

Truls Narveson Lesteberg^{1,2,3}, Charter Member of East Norway Lake Lutheran Church

by Patricia Lindgren, St. Paul, Minnesota

Truls Narveson Lesteberg was born February 2, 1832 in Eggedal, Buskerud, Norway. His parents were Narve Kristofferson Lesteberg (1803-1839) and Viel Andersdatter Glesne (1807-1878). His family, who came originally from the Ringnes farm, at one time laid claim to the farms of Nore, Narum, and Lesteberg. But by the time his father was born, he owned only Lesteberg and his cousins owned the other farms. Narve worked as a boat driver on the Noresund, where he drowned at the age of 36, leaving his third son Truls without a father at the age of 7.

His mother Viel remarried Ole Grimeli and had three more children. When his brother Kristoffer decided to sell Lesteberg to their youngest half-brother Erik and move to America in 1867 with his wife and baby daughter, Truls went with him. Truls traveled by steamship to America with his brother's family, landing first to Fillmore County in Minnesota. The Sigdal history says that they stayed first in Fillmore County with his cousin Anders Enga. I can't help wondering if that "cousin" wasn't really his brother Anders who had emigrated to the USA in 1852. All the Lestebergs except Erik eventually emigrated to America.

Truls and Kristoffer eventually moved to the Norway Lake settlement in Kandiyohi County in 1869. The family stayed that first winter in the sod house that Even Railson, another immigrant from Sigdal, had built the first year he came to America. The following spring, they filed homestead claims on land in Arctander Township, Kandiyohi County, Minnesota and built their own homes.

Truls Narveson Lesteberg married Maria Isaksdatter Redalen of Fillmore County on June 12, 1884. They were married at Norway Lake Lutheran Church. Truls would have been 52 years old at the time of his marriage. Maria was born in 1854, and would have been 30 years old at the time of her marriage to Truls. Truls and Maria Lesteberg had three children: Wiel (1884), Norvald (1886) and Maria Thea (1889). The children were all baptized at Norway Lake Lutheran Church (later renamed East Norway Lake).

1885 Arctander Township property tax records state that Truls Narveson answered for the taxes on the W ½ of the SE ¼ of Section 33, valuation \$557, and he paid \$6 in property tax. The 1886 Arctander Township plat map shows T. Narveson owning the W ½ of the SE ¼ of Section 34, in total 80 acres. This is most likely meant to be the same property in both records, but one of them is off by one section. The 1905 property tax records show Truls paying \$6 in taxes on the W ½ of SE ¼ of Section 34, valued at \$994. Truls' property is 6 miles away from his brother Kristoffer's farm on opposite ends of the same township.

Truls Narveson died September 15, 1889 at the age of 57. He is buried at East Norway Lake Lutheran Church cemetery, and his grave has an old-fashioned Norwegian soft-stone headstone. In December of 1890, Iver and Anna Syse became the legal guardians of Truls and Maria Narveson Lesteberg's minor children Viel, Norvald, and Thea upon the petition of Trul's widow Maria (source: Probate Court).

Maria and Truls' children:

1. Wiel Johnson, 1884-1964, Norway Lake, MN, Farmer. Viel married Floyd Johnson in 1915 and had six children: Fredolph (1916), Harold (1918-1985), Freddie (1919-1944) - died in WW2 in Italy from friendly fire, Olive Butler (1921), Orall (1923-1996), and Arline Payne/Dunlap (1927).
2. Norvald Lesteberg, 1886-1970, Starbuck/Benson, MN, Farm implement mechanic/farmer. Norval Lesteberg married Helen Suchow, a widow with four children. Norval and Helen had one daughter: lone Nauschultz (1922-1998).
3. M. Thea Lesteberg, 1889-1969, Velva/Minot, ND, Farmer. Thea and her husband Gilbert Lesteberg (who were spelling their name as Lesterberg) owned a farm in Brown Township, McHenry County, North Dakota near the town of Velva. Thea had four children in the 1920 census: Irene (1910), Thelma (1912), Elwin (1915), and Grace (1919).

Sources⁴

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- 1 This writing by Patricia Lindgren has been shortened by Earl Knutson to fit in the available space.
 - 2 Since Truls was not married at the time of chartering, no spouse is listed in the heading.
 - 3 Trul's brother Kristoffer and his half-brother Narve, also charter members, have separate pieces in this collection.
 - 4 The list of sources for the information presented is too long to be included here. Those interested should contact Patricia Lindgren.