the festival were overwhelmed with this wonderful show.

It would take too much space to describe all the costumes, properties etc. but they were simply perfect.

Later Mrs. Danielson received letters of thanks from various members of the committee:

From Mark and Lucille Johnson: "We wish to compliment you and add our personal appreciation for your splendid contribution to the centennial celebration. The pageant was a consistent work of art, and most effective in honoring the worthy pioneers, and will bring you much admiration and affection..... I am sending you some of the innumerable newspaper notices".

From Lois B. Christianson: ".... but I think the sweetest memories will come from our associations with people like you. We thoroughly enjoyed having you here aside from the wonderful work you did with the pageant. It was fine and beautiful.... Good luck with your many cultural activities, and God bless you".

From Thor Leifson : I am taking this opportunity once more to compliment you on the outstanding part you played in making the celebration such a great success..... "

From John Y. Bearnson, chairman of the committee: "This letter is directed to you by us all for the purpose of expressing our deepest appreciation for your great accomplishment in behalf of the Centennial. The Pageant itself, The Symbol of Iceland, as compiled and directed by you, will live in the memories of the 2000 people who witnessed its portrayal.... It was a unique production, one that we are sure you must feel proud of having guided, to such a splendid fruition. We hear nothing but high praise for its fine and artistic direction. I hope sure, that the people in Winnipeg and Canada appreciate your keen intellect and unusual ability, as we do here in Utah.... Again thank you for your generous and worthwhile project. It went a long way to enhance our Centennial and help to bring it to the high plane, which it enjoyed."

MRS. DANIELSON INVITED TO UTAH CELEBRATION



Mrs. H. F. Danielson

Winnipeg people in general, and Icelandic folk in particular, can take pride in the fact that Mrs. H. F. Danielson, of 869 Garfield street, has written a historical pageant for the centenary celebration in Spanish Fork, Utah, to commemorate the arrival of the first Icelandic immigrants in the United States. The celebration will be held June 15, 16 and 17, but Mrs. Danielson left June 1st to act as advisor on the production of the pageant.

She tells me that the pageant will be featured by appropriate scenery music and costumes, and will portray the migration of Icelandic settlers to America, bringing with them their culture, traditions and skills to their adopted country while retaining a

deep reverence for the literary heritage Iceland has given the world.

A member of the Manitoba Drama League, Mrs. Danielson has been active in drama circles for a number of years, both as director and actress. She directed and took the major role in the play from Arborg, Man., which won the top award in the first Manitoba Drama festival. In 1953 she was awarded the league scholarship for the six-weeks' course in drama at the Banff school of fine arts.

She has given radio talks and directed youth groups in drama and choral work in various parts of Manitoba and in the Icelandic community of North Dakota. She was editor of the Icelandic Canadian magazine for seven years and organized and directed the Icelandic Canadian Evening School, in Winnipeg, for the study of the literature and language. The first year's series of lectures given at the school were published in a book, Iceland's Thousand Years, which has been sold to universities and cultural organizations all over the world.

This versatile Winnipeg lady also conducted drama and choral groups for the Dominion Provincial Youth training schools in 1937 and 1938 and prepared a pamphlet on drama study which was mimeographed and used in these schools in various parts of Canada.

She has written and produced short sketches, pageants and a two-act play

which was performed in Arborg, Gimli and Winnipeg. She wrote and produced the pageant, The Symbol of Iceland, which was performed at the three-day folk festival sponsored by the YMCA at the centenary in 1951. The same pageant has been performed in aid of the foundation fund for the

Icelandic Chair at the University of Manitoba. It has been recorded in colored film strips, with the music and commentary on an accompanying tape record, for preservation in the Icelandic archives of the university.

—Frank Morriss
in the Wpg. Free Press

Young Pianist



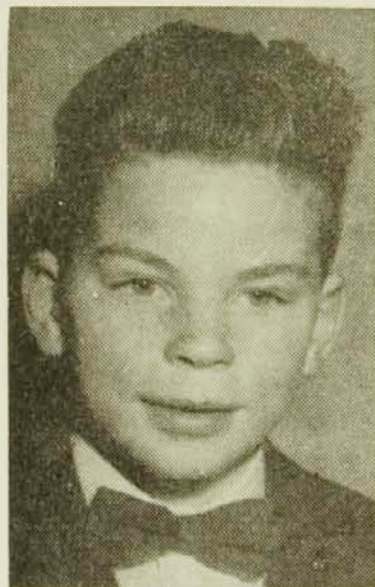
Thelma Kerrine Wilson

—Courtesy Winnipeg Tribune

Thelma Kerrine Wilson, eight, winner of the Grade 2 class at the festival, is the daughter of Mr and Mrs. (nee Thelma Guttormsson) J. Kerr Wilson, of 356 Kingston Crescent.

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ICELANDIC CANADIAN**

Family Tradition



Carlisle Wilson

—Courtesy Winnipeg Free Press.

Carlisle Wilson, 10, 356 Kingston Crescent, St. Vital, wasn't going to let his sister get ahead of him so he topped the Violin grade two solo class Saturday morning at the festival with an 83. His sister Kerrine set the standard by winning the piano solo, grade two.

★

Gloria Solvason won second place in the Grade two violin solo at the recent Winnipeg Musical Festival. She is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Stefan Solvason, 686 Mulvey Ave., Winnipeg.

Icelandic Centenary In Utah

Just around the time that the *Icelandic Canadian* goes to press, the descendants of the first Icelandic immigrants to the United States will be celebrating the hundredth anniversary of the coming of the first Icelanders to Spanish Fork, Utah, in the year 1855.

This was just eight years after the first vanguard of Mormon settlers had, fleeing from persecution in mid-western States, trekked across the barren desert, for over twelve hundred miles, to find a haven of refuge in what was then a desolate waste land. They called their new homeland Deseret, and it comprised all of Utah, and large sections of the adjoining territory.

We, who know something of the courage, fortitude, faith and dauntless endurance of the Icelandic pioneers in general, cannot help but feel a great upsurge of pride and a sense of achievement, as we picture the first three Icelanders who plodded across that burning desert, in 1855. True to their tradition, their descendants are today among outstanding leaders in enterprise and culture, in their communities.

That the Icelanders who came to Utah, were embraced into a brotherhood of kindred spirits cannot be doubted, for when we read the story of the brave people who conquered the desert and made it blossom like the rose, we realize that here was a people whose foresight, endurance, ideals and faith matched that of our own kinfolk who have given of their best in intelligence, skill and selflessness, so that future generations may reap richly the reward of their labours.

As with our own Icelandic pioneers, the uppermost thought in the minds of the first Latter Day Saints who came to Deseret was to build schools, and establish centres of religious worship. Not only did they build schools, but a mere three years after the first immigrants came in 1847, they had established a university. To be sure it was housed in a poor building and lacked almost all material necessities, but it was the answer to the high ideals of the settlers for it was a seat of higher learning, and around it they could build their varied cultural activities.

While they were busy building culturally, they worked at transforming the desert into flourishing cultivated land. The settlers in Deseret were the first in the United States to use irrigation for the cultivation of land. The fruits of their labours, physical as well as spiritual, are everywhere evident today in Utah, and further afield. And the Icelandic settlers, had a hand in all this glorious building of a western empire. But, few as they were, they kept faith with their own Icelandic traditions, and have to a remarkable extent kept up their ties with Icelandic culture, in spite of a hundred years of isolation from direct contact with Iceland or with other Icelandic settlements on this continent.

Anyone who has read of the elaborate plans that have been made for the Centenary celebration in Spanish Fork, June 15-17, will realize how closely the Utah Icelanders have kept in touch with their Icelandic heritage. It is further evident that, few as they are, they have the vision, courage and

generosity of spirit, to commemorate this important milestone in their history with fitting magnificence, and sparing no expense.

For Western Icelanders everywhere, this event in Spanish Fork is indeed of great significance, and we rejoice with the descendants of the Icelanders there on this historic occasion. We know that Icelanders everywhere will be with them in spirit during the three-day celebrations, and many hundreds of their kinsmen will be there to congratulate them and to wish them continued success in all their enterprises. Not only will the celebration be an

outstanding event in itself, it will serve to knit closer together all the Icelandic communities on this continent; and the effort being made by the Utah Icelanders to perpetuate their Icelandic heritage will perhaps serve as a stimulant to other communities to redouble their own efforts in the cultural field.

The *Icelandic Canadian* congratulates the Utah Icelanders on this happy occasion and wishes them success with the celebration and with all their interesting enterprises and endeavours.

Holmfridur Danielson



In The Editor's Confidence

THE ICELANDIC CANADIAN wishes to express to THE AMERICAN SCANDINAVIAN REVIEW its sincere appreciation for many past and present favors. This splendid publication has always shown a willingness to assist us by every means within its power. We hope that somehow we shall be able to reciprocate.

We extend greetings to our sister publication, FÉLAGSBLAÐIÐ, published by the Icelandic-American Association of Los Angeles. The sense of kinship we feel for each other is the direct result of the similarity of our aims.

FÉLAGSBLAÐIÐ is published in English, but the Icelandic connection is maintained by articles about Iceland and by headings in the Icelandic language, such as 'Ferðamenn' and

'Samtíningur'. Considerable space is devoted to news regarding the activities of the members of the Icelandic community in Los Angeles.

A great deal of credit is due to Mrs. G. M. Thorwaldson, the editor and business manager, for her efforts, which must take a great deal of her time.

In a letter published in the spring issue of this year the suggestion is made that there be published a translation by Dr. T. J. Oleson of the article *Romans in Iceland* from Kristján Eldjárn's GENGIÐ Á REKA. Unfortunately we cannot comply with this request, as this article has been translated and was published in a previous issue of THE AMERICAN SCANDINAVIAN REVIEW.

As our readers will recall, the first

Toronto Club Studies Icelandic Literature

Ever since we organized the Icelandic Canadian Evening School in 1944, it has been our personal privilege and pleasure to be of assistance to individuals and clubs in various parts of this continent, who wished to enhance their knowledge about Iceland and the Icelandic history, literature and language.

A sort of private correspondence school has been operating for the last ten years, with various types of material on Icelandic history and culture going out to these groups of interested persons. This has included books and pamphlets, maps, dictionaries, typewritten addresses, and hundreds of copies of the language lessons that were prepared for the Evening school originally. We have also been able to aid teachers with recordings, poetry samples and translations for use in classroom work, and school broadcasts. Students have received a large variety of material, and many of these in various parts of Canada and the United States have written theses on Icelandic matters, or on the Icelandic settlements in America. Requests have come for material and language lessons from as far away as Hawaii.

It was of great interest to us to hear about a Literary Club in Toronto, composed of non-Icelandic women, who wished to take on the study of Icelandic literature as a project for last season. When Mrs. Marjorie Blackadar, a member of this Toronto Club, known as the Monday Club, contacted us for material on Iceland we were delighted to send her a variety of mimeographed and typewritten material on hand, as well as such

advice we could give, along with lists of books on Iceland published in the English language. Later we asked Mrs. Blackadar to tell us a little about their interesting project.

The following are a few excerpts from her letter.

"Mrs. Young and I belong to a Literary Club, a study group, known as the Monday Club. It was organized in 1913 by a group of young women with a keen appreciation for literature, and the avowed purpose of each member to undertake a bit of research each season and of sharing it with fellow members. . . . It is an interesting group, as we have as members artists, musicians, teachers, craftsmen, and writers, and we meet twice a month for study and discussions from October to April each year. . . . Some of us have been members for twenty-five years or more.

"You will appreciate that in this length of time a great many subjects have engaged the attention of the members. We have had papers on Scandinavian literature, mythology, and on the literature of New Canadians, all of which have touched on Icelandic literature.

"However, so far as I could find out, the Club had never made a study of Icelandic literature as such. I made two abortive efforts to include it on the programme—while doing some reading myself and becoming more interested all the time. Last year our programme was "elective", an innovation for us, and Mrs. Young and I decided our papers would be by way of an INTRODUCTION to Icelandic culture.

"If you think our little effort is sufficiently important to interest your readers, we would of course be honoured to have it brought to their attention in the **Icelandic Canadian**.

"Our papers were well received and created a lively interest, moreover we responded to a request for a sort of command performance by another group to which we belong. They, also were very enthusiastic, and one of them we discovered has a cousin who wrote her college thesis in Icelandic.

"I think the reason the Club had hitherto hesitated to undertake a study of Icelandic literature, has been because of the idea that resource material, translations etc., are so hard to come by. Where do we start, we asked ourselves, and how do we organize such a study?

"Well, I went to the reference library and found the subject much vaster than I had realized. . . . and then I came upon the book, **Iceland's Thousand Years**. That of course was the answer to our problem and I used it extensively. I sent to you for a couple of extra copies and for copies of the **Icelandic Canadian**, and was most happy to receive these and the other material you sent me.

"My own little library includes Dr. Pilcher's **Icelandic Christian Classics**, and his **Meditations on the Passion**. The **Story of Burnt Njal**, and the **Grettir Saga**; **Modern Sagas**, (Walters) and many of Mrs. Salverson's books. From the library we had: **Icelandic Sagas** (Craigie) **North American Book of Icelandic Verse** (Kirkconnell) **Canadian Overtones** (same author) **History of Iceland** (Gjerset); **Independent People** (Laxness) **New World Outpost** (Rothery) and **Land of the Loon** (Yeats). More recently we came by the books, **Iceland New-Old Republic** (Amy Jensen) and **Iceland and the Ice-**

landers, by Helgi P. Briem. We also had all the articles you listed in the **Geographics**. In our bibliography we also included eight or ten of the Cornell Press publications on Iceland, and Dr Einarsson's **Grammar**.

"My interest in Icelandic literature had been keen for a long time and in addition my curiosity was piqued by the conflicting opinions prevalent when the Canadian troops were in Iceland. Later my nephew, Dr. A. K. Blackadar, (New York University Faculty) was stationed in Iceland for two years and was most enthusiastic. At that time he was a young Captain in the U.S. Airforce in the Meteorological Branch. I have another link with the great Northland, Dr. Robert Blackadar, a Canadian, (University of Toronto) is a geologist attached to the Federal Government's Arctic Exploration Division. He spends his summers in the Arctic. Year before last he and another lad were on Ellesmere Island and located one of Peary's caches, and a bit of the American flag, etc."

Mrs. Blackadar in her letter describes more in detail this splendid cultural project of Icelandic studies, undertaken by a group of non-Icelandic enthusiasts. This outstanding effort as well as some others that have been mentioned in the **Icelandic Canadian**, notably the project undertaken by Miss Marion Henderson, a school teacher at Iroquois Falls, Ont. (See **Icel. Can.** Vol. 7, No. 3) should bring home to us who are of Icelandic origin, how much we could do, and what a joy it could be, to spend some time and effort individually or in groups, to really acquaint ourselves with our Icelandic History and literature, past and present, and to make an effort to study the language, as well.

We have always held the view that

learning about our own background and delving into the intriguing past of our Icelandic heritage should never be looked upon as a **chore or duty**, but rather as a delightful adventure of the mind and the spirit. And who is it among us that is not willing to sacrifice a few moments of his leisure time to improve his mind, to enhance his knowledge, to broaden his vision? Not one, surely, so we feel that in our surge towards more knowledge, more understanding, more joy in creative living we should indeed, wish to devote some time to the study of our own ancestry.

That is why we consider that it has, for the last ten years, been a rewarding task to aid in every way, all those who have come to us for help in their study of Icelandic history, literature and language, whether they have been of Icelandic origin or not. And we think that the readers of the Icelandic Canadian cannot help but feel a thrill when they read about such efforts as this one by the Monday Club of Toronto. It will be a spur to their own enthusiasm and efforts in this sphere of study.

Holmfridur Danielson

Gala Occasion

The Hans Ortner residence on Haldane Avenue in Whittier was the scene of a very pleasant gathering Sunday afternoon, April 24. The occasion was manifold. In the first place, the Ortners had been married forty years on the third of February. In the second place they had recently moved into this beautiful area in Whittier, so it was a sort of housewarming too. Another event is that Mr. Ortner will celebrate his 75th birthday late in May. As a climax to all this, the Ortners are planning a trip to Iceland and Germany this summer.

Friends arrived from San Diego to La Canada to pay homage to this couple who have never considered time nor money too great a sacrifice if someone needed assistance in some manner. Their many deeds of kindness have earned the deep esteem that prompted their many friends to gather at their home to express their deep appreciation. A delicious lunch was served by the self-invited guests, followed by a program consisting of

community singing, and an original poem written for the occasion by Mr. Ed Scheving of San Diego. The Ortners were presented with a gift from the group. They responded with well-chosen words.

From "Félagsblaðið," Los Angeles

★

Jón Kristgeirson, an instructor in the elementary schools in Iceland, spent a year in this country studying the methods used here in our public schools. He spent nearly a week in the city as a guest of the Nils Lansings. —"Félagsblaðið", Los Angeles

★

We have heard of a few in this area who are making plans for visiting Iceland this summer. Mrs. Sumi Swanson left New York on April 6th. Cards received by several of her friends around the end of April were postmarked in Paris. Needless to say, she is having a glorious trip. Mr. Swanson will meet her in Iceland about the beginning of July. —"Félagsblaðið", Los Angeles

TO SOME OF THE READERS OF THE ICELANDIC CANADIAN MAGAZINE

To celebrate my wife's 45 years' work in the interest of Icelandic culture , as actress, director, writer, speaker, organizer and teacher, I decided to gather together into one book some of her main articles and speeches that have been published in the Icelandic Canadian and other publications. (There will be only one copy of this book made)

For many years it has been my ambition to have a complete index made for the whole of the Icelandic Canadian Magazine, but this is a tremendous undertaking and may never get done. In the meantime while I was lining up the material for Mrs. Danielson's book I thought it would come in handy for owners of a full set of the magazine to have this partial index. It contains much historical material as well as other information, that will prove useful as source material, for during her seven years as Editor-in-Chief, Mrs. Danielson wrote a high percentage of the main articles as well as scores of feature stories of historical significance, the material for which she gathered together from all over America.

I am sending a copy of this index to Libraries, Universities and a few individuals whom I know to have interest in these matters. I hope it will be useful in finding some relevant material in the Icelandic Canadian and the other publications that are mentioned.

Hjalmur F. Danielson,
Business and Circulation Manager,
The Icelandic Canadian Magazine.

ESSAYS, HISTORICAL ARTICLES and SPEECHES

Collected from The Icelandic Canadian, Timarit of The Icelandic National League, Árdís
and other publications.

Volume One

by

HOLMFRIDUR DANIELSON

Former President of The Icelandic Canadian Club; Editor in Chief of The Icelandic Canadian
1947 to 1953; Life member Manitoba Drama League, Provincial Chapter I.O.D.E. and the Jón
Sigurdson Chapter I.O.D.E.; Vice President Manitoba Drama League.

Volume Two

by

HJALMUR F. DANIELSON, B.Sc.A.

Business and Circulation Manager: The Icelandic Canadian

Winnipeg, Manitoba, October 1966

INDEX

Essays, Historical Articles and Speeches, collected from The Icelandic Canadian, Tímarit of the Icelandic National League, Árdís, and other publications, made into one book.

Volume One

by

HOLMFRIDUR DANIELSON

Amphitheater of Democracy, Autumn 1943	1
The Road (Vegurinn, by D.S.), Summer 1946	7
Pioneer Mother, a story, Autumn 1946	9
Christmas Memory, a poem, Winter 1946	17
Hobnobbing with hobbies, Summer 1947	25
Kate B. Carter, Summer 1947	29
Lundar Diamond Jubilee, Autumn 1947	33
The Artist and The Man, Spring 1948	39
The Vikings Come to Iroquois Falls, Spring 1949	100
A Lover of Ships, Summer 1949	112
The Enchanted Coach, Autumn 1949	116
A New Venture in Music, Spring 1950	127
Adventures of the Artistic Mind, Summer 1950	130
Pageant on Icelandic Culture, Summer 1950	136
Icelandic Paintings Exhibited in Springville Utah, Summer 1950	139
Abiding Interest in Music, Summer 1950	146
Nordal's Royal Colwood Pottery, Autumn 1950	152
Memorial Museum Opened in Utah, Autumn 1950	159
75th Anniversary of Winnipeg Commemorated, Winter 1950	161
Bronze Plaque by Winnipeg Artist, Winter 1950	164
Gudrun Borgford Pesnicak Tells About Stay in Japan, Winter 1950	168
Playhouse Concert to mark Important Milestone, Spring, 1951	168
Dr. Niels Finsen, Discoverer of Artificial Sunlight, by H. F. D. and H. D., Summer 1951	177
Versatile Musician at Gimli, Spring 1951	187
Thordarson Reunion in North Dakota, Autumn 1951	189
Christmas Carols, Winter 1951	197
A County Squire in North Dakota, Spring 1952	204
Succeeds in Radio and Movies, Spring 1952	209
An Experiment in Education, Summer 1953	222
Hall of Fame For Mrs. Carter, Spring 1953	227

Leona Oddstad Gordon Sings at Hawaii, Spring 1954	235 & 246
Utah Icelanders Celebrate Centennary, Spring & Summer 1955.....	237, 241, 243
Toronto Club Studies Icelandic Literature, Summer 1955	244
Eminent Icelandic American Opera Singer, Winter 1957	247
Icelandic Canadian Makes Violins, Spring 1962	252
Albert Thorvaldsen, Sculptor, Tímarit, Icel. Nat. League 1964	257
Nokkrir Vestur-Íslenzkir Listamenn, Tímarit, Icel. Nat. League 1951	274
Sigurður Guðmundsson Málari, og íslensk Menning, Heimskringla and Lögberg, May 20, 1954, Alþýðublaðið, July 9, 1954.....	310
Glimpses of a Trip to Iceland, Heimskringla, Oct. 30, 1940	314
Ávarp Fjallkonunnar at Gimli, August 1, 1949	326
Iceland and its Progress, an address given at "Zonta International", Conference at Fargo, North Dakota, Nov. 3, 1953, which covered the Northern States of the U.S.A. and all Canada. The Zonta International is an amalgamation of Business and Professional Womens' Clubs all over the world.	323
Iceland an introduction to the Pageant: "The Symbol of Iceland" presented at the Centennial Celebration at Spanish Fork, Utah, June 15, 16, 17, 1955	346
Nýjar Leiðir, Árdís, 1934	352
Úr Ævisögu Helen Keller, Árdís 1944	356
Nýárs Hugleiðingar, Árdís, 1937,	367
Pánkabrot Úr Íslands Ferð, Árdís 1939	370
Symbol of Iceland,—An Historical Pageant, presented at the Centennial Celebration in Utah, 1955	380

Volume Two

HJALMUR F. DANIELSON, B.Sc.A.

Iceland's Golden Age Literature, A Brief Survey of How It Was First Introduced to the World, Icel. Can., Spring and Summer 1956	1
The Celebrated Island of Iona, Icel. Can., Summer 1958	15
The Ancient Schools of Ireland, Summer 1963; Eimreiðin LXX Árg. page 2, translated by Þóroddur Guðmundsson; Lögberg-Heimskringla, June 18 and 25, 1964	20
Kynning Gullaldarrita Íslendinga Út Á Við, Tímarit, Icel. N. L. 1957	29
Flensborgarför Framars Flokksforingja, Únga Íland, May, 1908	46

News Items Of Historical Significance

VOLUME ONE — CONTINUED

News From Utah, Winter 1946.....	20; 84
Salute to Our Readers, Summer 1947	23
Hobnobbing With Hobbies, Summer 1947	25 and 45
Keeko, The Children's Book, Winter 1947	38
Boss Johnson, Premier of British Columbia, Summer 1948	44
Palmason New York Recital, Autumn 1948	49
Eylands Family Comes Home, Autumn 1948.....	52
At the End of Ninety Years, Autumn 1948	54
Music Collection, Spring 1948	55
Dr. Jón Stefánson's Memory Honored, Winter 1948	57
Member's Corner, Summer, 1948	45, 61, 105
Sigurdson's Launch a Community Enterprise, Winter 1948	58
Folk Festival in St. Paul, Autumn 1947	59
"Fanny" and "Lukka" For Iceland, Autumn 1948	68
Guttormur J. Guttormsson Honored, Winter 1948	69
In The News, Summer 1948	71, 81
Two Charming Visitors, Summer 1948	74
Eight-year Old Virtuoso, Summer 1948	80
Places Third in Miss Canada Contest, Winter 1948	88
Arinbjorn Bardal, Winter 1948	89
Thora Asgeirsson, Winter 1948	90
Icelandic Girl at Lucia Festival, Summer 1949	103
Dedication at Blaine, Summer 1949	108
Vilhjalmur Stefansson, Spring 1949	109
First Icelandic Girl Born in Winnipeg, Summer 1949	114
Gudrun Olgeirson, R. N., Autumn 1949	121
Memorial Home at Mountain, North Dakota, Winter 1950	124
Gudmundur Gudbrandson Carpenter, Summer 1950	148
Musicians in Winnipeg, Autumn 1950	155
A Musical Family, Summer 1950	174
Linda Hallson at Playhouse Theater, Winter 1950	176
Dr. Páll Ísólffsson, Winter 1951	199
Dr. Rúnólfur Marteinsson, Winter 1951	201
G. Gottfred, Summer 1952	210
Rev. Friðrik Friðriksson, Summer 1952	212
Eva Clare and Her Icelandic Students, Summer 1952	213
Outstanding Students From Iceland, Summer 1952	215

S. K. Hall and His Music, Summer 1952	217
Helgason Lyrics on the Radio, Autumn 1952	218
Balance Between Mind and Matter, Winter 1952	220
Wins Playwright Contest, (Lauga Geir), Summer 1955	239
Icelandic Centenary in Utah, Summer 1955	241
Mrs. Danielson Invited to Utah Celebration (Free Press), Summer 1955	243
News Item: Mrs. Danielson Granted Life Membership in the Provincial Chapter I.O.D.E., Summer 1961	251
Interesting Family, Winter 1963	255
