

Wald Family Histories

Collected by Allen H Wald

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Abstract

The first known history of our family was written in 1939 titled: "The Wald History" by Cleva Darling. I am aware of several errors in Cleva's work. I hope that I have been able to bring out the truth where evidence was available. Nevertheless, I am not so proud as to suggest that any of my work will be found perfect in the end. The stories here are based upon the documents I have found, and where possible I have tried to include copies of the originals or at least a credible reference. Please feel free to contact me and let me know what you think.

The earliest Norwegian immigrants in our family came to the Fox River Settlement in Illinois during the mid 1850's. During the 1860's they moved to Iowa and were among the first to homestead near the towns of Cambridge and Slater in Story county. The original family farm was actually on the northern most boarder of Polk county close to Cambridge. Our grandfather, Ferdinand Oliver Wald, was born 27 July, 1896 in Fertile Iowa (a cousin to Cleva Darling). Ferdinand married Velma Howe on 31 December, 1925. On his birth records from Fertile Iowa his last name was originally written "Wold". This name was later crossed out and changed to "Wald" in the county court records. Ferdinand's father was named Ole Olson Wold, and signed his name "O. O. Wold". He was a Lutheran minister who served in Moreland Illinois for two years, and then in Fertile Iowa and surrounding towns for fifteen years. He died of pneumonia in 1908 and left behind his wife Augusta and eight children. The youngest, Oletta, was born after he died. Pastor Wold's parents came to America with the great Norwegian immigration of the 19th century. His father, Ole J. Olsen Wold (Vold), came from the township of Årdal in Rogaland county, Norway. His mother, Udbjørg Bertine Andersdatter Gaard (Bertha Gaard), came from the island of Tømmerøya, also in Rogaland county. On 7 July, in the year 1891, O. O. Wold married Augusta Simerson from Belmond Iowa, daughter of Frederick Simerson (Simonsen) Molstad and Pernille Larsdatter Bratten. Both of Augusta's parents were born within the Veldre parish, in Hedmark county, Norway. In the church book from Veldre it states that Pernille and Frederick left for America in 1867, just four days after being married. The records of their family can be found in the Norwegian bygdebok for Veldre where there is a rich family history. There you will read of Pernille's family lines which can be followed back to King Håkon V Magnussen who was king of Norway from 1299 to 1319. We have also discovered another royal lineage in the Gaard family lines. This family can be traced back to Gard Tøresen, b. 1373, who was Lagmann (literally: 'law man', modern equivalent: high court judge) for that entire region. His family history includes many royal lines including the 'Holy Birgitta' of Sweden.

At the time of this publication, the gedcom files containing known family pedigrees can be found online at the following address:

<<http://www.rootsweb.com/>>

Please feel free to use my email or check out our family history site:

<allenwald@yahoo.com>

<www.oooald.org>



¹Our Wald family name comes from the beautiful valleys of Ryfylke fjord and the ancient farms of rural Årdal, Norway. Today you will still find a farm there called Vadla, which in earlier times was spelled Walde or Valle. Many of our ancestors lived on Vadla as well as a neighboring farm called Valheim or Wallem. At one time Valheim was part of Vadla, but today they are separate farms. There are several individual farms and dwellings that were given variants of these names, and many similar spellings were used through the centuries. The letters 'V' and 'W' were often used interchangeably in ancient Norwegian documents and would sound the same when spoken.

We know from Årdal histories that our great great grandfather, Ole J. Olsen, b. 1831, was raised in a dwelling called Vold or Volden. This is the specific origin of our name. Ole came to America in 1854, and the surnames Vold, Wold and Wald are all found in documents that originated here. His birth was recorded in the Årdal kirkbok where his father was called Ole Iversen Volden. The place, Volden, was not part of the larger Vadla group, but it was close in location. The family at that time was poor. Folklore from Årdal tells of one individual they called 'Spel-Ola' who was notorious for his ability to 'spelle' which means 'to play', and his skill was with the fiddle. Spel-Ola also loved to drink and was not above thievery to make his livelihood. After a questionable carrier he was sent to prison for stealing several items from the local people including three copper cheese kettles and a bull. Ole was sentenced to five years hard labor. In 1860 he died of tuberculosis while still in prison, and he left behind eight

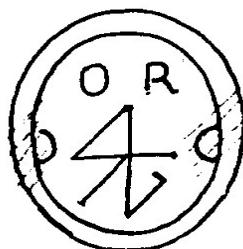
¹

This calligraphy was penned in the year 1680 where it represents the actual place of our Wald heritage. There are many examples of such artful writing in the various land and tax records of these early times. Often these are the only records we have of the people who lived then.

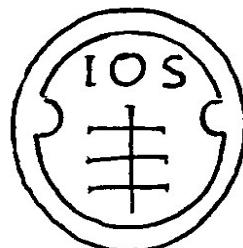
children and a wife. We know from the record of the prison priest at Kristiansand tukthus that Spel-Ola was indeed the same person as Ole Iversen Volden, b. 1808. Also in that folklore it describes their home as “an old smoke-house with a turf-ed-roof on the meadow between the oldest school-house and Lonn”. The Norwegian word ‘vold’ means ‘a meadow or a field’. The story tells that the dwelling they called Volden was torn down when the property was sold in 1861. Therefore, the place of our family’s origin no longer exists.

Nevertheless, the Wald name also follows from the greater history of these farms of Årdal, and many of those places do still exist. Spel-Ola’s father was called Iver Olsen Lillemoe, b. 1773, because he lived at Lillemoe which means ‘little mountain’. The farm records tell us that Lillemoe was part of Valheim and also part of Vadla. Iver’s birth record tells that his father was called Ole Wallem, b.~1754. There is a confirmation record for Ole Iversen Valde, age 16 in 1770. This was likely the same individual. The church records before 1760 were lost, so there is very little known of the earlier generations. A probate record from 1778 lists Ole Wallem as the son of Iver Olsen and Lisbet Halvorsdatter Valle. In 1762 the same place was called Valheim. This Iver would have been born about 1730. There is evidence that he owned part of the land that he farmed even though he and later generations were all called ‘huusmand’ which means they were tenant farmers. Census and tax records from 1701 and earlier list men with similar names at these same places, but there is little to tie the generations together and nothing about the women. In 1701 we find Olle Olssen age 25 on Walde and Ifwdr Olssen age 54 on Wallem. In 1663 we find another Olle with a son named Olle on Valle, no ages given, and two men named Iffuer on Vallim. In 1665 we again find Ole Olsen on Valle, no age given, and Iffuer on Vallin age 60. This Iffuer (b.~1605) is the earliest known ancestor of the Wald paternal line given the assumption that the family lines from this place are in some way contiguous. With these early generations evidence is sparse.

For those interested, you can look on a map or view these places using satellite photos. Just look north and east of Stavanger for Årdal, Hjelmeland and Finnøy. The Gaard farm on the island of Talgje, part of Finnøy, was another place where many of our ancestors lived. Most of these farms are kept today just as they were hundreds of years ago. Even the original church building at Årdal still stands.



Ola Vadla.
1668.



Ivar Valheim.
1669.

The Wald History by Cleva Darling

Written in 1939

Norway, the most democratic kingdom, occupies the western part of Europe. It is a little larger than New Mexico. There are no privileged classes and no order of nobility;² and in no country are there so many great statesmen, professional men, and scientists of peasant birth.

It was here, in the middle of the eighteenth century, in the little town of Ordahl³ that Iver Lillemo was born and lived all his life. He married and had one child named Ole Peter Vold, our direct ancestor. Ole married Siri--and they had eight children: Ole J.; Sarah; Torkel; Gurina; Peter; Martha; Oley; and Andrew.

Of these children not all is known. Oley chose the name Dahl because of coming from Ordahl. He came to the United States and bought a bakery in Indianola, Iowa. He married a Louder girl of Indianola and they had two children, Ella and Charles. Ella married a Mr. Gilbert. After his death she married Mr. Mathis and they had one child, Virginia. Virginia had stage ambitions and little is known of her.

Sarah and Gurina also came to the United States and both settled in Illinois. Sarah married a man from Esmond, Illinois and had one girl who married Ludwig Burg. She has six children. Gurina married Mr. Olson. They had two children: Regina, who married Hulver Warren of Eagle Grove, Iowa, and had three children; and Andrew K. who lived at Cambridge, Iowa, married and had four children-- Ella, Mary, James, and Ollie.

Torkel (or Tom as was his nickname), married a Swede girl from Boone, Iowa. They moved to Omaha, Nebraska and there three children were born. His wife never gave up her ambition to be an actress and began training the children for the stage when they were very young. One day Tom said he was going up town for a couple of hours. He never returned, nor did the family ever hear from him again. The family moved to the Western Coast where the children went on the stage.

² In earlier times there were the poorer class called huusmand or cottagers who usually did not own the land and held no family rights to the land where they lived and worked. There were also various royalty and nobleman classes as well as military classes.

³ Årdal, pronounced: [Or-dahl].

Little of Peter and Andrew is known except they left Norway and went to Germany to seek their fortune.

Martha--ah, Martha loved not wisely but too well. One of the children, Ole Miller came to America and served in the Spanish American War. He never married and the last heard of him, he was in the Old Soldiers Home in Crookston, Minnesota.

The children of Iver Lillemo's families learned to work at an early age. There was always much sewing, weaving, and knitting by the girls; and the boys went out on the fiord with their father to fish. The waters of the fiord are too deep to freeze so that work went on the year around. Most of the fish were sold; but some was salted and dried to be used at home. Farming was the principal occupation of the family.

But there were good times too. Occasionally they met at homes of their friends; and their weddings were always a big occasion.

The Scandinavians are a religious people and Norway has the reputation of being the most Christian and the most Protestant country in the world. Every Sunday they would all don their best attire and go to church. The women and girls wearing their dark, full skirted dresses and shawls made a beautiful picture as they walked along the road.

Christmas was always a gala occasion. There was extra feed of all kinds for the stock and the birds. Carols were sung and the story of the Christ child told over and over again. The gifts were distributed. These were usually practical, such as clothing, but none the less appreciated.

Then there were the big dinners. Lutefisk⁴ being the main dish with potato cakes, lefsa, kringla and probably komla. Of course, the Helliga Yule rice was never forgotten. They also had preserves from the berries that had been found in the woods.

The children were sent to school as soon as they were permitted. Every hamlet had its parochial school, as public schools weren't so common. Here the minister taught them to read and write, and they studied the Bible around the fireplace at night. Legends of the skalds or early bards were told and many other songs and poems.

Taking up our ancestors on the Gaard side, which is our great grandmother's side, we have Andrew Olson Gaard, who was married twice. His first wife was Margreta Gaard and there were three children: Ole, who married Christena Meling; Elsie who died quite young; and Olous who drowned as a young boy after he slipped while walking on a cliff by a fiord. Before help could come, he fell into the ocean and drowned.

⁴ Lutefisk: Cod fish, treated in a lye solution and served boiled. Literal translation: "Lye (boiled) fish". Lefsa: (lefse) A thin pancake from rolled dough served buttered and folded, and sometimes sugared. Kringla: (kringle) A rolled, round, or twisted--pretzel shaped pastry. Komla: A type of candy. Helliga Yule rice: "Sacred Christmas rice".

Margreta died, and Andrew married again. We find that our grandmother is a child of this marriage. His second wife, Sarah Haanda, and Andrew had eight children, all of whom married. Margreta married Nels Jorstad. Sarah married Lars Larson and they had no children. Olous had four children, Andrew had two, and Theodore had two. Bertha Hubert married Ole J. Wald and they had nine children. Malein married John Hanson and had six children. Helena married Jorgen Gangness and they had six children also. Andrew's second children and their descendants still reside in Norway.

We find things were easier for Andrew Gaard's family than for the Iver Lillemo family. He had inherited some money and with perseverance had accumulated enough money and land to be considered well-to-do. He gave the children the best education within his means. The girls were sent to sewing school, which is the same as college in our day; and the boys were taught the rudiments of farming for he intended to start them out when they desired to make homes of their own.

Andrew Gaard build and furnished a nice home. One of the nicest things about this home was a parlor. A parlor was a luxury in those days. Only the wealthy could afford them so this family was the envy and admiration of the country.

After Margreta had been married for a while, they heard of the many opportunities in America, and as times were harder, decided to come to this country. But Margreta was loathe to go to this strange land without some of the immediate family so she prevailed upon her parents, and Helena and Bertha were permitted to accompany her. So in the year of about 1850 they started for America.

It was a long, tiresome journey, but they finally reached the United States, and then went to Morris, Illinois, where there was a large Scandinavian community. Here Margreta and her husband moved on a farm. But Margreta was not to enjoy this new land for long. She became sick and after a long illness, died.

Ole J. Wald with two brothers, Torkel and Oley, also decided to try their luck in America. They were tired of the sea and so many of their friends had written back to tell of the rich black soil that grew crops in abundance, that being of an adventurous nature, they made their plans to come. They also came to Morris, Illinois.

These boys and girls were never to see their native land again. Here Bertha and Ole J. met and after a short courtship were married in Ottawa, Illinois, in 1854 and moved to a farm between Ottawa and Morris. It was here they had four of their children; Sarah in 1857; Susie in 1860; Oley in 1861; and Andrew in 1863.

This farm was small and stories were coming in of the rich land at low prices in Iowa. But it was far away; still it would be wonderful to have a place of their own. So by hard work and diligent saving, after a few years, they had almost enough for a farm.

One day a stranger came through the country. He had been in Iowa and bought a farm. He told of its location, the nearness to market and neighbors. Ole listened and knew that this was what he wanted. He found the man was willing to sell and soon the deal was completed. The hard earned money of the Wald family had been exchanged for a deed to land they knew nothing about.

Ole began to have misgivings about the deal and decided to see the farm. He made the trip and was far from disappointed. Hurrying home, he began to prepare for the westward journey. They loaded their possessions into a covered wagon; and hitching their two horses, their only livestock, they set out for their new home in the early spring of 1865. Towns were far apart, but Ole hunted for wild game so there was always plenty of fresh meat. The roads were poor and at places practically impassable, but they seldom lacked a house in which to sleep, or assistance when needed. Many of the families along the way were only too glad to exchange a night's lodging to the weary travelers for news of "back East".

Finally, after several weeks of tedious traveling, they reached Story County. Here they stayed with friends until a log house could be built. Then the long, hard work of clearing the fields began.

The first year, just small fields of corn and small grain were seeded. Since there were few pieces of machinery, the work was done by hand. The fields were marked off in rows in both directions for the corn and then holes were dug at these intersections and the corn planted. In the fall the small grain was cut by hand, then a flail was used for threshing it. Many a hot afternoon, the younger boys stood in the field with a sling shot to keep the cranes and crows away from the fresh young shoots.

The men and boys were not the only ones who were busy. The girls got up just as early. Their days were spent in sewing, knitting and preserving or drying fruits for the long, cold winter months. The fruits could easily be found in the woods, and the wool for knitting had to be cleaned and carded in the home.

More children were also added to the family: Severen on December 10, 1865; Martin on October 11, 1869; Bessie on November 9, 1872; Burton on December 25, 1875; and Marie on January 10, 1879.

When Burton was a baby, a new frame house was built. Before this, there had been just a two room log house with the children sleeping in the loft, so the new house was something to be proud of.

In the evenings and on rainy days, Ole repaired harnesses and sharpened the tools or made wooden shoes; these were more practical and cheaper for the fast growing children. Bertha sat near, sewing or knitting, telling the children stories of the childhood in Norway.

Although Ole Sr. had always been a follower of Bacchus in a mild form, in later years he grew worse. As in all cases like this, he became abusive, insisting on bringing his crowd in the home. This was too much for the children, who wanted to keep their good social position in the community. Finally these Bacchanalian revels would last several weeks at a time, so the children had Bertha get a divorce.

Bertha and the children stayed on the farm and Ole went to Humboldt County where he stayed most of the time, the rest of his life. He died in May of 1906⁵.

When the children began to grow up, it was Sarah (the oldest in the family) who went ahead with the sewing and management of the home. She also gave sewing lessons, which was her work until all the children were grown. Then she married Hector Auestad in July 1899, and they lived in Slater, Iowa, where she died in January, 1929.

With Sarah to help her mother, Susie, the next child could work out. She worked in Minneapolis for many years, then went to Omaha, Nebraska. Here she met Charley Anderson and they were married in Omaha. They made their home in Omaha, Des Moines, and finally moved to Slater, where she lived until her death in 1930.

Bertha managed the farm to the best of her ability, with the children to help her, which must have been plenty good, for they all had plenty. She never acquired an extensive use of the American language, so most of the conversation at home was in her native tongue. In later years she seldom talked of Norway, but one wonders if she didn't sometimes wish she could visit the land of her youth. Of course, she would not wish to stay since all her children were here. She died August 19, 1899.

Andrew and Oley helped on the farm. They helped with the field work in the spring, summer, and fall, but in the winter they hunted to supply fresh meat for the table. There was always plenty of beef and pork. To keep the meat, the beef was dried and the pork salted.

When Severen was old enough to help with the work, Oley (the oldest boy), decided to study for the ministry. He went to Minneapolis. After he had graduated, he married Augusta Simerson on July 8, 1891. Then they went to Fertile, Iowa to preach. He stayed there until his death on January 18, 1908.

Oley and Augusta had eight children. Bertilla was born March 29, 1892. Alvah was born April 4, 1894. Both graduated from high school and taught for several years, then went to Business College. After the family moved to Minneapolis, they got stenographic positions and resided at home.

⁵

Ole J.'s actual death date is June 1908; (from Humboldt county records).

Ferdinand, born July 27, 1896, married Velma Howe on December 31, 1925. They had five children: Fred, born September 20, 1927; Oletta, born May 19, 1930; Leonard, born December 15, 1933; Gordon born August 17, 1935 and died March 13, 1938; and Lorna, born February 14, 1941. They reside in Salt Lake City, Utah.

Joseph, born September 30, 1898, graduated from high school and attended Minnesota University. He then went to New York City to work but returned to St. Paul. He married Ruth Gibson on June 24, 1934. They had five children: Leon, born September 13, 1935; Kenneth, born March 18, 1939; Karen, born March 25, 1943; Janet, born April 1, 1944; and James, born January 8, 1949.

Burton, born February 8, 1901, also graduated from Minnesota University. He married Evelyn Gulden in January of 1939. He works for the Toastmaster Co. in Elgin, Illinois, where they reside.

Ina was born July 18, 1903, and graduated from Minnesota University. She taught a number of years, then left for California where she furthered her work in Home Economics, taking up tearoom management.

Reuben, born September 25, 1905, also graduated from Minnesota University. He married and has three daughters: Kay Larae, born March 7, 1939; DeEtta Bea, born May 15, 1942; and Rona Lee, born August 25, 1945. They live in Portland, Oregon.

Oletta was born August 22, 1908. She graduated from a Minneapolis high school and attended Augsburg College in Minneapolis. She has taught in Minnesota high schools and is very outstanding in her work in art.

Andrew, the fourth child of Ole J. and Bertha's family, married Clara Hansen. He moved to another farm. There, they had four children: Archibald, Meranda, Cora, and Charlotte. Then leaving Charlotte with some relatives at Eagle Grove who raised her, the family moved to Calamette, Oregon, where he did truck farming. There five more children were born: Theodore; Burton; Harold; Raymond; and Barbara. Archibald now lives in Santa Clara, California. Meranda married a Mr. Bower and lives in West Linn, Oregon. Theodore and Cora both live in Portland, Oregon. Charlotte married Orville Boughton of Eagle Grove, Iowa, and had one child, Patricia. Charlotte died in 1938. Barbara died when a child, and Raymond was killed by a train in December of 1933. Andrew died in 1905 and his wife and most of the children reside in Oregon.

Severin was born in December 1865, and was the third boy. He also helped with the farm work, but early in life decided he wanted to study law. Not having all the money necessary, he took and passed an examination to teach. He taught school in the winter months and worked in the harvest fields of Minnesota during the summer. After several years he had acquired enough to go to college.

He entered Iowa Business College in 1895 and then entered Drake University and finished in 1897. He then married Minnie Johnson and they moved to Slater where he began the practice of law. They had seven children: Curtis, born April 13, 1900, is married to Elinore Sydness. They live in Des Moines and have three children: Mary Louise, Kenneth, and Jeanne. Curtis works for Central Life Insurance Co.

Lowell was born on September 9, 1902. He was in the army for a while and is now at home.

Roscoe was born March 20, 1904. He attended Iowa State College where he graduated. He married Lillian Bergren and they have three children: Bonita, Joan, and Robert. Roscoe taught for several years at Neola, Iowa, and is now Superintendent at Defiance, Iowa.

Bonnie was born May 12, 1906, and married Jack Reinertson. She lives in Slater and has one boy, Jimmie.

Doris Minnie was born August 25, 1908 and only stayed with the family three weeks.

Melba was born January 27, 1910. She married A.A. Olson and has one boy, Lee.

Laura, born August 11, 1912, married Merle Horn and has one daughter, Sharon Kay. She lives in Rockford, Illinois.

All of Severin's children attended high school in Slater, Iowa and all finished there.

Next in order comes Martin, who was born October 11, 1869. He helped at home, too, but when he was about seventeen, he went to Omaha and worked and then went to Humboldt County. He married Myrta Fowler in 1896 and then he went to Oklahoma, then back to Iowa where he lived nineteen years. Deciding that Minnesota was where he next wanted to live, he stayed there six years but returned to Runnels, Iowa, where he lived just two years before his death on March 22, 1939.

Martin and Myrta had seven daughters, the oldest dying in infancy.

Cleva Bevine was born September 25, 1898. She taught school seventeen years, which certainly is a wonderful record. She married Homer Darling in 1935 and lives on a farm near Runnels, Iowa.

Marjorie Opal, born March 10, 1901, taught school five years. She married Arthur Kabrick in 1926. She has two children, Ordean and Sharon Lee. They live on a farm near Cylinder, Iowa.

LaVona Jeraldine was born May 25, 1903, taught school nine years, and married Ray Lees. She has a daughter, Margaret and lives in Des Moines, Iowa.

Frances Melva was born October 25, 1905. She taught eleven years, then married Dgbert Helland in 1935 and they have one son. She now lives in Rodman, Iowa, where her husband is a teacher in the high school. These four girls graduated from Harley High School and attended Iowa colleges.

Lilith Esther, born April 19, 1908, graduated from Patterson High School. She attended Iowa State Teacher's College for three and a half years and then began teaching. She has taught nine years and a half and now teaches in Elkhart, Iowa. She married Fred Brown.

Urcela Delores, born April 17, 1919, graduated from high school at Lakefield, Minnesota, and attended Simpson College and Iowa State College. She married a Mr. Coventry.

Bessie, the next child after Martin, was born November 9, 1872. She attended Highland Park College in Des Moines and Iowa State Teacher's College at Cedar Falls. She taught school until her marriage to Andrew Maland in 1900. They moved to Slater where Andrew was editor of the Slater News. They had two children, Ella and Obert.

Ella was born August 22, 1901. She graduated from Slater High School and attended Drake University. After her graduation she taught several years but because of ill health had to give it up. She entered Sunnyslope Sanatorium and spent several years there. After her recovery, she entered the Deaconess Home in Omaha and is now located in Denver.

Obert, born March 27, 1904, also graduated from Slater High School. He attended Iowa State Teacher's College. He worked with his father for awhile, then went to Minneapolis where he has since lived. He married Tena Larson and they have two children, Betty and Marie.

Burton, the youngest boy, was born November 20, 1875. He attended Iowa State Teacher's College at Cedar Falls and taught for several years. He then decided to study for the ministry and entered Augsburg Seminary in Minneapolis. It was while there that he became ill with typhoid fever and passed away on December 13, 1900.

Marie, born January 10, 1879,⁶ the youngest daughter, was full of vitality. She loved to be with people and have fun. She worked in Des Moines for a few years and then with her mother moved to Slater, where she and her older sister, Sarah, established a dressmaking shop. She married Clarence Clark, who was manager of the creamery at Slater. They had eight children, one dying in infancy. All of the children attended and graduated from grade school and all but Marium graduated from high school. Marium will graduate in the spring of 1940.

Ralph, born March 19, 1904, attended Iowa State College at Ames, Iowa, then went to work in the creamery. In 1929 he married Hazel Hoop. They make their home in Slater where Ralph is now manager of the creamery since his father's death.

Bessie, born December 22, 1905, was destined to brighten the home for only a short time, and died September 18, 1906.

Maylo was born August 7, 1907. She attended Capital City Commercial College in Des Moines and then worked for three years in the offices at Iowa State College. She married Morrill Nervig in 1928 and they have two boys, Paul and Clark. They now live in Slater, Iowa.

Oriett, born March 20, 1909, attended University of Commerce in Des Moines where she affiliated with Gamma Delta Chi sorority. She also worked at Iowa State College for six years, then became dental assistant for Dr. Buck at Ames where she still works.

Marshall was born September 9, 1910. After graduation from high school he went to work in the creamery where he still works. He is interested in music and sings with a quartet over different radio stations.

⁶ The birth of this child was found in the churchbook for the Palistine congregation of Story county Iowa, pg. 5-6, born 10 January, 1879, named Anna Maria, mother Sofia J. Olsen (unmarried), witnesses: Bertha Nyhru, Bertha Olsen, Serine Olsen, O.O. Olsen, A.O. Olsen

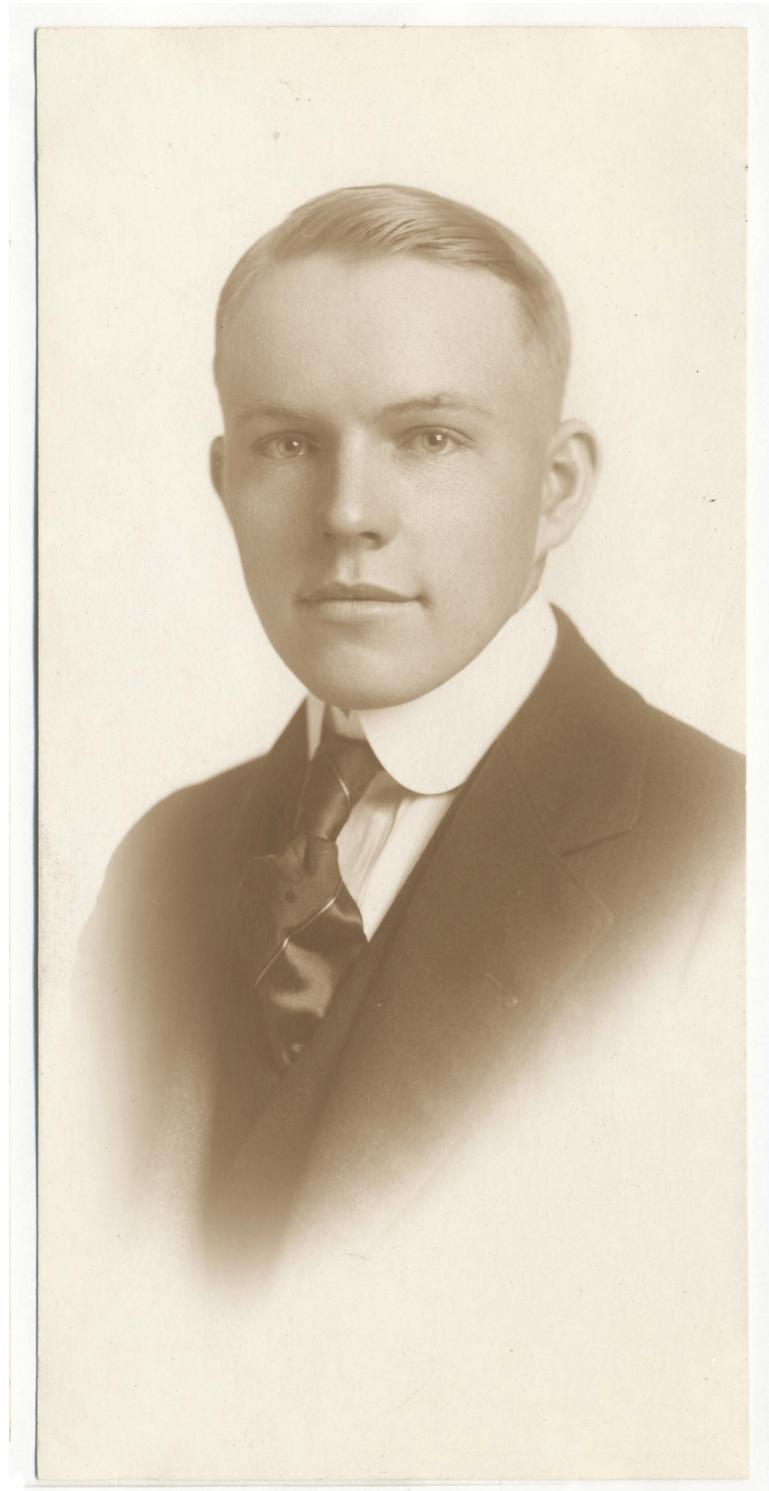
Maylo Nervig, daughter of Anna Maria, stated to me personally that Anna Maria was not the daughter of Charles Andersen. Maylo told me that her mother had confided this to her before she died and that she was the only one who knew that this was true. Maylo told me that Anna Maria's mother, Sophia Olson Wold went to Des Moines to work as a seamstress, and it was there that she "got in trouble" with a Swede man. The name of Anna Maria's true father is not known. The family of Ole J. and Bertha took the child in and raised her as their own. All of the children accepted Anna Maria as one of their siblings, and that is the way it always was. When Cleva Darling wrote the family history in 1839 Anna Maria was then listed as the youngest child of Ole J. and Bertha. Maylo asked me to make it known that Anna Maria wanted to always be considered a Wald, and so she always will be.

Robert was born April 23, 1912. He also worked in the creamery during the summer months and then full time after graduating from high school. He married Edwinna Ramsey and has one son, John.

Jessie Mae was born August 17, 1915. She finished high school and attended Simpson College where she affiliated with Delta Delta Delta sorority. After finishing college, she began teaching school at Ralston, Iowa, where she has been the past two years.

Marium was born April 3, 1921. She attends Slater High School where she will be a senior next fall. She is drum major in the Slater band and also plays basketball.

This concludes our line of the family history. Probably none of us will be long remembered nor considered great, but we make up the average American family, with our small successes and failures. It is hoped that each one in his own way has made the way a little bit smoother for someone else.



Ferdinand Oliver Wald

I Remember My Childhood By Ferdinand Oliver Wald

I was born in the little town of Fertile, Iowa, July 27, 1896, the third of eight children. My earliest recollection of my childhood was when I was about three years old and was sitting in the high chair in the kitchen when the cat came running in with her kittens. Mother made a dash for the cat, knocked the high chair over and I fell against the table, cutting the top rim of my ear, which gave me the scar I have today.

The three children had a picture taken when I was a baby in dresses. I was holding my mother's watch, the one given to her by her father when she was a girl. Mother gave it to me to keep me quiet while the picture was being taken and I dropped it. It stopped, and Mother never had it repaired. It was since given to Oletta, the oldest granddaughter, and it runs beautifully today, some seventy-six years later. The first home I remember was a small house near the old mill. Mother was always worried about the mill pond and her little children falling in. One day, my sister, Alvah, caught a fish and we all screamed with delight and Mother came running out to see who had fallen in the pond.

We soon moved from that house to a larger one across from the school house and near Father's parish house where he was a pastor for several years. As children, we knew what it meant to attend church and keep quiet.

As young boys, we had few store bought toys, and got used to making our own. We learned to be resourceful and used anything at hand to make our own toys. Mother's sewing spools made good materials for trains and many other things. We experimented a lot. My cousin, Harold, and I once made a steam engine. It blew up and we both got badly burned and so I switched my interests to electricity and became an Electrical Engineer.

We were like all other boys, we played pranks, such as putting a cat in a bucket and winding it around as it went up to the hay loft and letting it whirl around as it came down so when the cat got out, it would stagger like it was drunk. We would also put a corn cob under the horse's tail and watch his antics as he tried to get rid of it.

There was a fat man in our town who owned a horse and pony cart. One day we watched him go into a dip in the road and he was a little too heavy for the situation, which found him in the cart at the bottom of the dip and the horse in the air pawing with his front legs to reach the ground.

I remember the time Burton, my little brother, was sitting in the seat of our wagon, when the team of horses became frightened and bolted. They ran wildly for some

time and when they were stopped, Burton sat up in the back of the wagon and feeling his head said, "Where's my hat? I want to go to Hanlan Town." This was certainly a relief to Mother who was standing motionless and frightened. We must have been reluctant to leave our little house by the mill where we had such fun fishing and going swimming. Even when I was very small I swam in the shallow stream up above the mill. I remember once Dad was helping me undress and he said, "You've been swimming haven't you?" My undershirt gave me away--I had it on backwards.

The new house was set back from the street, and so was the school house across the street, which accounts for the concern Mother had for me when as a young boy I had to make the fire in the school building. We would sometimes have such high snowdrifts that she feared I couldn't find my way home, so she tied a rope to the door knob for me to take to the school so I could follow it home. I remember once I lost the key to the school, and was very upset, but I went over to the school anyway, not knowing really why, because I knew I couldn't get in. When I got almost to the door, I looked down and there laid the key. The wind had swept the snow off the path and it was in plain sight.

I have often thought, especially since the terrible blizzard of January 11, 12, and 13, 1975 which was considered the worst of the century, that we were well off in some ways when we were children. We had a storm cellar which served, not only as protection but as food storage. We always had potatoes, carrots, beets, apples and some cured meat. Mother also preserved some cooked meatballs and sausage in tallow. We always had a wood burning stove with plenty of wood we boys had to cut up in stove lengths. Most important of all, we had water from the well and a cistern of rain water collected during the summer months which had a capacity of 500 gallons. These things might have saved a lot of people some suffering from cold and hunger had they had them in this last bad storm.

While we were living in the new house, tragedy struck and our Father became very ill with pneumonia and passed away. Father was called to serve as Pastor of the Village of Fertile Norwegian Evangelical Lutheran congregation in 1892, after it had joined with the Clear Lake congregation to form one parish. The church edifice was built in 1895. At this time the congregation was affiliated with the United Lutheran Church. In 1893 the so called Augsburg strife caused a division in the Village of Fertile Congregation. This eventually caused a division in the congregation and in 1899 about half the members, together with my Father, withdrew to organize the Elim Lutheran Free Church. They chose a building site west of Fertile where he served as Pastor until his death in 1908.

Life was not easy for our family after Father died. My youngest sister was born 8 months after Father died. Mother inherited a farm which was her share of Grandfather's estate. We had some income from this besides what Mother earned from her dressmaking. My Uncle Ludwig, Mother's brother, who had no family, was very good to Mother. He always treated us like his own family.

After my two older sisters graduated, they became teachers, but were not happy in that profession, and so one at a time, they went to business college and became secretaries. I worked for Uncle Simon, Mother's other brother, on the farm in the summertime and graduated from Ames Engineering School. We all helped each other until we all graduated from college.

In 1918, after graduation, I joined the Navy and was in the service for the remainder of the war. I never saw actual battles, but I saw some countries I otherwise would not have seen. While I was on ship, I fell from the ship's mast--landing on my side and the side of my head, making a long gash in my head. The scar is still visible. The ship's doctor told me if I had landed on my back it would have killed me. I must have had a destiny to fulfill. While in the hospital aboard ship, I tutored a young man in mathematics, who was studying to become an Ensign.

After my stint in the Navy where I progressed to a commission as Ensign, I came west, ending up in Cheyenne, working for the Union Pacific R.R. I didn't care for Cheyenne as a community in which to make my home, so I went west to Ogden, Utah, where I applied for work at the Utah Power and Light Co. They put me on as a meter tester. Here I met David Isakson and his wife Ruth. We became very good friends and remained so until their deaths. Ruth's mother once told me I should meet a Mormon girl. I smiled at this, never dreaming I would do just that.

After being transferred to Logan as Power meter man, I met Velma Howe, who was going to the Utah A.C. College summer school. After three years and my transfer to Salt Lake as assistant to the Meter Superintendent, we were married on Dec. 31, 1925, the same year she graduated from the B.Y.U. in Provo. It was not until the 28th of October, 1952 that I was baptized a member of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. We were married in the Salt Lake Temple June 30, 1954 and sealed together with all our children on July 1, 1954, the same day Oletta, our oldest daughter was married. Kay Cummings was proxy for our little 2½ year old boy, Gordon, whom we had lost in death.

We have had a wonderful life together and several fine trips. One to Europe in 1959 where we met Leonard who was released from his Norwegian Mission at that time. We stayed in Norway for one week visiting many of my relatives on both sides of my family, collecting many names for our temple record. We also had a nice trip to Hawaii in Oct. 1963 when the Cultural Center was dedicated. We have just returned from a trip to Minneapolis where we accompanied my sisters, Oletta and Alvah, to Iowa where my Father's little Lutheran Church was holding its 100th anniversary. Oletta, who is a teacher of teachers in the Lutheran Bible Institute, was the principle speaker at the banquet. She gave an outstanding talk. One woman there asked Velma what Church we attended, and she told her she had made a Mormon out of me, which wasn't too difficult after he understood our principles and philosophy.

It was wonderful to see the old school house, the home where we lived by the mill, and the big house where we lived so long and where my Father died. The old pump just outside the door still stands, and believe it or not, still pumps water. We have just had a trip to Washington D.C. to see our beautiful Mormon temple and other high lights, such as the Capitol, the Lincoln Memorial, the Washington Monument, the White House, the Kennedy Center and Mt. Vernon. We now have a mobile home in Sandy, Utah, and one in Mesa, Arizona where we spend five winter months of the year. This delights our youngest daughter, Lorna, who lives in Tempe, about 15 miles from our little house. We are just about 10 miles from the Mesa temple where we go often.

We are very proud of our family. Fred with his 9 children, the oldest of which is now on a mission in California; Oletta, with her 7, the oldest of which is now on a mission in Canada; Leonard with his two daughters; and Lorna with her 4 little ones. We hope to enjoy them all for some time to come.

1975 or '76

A Tribute to Ferd (on his ninetieth birthday)

90 years! Not everyone is privileged to live ninety years, especially when most of the years have been in good health. These have been years of ups and downs, successes and disappointments, joys and sorrows, mountains and valleys. But through them all has been the gracious and loving Spirit of God, blessing, providing and sustaining. Like a diamond, Ferd has many facets which have made him a man who has been loved and respected and admired by his family and friends. Ferd, the engineer whose expertise was recognized and appreciated by his co-workers at the Utah Power and Light Company. Ferd, the watch-fixer who could somehow take all the little watch parts and put them together in working order. Ferd, the photographer who loves to record in pictures the many happy events and people in his life. Ferd, the encyclopedia who seems to know something about most everything. Ferd, the problem-solver who has been able to figure out solutions to many of the problems given him. Ferd, the handy man who can fix most things that break down. Ferd, the husband who has been privileged to live some 60 years with his loving wife, Velma. Together they have supported, sustained and encouraged each other in love. Ferd, the father who has never been too busy to give a listening ear or a helping hand to his children. Ferd, the grandfather whose 23 grand children and the coming "greats" bring him much pride and joy. Ferd, the man of faith whose trust and reliance on our Lord and Savior has sustained him through the years.

A Paraphrase of Psalm 128

Blessed have you been because
The Lord bless you from his heavens.
 you have feared the Lord;
May you see the prosperity of your offspring
 you have walked in his ways.
 all the days of your life.
You have eaten the fruit of the labor
May you see your children's children.
 of your hands;
 You know the secret of happiness
 Peace be unto you and your family.
 and it has been well with you.
Your wife has been like a fruitful vine
 within your house.
Your children have been like olive shoots
 around your table.
 Lo, you have been blessed
 because you have feared the Lord.

by Ferd's sister, Oletta



Personal History of Velma Howe Wald

Written in 1962

I was born in the little town of Provo, Utah Co., Utah, on January 22, 1898. I was my Mother's last living child. The second of eight children, Orvil Hill Howe, died of pneumonia at age 2 ½ years. The last three, Fordis, Martha, and Olive died within 10 days after birth. Doctors were not able to handle the R.H. factor in the early 1900's.

I was very fond of my two older brothers, John William Jr. and Leonard Jackson. It seemed that the more they teased me and played tricks on me, the more I loved them. Will would tease me until I would cry and then hold his hat and tell me to cry a hatful. Len once had me put my tongue on the frozen pump handle and Mother had to put warm water on it to keep from pulling the skin off. I wanted to shoot Len's gun once and when I did it kicked back and knocked me across the room.

My older sister, Ada, was very protective. I felt at times she was almost too protective. I was offered a ride to school in one of the first automobiles to come to our town, and Ada wouldn't let me go. She was afraid. I don't think I have ever forgiven her for that.

I have had the usual childhood diseases--measles, mumps, (I had mumps again along with my youngest child) and chicken pox. The older children tried to get me to look at myself in the mirror when I had measles, and they had laughed so at me that I wouldn't. I have wished since that I had taken one little peek.

I was very impressed with my first grade teacher, Ida Coombs. She had a way with little ones that made me love her. In fact, Mother thought I loved Ida as much as I did her. My seventh grade teacher, Nat Wilson was wonderful. I also remember James Clove, J. Morrel George, and Bess Bars in High School. The one who left the most wonderful impression was Amos N. Merrill, School of Education, B.Y.U. He was a great inspiration to me.

For the most part, my childhood was happy, although we had very little of the material things. Our house was small but very clean and neat. We had a small farm not far from our house, where Father raised fruits, grains, and chickens. This did not support us entirely. Father was a carpenter by trade. In the summer, work was plentiful, but often in the fall, he left for Salt Lake City, Tooele or surrounding mining towns where carpenters were needed.

There was always a great deal of work for us to do because we raised most of our food. We hoed weeds, rode the horse for the cultivator and the hay, milked cows, fed and cared for them and some horses, fed chickens, churned butter in an old dasher churn. We also made soap. It was often my task to clean lamp chimneys and fill the lamps, so you can imagine how happy I was to see the house being wired for electricity. This also eliminated the tiresome task of turning the washer.

Being the youngest, it was often my responsibility to do many things usually delegated to boys, such as: Take the cows to pasture and bring them back at night, bring in the coal and wood and fill the reservoir for warm water. Mother and I often planted and cared for a garden--just the two of us. We picked the fruit and prepared it for canning. If Ada was not working, she helped with this. In the fall there was always a fat hog to butcher and the meat was cured and prepared for winter. After this event, I was often sent to many poor families or old people with some of the goodies Mother knew how to make from the meat. In fact, no one near us ever went hungry if my mother knew about it. There was always something to share with those who needed help. I was also sent many times to the Bishop's Store House with butter and eggs and other produce. We paid tithing with what we had.

Mother made all our clothes except stockings and under shirts. We always had a new dress for the 4th of July and one for Christmas. We wore very simple gingham dresses to school and in cold weather we wore last years wool dresses with aprons to keep them clean. Mother was about the most thrifty person I ever knew. She could make us look nice with so little money. She sold milk and butter to buy the material for my graduation dress and then made it herself and I looked lovely. Another time, I remember, I wanted to go to the class dance at the Y. and I had no dress. So Mother took my summer dress, washed and dyed it, and I went to the dance and had a wonderful time.

Even though there was lots of work to do, my wonderful Mother always arranged for me to have an hour or two each day to myself in the summertime. This was usually spent spinning tops, playing marbles, guinea or playing in the hay loft. It was such a thrill to find a nest of eggs, for often a hen would choose the hay loft instead of the nest made for her. And then there were the pleasant evenings when we would sit on Father's knee and sing, "High On The Mountain Tops", "God Moves In A Mysterious Way" and many other favorites. I have often thought this gave me my first love of music, for in later years I studied vocal and sang many solos in and around Provo. We had many other pleasant evenings with our friends, pulling candy and playing games. I think the most pleasant times of all were our picnics in the canyon and our trips to Grandfather's in Heber. We would hitch old Browny to the surrey with the fringe on top and take our lunch to the canyon or take the whole day and go to Heber to see Grandfather and Aunt Margaret as we called Grandfather's second wife.

We picked and packed fruit to earn money to help defray school expenses. After the 8th grade in the old Parker School, I attended Provo High School for two years and then was able to go to the B.Y.U. for three years. This gave me one year of college, or

what was called then a Normal Certificate. I taught school, continuing my studies with extension courses and summer school. After five years, I was able to enter the A.C.U. at Logan as a Junior. I was not happy at Logan and so I came back to the B.Y.U. to graduate.

It was while I was at Logan that I met the man I was destined to marry. I liked this clean, fine looking, intelligent young man very much, and I shall never forget the sinking feeling I had when he told me he was not a Latter Day Saint. After three years we decided to get married.

It was a great worry to me to take this step knowing that I may never realize my girlhood dream of a Temple marriage; and knowing too that my parents were unhappy about it. However, my Father said he would never say "No" to me, and after I made my decision, he said I was not to worry about it--that Ferd was too clean and fine to reject the Gospel indefinitely. I received other excellent advise. The principal of the High School where I was teaching was in the Bear River Stake Presidency. He could see that I was worried and he called me into his office to talk to me. After telling him why I was troubled, he advised me to marry this man because he felt that he was a fine young man and would eventually be a Latter Day Saint. Never had advise from a good religious man been so timely and welcome.

This proved to be good advise, for I now have four fine children and ten grandchildren, twin boys among them. Leonard has served a foreign mission, Fred a states mission and Oletta along with her Mother has served a stake mission. My husband and I have been married in the temple and our children are sealed to us along with the little boy, Gordon, whom we lost with leukemia when he was 2 ½ years old.

This all took about 25 years and there were times when I despaired ever getting to the temple, but I kept on hoping and praying and we are now a united happy family and have done some temple work for my husband's people as well as others we do not know.

We have had some wonderful trips together. We have been east as far as Boston and up the coast of Maine; many trips to Minneapolis where Ferd's sisters live, west to California and up the coast to Seattle and Portland, north to Canada, and into the beautiful Canadian Rockies. The highlight of our trips together was our tour of the continent of Europe and our week in Norway with our missionary son, where we made contact with some of Ferd's people and secured many names for our temple record.

We hope to do some more traveling in a year or two when we both retire, me from teaching, which I have done since the family grew up, and Ferd from his position as Electrical Engineer for the Utah Power and Light Co. Of course we expect to see our daughter, Lorna, through school, who is a Junior in the University of Utah now.

We, like our fathers before us, will probably never leave much in a material way to our children, but we hope they will gain from their parents, home life and church

experiences a profound testimony of the Gospel and a desire to live the Gospel always, for indeed this is the only way to true happiness.

The Life of Reverend O. O. Wold

written in 1904

The picture of Rev. O. O. Wold shows you that he is a man of purpose. Rev. Wold is a minister of the Gospel. He is also interested in agriculture, owning a fine farm a few miles west of Fertile.

He has a pleasant village home just south of the school house where he and his good wife live happily with their three sons and three daughters. Rev. and Mrs. Wold are among those who can claim our worthy president's commendation on their fine family.

Rev. O. O. Wold was born the eleventh day of February 1861 in La Salle Co., Illinois. Five years later he with his parents moved to Polk County where young Wold spent his childhood days on a farm. At the age of 18 he was converted to God and at once began to take part in active church work.

At the age of 21 he felt a Divine call to study for the ministry and a year later entered the Augsburg Seminary at Minneapolis where he studied seven years in preparation for his life work. In 1891 he was graduated from the theological department of said institution.

July 7, 1891 Rev. Wold was united in marriage to Augusta Simerson of Belmond, Iowa. She has proved herself to be a most capable and competent help to her good husband.

Soon after graduation he received a call from the village of Fertile congregation, but owing to the pressure from the United Church, he was sent to Chicago where during a stay of one year he worked with a society which was very religious and consecrated to their Master. But owing to poor health, Rev. Wold felt a change of climate would be advisable, though leaving his first charge was a hard thing to do. The relation of this first church and its pastor can be summed up in the words of one of the members who said, "We will never get a pastor that will take Rev. Wold's place and he will never get a church where he will take as well with the people."

About this time Rev. Wold received a second call from the Fertile and Clear Lake churches which he accepted and took charge of in 1892. He served the congregation for several years and won the esteem of not only his church members but the community as well.

Late in the nineties a division arose in the village church and as a result a Free Lutheran Church was organized and a neat commodious house of worship was built in 1899 about two miles west of Fertile with Rev. Wold as their faithful and beloved pastor.

Rev. Wold believes that the church work of Jesus Christ is broader than denominations or creed, in fact the Divine truth subject to personal approval and made known through the life.

Those who know the reverend gentleman, even though they may differ with him on theological points, admire the man and hope he may live long to exert his strong influence for good in our midst.

Obituary for Reverend O. O. Wold, Fertile, Iowa

Rev. O. O. Wold passed away at 9 p.m., January 18, 1908, aged 46 years, 11 months, and 7 days.

In the death of Rev. O. O. Wold the community loses an honored citizen, the wife a devoted husband and the children a loving father.

Mourning is not confined to relatives alone but the community is in sorrow, for a friend has gone. For several years he has been in failing health. About two weeks ago he was stricken with his last fatal sickness, heart trouble and lingered between life and death until Saturday at 9 p.m. he passed on to his reward.

The deceased was a man of decided opinions. He spoke plainly, was quick of discernment and when his mind was fixed he never wavered in doing his duty. He stood for high ideals in life. He had a deep abiding conviction and a faith that clung with wonderful tenacity on the life's beautiful beyond. He not only lived it himself, but all with whom he came in contact could continually see in him the finger pointing to the higher life, the life lost in self but found in the man of Galilee.

Brother Wold came to Fertile and took charge of the struggling congregation here something like 15 years ago, then without a church edifice, and it was through his tireless efforts that the church in this village and the one where the funeral was held, three miles west of town, was built.

Beside his work here, he for many years preached to his people at Clear Lake, Mason City and other points. The roads were never too bad. However inclement the weather, he never neglected his work for the Master whom he so faithfully served.

The subject of this sketch was born in La Salle Co., Illinois, on February 11, 1861 and died at his home in this village at 9 o'clock p.m., January 18, 1908. He moved to Story Co., Iowa with his parents in the spring of 1865 where he grew to manhood.

He was educated at Augsburg Seminary, Minneapolis. He was ordained as minister of the gospel by the clergy of the United Norwegian Lutheran Church in America at Kenyon, Minnesota on June 22, 1891 and has continued in the ministry since. One year was spent in missionary work in the city of Chicago.

He was united in marriage July 7, 1891, with Miss Augusta Simerson. He is survived by a heartbroken wife and seven children, 3 girls and 4 boys besides his aged father, 3 brothers and 4 sisters, all of whom were present at the funeral.

The funeral services were held Wednesday forenoon at the church west of town and interment made at his old home at Slater, Iowa. Owing to the high esteem in which Brother Wold was held by all the people, Americans as well as Norwegians, a point service was held. Rev. Hampton of Mason City speaking in English and Prof. Nydahl of Augsburg Seminary, a classmate and life long friend of the deceased, spoke in the Norwegian language. The large concourse of people of all nationalities who gathered at the funeral to pay their last sad tribute of respect to the deceased, speaks more eloquently of the respect in which he was held than any words that we can say.

Obituary for Reverend O. O. Wold, Slater, Iowa

Word reached Slater last Friday telling of the serious illness of Rev. O. O. Wold at Fertile, Iowa, and that he could not possibly survive very long. His brother, Attorney Wald, departed immediately for Fertile, reaching the bedside of his sick brother on Saturday and before life had become extinct. He passed away in the evening.

Funeral services were held from the pastor's church at Fertile on Tuesday and the remains brought to Slater last night to be buried in the family lot in the local cemetery, the services to take place at the Norwegian church this Thursday afternoon at two o'clock.

The illness which cut the life of the pastor short while in the prime of life and in the midst of much work dated back two weeks when he contracted a cold which ultimately developed into pneumonia and resulted in his death on Saturday.

Deceased reached an age of forty six years, the greater part of which had been spent in active church work. For fifteen years he had been working at Fertile where he built up a strong congregation and was engaged in work when the last summons came.

He was an energetic, enthusiastic worker, a thorough Christian and dearly loved by his congregation which is in deep sorrow over his sudden demise.

Aside from a father, three brothers and four sisters, he is mourned by a faithful wife and a family of seven children.

“History of the Moreland Lutheran Church in Chicago” (an excerpt)

At the congregation's meeting on April 25, 1891, it was decided to ask the United Lutheran Church's Mission committee to call a pastor to Moreland (previous to this there had been several temporary Pastors). This committee then sent a call to O. O. Wold, who had been graduated from Augsburg Seminary and was ordained at the United Church annual meeting in 1891.

With the help of Pastor N. J. Lockrem, the congregation rented an empty store on Lake Street at 51st Court. Some chairs were purchased and the first service was held on Ascension Day evening the 7th of May. It was the first time the congregation had held a service in its own place of worship. Previously services had been held in a vacant room in the public school and occasionally in private homes, and just before this the congregation had rented the Presbyterian church.

That Lockrem's work was a blessing to the congregation manifested itself Sunday, June 7; a new foundation stone was laid then, in that six families were admitted to the congregation at the meeting on June 2. On June 7 was held the first confirmation service, with the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, Pastor Ellestad officiating.

Pastor Wold came to Moreland August 1, 1891 and was installed by Pastor Ellestad on Sunday, August 5. Despite his poor health, he took energetic hold of the work both spiritually and temporally. Besides Moreland, he served the Emmaus church, with great blessings for both congregations. Not a few members were added to the church during this one year.

Already at the congregational meeting of September 18 a committee was selected to find a suitable site on which to build a church, and this committee found the site on which the church now stands. At the meeting on the 22nd it was unanimously decided to elect a new committee of five with full power to close the deal for the same. Johs. Olsen, John B. Jansen, Nils Möller, Pastor Wold and John Hevly were elected.

This committee gathered on September 24 at the real estate office to negotiate the purchase of the aforementioned lots. It was then and there agreed to pay \$1,250 for the two lots, on the following terms: \$200 within two months and thereafter \$200 each year, interest to be 6%. The Ladies' Aid sponsored an auction in Fishers Hall resulting in

income of better than \$200, by which the first \$200 was paid on the lots. At the meeting on January 4 an Ingathering Committee was elected. Some subscription lists were sent out and a committee to prepare plans for a church was elected.

At the congregational meeting on February 1, 1892, it was voted nearly unanimously to build the church, and a Building Committee of three was selected to begin work as soon as possible. The Ingathering Committee reported that \$475 has been pledged to date. Pastor Wold was elected as treasurer of the Building Committee. But how were building materials to be gotten to the site? It was not possible to get a load to Moreland from any lumber yard in Chicago. There was then no other way than to haul it by railroad to Moreland. But lumber was ordered and paid in good promises at the Central Lumber Company (O.B.Jacobs) for something over \$850.

On March 3rd the work on the church began; and it was completed outside, windows and doors put in, the school room finished, so that the first service was held in the church May 7, 1892.

Pastor Wold resigned at the business meeting on May 3rd. He had received a call from Fertile, Iowa, but promised to remain until August 1st, if his health permitted it. It was with regret that the congregation accepted his resignation, but he declared definitely that he could not continue in Chicago longer.

“History of the Fertile Lutheran Congregation” (an excerpt)

In 1892 the Village of Fertile Congregation united with the Clear Lake Congregation to form one parish. The Rev. O. O. Wold was called to serve as pastor. The parsonage, which was located in Fertile, was almost completed by this time. The church edifice was built in 1895 and dedicated the following year. At this time the congregation was affiliated with the United Lutheran Church.

In 1893 the so-called Augsburg strife caused a division in the Village of Fertile Congregation. This eventually caused a division in the congregation and in 1899 about half the members together with Pastor Wold withdrew to organize the Elim Lutheran Free Church. This group chose a building site west of Fertile and gave their synodical allegiance to the Augsburg Free Church. This congregation has since been dissolved and the building dismantled. The Elim Cemetery remains and is maintained as a burial site. The Fertile Lutheran Church continued as a member of the United Church (Forende).

Congregations Served by O. O. Wold:

The Norwegian Evangelical Lutheran Congregation in Moreland, Chicago, Illinois. 1890-1891 Norwegian Fertile Congregation, Fertile, Iowa. 1892 Fertile Norwegian Evangelical Lutheran Congregation, Fertile Iowa. 1892-1895 Twin Lakes Congregation 1892-1895 Village of Fertile Lutheran Congregation, Fertile Iowa. 1892-1900 Trinity Lutheran Church, Mason City, Iowa. 1896-1898 United Lutheran Church, Clear Lake, Iowa. 1892-1900 Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Congregation, Thompson, Iowa. 1902-1908 Elim Norwegian Evangelical Lutheran Congregation, Fertile, Iowa (3 miles west). 1898-1908 (also called the Elim Lutheran Free Church)



Ole Olsen Wold and August Simerson

I Remember Mother Wald by Oletta Wald

Mother has been dead for some 28 years, so that is a long enough time to forget many things about mother, but not too long to remember some of the outstanding things. I will share with you what I remember about Mother.

Her Early Years

Augusta Simerson Wald was born in Belmond, Iowa in 1872. She lived on a farm there until she was married at the age of 18 years. She had about an 8th grade education, but was self-educated. Even so, she was self-conscious about her lack of formal education. She seldom wrote letters, even to her children. She would always ask one of them to write the letter for her. On the occasions that she did write a letter, she could write a good one, so she was better at it than she thought she was. She met her future husband when he came to her community as a seminary student to teach Bible school. They were married when he finished Augsburg Seminary. The wedding was on a hot July day, but Mother was dressed in a stylish high collared, long sleeved brown dress, according to the styles of that day. They moved to Chicago where he had his first call. They lived there less than three years because the climate did not agree with him. Their second call was to Fertile, Iowa. Those were turbulent years in the Lutheran Church with struggles concerning doctrines and loyalty to Augsburg College where father had attended. Father got caught in the struggle and had to leave the church in the town of Fertile and started another one in the country. Father contracted the flu and died from it on January 18, 1908, leaving Mother a widow with seven children and one on the way. I was born seven months after his death. She was a widow at the young age of 36 years old. These were very discouraging days for her. She owned the home in Fertile, so could continue to live there.

But in 1912, she moved her family to Belmond, Iowa, to live with her father. By now, her mother had died and Grandpa was alone. This might seem to have been the ideal arrangement for both of them, but it lasted about two years. Grandpa was a cantankerous old Norwegian who did not like children. Mother struggled to keep peace between grandpa and the children, but the last straw was the time when one of the boys came in crying that Grandpa had chopped to pieces the wooden track and train the boys had made. Mother decided that her children were more important than free housing, so she moved to Slater, Iowa where the Wald relatives lived. We lived there until 1923 when we moved to Minneapolis because of better opportunities for college for the children. Because Mother had so little education herself, she was determined that her children have an education.

Her Health

On the whole, Mother had good health. Until the last year of her life, when she developed cancer, she did not have any of the common ailments of old people. She had good eyes, ears, no arthritis or high blood pressure. But she was plagued with migraine headaches. In her early years, there was little medication, so she had to endure the headaches. But she found that certain pressures increased the headaches. She made up her mind that she would not do what she could not physically do, no matter what people thought of her. This was true of all her attitudes toward life. Mother learned how to live with her body and refused to allow the opinions of others to deter her from doing what she thought was best for herself. Mother learned how to live with herself and be at peace with the world.

Her Personal Appearance

Mother was a slightly built person, medium height and on the slim side. As long as I remember her, she had gray hair rolled in a pug on the top of her head. There was a slight wave to it so it looked soft and becoming. Never did she have it cut or curled. You would not call her pretty, but she had a very interesting face, reflecting the serene spirit of her soul. She had regular features and a bone structure that was so well formed that I longed to make a sculpture of her face. She dressed neatly and always wore a hat when she went out, even for a ride in the car!

Her Temperament

Mother was a very calm, composed and peaceful kind of person. In all the years I knew her, I seldom saw her angry or upset. No doubt she had her times of frustration and upsetting experiences, but she did not show her feelings. She accepted the problems of life with remarkable tranquility. Only one person really upset her and that was her sister-in-law who had done many mean things to her, among them was the refusal to let her know that her mother was dying, until after she was dead.

As a Parent

While Mother was a quiet and calm person, she was firm in her dealing with us children. She had deep convictions as to what was right and wrong. She never yelled or

scolded you, but you always knew what she believed and how she wanted you to behave. You did not go against her wishes because you respected her convictions. Mother was really a very reserved and private person. She did not reveal her feelings very much. She was not a demonstrative woman, did not hug her children or say she loved them. But we found our security in her by what she did. I was a grown woman and teaching before I realized that not everyone loved or respected their mothers. I guess I thought they were all like my own. I was really shocked to hear a fellow teacher criticize her mother and indicate she neither loved or respected her. Mother showed her trust in us by the way she treated us as we grew up. She never sat up waiting for her children to come home from an evening affair. I believe she trusted us in doing the right thing. If she lay awake until we got in, she never indicated it to us. She did not have many close friends. Her life was her children, but she was highly respected by all who knew her.

Her Family

Mother had eight children: Bertilla, Alvah, Ferdinand, Joseph, Burton, Ina, Reuben, and Oletta. One of her foremost desires was that they might get an education. Bertilla and Alvah attended business college and were stenographers most of their lives, Bertilla spending her last years with the Lutheran Brotherhood Insurance Company in Minneapolis, and Alvah with an accounting firm. Ferd, Joe, and Reuben earned electrical engineering degrees and worked in that line of industry. Burton got a degree in business and was mainly with the Toastmaster Company. Ina got a degree in home economics, taught for a few years, and then served as lunchroom manager in Minneapolis public schools. Oletta got a BA degree from Augsburg College and a Master's Degree in Christian Education from Biblical Seminary in New York. After some years teaching in the public schools, she became an instructor on the staff of the Lutheran Bible Institute and in the department of Christian Education of the American Lutheran Church. Her work entailed both writing and teaching, writing courses of instruction for Sunday Schools, Bible Studies and many articles. Out of her teaching experiences came two books which are still selling: The Joy of Discovery, a book on how to study the Bible, and The Joy of Teaching Discovery Bible Study.

Her Abilities

Mother was a very gifted person. Seldom did she face a problem that she could not figure out some kind of an answer. Life never stumped her. She could be the artist, carpenter, seamstress, engineer, plumber--whatever the need, she used her abilities to solve it. She would draw her own pictures for embroidering and hooking rugs. Give her a hammer, some nails and a few boards and she would soon have a cupboard built in the basement. We still are using some of the cupboards she built. Always she was busy with her hands, crocheting, knitting, embroidering, even in her last years. When she was no

longer strong enough to garden, she still would sit on her haunches in the yard and dig dandelions and crabgrass.

As a seamstress she was a master. She had to support herself sewing for others in a day when a person got five dollars for sewing a dress. If you made over a dress for someone, the person thought she should pay only three dollars! Mother was a very patient seamstress. Because she was so good, none of her daughters became very proficient in sewing clothes. (But Ina does very well in sewing quilts!) The daughters would do the cooking while she sewed. Her patience was most in evidence when she sewed for her daughters. We were all very fussy and many was the time that she would patiently rip a dress because we did not quite like the way it was made or fit. Never do I remember her making a fuss--which she should have done! Nor was any pattern too difficult for her to make, even though it took much time if it were an unusual one. As children we had many made-over dresses, but she could make them look like new. One of the nicest coats I ever had was made from the trousers of Ferd who had been in the Navy.

She was not a leader. I doubt she ever held an office or gave a public speech in her life. She did not like the spotlight, but was a loyal member in any group to which she belonged.

Her Faith

Mother had a deep abiding faith in Jesus Christ as her personal Savior. But she was not one to talk glibly about her faith. Yet she had definite convictions about what she believed and would defend her convictions if anyone tried to teach what she considered wrong doctrine. Her faith was reflected in her actions. Often she read her Bible. She truly demonstrated the reality of the fruit of the spirit as is revealed in Galatians 5:22. Love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control.

Her Husband

Our father was a pastor, a very evangelistic preacher whose main emphasis was focused on the importance of a personal faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. After several years in Chicago, he moved to Fertile, Iowa where he served two congregations. First in the town of Fertile, but due to disagreements with some of the members on doctrinal

issues, he was asked to leave. Then he started a church in the country which flourished under his energetic leadership. He was greatly loved by his parishioners. Down through the years when we met members of his congregation, they always spoke of him in loving terms. He was a social man, loved people and loved to entertain them. He also loved children, especially his own. His practice was to take some of them with him when he went on his calls, even to special services in other congregations. Our older sisters remember many times when they rode along with Father to his meetings. On the way as he drove his horse, he would sing the many hymns he knew. He was a man who loved music. While he was a good husband, kind and thoughtful, he was not too good mechanically. Mother had more skill than he did to fix things. Physically, he was not a rugged man and had his struggles with health. He died January 18, 1908 after a two-week bout with the flu. I believe his heart gave out. His death was a great shock to that small community. He had helped many to come to a personal faith in Jesus Christ and they mourned the passing of their pastor. He was buried in Slater, his boyhood home, at the age of 47 years.

Her Final Illness

At the age of 76 years, she developed a cancerous growth in her intestines. I remember how desperately ill she became one day. When we called the doctor, he sent an ambulance to take her immediately to the hospital. We really did not realize how very ill she was. The doctor performed surgery that night to release the pressure that the growth had built up in the abdomen. She was so ill that the doctor did not expect her to live through the night, but we went home and slept peacefully, believing all was going to be okay. A week later she had an operation removing the growth. That was a time when we became aware of the grace of God. Had the doctor not operated that night, she would have died. God in his mercy spared her life. She recovered and lived five more years.

One cold March day in 1953, we took her to the doctor for a checkup. Getting out of the car, she had to climb over a pile of snow, slipped and fell right in front of the doctor's office. She was rushed to the hospital where they found she had broken a hip. Chest X-rays revealed that she had also developed cancer of the lungs. She lingered in the hospital nine weeks, until she died on May 3, 1953 at the age of 81 years. She too was buried in the family plot in Slater, Iowa, along side her husband.



Fertile home: Burton, Reuben, Augusta, Ina, Oletta (in front) - 1910

The Simerson's by Oletta Wald, granddaughter

Frederick Molstad Simerson was born January 8, 1839 on the Molstad Gaard where his parents, Simon Hanson Faråsen and Alis Fredriksdaughter Erickson from Jentland had moved on October 12, 1833. He was baptized in the Veldre Church. When he was 27 years old, he married Pernille Larsdaughter Bratten who was born May 18, 1836. She was 30 years old. They were married in 1866 and in 1867 they left for the USA.

They boarded a sailing vessel. After 12 stormy weeks at sea, they landed on the east coast of America. They came on west as far as Trempealeau County, Wisconsin. They stayed here for two years and it was here that their first son was born, Simon, on August 15, 1868. In the early spring of 1869, in crudely built covered wagons, drawn by oxen, they and three other families from Norway (the C.B. Johnsons, Hans Hansons and C.M. Johnson) left that county. They traveled to La Crosse, crossed the Mississippi River and after eight long hard days of travel, arrived at their newly purchased land in the Belmond, Iowa township.

These four families lived in their covered wagons on the C.B. Johnson farm all summer while they hurriedly dug wells and built sheds and houses before winter set in. The Simerson's first home was a cave-like dug-out on a corner of their land. According to Grandfather Frederick, it was so comfortable that they lived in it for 8 years. After they had five of their six children, Grandmother Pernille moved into her first frame house in 1877, where her sixth child was born. They were farmers but Frederick preferred carpenter work, building many houses in Belmond and on the many farms in that area.

During the terrible diphtheria epidemic little Ole Simerson, age 2 years, died suddenly of the dread disease. According to the articles of the local newspaper, The Belmond Harold, they lost two more. The following are the articles:

April 13, 1881 -- Diphtheria again! Mr. and Mrs. Simerson, living west of Hickory Grove, lost a seven year old son Friday night from diphtheria. Little Johannes was sick only a short time. On Wednesday he had attended school. On Thursday he was taken sick and Friday night he died. The disease worked so rapidly that nothing could be done for him. Dr. Galer was summoned, but he could not help him. The afflicted parents have the sympathy of all.

April 27, 1881 -- Sad indeed! Again death has entered the home of Mr. and Mrs. Simerson of Belmond Township. Another of their children, a little girl, Ida, age 5 years, died of diphtheria. This is the third child that has been taken. Two others are very sick

and may not live. The children are buried in the corner of the Simerson farm under a tall stately evergreen tree.

Of the marriage three children survived: Simon, who married Anna Johnson. They had four children: Ruth, Florence, Harold and Alvin. Ludvig who married Gena Schonhood. They were married only about three years when she died of cancer. Augusta who married Ole Wold. They had eight children.



Pernille Larsdatter Bratten and Frederick Simonsen Molstad

Simon Simerson

"Men who plant civilization in the wilderness, who organize back-woodsmen into communities, and throw around them the protection of the law, should not be forgotten. They render mankind a priceless service, and those who come after them and enjoy the fruits of their labor and their sacrifices should never tire in honoring their memory." The parents of Simon Simerson were among the first to fell the trees of this county in order to make room for their crude dwellings, and since that time they and their children and grandchildren, have had much to do with the material prosperity of the county of which Simon Simerson is a large landowner. Simon Simerson was born on August 15, 1868, in Galesyville, Wisconsin. His parents, who were natives of Norway, being Fred and Parnelia (Bratten) Simerson.

Coming from the farming district of Hamar,⁷ Norway, to this country 1867,⁸ these thrifty citizens of the north country located first in Wisconsin, but in the spring of 1869 they joined the first group of Norwegians coming to Wright county to establish homes of their own. They drove in rudely constructed wagons from La Crosse, Wisconsin, to a settlement five miles northwest of Belmond. In true pioneer fashion they proceeded to make themselves comfortable, converting their wagons into dwelling places, and thus did they live during the first summer. In the fall of 1869 they hauled logs which they cut from Burr Oak Grove, and of these, with such tools as they had, constructed a half dug-out house intended for temporary use. However, it proved so satisfactory for their simple, primitive life, that there they lived for eight years, until 1877, when they built a larger and more modern home. There the parents lived until 1893, when they decided to move to Belmond, which was their home until the mother's death in June, 1912, and the father returned to the farm with his son, Simon.

Simon Simerson was one of six children, three of whom died in 1881, during an epidemic of diphtheria. Those who escaped this illness are Simon, Ludwig F., of Belmond, and Mrs. Augusta Wald, of Slater, Iowa. With the exception of two years when he lived in Texas, Simon Simerson has spent his entire life on the farm in section 4, adding to this in 1910, two hundred and forty acres in section 9, where he now lives. He is also the owner of the old home farm of three hundred and sixty acres in section 4, as

⁷ The Molsadt and Bratten farms, where Frederick and Pernille Simonsen were raised, were actually located in the Veldre parish which is located in Hedmark county. There are several local parishes that are closely associated in this locality, including: Veldre, Ringsaker, Brøttum, Vang, Furnes and Hamar.

⁸ Frederick and Pernille were married 23 April, 1867 in Veldre, Norway. Four days later on 27 April, 1867, they left their home and came to America.

well as of one hundred and sixty acres in section 3. This entire property, all in one body, is well improved, and on it he raises dairy stock and feeds cattle and hogs. The fine home, which was built in 1915 and has all modern conveniences, is situated in a beautiful grove of trees and is one of a group of well-painted, well-kept buildings.

The marriage of Simon Simerson and Anna N. Johnson took place on April 20, 1893, in Wright county, the bride being a daughter of Nels N. and Rachel (Dahlen) Johnson, natives of Norway, who came to the United States when children and settled in Minnesota, where Mrs. Simerson was born on March, 1867. A family of two boys and two girls have been born in the Simerson home. Ruth, the eldest, born on April 15, 1894, is a graduate of the Belmond high school and a teacher in the local schools. Florence, who was born on August 26, 1896, is also a high school graduate and has taught in the school in the vicinity of her home: she is a student at St. Olaf's College, Northfield, Minnesota. Harold, born on September 23, 1900, is a high school student, and Alvin, the youngest, was born on May 17, 1908, in Kingsville county, Texas.

Mr. and Mrs. Simerson and their family are devout members of the Norwegian Lutheran church, and have given liberally both of time and means toward its support, welfare and success.

It may be said with truth that the career of Simon Simerson is of the type that commands respect and admiration. Mr. Simerson is a man of good judgement, of practical intelligence, and of strong personality. He stands high in the community which his family helped to build up, and where he has lived long enough for his worth to be tried and his good qualities to be appreciated.⁹

⁹ History of Wright County, Iowa : its people, industries and institutions with biographical sketches of representative citizens and genealogical records of many of the old families; edited by B. P. Birdsall; FHL film # 989443 Item 3.

The Wald Name, From Norway to America

Valheim

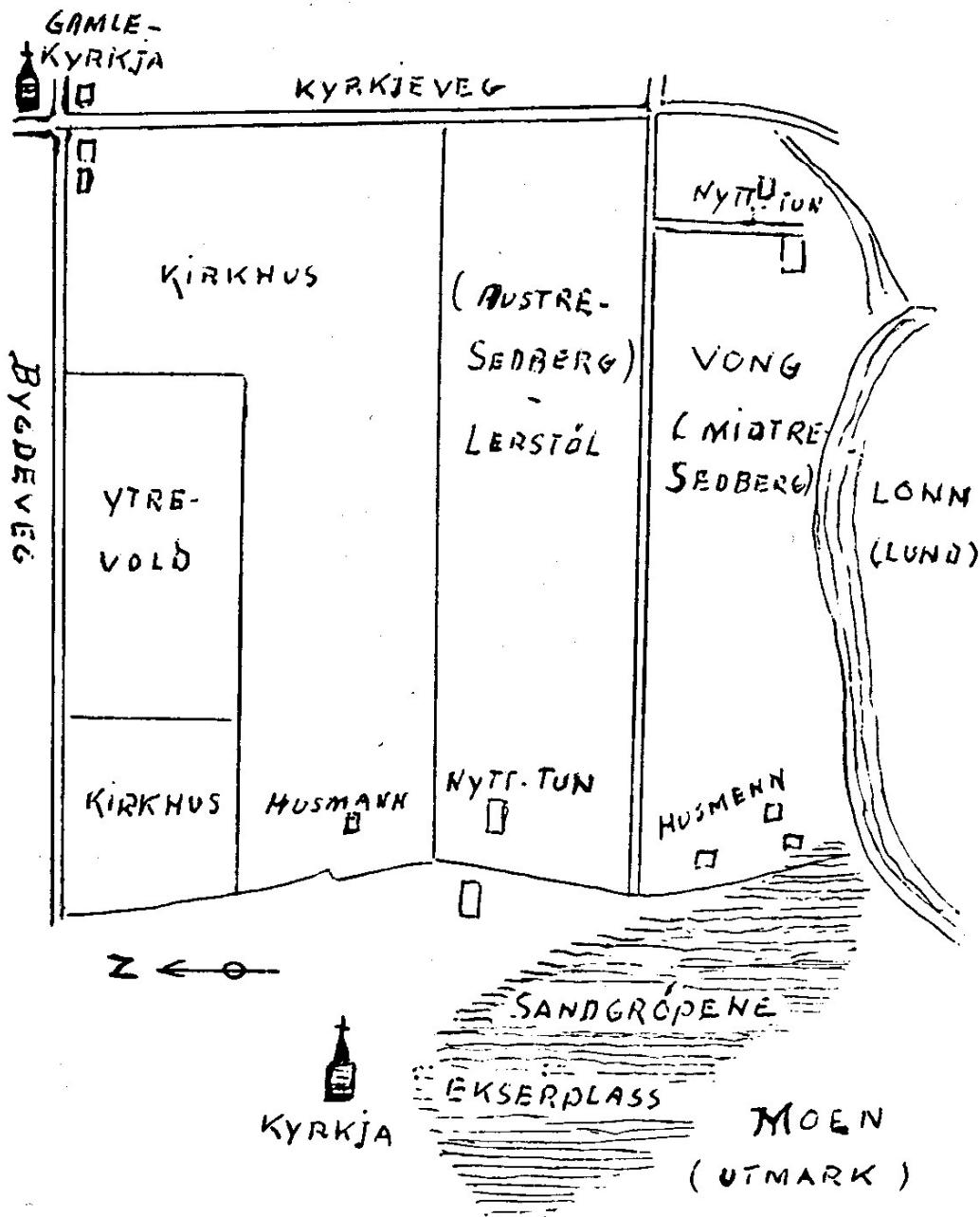
Our earliest known paternal grandfather was called Ole Valheimsvatne which means: “Ole at the lake on Valheim”. His father's name is not known for sure, but there is a confirmation record for “Ole Iversen age 16” in 1771, and this tells us that his father, like his son was named Iver. It states in the Årdal farm book: “Valheim er truleg ein av dei eldste gardane i Årdal”. Translation: “Valheim is probably one of the oldest farms in Årdal”. From the same book: “Earlier written forms of the name include: Volle, Vallem 1563, 1606, Walem, Wallem 1610, Øvre and Nedre Wallimb 1661, and Øvre and Nedre Wallem 1723.” The place called Valheimsvatne is listed under “Øvre” Valheim which means the “upper” or “higher” part of the farm. Ole's oldest son, Iver, was listed in the parish records as: “Iver Olsen, born at Wallem, christened 23 May, 1773”.

Lillemoe

The name “Lillemoe” means “little mountain”. After 1803, when Iver Olsen was married, he lived at Lillemoe which was part of the Vadla farm in rural Årdal. Also from the Årdal farm book: “Earlier written forms of the name Vadla include: Vald, Vold, Vall, Vadle Woldt 1602, Wold, Wallde 1610, 1617, and Walde 1723.” These farm names from Vadla are the earliest origin of our Wald family name. Iver's oldest son, Ole Iversen (Spel-Ola), was also raised on Valda, and lived with his mother at the place called “Lille-Vadla”.

Volden

Ole Iversen raised his own family on the Sedberg farm (later called Østigaard) at a place called “Volden”. Ole was therefore called “Ole Volden”, or “Ole Iversen Volden”. In “The Wald History” by Cleva Darling he was called “Ole Peter Vold”. No Norwegian documents have been discovered that list him with this middle name. However, there was some apparent confusion by the author of the “Spel-Ola” story where he was at one time mistakenly called “Ola Person” (Per is equivalent to the name Peder). Thus, Peder was very possibly a nick name. Nevertheless, in the Spel-Ole story



Ekserplassen på Sedberg. (Skisse av R.A.)

“Volden” is described as “an old converted smoke house with a turf roof, on the meadow between the oldest school house and Lonn”. The Norwegian words “voll” or “vollen” mean “a grassy field or a meadow”. Thus, the name “Volden” literally describes the location of his home just as “Lillemoen” and “Valheimsvatne” describe a

location. It means: “the place in the meadow”. In the map above, from the Årdal bygdebok, Volden would have been one of the Huusmand places in the lower right corner.

Olsen

Ole Iversen's oldest son was also named Ole. When this son emigrated to America his departure was recorded in the parish records with his name: “Ole Olsen from Vollen, Østigaard, Årdal, son to Ole Iversen Vollen and Siri Pedersdtr.” (1854). In “The Wald History” by Cleva Darling, he is listed both as “Ole J. Vold” and “Ole J. Wald”. Cleva writes that “Father's name was Vold in Norway but was changed to Wald in America in order to not mix up the mails”. In the parish records of the Palestine Lutheran Congregation of Story county, Iowa, his name is written: “Ole J. Olsen Wold” and wife “Udbjor Berthine Olsen Wold”. Ole J. almost never used the name Wold or Wald except where it is found in the church book mentioned above. Instead, he used the name “Ole J. Olesen / Olsen / Olson” (all three spelling are found in the records). When the vital records from Illinois and Iowa were searched for Vold, Wold, and Wald, none of Ole J.'s could be found. Ole J.'s wife, Bertha Gaard, was born in Talgje, Rogaland County, Norway, and is listed in the parish records with the name: “Udbjørg Bertine Andersdatter Gaard”. When the two were married in Ottawa, La Salle County, Illinois, they used the names “Ole Olson” and “Betsey Anderson”, married 15 September, 1855. This may seem odd, but the changing of Bertha's name to an American version was not unusual at that time. Evidence that this couple was in fact Ole J. Olsen Volden and Bertha Andersdatter Gaard comes from the 1860 Illinois state census and the 1880 Iowa federal census. In 1860 this same family was listed as Ole Olson and wife Betsey, both born in Norway, and their two daughters, Serine (Sarah) and Sophia (Susie), born in Illinois. In 1880 the family is listed again, now living in Iowa, but this time as Ole J. Olson and wife Betsey. In this census all nine of their children are listed, the oldest four having been born in Illinois and the youngest five born in Iowa. Since the names and ages of all of these children correlate with those listed by Cleva Darling in “The Wald History”, it appears very likely that “Ole Olson and Betsey Anderson”, married in 1855, were indeed our great great grandparents. The records show that Ole J. continued to use the surname Olson for much of his life in America. Their grave stone near Slater Iowa has the inscription: “Bertha Olson Wald” which confirms this. (Note: Ole J.'s name was never inscribed on the stone even though there was a place on the stone for the husband. He was buried in the family plot in an unmarked grave near Bertha).

Wold

Our great grand father, Ole Olson Wold, was the third child and the oldest son of Ole J. Olson. He used the surname "Wold" from a young age as is clearly shown in the

Palestine church book. In his official capacity as a minister in the Lutheran Church, and on his own letter head he called himself O. O. Wold. In the county records which list the birth of his children, he and the children are listed with the surname "Wold". However, in all of the records of the children who were born in Fertile (Worth county), the surname "Wold" was later crossed out. Then, written above the original "Wold" is the name "Wald". An explanatory note is also written in the margin of the records thus: "Corrected by affidavit on July 3, 1942...Ole O. Bakker, clerk, and Edith Hanson (secretary)". The late date of this name change is interesting, and leads one to wonder why this was done. The death record of Ole J. lists him as "Wald, Ole J. O.", died 1 June, 1908 in Thor, Humboldt County, Iowa. This record tells us that the spelling "Wald" was used in the family at least as early as 1908, but this does not necessarily prove that Ole J. himself chose to use this spelling. Bertha died in 1899 and, remember, her grave stone also bears the name Wald.

Wald

A few years after Pastor O. O. Wold died at the age of 47, his wife Augusta came to Slater Iowa to live near the family of the Pastor's brother Severin O. Wald. Our grand father, Ferdinand Oliver Wald (also the oldest son), used the surname Wold for at least part of his own life as a young man. So the question remains: why was the name changed from Vold to Wold and then to Wald? One possible explanation is that the names Vold and Wold were actually identical to the Norwegians. There is little doubt that they would have pronounced these two names the same, both with the "V" sound, because there is no "W" sound in their native language. Also, the capital "V" when written in Norwegian records often looks like "W" because of the elaborate way it is written. Also, the "W" spelling may have seemed more American at the time. Then, why was the name changed to Wald? Should we just accept that it was "in order to not mix up the mails"? A different explanation, and perhaps a better one, is that Augusta Simerson (wife of O. O. Wold) wanted to keep her family name the same as that used by the rest of the family. We know from a 1908 obituary for O. O. Wold that Severin O. (younger brother of O. O. Wold) had chosen to spell the name "Wald". In fact, since Severin O. was the informant for Ole J.'s death, this probably explains why Wald ("Wald, Ole J. O.") was given as the surname on Ole J.'s death record.

So, we have the mails, the pronunciation, and the choice of the extended family. There were possibly other reasons for the change, and we may never know them all. When one looks at the family plot in the Slater Cemetery in Iowa, one can certainly see that "WALD" was their final decision.

Slater Cemetery - Center Section

(located 2 miles south of the east end of Slater Iowa)

Row 13

1. WALD, Bertha Olson WALD Jul 10 1835-Aug 19 1899

2. Burton O. WALD Nov 20 1875-Dec 13 1900

3. Ole O. WALD 1861-1908

* Ole O. WALD (This is known to be the grave site of Ole J. Olsen, but no marker exists)

4. Augusta WALD 1872-1953

5. Lowell M. WALD 1901-1975

6. Melba F. OLSON 1910-1964

7. WALD Minnie E. 1875-1961; Severin O. 1865-1941

Ole J. Olson

Our grandfather's grandfather, Ole J. Olson, was born January 8, 1831* and was christened January 23, 1831. He has been named Ole J. Vold and Ole J. Olson Wold / Wald in other family histories, but there are very few original documents where he is called anything other than Ole Olesen, Ole J. Olesen, or Ole J. Olson. (see Palestine church record). He was born the oldest son of Ole Iverson Volden, and christened at the Lutheran church in Årdal, Norway, a church which still stands today. According to the Norwegian parish record, Ole emigrated from Årdal on 14 April, 1854. Once in America, Ole J. settled in the growing Mission township, Fox River settlement, in north central Illinois. Here he met and married Bertha Andersdatter from Gaard, Talgje, Norway. There is a marriage certificate from La Salle county, Illinois, with the names "Ole Olson and Betsey Anderson", married Sept. 15, 1855. Although our family history always records Ole's wife's name as Bertha, several other documents list her as Betsey including the census records from 1860 and 1870, and the land deed records from Polk county Iowa. Of these records the census records are the most important because they also list the early children of the family. These records correspond to the list of children known through the written family history. Land deeds show that Ole J. did in fact own land on the northern border of Polk county Iowa near the Norwegian settlements of Slater and Cambridge. In fact, the land that Ole J. owned can be easily located because it is now bisected by the I-35 freeway, on the northern most edge of Polk county, 1 mile south of highway 210. All of the original buildings are now gone and a modern farm house and barn occupies the site.

While living and farming in Polk county, Ole J. and family probably did most of their business in the town of Cambridge in Story Co. which was slightly closer and more accessible than Elkhart at the time. They were active members of the 1st Evangelical Lutheran Congregation of Palestine township. This congregation is still there, west of I-35 on highway 210. (The original building burned in about 1950). The land that Ole J. Olson owned was exactly 1 mile south and 1 mile east of the church.

Ole J. Olson Wald died June 1, 1908 in the town of Thor, Humboldt Co., Iowa. His death record is listed in the Humboldt county records of 1908 under the name: Wald, Ole J. O., born Jan. 7, 1830*, divorced, farmer; Father: Peter Vold, Birth place: Norway, place of burial: Slater, IA, cause of death: Apoplexy.

There can be little doubt that this is the actual death record of our great great grandfather, Ole J. Olson. The death date given in Cleva Darling's history, 1906, is incorrect. The informant listed is Ole J.'s son, Severin Wald who was a well known lawyer for many years in Slater.

Severen O. Wald

by William O. Payne, 1911¹⁰

Among the active members of the Story county bar none occupies a more honorable place than the gentleman whose name introduces this review. He has been in the thick of the fray for fifteen years and has carried off a fair share of laurels, being known as one of the brightest lawyers in this section of the state, an attorney who never acknowledges defeat as long as he feels he is in the right and who in a remarkable number of difficult cases has convinced the court or jury of the righteousness of his contention.

He was born in Polk county, Iowa, December 10, 1865, a son of Ole J. and Bertha U. (Gaard) Wald, both natives of Norway. They came to the United States before their marriage, in the early '50s, and located near Ottawa, Illinois. Mr. Wald purchased one hundred and sixty acres of prairie land in Elkhart township, Polk county, Iowa, from a man for whom he was working in Illinois, and in the spring of 1865 he and his family removed to this place. He built a log cabin and later improved his farm with modern structures, developing it into one of the valuable properties of the township. He also acquired land in Humboldt county, Iowa, taking up his residence there about 1890. Mrs. Wald passed away in 1899, her husband departing this life eight years later. They were both faithful members of the Lutheran church and active workers in behalf of every cause seeking to advance the permanent interests of the community. Mr. Wald possessed good business judgment and on account of his acknowledged reputation for integrity was a man of large influence whenever he was known.

Severen O. Wald was reared under favorable circumstances for a useful career. He acquired his education in the district schools and then took a course in the Iowa Business College of Des Moines. Subsequently he matriculated in the law department of Drake University, graduating with the degree of LL.B. in 1896. He was admitted to the bar January 22, of the same year, several months before his graduation from the university. Opening offices in Slater, he at once entered upon an active practice and has handled successfully some of the most important civil and land cases that have been tried in this section. Recently he won a land case at Clarion which involved twenty-five thousand dollars or more that had been unsuccessfully tried by some of the ablest lawyers in this part of the state. His clients are among the leading business men of the community

¹⁰ "History of Story County, Iowa, A record of Settlement, Organization, Progress and Achievement", by William O. Payne, Volume II, Chicago: The S. J. Clarke Publishing Co. 1911.

and his opinions upon questions of law command respect as coming from one who has carefully considered the subject from all points of view.

In June, 1899, Mr. Wald was united in marriage to Miss Minnie Johnson, of Des Moines, and of this union six children were born, five of whom are now living, namely : Curtis M., Lowell M., Roscoe E., Bonnie V. and an infant daughter.

Mr. Wald gives his support to the republican party and has been frequently requested to allow his name to be proposed for the state legislature, but his extensive and growing practice has prevented his acceptance of this honor. He has served as a member of the town council and fraternally is connected with Slater Lodge, No. 384, I. O. O. F., and the local camp of the Modern Woodmen of America. He and his wife are valued members of the Methodist church. Both as a pleader and counselor he has attained high standing in his profession, and as he is a man of studious habits who thoroughly prepares for every case in which he is interested, he apparently has before him many years of increasing responsibility and usefulness.

Volden, The Old Smoke House in the Meadow

Iver Lillemoe was born in the spring of the year 1773, in the beautiful glacial cut valley of Årdal Norway. His birth record is found in the records of the Lutheran Church from Hjelmeland parish which simply states: "Iver Olsen, born at Vallem, christened 23 May, 1773, in the church"¹¹. From this and other records we know for certain that Iver Lillemoe's father was named Ole. We also know that he was born at Vallem (later called Valheim) which is "one of the oldest farms in Årdal"¹². At this writing, there is significant uncertainty about the identity of Iver's father, Ole Vallem. The farm book from Årdal lists the family as: "Ola Valheimsvatne and wife Sofia Andersdtr., Children: Iver, born 1773 Anders, born 1784."¹³

This child, Iver, is the same person who would be called Iver Olsen Lillemoe our direct ancestor. Several lines of evidence¹⁴ indicate that Sofia Andersdatter was Iver's mother, however, another record indicates she married a second time in 1782 to Ola Toreson.¹⁵ This Ola may have been he who was later known as Ola Valheimsvatne, meaning: "Ole who lives at Valheim's lake." Therefore, Ola Valheimsvatne may have been Iver Lillemoe's father, but it seems equally likely that he was not. It is not known when Iver's father died.

Iver was the oldest son, so we can guess that his grandfather, by tradition, was also named Iver. An earlier census of 1758 lists an 'Iver Olson' in Årdal but there is no way to verify the connection. Eleven years later Iver's mother, Sofia Andersdatter, gave birth to Iver's only brother (half brother?), Anders, named after Sofia's father. Anders

¹¹ From the Hjelmeland parish "kirkebok", FHL film #0126126, page 46, 1773, entry #28: "Iver Olsen, born on the Vallem farm, christened 23rd May, in the church. Witnesses: Rasmus Åsenvigen, Peder Vallem, Peder Riveland, Mayia Hundness and Anna ibid"

¹² Årdal, Gard og Folk, Sigurd Eikeland, 1971, volume 2, pg. 306.

¹³ Årdal, Gard og Folk, Sigurd Eikeland, 1971, volume 2, pg. 340.

¹⁴ 1770 confirmations coincide with Ole Iversen Valde (#9--both were 16 years old in 1770). No other children between 1773 and 1782.

¹⁵ Ola Toreson was born in 1760 and would have been only 13 in 1773--too young to be Iver's father. Sofie Andersdatter was born in 1754 and would have been 19, old enough for her first marriage. Iver was with the family and listed as a child on the farm records in Øver Valheim.

was christened on "the fourth Sunday after the Holy Trinity" which was 4 July, 1784. No other children of this family are known.

Iver Olsen Lillemoe appears to have received a good education because later in his life he worked as a vaccinator, preparing small pox vaccine and administering vaccinations to all of the children in Årdal, Hjelmeland, and Fister. Little did he know that 200 years later, during our generation, small pox would be declared eradicated from the planet, due in part to his efforts. In 1801, a complete census was taken of all the people in Norway, but Iver Olsen was not listed in any of the farms of Årdal. There was one individual named Iver Olsen, age 28, listed as a soldier serving in Kristiansand. This could have been the same person, but we do not know for sure. After the turn of the century, Iver Olsen returned home and married Siri Rasmusdatter on "the first Sunday after the new year", January, 1803. Together they lived at Lillemoe which was part of the farm called Vadla, near the home of Iver's parents. Lillemoe was located on the hillside near the mountains and the name literally means "Little Mountain". Iver Olsen was known as Iver Lillemoe, and he lived at Lillemoe for the rest of his life. In 1804 Siri she gave birth to her first and only child whom they called Anna Iversdatter. Anna grew up and married Helge Olsen Lid in 1825. Many of their children and grandchildren also emigrated to America, and we know of their descendants who survive today.

When Anna was still a young child, Iver Lillemoe fathered a son with another woman. This boy, the only son of Iver Lillemoe, was named Ole after his grandfather, and he was christened 11 March, 1808: "Ole Iversen". The boy grew up near his father, but not in the same home. His mother, Guro Olsdatter from Strand, had been working as a servant on a nearby farm. Guro married in 1814 with Torgils Halvorsen Bergeland, and they raised Ole together on the farm called Lille-Vadla. Guro had one daughter with Torgils whom they named Kari, born 25 December, 1820.

Despite the affair with Guro, Iver Lillemoe continued to live with his wife Siri for many years afterward. In the local census of 1835, Iver's wife, Siri, was said to be sickly. She died on 11 December, 1839. Iver Lillemoe married a second time in 1842 with Magla Olsdatter from Jørmeland. After a good long life he died at the age of 80 on 3 January, 1854.

The most remarkable thing to say about Iver Lillemoe's son, Ole Iversen, is that he grew up to become a master on the fiddle. In fact, he was so expert that they called him "Spel Ola" which means "The Master Player, Ola" (see the story of Spel Ola). During these times there wasn't much entertainment out in the country, and it was a long journey by land and boat to the nearest city. The people in the valley no doubt enjoyed his music when he played at their special occasions. On 20 November, 1830, Ole Iversen married Siri Pedersdatter Hagen. Siri gave birth to their first son, Ole, on 8 January, 1831. After this time Spel-Ola and his family lived on the farm called Volden which was part of the Sedberg farm. Spel-Ola's proper name was Ole Iversen Volden, but in "The Wald History" he was named Ole Peter Vold. The origin of the middle name "Peter" is not known, but there can be little doubt that these two are the same person. Together Ole

Iversen and his wife Siri would eventually have eight children whom they raised "in an old converted smoke house with a turf roof". The youngest of the eight children, Andreas was born in 1849. In the story of Spel Ola, and in the farm records, Volden was called a "husmannsplass" which means "cotters farm".

Early in the year 1854, the oldest son, Ole, took some of his younger brothers with him and sailed to America to realize their dream of owning their own land and running their own farms. Their grandfather, Iver Lillemoe, had died earlier that year, remember, and their father Spel Ola did not have a good reputation with the people of Årdal. We do not know exactly when Spel Ola went to prison, but we know that it must have been after 1855 because the family is listed in the local census of that year. His death is recorded in the prison church record of the Kristiansand tukthus parish as: "Ole Iversen Volden, Hjelmeland Sogn, died 25 February, 1860". This must have been a terrible hardship for their family because they were poor and they did not own the land that they farmed. The economy of south western Norway was very depressed at the time, and there were not many opportunities for young men who wanted to start a family. According to Cleva Darling, all eight of the children would eventually leave Norway. In 1861, their mother Siri would then be the only one of the family left in Norway. Finally, late that year, this mother of eight children, who just a few short years before had held so much hope and promise in her arms, died alone on Christmas day, probably of a broken heart more than anything else. The place called Volden, the place that was literally our name sake, was then torn down and the land was sold.

The oldest son, who was our direct ancestor through name and lineage, was called Ole Olsen Volden. From "The Wald History" by Cleva Darling he is known to us as Ole J. Vold, but when he came to America he used the name Ole J. Olsen. The family name was latter changed to Wold and then to Wald by his children. Both of these names are variations of the historical farm names. It is not very likely that the origin of this name is related to the German word "wald" which means forest. A more likely origin is from the Norwegian word "voll" or "vollen" which means "a meadow or a grassy field".

It is written in the Gaard family history that Ole J. Olsen Volden met Udbjørg Bertha Gaard while they sailed to America aboard the same ship. The two were married shortly after their journey on 15 September, 1855 in Ottawa Illinois. More of their story is told in "The Wald History" by Cleva Darling to whom we owe much gratitude, for without her work it would have been very difficult to research this side of our ancestry.

Evidence for the Vold genealogy line.

There exists a substantial paper trail which confirms our ancestry from Norway. To begin, our great grandfather was known to us directly through testimony from our grandfather, Ferdinand Oliver Wald, and through "The Wald History" by Cleva Darling, written in 1939. His name was Ole Olson Wold. We know that he served as a Lutheran

minister in Moreland Illinois and Fertile Iowa from 1891 to 1908 when he died at the age of 46. On his letter head in the church he called himself O. O. Wold. In the book "Norwegians in America", in the chapter which lists priests, O. O. Wold is listed as a priest in Fertile Iowa. In this same listing it states: "His father was from Årdal, Ryfylke". Cleva Darling also confirms that the family was from "Ordahl". The latter spelling is an English translation of Årdal, and shows the correct way to pronounce the name as a Norwegian would say it. "Ryfylke" is the name of the judicial district which includes the township and parish of Årdal in Rogaland county. Emigration records from Årdal show that Ole Olsen, son to Ole Iversen and Siri Pedersdatter did in fact emigrate to America in 1854. Finally, the church records from the Palestine Lutheran church of Story Co. Iowa contain many references to the family of Ole J. Olsen Wold and his wife Udbjørg Bertine. This church record also confirms that Ole J. Olsen was born in Årdal Norway and his wife was born on the island of Talgje in Finnøy parish.

Cleva darling goes on to describe three generations of the family who lived in Norway. She states that the grandfather was named "Iver Lillemoe", he married and had one child named "Ole Peter Vold", this son married "Siri" and together Ole and Siri had eight children. "Ole J. Vold", the oldest son, immigrated to America in "about the year 1850" where he married "Bertha" in 1854 "after a short courtship".

In the Årdal Bygdebok (farm book) a family which coincides is described very well with only a few variations. Iver Lillemoe is listed as Iver Olson Littlemo, his parents are listed, it states that he married, his wife had one daughter, and that he also had an illegitimate son with Guro Olsdatter from Strand. The son's name is listed as Ola Iverson Volden who coincides with Ole Peter Vold. This Ola married Siri Pedersdatter. The eight grandchildren of Iver Lillemoe are also listed with slight variations in order and spelling. The table which follows lists the three generations as they are found in these three different sources for comparison.

Having established that this is the right place and time, the fact that the entire family described by Cleva Darling is listed in the Årdal farm book, and that they all appear in the original parish records, is very strong evidence that this is the actual family of our ancestors. The Årdal farm book also states that Ola (grandson to Iver Lillemoe) emigrated to America in 1854 which is the same time frame given by Cleva Darling. Furthermore, Cleva Darling states that Iver Lillemoe "lived all his life" at Årdal. The original parish records confirm this, and the Årdal farm book states that Iver lived on Lillemoe for 70 years.

We might also consider the names of the eight children. The custom in Norway at the time was to name the first son after his paternal grandfather and the second son after his maternal grandfather. The first daughter was named after the maternal grandmother and the second was named after the paternal grandmother, and so on. In this family the custom was followed with the exception of the first son, Ole, who was named after his father and great grandfather, Ole. The second child, Siri, was named after her maternal grandmother, Siri Torkelsdatter. The third child, Peder, was named

after his maternal grandfather, Peder Pedersen. The fourth child, Guro, was named after her paternal grandmother, Guro Olsdatter. The fifth child, Torkel, was named after his maternal great grandfather, Torkel. The sixth child, Martha, was possibly named after Guro's mother, Marta Sjursdatter, although there may have been a different Martha because the name Martha Volden does appear on some of the church records as a witness of christenings. Ole the younger was also named after his father.

The naming of the children does not provide evidence to link the family to us. However, their names help us to link them to the earlier generations. Unfortunately, no church records earlier than 1760 exist for Årdal, and the records kept between 1760 and 1800 contain very few details.

The following table shows the family of Iver Lillemoe as listed in "The Wald History" by Cleva Darling, in the Årdal farm book (1971), and in the original Årdal parish records for comparison. Although there are slight variations in spellings and in the order of the children, these three coinciding records provide very good evidence that this family from Årdal is in fact the same family that was described by Cleva Darling.

by Allen H Wald

	Cleva Darling	Årdal Farm Book	Årdal Parish Records
Grand Father:	Iver Lillemo	Iver Olson Littlemo born 1773	Iver Olsen Lillemoe born 23 May, 1773
Father:	Ole Peter Vold	Ola Iverson Vollen born 1808	Ola Iversen Volden chr. 11 March, 1808
Mother:	Siri	Siri Pedersdtr. Vollen born 1809	Siri Pedersdtr. Volden chr. 5 Oct. , 1807
Children: 1	Ole J. Vold	Ola Olson Vollen born 1831	Ole Olsen Volden, born 8 Jan, 1831
2	Sarah	Siri born 1833	Serine born 8 Sept, 1833
3	*Torkel	Peder born 1836	Peder born 29 Nov, 1836
4	Gurina	Guro born 1838	Guro born 12 July, 1838
5	*Peter	Torkel born 1841	Torkild born 7 Feb, 1841
6	Martha	Marta born 1844	Martha born 10 Jan, 1844
7	Oley	Ola born 1846	Ole born 19 Oct, 1846
8	Andrew	Andreas born 1849	Andreas born 27 June, 1849

*The order of Torkel and Peter were the only children out of place in the history by Cleva Darling.

Spel Ola “The Master Player”

The following is a translation of several excerpts relating to Spel-Ola from the Årdal bygdebok written by Sigurd Eikeland.

For over 150 years the cottager class had plenty of room in our farms. About 1860 this class composed about half of the population in the surrounding country. Then, because of their numbers, relations began to break down between the cottagers and other classes. Whenever they would snitch a little from others, it was as a rule out of necessity and of painful need to keep liveliness in themselves and their households. They were clever enough that they could steal milk from the cows and cheese from the cheese nets, and that they could take grain sheafs from the field during harvest and meat from the old smoke house where it hung to dry. Some would stand and confess publicly in church after a sermon, while others would go to prison. The worst of these was Spel-Ola.¹⁶

Ola Torgilson Volden and Daniel Jonson Kyrkhus were not exceptionally good friends. In 1823 Daniel said that Ola Torgilson had attacked him, and Daniel called Ola a thief and a scoundrel. According to Daniel, Ola first hit him in the back, between the shoulders, and then he hit him in the head "which afterwards left a slow unpleasant result for my health." Daniel had also said that Ola lived together (adulterously) with Guro Olsdatter from Lille Vadla (Ola Torgilson was Guro's step son. Guro had been widowed the year before by Torgils Halvorsen, Ola's father). Ola would moreover break himself into the mill house and grind illegally. Ola's wife, Gjertrud, was called a thief also.

Daniel Jonson came with a legal action and said: Ola had attacked him in his own house, he had ground illegally on the mill, and Gjertrud had stolen flour from his pile. Here there was no talk of reconciliation. 1825 was equally bad. Daniel brought another legal action against Ola and his step mother, Guro Olsdatter Lille Vadla -- and son to Guro -- Ola Iverson, because they had stolen 4 sheaves of grain from his field. They confessed and promised that it would never happen again. Daniel agreed under the condition that Guro and Ola pay 12 spd.¹⁷, and then Guro would also move her house away from Daniel and not display herself or her slender shape around his house after sunset. Both the accused and the complainant, Daniel Jonson, remained in agreement. Here shall one note that Ola Iverson above was the same who was called "Spel-Ola", the

¹⁶ Årdal, Frå istid til nåtid, Sigurd Eikeland, 1969, volume 1, pp. 210, 211.

¹⁷ spd. = spesiedalar. This was a coin which was worth about one dollar.

big thief. He had gone to a good school.¹⁸ In 1832 Ola Iverson Volden (Spel-Ola) brought a complaint against Iver Reiarson Vadla and Andreas Reiarson Østerhus because they had attacked him and "crunched" his fiddle. Afterwards he moved to Volden under Kyrkhus. (Formerly they lived on Volden under Midtre Sedberg).¹⁹

Ola Iverson was the last who lived on Volden before the place was sold to become the school's property.²⁰

Note: The following story of Spel-Ola was initially translated by Liv Meyers, and was revised into this side by side form afterwards. Some liberties have been taken in the translation, but this is mostly to try and preserve the flavor of the story. One can also use this version to compare the similarities and the differences between the Norwegian vs. English. The Norwegian version follows the original without deviation.²¹

Spel - Ola

About middle of the 1800-century stood an old smoke-house with a turf-roof on the meadow between the oldest school-house and Lonn -- on property belonging to Kyrkhus. That was the cotters-farm Vollen. The place was sold to be school-property in 1864, so the happenings which here are told took-place before that time, but it-is not so easy for exact-dates to be established. On the cotters-farm lived Ola Vold, or Spel-Ola which he was best known under.

Spel-Ola

Omkring midten av 1800-talet stod ei gammal røykstove med torvtak på vollen mellom det eldste skulehuset og Lonn -- på eide dommen til Kyrkhus. Det var husmannsplassen Vollen. Plassen blei selt til lærarjord i 1864, så dir hendingane som her blir fortalt skjedde før den tid, men er ikke så lett å tidfeste nøvaktig. På husmannsplassen budde Ola Vold, eller Spel-Ola som han er best kjent under.

¹⁸ Årdal, Gard og Folk, Sigurd Eikeland, 1971, volume 2, pp. 193,194. This note about his education is interesting because his father, Iver Lillemoe, was also presumably educated and worked as a vaccinator for Årdal, Hjelmeland and Fister. It is not yet known who taught Spel-Ola to play the fiddle.

¹⁹ Årdal, Gard og Folk, Sigurd Eikeland, 1971, volume 2, pp. 194.

²⁰ Årdal, Gard og Folk, Sigurd Eikeland, 1971, volume 2, pp. 219. Ola Iversen and Siri Pedersdatter are listed with their children on the Volden farm in the 1855 census. Siri Pedersdatter Volden died 25 Dec. 1861. According to volume 1, the place was sold before 1864.

²¹ Årdal, Frå istid til nåtid, Sigurd Eikeland, 1969, volume 1, pp. 399, 400.

Johannes Vadla has called Spel-Ola for "Ola Person", but that can probably not be right. After this one can find out most likely name was Ola Ivarson. This Ola was born 1808, an illegitimate son to *the* married man Ivar Olson Lillemo, cottager under Walle, and Guro Olsdatter *from* Qvalshaug of Strand (living at Hundsnes), written thus in *the* churchbook. Ola was married 1830 with Siri Peders-daugter Hagen, probably from Segadal in Hjelmeland, born 1809.²² Ola was then called Ole Varden. Ola and Siri had many children, among others Ola born 1831 and Per (Peder) born 1836. *The* parents are called Vollen when *the* children became confirmed.

Ola was *a* fiddler and *the* obvious-choice in weddings and other gatherings where they needed music. For he was master on *the* fiddle and became simply called "Spel-Ola", but other opinions of people that they well could call him "Stel-Ola". For steel that did he, many go so far that they called him a big-thief.

Where there were young-people -- there was Ola. And where there was liquor -- yes there was Ola always full.

Best-friend to Ola was Jonas Gjesfjell. There is just one Jonas to-be found among people who have lived on Gjesfjell, and that is Jonas Johannesson, born 1803, so that can agree good with times which were mentioned above. In behavior were they two alike, just then that Jonas not could play (*the fiddle*).

Johannes Vadla har kalla Spel-Ola for Ola Person, men dette kan truleg ikkje vere rett. Etter det ein kan finne ut må nammet vere Ola Ivarson. Denne Ola var født 1808, ein uekte son til gift mann Ivar Olson Lillemo, husmann under Walle, og Guro Olsdatter Qvalshaug av Strand, f. t. Hundsnes, står det i kyrkjeboka. Ola blei gift 1830 med Siri Pedersdatter Hagen, truleg frå Segadal i Hjelmeland, født 1809. (9) Ola er då kalla Ole Varden. Ola og Siri hadde fleire barn, mellom andre Ola født 1831 og Per født 1836. Foreldra er kalla Vollen då barna blei konfirmerte.

Ola var spelemann og skjølvskriven i bryllaup og andre samkomer der det trongst musikk. For han var meister på fela og blei bare kalla "Spel-Ola", men elles meinte folk at dei like godt kunne kalla han "Stel-Ola". For stal det gjorde han, mange går så langt at dei kallar han for stortjuv.

Der det var ungdom -- der var Ola. Og der det var brennevin -- ja der var Ola alltid full.

Bestevenn til Ola var Jonas Gjesfjell. Det er bare ein Jonas å finne mellom folk som har butt på Gjesfjell, og det er Jonas Johannesson, født 1830, så det kan rime godt med tida som er nemnt ovanfor. I åtferd var dei to like, bare det at Jonas ikkje kunne spele.

²²

Ola's wife Siri Pedersdatter Hagen was actually born 5 October, 1807, and her christening is recorded in the Aardal church book. Siri Pedersdatter from Segadal in Hjelmeland, mentioned above, married a different man, and her unrelated family is found in the Hjelmeland bygdebok under the farm of Segadal.

One day midst in hay-making-season came Spel-Ola and Jonas Gjesfjell east to Bønardalen with backpacks and fishingpoles. To people who inquired, replied they that they *were* going east into the lake and fish. At that time were there people and cattle on all summer-farms, and people who came past were good welcomed. So also with Ola and Jonas. They stayed themselves to a couple days on Vasstøl, which in that time was *the* farm of Øver Mæle.

But simultaneously with the fishing-trip *it* happened that away *went* three large kettles of copper, one on Vasstøl, one on Saupstøl and one on Onnestøl (?).

Farm-folk became angry, they must *come* up with new cheese-kettles. Ola and Jonas were blamed, but no-one had proof on them. After / harvest became stolen a bull in *its* stall in a barn, and immediately after had Ola gone on *a* boat to town with meat. People were mistrusting and inquired after. Then came forth that Ola had been in town with a bull-carcass and a hacked/asunder copper-kettle.

Then go they to Ola, and he must confess that he had done *it*. He had taken *the* bull, he / lead *it* to Gjeilå and slaughtered *it* there. Helps-man (*accomplis*) named he not. The copper-kettles were they either not found. But Ola had also other things to answer for. One time had he stolen a ham on Ristingsvoll, *the* owner came over him with *it* as he crept out *the* smoke-vent in *the* cook-house, bearing *the* ham.

Ola was taken to prison in Kristiansand, and was sentenced to 5 years hard-labor.

Ein dag midt i Slåtten for Spel-Ola og Jonas Gjesfjell aust Bønardalen med ryggskrepper og fiskestenger. Til folk som spurte, svara dei at dei skulle aust i vatna og fiske. Den tid var det folk og fe på alle stølar, og folk som for framom blei godt mottatt. Så og med Ola og Jonas. Dei ga seg til eit par dagar på Vasstøl, som i den tid blei brukt av Øvre Mæle.

Men samstundes med denne fisketuren kom det bort tri store primkjelar av kopar, ein på Vasstøl, ein på Saupstøl og ein på Onnestøl (?).

Bygdefolket blei arge, dei mitteå opp med nye primkjelar. Ola og Jonas fekk skulda, men ingen hadde bevis på die. Hausten etter blei stolen ein stut på båsen i eit fjøs, og straks etter hadde Ola fare på båt til byen med kjøt. Folk fekk mistru og spurte etter. Det kom fram at Ola hadde vore i byen med ein stutaskrott og ein sundhakka koparkjel.

Då gjekk dei på Ola, og han måtte vedgå det han hadde gjort. Han hadde tatt stuten, ført han til Gjeilå og slakta der. Hjelpesnamm nemnde han ikkje. Koparkjelane fekk dei heller ikkje greie på. Men Ola hadde og andre ting å svare for. Ein gong hadde han stole ei fleskeskinke på Ristingsvoll, eigaren kom over han med same han kraup ut røykgluggen i eldhuset, berande på skinka.

Ola blei ført til fengslet i Kristiansand, og fekk dom på 5 års tukthus.

Long was it not before Jonas came to *the same place*. That happened like this: He was in employment by Tore Johnsen Valheim. One evening came Dan Tengesdal inside with Tore, they were good pals. Dan had been in town with meat, and wanted *to stay over/night* on Valheim, and so travel up *the lake* *the next day* to Tengesdal.

Then Dan let himself (*be careless*), *and saw Jonas* that he laid *his shirt* with *his pocket-book* inside over *his lunchbox*. So as-soon-as Dan had fallen-asleep, tip-toed Jonas himself in and took *the pocket-book* and went out to Valheims-mountain and concealed it under a rock. But this came up, people had met Jonas in (stormy) weather on *the way to the mountain*. And then usefulness there *was no longer to deny*.

Spel-Ola and Jonas Gjesfjell came thus back / together -- but inside stone-walls. Ola became sick and *the priest* was with him often. One day confessed he all he could remember. Among other *things* said he that Jonas had been with *him* and slaughtered *the bull*, and *the copper-kettles* had they taken on the fishing-trip. *The kettles* had they carried up *the moor* and in Løyning to Gullster rock-pile and hid them there. Many other *incidents* came also forth during confession.

Prison-priest noted down all, comforted Ola and promised to bear this forward to people in Årdal. Day after, died Spel-Ola.

Lenge varte det ikkje før Jonas kom på same staden. Dette bar slik til: Han var i arbeid hos Tore Johnsen Valheim. Ein kveld kom Dan Tengesdal innom hos Tore, dei ver gode bussar. Dan hadde vore i byen med kjøt, og ville bli nattat over på Valheim, og så fare opp vatnet neste dag til Tengesdal.

Då Dan la seg, såg Jonas at han la trøya med lommeboka i ovanpå matskrinet. Så snart Dan hadde sovna, stiltra Jonas seg inn og tok lommeboka og gjekk ut til Valheimsåsən og gøynde den under ein stein. Men dette kom opp, folk hadde møtt Jonas i uver på veg til åsen. Og då nytta det ikkje lenger å nekte.

Spel-Ola og Jonas Gjesfjell kom så saman att -- men innanfor murane. Ola blei sjuk og presten var hos han ofte. Ein dag skrifta han alt han kunne mennast. Mellom anna sa han at Jonas hadde vore med og slakta stuten, og koparkjelane hadde dei tatt på ein fisketur. Kjelane hadde dei bore ut heiane og inn Løyning til Gullsterøysane og gøynt dei der. Mykje anna kom og fram under skriftemålet.

Fengselpresten noterte ned alt, trøysta Ola og lova å bere det fram til folk i Årdal. Dagen etter døydde Spel-Ola.

Copper-kettles in Gullster rock-pile then were looked-for long and well after, but no-one was able to find them. Farm-folks thought rather that *the* priest had mistaken *the* same place and name, or that Ola had been confused when he confessed.

His / son, Per Olson, followed in father's footsteps. One time stole he wool on Skogarbø and Øvre Valheim. He was caught on *the* way/home from town and received imprisonment he also. Like *his* father died he in prison.

The two other sons to Spel-Ola, Anders and Ola emigrated to America, Ola in 1854. What time Anders emigrated is not known. One other child to Spel-Ola was Serina Mælshorten.

Koparkjelane i Gullsterøysane har det vore leita lenge og vel etter men ingen har klart å finne dei. Bygdefolket trudde helst at presten hadde rørt saman stad og namn, eller at Ola hadde vore uklår då han skrifta.

Sonen hans, Per Olson, gjekk i farens fotefar. Ein gong stal han ull på Skogarbø og Øvre Valheim. Han blei tatt på heimveg frå byen og fekk tukthusstraff han og. Lik faren døydde han i fengslet.

Dei to andre sønene til Spel-Ola Anders og Ola reiste til Amerika, Ola i 1854. Kva tid Anders reiste, er ikkje kjent. Eit anna barn til Spel-Ola var Serina Mælshorten.

Ole Iversen Volden, or "Spel-Ola" was born in 1808 and married Siri Pedersdatter Hagen in 1830. As we now know, Spel-Ola and Siri Pedersdatter had eight children altogether, five sons and three daughters. The couple were still living together with the younger children in 1855, and they were listed in the Årdal census of that year. Ole died in prison on 25 February, 1860, and Siri died shortly afterward, on Christmas day in 1861.

Spel-Ola's father, Iver Olsen Lillemoe, was never married to his mother Guro Olsdatter. Iver Lillemoe's legal wife was Siri Rasmusdatter Hia whom he married four years before the affair with Guro, and with whom he fathered a daughter, Anna, b. 1804. Despite the affair, Iver lived at Lillemoe with his wife Siri until she died in 1839. In 1842 Iver married again with Magla Olsdatter from Jørmeland, Hjelmeland. Iver lived to be eighty years old and died in 1854.

Guro Olsdatter Strand

Spel-Ola's mother was named Guro Olsdatter from Strand. Guro was born in Rogaland county Norway, in the Strand parish, on a farm called Qvalshaug (Kvalshaug). This farm is part of Jørpeland, which now includes a city of over 3000. Guro was born 9 May, 1779, the sixth of nine children. Guro's father was Ole Jonsen who was born about 1721. Guro's mother was Martha Sjursdatter from Viglesdal, Årdal. Ole and Martha were probably cousins, and if not cousins they were closely related. Martha was Ole's second wife, and the two of them were required to obtain the king's permission to marry because of their kinship. The actual relationship is not yet known. Guro's christening was recorded in the church book as:

Ole Jørpeland's datter Guraa

After her son Ola was born, Guro married three times and she was widowed by all three men. Her first marriage was in 1814 with Torgils Halvorson from Bergeland. Torgils was the father of Ola Torgilson Volden mentioned above. Ola, was only six years old at that time. Guro and Torgils had a daughter together named Kari, born in 1820. Torgils died in 1822. The identity of Guro's second husband is not yet known, but he may have been the person who taught the young Ola to play the fiddle. Guro's third marriage was with Ola Tolleivson from Følsvik in 1835.

Guro emigrated to America in 1853 (at the age of 75) with the family of her daughter Kari and Kari's husband Markus Andersen from Vadla. This couple had two children at the time, Anders and Gurina (named after Guro). The family came with many other Norwegian immigrants to the Fox River settlement in La Salle county Illinois, and they are listed in the federal census of 1860. Guro was then over 80 years old. At that time Guro had taken the name Julia Anderson, Julia being an Americanized version of Guro, and Anderson being the surname used by Kari and her husband whom Guro lived with. As mentioned above, Ole J. Olsen, Spel-Ola's oldest son, emigrated in 1854, and he also came to La Salle County near Guro's family. Ole J. married in 1855 with Udbjørg Bertine Andersdatter from the Gaard farm (Bertha Gaard) on the island of Talje. Guro most likely died shortly after 1860 because she is not found in census records of 1865 or later. Her daughter, Kari (Spel-Ola's half sister) died in Illinois during the birth of her third child in 1854. Kari's husband, Markus, married again and had several more children who moved to Grundy Illinois.

Spel-Ola's other half sister, Anna Iversdatter, married Helga Olsen from Tinn. They had one son, Ole Helgasen, born in Årdal. Then they moved to Sjernerøy, Rogaland county where they eventually had eleven children together. After Anna died, her husband Helga also came to America with one of their sons in about 1875.

Håkon V Magnussøn

The farm records from Veldre, Hedmark, Norway clearly show a lineage from our family back to ‘King Haakon the fifth’ who was our great grandfather twenty two generations ago. This royal line comes through Augusta Simerson, wife of Ole O. Wold, and her mother Pernille Larsdatter Bratten, b. 1836. Pernille’s lineage can be shown back to Ales Lauritzdatter Bratten, b. 1625, who was called: ‘adelsdamen Ales Lauritzdtr.’ which means ‘nobel woman’. The lineage from 1300 through 1600 is given, but there are some generations that are suspect with not many details. So there is considerable uncertainty, but we do know that Ales Lauritzdatter held this title, and therefore it is very likely that she was a direct descendant of the king. There are many files available on the internet about this king and his family. The following is from [www.nationmaster.com/ encyclopedia](http://www.nationmaster.com/encyclopedia):

Haakon V Magnussøn was born in 1270 and was king of Norway from 1299 until 1319. He was married to Eufemia of Rügen, and father to Ingeborg Håkonsdotter who married duke Eric Magnusson of Sweden. Haakon V is considered to be the last Norwegian king in the Fairhair dynasty.²³ He was the younger surviving son of Magnus the Lawgiver, King of Norway and wife Ingeborg of Denmark. He succeeded when his older brother king Eric died without an heir. Haakon descended from king St Olav, Olav II of Norway through his mother who was daughter of Jutta of Saxony, and herself a descendant of Ulvhild of Norway, duchess of Saxony. Olav II Haraldsson (995 – 1030), king from 1015–1028, was called during his lifetime ‘the Fat’ and afterwards known as Saint Olaf.

This broken bust is said to have been sculpted after Haakon V Magnussøn.



²³ <http://www.statemaster.com/encyclopedia/Haakon-V-of-Norway>

'Gard Tøresen'

Gard Tøresen²⁴ was born in 1373 A.D. and is known to be one of our direct ancestors. We know of him from the family histories that were kept on the Gaard farm in Talgje, Norway where he lived. In 1959 our grandparents, Ferdinand and Velma Wald, traveled to the Gaard farm and visited our distant cousins who still live there. As a result we have copies of the genealogical records that have been kept by that family for many centuries.

Bertha Gaard, our great great grandmother, was named in her birth record:

'Udbjørg Bertine Andersdatter Gaard'

Her given name was Udbjørg Bertine, and this is why she used the name Bertha when she came to the United States. Her father's name was 'Anders Olsen Gaard', so she was called Anders' daughter. Gaard or Gård is the name of the farm where their family lived, and thus her name: Bertha Gaard.

The Gaard farm is located on the island of Talgje, just off the south west coast of Norway, near Stavanger. Gard Tøresen, (who's name also comes from this place), was one of the earliest known proprietors. But it was actually much more than a farm as we would think of it. The place called 'Gård', (pronounced: [gôôrd]), would be better described as a farm village where many families lived together with their various homes circling around a central court yard. In ancient times Gård was even more than a village. Some might call it a castle or a manor with it's protective walls and towers. It was also the center of the region and a place of justice where courts were held and the law was enforced. At one time it was the most important village thereabouts in the larger region called 'Ryfylke'.

Gard Tøresen was a nobleman called 'lagemann'. This word literally means 'law-man'. However, in this case it means he was actually the supreme judge in this part of the country. In these early times the law was not like it is now in our country. The poor classes were not usually able to own property. The higher classes, who did own the land, were very careful to ensure that their ownership passed down only to their children or to other members of their family. The poor had to struggle just to have food to eat.

²⁴

Lagmannsætta : Gard Tøreson ætta fra Sør-Talgje i Rogaland, Engen, Sigleif, 1903-1989. History and genealogy of the Tøreson family of Sør-Talgje in Rogaland, Norway. Includes histories and genealogies of related families on other farms in Rogaland county, ca. 900 to ca. 1600. FHL INTL Book: 948.31/F2 D2e v. 2 pt. 1 supp. Publication [Stavanger] : S. Engen, 1984. ISBN/ISSN: 8299079748

Even if they could acquire some savings, it was very hard for them to find land to purchase that wasn't already spoken for. There were also taxes required, both for the poor and for the land holders. Many of the earliest documents we have are tax accounts which list the farms, the men on those farms, and their property.

Because of the importance of royal family lines, there are many genealogies and family histories that were carefully kept by the royal families and their 'noble' grand children. Of our Norwegian ancestors, this is the second time we have seen a family line that can be traced back to royalty. Remember that the family of Augusta Simerson can be traced back through king Håkon V Magnussøn who was king from 1299 to 1319. Augusta's family all came from south eastern Norway in Hedmark county. Although Gard Tøresen's family lived on the opposite side of Norway, his family lines can be traced back to the same royal lines and also to the early Swedish royalty.

It is probably not that unusual that some family lines can be traced back to the kings and queens of medieval Europe. The number of ancestors we have twenty generations back is just over a million ($X = 2^{20}$). No doubt the vast majority of our ancestors were found among the peasants and the working class. After all, these were the people who emigrated to America looking for land that they could own for themselves. Nevertheless, it is wonderful and interesting to have access to records that show our royal heritage and tell about their history.²⁵



Tore Gardson
adelsvåpen

²⁵ 'adelsvåpen' = 'his royal coat of arms'

Pedigrees and Family Group Sheets

I often have family members tell me that they can't follow what I write because they don't know all the families and they need a pedigree they can see to understand how everyone fits in. Of course even I make heavy use of the pedigree files on my computer while I write, and I try to keep notes about most individuals in those files. So the best place to see my computer files is <www.rootsweb.com> and search for an individual like 'Ferdinand Wald', or you can download a possibly more current version from our family website which is <www.oooald.org>. Although there are many files and many ways to print them, here I have included just a few descendant charts and family group sheets referring to individuals who are found in my personal research. I hope this helps.

Children of Iver Olsen Lillemoe



Children of Ole Ivarsen Volden

Ole Ivarsen Volden (b.1808;d.1860)

sp: Siri Pedersdatter Hagen (b.1806;m.1830;d.1861)

 Ole J. Olson Vold (b.1831;d.1908)

 sp: Udbjørg Bertine Andersdotter Gaard (b.1835;m.1855;d.1899)

 Serine Olsdatter Volden (b.1833;d.1876)

 : Gunder Helgesen (b.1832)

 : Gustav Bernhard Olaus Beutich (b.1835)

 : Ole Olsen Totland

 Peder Olsen (b.1836)

 Guro Olsdatter (b.1838)

 sp: Syvert Pedersen (m.1864)

 Torkild Olsen (b.1841)

 Martha Olsdatter (b.1844)

 Ole Olsen Dahl (b.1846)

 sp: Allazenia or Ella Lowder (b.1856;d.1886)

 Andreas Olsen (b.1849)

 sp: Tørborg Andrea Ragnethe Andersdatter (b.1850;m.1874)

Children of Ole J. Olson Vold

Ole J. Olson Vold (b.1831;d.1908)

sp: Udbjørg Bertine Andersdotter Gaard (b.1835;m.1855;d.1899)

 Serina O Olson Wald (b.1858;d.1929)

 sp: Hector Austad (b.1848;m.1899)

 Sophia (Susie) Olson Wald (b.1860;d.1930)

 sp: Charles Anderson (b.1865)

 Ole Olson Wold (b.1861;d.1908)

 sp: Augusta Simerson (b.1872;m.1891;d.1953)

 Andrew Olson Wald (b.1863;d.1905)

 sp: Clara Hansen

 Severen O Olson Wald (b.1865;d.1941)

 sp: Minnie E. Johnson (b.1874)

 Martin Lewis Olson Wald (b.1870;d.1938)

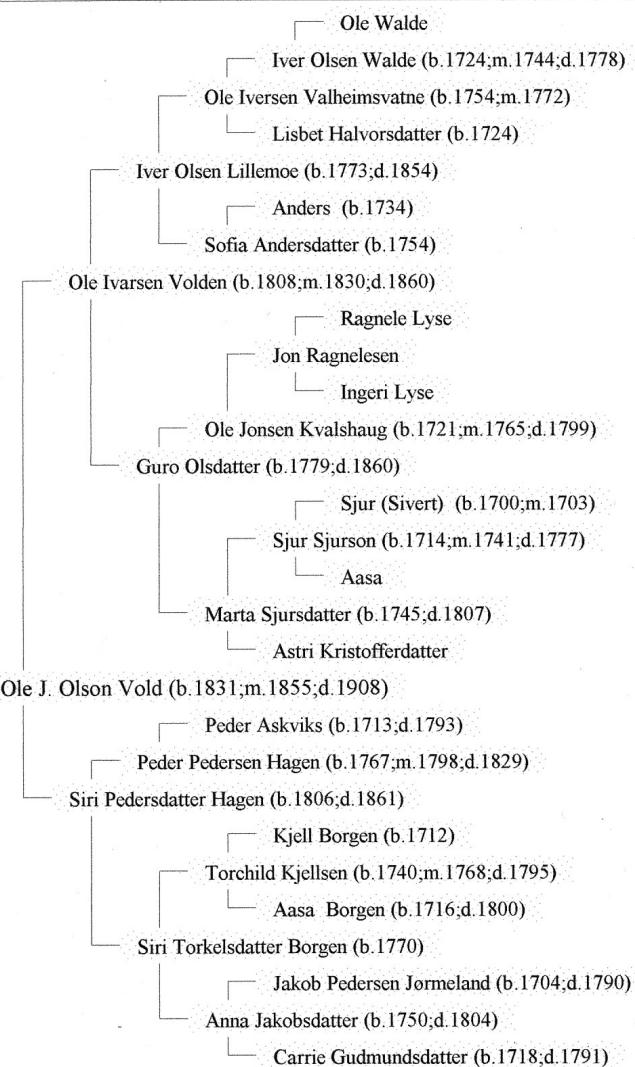
 sp: Myrta Fowler (m.1896)

 Bessie G Olson Wald (b.1872;d.1909)

 sp: Andrew Maland (b.1874;m.1900)

 Burton O Olson Wald (b.1872;d.1900)

Ancestors of Ole J. Olson Vold



Children of Serine Olsdatter Volden

Serine Olsdatter Volden (b.1833;d.1876)
: Gunder Helgesen (b.1832)
| └── Anna Karina Gundersdatter (b.1859)
: Gustav Bernhard Olaus Beutich (b.1835)
| └── Olaus Gustavsen (b.1864;d.1866)
: Ole Olsen Totland
| └── Olaus Olsen Mælsosen (b.1867)

Children of Guro Olsdatter Volden

Guro Olsdatter Volden (b.1838;d.1873)
sp: Syvert Pedersen Døvik (b.1842;m.1864)
| └── Serina Pedersdatter (b.1864;d.1958)
| sp: Ludwig Berg (b.1862;m.1887;d.1942)
| └── Thomas Pedersen (b.1866)
| └── Betsey Pedersen (b.1868)
| └── Caroline Pedersen (b.1869)

Family Group Record

Husband		Ole Olson Wold	
Born	11 Feb 1861	Place	Fox River, Lasalle, Illinois
Died	18 Jan 1908	Place	Fertile, Iowa
Married	7 Jul 1891	Place	Belmond Iowa
Husband's father	Ole J. Olson Vold		
Husband's mother	Udbjørg Bertine Andersdotter Gaard		
Wife		Augusta Simerson	
Born	5 May 1872	Place	Belmond, Iowa
Died	3 May 1953	Place	Minneapolis, Minnesota
Wife's father	Fredrick Simmerson		
Wife's mother	Pernille Larsdatter		
Children List each child in order of birth.			
1	F	Pauline Bertilla Wald	
	Born	29 Mar 1892	Place Chicago Ill
2	F	Alvah Ovedia Wald	
	Born	4 Apr 1894	Place Fertile IA
3	M	Ferdinand Oliver Wald	
	Born	27 Jul 1896	Place Fertile, Iowa
	Died	30 Mar 1987	Place Sandy, Utah
	Buried	3 Apr 1987	Place Salt Lake City, Utah
	Spouse	Velma Howe	
	Married	31 Dec 1925	Place Salt Lake City, Utah
4	M	Joseph Harold Wald	
	Born	30 Sep 1898	Place Fertile, IA
	Died	18 Jan 1955	Place
	Spouse	Ruth Gibson	
	Married	24 Jun 1934	Place
5	M	Burton Emanuel Wald	
	Born	8 Feb 1901	Place Fertile IA
	Died	26 Jul 1965	Place
	Spouse	Evelyn Gulden	
	Married	Jan 1939	Place
6	F	Selina Honora Wald	
	Born	18 Jul 1903	Place Fertile IA
7	M	Reuben Ephraim Wald	
	Born	25 Sep 1905	Place Fertile, Worth, IA
	Died	18 Aug 1993	Place Cornelius, Washington, OR
8	F	Oletta Augusta Wald	
	Born	22 Aug 1908	Place Fertile, Worth, IA
	Died	22 Dec 1997	Place Minneapolis, Hennepin, MN

Family Group Record

Husband		Fredrick Simmerson	
Born	8 Jan 1838	Place	Faråsen, Veldre, Hedmark, Norway
Died	25 Oct 1928	Place	Belmond, Iowa
Married	1867	Place	Belmond, Wright, Iowa
Husband's father	Simen Hansen		
Husband's mother	Alis Frederiksatter		
Wife		Pernille Larsdatter	
Born	15 May 1836	Place	Store Bratten, Veldre, Hedmark, Norway
Chr.	5 Jun 1836	Place	Store Bratten, Veldre, Hedmark, Norway
Died	30 Jun 1912	Place	Belmond, Wright, Iowa
Wife's father	Lars Pedersen		
Wife's mother	Johane Andersdatter		
Children List each child in order of birth.			
1	M	Simon Simerson	
Born	15 Aug 1868	Place	Gailsville, Trempealeau, Wisconsin
Died	2 Mar 1944	Place	Belmond, Wright, Iowa
Spouse	Anna M. Johnson		
Married	20 Apr 1893	Place	Belmond, Wright, Iowa
2	M	Ludwig Frederick Simerson	
Born	4 Apr 1870	Place	Belmond, Wright, Iowa
Died	26 Dec 1955	Place	Belmond, Wright, Iowa
Buried		Place	Clear Lake, Iowa
Spouse	Gena Mathilda Schonhood		
Married	3 Jun 1908	Place	
3	F	Augusta Simerson	
Born	5 May 1872	Place	Belmond, Iowa
Died	3 May 1953	Place	Minneapolis, Minnesota
Spouse	Ole Olson Wold		
Married	7 Jul 1891	Place	Belmond Iowa
4	M	Johanes Simerson	
Born	3 Aug 1874	Place	Belmond, Wright, Iowa
Died	8 Apr 1881	Place	
5	F	Ida Simerson	
Born	14 Feb 1876	Place	Belmond, Wright, Iowa
Died	24 Apr 1881	Place	
6	M	Ole Simerson	
Born	26 Apr 1879	Place	Belmond, Wright, Iowa
Died	21 Apr 1881	Place	

Family Group Record

Husband		Ole J. Olson Vold	
Born	8 Jan 1831	Place	Aardal, Rogaland, Norway
Chr.	31 Jan 1831	Place	Aardal, Rogaland, Norway
Died	1 Jun 1908	Place	Thor, Humbolt, Iowa
Married	15 Sep 1855	Place	, Lasalle, Illinois
Husband's father	Ole Ivarsen Volden		
Husband's mother	Siri Pedersdatter Hagen		
Wife		Udbjørg Bertine Andersdotter Gaard	
Born	10 Jul 1835	Place	Talgje, Rogaland, Norway
Chr.	19 Jul 1835	Place	Talgje, Rogaland, Norway
Died	19 Aug 1899	Place	Slater, Story, Iowa
Buried	Aug 1899	Place	Slater, Story, Iowa
Wife's father	Anders Olsen		
Wife's mother	Siri Torbjørnsdatter		
Children List each child in order of birth.			
1 F	Serina O Olson Wald		
Born	6 Sep 1858	Place	Ottawa, Illinois
Died	2 Jan 1929	Place	Slater, Story, Iowa
Spouse	Hector Austad		
Married	Jul 1899	Place	Slater, Story, Iowa
2 F	Sophia (Susie) Olson Wald		
Born	Jan 1860	Place	Ottawa, Illinois
Died	1930	Place	
Spouse	Charles Anderson		
Married		Place	Omaha, Nebraska
3 M	Ole Olson Wold		
Born	11 Feb 1861	Place	Fox River, Lasalle, Illinois
Died	18 Jan 1908	Place	Fertile, , Iowa
Spouse	Augusta Simerson		
Married	7 Jul 1891	Place	Belmond Iowa
4 M	Andrew Olson Wald		
Born	1863	Place	Ottawa, Illinois
Spouse	Clara Hansen		
Married		Place	
5 M	Severen O Olson Wald		
Born	10 Dec 1865	Place	Cambridge, Story, Iowa
Died	16 Sep 1941	Place	
Spouse	Minnie E. Johnson		
Married		Place	
6 M	Martin Lewis Olson Wald		
Born	11 Oct 1870	Place	Cambridge, Story, Iowa
Died	22 Mar 1938	Place	
Spouse	Myrta Fowler		
Married	1896	Place	
7 F	Bessie G Olson Wald		
Born	9 Nov 1872	Place	Cambridge, Story, Iowa
Died	10 Jan 1909	Place	War. township
Spouse	Andrew Maland		
Married	9 Oct 1900	Place	Slater, Story, Iowa
8 M	Burton O Olson Wald		
Born	20 Nov 1872	Place	Cambridge, Story, Iowa
Died	13 Dec 1900	Place	

Family Group Record

Husband		Anders Olsen	
Born	Abt May 1795	Place	Gaard, Talgje, Rogaland, Norway
Chr.	25 May 1795	Place	Talgje, Rogaland, Norway
Died	13 Jan 1868	Place	Gaard, Talgje, Rogaland, Norway
Buried	18 Jan 1868	Place	Gaard, Talgje, Rogaland, Norway
Married	17 Jul 1827	Place	Finnøy, Rogaland, Norway
Husband's father	Ole Andersen		
Husband's mother	Udbjørg Olsdotter		
Wife		Siri Torbjørnsdotter	
Born	Abt Mar 1804	Place	Hovda, Fogn, Rogaland, Norway
Chr.	25 Mar 1804	Place	Hovda, Fogn, Rogaland, Norway
Died	26 Mar 1874	Place	Gaard, Talgje, Rogaland, Norway
Buried	6 Apr 1874	Place	Gaard, Talgje, Rogaland, Norway
Wife's father	Torbjørn Andersen		
Wife's mother	Helge Nielssdotter		
Children		List each child in order of birth.	
1	F	Margrethe Marie Andersdotter	
Born	8 Apr 1828	Place	Gaard, Talgje, Rogaland, Norway
Chr.	27 Apr 1828	Place	Gaard, Talgje, Rogaland, Norway
Spouse	Nels Torsen		
Married	29 Apr 1855	Place	Talgje, Rogaland, Norway
2	M	Olaus Andersen	
Born	8 Jan 1830	Place	Gaard, Talgje, Rogaland, Norway
Chr.	24 Jan 1830	Place	Talgje, Rogaland, Norway
Spouse	Dorthea Maria Jakopsdotter		
Married		Place	Skjorvestad, Rennesoy ?
3	F	Helene Andersdotter	
Born	7 May 1832	Place	Gaard, Talgje, Rogaland, Norway
Chr.	13 May 1832	Place	Talgje, Rogaland, Norway
Spouse	Jorgen Tidesen		
Married	31 Oct 1856	Place	Talgje, Rogaland, Norway
4	F	Anne Serine Andersdotter	
Born	24 Apr 1834	Place	Gaard, Talgje, Rogaland, Norway
Chr.	4 May 1834	Place	Finnøy, Rogaland, Norway
Died	30 Jun 1834	Place	Gaard, Talgje, Rogaland, Norway
Buried	6 Jul 1834	Place	Finnøy, Rogaland, Norway
5	F	Udbjørg Bertine Andersdotter Gaard	
Born	10 Jul 1835	Place	Talgje, Rogaland, Norway
Chr.	19 Jul 1835	Place	Talgje, Rogaland, Norway
Died	19 Aug 1899	Place	Slater, Story, Iowa
Buried	Aug 1899	Place	Slater, Story, Iowa
Spouse	Ole J. Olson Vold		
Married	15 Sep 1855	Place	, Lasalle, Illinois
6	M	Theodor Andersen	
Born	16 Aug 1837	Place	Gaard, Talgje, Rogaland, Norway
Chr.	3 Sep 1837	Place	Finnøy, Rogaland, Norway
Spouse	Anna Hansdotter Melin		
Married		Place	
7	M	Anders Andersen	
Born	12 Apr 1840	Place	Gaard, Talgje, Rogaland, Norway
Chr.	17 Apr 1840	Place	Talgje, Rogaland, Norway

Family Group Record

Husband	Anders Olsen	
Wife	Siri Torbjørnsdotter	
Children	List each child in order of birth.	
<hr/>		
7 M	Anders Andersen	
	Spouse	Elen Marie Sjursdotter
	Married	14 Jul 1874 Place Finnøy, Rogaland, Norway
8 F	Anne Serine Andersdotter	
	Born	10 Feb 1843 Place Gaard, Talgje, Rogaland, Norway
	Chr.	12 Feb 1843 Place Talgje, Rogaland, Norway
	Died	28 Jul 1926 Place
	Spouse	Lars Larsen
	Married	Place
9 F	Inger Malene Andersdotter	
	Born	19 Jul 1845 Place Gaard, Talgje, Rogaland, Norway
	Chr.	20 Jul 1845 Place Talgje, Rogaland, Norway
	Spouse	John Larsen
	Married	28 Jun 1865 Place Finnøy, Rogaland, Norway

Family Group Record

Husband		Ole Ivarsen Volden	
Born	11 Mar 1808	Place	Aardal, Rogaland, Norway
Died	25 Feb 1860	Place	Kristiansand, Rogaland, Norway
Married	20 Nov 1830	Place	Aardal, Rogaland, Norway
Husband's father	Iver Olsen Lillemoe		
Husband's mother	Guro Olsdatter		
Wife	Siri Pedersdatter Hagen		
Born	5 Oct 1806	Place	Aardal, Rogaland, Norway
Chr.	5 Oct 1807	Place	Aardal, Rogaland, Norway
Died	25 Dec 1861	Place	Aardal, Rogaland, Norway
Wife's father	Peder Pedersen Hagen		
Wife's mother	Siri Torkelsdatter		
Children	List each child in order of birth.		
1 M	Olc J. Olson Vold		
Born	8 Jan 1831	Place	Aardal, Rogaland, Norway
Chr.	31 Jan 1831	Place	Aardal, Rogaland, Norway
Died	1 Jun 1908	Place	Thor, Humbolt, Iowa
Spouse	Udbjørg Bertine Andersdotter Gaard		
Married	15 Sep 1855	Place	, Lasalle, Illinois
2 F	Serine Olsdatter		
Born	8 Sep 1833	Place	Aardal, Rogaland, Norway
3 M	Peder Olsen		
Born	29 Nov 1836	Place	Aardal, Rogaland, Norway
4 F	Guro Olsdatter		
Born	12 Jul 1838	Place	Aardal, Rogaland, Norway
Spouse	Syvert Pedersen		
Married	29 Mar 1864	Place	
5 M	Torkild Olsen		
Born	7 Feb 1841	Place	Aardal, Rogaland, Norway
6 F	Martha Olsdatter		
Born	10 Jan 1844	Place	Aardal, Rogaland, Norway
7 M	Ole Olsen Dahl		
Born	19 Oct 1846	Place	Aardal, Rogaland, Norway
Spouse	Allazenia or Ella Lowder		
Married		Place	
8 M	Andreas Olsen		
Born	27 Jun 1849	Place	Aardal, Rogaland, Norway
Spouse	Tørborg Andrea Ragnethe Andersdatter		
Married	9 May 1874	Place	Arendal, Aust-Agder, Norway

Family Group Record

Husband	Peder Pedersen Hagen	
Born	1767	Place Hjelmeland, Rogaland, Norway
Chr.	25 Dec 1767	Place Hjelmeland, Rogaland, Norway
Died	2 Nov 1829	Place Aardal, Rogaland, Norway
Married		Place
Husband's father	Peder Askviks	
Husband's mother		
Wife	Siri Torkelsdatter	
Born	Feb 1770	Place Aardal, Rogaland, Norway
Chr.	27 Feb 1770	Place
Wife's father	Torchild Kjelsen	
Wife's mother	Anna Jakobsdatter	
Children	List each child in order of birth.	
1 F	Anna Hagen	
	Born	1802 Place Aardal, Rogaland, Norway
2 F	Siri Pedersdatter Hagen	
	Born	5 Oct 1806 Place Aardal, Rogaland, Norway
	Chr.	5 Oct 1807 Place Aardal, Rogaland, Norway
	Died	25 Dec 1861 Place Aardal, Rogaland, Norway
	Spouse	Ole Ivarsen Volden
	Married	20 Nov 1830 Place Aardal, Rogaland, Norway
3 F	Marthe Pedersdatter Hagen	
	Born	3 Apr 1809 Place Aardal, Rogaland, Norway
	Died	10 Jul 1809 Place
4 M	Peder Pedersen	
	Born	4 Aug 1811 Place Aardal, Rogaland, Norway
	Died	5 Oct 1831 Place Aardal, Rogaland, Norway
5 F	Marthe Pedersdatter	
	Born	11 Aug 1811 Place Aardal, Rogaland, Norway

Family Group Record

Husband	Iver Olsen Lillemoe	
Born	May 1773	Place Aardal, Rogaland, Norway
Chr.	23 May 1773	Place Aardal, Rogaland, Norway
Died	3 Jan 1854	Place Aardal, Rogaland, Norway
Married	2 Jan 1803	Place Aardal, Rogaland, Norway
Husband's father	Ole Iversen Valheimsvatne	
Husband's mother	Sofia Andersdatter	
Wife	Siri Rasmusdatter	
Born	26 Nov 1767	Place Aardal, Rogaland, Norway
Died	19 Nov 1839	Place Aardal, Rogaland, Norway
Wife's father	Rasmus Olsen Or Hia	
Wife's mother	Siri Jacobsdatter	
Children	List each child in order of birth.	
1 F	Anna Iversdatter	
Born	Jun 1804	Place Aardal, Rogaland, Norway
Died	11 May 1864	Place Siernaroy, Rogaland, Norway
Spouse	Helge Olsen	
Married	1825	Place Norway

Family Group Record

Husband		Iver Olsen Lillemoe
Born	May 1773	Place Aardal, Rogaland, Norway
Chr.	23 May 1773	Place Aardal, Rogaland, Norway
Died	3 Jan 1854	Place Aardal, Rogaland, Norway
Married	Not married	Place
Husband's father	Ole Iversen Valheimsvatne	
Husband's mother	Sofia Andersdatter	
Wife		Guro Olsdatter
Born	9 May 1779	Place Strand, Rogaland, Norway
Chr.	9 May 1779	Place
Died	Aft 1860	Place , Illinios
Wife's father	Ole Jonsen Kvalshaug	
Wife's mother	Marta Sjursdatter	
Children List each child in order of birth.		
1	M	Ole Ivarsen Volden
Born	11 Mar 1808	Place Aardal, Rogaland, Norway
Died	25 Feb 1860	Place Kristiansand, Rogaland, Norway
Spouse	Siri Pedersdatter Hagen	
Married	20 Nov 1830	Place Aardal, Rogaland, Norway

Family Group Record

Husband		Torgier Halvorsen	
Born	1755	Place	Aardal, Rogaland, Norway
Died	15 Feb 1822	Place	Aardal, Rogaland, Norway
Married	11 Jul 1814	Place	Aardal, Rogaland, Norway
Husband's father	Halvor Ormson		
Husband's mother	Anna Torgilsdatter		
Wife		Guro Olsdatter	
Born	9 May 1779	Place	Strand, Rogaland, Norway
Chr.	9 May 1779	Place	
Died	Aft 1860	Place	, Illinios
Wife's father	Ole Jonsen Kvalshaug		
Wife's mother	Marta Sjursdatter		
Children List each child in order of birth.			
1	F	Kari Torgilsdatter	
		Born	25 Dec 1820 Place Aardal, Rogaland, Norway
		Died	10 Aug 1853 Place Fox River, Lasalle, Illinois
		Spouse	Markus Andersen
		Married	30 Jul 1848 Place Aardal, Norway

Family Group Record

Husband		Ole Jonsen Kvalshaug	
Born	1721	Place	Strand, Rogaland, Norway
Died	7 Jul 1799	Place	Strand, Rogaland, Norway
Married	3 Feb 1765	Place	Forsand, Rogaland, Norway
Husband's father	Jon Ragnelesen		
Husband's mother			
Wife		Marta Sjursdatter	
Born	Abt 1745	Place	Forsand, Rogaland, Norway
Died	1807	Place	Strand, Rogaland, Norway
Wife's father	Sjur Sjurson		
Wife's mother	Astri Kristofferdatter		
Children List each child in order of birth.			
1	F	Ingrid Olsdtr	
Born		Place	Lyse, Fossand, , Norway
Chr.	14 Jul 1765	Place	
Died	1799	Place	Kvalshaug U. Jorpeland, Strand, , Norway
2	F	Astri Olsdtr	
Born	1767	Place	Lyse, Fossand, , Norway
3	M	Ragnhild Olsen	
Born		Place	Kvalshaug U. Jorpeland, Strand, , Norway
Chr.	21 Oct 1770	Place	
4	F	Marta Olsdtr	
Born	1772	Place	
5	F	Marta Olsdtr	
Born		Place	Kvalshaug U. Jorpeland, Strand, , Norway
Chr.	8 May 1774	Place	
6	F	Guro Olsdatter	
Born	9 May 1779	Place	Strand, Rogaland, Norway
Chr.	9 May 1779	Place	
Died	Aft 1860	Place	, Illinios
Spouse	Iver Olsen Lillemoe		
Married	Not married	Place	
7	M	Sjur Olsen	
Born		Place	Kvalshaug U. Jorpeland, Strand, , Norway
Chr.	10 Feb 1782	Place	
Died	1807	Place	
8	M	Jon Olsen	
Born		Place	Kvalshaug U. Jorpeland, Strand, , Norway
Chr.	19 Jun 1785	Place	
Died	Abt Dec 1785	Place	
9	M	Jon Olsen	
Born		Place	Kvalshaug U. Jorpeland, Strand, , Norway
Chr.	9 Aug 1789	Place	
Died	1807	Place	

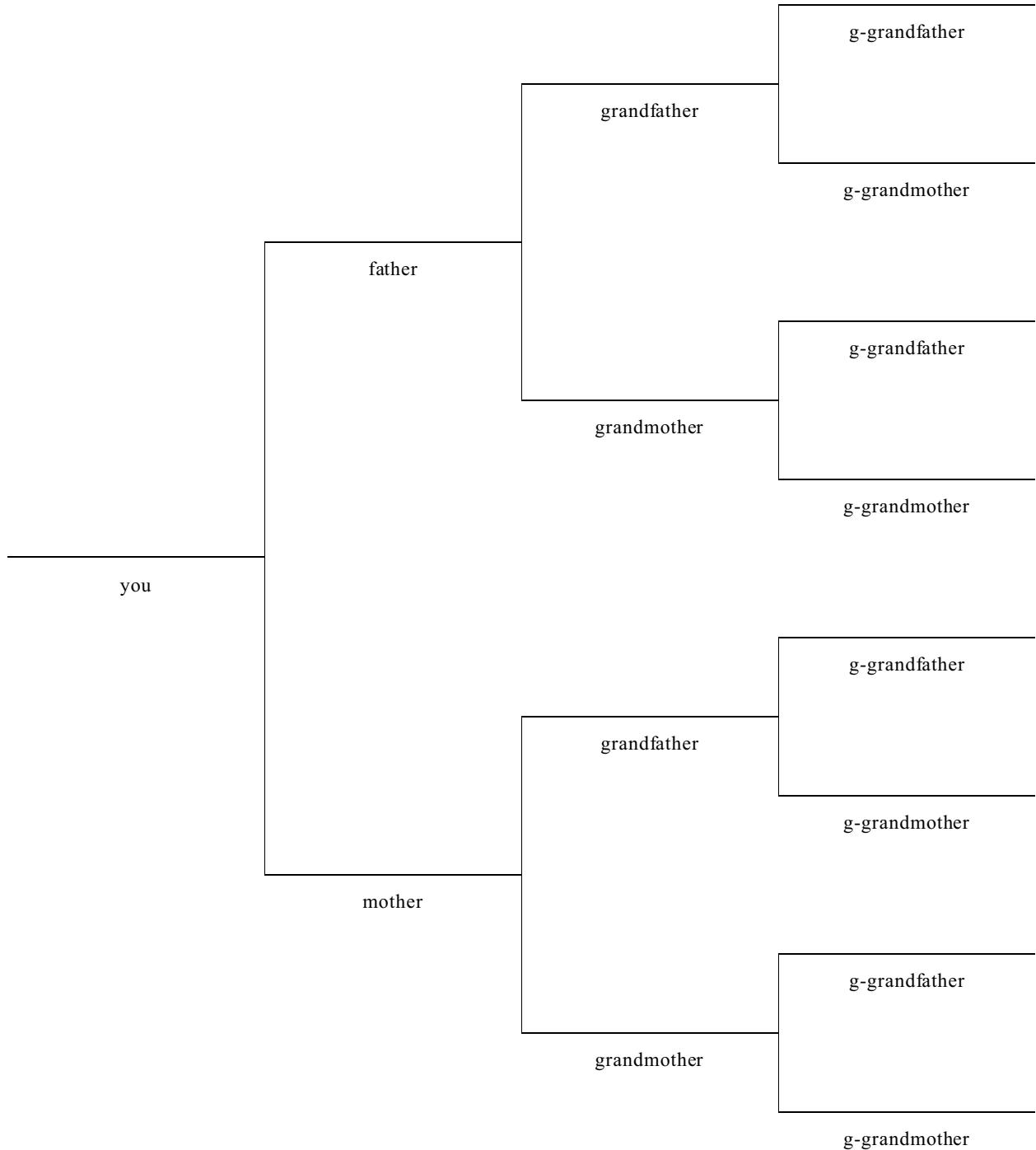
Family Group Record

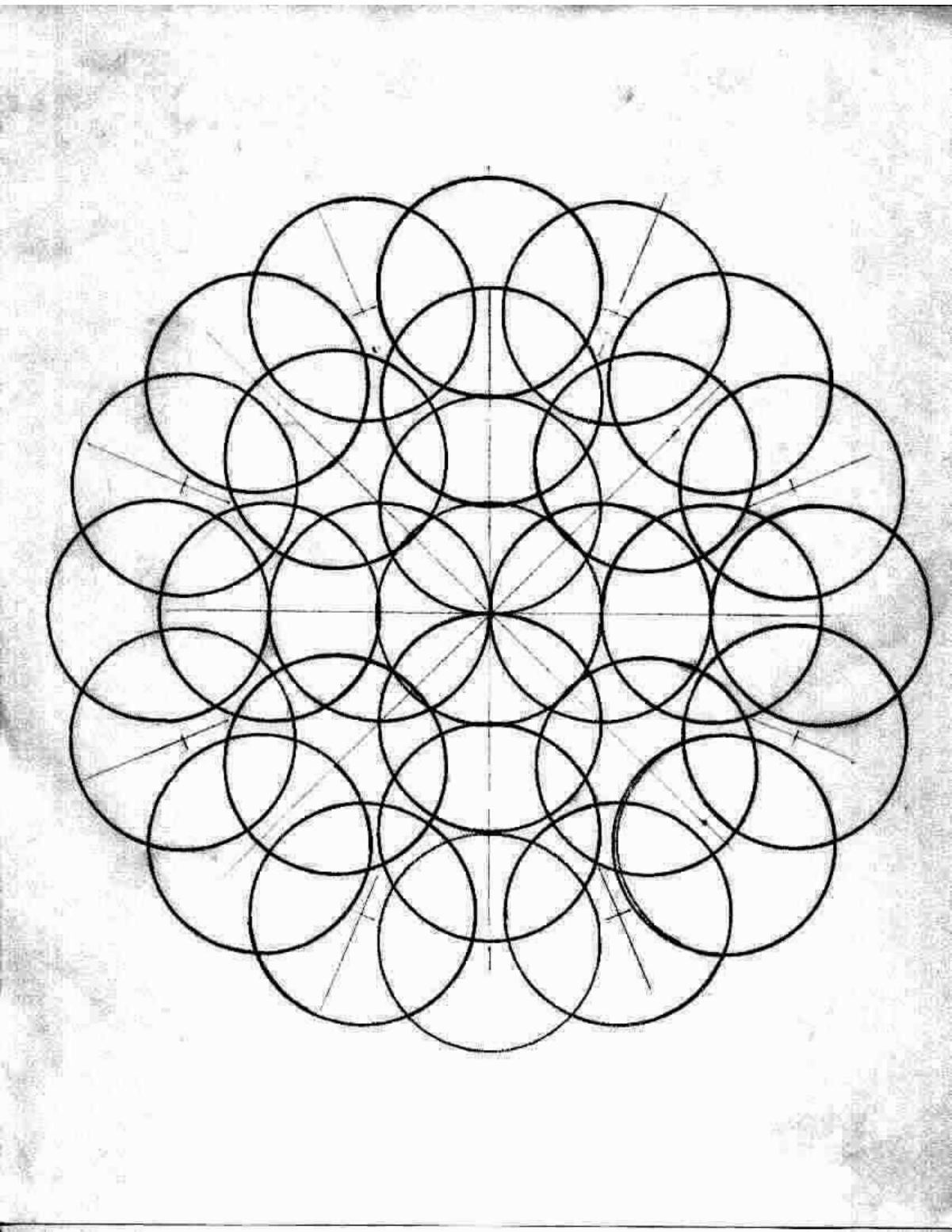
Husband		Ole Iversen Valheimsvatne	
Born	1754	Place	Aardal, Rogaland, Norway
Married	Abt 1772	Place	Aardal, Rogaland, Norway
Husband's father	Iver Olsen Walde		
Husband's mother	Lisbet Halvorsdatter		
Wife	Sofia Andersdatter		
Born	Abt 1754	Place	Finnøy, Rogaland, Norway
Wife's father	Anders		
Wife's mother			
Children List each child in order of birth.			
1	M	Iver Olsen Lillemoe	
	Born	May 1773	Place
	Chr.	23 May 1773	Aardal, Rogaland, Norway
	Died	3 Jan 1854	Aardal, Rogaland, Norway
	Spouse	Guro Olsdatter	
	Married	Not married	Place
2	M	Anders Olsen	
	Chr.	4 Jun 1784	Place

Family Group Record

Husband Iver Olsen Walde			
	Born	Abt 1724	Place
	Died	16 May 1778	Place Aardal, Rogaland, Norway
	Married	Abt 1744	Place Vadle, Hjelmeland, Rogaland, Norway
	Husband's father		
	Husband's mother		
Wife Lisbet Halvorsdatter			
	Born	Abt 1724	Place
	Wife's father		
	Wife's mother		
Children List each child in order of birth.			
1	F	Marta Iversdatter	
		Born	Abt 1745 Place Vadle, Hjelmeland, Rogaland, Norway
		Died	1771 Place Hjelmeland, Rogaland, Norway
2	F	Katrine Iversdatter	
		Born	Abt 1746 Place Vadle, Hjelmeland, Rogaland, Norway
3	F	Lisbet Iversdatter	
		Born	Abt 1748 Place Ardal, Rogaland, Norway
		Spouse	John Pedersen
		Married	1778 Place Hjelmeland, Rogaland, Norway
4	M	Iver Iversen	
		Born	Abt 1750 Place Vadle, Hjelmeland, Rogaland, Norway
5	F	Siri Iversdatter	
		Born	Abt 1753 Place Vadle, Hjelmeland, Rogaland, Norway
6	M	Ole Iversen Valheimsvatne	
		Born	1754 Place Aardal, Rogaland, Norway
		Spouse	Sofia Andersdatter
		Married	Abt 1772 Place Aardal, Rogaland, Norway

A Personal Pedigree





The art work above represents an individual at the center, surrounded by 4 grand parents, 8 great grand parents, and 16 great great grand parents. As you can see, everyone of us has many close ancestors. We don't have to go back far before there are many more to learn about. If you have any interest at all, there are dozens of family lines that still need much attention. Please let me know if you want to help.

My Research Journal

Allen H Wald

Note:

I have sometimes been accused that I only wanted to dig up old skeletons from the Wald family closets. For the record I want to say that I really just wanted to see what was in that closet, no matter what it was. Furthermore, I have a great desire to find whatever else there is, good or bad, as long as it helps to tell the story of our family and preserve that history for future generations.

Along with archery, this research has become my other favorite pass time, and as my bow arm grows less steady I find my desire to learn about our family grows stronger. Therefore, I continue to write about what I find, and I hope those whom I write about will forgive me if there are mistakes that result. Nevertheless, even as our arrows don't always hit the center, at the end of the tournament we usually find that the majority of hits leave a well punctured mark around the middle of the target. So it will be, I hope, with this work.

Allen H Wald

My Discovery of Our Family in the Palestine Lutheran Congregation

In the summer of the year 2001 I traveled to Iowa for the third time in as many years. Previously I had met a woman named Florence Wheeler who lives in Cambridge (near Slater) who had been collecting genealogy about every single person who ever lived in Cambridge, and she had been doing this for many years. She is not a member of the LDS church, but she is every bit the expert genealogist that you'll find anywhere in Utah. She had one entire wall of her large living room filled with books and genealogies, indexes and files. The year before this she and I had looked through many of her materials for information about the Wald / Wold / Olson family with almost no success.

It was a sunny day and the Iowa summer was warm and humid. The corn in the fields was well over your shoulders, and traffic on I-35 was light. Cambridge is only a few miles off the freeway--right in the middle of the state. When you turn off the main highway into town you can see that main street is all of one block long. I knocked on Mrs Wheeler's door and after several minutes she answered. (I don't think they get too many out of town visitors). She lives in an old novelty / gift shop, and her home is filled with all kinds of trinkets and nick-knacks that seem to be left over from former days before she retired. She invited me in and we sat down and talked for a while. I reviewed some of my research through that year, things I had learned since the time that I visited the year before. I told her that I was just there to see what new information I could find. We discussed the land deeds that I had found concerning Ole J. Olson, my great great grandfather. He lived with his family just a few miles south of Cambridge on the south side of the Polk county line, and a few of their children had been born in Cambridge, or at least we know that their names were entered in the Story county records as having been born there. At some point in our lengthy conversation she told me that I should go over and visit with the pastor at the Palestine Lutheran church which is just south of the freeway on the main highway between Cambridge and Slater. She also sold me a small book containing the history of the Palestine congregation. I had looked at this book the previous year, but it was not completely indexed, and I didn't find what I was looking for. This time I looked a little more carefully and discovered that several of Ole J.'s children were listed as members of the congregational choir, and in one place the book states that Ole O. Wold had been a member and gone on to become a priest in the Fertile Iowa congregation. At that point I knew I was on a hot new lead, and I had to pry myself away from this terribly talkative (wonderful) lady so I could pursue this new information.

It was now late in the afternoon when I got to the church, and I felt that old feeling of anxiety once again as I approached the building--the voice in my mind went something like: 'what the heck am I doing', 'this is stupid', 'they're going to think you're such an idiot'. I brushed those thoughts aside, knocked on the door, and the pastor came out to meet me. I told him who I was and why I was there, and he took me into his clerk's office and showed

me the oldest record book of their congregation which began around the year 1865. We looked briefly through the book and found definite records of our family. I was thrilled to have actually held that original old book in my hands. He copied a couple of pages for me, and then he said that he needed to get back to his work, but that if I would come back the next day at 9:00 a.m. his secretary would be there and she could help me look through the book more thoroughly and copy anything that I wanted. So I thanked him and left. The next day I returned and copied several more pages from the old church book along with many other pages from a 100-year anniversary book that they had. As you will see, the church book was written in the Norwegian language, and there is one page in that book that I consider to be one of the three most important documents that I have found in all of my research regarding the Wald family. I have included a copy of this page below.

The document is a listing of individuals and families as they join the congregation. At the top of the page, #129 and #130 are our great great grand parents “Ole J. Olsen Wold and Udbjør Berthine Olsen Wold”. It also states that Ole was born in Årdal and Bertine, (a.k.a Bertha Gaard) was born in Talgø (also spelled: Talgje). They both formally joined the congregation in 1871, and this coincides with land records that show that Ole bought land shortly before that time. In fact, after I left the Palestine church I drove back over toward the land that Ole J. owned, and I discovered that his land was precisely one mile south and one mile east from the church. I had not noticed this the year before when I first met the current land owners because their farm house is on the other side of the raised freeway. The land that Ole J. owned is actually now bisected by the newly constructed freeway, and you can no longer see the church from the east side of the farm.

Why is this document so important? This is the only primary source documentation that I have ever found that lists the full names “Ole J. Olsen Wold”, including the farm name Wold, at the same time with his wife, giving her birth name “Udbjør Berthine”, also with his two surnames “Olsen Wold”. Perhaps even more important, the names of the parishes where

Anmärkningar:				Fortegnelse over Menighedens Medlemmer:				Anmärkningar:			
No.	Medlemmers fulde Navn.	Födt	Konfir. Når.	No.	Medlemmers fulde Navn.	Födt	Konfir. Når.	No.	Medlemmers fulde Navn.	Födt	Konfir. Når.
129	Ole J. Olsen Wold	Årdal	Kap. 1871	129	Ole J. Olsen Wold	Årdal	Kap. 1871	129	Ole J. Olsen Wold	Årdal	Kap. 1871
130	Udbjør Berthine Olsen Wold	Talgø	Kap. 1871	130	Udbjør Berthine Olsen Wold	Talgø	Kap. 1871	130	Udbjør Berthine Olsen Wold	Talgø	Kap. 1871
131	Jonas T. Larson Øknerud	Høyland	Kap. 1872	131	Jonas T. Larson Øknerud	Høyland	Kap. 1872	131	Jonas T. Larson Øknerud	Høyland	Kap. 1872
132	Sina Larson Øknerud	Snarheim	Kap. 1872	132	Sina Larson Øknerud	Snarheim	Kap. 1872	132	Sina Larson Øknerud	Snarheim	Kap. 1872
133	Aristian Kristiansen Høtne	Øyer	Kap. 1872	133	Aristian Kristiansen Høtne	Øyer	Kap. 1872	133	Aristian Kristiansen Høtne	Øyer	Kap. 1872
134	Nygude Høng Høtne	Østerø	Kap. 1872	134	Nygude Høng Høtne	Østerø	Kap. 1872	134	Nygude Høng Høtne	Østerø	Kap. 1872
135	Lars Olsen Raben	Øtne	Kap. 1872	135	Lars Olsen Raben	Øtne	Kap. 1872	135	Lars Olsen Raben	Øtne	Kap. 1872
136	Kornelius Petersen Håland	Åsbygd	Kap. 1872	136	Kornelius Petersen Håland	Åsbygd	Kap. 1872	136	Kornelius Petersen Håland	Åsbygd	Kap. 1872
137	Lars Reinertsen Rødmo	Fyllborg	Kap. 1872	137	Lars Reinertsen Rødmo	Fyllborg	Kap. 1872	137	Lars Reinertsen Rødmo	Fyllborg	Kap. 1872
138	Anna Rødmo	Fyllborg	Kap. 1872	138	Anna Rødmo	Fyllborg	Kap. 1872	138	Anna Rødmo	Fyllborg	Kap. 1872
139	Colling Halvorsen	Fyllborg	Kap. 1872	139	Colling Halvorsen	Fyllborg	Kap. 1872	139	Colling Halvorsen	Fyllborg	Kap. 1872
140	Ramse. Høtne	Moen		140	Ramse. Høtne	Moen		140	Ramse. Høtne	Moen	

they were each born are also given. When I saw this document I knew immediately that I had found the most telling proof that I have yet to this day—proof which validates all of the other documents and histories—so many of which were incomplete, uncertain, and ambiguous, and most of which came from secondary sources that could not be trusted completely. Furthermore, a history of this congregation has been kept over the years. Although Ole J. was not mentioned directly, his children were active and managed to appear in that history several times. It is also well documented that his son, our great grandfather, Ole Olson Wold was raised in this congregation, and this fact has been confirmed to me personally by Mrs Maylo Nervig who still lives in Slater and who is a cousin to our grandfather Ferdinand O. Wald.

My Visit to the Dungeons of Des Moines, Iowa, and What I Found There

On my way home from Cambridge and Slater that same year (2001), I stopped in Des Moines and spent a couple of hours in their historical library. I didn't find much there, so I went to my final stop, the Polk county court house which is right in the middle of downtown. Des Moines is a reasonably large city, about the same size as Salt Lake. The court house is a large four story building which covers about half a city block, adjoined by several other buildings including the police station on the west side. When I entered the building, I was immediately struck by the gloominess of the large main floor room. This place was not designed to make people feel welcome. There were several people bustling about, and quite a few individuals sitting near the walls on benches and folding chairs. As I went past the guards through the metal detector, I noticed that most of the people were rather ruff looking. These people were having trouble with the law in one form or another.

I made my way to the clerk's office. Inside that room it was slightly brighter but also large and imposing. As I entered I again saw several people who were sitting on a long bench, each waiting for their turn, separated from the clerks by a long tall counter. I noticed that, while there were a great number of clerks and others milling about among the desks on the other side of the counter, there were seemingly no clerks at all who were actually there at the counter helping people. So, like the others, I took a number, and after about 30 minutes my turn finally came up. I told the clerk that I was looking for documents regarding a divorce case from about 1890. I didn't know the exact date, but I did know from our family history* that Ole J. and Bertha had been divorced, and shortly afterwards Bertha had died in 1899. I also knew that the family farm was in Polk county, situated on the northern most edge of the Polk county line, very near Slater and Cambridge. After Ole J. and Bertha died, most of the family had ended up in Story county. This fact explained why my grandma and grandpa Wald had had so much trouble researching this family—because they didn't really look for records in Polk county. Nevertheless, I had discovered the location of their farm through land deeds signed by Ole J. himself, and today I was looking for some real meat—something that would tell me more about how this family had fallen apart over 100 years ago.

As you might imagine, the first clerk that I talked to didn't have a clue how to help me, and she didn't even seem to understand what it was that I was asking for. So she went and got another clerk, and after making the same request to at least four different clerks (each time gaining more and more of an audience among the various people who were behind me), finally a slightly older lady came to the counter. After I explained my request yet again, she very kindly escorted me past the counter, around several desks to the back of the room, through two sets of tall oak doors, and down a long narrow set of stairs that led into the basement of the courthouse. There were no windows in that basement, and there didn't seem to be any real rooms either. The entire space was filled with a maze of masonry pillars and

archways with various odd spaces between them—all built in the distant past by some long forgotten mad brick mason. As I reached the bottom of the stairway I saw hallways protruding off in all directions, some long and dark at the end, some short and halting abruptly. Every brick appeared to have been painted at least a dozen times—most recently with thick, glossy gray paint. The smooth texture and dark gray brick gave that basement the appearance of a damp and gloomy dungeon. At this point I was again asking myself: “what am I doing here”, and “I wonder if there is any chance in Beelzebub’s castle that I will find what I want down here.” I felt like leaving immediately.

Nevertheless, I was there, down in that strange basement. Tucked away in every conceivable nook and cranny were dozens of file cabinets of all sizes and shapes, carefully fitted underneath a strange entanglement of large ventilation tubes, pipes, conduits, and computer cables. Down in that dungeon I was introduced to a very friendly young records clerk named Tina Lee. I explained to her what I was looking for, and she very kindly and expertly helped me find several index films where she thought we might find reference to the documents I was seeking. I then spent the better part of two hours looking for any reference to Ole J. Olsen / Olson / Olesen / Oleson / Vold / Wold / Wald etc. etc., and had absolutely no luck at all. Although she was working on other things, Tina had come over to help me several times during those two hours, and when it came time to leave I’m sure she could see that I was very disappointed. I thanked her for allowing me to search through their records and for helping so much, and I then prepared to leave thinking that I would just blow off that whole day as a complete failure, having not found anything at all. Before I left, Tina insisted that I write my name and address on a card with the names of the family and the information that I was looking for. She then told me that she would let me know if she finds something in the future. She had been really nice in helping me, but while standing underneath that huge labyrinth of bureaucracy I wasn’t holding out much hope as I left.

I had heard that small town court houses sometimes keep old boxes full of case documents, and that the case of a family divorce could produce many documents that would be filled with details about the family. That day there was no such luck for me. The next year in the fall, however, well over a year later, after I had nearly forgotten about that whole sorry day in Des Moines, here in the mail came a letter from the Polk county clerk’s office. Sure enough it was from my friend Tina. In the letter she explained that she had been looking for something else, and by accident she had run across an old index for equity cases. Somehow she remembered that I had been there and had been looking for this case type. She found the card that I left the year before, and although she wasn’t able to locate the actual case file, she found a copy of the docket for the case which led her to find a copy of the final divorce decree given by a Judge Holmes. We didn’t get any documents from the original court case, but we did get the final decree which describes several details about the divorce—the end of which must have been a very difficult struggle for the family. I have included that document below.

The docket shows that the case proceeded from August 31, 1893 until this final decree of November 4, 1895. The fees sheet also shows that the case was not finalized until 1898, just one year before Bertha died. The document begins at the bottom of page 522

through to the end of page 523, with "Bertha Oleson, Plaintiff, and Ole J. Olseson, Defendant...case #4459".

THURSDAY MARCH ELEVENTH, 1897. CONTINUED.

plaintiff have judgment against the defendants, E.D.Janes & Company, E.D.Janes, and Frank Janes and each of them, in the sum of \$279.75 with 7% thereon from this date until fully paid and for the costs of this action taxed at \$-----, including an attorneys fee of \$23.98, and that execution issue there for.

Abbie A.Thompson)
-vs-) No 7007 Eq.Holmes J.

R.W.Marquis, et al) On hearing the report of the referee herein it is ordered that his fee bill as reported be and the same is hereby allowed as follows: For the purpose of making a sale and posting notices \$10.00; Receiving bids and making report \$15.00; Bill of Sale \$10.00; Notary fees \$30.25; 121 assignments \$30.25, Total \$100.50.

Ella M.Millor)
-vs-) No 8902 Law Holmes J.

A.H.Leonard) It is hereby ordered by the court in said cause, that J.B.Puckett be, and he is hereby appointed and duly authorized to serve the writ of Habeas Corpus, this day issued, in said cause, with like effect in all respects as if done by the Sheriff.

Mrs.S.L.Hellyer)
-vs-) No 7187 Eq.Holmes J.

D.Hellyer) Be it remembered that now on this 11th day of March, 1897, the same being the 58th day of the January Term, 1897, of the District Court of Iowa, in and for Polk County, the case of S.L. Hellyer, plaintiff vs. D.Hellyer, defendant came on in regular order in open and regular session before the court for trial, the plaintiff appearing thereto with her attorney, C.L.Wilson. The defendant failing to appear the court after having duly examined the pleadings in the case, and being satisfied of the residence of the parties as required by the statutes of Iowa, and finding that all jurisdictional requisites are present and that this court has jurisdiction over the parties in this suit and after having heard the testimony adduced on the trial, and being fully advised in the premises, finds that all the allegations of plaintiff's petition are true, and finds that the slanderous charges made by the defendant against the plaintiff and alleged in his answer in this cause are untrue and the court finds that upon the allegations of plaintiff's petition she is entitled to be divorced from the defendant.

Therefore it is hereby ordered, adjudged and decreed by the Court that the plaintiff, S.L.Hellyer, be, and is hereby forever divorced from the said defendant, D.Hellyer; the bonds of matrimony heretofore existing between them being hereby and forever dissolved, and all of the right or interest that the said D.Hellyer may have had or been entitled to in the property of the plaintiff by reason of his marriage to her, is hereby cut off and forever barred.

Bertha Oleson, Plaintiff)
-vs-) No 4459 Eq.Holmes J.

Ole J.Oleson, Defendant, &
Peoples Bank of Humboldt,
Intervenor.)

This cause coming on this 4th day of November, 1895, before the Hon.C.P.

Holmes, one of the Judges of said Court, the Court after hearing the evidence, and argument of counsel and being fully advised in the premises finds:

That the allegations and statements in the petition are true, and that the plaintiff and defendant separated more than ten years since and that said plaintiff and defendant have not lived together during said period of more than ten years last past: The court further finds that plaintiff and defendant entered into an agreement of separation and division of the property, at the time of their separation, and that the East one half(½) of the North-east quarter(¼) of section six(6) Township eighty-one(81), Range twenty-three(23), being the fractional half of the half section, amounting to about seventy(70) acres of land, is the homestead of the plaintiff and has been for more than twenty (20) years last past.

The Court further finds, that the mortgage given by Ole J. Oleson to the People's Bank of Humboldt, Iowa, was given without the knowledge and consent of the plaintiff, upon the homestead of the plaintiff.

It is therefore ordered and considered by the court that the marriage contract between the plaintiff and the defendant be, and the same is hereby set aside, annulled and cancelled and held for naught, and that plaintiff and defendant be perpetually divorced from each other, and that the bonds of matrimony heretofore existing between the plaintiff and the defendant be and they are hereby dissolved, set aside and held for naught.

That the mortgage given by the defendant Ole J. Oleson to the Peoples' Bank of Humboldt, is null and void and that the same be and is hereby set aside, cancelled and held for naught.

It is further ordered and decreed that the title to the East one half(½) of the North-east quarter(¼) section six(6) township eighty-one(81) range twenty-three(23), being the fractional half of said half(½) section, amounting to about seventy(70) acres more or less, be and the same is hereby decreed to belong in fee simple to Bertha Oleson, and that all interest in and to said land and every part thereof of the said Ole J. Oleson be and the same is hereby cut off, cancelled, and held for naught and that the plaintiff Bertha Oleson is hereby decreed to be the owner in fee simple of said land and every part thereof, free from all liabilities and incumbrances, created and to be created by the said Ole J. Oleson, and particularly, free from the mortgage given by the said Ole J. Oleson to the Peoples' Bank of Humboldt, Iowa.

It is further ordered and decreed that the costs in this case made by the Peoples' Bank of Humboldt, shall be paid by the said Peoples' Bank of Humboldt and a judgment is hereby entered thereon in favor of the plaintiff in the sum of Dollars, and that an execution be issued thereon in default of payment.

It is further ordered that each party shall pay their own costs in the main case.

ORDERED THAT COURT ADJOURN UNTIL NINE O'CLOCK A.M. TO-MORROW.

J U D G E S .

Although it is well documented in the Wald Family History²⁶ that Ole J. and Bertha divorced, the document above is very important for several reasons. First, we see that their names were given as: "Ole J. Oleson and Bertha Oleson". This helps prove their identity which has been difficult given that other family histories and documents have used many different names and forms of their names with an astonishing variety. Furthermore, the land in question, as described within the divorce decree, is in fact the same land that has been previously attributed to this family within land deeds and other documents. That is: "The East one half (1/2) of the North-east quarter (1/4) of section six (6) Township eighty-one (81), Range twenty-three (23),...,amounting to about seventy (70) acres of land". This describes section 6 of Elkhart township which is very nearly at the center of Iowa. The actual town of Elkhart is a few miles south of the farm, but in earlier times there was no bridge over the Skunk river, so settlers on the north end of the township could travel much more easily to Cambridge or Slater. This quarter section of land can be easily found situated on the northern most edge of Polk county, Iowa, immediately east of the I-35 freeway and one mile south of state highway 210. According to the land deeds, Ole J. Oleson at one time also owned land to the west of this section which was not described here. Finally, we see in the decree that Ole J. and Bertha had been separated for at least 10 years previous to 1895, and that Ole J. had apparently sold the property and left the family without fulfilling an earlier obligation to give half of the proceedings to Bertha. Ole J. then moved to Humboldt county where his death is recorded in 1908. No doubt that this must have been a terrible hardship for Bertha and the children, and just one year after finalizing the decree and obtaining ownership of the land again in 1898, Bertha died in 1899. Bertha's grave stone can be found in the Slater cemetery which is about two miles south of the east end of Slater. The stone reads "WALD, _____, Bertha Olson, b. 1835, d. 1899". There is a space on the stone for her husband, but the family never had his name inscribed there. After his death, Ole J. was brought to Slater and buried in the family plot, but he was not placed next to Bertha under the stone. At present his grave is still unmarked. On the stone, under Bertha's name, there is a small inscription which is nearly illegible due to weathering. It reads: "Her end was peace".

²⁶ from "The Wald History" by Cleva Darling: "Although Ole Sr. had always been a follower of Bacchus in a mild form, in later years he grew worse. As in all cases like this, he became abusive, insisting on bringing his crowd in the home. This was too much for the children, who wanted to keep their good social position in the community. Finally these Bacchanalian revels would last several weeks at a time, so the children had Bertha get a divorce. Bertha and the children stayed on the farm and Ole went to Humboldt County where he stayed most of the time, the rest of his life."

My Initial Research

This all began in November of 1985 when I returned home from an LDS mission in Montana. December of that year I visited my grandma and grandpa Wald in their home in Sandy Utah. I talked with grandpa about genealogy and he told me a little about his grandmother's family in Talge Norway. They had visited there when their son, uncle Leonard finished his mission in Norway. I remember grandpa showing me pictures from that trip, and I also remember him explaining that his grandfather's family was from Aardal—pronounced 'Or-dahl'. (Grandpa made a point of the correct pronunciation—also spelled 'Årdal').

After that visit I had borrowed all of grandma Wald's genealogy sheets and made copies of everything she had. There wasn't a lot of documentation, but she did have a lot of family group sheets. I then spent several weeks inputting all of the information from those sheets into the computer. (Remember that computers were limited in 1985. 'Windows' didn't exist yet, and printers still used typing ribbons and tractor feed paper). I also gathered everything I could find from my mother's Huffaker genealogy and entered that data as well. I then printed 11 copies of everything and sent a copy to everyone in my family. I received zero responses.

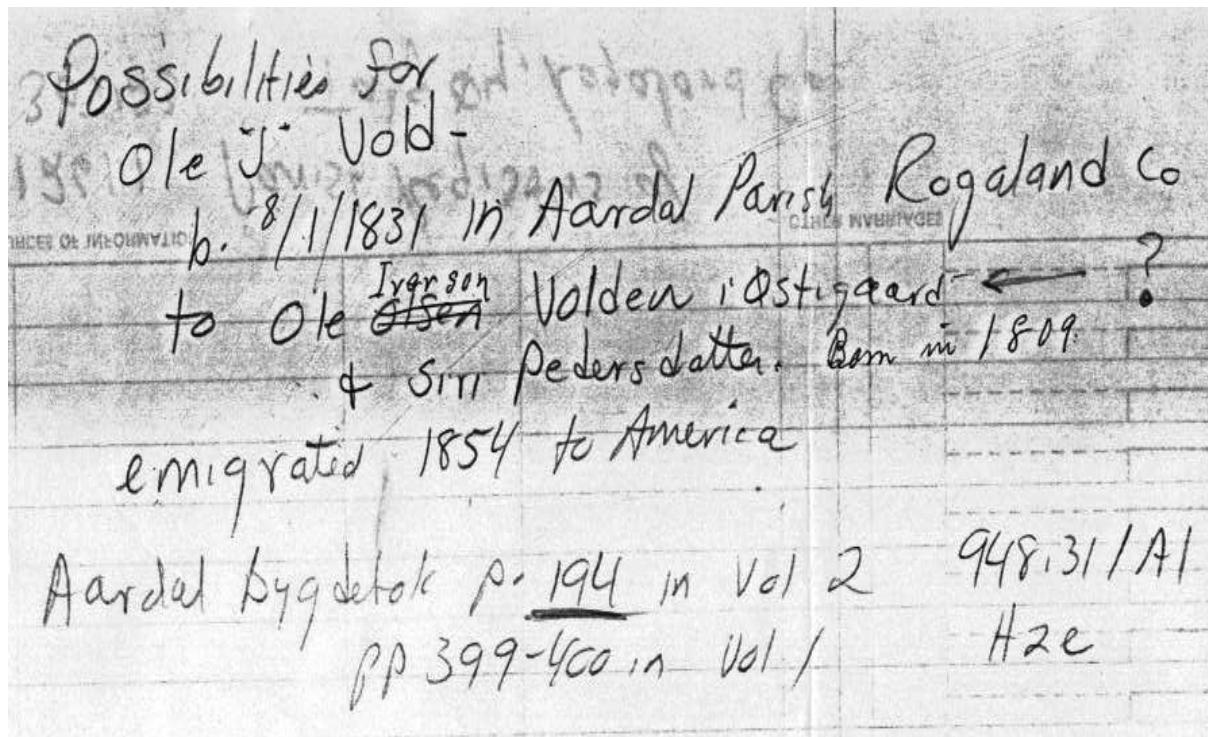
One year later I got married, and after a few more years I remember sending another letter to all of my brothers and sisters with the brilliant suggestion that we write a history of our own family. The idea was that we could send around a revolving letter that each of us could contribute to with our own experiences, and then after several revolutions we would publish all the letters in a book. I received exactly three responses; one remembrance from my mother, one short story from Susan, and one letter from my brother Steven who basically said that he thought it was a dumb idea. Given the level of response, perhaps he was right.

Several years later still, after I had made many great discoveries about the Wald family from Aardal, I sent everyone in my family, including the Wald aunts and uncles, a collection of family histories that I had worked on, some of which I had written. I included several items I had found in Norwegian histories and Aardal parish records. Much of that information had not been known to our family, and there were some very exciting documents that I had collected. I had spent a lot of time on this and quite a few dollars printing all the copies and mailing them out as Christmas presents. I remember thinking that surely this would create some excitement in the family. I once again received zero responses.

Nevertheless, something deep inside compelled me to further the research, and I continued to work on the genealogy in grandpa Wald's line from Norway which is where much work still needed to be done. Grandpa Wald's grandfather, named "Ole J. Vold", was born in

1831 and immigrated from Norway in 1854. Although we had a brief history of his family written in 1939 by Cleva Darling, there were several inconsistencies in the pedigree that Grandma Wald had put together, and there was no real documentation of original records for the family. I worked for several months on those problems without real success until I finally came upon the following note that I had copied with grandma's genealogy:

This note turned out to be the key that unlocked all of the genealogy on the Wald paternal line. The book listed in the note is the 'bygdebok' or 'farm book' for Aardal parish in Rogaland county, Norway. It is written in the Norwegian language which was a difficulty. I'm sure that this is the main reason why grandma Wald didn't get much out of it.



Nevertheless, with a lot of help, and several more months of persistence, I was able to piece together good documentation of the family. There were many records from the Aardal and Hjelmeland parish registers, and there is information about several related families in the Aardal book. (Hjelmeland is the parent parish to Aardal). Even more importantly, the Aardal bygdebok also contains a history of my great great great grandfather who was named Ole Iversen Volden—also known as 'Spel-Ola'. We couldn't read the story at first, but I knew that there was a good possibility that this individual was our direct ancestor. The bygdebok states that Iver Lillemo was Spel-Ola's father, and Cleva Darling states that Iver Lillemo was definitely our direct ancestor. (Note that Cleva Darling didn't mention Spel-Ola). See the story of Spel-Ola on page 50.

The importance of the Spel-Ola story was that it inspired me with a desire to know whether or not this was truly about our ancestors. There were several clues that seemed to

show that it was true, but there were inconsistencies as well. When we got a translation of the story, I sent a copy to my uncle Leonard and asked him if he knew anything about Spel-Ola or his family, and whether or not they were in fact part of our family. He said that they had looked at this family years ago, but that “it was all so muddled”, and that “they were not able to make the connection”. He also told me that I needed evidence if I was going to make that claim, and they had not been able to find the evidence when they had looked into it years ago. After all, Ole Iversen’s oldest son was named “Ole Olsen”, and this is probably the number one most common name in all of Norway! Undaunted and being the good scientist that I am, I went looking for evidence. Over the next five years through hundreds of hours at the Family History Library, and with three trips to Iowa and Illinois, I can now state that I have found the evidence that proves these people are indeed our ancestors. Even still, with all the hundreds of documents, and with all the histories that I have found written from both Norway and the United States, I knew from the day that I laid hands on that book that this was our family. I knew it. My heart told me that it was true, and I knew that the evidence would be found. I also knew that it would be worth the effort, and I now consider this history with all of the associated documents and histories among my most prized possessions. There are not many things in my home, other than my wife and children, that I would sooner take with me if I were forced to leave—as the pioneers in 1847 when they left Nauvoo. (Incidentally, Spel-Ola’s son, Ole J. Olsen, and his family were members of the American Lutheran church in northern Illinois at very nearly the same time that the pioneers were migrating west—before the railroad was completed. The history of Iowa and Illinois of this period clearly shows that many Lutheran ministers spoke strongly against the Mormons, and there is no doubt that my grandfather’s parents and grand parents were taught from a young age that the Mormon religion was born of evil).

Finally, of all the many documents that I have found that link our family to the family from Aardal Norway, the one document that I consider the absolute most significant the death record of Spel-Ola which was recorded in the prison parish register in Kristiansand Norway.²⁷ This document not only proves that the story is true, but it also gives the date and tells the circumstances of the story’s ending...

He was many miles from his home, in a cold and dark prison. It was February of the year 1860. No doubt there were few comforts available to him that night. This is how Ole Iversen Volden spent his last night on Earth while the prison priest offered what solace he could. Ole was terminally sick with pneumonia, and coughing up large amounts of blood. He knew that his time was near, and his misery must have been great that night. Nevertheless, he was humbled and repentant, and with the attendance of the priest, he confessed his sins for the last time. Later that night he died, alone. A few days afterward his body was buried in the prison graveyard.

²⁷

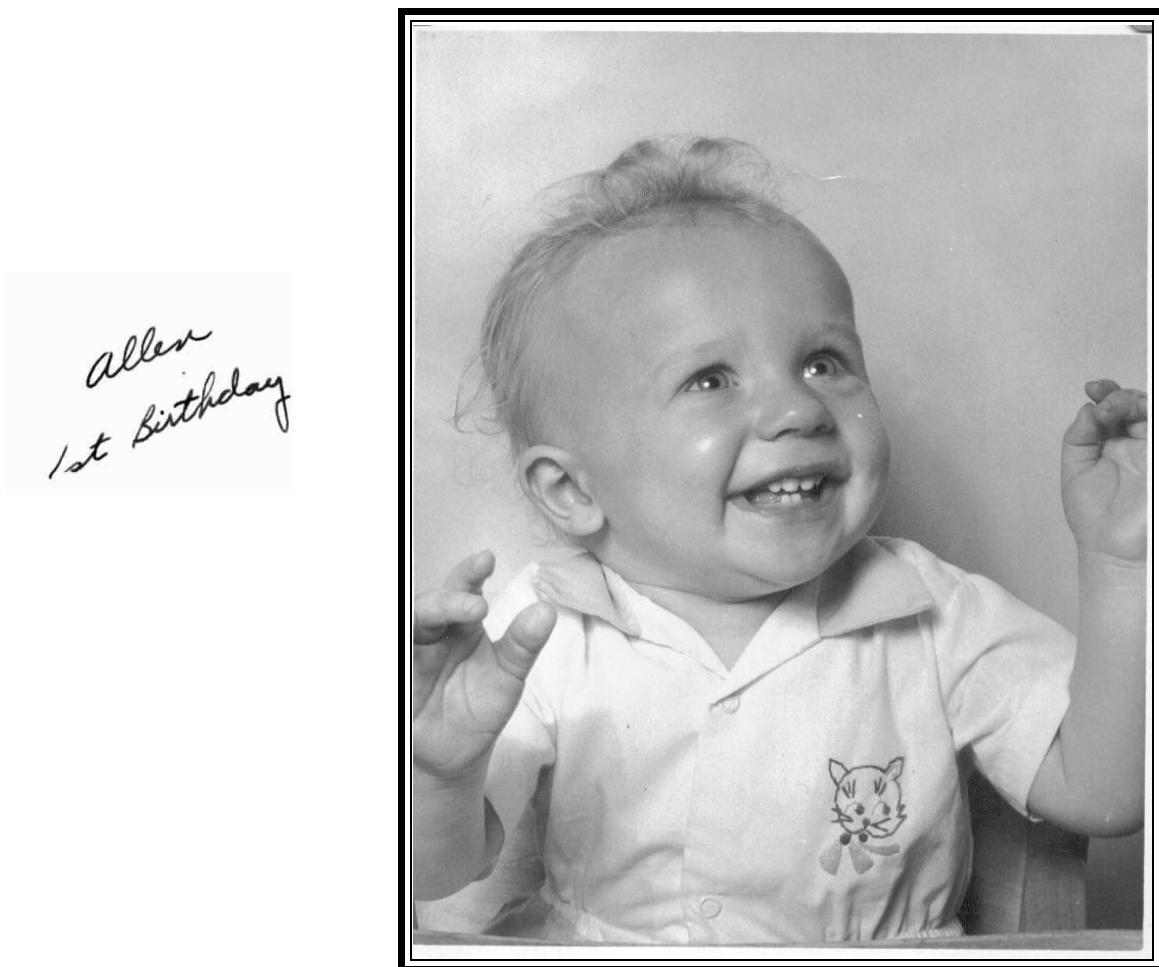
See the next page; Kristiansand tukthus (penitentiary) parish register, FHL film 1406338 item 3, b. A1, 1840-1875, 1860 #1

Nr.	Den egne Døds- dag.	Begrav- elses- dato.	Den Begravede fulde Navn og Stand.	Ålder.	D. Begravede og		Dødsfodte.
					Døboldsted.		
1.	9. Jun.	12 Jun.	Hugkast Ole Andreas Johansen Børge	55	Vestromaland	18	58. Afløstsped.
1.	17. Jan.	19 Jan.	Hugkast Ole Tønnesen Liebstål	23	Tedde Røgen	18	59. Hansabær
2.	16. Febr.	21 Febr.	Jørgen Mathias Ole Brothén Samuelson, Hugkast	38	Aristeiansand		Bianfor
3.	2. Maart.		Hugkast Andreas Halvorson (Austhus)	23	Sigdal Semanger	18	Eryppyz.
1.	25. Feb.	1. Maart	Gitt Mand Ole Iversen Volden	51	Hjelmeland Røgen	60	Stadgivning.

"#1 (bottom), died 25 February, 1860, buried 1 March, married man Ole Iversen Volden, age 51, birthplace Hjelmeland Sogn, cause of death blodstyrting" (hemorrhage due to excessive coughing, most likely caused by pneumonia or tuberculosis).

A Trek on The Paper Trial, part I

I've spent years looking through thousands of books and films at the Family History Library. Among all those ancient documents I had never expected to find a picture of myself. Nevertheless, one day I decided to read the news on the day that I was born. I looked it up in the Salt Lake City Deseret News, and while browsing through that paper, I noticed that all of the children who had their first birthdays on that date were listed with their pictures. Immediately I went and got the news paper of the following year. Sure enough, there was a picture of me right there with my smiling face and my curly blond hair, one year old. This document is significant not only for the fact that I found it there in the historical library, but it also tells me who my parents were, it gives our home address, and it confirms my birth date, the same birthday I have been using all my life. I probably could have found the same information in the county birth records, or I could have ordered a duplicate birth certificate from the county health department (I actually have my original), but this particular



document was even better because it had my picture. This is a picture I am very familiar with having seen it many times in my own picture album with my mother's hand writing next to it:

Most people probably wouldn't believe this, but I actually remember the day that we went downtown to take this picture. I also remember how fun it was to be one year old, and I remember being able to understand what everyone else was saying but unable to express words to make myself understood. I also remember my father laughing at me while I was trying to babble on about something that I couldn't make the words for.

This story brings up some important points about family history research. First, historical facts must be documented if at all possible. If documents can't be found, then any assumptions that are made must be continually questioned and subject to the results of further research. Frankly, why should I assume that I was not covertly adopted into my family? If that assumption is false then I could spend my entire life researching the ancestors of a family that is not my own! Even the document referred to above does not prove unequivocally my parentage. Nevertheless, I have many other lines of evidence to support it and none which do not. Second, historical research should never be limited by goals that are too specific such as 'gathering names for the temple' or 'researching just my direct line ancestors'. The Family History Library is filled to overflowing with books and records produced and gathered by people who have all had a much larger vision in mind. That vision, in part, is to gather and preserve all of the information available, usually within a specific field of interest, and then to organize and publish it in such a way that others can use it as well. Finally, this picture of myself, found in the film archives of the library, is certainly a reflection of the fact that ours is the first generation which has produced huge amounts of visual materials that can be passed on to future generations. With that in mind, I have often wondered just what pictures and videos will still exist and will be in possession of my own great great grand children that will document my own life and the life of my family. I believe we should not only work toward the discovery of the past, but we must continually prepare the present for the archives of the future using all forms of media that are available.

Back to my original research. My principal goal has been to collect everything I can find regarding the Wald family line, focusing primarily on the Norwegian ancestry of my grandfather, Ferdinand Oliver Wald. With that goal, I decided to take a trip through Iowa and see what I could find in the town of Fertile which was Ferdi's boyhood home (gramma called him this). My journey began in the summer of 1997. Our daughter Julianne had spent a few weeks with her grandmother in Kansas. Since I was driving there to bring her home, I decided that this would be a good time to take a detour through Iowa. The night that I reached Iowa it rained hard with lots of lightening. While I was sleeping in my car the rain made it nice and cool, but it was warm and humid the next morning. I woke up about 5 am and drove the last 100 miles to Fertile during the very early hours of the morning. I knew that I might make it there in time for church, but I didn't know what time that would be. I didn't even know where the church was. When I drove into town I noticed a large Christian church at the edge of town. Fertile is still a very small mid-western town just a few miles off the freeway in north central Iowa. Main street follows parallel to the river that flows through town. As I drove, I stopped briefly at the old Fertile river mill which is now a state historical

site. There was no one there that morning, but I remembered the story that my grandfather told about going to swim in the river by the mill when he wasn't supposed to. When he arrived home his mother immediately knew what he had done because he had put his tee shirt on backwards after the swim. I continued down to the end of main street, then I followed the road as it turned north through a neighborhood of typical middle class homes and up to the top of the hill. There at the north western corner of town sat another church which looked similar but not exactly like the church that I was looking for. (It has been restored with several additions since the original building was built). I got out some pictures of the Fertile Lutheran church that I had brought with me, and as I sat in the car people began arriving for the Sunday services. I rolled down my window and asked an old lady if this was the Lutheran church. She politely said: "ah, yes" while shrugging her shoulders as if to say: "what other church would it be?" I had already changed my clothes at a gas station on the way, so I combed my hair and put on my good shoes and walked inside. When I entered the church at about 8:50 am, the pastor was there greeting people and I introduced myself as Allen Wald. Immediately he said: "Well, we know who you are! Welcome." He then told me that the lady had come in and said that "some strange man is parked outside and is asking questions about the church". It turns out that I had written letters to the 'Fertile Lutheran Church' earlier that year, and the pastor had received those letters but he had not yet responded. So he definitely knew who I was, and he also knew very well who my great grandfather was, pastor Ole Olson Wold, one of the very first pastors of their congregation. O. O. Wold (as he called himself) was my grandfather's father. This fact was told to me personally by my grandfather, and it has been well documented in our family history. Ferdinand's father had died when Ferdi was only ten years old, and his family was forced to move back to Slater Iowa because the church could not support them and they had no other family near Fertile. That was in 1908, over ninety years ago.

I went into the chapel and sat down near the back (with the hope of some anonymity), but as he began the service, the pastor asked me to stand up and introduced me as the great grandson of Pastor Wold. Although I hated this embarrassment, it was later worth the trouble. After the meeting I was invited downstairs for coffee and cake (orange juice was optional). There I met several members of the congregation. One old gentleman told me that he didn't know pastor Wold, but that his father had known him. He said that pastor Wold's teachings and his work for the congregation were well respected for many years after his death. He also said that his father had taught him many things using pastor Wold as his example. Later I was able to talk more with the current pastor. He showed me the original church register for their congregation. The book was very old, bound with leather, and was entirely written in the Norwegian language. In that book we found the original record of the christening of my grandfather, "Ferdinand Oliver" as performed and recorded by his father who was "O. O. Wold", the current pastor at that time. (See the next page.) There were other records in that book of known family members, but Ferdinand's was very important to me because I knew my grandfather personally when I was younger. This original record of his birth and christening are now an essential link in the paper trail left by the family, and help to prove our lineage beyond any reasonable doubt. Unfortunately, such documents from the U. S. Lutheran church are not available at the Salt Lake Family History Library, and one must either travel to the place of origin to examine the records or purchase them directly from the Lutheran church archives. The same is true for other family documents I later

found at the Palestine Lutheran church near Slater, Iowa. Those documents (mentioned in previous letters) link pastor O. O. Wold and the family in Fertile to his parents, Ole J. Olson Wold and his wife Bertha who both immigrated from Norway during the mid 1850's.²⁸

²⁸ Next page: Birth record from the original church book of the Lutheran congregation of Fertile, Iowa. In possession of the pastor. See entry #15 on page 100 / 101, from the year 1896:
“Ferdinand Oliver, born 27 July ‘96, christened 30 August ‘96, parents: O. O. Wold and wife Augusta, witnesses: Augusta Wold, Hans Hovland, Maria Hovland, K. Steffenson, Marie Daley and Burthan Wold”

This brings up another important point about family history: You can find a lot of information in historical libraries, but you can never find all the information about your family in one single place. Often the best place to look is right where they lived. I have found many of the most important documents regarding this family during my travels through Iowa and Illinois.

After my visit to the church in Fertile, I drove south, back to Slater where the family moved after pastor Wold had died. I knew that several family members were buried there, but I didn't know exactly where the cemetery was. I stopped at a gas station as I entered the town, and I asked the clerk if she knew. She said that she didn't but the Lutheran church was just around the corner and about four blocks north. I drove to the church but it was empty, so I just kept driving north through that neighborhood hoping I would figure something out. A few blocks later I saw an old man and a woman out in their yard and it struck me that they might know where the cemetery was. I stopped and asked them, and they seemed confused at first. The old man asked me who I was looking for, and I told him I was looking for my great grandparents who were named Wald or Wold. Suddenly his eyes lit up and he said: "Oh! You mean judge Wald...yes, his name was Severin Wald (he pronounced it Sēē-ver-inn)." I told him that I thought that might be a brother whom I knew had been an attorney in Slater. He told me that he had been well acquainted with "Judge Wald" as a young man because he had had several problems with the law in those days. He was a very nice old Norwegian, and he told me that he was 92 years old. We sat and talked for a while and he told me that he had come to America with his father when he was just a boy. Before I left he not only told me how to find the cemetery, but he also told me exactly where in the cemetery I would find the Wald family plots.

Just for anyone else who might want to find the place, the 'Slater Cemetery' is about two miles south of the south east corner of town. Just turn west off I-35 toward Slater on highway 210 and turn south at the Conoco station as you enter town from the east . You can't miss it out in the middle of the corn fields. The Wald family plots are east of the path at the north west corner of the cemetery. There is a sexton's list posted at the south east corner if you need to look it up. One of my goals in visiting this cemetery was to find evidence linking Ole O. Wold with his father Ole J. Olson (also known as Vold, Wold and Wald). Clearly this is the site of our family burials with "Ole O. Wald" (was Wold) buried next to his wife "Augusta Wald". Next to them is the site of Severin Wald and his wife, and on the other side is a large stone with the name "Bertha Olson WALD". On this large stone there is a place for the husband's name, but Ole J.'s name was never inscribed there. In fact, there was never a stone placed over Ole J.'s grave, and the first time I went to this cemetery I didn't realize that he was in fact buried there. It is recorded in our family history by Cleva Darling that Ole J. lived alone in Humboldt county after he and his wife divorced, and that his body was brought back to Slater for burial after his death. I was disappointed that I didn't find a stone there with his name on it, but the second time I came to Iowa I stopped at this cemetery again and I discovered that the sexton's list has two individuals listed, both named 'Ole O. Wald'. (There is also a list kept by the Daughters of the American Revolution, but their list only gives the one name). You might think that this was a typo on the sexton's list, but separate plot numbers are given for both. My investigation revealed that one of the plots is marked with the grave stone of our great grandfather, while the other--

where his father is buried--is yet unmarked but placed within the other family plots. It might also be noted that he was not buried next to his wife, Bertha. On the larger stone over Bertha's grave there is only her name inscribed. There is also a very worn inscription under her name that was difficult to read. As I have previously mentioned, Bertha had come to considerable grief over her husband in the later years of their marriage. After he left the family she was not well off, and she and the children had many difficulties making ends meet. She lived only a few years after the divorce became final, and she had also suffered a long illness at the end of her life. If you look carefully at her stone you will see that the inscription there shows the faith that she had taught her children. It simply states: "Her end was peace".

Original Documentation

When a person enters the Family History Library (FHL) in Salt Lake City for the first time, one generally doesn't know just exactly where to start. If this were a normal library there would be a large empty entrance hall with a list on the wall which would indicate where to find the various collections in the building. But in this library the entrance foyer always has at least three or four elderly missionaries just waiting there, watching for just such an unwary traveler, lost and confused, and when they wander in they are immediately descended upon as if to become the next victim of this gang of thugs who are continually laying in wait. I remember clearly the first time I went there. Although I wasn't really mugged or thugged, I was rushed into the adjoining room where I was promptly given the standard introduction to the library and shown a short video. After that, one of the missionaries took me into the main floor and sat me down at one of the computers. This (I have come to realize) is standard procedure for all newbies who enter. After a few minutes at the computer, we were able to bring up several records of the Wald family. While inspecting these records and after considering several other records in the FHL collection, I eventually came to realize that there were many inconsistencies and some obvious errors, and there was certainly not a lot of correlation between the records from the FHL and the records that I had received from my grandparents.

And so this is how I came to begin my research—with the realization that there were way too many mistakes already within the records. I determined to uncover the truth of the matter if it was possible. As I continued to visit the library during the next several months, I was continually frustrated by the computerized records kept by the church. It turns out that several different individuals had contributed to those records over the years. In fact, many deceased individuals had been represented two or three or even four times, all with different birth dates and different birth places etc. Although this is not at all unusual, it is confusing to someone who is just beginning their research. Since then I have learned that computers, although great tools that they are, contain only information that has been put there by some person. In the case of the FHL databases, that information unfortunately contains absolutely no supporting documentation of the original sources that could help a researcher sort through all of the problems.

It is the search for the original documents that I then determined to pursue. I recall the first truly original document that I found. My father, Fred Wald, was there with me that day. We had found a mention of a marriage record in grandma Wald's notes, and we went down to the international floor of the library to look up this record. The record, which is shown below, is the marriage record of our great great great grandparents Ole Iversen and Siri Pedersdatter. I recall clearly that we suffered quite a difficulty actually finding the document. The record we were seeking was originally recorded in the church book of the Aardal Lutheran parish of Rogaland county in south Parish records from Årdal, Rogaland, Norway:

"# 7: young man Ole Iversen Volden age 22 years, maiden Siri Pedersdatter Hagen, age 22 years, sponsors: Daniel and Ole Kirkhus, date: November 20th, 1830, married in the church."

western Norway. These books contained several hundred pages of records, and they are kept at the FHL on 35 mm films. Not only did we not even know how to put the film in the viewing machine, but we didn't have a clue how to find the actual pages containing this specific marriage among the hundreds of other records on the film. To top it off, that entire set of records was written by hand in the Norwegian language as are nearly all of the church records from the 17th century. Never before had I felt so completely unable. These records seemed so unfathomably lost to antiquity, and the task of deciphering such documents seemed utterly confusing and hopeless. Nevertheless, the library has people who helped us, and eventually we found the correct pages and managed to make copies and got help with the translation.

There is little doubt now as to the identity of this couple, but when we first found this document there was nothing but doubt. With a lot of help and several more hours of searching I began to find more documents regarding this same family. In fact, there are literally hundreds of original documents that exist in the Norwegian and FHL archives that

pertain to this family. As I began to find these documents I found the task to be extremely compelling and exciting. Although I could not read any of them, there are always people at the library who can, and I was insistent that they would teach me the words while they translated.

Eventually I began to learn a few words, and I purchased a Norwegian translators dictionary. After a few weeks of struggling to understand a variety of Norwegian documents, something amazing happened. I had been studying several different items, and I was relying heavily on the help at the library. Then there was one day when I looked at a certain document and I realized that I understood the translation—and I knew that my interpretation was correct! This was like a moment of awakening for me because I had previously been so confused by the new language. Many ancient Norwegian words are not even the same words or spelled the same as the words that they use today. It's like reading Shakespear's English, only this time it's not in English and it's also hand written in an ancient and antiquated script. But almost as if a light just came on I realized that I could understand what was written and that I would not always be confused by this new research. I have never learned to speak another language, and even now, ten years later, I can hardly speak or even understand a word of Norwegian when spoken. Nevertheless, I am able to understand the written language to a great degree. This is not to say that I haven't had to study and continue to learn new words, but I believe that it was on that day that I was blessed with the gift of the interpretation of tongues as spoken of by the prophet Moroni (see Moroni 10:8-18). It turns out that many Norwegian words are identical to English words, but they are just spelled differently. Thus many words can be translated directly by reading them phonetically. However, to speak those same words is a whole different problem. Norwegian is also somewhat more simple without a lot of the extraneous words that we love to use in English to help a sentence 'sound' right. So, with a vocabulary of two or three hundred words I began a serious study of our Norwegian family history. And what an amazing history we have found as it continues to unfold.

Below is a copy of the birth record for Siri Pedersdatter Hagen, # 62.²⁹ Hagen is the place where her family lived. It means: a hill or a knoll or mound. See if you can pick out the names of her parents which are given in the record.

²⁹

FHL film # 0126128, Aardal parish records, Aardal, Rogaland, Norway.

John G. Clegg
Oct. 1807

Guro Olsdatter Strand - Julia Anderson Illinois

Our 4th great grandfather, Iver Olsen Lillemo, was married in 1803 with Siri Rasmusdatter Hia. In 1804 she bore him a girl whom they named Anna Iversdatter. Siri never had any more children, and she was said to be sickly in census record of 1815. In 1809 Iver Lillemo had a son with Guro Olsdatter of Strand, with whom he was not married. His son was named Ole Iversen, and as we know, he was the same individual who was latter called ‘Spel-Ola’ because of his great skill with the fiddle. Guro and her son Ole lived at Lille Vadla which was a nearby farm, and we can assume that young Ole knew his father well and also his half sister Anna. In 1814 Guro married with Torgier Halvorsen and had another child named Kari Torgiersdatter. (For more details on Guro’s family please see the Wald family gedcom files). It is possible that this Torgier Halvorsen was the person who taught young Ole to play. The spellmenn are known to have kept records, like genealogies, of those who were renowned, and who had taught later generations to play. I have often wondered if it might be possible that some record of the spellmenn in this area still exists. If it does we might be able to learn more about this family from such a record.

Guro’s first husband, Torgier, died in 1822, and she was married twice more (although we don’t know who her second husband was). In 1853 Guro was about 74 years old, a widow after her third husband, and during that year she immigrated to America with her daughter, Kari. At this time Kari had married with Marcus Andersen, and they had two children, Anders and Gurina. So this young family came to America and brought with them their two children, Kari’s aging mother Guro, and some time later, both of Marcus’s parents as well. Remember that Ole J. Olsen (Spel-Ola’s oldest son) also immigrated to America in 1854 with two of his brothers. His emigration is recorded in our family history by Cleva Darling. However, there were many others in the family who also came here during this period. For instance, Iver Lillemo’s daughter Anna married and had eleven children while living in a neighboring parish called Sjernarøy, Norway. Anna died while her children were still young, and her husband, Helge Olsen, also came to America with one of his sons.

Back to Guro’s family. The census records in Illinois and Iowa give us more information about them. In 1860 the family is clearly listed in Manlius, Illinois. Guro, living with her daughter’s family, is there listed with the name “Julia Andersen, age 80” (see the next page). One might pause to wonder whether this is indeed the same person, but in this case the evidence is very clear. Kari and her husband, Marcus Andersen and their children are unmistakable with their distinctive names and ages—known to us from the church and farm records of Norway. Also, the immigration records from Norway clearly show that Guro did come with them. Therefore, who would it be at age 80 who had taken the name Julia and was now living in the same home? No later record of her is known, but it was my search for her burial site that provides a most interesting epilogue to this story.

In 1870 Kari's husband, Marcus, is listed with his wife and several more children in the census for Nettle Creek, Grundy, Illinois. This large family is related to us because Kari was Spel-Ola's other half sister. I have recently had contact with the descendants of this family who still live in this same place. In 2001 our family traveled to Illinois and Wisconsin. While Lucinda and Katie stayed with some friends in Madison, my daughter Julianne and I spent a day exploring the Fox River Settlement of Illinois which is centered around the modern town of Norway, Illinois. The old Lutheran church building is still there. It was built in 1848, but it is now used as a museum for the relics of the Norwegian emigrants. We looked around for a while, then we went to the market to get

11	1654	1164	Richard Larson	24	m
12			Betsey "	21	f
13			Christina "	8	f
14			Silvert Johnson	30	m
15	1655	1165	Mark Anderson	40	m
16			Christina "	30	f
17			Andrew "	10	sw
18			Julia "	8	f
19			Caroline "	4	f
20			Jacob "	2	sw
21			Richard "	7	sw
22			Julia "	80	f
23	1656	1166	William Tice	53	m
24			Elizabeth "	42	f
25			Sophia "	19	f

some lunch. I asked the owner if he knew where the local Norwegian cemetery was. He knew of several, and he sketched me a map.³⁰ After lunch we drove around to all the local cemeteries and a few other historical sites that were on the way. It's great to have your kids with you while searching through cemeteries because they can run and hunt through all the stones a lot faster than you can. After four charming old—but well kept cemeteries, we were still disappointed. As we drove to the last one on the map I didn't have much hope, and I felt like giving up as I often feel on such trips. The cemetery is about one mile south of town, just east of the road. As we drove up, another group of people were just leaving, and when they were gone we had the place to ourselves. It was quiet and peaceful, but it was also sunny and hot—a typical muggy mid-western summer afternoon. Julianne went quickly up the hill, and as before, I told her to look for any stones with the name Andersen. Surprisingly, in about two minutes she had located two sites with that name on the stones. It turns out that the second was finally the site of the family that we were looking for, but what we found was quite different than what I had expected.

Recall that Kari Torgeirsdatter married Markus Andersen, and the two of them had two children in Norway whom they brought with them when they came to America with Kari's mother Guro (Julia). Later the parents of Markus Andersen came also. The census of 1860 clearly shows that Kari's mother, Guro (Julia), was still alive that year. As I have said, the 1870 census record shows that Markus had moved to Nettle Creek, Illinois and had several more children there. In both these census records the wife of Markus was named Christine, and I had assumed that this was the same person as Kari—that she had just changed her name slightly the same way that her mother did. This was not at all uncommon for the emigrants to do. However, the stones in that old cemetery told a different story. It turns out that Markus had buried his parents there shortly after they came here. I'm not sure what year they came. There is a large upright stone with inscriptions on all four sides. One side has the names of Markus's parents with both their birth and death dates, and it is very certain to me that these were indeed his parents. Also on the stone is an inscription with the birth and death dates of his wife Kari (Spelled 'Cora') who also died shortly after coming here—just three months after the birth of her third child, another son named 'Cornelius'. The boy lived just a little over one year, and then he died also. On the stone are the names and death dates of two other children: Julia (Gurina) who died at age 18 and Milton who died at age 20, and finally there is another inscription with the name and death date for the second wife of Marcus. One side is empty with just a scripture engraved on it. I can hardly overemphasize the extraordinarily great fortune of the fact that fully three generations of the same family—parents, children and two wives, and also the name of Marcus Anderson himself—all are recorded on that one stone. That Kari's name is spelled 'Cora' was at first confusing, but as I read the entire stone the history of this family became much more clear. Also, there is another flat stone next to the tall one. On that stone is again inscribed the name of Marcus's wife and her son—the same inscription that was on one side of the tall stone. Now the sad tale can be told once more. Marcus Andersen had come here with his entire family, with all their hopes and dreams, and with only what possessions they could carry with them, only to see

³⁰ The family of Marcus Anderson from the 1860 census of Manlius, La Salle, Illinois. Note the entry for "Julia Anderson, age 80" at the bottom.

his wife and their baby son lost to death within a year of their arrival. No doubt this was a very difficult beginning to their lives in America. Even still, Marcus continued on with his two older children, he soon married again, and with his new wife he had many more children. In 1874 he lost his second wife, and I have recently discovered that he married again for a third time. Marcus died 25 November, 1892, age 68.

The following was found at the Norway Cemetery, east side of highway 71, less than 1 mile south of Norway Illinois (old Fox River settlement), at the center of the north most section of the cemetery, up on the hill.

Two family markers, one large gray stone,
and one flat (worn) white marble stone.

On the large gray stone:

Side one:

“Cora
Wife of Marcus Anderson
Died Aug. 10 1853
Aged 32 yrs. & 3 mos.”

“Cornelius Anderson
Died Nov. 18 1854
Aged 1 year 4 mos.”

Side two:

“Julia Anderson
Died Dec. 1 1869
Aged 18 yrs. & 8 mos”

“My Father and Mother
Andrew Marcuson
Died April.3 1875
Aged 86 years
Martha Marcuson
Died April 24 1874
Aged 83 years”

Side three:

“Christine
Wife of
Marcus Anderson
Died July 26 1874
Aged 48 yrs. & 2 mon.”

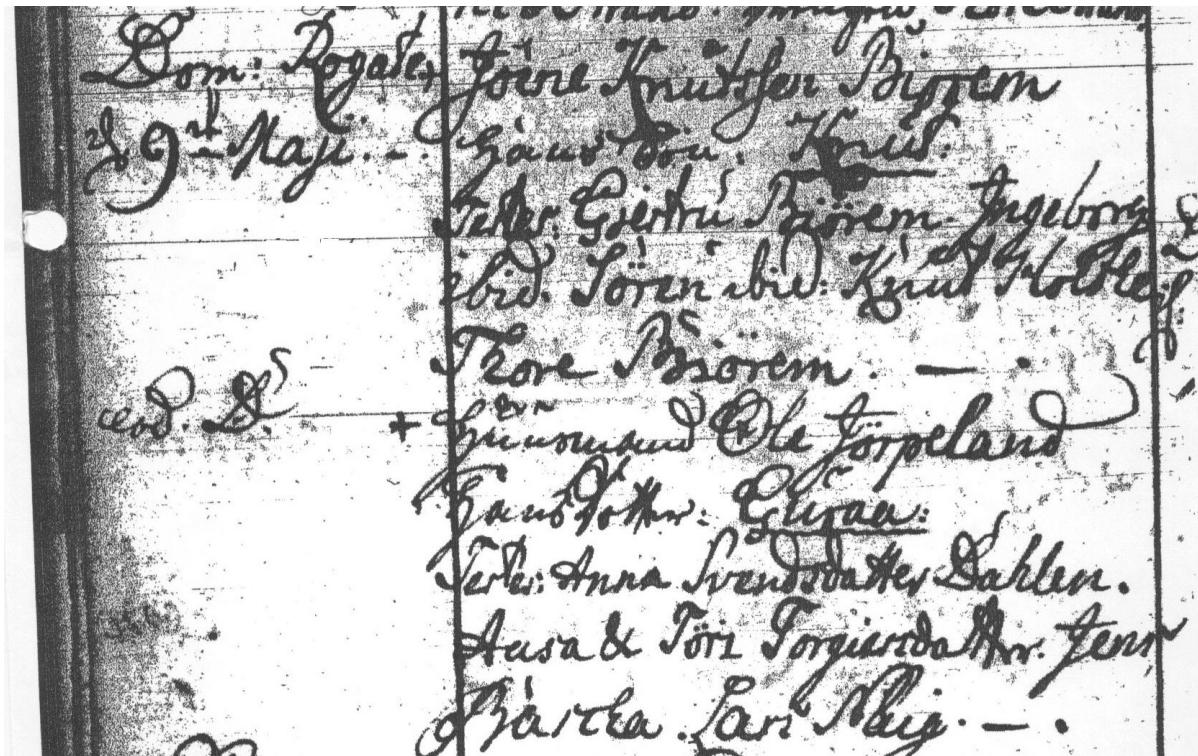
“Milton
Son of
Marcus Anderson
Died Aug. 24 1890
Aged 20 yrs. 11 mos. & 6 days”

Side four: empty

Worn white marble stone:
Same inscription as large grey stone:

“Christine
Wife of
Marcus Anderson
Died
July 26 1874
Aged 48 yrs. & 2 mon.”

I never did find another stone for Kari's mother Guro. In the birth record of her son Ole, she is named "Guro Olsdatter Qvalshaugen of Strand". Qvalshaugen is one of the farms at Jörpeland in Strand parish, so we can be fairly certain that the birth record below is indeed hers—listing her father as "Ole Jörpeland".³¹ Who would have imagined that her name would change so completely before her final days here in America. I suppose that there may yet be a stone for her in some other cemetery near Nettle Creek, Illinois. I would like to go there some day and look.



³¹

Birth record for Guro Olsdatter, born 1779 in Strand parish, Rogaland, Norway. See the second entry above from the Strand kirkebok: "ibid. (Christened on the 9th of May) Huusmand Ole Jörpeland, hans datter: Guraa. Witnesses: Anna Svendsdatter Dahlen, Aasa & Tore Torgiersdatter, Jens Baecka, Lars Naig."

A Trek on The Paper Trial, part II: Names

My great grandfather, Ole Olson Wold, was at the age of 16 confirmed in the Palestine Lutheran church of Story county, Iowa. It is written in the history of that congregation that Ole was born in Illinois and that he became a preacher in Fertile Iowa. Therefore, there is little doubt as to his origin in this place. In all documents that I have seen he was known as Ole Olson or Ole Wold or O. O. Wold etc. His parents were much more interesting however. His father apparently called himself Ole J. Olson (spelled ‘Olsen’ in Norwegian documents). I also have documents which name him the following: Ole, son of Ole Iversen Volden, Ole Olson, Ole Oleson, Ole Volden, Ole Olsen Volden, Ole O. J. Olsen, Ole J. Olson Wold, Ole O. Wald, Ole Vold, and Ole J. O. Wald. Perhaps the only thing he wasn’t confused about was that his name was ‘Ole’. It does confuse the research though. And how about his wife? At birth she was named: Udbjørg Bertine Andersdatter Gaard. She was also named Betsey Anderson, Bertha Andersen, Bertha Gaard, Bertha Andersen Gaard, Bertha A. Gaard-Wald, Bertha Hubert Gaard, Bertha Olson, Betsey Oleson, Betsey J. Olson, Elizabeth Oleson, Bertha Olson Wold, and on her grave stone, Bertha Olson Wald! In fact, it seems like the more I find documents for these two, the more variations I find for their names. This might appear to be unfortunate or even telling of the possibility that the research is flawed and filled with various different people. Perhaps they just ‘seem to fit’ but are not really the same individuals. Nevertheless, I have seriously studied every document that I have, and with few exceptions I am convinced that all these names represent just two individuals who came from Norway to Iowa, probably weren’t very literate, and left this broken trail for me to follow. Furthermore, it is by no means unfortunate, and indeed I think the opposite is true. Since each name above came from such widely varying documents which were produced over their entire lives, this serves to weave a more complete history about them. The variation in names has also compelled me to look for more documentation to prove or disprove the validity of the rest. As a result, I believe that I have a very good summary of their lives, and this is what I wish to write about in the balance of this chapter.

Bertha was born at the Gaard farm on the island of Talje, Rogaland county, in south western Norway. In the church book her name is written “Udbjørg Bertine Ølsdatter Andersdatter Gaard”.³² Her parents were named “Anders Olsen Gaard and wife Siri Thorbjørnsdatter”. The fact that her father’s father (who is listed as a witness at the christening) was named Ole Andersen and her father was Anders Olsen (the younger) seems to have confused even the priest, and he had to cross out his first attempt at her father’s name. But we know that he finally got it right because her name is given again in full when she leaves to come to America: “Udbjørg Bertine Andersdatter Gaard” with her sister: “Margrethe Marie Andersdatter Gaard”, “Udflyttede til Amerika, 18 April, 1855”.

³² Birth record from Talje, Rogaland, Norway: “Udbjørg Bertine Andersdatter Gaard, born 19 July, 1835, in Talje church; parents: Anders Olsen Gaard the younger and wife Siri Thorbjørnsdatter.

In “The Wald History” by Cleava Darling, it is documented that Ole and Bertha were married soon after their arrival here, and they lived at the Fox River settlement as did many newly emigrated Norwegians at the time. (There is also a version which states that they traveled together and met on the boat, but I have not been able to confirm this). The Fox River settlement included the Mission township, and part was also called Lisbon. Today there is a small town there named “Norway”, and these places are all found within La Salle county, Illinois. In the records from La Salle county there is a marriage certificate which lists the following couple: “Ole Olsen and Betsey Andersen, married Sept. 15, 1855”. There is no other information given, and I might be very reluctant to say that this is indeed our couple. However, the dates do coincide with their dates of emigration, and the 1860 census of Mission township lists the following family:

“Oleson, Ole	age 30	b. Norway
Betsey	age 25	b. Norway
Serine	age 3	b. Illinois
Sophia	age 1	b. Illinois”

Well now, these are the same names as those on the marriage certificate, living in the same county, and here they have two daughters just a few years after their marriage. Cleava Darling states that the family moved to Iowa sometime in the mid 1860's. The 1870 census for Elkhart township in Polk county (between Slater and Cambridge, Iowa) lists the same family, now with six children:

“Oleson, Ole	age 35 (?)	b. Norway
Elizabeth	age 33	b. Norway
Sarah	age 12	b. Ill
Susan	age 10	b. Ill
Ole	age 8	b. IA
Andrew	age 6	b. IA
Sevard	age 4	b. IA
Lewis	age 6/12	b. IA

There are some discrepancies with the ages, but this is common in early census records. The women all have slightly different names. Even still, the 1870 record is certainly the family whom we know to be our great great grandparents. The 1860 record is perhaps less certain but only slightly so. Remember that names were often ‘Americanized’, and Serine is the full form of the Norwegian name Siri. The name Sarah is very nearly the same name only spelled differently. Also remember that Susan has been substituted for Sophia in this same family before (see Ole’s sisters in the gedcom file). Finally, both Ole’s mother and Bertha’s mother were named Siri. Ole’s father was named Ole, and Bertha’s father was named Anders (Andrew). Therefore, with the exception of Susan (Sophia), they have followed the Norwegian naming practice as we should expect (the oldest son is named after the father’s father and the next son is named after the mother’s father, the oldest daughter is named after the father’s mother and etc.). This is a very important point that we might fail to fully appreciate today. Modern people just don’t think it too important to honor their parents this way. In Norway the tradition was very strong and lasted for many

centuries. Remember that both Ole and his wife were born in Norway. In 1880 we have the same family again in Elkhart township:

1880 U. S. census, Elkhart, Polk, Iowa

Ole J. OLSON	Self	Male	W	53	NORWAY	Farmer
Betsey OLSON	Wife	Female	W	50	NORWAY	Keeping House
Sarah OLSON	Dau	Female	W	22	IL	
Susan OLSON	Dau	Female	W	19	IL	
Ole OLSON	Son	Male	W	18	IL	
Andrew OLSON	Son	Male	W	17	IL	
Severen OLSON	Son	Male	W	14	IA	
Martha OLSON	Dau	Female	W	11	IA (Martin Lewis)	
Betsey OLSON	Dau	Female	W	7	IA	
Brolin OLSON	Dau	Female	W	4	IA (Burton)	
Mary OLSON	Dau	Female	W	1	IA	
Mary PETERSON	Other	Female	W	22	NORWAY	Keeping House

Once again there are discrepancies, but we see that this is indeed the same family living in the same place. Here Ole J. has his distinctive middle initial, and his wife is back to Betsey again. There are also mistakes in the writing and the transcription. Martin Lewis is listed as a daughter and named: ‘Martha’. Burton is also listed as a daughter and his name is transcribed as ‘Brolin’. (Is this really a name?) If you inspect the original carefully, you will see that it appears the writer did mean to write ‘Burton’ but didn’t cross the ‘t’ very well. This doesn’t explain the designation of daughter however. I don’t know if Mary Peterson was related to the family, but there is no doubt from the list that this is the same family again. All of these children were documented by Cleava Darling, and several of the birth records have been found in the county record books. More importantly, Ole J. Olson did in fact purchase land in Elkhart township. On the land deed they are named “Ole J. Oleson and Betsey J. Oleson”. The land is described as: “The north east fractional quarter of section Six in Elkhart township...” It turns out that this piece of land is precisely one mile east and one mile south of the Palestine Lutheran church where we have found several other family records previously discussed.

Before the next available census in 1900 the couple was divorced and Bertha had died. I was not able to find a census record for Ole J. in that year, and he died in 1908 while living in Thor township near Humboldt, Iowa. After so many records already found for this family, one might think that this would be a good place to stop. But the more I find, the more I discover that other documents might yet be available. There are early records available in the Lutheran church archives in Chicago that I would really love to search some day. There is also two full sets of news papers from Slater and Cambridge Iowa that go back to the 1880’s. I’m sure that most of the early editions will be written in Norwegian. I’m also sure that they won’t be indexed. Nevertheless, they have been microfilmed at the local libraries in Iowa, and I plan to spend time looking through them in the near future. There is also the matter of Ole J.’s younger brother Andrew Olsen Volden. Cleava Darling tells that Ole J. came here with two of his brothers. The Rogaland emigration index lists only the one: “Andrew Olsen Volden”, but it doesn’t tell the year that he emigrated. I only know that he

did not come the same year that Ole did. There are a few possible matches among individuals in the census records, but I haven't been able to pin him down yet.

One final note on this family. The census record of 1880 lists the youngest daughter of Ole J. as: "Mary Olson", age 1. Cleave Darling also lists her as Ole J.'s youngest child. However, the fact is that this child was the daughter of Sophia who gave birth out of wedlock at age 19. The child's full name was listed in the church book at her christening: "Anna Maria, daughter of Sophia Olson Wold, b. 10 Jan. 1879". The church book also states that Sophia was unmarried at the time, and this fact has been confirmed to me personally by a living descendent of Anna Maria. Nevertheless, the whole family raised the child as one of the rest, and the actual father's name was never recorded that I know of.^{33 34}

14.	Udbjørg Bertine Gårddatter Andersdatter Gård	19 Juli i Talje Søster datter	Anders Olson Gaard & synn 2 f. Siri Thorbjørn datter	Ol rastrext. Guri Negland Anne Rasmussen J. Gaard, Ras. nis Endre Gaard Anders Holg. Norge RaAnders Gaard, syn.
-----	--	--	---	---

³³ From La Salle county, Illinois marriage records

³⁴ Talje emigration records; see # 6 & 7 "Margrethe Marie and her sister Udbjørg Bertine"

Udflyttede (ogsaa Born.)

a-Folio

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de	Medbragte Atester.	No.	Opgiven Datum.	N a v n.	Alder.	Til hvad Sted.
as	Blev fra Tjønnegr. Gjort af 20/11-52.	1. (1851)	Hans Christian 1820.			
træ		2. - " -	Helle og Hjelte			
		3. - " -	Anna Hjelte datter	1829		
		4. - " -	Hans Christian	1848		
		5. Munke	Mallene Lindegaard	43.		
	Akj. fra Tjønnegr. Distriktsbrev af 29/3-55.-	1855.	Ter - - -			
		6. - " -	Margrethe Marie Underdatter Gaard	27.		
		7. - " -	Udbygning Oberhusne Underdatter Gaard	20		
		8. - " -	Valentin Valentinius Særen - - -	33.		
		9. - " -	Rasmus Klemm Kjærnskov	96	90	
	Blev fra Tjønnegr. Gjort af 29/3-55.					

MARRIAGE LICENSE.

STATE OF ILLINOIS,

LA SALLE COUNTY, } The People of the State of Illinois:

To any regular Minister of the Gospel authorized to marry, by the Church or Society to which he belongs, any Justice of the Supreme Court, Judge, or Justice of the Peace, SEND GREETING:

Upon Application being made, and it satisfactorily appearing to the Clerk of the County Court of La Salle county, that Ole Olson

Betsy Anderson is of the age of Twenty-one Years, and that

WE DO GRANT THIS LICENSE, and authorize either of you to solemnize the rite of Marriage between the above named individuals within said county, and we hereby require you to make Certificate of such Marriage and return the same, together with this License, to the Clerk of our said court, within Thirty Days after solemnizing such Marriage.

IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF, The subscriber, Clerk
of the County Court of La Salle County, has hereunto set his Hand
and affixed the Seal of said Court at Ottawa, this 1st day of

Sept. 1855

Sam'l W. Raymond Clerk
Steinrich

STATE OF ILLINOIS,

LA SALLE COUNTY, } I do hereby Certify, That by virtue of and pursuant to the
authority in the above License granted, I DID, on the 15th day of September 1855, re-
lunize the Rite of Marriage between Ole Olson and
Betsy Anderson therein named.

31		Brooks Gates	26	m	
32		Jane "	24	f	
33		Ellen "	5	f	
34	2102 2117	Ole Olson	30	m	
35		Betsy "	35	f	
36		Serina "	3	f	
37		Sophia "	1	f	
38	2103 2118	Rasmus Williamson	50	m	
39		Julia "	30	f	
40		Christina "	9	f	
		No. white males,	19	No. colored males,	No. foreign born,
		No. white females,	21	No. colored females,	No. deaf and dumb,

1860 census for Mission township, La Salle, Illinois.

8	—	Henry	2 M 14				
9	—	Martin	2 M 11				
10	118 119	Clemon Oli	35 M M farmer	1600	850	A	
11	—	Elyzabeth	33 F M Keeping house			A	
12	—	Sarah	12 F M			A	
13	—	Susan	10 F M			A	
14	—	Oli	8 M M			A	
15	—	Marcia	6 M M			A	
16	—	Bernard	4 M M			A	
17	—	Lewis	12 M M			A	
18	119 120	Clemon Andressa	27 M M farmer	1400	750	Non	
19	—	Wm. C. —	5 M M			A	

1870 census for Elkhart township, Polk county, Iowa.

" Anna	W M 7	Daughter	
" Martin	W M 4	son	
" Ed Martha	W F 11	daughter	keeping house
" Chas. Oleg	W M 5	beth	farmer
" Henry	W M 10	broth	keeping house
" Sarah	W F 22	Daughter	
" Lizzie	W F 11	Daughter	
" C. J.	W M 18	son	
" Andrew	W M 17	son	
" Dennis	W M 14	son	
" Martha	W F 11	Daughter	
" Henry	W F 7	Daughter	
" Martin	W F 4	Daughter	
" Mary	W F 1	Daughter	
Maria Land	W M 22	Daughter	keeping house
Garrett Anton	W M 61	father	farmer

Note D.—In making entries in columns 9, 10, 11, 12, 16 to 23, an affirmative mark only will be used—thus /, except in the case of divorced persons, column 11, when the b

Note E.—Question No. 12 will only be asked in cases where an affirmative answer has been given either to question 10 or to question 11.

Note F.—Question No. 14 will only be asked in cases when a gainful occupation has been reported in column 13.

Note G.—In column 7 an abbreviation in the name of the month may be used, as Jan., Apr., Dec.

1880 census for Elkhart township, Polk county, Iowa.

Montgomery

No. 10 Mr. Chapman.

Know all men by these presents,
that we, Olly J. Chapman and Rosetta J. Chapman, husband and wife
of the County of Polk and State of Iowa, party of the first part
for and in consideration of the sum of Six Hundred (600)
Dollars, in hand paid by Vice M. Chapman of the County of
Kings and State of New York, party of the second part, to
receipt whereof is hereby acknowledged, do hereby will and
convey unto the said party of the second part, the following
described premises situated in the County of Polk, in the State
of Iowa to-wit:

The North East quarter of Quarter (1/4) of
Section Six (6) in Township Eighty One (81) North
Range, Twenty-Two (22) West 5 P.M.
To have and to hold the above described premises, together
with all and singular the appurtenances now or hereafter in
anywise belonging or appertaining thereto; the intention
being to convey hereby an absolute title in fee simple, in-
cluding all the rights of homestead, unto the said party of
the second part, his legal representatives, or assigns, forever.
Provided, always, and these presents are upon this express
condition, that if the said party of the first part, their
heirs, executors, administrators or assigns, shall pay or
cause to be paid unto the said party of the second part his
legal representatives, or assigns, the sum of Six Hundred
(600) Dollars, according to the tenor and intent of one and
hundred and six (106) days for the principal sum of Six Hundred Dollars
bearing seven (7) per centum, and payable two years from
the first day of January A.D. 1876, with interest thereon at
the rate of ten (10) per centum per annum, payable monthly
as provided by law, coupons numbered from one to ten
inclusive, attached to the said bond, to wit: one-half
days of the months of July and January in each year
until said principal sum become due; but with interest
however, at the rate of ten (10) per centum per annum, for
one-half days of the month of January, for the period between

*I am bound to pay to the said party of the second part
the sum of Six Hundred Dollars, on or before the 1st day of January
A.D. 1876, with interest thereon at the rate of ten (10) per centum per annum,*

Reading Old Cemetery Stones

I've heard of several methods for reading information on old grave stones such as rubbing charcoal on cloth, or dusting the stone with flour, but I'm convinced that these won't hold a candle to a method that we recently discovered by accident. Last summer my wife and I were visiting several small cemeteries in Ohio looking for ancestors from her family. One day it was nearly dark when we arrived at a small, well kept cemetery near Zanesville. As the evening light faded, we had just enough time to find the family plots that we wanted to see, but when we found them it was too dark to read any of the stones. Unwilling to give up, I got a flash light from the car and we were very pleased to discover that many of the oldest grave stones are much easier to read in the dark! All you need is a good strong flashlight held very nearly parallel to the face of the stone. This allows the relief of the lettering to be nicely cast into shadows. As you move the light up and down and from side to side, many old stones that are practically illegible during the day become wonderfully clear and easy to read.

Later that same trip I decided that I would try this same method in the day time. At a different cemetery in Illinois, my daughter and I found a family grave site with another very old stone of importance to our research. I went to the car and got the flash light, but this time I also brought a large heavy quilt. I covered the stone and myself with the quilt, and my daughter worked as a scribe. Again, I was able to read the stone with wonderful clarity using the shadows cast by the flash light in the darkness under the quilt. I have to admit that it was not very comfortable under that quilt in the middle of the summer, but the result was well worth the effort. This method also leaves the lettering on fragile old stones untouched and completely undamaged. For this reason it is highly preferable to many other methods.

Allen H Wald

Oley Dahl

The following excerpt is from the Wald Family Histoiry by Cleva Darling, written in 1939. Thank goodness that she wrote this, because without it my research would have been much more difficult and probably boring:

“Ole married Siri--and they had eight children: Ole J.; Sarah; Torkel; Gurina; Peter; Martha; Oley; and Andrew.

“Of these children not all is known. Oley chose the name Dahl because of coming from Ordahl (Årdal). He came to the United States and bought a bakery in Indianola, Iowa. He married a Louder girl of Indianola and they had two children, Ella and Charles. Ella married a Mr. Gilbert. After his death she married Mr. Mathis and they had one child, Virginia. Virginia had stage ambitions and little is known of her.

“Sarah and Gurina also came to the United States and both settled in Illinois. Sarah married a man from Esmond, Illinois and had one girl who married Ludwig Burg. She has six children. Gurina married Mr. Olson. They had two children: Regina, who married Hulver Warren of Eagle Grove, Iowa, and had three children; and Andrew K. who lived at Cambridge, Iowa, married and had four children--Ella, Mary, James, and Ollie.

“Torkel (or Tom as was his nickname), married a Swede girl from Boone, Iowa. They moved to Omaha, Nebraska and there three children were born. His wife never gave up her ambition to be an actress and began training the children for the stage when they were very young. One day Tom said he was going up town for a couple of hours. He never returned, nor did the family ever hear from him again. The family moved to the Western Coast where the children went on the stage.

“Little of Peter and Andrew is known except they left Norway and went to Germany to seek their fortune.

Martha--ah, Martha loved not wisely but too well. One of the children, Ole Miller came to America and served in the Spanish American War. He never married and the last heard of him, he was in the Old Soldiers Home in Crookston, Minnesota.”

The oldest son in this family, Ole J., was our great great grandfather, also known as Ole J. Olson Wold. Although I have found the parish birth records from Norway for all of his brothers and sisters, I have never been able to find any U.S. records about any of them--until now. The difficulty is that names are changed, spellings are inconsistent, this family has very common names, and people move around. Very few clues are left behind. But in this case we have a few clues, so I spent some time digging in the census records online and I finally found the following from 1880:³⁵

³⁵

Source: 1880 census, Washington, Warren, Iowa, pg. #362A

Name Birthplace	Relation	Marital Status	Gender	Race	Age	Birthplace	Occupation	Father's Birthplace	Mother's
Mary LOWDER	Self	W	Female	W	50	NC	Farming	TN	NC
Edwin LOWDER	Son	S	Male	W	22	IA	Farming	NC	NC
John W. LOWDER	Son	S	Male	W	20	IA	Farming	NC	NC
Victoria LOWDER	Dau	S	Female	W	18	IA	At Home	NC	NC
Candace LOWDER	Dau	S	Female	W	15	IA	At Home	NC	NC
Charley D. DALL	GSon	S	Male	W	4	IA		NORWAY	IA
Ella DALL	GDau	S	Female	W	3	IA		NORWAY	IA

“Mary Lowder” is a widow, age 50. She is living with four of her children on a farm in Warren county, Iowa, (near Indianola). This place is just south of Des Moines. Our direct line family (Ole J.) is living in the next county north. Notice that the grandchildren here are unmistakably the children of “Oley Dahl” as told in the family history above. I knew instantly when I first saw this it could hardly be a coincidence! But where are their parents, Ole and his wife? And who is Ole’s wife? She cannot be one of the daughters listed here-- they are too young. A quick check of the 1870 and 1860 census for the same place reveals that indeed there were four older daughters in the Lowder family named: Edith b. 1847, Rachel b. 1849, Asenith b. 1854, and Alazina b. 1856. Oley Dahl was born in 1846, so he might have married any one of them. As luck would have it there are marriage records for Warren county back to 1850, and the actual marriage license and certificate have been photographed and preserved with their names:

“Ole Dall and Ella Lowder”, married 10 November, 1874, in Indianola, Iowa.

Well, here’s another question, who is this Ella Lowder? She was not listed in the census records, or was she? Digging deeper into the county records I found the following “Record of Guardian’s Deeds” which clearly identifies the deceased mother of Charles and Ella Dall.^{36 37}

³⁶ “Record of Guardian’s Deeds”, Warren County, Iowa, FHL film #1011027, p. 423.

³⁷ Marriage Register, Warren County, Iowa, FHL film # 1034029, item 17, p. 309.

RECORD OF GUARDIAN'S DEEDS.

<p>TO ALL TO WHOM THESE PRESENTS SHALL COME: I, <u>Mary Fowler</u>, of <u>Warren</u>, County, State of Iowa, Guardian of the person and property of <u>Charles V. Dall & Ella May Dall</u>, minor, sends greeting: Whereas the said <u>Mary Fowler</u>, <u>Allamaria Dall, Grand</u> sends greeting: Whereas the said <u>Mary Fowler</u>, Guardian as aforesaid, heretofore, to wit: at the <u>22d. A.D. 1886</u>, Session A. D. 1886, of the County Court of <u>Warren</u>, Territory, and State of Iowa, made application to the said Court to sell <u>Real Estate</u>, belonging to said minor. </p>	
<p>AND WHEREAS, notice of said application was duly and personally served upon said minor, according to law: And Whereas, also, at the said <u>22d. A.D. 1886</u>, Term, A. D. 1886, of said County Court, the said <u>Mary Fowler</u>, in her capacity of Guardian aforesaid was ordered and empowered to sell <u>the Real Estate</u>, <u>hereinabove described</u>.</p>	
<p>AND WHEREAS, also, the said Guardian has given the Bond with sureties required by law: And Whereas, also, the said Guardian has sold the Real Estate hereinabove described, being <u>all</u> of the said Real Estate which the said Guardian was empowered to sell by said order of said County Court, to <u>Edwin Fowler</u>, of <u>Warren</u>, County in the State of <u>Iowa</u>, for the sum of <u>Thirty Three and 66/100</u> Dollars.</p>	
<p>NOW THEREFORE, KNOW YE, That I, the said <u>Mary Fowler</u>, in my capacity of Guardian as aforesaid, by virtue of the authority vested in me by said County Court, and in pursuance of the said order of said Court, in consideration of the sum of <u>Thirty Three and 66/100</u> Dollars, to me paid by the said <u>Edwin Fowler</u>, (the receipt whereof I hereby acknowledge,) do by these presents grant, bargain, sell and convey unto the said <u>Edwin Fowler</u>, and to his heirs and assigns forever, the following described tracts of Real Estate, lying and being situated in the County of <u>Warren</u>, and State of Iowa, to wit: The <u>one hundred sixtysixth part of the West half of the North East quarter of Sec 7 except the right of way to the Wisconsin & Milwaukee Railway Co</u> beginning at the NE corner of the S E quarter of Sec 7 thence South 20 rods thence west 45 rods thence N 30 degrees E 48 rods to the place of beginning all in Town <u>16</u> of Range <u>9</u> West also beginning <u>32</u> rods N 78 degrees E East corner of the N E quarter of Sec 7 thence N 23 degrees E 23 rods N 73 degrees E 23 rods South 59 rods to the place of begin- ning in Township <u>16</u> Range <u>9</u> West of S. P. M. I. D. TO HAVE AND TO HOLD, The said described premises unto the said <u>Edwin Fowler</u>,</p>	
<p><u>his</u> heirs and assigns forever. And I the said <u>Mary Fowler</u>, for myself, my executors and administrators do hereby covenant with the said <u>Edwin Fowler</u>, <u>his</u> heirs and assigns that in making the said sale, I have in all things observed and complied with all the requisitions of the law, and that as Guardian aforesaid, I will WARRANT AND DEFEND the above granted premises to the said <u>Edwin Fowler</u>, against the lawful claims of said minor and all persons claiming or to claim the same by, through or under him.</p>	
<p>IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and seal, this <u>9th</u> day of <u>October</u>, A. D. 1886.</p>	
<p><u>Mary Fowler</u> [L.S.] Guardian as aforesaid.</p>	
<p>STATE OF IOWA, COUNTY OF <u>Warren</u></p>	

MARRIAGE REGISTER

DATE	GRANTING OF LICENSE.	D.
Nov 10/74 No. 145	Marriage license issued to Ole - Ball Ella Louder the former 27 years of age, and the latter 18 years of age, on the testimony of <i>Thomas Woodfoot</i>	and

WARREN COUNTY, IOWA.

DATE OF RETURN	CERTIFICATE
	TO THE COUNTY COURT OF WARREN COUNTY: THIS CERTIFIES, That on the 10 day of November A. D., 1874; at Ottumwa in said County, according to law, and by authority, I duly JOINED IN MARRIAGE, Ole - Ball and Ella Louder Given under my hand the 1 st day of November A. D., 1874 <i>F. C. Moore</i>

So, Ole's wife, Ella, was also known as Allazenia Lowder. They named their daughter Ella after her mother, but this more beautiful form of the name was not used in the 1880 census (It was used in an earlier census with a different spelling).. The guardianship deed tells us that Allazenia has died some time before 1886. Perhaps it was a long time before, and that is why she is not found in the 1880 census with her children. In fact, I finally did find her husband, "Ole Dall" listed in the 1880 census, living a short distance away from the family at a boarding house in Des Moines and working as a baker. I imagine that his wife may have died in child birth or by some other disease, and at this time he has moved back to Des Moines to find work.

It seems the family didn't really live happily ever after. A somewhat more tragic ending than the one painted by Cleva Darling. However, we can thank her again for providing the clues that helped us find anything at all about them. There are many more census and county records giving details about this Lowder family. Much research can yet be done there. As for "Oley Dahl" / "Ole Dall", he was the brother of our direct ancestor, and therefore he was very much a member of our Wald family with the same heritage from Årdal, Norway. Whether or not Oley and Ella's descendants still survive today remains to be discovered. If they do, it might be interesting to share with them the family history that they probably don't know much about...yet.

Allen H Wald

Regina Knutsdatter Olsen

My Grandfather's cousin, Cleva Darling wrote: "The Wald History" in 1939. This document has been extremely helpful for my research on the Wald family, all of whom came from Norway. Of what she wrote not all has been verified. That our direct line goes back to Iver Olsen Lillimo of Aardal, Rogaland, Norway, this is for certain true. Nevertheless, the family that I am writing about here received only brief mention in her history. What she did write led me on such a search as I have never had. I have never felt so compelled to search, faced with obvious mistakes, but with so many details that must fit somehow. Eventually I was able to find many original documents, and this is the story they tell.

From 'The Wald History' by Cleva Darling:

"Sarah and Gurina also came to the United States and both settled in Illinois. Sarah married a man from Esmond, Illinois and had one girl who married Ludwig Burg. She has six children. Gurina married Mr. Olson. They had two children: *Regina, who married Hulver Warren of Eagle Grove, Iowa, and had three children; and *Andrew K. who lived at Cambridge, Iowa, married and had four children--Ella, Mary, James, and Ollie."

"Sarah and Gurina" here are sisters to Ole J. Olson Wold who was our great great grandfather. When looking for Gurina, my research quickly focused on her child, 'Regina', who would have been Ole J's niece according to the 1939 history.

Regina and her family are listed in the 1860 federal census of Adams, LaSalle, Illinois:

	age:	birth place:
Knud T. Oleson	48	Norway
Ingebor	48	Norway
Ole. K	21	Norway
*	Regina K	Norway (b. ~1846)
*	Andrew K	Norway (b. ~1849)
	Clark K	Ill
	Martin J	Ill

'Adams, Illinois' is one of many early settlements in LaSalle county where the Norwegian immigrants lived. This was a major staging place for further migration to Iowa and other places. From the census above we see that Regina's father was indeed 'Mr. Olson', and there was another child named Andrew K. The initial 'K' for all the older children obviously represents the Norwegian naming which would be 'Knudsen' or 'Knudsatter'. The census records consistently state that Regina and Andrew were born in Norway. Note that Regina's mother is not named Gurina. Initially I thought that Gurina may have died and their father remarried. Soon I discovered that this was impossible.

These two children, Regina K. and Andrew K., listed in 1860, are for sure the two that were spoken of by Cleva Darling. Note in the 1870 census, from the same place, that Regina has married ‘Hulver Warren’, also stated in the Wald history. There is a reference in the Rogaland emigration index showing that ‘Halvor Halvorsen Vaare’ immigrated in 1866 with his first wife and two sons. This reference reflects the original emigration record which is found in the church book where they lived.³⁸ It also states that his parents immigrated the year before in 1865, and that ‘Regina Olson’ was his second wife. Halvor’s first wife died soon after their arrival in America. Halvor remarried with Regina on 10 March, 1870.³⁹

From the Rogaland Emigration index, departing through Stavanger:⁴⁰

Departure from Norway in 1866 listing: “Halvor Halvorsen Vaare age 33, (b. ~1833)”. (The index states that his second wife is ‘Regine Olsdr.’, although the church book states that he originally emigrated with his first wife Inger). He does have his two sons with him: ‘Halvar Olai’ and ‘Erik Mathias’. Another entry: ‘Halvor Olsen, b. 1799, left in 1865, from Vore, Skjold, Norge with his (wife) Helga Olsdr, b. 1794.’ (These are Halvor’s parents).

From the 1870 federal census, Adams, LaSalle, Illinois:

Hulver Warren,	40,	Norway carpenter
Regina	24	Norway
Ole	9	Norway
Mathias	7	Norway
Burton	5	Ill
Hulverson, Ingebor	60	Norway

Notice that Regina is now married and is significantly younger than her husband. She is also only 15 years older than Ole, age 9. The first child born in Illinois is Burton—probably born early in 1866. This child was born to Halvor’s first wife, Inger, very soon after they arrived in Illinois. There is no doubt that Inger died shortly afterward. About 1874 or 1875, Halvor and Regina moved to Story county Iowa and lived for a few years in the Palestine township which is the same place that Ole J. Olson Wold lived with his family.⁴¹

³⁸ Norwegian Digitalarkivet, <<http://digitalarkivet.uib.no/>>, Skåre i Torvasted, Rogaland, 1866, “Udflyttede”, pg. 251, #9.

³⁹ Illinois marriage records, LaSalle County, Illinois, book D, #160, FHL US/CAN Film 1683303. See also: <<http://cyberdriveillinois.com/departments/archives/archives.html>>

⁴⁰ Norwegian Digitalarkivet, <<http://digitalarkivet.uib.no/>>, “Emigranter fra Stavanger 1825-1970.”

⁴¹ See the 1880 census for Polk County, Iowa. Ole J. Olson lived on the northern most border of Polk County, bordering the Palestine township, near the town of Cambridge.

From the 1880 federal census, Palestine, Story, IA:

H. H. Warren	46	Norway (b. ~1834)
Regina	34	Norway (b. ~1846)
Ole H.	17	Norway
Ellen I.	9	Ill
Charles O.	7	Ill
Henry H.	5	IA
Hannah J.	3	IA
Enoch	1	IA
Hellen Warren	89	Norway (mother)

The oldest son, Ole H. is still with the family (presumably the same as ‘Halvar Olai’ in the emigration record). Burton is not listed and Matthias has gone to work for the rail road. Regina now has two of her own children born in Illinois and three born in Iowa. Note that Halvor’s elderly mother is living with the family (her Norwegian name was Helga Olsdatter).

We know that Matthias has gone to work for the rail road and ended up in California because his history can be found in the family history of his son, Earl Warren, who became Chief Justice of the U. S. Supreme Court. This connection provides an interesting set of details that were significant in this research. My search for the name ‘Warren’ in the Rogaland emigration index brought up several references to Earl Warren, and it was noted each time that this was “Earl Warren, Chief Justice of the U. S. Supreme Court.” During his life Earl Warren traveled to Norway to visit the place where his grandfather was born. The place is called Vaare (also spelled Vore and Vårå) in Tysvær parish, Rogaland county. The name ‘Warren’ is derived from this place and can be translated directly meaning: ‘The place called ‘Vaare’. A visit of such a high dignitary from the United States was very significant to the people who lived in this rural place, so it was duly noted and later written in the bygdebok (farm book) for Tysvær.⁴² It was also noted that Halvor Warren’s second wife was ‘Regina Olsen’.

Before we can lay claim to a relationship between our family and Earl Warren of the U. S. Supreme Court, I am compelled to note that Matthias, who was Earl Warren’s father, was born of Halvor Warren’s first wife who was Inger Knutsdatter from Nes in Tysvær. According to Cleva Darling, the Wald family relationship was through Halvor’s second wife, Regina, who was said to be the daughter of Gurina, (Ole J.’s sister). Unfortunately, we know that Ole J.’s sister Gurina was born in 1838 and would have been less than eight years old when Regina was born. Also, we have Regina listed as a daughter to Knud T. Olson and wife Ingebor in the 1860 census (above). This incongruity was the problem that became the heart of my investigation, and I was determined to find the truth of it.

There are several coincidental connections between our Wald family and the Warren family. Other than the written history by Cleva Darling, one of the strongest is the fact that

⁴² “Tysvær Gard og ætt”, Nils Olav Østrem, Tysvær Kommune, 1999, vol. 5, gard 91–Vårå, pg. 42, 43 #101.

both families lived very near each other in Story County, Iowa for several years around the time of 1880. (Ole J. Olsen and family actually lived on the northern border of Polk County). Also, Andrew Olson, Regina's brother, did settle in Cambridge, Story County, Iowa, and his family is found in the 1900, 1910 and 1920 census records. Andrew and his wife are buried in the Cambridge Cemetery, north section, row 22, #5 and #6.⁴³

Halvor Warren, Regina and family moved from Story County to Eagle Grove, Iowa some time between 1880 and 1885. There was a local census in Story County in 1885. Their family was not listed. There is no 1890 federal census because it was destroyed. The next time the family is listed is 1900 and 1910:

From the 1900 federal census of Eagle Grove, Wright, Iowa:

Warren, H. H.	67	Norway
Regina	54	Norway
Chas. O	27	Ill
Henry	25	IA
Hannah J	23	IA
Enoch	21	IA
Anna	16	IA

From the 1910 federal census of Eagle Grove, Wright, Iowa:

Warren, Hulver H.	77
Regina	64
Charles H.	37
Henni J.	33
Anna	26

Here we see that Regina has another child, Anna. This would be six children that we know of, not three as told by Cleva Darling. But clearly this is the same family which lived nearly next door to the Wald family in 1880. The following document lists her father's name which helps to verify that this is the same family that was listed in Adams, LaSalle, Illinois in 1870:

Wright Co., Iowa funeral home records:⁴⁴

Funeral expenses charged to "Chas Warren, of \$174.00, regarding deceased: Regina Warren, Norwegian Lutheran, residence: Eagle Grove; Birth place: Norway; Date of birth: Aug. 18, 1845; age: 71 years, 8 months, 6 days. House keeper; Father: Knut T. Olson; Date of death: April 24, 1917; Place of burial: Gold Field cemetery; Husband: Halvor Warren."

⁴³ "Story County, Iowa cemeteries, grave marker inscriptions," compiled by: Story County Genealogical Society, vol. 8: Union Township including city of Cambridge.

⁴⁴ Funeral records from 1913-1929, original records in the possession of the Kastler Babcock Funeral Home, Eagle Grove, Iowa; FHL US/CAN Film #1403584.

As you can see, this is an extraordinary document with many details about Regina's life. The county records show that there is a Warren family plot at Gold Field Cemetery, but the reference I have states that there is only a large family stone with no details on it. The details we need to know are Regina's true mother and the precise place in Norway where Regina was born. Here they were not given. I did find the following biography about her father.

From the History of LaSalle County:⁴⁵

Knud T. Olsen, section 15, Adams Township, was born in Riskedal, near Stavanger, Norway, Jan. 1, **1811, a son of Ole Knudsen ... was married in his native country in June, 1837, to Isabelle Aslagsdatter, (she is named Ingebor in the 1860 census)... by whom he had seven children, five of whom are yet living—Ole K., Regina, Andrew, Charles and Martin. Mr. Olsen brought his family to the United States in 1850, first locating in Freedom Township, LaSalle Co., Ill, and since 1857 he has made his home in Adams Township. His family are members of the First Norwegian Evangelical Free and Independent Lutheran Church of Leland. His son Ole married Julia Jensen and resides in Freedom Township; Regina married Halver Warren and resides near Eagle Grove, Iowa; Andrew lives at Huxley, Iowa, he married Elsie Jensen; Charles married Johanna Johnson and lives in Shelby County, Iowa; Martin is farming on the homestead in Adams Township, he is unmarried.

Regina's father, Knud T. Olson, was from 'Riskedal' which is a farm in the Aardal parish. This is the same parish where Ole J. Olson Wold was born. Surely Regina's birth record should be found there. After several searches in this and all the surrounding parishes I found no Regina born in 1845. Furthermore, the Aardal parish record contains the following marriage record for Ole J's sister Gurina.⁴⁶

From the Aardal parish register, marriages, 1864:

"Gurine Olsdtr., Volden under Østigaard, age 26, father Ole Iversen, Syvert Pedersen, Store Dovig, age 22, father Peter Bjornsen, married 29 March."

This is almost certainly the real Gurina, sister of Ole J. Olson Wold (Volden). It is certain because the place name is specific, her father's name is the same as Ole J.'s, and her age is what we expect from her birth record. At this point we must give up all pretense that Regina is Gurina's daughter. Nevertheless, there must be a reason that Cleva Darling would have said so.

Unwilling to give up, I determined that I would find Regina's birth record. For many years the Norwegians have done extremely well preserving and researching the historical records of their farms and families. Very recently they have completed the unprecedented task of scanning virtually all of the parish registers and made them available online for all to

⁴⁵ "History of LaSalle County," 1886, [vols. 1-2] / compiled by Berdeane Wagner, FHL US/CAN 977.327 D3h, vol.II, pp. 27, 28.

⁴⁶ Norwegian Digitalarkivet, <<http://digitalarkivet.uib.no/>>, Aardal, Hjelmeland, Rogaland, Norway, parish register for 1864, marriages, #2, pg. 163, married 29 March, 1864.

search. These are hand written books, some hundreds of pages, not indexed by name, but searching them online is by far easier than going to the library in Salt Lake City to search using dozens of different micro-films. Since I have the document from Eagle Grove that gave me Regina's birth date in 1845, I determined that I would just look through all of the parish registers in Rogaland County on this date. There were many books, but the name 'Regina' is not very common in Norway, so it was not difficult to determine whether she was there as I looked through each one. Fortunately, I finally found her birth in the following record.

From Stavanger, Domkirken, Frue, parish register, 1845 births.⁴⁷

This document, along with the birth record of her brother Andrew, tells us that her parents had moved to the city and stayed there for a few years before they came to America. It is certain now that Regina's mother was not Gurine, sister to Ole J. Olson Wold.⁴⁸ We have the census in 1860, the biography of her father, and finally the very record of her birth

from Norway. Her mother was 'Ingeborg Aslaksdatter' as shown here and also told in the biography of her father. This is without doubt the birth record for the same individual who lived in Adams Illinois, then Story Co., Iowa, and finally Eagle Grove, Iowa. The documentation of her life is very consistent, and the birth date of August 18, 1845 is the same here in this Norwegian record and in the record of her death. It is not very common to have so many documents that all coincide for one individual who lived on two different continents in these early times. So, if Regina was not the daughter of Gurina Olson, why did Cleva Darling write that she was? At least one answer to the puzzle comes from the family of Regina's father.

⁴⁷ Norwegian Digitalarkivet, <<http://digitalarkivet.uib.no/>>, Stavanger, Domkirken, Frue, parish register, 1845 births, pg. 43, #367.

⁴⁸ Note that the 1895 local census for Palestine Twp., Story Co. has: 'Ole O. Olson, 59, and Gurie Olson 57,' (b. ~1838) with four children. Both were born in Norway. There is a possibility that this could be the same Gurina if she lost her first husband and remarried. Her children were all born in Iowa about 1874 through 1880.

Knud T. Olson's birth record is found in the Aardal parish register (**actually 1813 not 1811), where it states that his mother was 'Aasa Torkildsdatter Borgen'. When I found this record I realized that I recognized the place name. After a short search in the farm book, sure enough, this Aasa was a sister to Siri Torkildsdatter Borgen, who was Ole J. Olson's grandmother. The result is that Regina, daughter of Knud T. Olson of Riskedal, Aardal, Norway and Ole J. Olson of Volden, Aardal, Norway were in fact second cousins having a set of great grand parents in common. I suspect that this is the relationship with Regina that was known while the families lived near each other in Story Co., Iowa. The actual family connection must have been distorted over the years after Regina's family moved to Eagle Grove. Given this documentation, we can now state that our Wald family is related through Regina's marriage to the family of Halvor Warren who was the grand father of Earl Warren of the U. S. Supreme Court. More important though, the common great grand parents of Regina and Ole J. were: Torchild Kjelsen Borgen, b. 1742, and his wife Anna Jakobsdatter, b. 1750. Torchild and Anna were married in 1768 in the Aardal parish and had a total of eight children born there. There are many more Norwegian records to be found in the history of this parish concerning these families and their connections with our own.

Allen H Wald

2008

Andreas Olsen Wold

Recently I have received information about Spel-Ola's son, Andreas, b. 1849. He was the youngest son of Ole Iversen Volden and wife Siri Pedersdatter. This son was only eleven years old when his father died. His mother died the next year in 1861. The bygdebok indicates that he went to America, but they didn't know what year he had left. Cleva Darling states: "Little of Peter and Andrew is known except they left Norway and went to Germany to seek their fortune."

We now know that Andreas actually stayed in Norway and married in 1874 with Tørborg Ragnethe Andersdatter, b. 1850. They lived in Arendal, Aust-Agder, Norway and had at least three children there. The record of their marriage is extraordinary because of its details. There were actually two copies, one kept by the clerk and one by the parish minister.⁴⁹

16. Mai	Dengارد Малад				Nicolaides Age 19° of lung gran Granules - 26 mm. - Octobacterium Mar. 2 Lact. Ph. 11-365
17.	Andreas Olson Back of round c. f. Nicolaij Taiwan				
	Olson				

"Entry #16: May 9th, 1874, Young man, painter, Andreas Olsen Wold, of Arendal, born in Wolden in Hjelmeland: 27 June, 1849, father: Ole Iverson; Maiden Tørborg Andrea Ragnethe Andersdatter, of Arendal, born 23 December, 1850, father: Anders Olsen. Sponsors: Niels(?) Thorbjørnsen, Ole Petersen. The bands were read on April 19th, 26th and May 3rd."

This record gives Andreas' birth date, his specific place of birth and his father's name. The place: 'Hjelmeland' is the parent parish for Årdal. Therefore, all of the information matches the individual whom we know, and there can be no doubt that he is part of our Wald family. Andreas also appears earlier in the 1865 census in this same place where he is called a painter's apprentice, so we know that he came here soon after his parents died, but we don't know why. Recently I found the following entry in the 1865 census:

1865 census, Østerrisøer, Aust Agder, Norway

entry #889: "Torkil Ols. Bager Svend ug 24 m Hjelmeland"

⁴⁹ Digitalarkivet, <http://www.arkivverket.no/>, scanned parish registers, Arendal, Aust-Agder, Ekteviede: 1868-1878 Ministerialbok, 1874, pg. 315, #16, Ekteviede: 1874-1888 Klokkerbok, 1874, pg. 311, #16.

This appears to be his older brother, Torkild Olsen, b. 1841. He was living less than 50 kilometers from Andreas in the costal city of Østerrisøer which is in the same county, and he was unmarried and working as a baker's apprentice. Cleva Darling tells us that Torkild came to America and "married a Sweed girl from Boone, Iowa". So far I don't have any more information about him.

The oldest son of Andeas was Ole Andreasen, b. 1876 in Arendal. He married Pauline Evensen, b. 1879, and moved to Oslo where he also worked as a ships painter. His great grand daughter, Lois, is a third cousin of ours who currently lives near Sacramento California. She contacted me when she learned of her relation to our family in Aardal from my website, and I now have information she gave me about her lineage. Incidentally, Pauline Evensen was born in the Ringsaker parish in Hedmark county which is the parent parish for Veldre, the home of Fredrik Simensen and Pernille Larsdatter. There is no relation there, just a coincidence.

Allen H Wald

2009

Serina Olsdatter Volden

Serina was the second child of eight born to Ole Iversen Volden and Siri Pedersdatter Hagen. She was born 8 September, 1833 in Årdal, Rogaland, Norway. Being second, Serina was the closest sibling to their oldest son, Ole J. Olsen Volden (Wold) who was our gg-grandfather. In the minister's birth register her name is written 'Sussane' then crossed out with 'Serine' written below. In the clerk's duplicate register her name is just written 'Susane'. The name 'Susanna Olesdr.' also appears in the local census for Årdal in 1835. In America the names Serina and Susanne were often used interchangeably, but we don't see the name Susanne very often in Norwegian records. The equivalent name 'Siri' is found much more often, especially in older records. In all the records with her own children she is called 'Serina'.

1833. Godte Døtindetjon.						
No.	Aar og Datum.	Barnets fulde Navn.	Daabs Datum en- ten i Kir- ken eller hjemme.	Forsdrenes Navn, Stand, Haandtering og Bøopal.	Faddernes Navn, Stand og Opholdssted.	Hvor anfert i det almin- delige Jevn- sretses-Re. gister.
10.	Septbr. 8 th	Susanne Serine	bjænn døbt Fuglau ^b 11 th , i Lindau Fuglau ^b	hùndmand Ole Frans og Siri Færmor hùnd høg	Ola Kirk Sønn Øiv. münd Vallau Monsig høgau, kirk Østigaard og Ingaborg Lillimoe	.. 360.

1833, #10, born September 8, ~~Susanne~~ Serine, christened at home on Septemer 11, christened in the church September 22, parents: huusmand Ole Iversen and Siri Pedersdatter Volden, witnesses: Ole Kirkhuus, Gudmund Wallem, Martha Hagen, Kirsti Østgaard and Ingeborg Lillimoe.

The family is described in the bygdebok (farm book) on Volden, which is the place where they lived. There it states that Serina had also lived on Mælshorten which is often abbreviated as Horten⁵⁰. We don't know when she moved there, but we know that Serina's father died in 1860 and her mother died in 1861. At that time she was 28 years old. It was probably then that Serina went to live with her mother's sister who was Martha Pedersdatter, b. 1811. Martha lived on Mælshorten with her husband Nils and their children. In the bygdebok⁵¹ she is called Martha Pedersdatter Hagen because that is where she lived as a child. But in the kirkebok we see her present at all of the christenings for Serina's children where she is called Martha Horten. I like to call her Aunt Martha. We also see her named Martha Hagen listed with the witnesses in Serina's birth record (above). It seems that Aunt Martha was present at nearly every important event in Serina's life. When her parents died, Martha took Serina in, with two small children, and made a place for them in her home.

It appears that Serina may have been somehow mentally handicapped. The birth record gives the first clue because she was christened at home soon after birth, then later again in the church. This may have been done because they thought the child might not live. This is of course speculative, but we also have clues from the little we know about her life. Serina eventually had three children by three different men, but she never married any of them. Perhaps we can imagine her as a beautiful young woman, friendly, outgoing, and easily taken in by hansom young men with selfish intentions. She had the ability to become a mother, but was unable to form a stable relationship with a man who could care for her and the children. In the following we see her listed in the 1865 census, living with Aunt Martha and family:

1865 census, Horten (Mælshorten), Årdal / Hjelmeland, Rogaland, Norway:

3254	23	Niels	Niels.	Husfader Husmand med Jord	g	68	m	
3255	24	Martha	Pedersd.	Hans Kone	g	53	k	
3256	25	Asoline	Nielsd.	Deres Datter	ug	17	k	
3257	26	Maria	Nielsd.	Deres Datter	ug	13	k	
3258	27	Maline	Nielsd.	Deres Datter	ug	10	k	
3259	28	Serina	Olsd.	Lossierende	Dagarbeider	ug	31	k
3260	29	Olaus	Gustavs.	Hændes Søn	ug	2	m	
3261	30	Anna	Gundersd.	Hændes Datter	ug	7	k	

At this time Serina is listed with her two older children. Her daughter was named Anna Karina Gundersdatter, born 1 April, 1859, christened in Årdal. The kirkebok reads as follows:

"1859, #15, born 1 April, christened 8 May, Anna Karina, uægte (the parents were not married), parents: Gunder Helgesen and maiden Serina Olsdatter, from Egland in Årdal, witnesses: Martha Horten, Gurina Volden, Martha Olsdtr. ibid, Johne Lillemoe, Jens Yttrevold the younger."

⁵⁰ Årdal bygdebok, "Årdal, Frå istid til nåtid", Sigurd Eikeland, 1969, vol. 1, pg. 218.

⁵¹ Årdal bygdebok, "Årdal, Frå istid til nåtid", Sigurd Eikeland, 1969, vol. 1, pg. 138.

Notice among the witnesses are Aunt Martha and Serina's two younger sisters Gurina Volden (b. 1838) and Martha Volden (b. 1844). We should note that there was another girl named Martha Pedersdatter Horten (b. 1834) who was nearly the same age as Serina. This girl lived on the same farm but was not a close relation. It is possible it was she listed here at the christening, not Aunt Martha, but I think this is unlikely. It also states here that the parents were living on the Egland farm in Årdal when the child was born, but there is no mention of them in the bygdebok at Egland. So this is perhaps a mistake, or it could be that Gunder was working on that farm at the time. The father, Gunder Helgesen, was born on Tjentland. In the bygdebok he is listed with his family on a different farm called Kaltveit, #29, where it shows that he had married Anna Sveinungsdatter that same year, 1859. Soon after his marriage, Gunder had another daughter with his wife. Her name was Ane Malena, born 1860. This couple previously had a daughter together named Kari who was born in 1854. That was six years before they were married.⁵² It seems Gunder was a busy man.

Serina's next child was a son, Olaus Gustavsen, born 9 September, 1864 in Årdal, Rogaland, Norway. His father was Gustav Bernhard Olaus Beutlich (also called Bøitli). He is listed in the 1865 census living in Stavanger, working as 'Handlsbetjent'. In the birth record he is called 'Krambedsdrang'. Apparently he was an apprentice clerk of some kind, possibly for the police courts in the city. The birth record for Olaus reads as follows:

"1864, #33, born 9 September, christened 16 September, Olaus, uægte, parents: krambedsdrang in Stavanger, Gustav Bøitli and maiden Serine Olsdatter Horten, witnesses: Martha Horten, Klara Smitt, Analine Horten, Tjoran Horten, Syvert Bokken(?)".

Once again Aunt Martha is present with two other family members from Horten. In the 1865 census Serine is living on Horten. There she is called 'Lossierende / Dagarbeider'. This means that she is simply a roomer and a day laborer. She is with the family, but she is poor and has no husband to support her. She also has two young children and soon will have another:

"1868, #5, born 20 December, 1868, Olaus, uægte, parents: Ole Olsen Totland and piga Sirene Olsdatter Mælsosen, witnesses: Gunla Horten, Karoline Schmidt, Guri Mælsosen, Tjoran Horten, Aanen Riskedal."

Here note that she names another son Olaus, so immediately we suspect the death of her first son. Unfortunately that is what happened, and we find it recorded the year previous:

"1867, #2, died 30 December, buried 5 January, male child: Olaus Gustavsen, age 2, from Horten under Mæle."

Only nine years later in 1876, Serina died. In the death record from Årdal she is called 'Fattiglem' and 'ugift'. This means that she was poor, and still unmarried. This word 'Fattiglem' also translates 'destitute / pauper'. The record states that she died in the county sick house in Stavanger. This seems to imply that she had suffered a prolonged illness and the family was not able to care for her. Even still, they brought her home to bury her. There

⁵² Årdal bygdebok, "Årdal, Frå istid til nåtid", Sigurd Eikeland, 1969, vol. 1, pg. 465.

is a corresponding death record in Stavanger in St. Petri's church, #67 in 1876. That record is nearly identical and only confirms the Årdal record.

Olaus the younger was only seven when his mother died. He continued to live on the same farm and was confirmed in 1882 at age fourteen. At that time he was called 'Olaus Olsen Mælsosen'. We aren't sure what became of him. Olaus's father was from Totland which is a nearby farm in Hjelmeland parish.

In 'The Wald History' by Cleva Darling we read the following:

Sarah and Gurina also came to the United States and both settled in Illinois. Sarah married a man from Esmond, Illinois and had one girl who married Ludwig Berg. She has six children. Gurina married Mr. Olson. They had two children: Regina, who married Hulver Warren of Eagle Grove, Iowa, and had three children;...

Martha--ah, Martha loved not wisely but too well. One of the children, Ole Miller came to America and served in the Spanish American War. He never married and the last heard of him, he was in the Old Soldiers Home in Crookston, Minnesota.

From previous research we know that Cleva Darling had several of these family members mixed up. Here we should now consider all three sisters who were daughters of Ole Iversen Volden. Gurina was the one who "married a man from Esmond, Illinois", and it was her daughter, Sarah (b. 1864), who married Ludwig Berg. 'Regina' above was not Gurina's daughter, and I have previously written a full report of what we know about her. Sarah listed above with Gurina would have been the sister named Serina who is the subject of this report, but we know that this Serina died in Norway and likely never even visited America. When Cleva Darling writes: "Martha--ah, Martha loved not wisely but too well", perhaps it was actually Serina to whom she was referring. We see from the documents that Serina would certainly fit this description. Cleva Darling also writes: "One of the children, Ole Miller came to America and served in the Spanish American War. He never married and the last heard of him, he was in the Old Soldiers Home in Crookston, Minnesota". The way this was written seems to imply that Ole Miller came to America but his parents did not. Could this be Serina's son Olaus? He was born in 1868 and would have been about the right age to have served in that war. Serina had no other children that we know of. So far no further connection has been found.

Now we have just the youngest sister, Martha Olsdatter (b. 1844) to account for. When we look for her in the 1865 census we find the following:

1865 census, Mæle Nedre 18b, Aardal / Hjelmeland, Rogaland, Norway (see also #38, 43, pg. 124, in the Årdal bygdebok):

3262	31	Niels	Peders.	Husfader Gaardbruger og Selveier	ug	37	m	
3263	32	Bertha	Pedersd.	Hans Moder	Føderaadskone	g	63	k
3264	33	Kleng	Ols.		Tjenestekarl	ug	17	m
3265	1	Martha	Olsd.		Tjenestepige	ug	20	k

This looks like a good possibility for our Martha Olsdatter. Her age given as twenty is younger than we expect since our Martha was born in 1844. However, she is working as a servant girl on another part of the Mæle farm, so she would have been very near the rest of the family. I have yet to find more good information about her in several searches through Årdal parish records. It seems very possible that it was she who came to America soon after 1865 with her sister Gurina. In that case there may yet be another family here that is related to our Wald family from Årdal.

Allen H Wald

2010

Sarah Peterson Berg

“The Wald History” was written by Cleva Darling in 1939. Her work has been the foundation of much of my research, but today we have tools that Cleva never dreamed of. Looking back we can imagine that her history was based mostly on information gathered from family members who were alive at the time and who were telling from their own memory about the past generations. At that time the family was either living nearby and available for interview, or perhaps she corresponded through the mail. They may have had family bibles, or old letters, and there was the local family cemetery to consult. I doubt there was a whole lot more in terms of original sources for her information.

Today we have tremendous collections of documents found in all kinds of libraries, churches, courthouses, and databases from around the world. We also have computers and the internet to help us find the documents, sort through them, and organize them to focus the history which is has been deeply obscured by time.

The subject of this report is Sarah Peterson Berg of DeKalb, Lee, and Ogle counties in Illinois. She was born in Norway on 3 May, 1864 and given the name Serina Pedersdatter. According to the documents I have, her parents were Syvert Pedersen and Gurina Olsdatter Volden who lived for a short time at Midtbrekka on Store Døvik in the township of Årdal, Rogaland, Norway. The descendants of her family, now living in Illinois, say that Sarah came to America when she was only six weeks old. At least one document from Norway confirms this. The U.S. census from 1870 shows that the family lived in LaSalle county, Illinois. By 1880 they had moved to DeKalb county, and on 24 March, 1887 Sarah married Ludwig Berg in Sycamore, DeKalb, Illinois. Sarah and Ludwig had six children together. In 1900 they were living with all their children in the township of Alto, Lee, Illinois. After a long life together, Ludwig died in 1941, and Sarah died in 1958 at the age of 94. They are buried with several of their family members at Woodlawn cemetery in Ogle county, Illinois.

I now have direct proof to make this connection from Serina Pedersdatter of Årdal, Norway to Sarah Peterson Berg of DeKalb, Illinois. I also have a substantial body of circumstantial evidence to support this conclusion, as well as two primary source documents that prove the case beyond a reasonable doubt.

The following is from Cleva Darling’s history:

“Sarah and Gurina also came to the United States and both settled in Illinois. Sarah married a man from Esmond, Illinois and had one girl who married Ludwig Burg. She has six children. Gurina married Mr. Olson. They had two children: Regina, who married Hulver Warren of Eagle Grove, Iowa, and had three children; and Andrew K. who lived at Cambridge, Iowa, married and had four children--Ella, Mary, James, and Ollie.”

“Sarah and Gurina” here are sisters to Ole J. Olson Wold who was our great great grandfather. The parish register from Aardal, Rogaland, Norway contains the birth records of all eight children in this family. Their parents were Ole Iversen Volden b. 1808, and Siri Pedersdatter Hagen b. 1806.

The quote above clearly shows that there was a relationship between our family and the family of Ludwig Berg, but as written the precise relationship is not entirely clear. Sarah (Serina) Olsdatter, b. 1833, was the second of the eight children. My previous research has shown that she never came to America as stated by Cleva Darling. According to the excerpt above it was Sarah’s daughter who married Ludwig Burg and had six children. However, the documents from Illinois, Iowa and Norway show that it must have been Gurina’s daughter, also named Sarah (Serina), who married Ludwig Berg and had six children. It is easy to see how the confusion began because the younger Sarah was also born in Årdal. This Sarah, born 1864, was the daughter of Syvert Pedersen Dylig (Døvik) and Gurina Olsdatter Volden. The mother listed in her birth record is clearly the same Gurina who was a sister of Ole J. Olson Wold, and her identity is made certain in the marriage record, also 1864, where her birth place is called: “Volden under Østigaard”, and her father’s name is given: “Ole Iversen”.

Parish records from Årdal, Rogaland, Norway, 1864:

18.	3 ^½	5 ^½	Serina	ægt.	Syvert Pedersen 3 Gurina Olsdatter Dylig.
16. 6. 1864.	16. 6. 1864.	16. 6. 1864.	16. 6. 1864.	16. 6. 1864.	16. 6. 1864.

“#18, born 3 May, christened 5 June, Serina, ægte, parents Syvert Pedersen and Gurina Olsdatter Dylig, witnesses: Martha Horton, Serina O. ibid, Thorberg Brakken, Johne Skjelsvig, Anders Svadberg”. (There is a small note which indicates that the information for this entry was conveyed to the clerk who wrote this on 16 June, 1864. I seems that the family had already left for America at that time).

Parish records from Årdal, Rogaland, Norway, 1864:

L.	29	Syvert Pedersen Store Døvig	Peter Bjørn
		Jørgen Gurine, Olsdatter	Ole Iversen

"#2, Married 29 March, Bachelor Syvert Pedersen Store Døvig, age 22, and Maiden Gurine Olsdatter Volden under Østigaard, age 26. The groom's father was Peder Bjørnsen Skjelsvig and the bride's father was Ole Iversen."

Syvert Pedersen and Gurine Olsdatter came to America soon after the child was born. There are many questions about them that remain unanswered. This time period provides very few records from Norway or from frontier America that would help us. The event of their leaving Årdal was not recorded in the parish record. Since the family was not listed in the 1865 Norway census, we assume they must have come before then. See the following two census records:

1870 U.S. census, Rutland, LaSalle, Illinois:

	age	occupation	place of birth
Peterson, Levi B.	29	Farmer	Norway
Julia	29	Keeping house	Norway
Sarah	6	at home	Norway
Thomas	4		Illinois
Betsey	2		Illinois
Caroline	1		Illinois
Betsey	62	with son	Norway

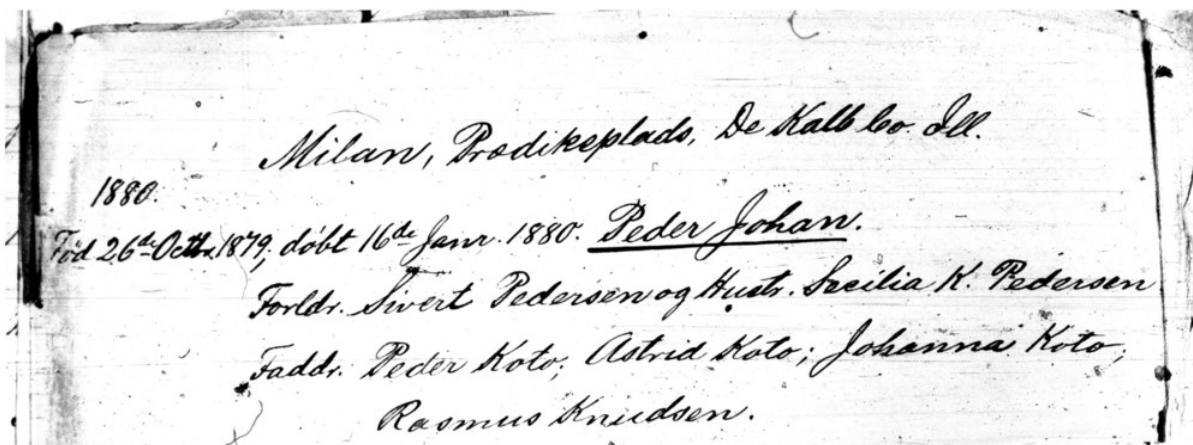
1880 U.S. census, Afton, DeKalb, Illinois:

	age	place of birth	occupation
Samuel B. Peterson	37	Norway	Farmer
Celia Peterson	35	Norway	Keeping House
Sarah Peterson	15	Norway	At Home
Thomas Peterson	12	Illinois	Works on farm
Betsey Peterson	9	Illinois	
Celia Peterson	4	Illinois	
Peter Peterson	8m	Illinois	

The 1880 census above is certainly the family of our Sarah Peterson. The 1870 census does not agree completely with the later, but it appears to me that it is still a good candidate. Comparing the two records, in the later census Gurine (Julia) has died and Syvert (a.k.a. Samuel / Levi) married a second time with Celia Oleson. That marriage is recorded in DeKalb county records on 2 September, 1873. Just to be clear, it appears that Syvert had in the earlier census used the name Levi B., then in the later census changed his name to

Samuel B. Peterson. Also, in the earlier census he is with his first wife, and in 1880 with his second wife. This is important because the 1870 census lists his first wife who would be Gurina from Årdal, and we have documentation of that marriage from Norway. The name ‘Julia’ is a common substitution for Gurina used by immigrants of this period. There are slight age discrepancies between the two records. That fact doesn’t bother me because we see it a lot in census records. The youngest child in 1870, Caroline, does not appear in 1880. In this scenario she must have died, but I have found no birth or death records for these children. It is possible that Caroline’s death is the result of the death of her mother while she was very young. The older children, Sarah, Thomas and Betsy, do appear in both records. That and the fact that Samuel B. Peterson’s second marriage is well documented are the primary details that lead me to believe these are the same family.

So, my conclusion is that Syvert Pedersen at one point used the name Levi B. Peterson, then later settled on the name Samuel B. Peterson which is the name he used the rest of his life. The following document is the only direct proof I have found for this:



From the Evangelical Lutheran Church Archives, film # ELCA 5

“Milan, Prædikeplads, DeKalb Co. Ill.”

“1880. Born 26 October, 1879, Christened 16 Jan. 1880. Peder Johan.

“Parents: Sivert Pedersen and wife Sacilia K. Pedersen

“Witnesses: Peder Koto; Astrid Koto; Johanna Koto; Rasmus Knudsen.”

The birth record above was recorded in the church book from Milan, DeKalb, Illinois. The child “Peder Johan” is also listed in the 1880 census as “Peter”, age 8 months, son of Samuel B. Peterson. In that census, next to the age column there is another column that states: “if born the previous year, give the month”. For Peter it states that he was born in October of 1879 which agrees with this record. Furthermore, we know from other documents, including the 1900 census, that Samuel B. Peterson had a son named Peter J. born at this time. The significance here is that the Priest wrote the father’s Norwegian name on this birth record even though he was using his Americanized name for other official

documents. There is no other individual using the name Sivert in this place at this time, so we must conclude that Sivert Pedersen and Samuel B. Peterson are the same person. The actual book that this document came from was not at all complete, and I found no other birth records or documents regarding this family.

There are other circumstantial reasons for arriving at this conclusion. First, we don't find a Samuel B. Peterson or his family listed anywhere in the 1870 U.S. census, and we don't find a Levi B. Peterson or his family listed anywhere in the 1880 U.S. census. Therefore, there are no other families that would overlap during these years. Second, we know that Celia (Sacilia) was Samuel's second wife because we have the marriage record from Illinois in 1873. It is also noted in the 1910 census that Celia is Samuel's second wife. Third, I have already mentioned that the name Julia is a common American version for the Norwegian name Gurina / Guro / Guraa, so we expect that this is a name that she might have used. Thus we see her listed as Julia in the 1870 census. Fourth, and perhaps most important, the older children in this family, Sarah, Thomas and Betsey, match in both records even though the ages don't agree as well as we would like. Fifth, the birth places are consistent. The parents and the oldest child Sarah were born in Norway, and all the younger children were born in Illinois. Sixth, the 1900 census from Afton, DeKalb, Illinois, states that Sam B. Peterson was born in December, 1842, and that he immigrated in 1865. This is consistent with what we know about Syvert Pederson who was born 11 December, 1842 in Årdal, Norway. Finally, in the 1870 census we see Betsey Peterson, age 62, also from Norway, who was listed as the mother of Levi. If we accept the conclusion that Syvert Pederson who married in 1864, Levi B. Peterson from the 1870 census and Samuel B. Peterson from the 1880, 1900, and 1910 census are the same person, then this must be his mother who had come with them from Norway. Syvert Pederson's parents are known from the Årdal parish record. They were Peder Bjørnsen, b. 1794, and Britha Thorsdatter, b. 1807. The name Betsey was again a common substitution for the Norwegian name Britha or Bertha, and her age in 1870 would have been 62 or 63. This is again consistent with the family from Norway.

Perhaps most important of all, I now have a copy of the marriage certificate for Ludwig Berg and Sarah Peterson. I obtained this document just a few days after I completed this report, so I am including it here as part of this updated version. It was a member of the Berg family in Illinois who sent this to me only after I sent them my initial report. I was so happy to get this that I was completely undaunted by the fact that it came after the first report was done. The only other way I would have found this original document would be to travel to Illinois and visit the local historical library which I could not easily do.

First note that the name of Sarah's mother is given as 'Julia Oleson Vohl.' This is certainly our gal whom we know as 'Gurina Olsdatter Volden'. Also remember that the 1870 census had the name 'Julia' for the mother. Next note that her place of birth is given as 'Ordal, Norway'. The proper spelling is Årdal or Aardal, but the Norwegians pronounce this [Or-dahl]. This document which gives her name with the place of birth makes her identity certain, especially on top of all the other evidence.

Note: This Return is to be carefully filled out and attached to and returned with the Marriage License. This Return does not take the place of the Certificate which comes attached to the License, but is IN ADDITION THERETO.

ILLINOIS STATE BOARD OF HEALTH.

Return of a Marriage to County Clerk.

1. Full name of GROOM, Ludwig Berg
2. Place of Residence, Town of Milan, De Kalb Co Ill
3. Occupation, Farmer
4. Age next Birthday 26 years. Color, White Race, Caucasian
5. Place of Birth, Christiana, Norway
6. Father's Name, Hansen, Berg
7. Mother's Maiden Name, Sophie Knutson
8. Number of Groom's Marriage, first
9. Full Name of BRIDE, Sarah Peterson
Maiden Name, if a Widow, _____
10. Place of Residence, Town of Alton Ills.
11. Age next Birthday, 22 years. Color, White Race, Caucasian
12. Place of Birth, Motal, Norway
13. Father's Name, Samuel Peterson
14. Mother's Maiden Name, Julia Gleason Nohl
15. No. of Bride's Marriage, first
16. Married at Sycamore Ill. in the County of De Kalb and State of Illinois, the 24th day of March 1887.
17. Witnesses to Marriage Elvilline Susan Rogers

N.B.—At Nos. 8 and 15 state whether 1st, 2d, 3d, 4th, &c., Marriage of each. At 17 give names of subscribing witnesses to the Marriage Certificate. If no subscribing witnesses, give names of two persons who witnessed the ceremony.

Sycamore Ill. March 24th 1887
We Hereby Certify that the information above given is correct, to the best of our knowledge
and belief.

Ludwig Berg (Groom.)
Sarah Peterson (Bride.)

I Hereby Certify that the above is a correct return of a Marriage solemnized by me.

Dated at Sycamore Ill.
this 24th day of March 1887

Charles A Bishop
County Judge

Now consider the family of Ludwig Berg. First we have the testimony from Cleva Darling who stated that one of the daughters "married Ludwig Berg of Esmond Illinois and together they had six children". When we look for this family we find them in the 1900 census in Alto, Lee, Illinois which is about twenty miles from Esmond. See the following:

1900 U.S. Census, Alto township, Lee, Illinois:

		age	birth place	year of citizenship
Berg,	Ludwig	37	Norway	1868
	Sarah	wife	35	Norway
	Henry S.	son	12	Illinois
	Grace C.	dtr.	9	Illinois
	George B.	son	7	Illinois
	Leonard S.	son	6	Illinois
	Lilly S.	dtr.	5	Illinois
	Morris J.	son	3	Illinois

1910 U.S. census, Lynnville, Ogle, Illinois: (This place is even closer to Esmond.)

		age	birth place	year of citizenship	
Berg,	Ludwig	head	47	Norway	1867
	Sarah	wife	45	Norway	
	George	son	17	Illinois	
	Lilly	dtr.	14	Illinois	
	Leonard	son	14	Illinois	
	Nolas	son	13	Illinois	

There are six children in this family, and the wife's name is Sarah. According to Cleva Darling she is the daughter of one of the sisters of Ole J. Olson. There were no new children listed in 1910, so the total remained at six. Family files posted at <www.rootsweb.com> also show this family with a few more details:

From www.rootsweb.com/... /worldconnectproject/... /Berg family:

"Ludwig Berg, b. 7 Feb 1862 Norway, d. 7 Mar 1943
 "wife: Sarah Peterson b. 4 May 1864 Norway, d. 6 Apr 1958
 "married: 24 Mar 1887 Sycamore, Illinois
 "children: Henry
 George
 Leonard
 Norris
 Grace
 Lillie

The order of the children is different, but this is certainly the same family. There is a note in the Rootsweb file stating that Sarah came to America at the age of six weeks. It also states: "Bertha Peterson (Betsey), sister of the bride, was Sarah's attendant at her wedding". And most importantly, the birth date given by these family records from Illinois is just one day different from the birth date given in the Årdal parish record shown at the beginning of this report.

Now let's look at Ludwig Berg's family. See the following:

1870 U.S. census, Milan, DeKalb, Illinois:

		Age	Occupation	Birthplace
Berg,	Oloise	29	Farmer	Norway
	Sophia	37		Norway
	Hedwig	10		Norway
	Ludwig	7		Norway
	Hilda	5		Norway
	Oscar	2		Illinois
	Adolph	5/12		Illinois

Ludwig Berg above is age 7 in 1870. This census is the right place and therefore a good match for Ludwig Berg age 37 in 1900. We know from Ludwig's marriage that he had a brother named Oscar who was his attendant at the wedding. One detail doesn't match the marriage record from 1887 which lists Ludwig's father as 'Hansen Berg'. I wonder if the name Hansen is a mistake because the 1870 census above is clear, and the name Hansen is not a first name. His name could have been Olaus / Oloise Hansen Berg. We will need a birth record from Norway to be sure.

This earlier family does not appear again in the 1880 census from Illinois. But we do find a very interesting entry in the following census from Story county, Iowa:

1880 U.S. Census, Howard twp., Story, Iowa:

	age	occupation	birthplace / parent's birthplace
Borg,	Olaus 39	Laborer	Norway Norway Norway
	Gunhild 45		Norway Norway Norway
	Hilda 15		Illinois Norway Norway
	Adolf 10		Illinois Norway Norway
	Matilde 8		Illinois Norway Norway

1880 Census, Howard twp., Story, Iowa:

	age	occupation	birthplace	parents birthplace
Berg, Ludwig	17	Laborer	Iowa	Norway

It appears the wife could be different person in 1880, but this certainly looks like the same father with two of the same children present, Hilda and Adolf. More interesting is the fact that they have now moved to Story county, Iowa which is only a few miles from where the Wald family were then living. We also have Ludwig Berg, presumably the same individual, now working as a laborer on a nearby farm, also in Howard township.

This record indicates that Ludwig Berg was raised near Esmond, Illinois, came to Story county, Iowa with his family some time after 1870. Then he went back to Illinois where he married Sarah Peterson in 1887. There they had six children by 1900. Whether Ludwig met Sarah in Iowa or Illinois we don't know. We also don't know if Sarah ever lived in Iowa, but her family may have traveled there. During this period there were several families that were closely related who had immigrated about the same time. We also know that our Wald family spent several years in LaSalle county, Illinois from 1854 to about 1867. So the family of Olaus Berg may have known them there. This seems to me an extraordinary

coincidence to see Ludwig Berg moving to Iowa near the Wald family and then back to Illinois. There must have been ties between these two families because they were both from the same parish in Norway, and they would have certainly known each other and attended the same church in Iowa.

Back to Ludwig's parents. Olaus's wife was named Sophia in 1870 and Gunhild in 1880. These may have been two different women, but I was not able to find a marriage record for either one, so that will remain a question mark. There is a biography from Illinois regarding Theodore O. Berg who was possibly Olaus's brother (see below).⁵³ In that record it states that they were born near Christiania (Oslo). Since they left before 1865, this place as given is not specific enough for an easy search. I have searched all the parishes registers from near Oslo for the birth of Theodore Berg, born 23 Nov., 1833, but so far I haven't found it. Theodore Berg was married to Maria Donaldson in 1858 in Henderson county. In the census from 1860 in Henderson county, he is listed as Theodore Olson and has a brother named Louis. This is presumably Olaus, the same person as Ludwig's father, so his full name would have been Olaus Olson Berg. This is important to know when looking for their home parish in Norway, but 'Berg' is a very common place name, so we will need more to go on before continuing that search. Additionally, there appears to be another brother who came later named Erick O. Berg who is listed on the same page with Theodore in the 1880 census for Milan, DeKalb, Illinois. There are many more details could be researched regarding them.

Today the Berg family still lives in Illinois, and the following pictures were taken from a family web site at <<http://www.andrew-jarrett.com/alvincurtisberg.html>>.

Allen H Wald

⁵³ "The Biographical Record of DeKalb County, Illinois", S. J. Clark Pub. Co., 1898, pg. 127.



Front Row: Ludwig and Sarah Berg, and son, Norris

Back Row: Their other children: Lily and Leonard (twins), Henry, George and Grace



Left: Sarah and Ludwig Berg with Henry, Grace and George (on his dad's lap), taken about 1894. Henry would be 6 and Grace would be 4.

Right: Four generations, Sam Peterson, Grace Berg Busse, Sarah Peterson Berg, holding Freddie Busse, about 1910.



THEODORE O. BERG¹ resides on section 19, Milan township, where he owns a farm of three hundred and twenty acres, which he keeps under the highest state of cultivation. He is a native of Norway, born near Christina (Christiania? / Oslo), November 23, 1833, and in his native country grew to manhood and received a limited education. In 1853, he came to the United States, taking ship at Christina, for Quebec, from which place he came directly west to Chicago, arriving in that city he made the trip with his brother Ole Berg, and they went direct to LaSalle county, where our subject commenced work on a farm by the month, and continued to be thus employed for one year, when he was taken sick, and remained in ill health for two years. He then resumed work on a farm, and later purchased a threshing machine and engaged in threshing and also in teaming.

Mr. Berg was married in Henderson county, Illinois, in 1858, to Maria Donaldson, a native of Norway, who came to the United States in the spring of 1853, and located first in Chicago, after which she went to Henderson county. After marriage, Mr. Berg rented a farm for three years in Henderson county, which he operated, and in 1864 moved to De Kalb county and purchased eighty acres of unimproved land in Milan township, on which he located, and as time passed, made other purchases of land until he was the owner of six hundred acres, all of which was well improved. His home place may be considered a model farm, having all the improvements used on a farm at the present time, including a gasoline engine for pumping water for stock and grinding feed for the same. Coming to this country without a dollar, his success in life has been remarkable, and all has been acquired by his own labor, assisted by his good wife. They are the parents of two children, Oscar T., who is married and residing on the old farm, and Amelia, wife of A. Sanderson, a farmer of Milan township. They have lost three children. Caroline grew to womanhood, married Charles Sanderson, and died leaving six children. Oscar died at the age of four years, and Caroline died in infancy. To each of his children he has given good farms, while yet retaining the home farm of three hundred and twenty acres.

In addition to his general farming, Mr. Berg has for years owned and operated a steam thresher, and has now one of the most complete threshing machines manufactured. He began the business before coming to DeKalb county, and has continued in the same to the present time, making it a source of some revenue. He has always been in favor of good roads, and for six years served as commissioner of highways, giving much of his time to the improvement of the roads. Politically he is a Republican, but is not what is now termed a politician. He believes in the principles of the party and annually votes his party ticket. He and his wife have been life long members of the Lutheran church. They are good people and are held in the highest esteem wherever known.

Story County Histories

Most of the histories below were compiled by Florence Wheeler who has collected histories and genealogies in Cambridge, Iowa for many decades. The first time I met her she tried to sell me a copy of this but I didn't take it. The second time I spent a little more time looking through the book and found that members of our family are mentioned in several places. The very first Norwegian settlers arrived in 1855. Ole J. Olsen brought his family in 1865. So even though he wasn't listed with the first settlers, he was certainly among the earliest in the county. The Palestine church was situated only one mile from the farm where Ole J. built a home and raised his family. I didn't realize this fact until my second visit because the site of the original farm is now separated from the church by the I-35 freeway which splits Iowa right down the middle. Since the freeway is raised, you can't see the church from their farm. Details like this can make a big difference. You learn a lot when you actually go to the place where a family lived.

The Lutheran faith and their early church leaders played a big role in keeping the records of these families. This tradition was continued to a large degree in America. In all of Scandinavia nearly 100 % of the people who lived during the 17th century and later have been accounted for in their census records and their parish records. Virtually all of those records are now available online, and many more early records become available every day. We would do well to keep records that are so complete today. The Norwegians are very interested in their family histories and continue to be excellent partners in this work.

Norwegian Settlement In Story and Polk Counties, Iowa

A short history of the first Norwegian Settlement in Story and Polk Counties, of Iowa, Including the Palestine Congregation, and the Soldiers Enlisted in the Civil War.

In 1848 to 1854 there was a large emigration to America from the three parishes in Norway known as Etne, Skaanevik and Fjelberg¹ parishes that settled around Lisbon, Illinois². The emigrants came from Norway to seek and acquire a home for themselves and families, and they expected to find government land at government price on which to make their permanent home in this new world. They had bid goodbye to relatives and friends in Norway and had prepared for a long voyage in their sailing vessels to America, with provisions for their families that would last them from seven to fourteen weeks on their slow sailing vessels.

Disappointed

When they came to Lisbon, Illinois, it was a great disappointment to them to find that there was no government land to be had. This disappointment was especially great to the mothers, and many of them shed silent tears and said, "How can we with our families acquire a permanent home here in America?" These mothers could not sing when they were plying their shuttles in the looms, nor when they were treading their spinning wheels, or when they were rocking their babies in their cradles, thinking of the future.

Here was a new language to learn, climatic conditions were much different from those to which they had been accustomed, and this flat prairie land looked so different from the steep hills, bluffs, mountains, and rocks that they had been looking at. And where could they think of getting a permanent home when there was no government land to be had at \$1.25 an acre.

Committee to Select Land

In early fall of 1854, a man by the name of Nils Olsen Naes, who was employed by a Bible Society, traveled over different parts of Iowa and Southern Minnesota selling Bibles printed in the English and the Scandinavian languages. He came to Lisbon, Illinois, and told them that in Iowa there was government land to be had for \$1.25 an acre; fine prairie land with timber along the streams; a large area of land. This made quite a stir among the emigrants of Lisbon. They called a meeting and selected a committee to go to Iowa to investigate the land which was nearly three hundred miles west of Lisbon.

They selected four men: Osmond Sheldahl, Olie Fatland, Osmond Johnson and Olie Apland, as a delegation to go to Iowa and investigate this land, and if it was found to be as described by Nils Olsen Naes, they should secure enough for the colony. These four men left

Lisbon, Illinois the 25th of September 1854. They rode in a two seated spring wagon drawn by a span of horses. These men were selected because they could speak the English language fairly well. They came back in thirty days and reported that they had secured land for the colony and found it very good. Osmond (Hagefos) Johnson was one of the four delegates that came to Iowa in 1854 to select the land. But he did not come with the colony in 1855, because he had some land and livestock to look after in Illinois. He came the next year. He was the father of John O. Johnson and Mrs. Carrie Larson.

Rejoice Over Finding Land

This brought cheer to all, especially to the mothers. They considered that this delegation had done a very heroic act and it was like a magnetic inspiration to the whole colony. They commenced to prepare to emigrate to Story and Polk Counties, Iowa (they had all winter to prepare in) three hundred miles away. What a change. Sadness gave way to joy, and the mothers sang songs of cheer while plying their shuttles in the looms or while at their spinning wheels, and the winter months were miraculously shortened with the thought of going to new homes in Iowa.

The Westward March to Iowa

The men made ready the covered wagons in which the journey would be made, and when the 16th day of May 1855 arrived, word went forth that all those who wished to emigrate from Lisbon to Iowa should congregate at Holdeman's Prairie a short distance west of Lisbon. And so on the 17th of May, they proceeded westward to Iowa, their future homes. They selected the 17th of May to start because that is Norway's day of liberty. These emigrants were all Lutherans and had taken with them from Norway their parishes, a heritage. They were God fearing and respected the teachings of God's word. They would not undertake the immigration to Iowa as a colony without it being a churchly colony. They had already organized a congregation and called it the Palestine Congregation. They named it Palestine Congregation in keeping with the description of the land they were to possess on coming to Iowa.

They elected Olie Anfinson as their pastor; Erick Sheldahl, chorister; Knute Bauge as teacher. They would not undertake the emigration to Iowa as a colony without it being a churchly colony, so this was a whole congregation on wheels. Every soul belonged to it. They had services every Sunday on their journey. This scene can better be imagined by us at this day as to what this tentative organization meant to this colony. We also are present and are now celebrating the ninetieth anniversary of the event, have the blessings that have come to us, their descendants, during the last ninety years.

Let us picture the scene. The order came to start one hundred and eleven souls. Twenty—one families, three widows, and five young men, were transported by twenty-five covered wagons. Eighteen were drawn by oxen, six by horse teams, and one spring wagon drawn by one horse owned by Lars Thompson. The names of the emigrants are as follows: Rev. Olie Anfinson and wife Ingerie, and daughter Carine...Osmond and Anna Sheldahl and children Caroline, Erick, Halvor, Henry and Randy...Erick and Margaret Sheldahl and

children Betsy, Randy, Erick and Martha...Olie and Carrie Fatland and children John, Elie, Britt, and Henry.. .Knute and Carrie Ersland and children Hactor, Madts, Anna, Anf in, Martha, Elias, Carrie, Engeborg and Amos.

Knute and Carrie Boug. . .Ivor and Malinda Tweet and daughter Martha... Barney and Sarah Hill, and daughter Betsy... Peter Christian and Serina Heggem... Lars and Martha Tesdahl... Wier and Martha Weeks and children Anf in, Halvor, Torres, Wier, Engebog, Martha, and Hans.

Severt and Allis Gravdahl and children, Julia and Andrew...Askel and Golla Larson and il Lars, Thomas, and Charls... Orga and Ragna Hauge and children, Severt, Sarah, Lars, and Anna.

Torbjorn and Madela Houge and children Sarah and Guste...Olie and Valbor Rouge and son John...John and Bertha Severson and children, Mary, John and Severt...Salemon and Sarrah Heggen and children, Andrew, Nels, and Olie.

Olie and Anna Heggen... Engebret and Sarah Heggen and daughter Susana...Torger and Gertrud Olson and children, Cecelia, Olie, George and Martha...Mrs. Julia Shaw and children, Betsy, Thomas and Erick.. .Mrs. Torres Olson and children, Hellen and Rasmus.. .Mrs. Ragna Larson and step—daughter, Anna Wee. Five young men: Lars Thompson, Olie Apland, Olie Tesdahl, Erick Johnson, Eiven Olson.

These emigrants followed what was called the California trail — the same trail that the four delegates had followed. They were lucky; they had good weather on the whole journey. The worst difficulty they had was in crossing the streams. One time one wagon got in a little too deep and they needed help. Another time, the cattle went down the stream and they had quite a time to round them up. But all these men were raised right along the ocean in Norway and could swim like fish.

They Prepare For The Journey

Before they left Holdeman's Prairie the 17th day of May, the women folk had prepared an abundance of food to eat on the way such as Lefsa, flatbroe, kavring, krengla, fatost, gaminelost, sotort, dravele, primeost, and they had their camp stoves so they could make raspe, komla, hagleta and mossmor and paatete kaka. They had prepared enough food so that nearly one half of it was left when they reached their destination, and that came in very handy. Do you think for a minute that these women could not prepare it. They had a bunch of cattle with them, some milk cows, so they had milk for the children. The journey ended on June 7th. They came to the land that was selected by the four men. They stopped on the quarter section that Osinond Sheldah had filed for himself, one mile east of where Huxley is now.

They formed a circle with all their wagons, removed all their camp utensils and commenced to prepare the food for the first meal; and thanked God for the safe journey and his righteous blessings. On the following Sunday, June 10th, in this enclosure, they held

their first service, and thanked God, for bringing them safely through their journey into this new land, and asked God's righteous blessing on the new colony.

The first Sabbath day service under roof was held on Olie Fatland's land under the shelter of a hay shed. Under this same hay shed the first confirmation class was organized. The members were as follows: Torres Weeks, Wier Weeks, Engeborg Weeks, Anf in Ersland, Anna Wee, and Betsy Shaw. These were confirmed in the spring of 1856 in Rev. Anfinson's home.

Later Arrivals to the Colony

On September 30, 1855 the colony was increased by thirty souls from Lisbon, Illinois, five families, and one young man. They came in five covered wagons drawn by four ox teams and one horse team. The first colony had good weather all the way and covered the three hundred miles without a mishap. But these last ones had cold and rainy weather all the way and it took them six weeks to make the trip. Gunder Madskaar got sick and died when they got to Iowa Center September 29th, and was buried at that place. They had almost reached their destination as they only had eleven more miles to go.

The following are the names of the members of this colony:

Benjamin and Engerie Thompson and children, Thomas, Knuts, Cecieliafi and Sarah.. .Mrs. Carrie Madskaar and children Engeborg and Eric.. .Wier and Carrie Johnson and children, John, Olie, Sarah, Julia, Anna, Elie, and Simon...Nels and Carrie Christofison and children, John and Emelia... Erick and Baero Tesdahl and children, Anna, Seveart, Aamon, Sarah and Bertha... and Thomas Berhow.

This colony was ready to start on May 17th with the rest but could not start that day on account of having to wait for Simen Johnson, who was born a few weeks after. So they started August 25th. These thirty added to the one hundred and eleven made one hundred and forty—one and three children were already born, but two women and one child had died, so that left the same number to face the winter on the prairie. Lars Tesdahl, Knute Ersland, and John Severson were the first to erect their own homes.

First Births and Marriages and Deaths

The first three children born to the colony were Anna, daughter of Soleomon and Sarah Higgen, July 4th, 1855; Olie, son of Olie and Anna Heggin, August 14th; Halver, son of Lars and Martha Tesdahl, September 15. The first couple to get married in the colony was Olie Apland and Anna Ersland. They were married in Olie Fatland's house by Rev. Anfinson. Ole Apland was the fifteenth man to apply for a marriage license in Story County, and this was the first Norwegian couple to get married in the State of Iowa.

The first deaths were a baby of Engebrith and Sarah Heggen, the wife of Knuts Ersland, and the wife of Erick Tesdahl. Look at the picture: one hundred and forty—one souls, fifteen horses, forty—four oxen, and another bunch of cattle on the raw prairie, and too late to plant anything that year. How could they live until they reaped their harvest the

next year, facing a long cold winter? Some of them had a little money, but there was not much that you could buy with money. They had a little groceries and some foodstuff at the little store at Cambridge, also at the store at Swede's Point and at the few stores at Des Moines (but that was far to go). They got some grain from the settlers around Swede Point and probably a little at Ballard Grove, and maybe they had to go to Des Moines for some. But sometimes they got down so low that they had to grind the corn on the coffee mills to get corn meal to make corn bread and corn mush. And if they had plenty milk, that would keep them from starving for a while. But the children had to have their milk first.

Plenty Wild Food and Game

But they were like people are in all new colonies, friendly and helpful, and divided the best they could. If one had food, they all had food. There was an abundance of good upland wild hay, but the stock could not live on hay alone. They had to have a little grain with it. There were lots of wild grapes, plums and berries; all kinds of nuts in the timber, and strawberries to the glory of all on the prairie. All kinds of game; reindeer, wolves, coyotes, ground—hogs, skunks, rabbits, squirrels, mink and what not. There was also an abundance of wild geese, ducks, prairie chickens, and quails, lots of fish in the streams. No one ever heard of a hunter's license.

From Big Creek Grove west of Sheldahl, till you got to Skunk river, there was no timber, just the open prairie. And from Huxley south, until you got past Alleman, there was no timber. Just a little northeast of Huxley is Ballard Grove, and a little north of that is Walnut Grove. Southwest of Slater and Sheldah is timber. About seven miles southeast of Huxley is White Oak Grove, and there was lots of timber along Skunk river on the east.
Church and School

In the summer of 1857, they erected their first School House. It was built by private subscription and was built just across the road from where the Palestine Church stands now. It was also used for a church. They had been having church services in the homes before that. On December 28th, 1860 a very stormy winter day, it was proposed to subscribe for the erection of a church in the colony. The work was started, but on account of the great national disaster, the CIVIL WAR, and as twenty-three of the youngest and best men enlisted in the service of the Union from this colony alone, the church was not finished and dedicated until in August 1866. It was dedicated by Rev. Haselquist. The church still stands on the same spot in the southeast corner of what was Erick Sheldahl's land. But it has been remodeled several times since.

Those Who Went to War

Following are the names of the young men in the colony that enlisted in the service: Olie Anfinson, Ivor Twidt, Thor Lande, Torres Scott, Halver Weeks, Torres Weeks, Wier W. Weeks, Anf in Ersland, Elias Ersland, Erick Egland, Henry Egland, John O. Severeid, Severt Tesdahl, Thomas Shaw, Sorren Olson, Lars Olson, John O. Johnson, Thor Helland, Holder Johnson, J. W. Johnson, Andrew Nelson (better known as Salemon Andrew), Andrew Gravdahl, Helge Hanson. Helge Hanson enlisted and had on a uniform inside of three weeks

after he arrived in this country from Norway. He was nineteen years old, and he did not know a word of English.

Following are the names of nine young Norwegian boys that served in the Civil War that came here from other states and settled in this colony right after the war: Andrew Nelson, Oley Nelson, Anf in Anfinson, A. W. Thompson, H. O. Hendrickson, Cyres Highland, Nels Gord, Lars Bouq, John Anderson, better known as "Candy John".

Following are the names of seven of the twenty—three that enlisted from here that did not come back: Halver Weeks, Elias Ersland, Lars Olson, Torres Scott, Holder Johnson, Henry Egland, Thor Helland.

When they came in 1855 there were quite a few families in Des Moines, a flour mill, a few stores, a blacksmith shop and some sawmills. A store and a sawmill at Swedes Point (now Madrid) a small store at Cambridge, and when you started north from Des Moines and got about four miles north of where the State House stands now, there was not a house or a building of any description until you got to Ballard Grove. And when you started east from Swedes Point, got east four miles, there was not a house or a stick of any kind until you got to way past Skunk River.

Primitive Tools Were All We Had

When these settlers first came, they cut all the hay with a scythe; and the small grain with a cradle; planted the corn by hand, plowed it with a one shovel plow and one horse. They drew the water out of the wells with a hook or a rope and bucket. (All buckets were wooden those days).

They lighted the houses with candles, and some had what they called Kaala, made by the blacksmith, of iron, round painted in one end for wick to stick up, and a handle on the opposite side so you could hang it on the wall. Or it would stand on the table. It was about one inch deep, and they filled it up with lard, and put a wick or rage in it. It gave more light than a candle. The first lanterns were lit by candles. All their clothing was made by hand. They bought their hats and leather shoes. Quite a few wore wooden shoes that were home made. They went out riding with oxen in their lumber wagons, and those that had horses used horses.

They did not have the luxuries we have now, but they were happy. They did not know of anything else. They were jolly and did lots of visiting. The nearest Railroad was at Davenport, but in a few years, the Northwestern came to State Center, and on July 4th, 1864, the first train came to Nevada. In 1874 the Northwestern built a narrow gage road from Ames to Des Moines, and they put in five stations. Kelley, Sheldahl, Crocker, Polk City and Ankeny; (Crocker is no more). In 1882 the main line of the Milwaukee Road came through Cambridge. Then Huxley started, and they put in a depot where they crossed the Northwestern and called it Sheldahl Crossing, one and half miles north of Sheldahl. A few years later a majority of the business men in Sheldahl moved up to Sheldahl Crossing and changed the name to Slater.

They Grew and Grew and Grew!

This Norwegian settlement spread out and grew especially after the Civil War. All around Cambridge³ and west to Kelley and north and west of Kelley, north and west of Slater around Sheldahl, from there to Alleman and on to White Oak Grove, and from there to Cambridge. Huxley is about in the center of it.

There was one time that there were six school districts where every child that came to school was a Norwegian, and nine school districts in which from forty to eighty percent of the children were Norwegians. These Norwegians were very patriotic. Every child went to public school. There were always some emigrants who came from Norway every year, and they generally took out their Citizenship Papers as soon as they arrived. They had their Parochial Schools in between in the Norwegian language.

The people in this whole settlement talked Norwegian nearly all together. That was natural, since it was the language they knew so well, and many of them could not talk English at all. This was especially true among the older ones, and then too, people kept coming from Norway all the time. But the children learned English in school; especially in the districts where they were mixed. They learned it right away, and the men that had to do the business and trading picked it up. They used Norwegian language altogether in the churches for a long time, but along in the nineties they commenced to use a little English, and gradually a little more. Now they do not use a word of Norwegian in any of the churches.

At first they were seldom married outside of their race; they stuck pretty well together. But now they are not particular. They marry anyone they fall in love with, whatever nationality they belong to. Quite a few of the children that grow up now can not talk Norwegian at all. It would have been nice if they had kept it up and taught them the Norwegian language, since they are Norwegian descendants. Of course, they should learn the language of the land thoroughly first. It is nice to know as many languages as possible. This is a land of languages, and I think the Norwegian language is as good as any of the other languages. It is the Danish language. We got it from the Danes, and it so near like the Swedish that we can understand them. It is similar in many ways to the English and the German. There is so much good literature and so very much good poetry in the Norwegian language. There are so many dialects it is fun to listen to them. It is interesting too, to listen to the Swedes and Danes. While it is the Danish language, they pronounce the words a little differently, and they have many dialects too. The Norwegian language as used today is taught at the State University of Iowa at Iowa City, Iowa. The old Norwegian language is now used by the Icelanders.

The people in this settlement did not only send their children to the public schools, but as soon as they were able, they sent them off to Colleges and Universities. There used to be quite a bunch of boys and girls going away to College every fall. Some took one course, and some another. I don't think here is a course taught but what some of them took it up. There are professional men and women all over this land that were raised in this settlement, and many of them are teaching at the Colleges.

Three County Town; A Real Live Town

When Sheldahl started it was one of the liveliest towns far and near. They had an immense territory. There was no Madrid, no Slater or Huxley, no Railroad at Cambridge, just a grain elevator and a store in Kelley and a grain elevator and a little store in Crocker. Live stock and grain came from west of Swedes Point, now Madrid and from around Cambridge. Alleman was not dreamt of. There were so many buggies and wagons in town sometimes that they had to go almost out in the country to find a place to tie their horses. The merchants did a big business. There were four saloons, and they also did a tremendous business. But there never were any women that ever stepped inside of any of these saloons.

Sheldahl is in three different counties, Story, Polk and Boone. I should probably mention a few of the leading members of these old settlers: Rev. Olie Anfinson was a man of sturdy character, well posted, and well read, very religious, and was well thought of by the whole colony. They put him in as their first pastor. Rev. Osmond Sheldahl, was another man of great character; well posted, well read, very religious, knew the English language very well, and was well posted on legal matters. That made him a leader. They all went to him with their legal papers and documents. He was put in as their second pastor. Erick Sheldahl was another man of exceptionally good character; strictly honest and square in all his dealings, he was good hearted, very friendly, and had lots of friends, and I don't think he had any enemies at all. He was put in as Chorister of their church before they left Illinois, and served in that capacity, until he died in about 1915. He was also very religious.

Probably I should not say anything about Olie Apland, being he was my father, but I will mention a few things. He had many friends, and a few enemies. He was of strong personality, friendly and very jolly. He was plain outspoken, and if he did not like a person, he would tell them right to their face. That was why some did not like him. He could not stand to see anyone abuse any domestic animals. If they did, he surely would call them down. And if there was something that had to be done that no one liked to do, he had to do it. He was the goat. He run a big farm, and fed lots of live stock. He did lots of business, was very lenient to people that were honest and did not lie to him. He had about as many friends in Story County when he died as any man had. He died in 1879, so he did not live to be more than fifty-one years old.

A Stalwart Character of Great Strength

Thor Landry was another old settler of great sturdy character, and very deeply religious. He did not come with the colony in 1855, but came about two years later. If there ever lived a man that was a true, honest, upright, converted Christian, he was one. He lived and practiced it in his every day life and in all his dealings. It did not make any difference how busy he was on his farm. If it was right in harvest time, he would take his time and read a chapter in the Bible at the breakfast table, and pray and sing. He would joke and tell stories and laugh at times. He was very pleasant and friendly, but you would not talk to him very long until he would come in on some religious matter. He was very heavenly minded. He was six feet five inches tall, raw boned, straight as a dye, looked very much like Abraham Lincoln, and his face was shaped a good deal like "Old Abes". One time he and seven

neighbors took a load each of hogs to Des Moines and when they got a ways down, one hog climbed over the other hogs in the wagon and jumped out. So the other men wondered how they could get him up into the wagon again. Thor did not say a word, but grabbed the hog and put him in the wagon alone, pushed him up over the top box, which must have been at least six feet from the ground. Elick Wood of White Oak Grove was one of the gang. He had that hog weighed separately, and he weighed 400 pounds.

One time when Mr. Landy was in the army, two of the other soldiers tried to pick a quarrel with him. They insulted him and tried to get him mad, to get a fight with him. They finally got his temper roused up. He grabbed them by the nape of their necks, and held one in each hand and clinched their foreheads together until he thought they had all they could stand. They did not bother him anymore.

An Unusual Happening

Mr. and Mrs. Severt Helland were among the early settlers. They were very nice people and loved by everyone. Mr. Helland was a hard working man. Once when he was helping a man that lived a distance away with some work, he did not go home every evening. Mrs. Helland stayed alone with their two little boys, one 4 and one 2 years old. She put them to bed one evening. (It was in the summer time.) She was pregnant and felt that something was going to happen. It was dark. Her father and mother lived across the road, so she started to go over there. Helland's house was up from the road a ways and there was a big pond between the house and the road, and a track or trail along the side of the pond. There was tall slue grass and weeds all around this pond, and she got off the trail. She was entirely lost. It was pitch dark. She wandered around in the weeds probably around the pond several times. So finally she got so tired she had to sit down, and then the baby came. We wrapped it up in her apron and probably in a part of her dress, the best she could , and had to spend the rest of the night there until daylight came. Then she went to the house. She woke up the 4 year old boy and sent him over to her parent's house with the message. The baby was all right, grew to womanhood, and married Henry Fatland, a member of the 141 emigrants and lived a long time. She was a sister of the late Bunker M.S. (Uncle Mike) Helland of Slater, Iowa. This happened in the year of 1856 or 1857.

Hon. Oley Nelson was a very honorable and outstanding man in this settlement. He and his mother came here from Wisconsin right after the Civil War. He worked in Des Moines, clerked in stores a while, married Engeborg Ersland, a daughter of Knute Ersland, who was also working in Des Moines. After they got married he started a hotel and called it the Farmers Home. He ran that until 1874, when the Northwestern came through Sheldahl.. Olie Apland, his brother-in-law wanted to help him and start him in business, so Apland built a store building (the first building erected in Sheldahl after the depot was built) and went in partnership with him, and put in a stock of general merchandise. That was the first store in Sheldahl. The firm was "Apland and Nelson". The store had living quarters upstairs, which the Nelsons moved into. Carrie, their third child, was the first child born in Sheldahl.

Apland did not work in the store. He always lived on his farm near Cambridge. He just wanted to get Nelson started. Amos K. Ersland clerked there from the start, and in a

short time he bought Apland out. Then the name of the firm was "Nelson and Ersland". They had a large stock of goods and also bought grain. After a while Nelson bought Ersland out. And when so many of the business men moved to Sheldahl Crossing, Nelson also moved the store, grain elevator, and his dwelling. Oley Nelson was a very bright man, well educated, well read, and well posted on all topics. He had a clear voice and could speak on any subject. He had a strong personality, lots of friends, and was a natural leader. He was good hearted and always wanted to help the needy; too good hearted for his own good. He was also quite a surveyor and had a regular surveying outfit.

He was elected State Representative from Story County, and served in the 21st and 22nd General Assemblies. He was National Commander in Chief of the Grand Army of the Republic in 1936. He was Sergeant at Arms in the House Chamber at the State House 16 or 17 years up until he died in 1939. He was 93 years old when he died.

Oley Nelson's father joined the Eagle Regiment of Wisconsin when the war broke out and had served nearly one year when he was killed in action. Oley was the only child, and he wanted to take his father's place; so he enlisted in 1862. He was 18 years old at that time; he served until the end of the war. That left his mother entirely alone. She was a brave and very active woman. She never remarried and always stayed with her son. She lived to be real old.

Andrew Nelson, another outstanding figure in this settlement, was a brother-in-law of Oley Nelson. He married Martha Ersland, daughter of Knute Ersland, was a veteran of the Civil War, settled in Polk County just south of the Story County line southwest of Cambridge. He had a big farm, fed lots of cattle and hogs, and accumulated quite a bit of wealth. He was one of the best auctioneers in central Iowa. He had such a loud and clear voice, and a good judgement of the value of things. He had a very strong personal character, was jovial and humorous, told stories and jokes; he was an excellent salesman, and people would nod to him quicker than to anyone else. He was a very busy man.

An Interesting Character

A history of this settlement would not be complete without saying something about Ranart Nagelson, the big Dane that roamed over this settlement for a long time. Nagelson was raised a printer. His father printed a newspaper in Denmark, and he wrote a piece in this paper about the King of Denmark. He was found guilty and was sentenced for life. So a friend helped him out, put him in a casket as a dead man, and put him on board a ship just ready to sail for America. So he kept wandering and worked his way west till he got to this Norwegian settlement. He liked the people here and everybody liked him and treated him nice. He was a tall man over 6 feet, and gained in flesh right along till he got to weigh over 300 pounds. He peddled medicine for a living. He got his meals whenever he stopped, and no one ever charged him anything.

He would go up to the Norwegian settlements around Story City, Roland and McCallburg. He got all his medicine from the Druggist Gandrup in Story City. He knew 12 different languages. He would look over all the newspapers there were in the house. He

gathered all the news and he could tell all the news that had happened. He laughed very heartily. He had a great memory; he could speak the first name of every child whenever he stopped. He was very friendly and could tell lots of stories. He was a hearty eater. After a big meal in the summer time, he would go out on the ground and lay down and stretch. He never married, had no home, only where he took off his hat.

He was a happy go lucky fellow with a big smile. He came here sometime in the sixties and died in the late eighties.

Another Very Interesting Character

I should make a few remarks about Ames K. Ersland before I quit. He was a son of Knute Ersland, and was three years old when he came with the emigrants in 1855. He was a rather quiet man, read a lot, and was hungry for learning. He was self educated; a very great mathematician, excellent penman, and a good bookkeeper. He was of very clean habits, used no tobacco, was a total abstainer, very neat and clean about his person. Whatever he worked at had to be just so. He was quite an inventor. He invented quite a few things, and got patents on some of them. He had a perfect typewriter, but someone was just ahead of him on some parts.

He invented a screw nut that would not come off or get loose on freight cars, but some man was just ahead of him again. He invented a scale and a combination tool; he had a machine that sharpened and set a saw that worked perfect; he had a shop full of tools and machines that cost him several thousand dollars. He had these just for a hobby, as he did not try to make a dollar out of them. He had quite a bit of money invested in investment companies from which he got yearly dividends on which he lived during his last years. But two of them went up with the smoke, so he did not have much when he died. He never married. He was rather shy of women; he always advised young boys not to use liquor; he was honest as the day is long, and his word was as good as if his name was written to an iron clad contract. He was a charter member of Slater Lodge I.O.O.F. No. 384 and belonged to the Lutheran church. He died when he was 82 years old.

Almost Everybody Loved the Hills

Last but not least, I want to say a few words about Oliver Hill. He came with his parents from Illinois just before the Civil War, and settled down just west of Cambridge. He lived on the farm with his parents until they died, then he became the owner of the farm, and lived there until he died. He raised two boys and two girls. He was a well educated man, well posted on all topics, could get up and make a speech on any subject. He taught school for many years, both in and around Cambridge, and he was also in the mercantile business in Cambridge at one time. He belonged to the Lutheran church at Cambridge and was Superintendent of the Sunday School for many years. He did not use tobacco in any form, and was a very strong temperance man. He was strictly honest and everything had to be just so. He had a lovely home which he called Hillhurst that was kept up in fine shape. Mr. and Mrs. Hill were lovely people and loved by everybody. They are both dead now.

There are many more men that I would like to mention but space doesn't permit. There were many real good outstanding women in this settlement also that should be mentioned, who surely did their part. But if I would mention one, I would have to mention so many that it would take up too much space. The next person that writes a larger history of these old settlers will have to mention those that I have left out, and correct my mistakes.

Nevada Evening Journal, Everyday Events of Life - Strange Today

By Mathilda Tesdell, Cambridge

Do you remember when there were few folks that had a plow? Their fields were custom plowed, then the family hand sowed the small grain and planted the corn by hand covering it with a hoe. Harvest time the grain was hand scythed and hand threshed. The corn was hand husked, placed in piles in the rows and loaded later. They hauled grain to Des Moines or Madrid and had it ground into flour and corn meal. The Madrid Mill gave paper dolls to take home to the children.

Log cabins were here and there over the prairie. Walking was the most popular way to get places, often stopping as they came to a cabin for a cup of coffee, taking a message or offering a helping hand in any way. Many homes were occupied by three families. Trails were the roads. Pasture for livestock was the unfenced prairie. Each family had its own cowbell, by its sound they could tell where their flock was. Produce was taken to East Des Moines. Early in the morning butter was churned, pressed, covered with a handwoven cloth, then a covering of new mown slough hay and on its way in a horse drawn wagon reaching its destination in a firm form as our cooling system of today. There were many shallow hand wells on most farms minus pumps, but a pail and a rope answered the purpose nicely. The well also served as a cooling system for perishable food during hot weather. Clocks were scarce, so many sundials took their place. Many posts with its handcarved lines and sunny days were common. The church bell helped people get to services on time, it rang an hour before services commenced.

In 1857 a school house was built near where Palestine church now stands.⁴ It served as Palestine's second church home. Both young and old took advantage of the school to learn the English language. Children took turns going to school, usually due to shortage of shoes, wraps and books.

As lamps were rare they studied by the "kaala", somewhat like a candle, onion and a steel container. When the first candleholders were made they were shaped like kaalas. Many evening entertainments were held in the school houses during the winter months — box socials, debates, spelling bees, singing festivals, and school business meetings.

In the summer time we had a month of parochial school from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. at our school house. Our teacher was a student studying to be a minister or missionary. The first year we learned to read the Norwegian language. After that it was all biblical - most of

it had to be memorized. The parents who had children attending paid the teacher. His board and room was free among the patrons. They usually taught three months - three different schools. Some children attended two months. It was fun. For many years country children attending high school had to pay their own tuition and furnish their own transportation.

The spring of 1861 Palestine Congregation commenced to build its first church but the Civil War developed that summer so the young men left for service. Help and money became scarce so it was not finished until 1866. First services in it was the last Sunday of 1866. It was built of native lumber, it had handmade benches for seats. Services usually lasted two to two and a half hours, with a packed house nearly every time they met. Services were not held every Sunday. Often an unexpected minister arrived — that meant the children who could read to confirmation age formed two lines in the aisle and were catechized by the visiting minister. His questions were from the catechism, and Bible history. I wonder how the children of today would fare?

L. T. Wing was the first organist. He let the congregation use his organ.

Indians lived south of Cambridge and were frequent visitors of the white settlers. They usually rode their ponies - Mrs. and a baby - very seldom men came. They nearly always asked for two things — white flour and chicken.

Next on the scene were the peddlers. They came from Des Moines, walked, carried two large valises. There were selling goods for Des Moines department stores. They had many things - silks, linens, notions, etc. Later they had an enclosed wagon and one horse. They came for many years and did very well.

When schoolhouses and railroads were built we added tramps to our population. They too walked carrying a cane usually. They were morning visitors often. They would knock on the porch with the cane, asking for food. Some would offer to split wood for food. Some of them were hungry, others would eat what they liked - throw the rest along the roadside. They had their own language. They marked the posts - that way they never stopped at some houses. They spent nights and weekends in schoolhouses.

Next came the gypsies. There were often several families. They traveled in covered wagons and had a few extra ponies along. They camped along the roadside, often near a schoolhouse, creek and where there were trees. They would stay for weeks sometimes. They liked to trade horses. At times the children would attend schools. They had such bright colored garments.

Next came the Medicine Wagons - Rawlights, Watkins, Mc Connons. They did well for many years. By this time many years have gone by and we are commencing to be pestered by salesmen too often. Many are walking. Amongst them are students who are trying to earn a few dollars during vacation, they sold books and magazines mostly. For many years now it has been peaceful, once in a while we hear of a salesman — most of them are out to swindle an elderly person. In early 1900 we got telephone service in southern Story. There were two lines — East and West. The switchboard (Central) was in a farm

home. This was the start of Huxley Telephone Co. For many years it cost \$9.00 a year to have a telephone.

The early settlers mail came to Sheldahl, Iowa. In early 1900's the community near Cambridge got Rural Mail Delivery. There were two routes — No. 1, No. 2. For many years Frank Scott had No. 1 East of town and John Wills No. 2 west of town. Many years passed before the roads were graveled, and snow removal in the winter. When they came to snow drifts they cut the wire and drove through the fields. At times neighbors would get together and hand shovel snow drifts to open the road. Sometimes the mail carrier came horseback when there were too many drifts or too muddy roads.

In 1905 automobiles came on the scene and they increased in number very rapidly. By 1914 they were very common. I had my first ride in 1907.

On Saturday evenings everyone went to town and the business places did well. I remember when Cambridge had a hotel, livery barn, harness shop, two banks, three churches, two school houses, two barber shops, two miliary shops, a hardware store, two jewelry stores, a racket store, a bakery, a meat market, a telephone office, two drug stores, a furniture store, a cafe, an opera house, a lumber yard, a restaurant, a newspaper office, a canning factory, a produce house, a slaughter house, stockyard, elevator, dance hail, post office, a blacksmith shop, a creamer, doctor's office, two depots, a drayline, a mail cart, city hall, a taxi to meet the trains, service station, garage and hitchposts.

The stores were not self service. You had to wait your turn at the counter stating what you wanted. Most of the groceries were in bulk so had to be weighed. The last counter store I recall was south of main street in Story City, Iowa.

We must not forget to mention L. T. Wing's Sorghum Mill southwest of Cambridge. People came from far and near with sugar cane to have it made into molasses. Hundreds of gallons were cooked there for many years.

The settlers first newspapers were printed on just one side of the paper.

As long as farmers used horses many of them needed extra help — a hired man or two, also a hired girl. The dairy business was a must for many years. It had many stages. At first they skimmed the milk and sold butter. They had shallow pans for the milk. Next a milk man came to pick up the sweet milk, returning the milk when he made the next trip. Then came the cream separator and we sold cream. Creameries became many. Last stage, selling sweet milk again. Many farmers have no livestock now. Farm work is done in an easier way today. Small farms are disappearing. Machinery is the latest, so much work can be done by one man in a short time.

Debts are many, yet times have never been better in Story County, living standards at their best.

December 7 Delores (Thorson) Lewis brought the following information about the area churches which were directly descended from the Palestine congregation who traveled as a group of 111 persons from Lisbon, Illinois in 1855. They were Nazareth Lutheran Church in Cambridge, the Bethlehem Lutheran church in Slater and Central Lutheran in Des Moines. The Bethlehem Church at Kelly is from the Bethlehem church in Slater. The Fjelland Church in Huxley was formed by a separate group of Norwegian immigrants.

She has had an article from the "History in Fox Valley, Ill." which quotes "where tea and coffee, milk and mush would for colonists overflow; where pork and what would be daily bread, where each man would be cradled in fortunes glow." "Let us give thanks to the Lord for Norwegians like this who traveled before us."

It was also interesting that Reverend Elling Eilsen warned that such wanderlust and desire for worldly gain was an outpouring of "the heathenish Viking spirit." But the group decided to investigate moving on to Iowa from Illinois where they would locate over a hundred miles to the nearest railroad.

They were so busy making a living and living by their religion that they left politics and secular matters to others.

From: "History in the Fox Valley, Illinois"

"Where tea and coffee, milk and mush Would for colonist overflow; Where pork and wheat would be daily bread Where each man would be cradled in fortunes glow."

"Let us give thanks to the Lord-- For Norwegians like this who traveled before us."

These were the promises that led Norwegians to America. But so many came to the Fox River Settlement that it was not possible for all to fulfill their dreams. Therefore scouts were sent west to see what land was available there. Among these were Erik Nilsen who returned with glowing accounts of a "land as rich as the flesh pots of Egypt." Mils Olson Ness, a lay preacher, came from Iowa with news of timber and prairie land that could be purchased for \$1.25 per acre.

In spite of the discouragement of Reverend Elling Eilsen, who warned that such wanderlust and desire for worldly gain was an outcropping of the old heathenish Viking spirit, four men Osmund Sheldahl, Ole Apland, Ole Fatland, and Osmund Johnson were sent to stake out and secure land. After four weeks they returned to Lisbon to report that they had secured a "land like Caleb's Canaan flowing with milk and honey."

The next spring a group organized as the Palestine Lutheran Church, called Ole Anfinson to be their Pastor, and on May 17th, 1855 set out from Holdeman's Prairie, midway between Lisbon and Fox River. One hundred six persons bid farewell to their neighbors, and with 25 yoke of oxen, several horseteams, and a herd of cattle set out for Story County, Iowa.

They arrived in their new location on June 7th. From this beginning there are now about 12,000 people of Norse descent in this area of Iowa.

A second group, the Hauge group, sent eight men to seek out land in Iowa for them. These were Lars Sheldahl, Jonas Duea, Mons Grove, Jacob Aske, John Tarvestad, Paul Thompson, Ole Eino, and John Mehuus. They selected the area around Roland for their settlement. Two families of this group left Illinois in the fall of 1855 and eighteen others followed in 1856, with 24 wagons and several hundred head of cattle.

They found good land, but the first winter was one of the worst in History and they suffered severely. In addition, it was over a hundred miles to the nearest railroad, and economic depression lowered the prices of their products, and the spring rains flooded their fields and made such roads as they had impassable. Still they survived although the absence of towns with names of Norse background in the area makes one realize they were so busy making a living and living by their religion that they left politics and secular matters to others.

Today in Iowa - Minnesota - The Dakotas - Washington State - and California and throughout the Western United States the Norwegians have prospered and contributed much to the well being of America and its culture. We do need to thank God for these Pioneer of Norway for this beginning here in the Fox River in Illinois.. .an f or the Westward Movement of the Norwegians of long ago.

From: "Sheldahl History Book, 1846—1959"

Listing of the Norwegians in the wagon train to Iowa.

Ole Anfinson and wife Ingerie, and daughter Carine Osmund and Anna Sheldahl, and children Caroline, Erick, Halvor, 1~ and Randy Erick and Margaret Sheldahl, and children Betsy, Randy, Erick, an Martha Ole and Carrie Fatland, and children John, Elie, Britt and Henry Knute and Carrie Ersland, and children Hector, Madts, Anna, Anf in Martha, Elias, Carrie, Engeborg and Amos Knute and Carrie Boug Ivor and Madeline Tweet, and daughter Martha Barney and Sarah Hill, and daughter Betsy Peter Christian and Serina Heggen Lars and Martha Tesdahl Wier and Martha Weeks, and children Anf in, Halvor, Torres, Wier Engeborg, Martha and Hans Severt and Allis Gravdahl, and children Julia and Andrew Askel and Golla Larson, and children Lars, Thomas and Charles Orga and Ragna Hauge, and children Severt, Sarah, Lars, and Anna Torbjorn and Madela Houge, and children Sarah and Guste Ole and Valbor Hauge and son John Ole and Anna Heggen John and Bertha Severson, and children Mary, John and Severt Saleiuon and Sarah Heggen, and children Andrew, Nels and Ole Engebrit and Gertrud Olson and children Cecelia, Ole, George an Martha Mrs. Julia Shaw and children Betsy, Thomas and Erick Mrs. Torres Olson and children Hellen and Rasmus Mrs. Ragna Larson and step—daughter Anna Wee Lars Thompson Ole Apland Ole Tesdahl Erick Johnson Eiven Olson Engebrit and Sarah Heggen and daughter Susana

The Story of the Early Pioneers Like a Chapter from History

The story of the early pioneers reads like a chapter from the early history of our country - so Puritan like in spirit. Like the Pilgrims and the Puritans, they were deeply religious and the church was a part of their life - had been from their childhood and they brought the church with them, so to speak, to America. As a result they had a whole-hearted respect for all things holy.

An Event in Norse History

The 106 souls that comprised the now famous caravan in 1855 were making history as they progressed westward. Traveling as a congregation, something never heard of before nor since, made the trip an outstanding event in the history of Norwegians in America, a feat worthy of a place among the major accomplishments of these people in the land of their adoption. Its inception was as thoughtful as it was unique and reflected the deep religious convictions that marked all the early Norse emigrants. Verily, they were an honor to the race and the land from which they came.

Two Experiences Could Easily Have Been Serious

They had two experiences that did not look good. In crossing a river on a barge made out of logs the cattle got unruly, broke the enclosure and jumped into the water. However, they all swam to the shore and were none the worse. On another occasion one of the covered wagons, drawn by a pair of oxen, got into a swift current and were being carried away. The wagon box had already started to float when the driver called for help. Osmond Sheldahl, seeing the danger that beset those in the wagon, called for volunteers to go to their assistance. He got plenty of help and the wagon, the occupants and the oxen were all saved from what might have been a watery grave. Most of the men knew their stuff when it came to swimming they having mastered the art in the far off Norway fjords when mere boys.

What Food Had the Women Provided for the Trip

What to eat on the trip was their least worry, at least among the men, who had other things to think of. While the caravan had no special Commissary wagon, there was ample food stored away in the different wagons to insure eats for everybody — for the meals and at lunch time. (They had to stop now and then to rest the cattle as well as the tiring horses and oxen — and a lunch, of course.) Among the food supplies were a barrel of flatbre, a barrel of kringla, tubs filled with kavring (rusks), cookies and other delicacies. Also liberal supplies of prim ost, fat ost, gamiuel ost and what not. No, they did not suffer from want of food.

The new congregation then met at Cambridge on February 6, 1902 and organized as "The Nazareth, the First Evangelical Lutheran Church of Cambridge, Story County, Iowa," and chose the following officers; Trustees; C. E. Larson, John Fatland, A. A. Richardson, John O. Johnson and H. R. Sheldahl. Deacons: Jonas Lewis, Oliver Hill, Anf in Anfinson, Tobias Severson, Peder Buland and Viar Weeks. Secretary — Lewis Reierson Treasurer —

A. M. Mason Sunday School Superintendent - Oliver Hill; Assistant, Peder Buland Belle Mason — organist Peder Buland - klokkar The congregation has been functioning every since, served by the same pastor as the Palestine Church.

The Fjelberg Congregation Organized in 1865

The Fjelberg congregation was organized in 1865 at the home of Torres Skarveland, half a mile south from what is now the town of Huxley. The following year, 1866, steps were taken to build a church, a mile west from the Palestine Church. Rev. N. Amlund of Story City was their first pastor. The congregation had a healthy growth from the start. It received the name, "Fjelberg," in memory of the place in Norway from which many of the charter members came. The congregation later affiliated with the Norwegian Synod.

Shortly after the congregation had been organized a number of the charter members withdrew from the Palestine church and joined the newly organized church. Most of them had come from the Fjelberg parish in Norway, the same as most of the Fjeldberq's charter members.

Professional Men and Women in the Congregation

Through the passing years a number of professional men and women have developed in the congregation. Others, born in the congregation grew to manhood or womanhood in other communities. Among them are the following :~

PREACHERS: ~ John Stenberg, Osmond Johnson, Ole Norem and Axel Shefveland.
LAWYERS: Old Edwin Severson, John Brown and Ed Tesdahl. DOCTORS: Åd and Geo. J. Severson, SCHOOL TEACHERS: Ole Fatland, Lars and Edward Johnson, Andrew Tesdahl., Osmond Johnson, Prof. P. O. Holland, Carrie Tesdahl (Mrs. Geo. Nelson), Martha Tesdahl (Mrs. Ed. Raynes) Maggie Sheldah (Mrs. Elias Ersland), Jennie Tesdahl (Mrs. Osmond Ritland), Bessie Wald (Mrs. Andrew Maland), Osmond J. Viland, J. E. Johnson, Burton Wald, Nellie Larson, Edward Tesdell, Mary Larson (Mrs. Nels M. Flugum), Ada Tesdahl (Mrs. Martin Dobbe), Evangeline Tesdahl (Mrs. Herman Thomas) Andrew Maland, Evalina Maland, Erma Maland (Mrs. Chet Person), George Severson, Severt Severson, Joan Sheldahl (Mrs. Tracy).

Parochial School Teachers

These are the names of most of the men and women who have taught parochial school in the congregation: Knut Bauge, Osmond Sheldahl, Erick Johnson, Haldor Sheldahl, O. G. Nerness, Ola Frette.

I. H. Kofoed, Serine Olson (Wald), C. Theodore, Lars Torrsdahl, Osmond Viland, Borgen Molestre, H. C. Holmn, E. H. Myhre, Hans Oppdahl, Torkel Heggen, Anna Ostrem, Nels Tosseland, J. O. Jessinq, Torger Thompson, Bertha Viland, Marie and Carrie Larson, Ole Norem, Axel Shefveland, Bessie Iverson, Lydia Sheldahl, David Stove, Mr. Sunde, Joan Sheldahl, Agnes Berhow, Robert Larson, Dorothy Larson and Mrs. Eli Wee.

Men Who Have Served as Secretaries

Many have served the congregation as secretaries for longer or shorter periods. The three having served the longest are John Stenberg, Sam Maland and John Johnson. Some served as secretaries pro—tern, but are not mentioned in this list. The number include Knut Bauge, Torres Skarveland, J. Henningson, Torres T. Scott, Gustav Jacobson, Theodore Peterson, H. A. Sheldahl, John Johnson, Lewis Rierson, T. Nervig, Henry O. Sheldahl, T. O. Larson, Hans Stenberg, Quaid, John Stenberg, I. H. Kofoed, E. H. Sheldahl, P. Buland, Såland, A. A. Fjelland.

Men and Women Having Served as Sunday School Superintendents

The Sunday school has been a strong feature most of the years since it was organized in the seventies. Most of the time the superintendent was named by the congregation; at other times by a committee. In the latter case no record was made. Serving were John Johnson, H. A. Sheldahl, J.H. myhre, T. K. Tvedt, E. H. Sheldahl, H. C. Holm, O. S. Swandahl, Rev. Buland, Harry Tweedt, Sam Maland, Mary Larson, T. H. Mason, A. A. Fjelland, John Hendricks, Walter Christopherson, P. O. Louks and Irving Thompson.

Organists in the Congregation

L. T. Wing was the church's first organist. He was followed by Martha Nerness (Mrs. Thor Bauge). John Stenberg served one year and was succeeded by Anna Tesdahl and Martha Tesdahl. Later Marie Fatland served a number of years. Other organists have been Carrie Mason, Mary Saveraid, Minnie Dobbe, Mrs. S. O. Swandahl, Eleanor and Ruth Johnson, Elizabeth Maland and Leona Brandeland.

The First Organ in the Church

The first organ in the Palestine church made its appearance during Rev. Myhre's pastorate. The pastor, learning that L. T. Wing had an organ, he went to his home and found it to be true. It was an old one, but Mr. Wing had repaired it and had made it quite serviceable. Myhre persuaded Mr. Wing to take it to church and to play it, too, which he did. Thus Mr. Wing became the first organist in the church. Just how long this organ was used is not known, but it served its purpose — creating a desire for better music.

The introduction of an organ in the church had some opposition as might be expected, it being a new thing. It puzzled some of them. Playing Norwegian songs on a Yankee organ? An impossibility some said, too fantastic to be mentioned. All doubts, however, vanished that Sunday morning when the organ poured forth the sweet strains of songs which people had cherished all their lives. Pastor Myhre, no doubt, felt better as he had been freely criticized.

Singing Was Early Stressed

The first record of any choir singing dates back to 1875 when Pastor Myhre started a singing class. It was one part singing. When Martha Nerness began to play the organ she made an effort to play according to designated time, but realized it was hard to do and often, found herself several beats ahead of a congregation and to her it sounded terrible. Often she stopped playing to give the audience a chance to catch up. The presence of the choir helped some as the added volume made the lead more prominent.

Four-part choir singing did not materialize to any degree till the latter eighties when Prof. Codington started a singing school in the church and developed a large choir which functioned for many years. Among its members were some splendid talent - Annie, Maggie, Carrie and Louise Sheldahl; Marie and Lesa Fatland; Alice and Marie Johnson, Lena Nerness, Carrie Mason, Serine and Bessie Wald, Josie and Lenda Sheldahl, John Stenberg, Sam and Afidrew Maland, Cornelius Holland, Pete and John Brown, Henry and Carl Fatland and others. Members of the choir sang at the 75th anniversary of the church ten years ago.

Brief History of Palestine Ladies' Aid

No congregational history would be at all complete without something said about the Ladies' Aid Societies. What would we do in the work of the church if it were not for the labors of love on the part of our good women?

Early in the history of Palestine church the Ladies' Aid played a prominent part and this it has continued to do down through the years. The pioneers are all gone. No one is left to tell the story of the early beginning. But already during Rev. Sheldahl's pastorate there was a Ladies' Aid. Not very highly organized perhaps; but the good women felt the need of getting together to encourage one another in the christian life and helping along in the work of the church, both at home and in foreign fields.

The Ladies' Aid of Palestine church have down through the years worked almost exclusively for missions. Their programs have always been of a spiritual and devotional nature.

In the early days they did handwork at their meetings, knitting mittens and stockings, making quilts and comforts, shirts for the men and aprons for the women and other more or less useful articles. In the early days the serving at Ladies' Aid was very simple, in keeping with the circumstances and conditions of pioneer life. Late on, however, the Ladies' Aid would meet for one all-day sessions, with a complete dinner at noon, and lunch again in the afternoon. Often the entire family would come, men and women sometimes taking part in the devotional program.

Up until the year 1890 there was only one Ladies' Aid society in Palestine Congregation. Very often they would have two presidents together sharing the responsibilities of the office, these two also taking care of the work now done by the secretary, treasurer and other officers in the society.

In trying to honor those to whom honor is due, we hesitate to mention any names for fear of unintentionally omitting some whose names deserve honorable mention. But among those who took an active part as leaders in the early days we name the following: Mrs. Osmund Sheldahl, Mrs. Erick Sheldahl, Mrs. Ola Johnson, Mrs. Golla Larson, Mrs. Lars Tesdahl, Mrs. Karl Bauge, Mrs. Ingeborg Maland, Mrs. John Johnson, Mrs. Alv Johnson, Mrs. L. O. Larson, Mrs. Torres Weeks, Mrs. Hacktor Mason, Mrs. T. K. Twedt, Mrs. Andrew Sheldahl and Mrs. Lars Eide.

In 1890 when Rev. Faresth of the Bergen congregation resigned and some of the members of the congregation joined with Palestine during Rev. Holin's pastorate it was decided that the former members of Bergen congregation should form the nucleus for the South Ladies' Aid of Palestine Church. From then on until 1935 there were four societies or branches of the Palestine Ladies' Aid, namely, the South Aid, the Church Aid, the Huxley Aid, and the North Aid.

In 1935 three of the Societies consolidated and have since met at the church parlors. The North Aid has not yet joined with the others.

The following have served as presidents for the consolidated Aid Society: Mrs. Severt Westvold, Mrs. Thor Mason, Mrs. S. H. Ness, Mrs. Willie Richardson, Mrs. Seward Larson, Mrs. Lewis Larson and Mrs. Chris Wee.

The synodical budget of the congregation has been raised year after year, due in a great measure to the efforts of the Ladies' Aid. Other worthy causes too both local and otherwise have received their support. May God's richest blessing rest upon their efforts, now and forever.

Rang the Bell at Various Functions

Through the early years of the congregation the church bell was used at many more functions than it is today. For the forenoon services for instance it was rung three times — an hour before the services, at the time the services started and when the services were over. At all funerals the bell was tolled the same as today. The bell was also used at most of the church weddings in the early days. In this event the sexton was supposed to give the bell a sort of a merry ring, a ring—a—ling effect to indicate a happy, merry occasion; hence the "wedding bells," famed in the song.

The First Violin in the Church

The first appearance of a violin (a fiddle they called it those days) in the church dates back to the latter eighties. Prof. Codington, an instructor in vocal music, conducted a singing school in the church during the winter months. He started with note singing, the rudiments of music, do, me, sol, do and up and accomplished just a lot. At the close of the term they gave a concert. At the concert a friend of his, also a music teacher, assisted, singing a solo. Many eyes glared when a fiddle was produced and played as an

accompaniment to the singer. It was a distinct shock to many as the fiddle was regarded as the “Devil’s Instrument,” fit only for dance halls and saloons. Guitars were frequently used.

These Young Men Deeply Interested

Speaking of being faithful to the teachings of christian mothers, two young men living in Nevada surely remained true to their promises. The two men, known as Thompson and Orland, joined Rev. Sheldahl's confirmation class and regularly twice a month walked to the Palestine church to meet with the other members. On most of their trips they remained over night and generally got chance rides back to Nevada. They were confirmed with the rest of the class.

The Congregation's Charter Members - None Living

The charter members of the congregation were as follows; Rev, and Mrs. Ole Anfinson and family; Osmund Sheldahl and family, Mr. and Mrs. Erick Sheldahl and family; Mr. and Mrs. Askel Larson and family; Mr. and Mrs. Ole Fatland and family; Mr. and Mrs. K. A. Bauge; Mr. and Mrs. Wier Weeks and family; Mr. and Mrs. Lars Tesdahl and family; Mr. and Mrs. Knute Ersland and family; Mr. and Mrs. Osmond Severson and family; Mr. and Mrs. Engebret Olson and family; Mr. and Mrs. Ivar Twedt and family; Torbjorn Hauge and family; Mr. and Mrs. Ole Heggen and family; Mrs. Torres Olson and family; Mrs. Ragna Larson, Ole Apland, Peder Christian, Barney Hill, Ole Hauge and Salve Heggen.

Men Who Helped Build the First Church

Building the first church was very much a volunteer enterprise — one in which everybody helped as much as they could. Among those working were John Anderson (muxnar), Hemming Romsa, Ysten Ystenson, Rasmus Lewis, S. T. Artnz, Ola Nese, Osmond Severson, Jonas Lewis, Erick Frovick, Jens Rosland, Gustaf Jacobson, Ola Hiddlestad and Lars Tesdahl. Jonas and Rasmus Lewis were especially helpful with the work on the altar and pulpit.

“Fattigmans Kassen” Had Its Place

In the early days of the congregation they established what they chose to call “Fattiginans Kassen”, (poor man’s chest). The church had it unfortunates then as it has had ever since, people that needed help. In those days they were more numerous for the simple reason that there were no poorhouses nor county homes where they could be cared for. As a result the congregation had to look after them. It worked out a plan to have them cared for at the different homes — a week or two here, a week or so at another home and so on. It somewhat solved the problem. In addition they established “Fattigmans Kassen” into which freewill offerings, assessments and contributions were placed to be used as emergencies arose throughout the year. It was a very praiseworthy phase of church work.

A Foreign Practice is Abolished

The practice of passing wine or stronger drinks at funerals in the congregation received a knock-out blow in the nineties when Rev. Thvedt called the congregation together to consider the matter. A motion to stop the practice received an overwhelming majority. The habit, it seems, was the remnant of a custom that had prevailed in Norway and brought over here by the early settlers who saw in it no harm.

When Holm Had to See a Tailor

It was a summer day, late in the seventies when H. C. Holm and Rev. Myhre were relaxing on the lawn. Myhre had just returned from a walk of some distance. Myhre, by the way, never had a buggy nor a horse, and as he expressed it, he used the apostle's horses." He walked wherever he went - if they did not come and get him. Being agile and light of foot he enjoyed walking. Just to show Holm that he could get his feet off the ground and do it with ease he hopped over a nearby hedge with the ease of a scared hare. Not to be outdone, Holm tried it, too, but in the next minute found himself straddling the thorny bush. Well, the upshot was that Holm had to see a "skraedder," a tailor, the following week.

Sunday a Big Day With Pioneers

Sunday was a big day in the settlement for many years. As they were wont to do in the mother country, the whole family felt obligated to attend services — father, mother and children and any visitors that might be at their home. It was a part of their lives - had been since childhood.

In addition to the preaching and the singing, the meeting also had a social aspect. With the services over few were in a hurry to go home. They remained for social visits — to talk over the news of the settlement, to exchange views and to find out what the others had heard from home. A Norwegian newspaper, Decorah Posten and others, 'though several months old', was often scanned with the greatest interest for news items from the homeland — Norway.

The Sunday morning services also had another phase. For years the church papers were sent to the pastor. He in turn passed them out to such members of his charge as were subscribers. Mail facilities in general were very poor — and that was to be expected as the system was in its infancy. Some got their mail at Cambridge, others at Nevada and Sheldahl. Often when a member went to town he got the mail for the entire neighborhood. On Sunday he took it with him to church where it was distributed. Hans Nagelson, the peddler, made this a practice for several years and saw to it that all the mail he got reached the proper party. With the advent of the Milwaukee road the mail service took on another form - one could get his mail at both Huxley and Cambridge.

Church Struck by Lightning Twice

The Palestine church has been hit by lightning at least twice, but with no serious results. The first time was in July, 1875. While Rev. Myhre was on his way to the church one day he ran across some wood trimmings. He wondered where they came from. After

unlocking the church door he had some difficulty in opening it. After forcing it he found a mess of plaster and laths. He realized what had happened the previous night - a bolt of lightning had hit the tower, knocking off a lot of plaster in the lower part.

The second one occurred at a very unusual time — Christmas eve, 1893. It was a beautiful moonlight night, as balmy as a day in May and the sky was dotted with big thunderheads which displayed plenty of lightning. A light shower fell around nine o'clock, accompanied by lighting and thunder. The rain over, Valbor Sho, who was staying at Askel Larson home south of the church, noticed a peculiar light in the church steeple. She called the Larsons. Yes, the steeple was on fire. She hastened to the Tom Larson home to spread the news. That done she hurried to the John Maland home. There she was joined by Mother Malnd and the two hastened to the L. O. Larson home to apprise them of the fire. Mr. Larson, Paul Revere like, jumped on a horse to further spread the alarm, there being no telephones those days. When he reached the church he found that the blaze had been extinguished.

His brother, Tom Larson, had forced his way into the church and single handed had found his way up the tower to the belfry with a bucket of water and put out the blaze. The damage was very small.

Christmas eve was generally the occasion for a big program in the church, but that year none had been planned, due to the fact that Rev. Holm had resigned and was in Eagle Grove.

The First English Class in the Sunday School

The first English class in the Palestine Sunday school was organized in 1888, largely by the efforts of Osmund Johnson and Andrew Tesdahl, both active workers in the school. The following officers were chosen: Osmond Johnson, teacher, and Andrew Tesdahl, assistant. Henry Sheldahl, secretary and Maggie Sheldahl, treasurer. It had many members from the start and the interest increased as the summer advanced.

A Former Palestine Boy's Rise to Prominence

In speaking of careers and rise to prominence from humble beginnings, few can equal that of P.O. Holland, a member of the Palestine church in the nineties. His rise to positions of trust and prominence is a practical demonstration of what a young man can accomplish who has the will to do and can bravely face all difficulties.

Arriving in the Palestine community in 1893 he spoke of himself as "a poor, ignorant newcomer, unable to speak the American language." Two things he did possess - good health and just a lot of optimism. Eager to learn the language he never passed up an opportunity that would help him. He took an active interest in the church. Taking Rev. Thvedt into his confidence the two studied their English together. Seeing in the young man many possibilities Rev. Thvedt urged him to attend school. This was the turning point in Mr. Holland's life. Acting upon the advice of his pastor he enrolled at St. Olaf college form

which he graduated in 1904. He was a wizard in mathematics and stood very high in chemistry and physics.

His rise from then on was very remarkable, both as a teacher and a financier and he contributed much to the development of St. Olaf college. The positions of honor and trust held by him at the time of his death November 15, 1939, probably has no parallel in the N. L. C. A. He was president or vice president of eight banks, a prominent officer in the Lutheran Brotherhood Ins. Co., treasurer of St. Olaf college, chairman of the Board of Trustees of the N. L. C. A. and held many other offices, including the position as head of the school's large dairy farm.

Remember When the Preacher Came

Above all was his fine christian character and had faith in God and man. To him the church was first and the last in his life.

Remember when the preacher came for visit — how scared we were and how spic and span everything had to be, including the children? We kids, timid and bashful, would hide around the corners of the house and when the preacher came in sight how we'd run for the house as fast as our legs would take us? Once inside, how we'd stare in wonderment as if having our picture taken, saying nary a word nor utter a sound and possibly hanging onto mother's apron strings? Wholesome respect for the preacher? Guest that's what you'd call it. Then came the supper — crisp waffles with sweet, sugared cream and a goodly supply of wild strawberries in season. A feast fit for kings, we thought.

The “Pige Forening”

A “Pige Forening” (young ladies society) was organized in the congregation form in 1885. It was sponsored by Mrs. Mary Stenberg (Mrs. John Stenberg), assisted by Miss Serine Wald. It functioned very much like a ladies' aid, making a variety of articles which were sold at a bazaar, held usually in the fall of the year. It always worked in the interest of a worthy cause and grew to become a strong organization. When the leaders, Mrs. Stenberg and Miss Wald, moved to Slater in the latter nineties the organization became less active and later merged with the Ladies' Aid.

What Became of the Big Bible?

A large Bible, the big family size, was presented the church shortly after its completion in the sixties. It had a place on the altar, immediately in front of the pulpit and was always left open. One Sunday it was missing and all wondered what had become of it. It was finally located and returned to its place. Tradition has it that when the Bible was returned verses here and there and in some places a line or two had been marked with a pencil so as to make them unreadable. What became of the Bible no one seems to know.

All Wondered at the Stranger

One Sunday in April, 1876, there walked into the Palestine church a broad shouldered young man with long, wavy hair, full cheeks and a steady step. He carried a large umbrella and seated himself in a pew well towards the front. As he sat down he took from his pocket a handkerchief and proceeded to wipe the sweat from his brow, his face and neck. The services were well advanced, the preacher being in the midst of his sermon. The stranger, who sat with a rapt attention, focused his eyes on the speaker while all around him the people sat wondering who the well featured stranger could be.

They got the stranger's name after the services — it was Hans Christian Holm, the new parochial school teacher in the congregation who was to spend the summer months with them.

A student at the seminary in Minneapolis he had come to Ames the previous evening. There being no one to meet him he started to walk the distance to the Palestine parsonage after having inquired the way. With a large valise in each hand and the umbrella under an arm he began to make the distance. He soon found out that he was not walking on a Minneapolis sidewalk, but over an Iowa mud road.

Sweaty and tired he stopped at a farm home. As woman with a kindly smile opened the door. To her he told of his plight. A peddler? That's what she took him to be, but soon changed her mind, invited him in and extended him every courtesy.

A long, restful sleep and a hearty breakfast made him feel fit for the rest of the walk. He reached the Palestine church well nigh the noon hour - among people with whom he labored for many years.

No history of the Palestine church would be complete without a mention of Golla Larson, the maternity nurse to many Palestine folks, including the writer. All the children liked to go to her home. She had a sining smile and her cupboard always yielding pieces of candy or tasty cookies. She was rich in human kindness and thought well of everybody.

We should be guilty of negligence if we did not mention two of the church's most faithful members, Lars and Martha Tesdahl. They were not only stalwarts in body, but in mind and soul as well. No matter who the preacher might be they were always there, working shoulder to shoulder with the man whom they had helped call to serve them as their spiritual advisor. They never made much noise, being rather reserved and lived a sincere life, faithful to the end.

The Palestine congregation today has three daughter congregations - the Bethlehem church at Slater, Bethany at Kelley and Nazareth at Cambridge.

For toil, hard, earnest work and self-denials none can quite equal those of the early pioneer women who toiled early and late, summer and winter, working side by side with her husband to provide for the home they had established. In speaking of those days Mrs. Ola Omb (Betsy Oino) told how she did the milking one summer. With the three children, one outside the pen, one in a bushel basket near her and the baby in her lap, singing it to sleep,

she did the milking, while her husband was busy with other work. And then - they were happy in their work.

Why the Heavy Emigration from Norway?

Why was the emigration from Norway so very heavy in the latter fifties, the sixties and the seventies? The reasons were probably many and varied. To some it was the Viking spirit of adventure. To the ambitious it was the prospect of material betterment — to make money. To some it was to meet loved ones who had gone before them and to establish a home. To many it was probably the economic condition in Norway - the question of making a living - a livelihood. This is expressed in a Norwegian song, composed by an emigrant. A few lines read thus:

Dog elsker vi dig Norge Med dine fjeld og vand Og vilde nodig bytte Med vestens prairier land.

Men naar det gjelder brodet Er det saa strengt et bud At vi som skovens fugle Snart maa of redet ud.

After Eighty-Five Years

Eighty-five years have now passed since that eventful day when the charter members of the Palestine congregation met out on the open Iowa prairie for their first divine service in this part of the country. Eighty-five years is a long time. As the years came and went these pioneers witnessed a marvelous transformation — that of the wild prairie being changed into fine fruitful farms and the countryside dotted with churches, school houses and beautiful homes where live a God-fearing peace-loving people.

The Palestine Church with its spire pointing men heavenward and its church bell calling them to worship, has stood through all the changes of the years. Not only has the topography of the country changed, but the people, too, have changed their mode of living and their manner of thinking and doing. The pioneers have gone. A new generation has come to take their place, and the children of today will be the active Palestine congregation of tomorrow. Many of the old things have passed away; some have outlived their usefulness, some of them having become relics almost over night.

Not so in the spiritual realm - the heritage of our fathers. All these years the spirit that actuated the pioneers has lived on. The same faith, the same hope and the same love that pulsated in their lives is still at work in our midst. God is the same, His Word is the same and Christ is the same — yesterday, today and forever.

Let us continue to build on the same foundation upon which our pioneer fathers and mothers have built so wisely and so well.

Andrew and Bessie (Wald) Maland

As an educator and molder of public opinion, Andrew Maland, proprietor and editor of the Slater News, was accorded general recognition in Story County. His personal worth and his valuable service as a leader in politics received recognition by President Theodore Roosevelt, who appointed him postmaster of Slater. Thrown upon his own resources at an early age, he overcame every obstacle and through his undaunted perseverance, won his way to a position of responsibility.

He was born in Palestine Township on January 19, 1874, a son of John and Engebor Maland. The parents were both born in Norway and were married in their native country, coming to the United States in 1860. They spent one year at Morris, IL, and then located in Story County, Iowa. Andrew's father purchased 80 acres of land on Section 36, Palestine Township, on which he resided until his death in 1895.

Andrew Maland was reared under conditions that early acquainted him with hard work. He possessed limited advantages of education in the district schools but was ambitious to study the higher branches, believing that if he had a good mental training, he could better perform his part in the world. When 16 years of age, he was in attendance at the State Normal School at Cedar Falls, working of his board and in various ways earning money to pay his expenses. That he succeeded is shown by the fact of his coming home after the first term with \$15 in his pocket.

He also attended Highland Park College and at 19 years of age, began teaching at Renwick, where he continued for two years, then going to Humboldt, where he taught for one year and from there to Huxley, where he taught for three years. He completed his training at the State Normal School in 1899, but, having come to the conclusion that the remuneration for educational work was too small, he gave up teaching. Going to Slater, he formed a partnership with O. J. Viland and purchased the furniture business of Halverson Brothers, the new firm being known as Maland & Viland. In 1902 they purchased the Slater News, a weekly newspaper, and Mr. Maland continued its publication under the same title, also remaining in the furniture business. In 1906, he was appointed postmaster of Slater, and the printing plant and post office demanding his entire time, he and Mr. Viland mutually agreed to sever their business relations. Mr. Viland taking the furniture store and Mr. Maland the printing plant. He was also successfully identified with other business enterprises, being secretary and manager of the Farmers Cooperative Creamery Company for five years, carrying the concern through its early struggle and placing it on a substantial basis.

On October 10, 1900, Mr. Maland was united in marriage to Miss Bessie Wald, a sister of S. O. Wald, an attorney of Slater, and previous to her marriage a popular teacher in the area. Two children blessed this union: Ella B. and Obert J. Mrs. Maland was called from earthly scenes on January 10, 1909. She was a woman of many estimable qualities and her death was the severest loss Mr. Maland had ever known.

Politically he was, from the time of casting his first ballot, in thorough sympathy with the Republican Party. Since the age of 15 years, he was connected with public office, having served as township committeeman, member of the school board, member of the town council

and in other capacities. He was a prominent factor in local policies and in 1910 was campaign manager, succeeding in nominating H. S. Helland as a member of the legislature. He was a leader in every movement pertaining to the welfare of Slater and vicinity, going to the extremes of guaranteeing payment for good public entertainments for the town.. Fraternally he was identified with the Slater Lodge No. 384, I.O.Q.F., and in religious affairs he gave his allegiance to the Lutheran church, for four years serving as superintendent of the Sunday School and leader of the choir. He was the organizer of the Central Luther League and its secretary for several years, from which was developed the Luther League of Iowa, one of the most important movements in the Lutheran church in this part of the country at the time.

Appendix

Foods

Lutefisk: Cod fish, treated in a lye solution and served boiled. Literal translation: "Lye (boiled) fish". Lefsa: (lefse) A thin pancake from rolled dough served buttered and folded, and sometimes sugared. Kringla: (kringle) A rolled, round, or twisted--pretzel shaped pastry. Komla: A type of candy. Helliga Yule rice: "Sacred Christmas rice".

Length

Alen - From 1687 1 alen was 62. 8 cm. , and in 1824 this was adjusted to 62. 75 cm. Alnemålet (same as an alen) was equal to 2 feet (actually 2 $\frac{3}{4}$ ") and equal to 24 tommar. In the middle ages the alna was somewhat smaller.

Famn - Customarily reckoned to be 3 alen or about 6 feet.

Mil - One Norwegian mile before the metric system (which was adopted in 1870). The distance was reckoned to be 18,000 alen, or about 11. 3 km (about 7 miles). In the mountain and forest reckoning the Norwegian mile was shorter.

Rast - A measure of distance between two resting places, or a stretch of road one can walk without resting. The distance varies from place to place according to the terrain. This was probably the basis for the Norwegian mile.

Tomme - 24 tommar = 1 alen. From 1824 1 tommen = 2. 615 cm. (about 1 inch).

Veke sjø - Of distance measured on the sea. In old Norwegian written vika sjovar. The distance between two harbors. Alternatively, distance from place to place by water. The origin was probably the Norwegian mile, but the measured distance was to be sure often somewhat smaller.

Weights and Measures

Bismarpund (pound) - 5. 14 kg. , graduated into 24 marks. Later somewhat larger, in 1824 adjusted to 5. 977 kg.

Kvintin - About 4 grams. (see lodd)

Laup - Weight and measurement for butter (smør). 17. 43 kg. , divided into 3 bismarpund, and equal to 72 mark. Also measures 16. 2 liters.
(One Laup smør = a bucket of butter!).

Lodd - Small measurements used on a balance for precious metals, equal to 1/16 mark, graduated into 4 Kvintinar.

Mark - Measured in bismar-measures, originally 214. 32 grams (24 mark = 1 bismarpund). In 1824 adjusted to 249. 056 grams. The mark in the shipping system was somewhat larger. In addition, the mark was used in minting coins, and was graduated into 16 skilling.

Skippund (shipping pound) - There existed from the middle ages different skippund systems with weights that varied between about 148 and 185 kg. From 1683 the skippund was standardized to 159. 7 kg. In western Norway the skippund was graduated into 4 vetter and the vett into 6 spann.

Spann - There were 24 spann in one skippund. (1 spann = 6. 65 kg.)

Tonne (tonn) - Weight and measurement used for grain and salt and also for fish (especially herring). From 1683 1 tønna was equal to 139. 4 liter, in earlier times this was somewhat larger. 1 tonne barley = 90 kg. 1 tonne oats = 62 kg. 1 tonne mixed grain (barley with oats) = 79 kg.

Vett - There were 4 vetter in one skippund (about 40 kg.)

Property and Money

Månadsmatsbol (month's rent) - For property which required yearly or monthly rent and property taxes, this was paid with one month's food, or a renter may owe for one month's food. Reckoned to be 1 laup smør.

Skyldmark - Land registers were organized in order to prepare tax rolls in 1886. The Skyldmark was the unit used in assessing land value for taxation.

1 Skyldmark = 1 Krone (crown) = ~ 14 cents.

1 Skyldmark = 100 øre (1 øre = ~0. 14 cents);

Spesiedalar (spd.) - This was a coin which was worth about one dollar.

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