

*May pictures: The log cabin where my siblings and I were born. Picture taken shortly before we took it down in preparation for building our house. Cattle in spring. Fjords at work.*

Once in a while, most of us have heard the question, "Where were you born?" Sometimes, the inquirer is really asking if one is a native of a particular country, state, or area. But when I answer the query with "Right here," I really mean it. I don't mean just the U.S., or Michigan, or even our home county. If we are here in our house, I truly mean RIGHT HERE. Because I was born at home, and our cabin is the third little house on this same site.

The first house on this knoll was built by my great-grandparents, Lars and Benedicta Augustineson. After the farm house replaced it as a family dwelling when my grandparents were raising their family, the old cabin was used for a farm blacksmith shop. In time, fire destroyed the building.

After my parents were married, they built a little cherry house in the same spot. My brother, sister, and I were all born in that house. So, without even slightly diluting the truth, I can say that I was born in a log cabin.

I was only a couple of months old when we moved to the farm house with my grandmother. She was no longer able to live alone. Our house then stood vacant. In time, logs and roof deteriorated, and nobody had the money in hard times to keep up two houses. So, in the middle 1970s, when Runo and I were going to build a house, we chose this spot. We would have liked to have saved the log cabin, but it was not in good enough shape to restore, so it came down, and we built our little house on the same spot.

When we dug the basement for our house, we not only removed the concrete from the previous cabin, but we also dug along the walls of the original log basement. These timbers were still intact in places. We put in a new block basement and built our little house.

I guess I don't have a lot of wanderlust in my makeup, because I take pleasure and comfort in sitting here at the round oak table, writing this newsletter just about a dozen feet from where I was born. I look out

the window at the pasture that is presently occupied by our draft team of Norwegian Fjord horses, and I like knowing that it was the first field cleared by my great-grandparents. And, when people ask me where I was born, I enjoy saying, "Right here," and meaning it in the most literal sense.