

## Johannes Halvorson, Charter Member of East Norway Lake Lutheran Church.

[Johannes was a widower at the time the church was chartered, so no spouse is included in the title.]

A venerable church history book<sup>1</sup> has this: “Johannes Halvorson, from Gudbrandsdalen. Came to Rock Prairie with his father. Came to Norway Lake 1859. Married with Oline Olsdatter from Lesje, Gudbrandsdalen. Came to Norway Lake 1868 died 1870. Married with Kristanse Hansdatter Hoff from Land. Came to Norway Lake.”

Johannes, later known as John, is honored with a substantial paragraph in a county history book<sup>2</sup>. It reads:

HALVORSON, JOHANNES – Born at Gausdal, Lands Parish, Norway, Oct. 7, 1836; came with family to Rock Prairie, Wisconsin in 1857; selected claim on NE¼ of sec. 18, July 25, 1859; located following year; when driven out by Indians spent four years at Fort Francis, Benton County. First wife, Oline Olsdatter; died in 1870; one son, John Oliver. Second wife, Christine Hoff; five children living by this marriage – four sons and one daughter – Bernard, Henry, Justin Hardwick, Magnus and Emily Josephine, all of whom live at Norway Lake except Justin, who lives in New London.

This was written while Johannes was still living, so we can expect it to be accurate.

Norwegian baptism records confirm<sup>3</sup> the above-stated date of birth and place of baptism. The father's name is listed as Haavel Halvorson Nygaard and the mother's as Berthe Hansdatter.

Norwegian church exit records show<sup>4</sup> that Johannes, his parents, and five of his siblings left the Lands, Torpa, Nordsinni, Østsinni Parish on June 18, 1857.

In census records, this individual alternated between the names Johannes and John. In the 1860 census of Monongalia County, MN, John is listed in the household of his parents, along with two siblings. In 1870, John is head of a household in Harrison Township, Monongalia County. Residing with him are his spouse Oline, his father, and two siblings.

A microfilmed church record<sup>5</sup> shows that:

- Johannes Haavelsen and “Lina” Olsdatter were married on 3 November 1869. (Image 105)
- their son John Oliver was born on 19 August 1870 (Image 45).
- Lina Olsdatter died the same day her son was born. (Image 117)
- Johannes “Hovelsen” and Kristense Hanson Hoff were married on 26 April 1878. (Image 111)

The 1880 census of Lake Andrew Township has John Halvorson with spouse Christense and children Oliver, Benhart and Henry. Also in the household is John's older brother Halvor. In the 1895 census (of Minnesota) and the 1910 census of the same township, John's household includes Christense, Henry, Magnus and Emily. In the 1920 census, John has reverted to the name Johannes and is living in the household of his son Magnus.

To summarize, John and Christense's children were (image numbers are from the microfilm mentioned above and below):

1. Benhard, born 23 May 1878 – Image b 68
2. Henry, born 14 October 1879 – Image 71
3. Justin Hartvig, born 25 January 1881 - Image 76
4. Magnus, born 21 August 1882 - Image 81
5. Emily Josephine, born 15 February 1885 Image 87

From his obituary<sup>6</sup> we see that his death occurred on November 5, 1921 at age 85. It gives the married name of his daughter and the locations of his children. It also gives the news that a sister, Mrs. Martha Hanson of Bloomington, Nebraska, passed just 8 days after Johannes.

Prepared by Earl O. Knutson, February 2020

Closing notes:

- Three of Johannes' brothers are also charter members, and are written up elsewhere in this collection.
- A more comprehensive report on the Halvorson family can be found at <http://www.nllha.org/HalvorsonsofLakeAndrew.pdf>

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1 *Festskrift – En fremstilling af det kirkelige arbiede i Norway Lake fra 1862 – 1916*. Mons Sotendahl and N.J.Njus, Translation by Edna Rude. Published by Peter Gandrud, Bemidji, MN

2 *Illustrated History of Kandiyohi County, 1905*. <http://cdm16022.contentdm.oclc.org/cdm/ref/collection/p15160coll5/id/944> Page 281

3 <https://media.digitalarkivet.no/view/9290/91>

4 <https://media.digitalarkivet.no/view/8980/168>

5 Microfilm of records stored at the First Lutheran Church of Norway Lake, viewed via Ancestry.com.

6 New London Times, Nov. 17, 1921, viewed at the Kandiyohi County Historical Museum.