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# MANFRED HISTORY AND PRESERVATION

P.O. Box 321 Harvey, North Dakota 58341

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## Greetings from Manfred!

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## Rasmus and Margit Jacobson

Husband's Full Name: Rasmus Jacobson

Husband's Place of Birth: Norway

Husband's Father's Name: unknown

Husband's Mother's Name: unknown

Husband's Siblings' Names: Severin Jacobson Ekrem, and Sina Jacobson

Wife's Full Name: Margit Gulliksdotter Nordtorp Jacobson

Wife's Place of Birth: Heggenes, Valdres, Norway

Wife's Father's Name: Gullik Rønjusson Nordtorp

Wife's Mother's Name: Ragnhild Olsdotter Hegge Nordtorp

Wife's Siblings' Names: Ingrid, Ingebjorg, Bergit, Jennie, Oscar, John, Anne, Hilda, and Gladys

Children's Names: James Jacobson, Gladys Jacobson

## Rasmus and Margit Jacobson

Rasmus Jacobson accepted the position as buyer at the O & M Elevator in August of 1905. He married Margaret Nordtorp on May 4, 1907. They were the first couple to be married at Vang Lutheran Church. Rasmus' brother and sister, Severen and Agnes served as their attendants.

From 1907 to 1917 Rasmus and Margaret lived in the white corner house in Manfred, which was later occupied by the Ostrems.

Their son James was born in 1908 with Bertha Melby attending the birth. A daughter Gladys died in infancy.

The family moved to Fairview, Montana in 1917, where Rasmus acquired elevators and had farming interests.

Margaret (1885 - 1948) Gladys (1909-1909), and Rasmus (1872-1960) are buried at the Vang Cemetery.

Their son James who always considered Manfred "his home", became a senior vice-president at Chase Manhattan Bank, NY and was highly recognized for his executive and international achievements. James died in 1992.

## James Arthur Jacobson (son)

James Arthur Jacobson, 84, a retired banking executive whose government efforts during World War II helped spur China's wartime production, died Sunday at Bryn Mawr Terrace, PA, where he resided. He died of congestive heart failure and Alzheimer's on May 3, 1992 - he was born Feb 1, 1908. He lived in South Orange, New Jersey until 1990 when he moved to Bryn Mawr, PA. He made annual trips to North Dakota to see his aunts and cousins for many years. He also traveled to Norway to visit his father's family several times.

Between his work with the War Production Board and his position as head of the international department of the old Chase National Bank, Mr. Jacobson was ever on the move. He once estimated that he had traveled around the world 53 times.

James was born in Manfred, to Rasmus and Margaret (Nordtorp) Jacobson. Bertha Melby delivered James and was the first person to hold him. The Jacobson house is the corner house (across from Bertha's "new" house). James kept a picture of this house on his desk "so I always remember my roots."

Mr. Jacobson grew up in Fairview, MT. He attended Spokane Academy and graduated from St. Olaf College in Northfield, MN in 1929. James was a good friend of Ole Rolvaag's son. (Ole wrote Giant's of the Earth and other novels regarding the immigrant's experiences). James received a master's degree from Harvard's business school in 1931. He was awarded an honorary doctorate from St. Olaf College.

He went to work for Chase National Bank in 1931 and soon after was directing most of the institution's Far East operations.

During WW II, Mr. Jacobson served the War Production Board as a special assistant to director Donald Nelson, undertaking assignments in Great Britain, Mexico, and China. He accompanied a delegation that included Vice President Henry A. Wallace and Gen. Patrick J. Hurley to the Soviet Union, India, China, and other Eastern nations to coordinate Allied war production.

Next he was appointed by President Franklin D. Roosevelt as a special liaison officer to increase the Chinese nationalist government's output of war materials. Stationed in Chungking, he and Wong Wen Hao, minister of economics of China, developed a system for the assembly of American-made trucks that were flown in unassembled over the Himalayas from India. He also organized the manufacture of bayonets for rifles.

For his efforts, Mr. Jacobson was awarded China's Medal of Honor, the nation's highest award by Gen. Chiang Kai-shek.

Returning to the Chase bank after the war, Mr. Jacobson spent many more months in the East, especially in Shanghai, but also in Japan, Thailand and the Philippines. He retired in 1973 as the senior vice president in charge of all banking operations outside the United States. (His social circle included the Rockefeller from the bank.)

Mr. Jacobson was director emeritus of the Research Corp., a New York-based foundation that finances research in chemistry and physics. He was also a director of Research Cottrell, Inc. and a member of the Japan Society, the Asia Society and the Council of Commerce and Industry in New York. He was a member of the Merion Cricket Club and the Merion Golf Club, the Harvard Business School Club and the Church of the Redeemer in Bryn Mawr.

Mr. Jacobson was an avid and talented fly fisherman - an avocation he pursued in all parts of the world.

Surviving are his second wife, Marion Onderdonk Cole, stepdaughters Patricia Onderdonk Pruett and Adrienne Onderdonk Dudden and four step grand children. Cousins of James are children of Oscar and Bertha Melby and Anna (Ekrem) Bymoer of New Rockford. James' first wife was Norma Ayres, she died Oct 17, 1982.

James had many priceless gifts from his work and travels that were of museum quality. He met with leaders of various countries, including Nehru, Ghandi, and the President of the Philippines. James was also influential in starting the Dr. Tom Dooley Foundation to help Dr. Tom Dooley in Viet Nam (A book was written by Dr. Dooley). James had many personal letters and photos from Dr. Dooley.

