

## Ole Ellestad and Sigrid Ellestad, Charter Members of West Norway Lake Lutheran Church

A local church history book<sup>1</sup> has this:

**Ole Ellestad (1842-1828).** Ole Ellestad from Valdres, Norway. He married Sigrid Hollen and came to Goodhue County Minnesota in 1866 and to Swift County, Minnesota in 1869. They had six children: Emma, Sophia, Theolina, Ida, and Thomas.

(Although 6 children are mentioned, only 5 are named.)

Further information is found on grave markers<sup>2</sup> in the South Lake Johanna cemetery in Pope County:

Ole Tomasen Ellestad	2 April 1841 – 8 Jan 1928.
Sigrid Evensdatter Holien Ellestad,	24 August 1858 - 10 February 1918.

Several censuses (see below) give a very different date for Sigri's birth.

In the 1875 census<sup>3</sup> for Kerkhoven, Swift County, Ole (initial unreadable) Ellestad (age unreadable) is listed with Sigri (26), Betsey L. (3), Anne T. (1), and Julia (0). The parents' birthplace is Norway, the children's Minnesota.

In the 1880 census, we have O. J. Ellestad (39), a resident of Kerkhoven, Swift County. With him are Sigri (31), Betsy (8), Anne (6), Ida (5), Sophia (1).

In the 1885 census for Kerkhoven, Swift County, Ole (age 44) is listed with wife Sigrid (36), both born in Norway. Also in the house are Betsey (13), Anna (11), Julia (9), Soffia (6), female (name unreadable, age 3) and Thomas (3 months).

In the 1895 census, Ole T. Ellestad (age 54) and wife Sigri (46) in Kerkhoven, Swift County. With them are Lunna (23, clearly this is Betsy Laura), Thomas (10), and Vidtor Ellestad (7).

In the 1900 census of Kerkhoven, Swift County, we find

Ole (born April 1841) and  
Sigri (born July 1848).

They have been in the USA for 31 years. **Sigri is the mother of 9 children, 6 living.** Others in the household are: Thomas (born February 1885) and Victor (born March 1888). The parents were born in Norway, the children in Minnesota.

In the 1905 census, Ole Ellestad (age 64) and wife Sigre (56) live at RFD3, Murdock. With them are Julia Rasmussen (30), Silvia Rasmussen (5), Roy Rasmussen (2), Tomas Ellestad (20), and Victor Ellestad (17).

The children's names do not match well between the censuses and the above-mentioned local church book. This is cleared up in baptism records<sup>4</sup> for the Norway Lake congregation, which show:

- Betsy Laura, born 12 March 1872 to Ole Thompsen Ellestad and Sigri Evensdatter;
- Anne Theoline, born 29 Dec 1873; to Ole T. Ellestad and Sigri Evensdatter, and
- Ida Julia, born 15 May 1875, to Ole T. Ellestad and Sigri Evensdatter.

Apparently, the children were listed sometimes with their first names, sometimes with their second names. These records also confirm "Evensdatter" as part of Sigrid's name.

In agreement with the tombstone inscription, the death certificate<sup>5</sup> states that Ole T. Ellestad died January 8, 1928 in Swift County, Minnesota.

A search for Ole and Sigrid in Norwegian records was not productive. Two items were found, but it's not certain they are pertinent:

- A ship passenger list<sup>6</sup> has an Ole Thomsen Ellestad age 23 from Vestre Slidre on the *Frederick Peterson*, sailing from Bergen May 1, 1866.
- In the 1865 census of Ringsaker, Hedmark, Norway<sup>7</sup> there is a Sigrid Evensdatter, born 1848 in Vardal. She is a servant girl in a household with 22 people.

More information is available in an ancestry.com posting<sup>8</sup>, including the family's life in North Dakota in the early 1900s.

Report prepared by Earl O. Knutson, September, 2018.

1 Monson Lake Lutheran Church, Sunburg, Minnesota. 1886-1986. Edited by Leonora Lindquist, Nora Gjerde, Cora Lesteburg, Rev. Jerry Lamb.

2 Findagrave.com. For Sigri, this web site adds "born in in Vang, Oppland, Norway, died in Dunn County, ND."

3 All census data were accessed via Ancestry.com

4 These Evangelical Lutheran Church in America records were accessed through Ancestry.com

5 Accessed via Ancestry.com

6 Norwayheritage.com

7 [http://www.rhd.uit.no/folketelling/ftliste\\_e.aspx?ft=1865&knr=0412&kenr=004&bnr=0024&lnr=000](http://www.rhd.uit.no/folketelling/ftliste_e.aspx?ft=1865&knr=0412&kenr=004&bnr=0024&lnr=000)

8 <https://www.ancestry.com/family-tree/person/tree/40823224/person/19889095786/facts>