

The Story of Hans Jakob, the only Norwegian-American Lynching

Å ja, dæ var en nabo, je får sca, hær sãm vart hængt en fæmti år sea. Je trur Well, there was a neighbor, I'll have to call him, who was hanged about fifty dæ ein fæmti år sea i hæust. Å hainn var modi slæmm. Naboa var ræidd n da, alle-years ago. I think it was 51 yrs. this fall. He was plenty bad. The neighbors were samman; dem var ræidd n fær an -- va ræidd n skulle jæra nå gæli. Å så skulle dem all scared of him, scared that he might do something wrong. So they started off one sta skræm n da tur-- (EH Hva hadde han gjort?) Å, han hadde--han hadde vøri på sla-time to frighten him away-- (What had he done?) Well, he had been to prison before, veri før, \*åv kårs, å så hadde n -- han sålto \*grubb deinn tia tell bion hær, døm sål-of course, and then he had -- he sold grub at that time to the town, they sold grub-te \*grubb-- (EH Hva mener du med det?) \*Grubb, dæ var dæ dem \*grubbe opp dæ isteille-- (EH What do you mean by that?) Grub, that was what they grubbed up to use fær ve, da vet du, breinne kakugrubb vi kaltø. \*Kakugrubben deinn va brønn-- er i as wood, you know, burn "cake grub" as we used to say. Cake grub was burn-- is a lann som bir brønnin ne å brønnin åver å åver, så bir dæ ein kakugrubb brei som det-land that gets burned down and burned over and over until there is a cake grub as te hær. Å da måtte dem hæugge opp deinn fær å finna rota mitt unner kakugrubben. broad as this. Then they had to chop it up to find the root under the cake grub. Da tog dm dessa \*pisa n høugg opp dær, å så sålto dem de på \*ståra da, veit du, å som-Then they took these pieces and chopped them up, and then they sold them to the me stan kunne dæ væra en stor grubb å veit du me. Å dær visste dem itte orde tå fær stores, and sometimes they were quite large. And there all of a sudden a store in ell dæ høill på å bles opp i \*står ni Blær hær som an hadde bårå inni me en navar å Blair was about to blow up because he had bored a hole into a grub with an auger and så hatt i krut. Å så ha n sliji ti en tapp dær, å så rett som dæ var dem var innpå put in gunpowder. He had put in a plug, and right while they were in the store; \*ståri, så bles \*ståven i hundre filler, å døm untres på å dæ var \*æksplode dæ i \*ståven. the stove blew in a hundred shreds, and they wondered what had exploded in the stove. Å dæ binne dem å sjå åver \*grubb-pailen som låg ute da: Da fainn em to \*grubber teill So then they began to look over the grub pile that lay outside. There they found 2 dær som var teill-laga å skull blås opp mæ. Å denne mainnen var modi slæmm, han var grubs which were prepared for exploding. Oh, that man was plenty bad, he was awful fælt lei. Så var dæ \*kjærmann hær i taone hær, hainn skulle--hainn var mæ, hainn å, mean. Then the chairman of our town here, he was going to -- he was along too, and åsså skull m gå dit engong å så skræm n hær i frå, i frå dette la--køntri hær. Så they were going to go there once and scare him away, away from this la-- country jikk dm ditt, han levde ni en dal, neri slue el ni en dal. Så sto dæ i stort tre here. So they went there, he lived down in a valley, down in a slough or valley. Teint nea dæ gamle huse att dær. Å da jikk dem i døra å så spørde dem n om n ville So there was a big tree right down by the old house. And they went to the door and gå ifrå hær, alles så skull m ta fatt på n. "Nei," sa n, "je går itte hær i frå," asked him if he would go away, otherwise they would take hold of him. "No," said he, sa n, "je har vøri på alaveri," sa n, "je har gått ut -- ut dæ je har -- tjont ut dæ I won't go away. I've been to prison," he said, "I've gone out -- what I have -- je har -- straffa fær dæ je served out what I have -- punished for what I.

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har jort," sa n. "Væl, vil du itte reise," sa dem, "så tæger vi dæ ut å så sætter did," he said. "Well, if you won't go," they said, "then we'll take you out and vi på dæ i reip." Så jikk dem beint inn i sænga, å tog n beint tu sængen om natta, put a rope on you." So they went straight to his bed, took him right out of his å så bar dm n ut å sætte på i stort -- i reip da, så kaste dem reipe åver en grein bed at night, carried him out and put a big rope on him, and threw the rope over som stakk ut på tree, å så tog dem i vægen å så binne å dra n i vere, drog n i vere a branch that stuck out on the tree, and so they began to pull him up, pulled him å så slæfte dem n ne å så spurde dem n om n ville gå da. Nei, han ville itte gå, up and let him down, and so they asked him if he would leave. No, he wouldn't sa n, han ville itte gå. Så drog dem n opp att ijænn, å slæfte n ne att. Kjær-leave, he said, he wouldn't leave. So they pulled him up again, and let him down. Inga sto å glåmne på. Å da spurde dem n på nitt om n ville gå. Nei, han ville His wife stood looking on. And then they asked him again if he would leave. No, he itte gå dærifrå. Da dræiv m på å drog å drog tæll dæ--tæll slutten så vart n wouldn't go away. Then they kept on pulling and pulling, until at last he remained hængen i veri dæu, da. Å je var dær æi stønn etterpå, så ha m drigi reipe så dæ hanging in the air dead. I was there a while later, and then they had pulled the var ei jup skure i kvisten dær som reipe ha <sup>\*</sup>slaida att å fram da, jup skure i rope so that there was a deep incision in the branch where the rope had slid back kvisten. Da var dæ to ifrå Blær hær som sprang <sup>ne</sup> å så mælte dem da. Døm slapp fri, and forth. Then there were two from Blair here who ran down and reported them. They men di andre læut bettala hundre, je trur dæ var hundre å nitten el tjugu <sup>\*</sup>dala escaped, but the others had to pya a hundred, I think it was a hundred and nineteen vær, å en fæmm el sæks tå dem som kom på slaveri, dem var dær i fæmm år, på slaveri. or twenty dollars, and five or six of them went to prison, they were there for five (EH Men hva syntes folk for det meste om dette her?) Å, døm fækk i gætt ord hær runt, years, in prison. (But what did people mostly think of it?) Oh, they got a good rep- dem vart reidde fælk runnom Blær hær. Fær je å bror min reste ut i Minnesota å ar- utation, they got scared of people from Blair here. For I and my brother went out beidde på en brækkjard. Dætta var da ful kansje trædve år etterpå. Meinn da spurde to Minnesota and worked in a brick yard. This must have been all of 30 yrs. later. dem om vi var ifrå Blær, Viskånsen. "Ja," sa je, "vi er dæ." "De må vera mye <sup>\*</sup>råffe They asked us if we were Blair, Wis. "Yes," said I, "we are." "There must be lots fælk dær runt," sa n. "Ja, de kan vel heinne de ha vøri før," sa je, "men je ha itte of rough people around there," said he. "Well, maybe there used to be," said I, "but visst om næe slekt akkerat nå," sa je. <sup>\*</sup>"Væl, dem hængne en mainn--tog en mainn bæint I haven't known about it just now," said I. "Well, they hanged a man, took him right ut tu sænga å så hængne dem n," sa n. "Ja, dem jorde dæ," sa je, "men mainnen va out of bed and hanged him," said he. "Yes, they did so," said I, "but the man was stiggene lei," sa je, "de brann op en <sup>\*</sup>bale som em klæma han hadde jort, da, vet du, terribly mean," said I, "a barn burned up which they claimed he had caused, you see, en bale som brann opp næ kuen låg breint ihæl dær. Så <sup>\*</sup>klæime dem hainn hadde jort a barn that burned up so the cows lay there burned to death. Then they claimed he de da vet du. Han var færferdele slæmm, deinn Hans Jakob," he had done it you see. He was awful mean, that Hans Jacob,"

NORWEGIAN-AMERICAN DIALECT SAMPLE. Recorded by Winfield Krostu, born in Waupaca Co. Wis., 1884. Parents immigrated from Bygland, Setesdal, 1861. Recorded in Scandinavia, Wis., Sep. 16, 1942. Youth of an American Setesdøl

Eg va føtt i Våpækka Kaanti, Taon áv Farmington, i ári atten hundra feir á feirs. I was born in Waupaca County, Town of Farmington, in the year 1884. My parents Fårel dri va føtt i Nárge á kám ti detti landi i atten hundre á ain á træss. Dæ ha were born in Norway and came to this country in 1861. They had a little boy who ain liten gute so va fødd i Nárge, men den dœ på sjœn. Dá dæ kám ti detti landi, was born in Norway, but he died on the ocean. When they came to this country, they dá settla dæ på en homstede som e no Taon áv Farmington. På denne homsteden va settled on a homestead in what is now Town of Farmington. On this homestead there dær ølleve bonn sãm va fødde, á ieg va den yngsti. Dá eg va gamale nog te gå på skule were eleven children born, and I was the youngest. When I was old enough to go to li, så djekk eg på skuli borti et áiris-setlament so di kadda Sjørtn, á du vai kos school, I went to school in an Irish settlement which they called Sheridan, and you dæ áirisan æ ti sláast. Á ja, dá jikk dæ fælt, ska e sai dikká. Ja, dá e had jenje know how the Irish are to fight. You bet, those were tough days, I tell you. Well, på skuli dier ti eg var em trættn ár, så sænte dæ meg på ain tjørtjœskuli som dæ when I had gone to school there until I was about thirteen years old, they sent me kadda Ákadimien. Dier jekk eg ti og var i sytten ár, men så mátt eg tibakers på far- to a church school which they called the Academy. There I went until I was 17, but men á arbai på farmen. Á ja, dá ska eg sai deg mi arbaidde om dagan, á som me drakk then I had to go back to the farm. Then I'll tell you we worked in the daytime, but á slost om nettan. Du vai sætesdœlingen, dai hev store staina á tjempekara! Dá eg how we drank and fought at night. You know, the Setesdœls, they have big rocks and blai út i tjugefárs-alderon, dá for eg mæ ássá raise på freieri. Så fann eg meg ai powerful men! When I got into my twenties, I started to go a-courting. I found a rikti feine djente uppi ain leiten bœye som dæ kadda Skannavi, á fair henní han var real fine-looking girl up in a little town which they call Scandinavia, and her fa- en stárkipari. Men du vai dæ laiaste som va var ho ha to små systa, á når e kám på ther was a store-keeper. But the worst of it was that she had two small sisters, and freieri, so vil ikje dessi små jentun leddje sek. Á du vai koss di æ, dá tæcke when I came courting, these little girls wouldn't go to bed. Well, you know how it du me deg noko kændi liksãm ti lákkemate, á så vil dai sitje uppi á iete kændi. Men is, you take along some candy as a bribe, and then they want to sit up and eat cardy. så tækt eg mæ meg sjœle, e sill finne på êkort. Så sa eg dæ me dæ, at den sãm fyste But then I thought to myself, I'll figure out a way. So I said to them that the one kan avklæ seg ska fá fæn sânt. Ja, så bœjntedæ te á riv av seká klæin så at nappan who can get undressed first will get five cents. Then they started tearing off their fœuk. Men dá ska eg sai deg at gamla tok fat á meg får at småjentun raiv sunde klæ- clothes so the buttons flew. But then I'll tell you the old lady got hold of me for in si. Mæ djenta fækk eg lik væl. Så blai mi djipte i ári nitten hundre á tretten getting the girls to tear their clothes to pieces. But I got the girl just the same. opi en liten bœye sãm dæ kaddar Hákens. Dá me ha no blitt jipte, á me ha hatt So we got married in 1913 in a little town they call Hawkins. When we were married, kvelds-mate, så kjæm hornaran. Á ja, dai slo på sagi á dæ ringla bjœllu á dæ skœut. and had had supper, the charivariers came. They made music on saws, rang bells, and Ja, så mátt eg ut á je dæ noko pœning, så at dæ kunn fá kjœpt seg noko øl. shot off guns. So I had to go out and give them some money, so they could buy some beer.