

## Erik Paulson and Johanna Lundberg, Charter members of West Norway Lake Lutheran Church

A venerable church history book<sup>1</sup> gives this starting point:

Eric Paulson, from Ringerike. Came to McGregor 1861; to Norway Lake 1865. Married with Johanna Lundberg, from Vestergötland, Sweden. Came with her parents to Norway Lake 1861.

Full obituaries of Erik and Johanna are easily available at Findagrave.com<sup>2</sup>. They tell the very eventful life of both. Erik's grave marker<sup>3</sup> at the above church's cemetery reads ERICK PAULSON, CO. D, 21 IOWA INF. (This is a hint that the McGregor referred to above must be McGregor, Iowa.)

For Erick, the obituary states that the place of birth was Ringerike Kommune, Buskerud Fylke, Norway and the date was 12 August 1840. The date of death was 2 June 1921. It is also stated that Erik's father died when he was 6 years old and that Erik emigrated in 1861. Little is known about the trip to America. It is likely that his mother emigrated with him, since she died<sup>4</sup> in Arctander Township at age 101. They probably lived in IA for a time, since Erik enlisted<sup>5</sup> with the 21<sup>st</sup> Iowa Infantry on 15 August, 1862. He mustered out in 1865.

Erik's birth place is confirmed<sup>6</sup> in the birth/baptism section of the church book for Hønefoss, Norderhov, Buskerud, Norway. His parents are Paul Knudson Bjerkeie and Jørun Larsdatter. The handwritten birth date appears to be 19 (but could be 12) August 1840.

Johanna's obituary gives her birth date and place as 21 December 1848 in Skövde, Skövde Kommun, Västra Götelands län, Sweden. (On the modern map of Sweden Västra Götelands län is on Sweden's west coast, abutting the southeast tip of Norway. Skövde is a city well inland. In modern times, their main product is Volvo vehicles.) Her parents were Andreas and Lena Lundborg. The whole family - the parents and 6 children – emigrated to Minnesota in 1861. It is reported<sup>7</sup> that they came through Boston in June of 1861 and arrived in the West Lake settlement on 15 July. 1861.

Johanna was one of the survivors of the 20 August 1862 massacre at West Lake. The family's life in this period of time is told in the obituary and in other places. Likewise, Eric's experiences while in the Civil War are briefly told in his obituary.

Johanna's obituary states:

In 1869 she was married to Erick Paulson, who had served in the army during the Civil War. The ceremony was performed by Rev. Lundblad at the old log church near New London.

(This marriage was not recorded in the old log church congregational records, perhaps due to a guest minister. Eric's obituary gives 1870 as the marriage year.)

In the 1880 census of Arctander Township, the family's name appears to be "Paul." The household was Erik, age 39; Johannah, 31; Lena, 8; Samuel, 6; Emma, 4; Peter, 2; Karen Syverson, 25; Joran Larson, 86. Joran Larson is clearly Erick's mother, Jøran Larsdatter. Karen is a domestic.

In the 1900 census of the same place, Lina, age 28, is at home and there are two more children: Frank L., age 19; Selma 16. There is also a boarder, Hilda Norman, age 19. It is stated that the couple have been married 30 years, and that Johanna had borne 8 children, with 6 still living.

From Johanna's obituary and other sources, this is a list of their offspring (not including the two that died young):

1. Lina,	16 Apr 1872	Mrs Bernt Thopmson
2. Samuel Adolf,	28 Jun 1874	
3. Emma Johanna,	2 Feb 1876	Mrs. Martin Quamme
4. Peter Herman,	16 Jun 1878    24 Mar 1887	
5. Frank Louis,	13 Sep 1880	
6. Selma Elise,	27 Oct 1883    1955	Mrs. A. G. Spiess

Report prepared by Earl O. Knutson, April 2020

1 *Festskrift – En Fremstilling af det Kirkelege Arbeid i Norway Lake fra 1862 – 1916*. Translated by Edna Rude, Gary, MN. Translation promulgated by Peder C. Gandrud, Bemidji, MN. Page 2 of the translation .

2 Also available in the Willmar Tribune, March 29, 1916, page 1 and June 15, 1921, page 2.

3 Viewed at Findagrave.com

4 *The Illustrated History of Kandiyohi County Minnesota, 1905*, Victor E. Lawson, Martin E. Tew, J. Emil Nelson. <http://cdm16022.contentdm.oclc.org/cdm/ref/collection/p15160coll5/id/944> Image umn183828 Page 114

5 *The Illustrated History...* Image Umn183835, page 121

6 <https://media.digitalarkivet.no/view/1111/62>

7 *The Illustrated History...* Image Umn183834, Arctander biographies, page 120