

## 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 Taljge, Rogaland county, in south western Norway. In the church book her name is written “Udbjørg Bertine

Ølsdatter Andersdatter Gaard".<sup>32</sup> 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".

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

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

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 Elkart 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.<sup>33</sup> <sup>34</sup>

14.	Udbjørg Bertine Goddotter Andersdotter Gaard	19 Juli i Talje sister	Anders Olsen Gaard & yngre q f. Siri Thorbjorn dotter	Elisabeth. Guri Megland Anne Rasmussen st. Gaard, Ras, nis Enda Gaard Anders Mortg. Hauge Hedendo Gaard & yngre
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33 From La Salle county, Illinois marriage records

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

## Udflyttede (ogsaa Børn.)

a Folio

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de	Medbragte Akterster.	No.	Opgiven Datum.	N a v n.	Alder.	Til hvad Sted.
ns	Blaa fra Tjenset. Gjort d. 20/1-52.	1.	(1851)	Hansie Henriksen	fold 1820.	
ns		2.	- " -	Helle i frue		til
ns		3.	- " -	Anna Kjeldstatter.	1829	Slavas-
ns		4.	- " -	Hansie - - -	1840	Brøndum
	Akt. af fra Brugor. Dietrichson af 20/3-55.-	5.	1855.	Mallene Einarsdott ter - - -	43.	{ til Brøndum
		6.	- " -	Margrethe Marie Andersdatter Gaard	27.	
	Blaa fra Tjenset. Dietrichson af 10/4-55.-	7.	- " -	Ulbjorg Berthune Andersdatter Gaard	20	
		8.	- " -	Valentin Valentine Lecim - - -	33.	til Brøndum
	Akt. af fra Brugor 10/4-55.-	9.	- " -	Rasmussen Klemmis i. Klemmis - - -	96	90.



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

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 14<sup>th</sup> day of  
Sept. 1855.

Sam'l M. Raymond Clerk  
La Salle Co.

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 15<sup>th</sup> day of September 1855, solemnize the Rite of Marriage between Ole Olson and Betsy Anderson, herein named.



31		Brooks, Gates	26	m	
32		Jane	24	f	
33		Ellen	5	f	
34	2002 2117	Ole Olson	30	m	
35		Patsy	25	f	
36		Serine	3	f	
37		Sophie	1	f	
38	2103 2118	Rasmus Williamson	37	m	
39		Julia	37	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 O'Elton Oli	35 M M farmer	600	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	— Charcoal	6 M M			A	
16	— Bernard	4 M M			A	
17	— Lewis	6 M M			A	
18	119 120 O'Elton Andrew	27 M M farmer	1400	750	100	
19	— Margaret	25 M M			A	

1870 census for Elkhart township, Polk county, Iowa.

" Anna	W H 7	Sister	
" Berlin	W M 4	Sister	
old Martha	W F 16	Grand 1	Working house
Eliza. Oleg.	W M 53	Mother 1	Warren
" Abby	W F 13	Mother 1	Refugees
" Hazel	W F 22	Sister 1	
" Lydia	W 4 14	Sister 1	
" Ella	W M 18	Sister 1	
" Amanda	W M 17	Sister 1	
" Scrappy	W M 14	Sister	
" Martha	W M 11	Mother	
" Harry	W F 7	Daughter	
" Sophie	W F 4	Sister	
" Hazel	W F 1	Sister	
Grover Harry	W F 22	Second 1	Working house
Garrett Andrew	W M 61	Mother 1	Fracino

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 1 is used.

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.

Deed 1975 Upshaws

Know all men by these presents  
that we, Olly J. Olson and, Poetry J. Olson, 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 Wde M. Upshaw of the County of  
Kings and State of New York, party of the second part, its  
receipt whereof is hereby acknowledged, do hereby sell and  
Convey unto the said party of the second part, the following  
described premises situated in the County of Polk, and State  
of Iowa, to wit:

The North East fractional Quarter (1/4) of  
Section four (4) in Township Eighty North  
Range Twenty - Three (23) West 5 P.M.

I have and do hold the above described premises, together  
with all and singular the appurtenances now or hereafter in  
anywise belonging or appertaining thereto; the saleation  
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, their 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 effect of one bond  
bund for the principal sum of Six Hundred Dollars  
bearing interest to herewith, and payable for year from  
the first day of January A.D. 1876, with interest thereon at  
the rate of ten per centum per annum, payable semi-annual  
as provided by law composed, numbered from one to six  
inclusive, attached to the said bond, to wit: - on the first  
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 per centum per annum, to the  
last day of December in each year thereafter to the

1st of this Mortgage to  
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