

Lars Johnsen and Bertha Marie Jacobsen, Charter members East Norway Lake Church

Lars Johnsen's obituary states he was born in Balstad, Telemark, Norway 11 Aug 1830. I think Lars was born 7 Aug 1830 to John Pedersen and Sigrid Jensdatter of Ballestad, Gjerpen Parish, Telemark, Norway.

I was not able to verify the date of his emigration, 1900 census says 1852 and Festskrift says 1864 to Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

Again according to his obituary he married Bertha Marie Jacobsen of Muskego, Racine County, Wisconsin 10 Oct 1867.

Bertha Marie was the 6th child of Peder Jacobsen [1801-1881] and Gunnild Kirstine Larsdatter [1806-1899]. Peder and Gunnild emigrated in 1844 with their 4 oldest children. Also emigrating at the same time were his widowed mother Anna Tollevsdatter, brother Johannes and his family and brother Niels. The families left Porsgrunn, Norway 21 May on the brig Washington arriving 9 July in New York. Peder and his brothers occupations were listed as carpenters on the ships manifest. The families settled in Muskego, Racine County, Wisconsin, one of the first Norwegian settlements, and were involved in building the "Old Muskego" log church in 1844. Bertha Marie was born there 21 May 1848.

Lars and Bertha Marie moved to the Norway Lake area in 1868, possibly following her Uncle Johannes and his family who had settled there in 1867.

Lars homesteaded 80 acres in Arctander Township in 1869 [NW1/2 of SW1/4 of section 20]. He received title to this property 25 Feb 1875. He also purchased an additional 80 acres in sec 19 {N1/2 of SE1/4}.

Lars and Bertha Marie had 10 children, 8 survived to adulthood. All were baptized at the Norway Lake or east Norway Lake Church.

1. Julius Elmer: born 23 Dec 1868, died after 1940, married Thea, 2 children
2. Pauline Gustava: born 14 Jan 1871, died 10 Mar 1942, married Algot Westerdahl, 4 children
3. Alfred Ludvig: born 13 Aug 1872, died 17 Feb 1904, married Emma Nelson
4. Josefina Sofie: born 15 July 1875, died 12 Dec 1967, married Albert Amundsen, 4 children
5. Arnest/Ernest William: born 15 Mar 1878, died 1934, single
6. Lewis/Louis: born 6 Aug 1881, died possibly 14 Mar 1943, single
7. Luella: born 6 Aug 1881, died 25 Sept 1881
8. Louise: born 20 Nov 1882, died 26 April 1883
9. Luella: born 20 Nov 1882, died after 1940, married I. Magnus Hanson, 1 child
10. Louise Bertine: born 5 Aug 1887, died possibly 1944 in Minneapolis, single

Lars was instrumental in the establishment of School District 54 in sec 29. The petition was granted 15 Mai 1872. Lars served as the district's first treasurer.

Lars Johnsen died suddenly 12 Dec 1907, age 77, after returning home from a walk to the mailbox. Services were held 17 Dec at the East Norway Lake Church with internment in the cemetery. Rev M.A. Sotendahl presided. The 1900 plat map shows he had already passed ownership of his farm to his sons Ernest William and Lewis

Bertha Marie passes away 15 April 1915 and after services 20 April at East Norway Lake. She is buried in the church cemetery.

Bertha Marie's Uncle Johannes Jacobsen and his wife were also charter members of East Norway Lake Church.

Written by Carole Heimdahl, April 2020

Sources:

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• My Heritage• Family Search• US Land Office records• Newspapers.com	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ancestry.com and Public member trees• NLLHA biography of Johannes Jacobsen• Digitalarkviet-birth records• 1886 and 1900 Plat maps
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Footnotes:

1. Church records mistakenly list Luella rather than Louise as the twin that died in 1883
2. Biography of Johannes says that after landing in New York the families "traveled by boat on the Erie canal and on through the Great Lakes to Chicago and Milwaukee".
3. The "old Muskego" log church built in 1844 now resides on the Luther Seminary campus in St. Paul