

Guttorem Ellingson and Kari Thorsdatter, Charter Members of West Norway Lake Lutheran Church

Guttorem Ellingson sometimes used the last name Tollefsrud. This is shown in a local county history book¹:

Guttorm Ellingson Tollefsrud contributed funds for building the West Norway Lake church.

This suggests that he emigrated from a farm named Tollefsrud, of which there are 9 in Norway, 8 in Oppland and 1 in Flå, Hallingdal, Buskerud.

Telling of immigrants that came to the Norway Lake area in 1872, a local church history book² has;

Guttorm E. Tollefsrud, born in Hallingdal. Married with Kari Stavn, born in Hallingdal. To St. Ansgar, Iowa 1869. Tollefsrud and Stavn are neighboring farms in Flå, Hallingdal, Buskerud, Norway³.

According to Norwegian church records, Guttorm was born⁴ 8 October 1843 to Elling Bjørnsen Tollefsrud and Guri Guttormsdatter on the Tollefsrud farm in Flå, Hallingdal, Buskerud, Norway. Kari was born⁵ 28 February 1840 to Thor Knudsen Stavn and Margit Knudsdatter on the neighboring Stavn farm.

Guttorm probably had a humble beginning. In the 1865 census of Norway⁶, he is a hired man in the household of Peder Guttormsen on the Braategjordet farm, Nes, Hallingdal, Buskerud. The relationship between the hired man and the householder is not known.

In Norwegian church records we find that Guttorm and Kari were married⁷ 18 April 1868 in Næs Parish, Hallingdal, Buskerud. Their daughter Guri was born⁸ 25 May 1868. There is a record that the family of three, and a brother Peder, signed out of that parish⁹ in April of 1869.

In the 1875 census¹⁰, Guttorm Ellingson (age 31, born in Norway) is resident in Norway Lake Township, Kandiyohi County. With him are: Kari (34, Norway), Gurid (7, Norway), Elling (4, IA), and Theodore (1, MN).

In the 1880 census, Guttorm Ellingson (age 37) is in the same place. With him are Kari (40), Guri (12), Eling (9), Theodor (7), and Peder (3).

In the 1900 census of Norway Lake Township, Kandiyohi County:

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|---------------------------------|-----------------------------|--------------|------------------------|
| 1. Guttorm E. Tollefsrud, | born Oct 1843 in Norway, | immig. 1869 | |
| 2. wife Kari, | born Feb 1840 in Norway, | immig. 1869, | mother of 6, 5 living. |
| 3. Son Theodor, | born May 1873 in Minnesota | | |
| 4. son Gilbert, | born Aug 1881 in Minnesota | | |
| 5. son Elling, | born Sept 1870 in Iowa | | |
| 6. daughter-in-law Ingeborg A., | born Jul 1879 in Minnesota | | |
| 7. grandson Gilbert J., | born Sept 1899 in Minnesota | | |

Guttorm and family also appear in the 1895, 1905, 1910 and 1920 censuses.

There are grave markers in the cemetery at the West Norway Lake Lutheran Church with the inscriptions:

"Guttorm" E. Tollefsrud, 8 Oct 1843 – 24 Apr 1929

Kari Tollefsrud, 28 Feb 1840 – 24 Feb 1926

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

1 Illustrated History of Kandiyohi County, 1905: p 341

2 Festschrift: en Fremstilling af det Kirkelige Arbejde i Norway Lake, 1862-1916. By Mons Sotendahl og N.J. Njus. Page 39; read in page 10 of a translation by Edna Rude, Gary MN, published by Peter Gandrud.

3 Norwayparishes.com. Search for Tollefsrud

4 <https://media.digitalarkivet.no/view/1110/149>

5 <https://media.digitalarkivet.no/view/1110/113>; Her older sister, also Kari, was born 12 October 1838 and died at age 6 months. <https://media.digitalarkivet.no/view/1110/96>; <https://media.digitalarkivet.no/view/1110/561>

6 http://www.rhd.uit.no/folketelling/ftliste_e.aspx?ft=1865&knr=0616&kenr=003&bnr=0049&lnr=000

7 <https://media.digitalarkivet.no/view/5561/229>

8 <https://media.digitalarkivet.no/view/5561/41>

9 <https://media.digitalarkivet.no/view/5561/316>, lines 76-79.

10 All US census records accessed via Ancestry.com