

Narve Nilsen Raaen¹ and Helga Andersdatter, Charter Members of West Norway lake Lutheran Church

Narve Nilsen Raaen was born 1 Sept. 1836 to parents Nils Narvesen and Aase Eriksdatter on the farm Raaen in Krødsherad, Buskerud, Norway². One source³ says Narve was their 3rd child. In 1865 census⁴, Narve is listed as co-owner of the farm with his younger brother.

Helga Andersdatter was born⁵ September 17, 1841 to parents Anders Trulsen and Jertrud Eriksdatter on the Havig farm, Norderhov, Buskerud, Norway. Norderhov is about 20 miles east of the Raaen farm. In the 1865 census⁶, Helga is listed in her parents' house (mother's name spelled Gjertrud), the eldest of 5 siblings. Helga's infant son Anders Eriksen is also listed.

On April 22, 1867 Narve and Helga were married⁷ in the Krødsherad church. On the following day, the couple formally left that church⁸. A few days later they (and a 2 year old child, obviously Helga's son Anders) are on board the ship Flora⁹, which sailed from Drammen on May 3 and arrived at Quebec on June 11.

A local history book shows¹⁰ that Narve "H" Raaen homesteaded on Section 14 of Norway Lake Township on July 1, 1869.

In the 1875 census¹¹ of Norway Lake Township, there is a listing with the family name Nelson. Those listed are: Narve (age 38), Helga (33), Anders (10), Nels (6), Aase (4), Jorgen (2), and Maria (0). In the 1880 census, same township, the family name appears to be Nilson; there is an added child, Edvart (3).

As reported in a local history book¹², tragedy struck in 1881:

"May 13, 1881, Helga Andersdatter and a little boy, Erick Nelson, drowned in a little lake in Section 14."

In the 1885 census of Norway Lake Township, the family name is once again Raaen. Those listed are Narve and the 5 youngest children. In the 1900 census, there is the widower "Norve Raan," his son "George," and his niece Bertha Raan.

In the 1905 census for Norway Lake Township, Narve N. Raaen is residing in the home of his daughter Maria Leite.

A local history book¹³ shows that Narve was active in the Norway Lake community: in 1878, Narve N. Raaen was one of those who signed a petition to request a new school, which became District 72; in 1875, Narve Raaen was elected secretary of the newly formed West Lake Church.

Family sources say that Narve died on May 23, 1912 and is buried in Starbuck, MN.

This summary prepared by Earl O. Knutson based on information collected by descendants Bernice Leite and Cathy Monson, and shared by descendant Dan Leite.

- 1 Researching this family by internet was difficult owing to the various spellings (Råen, Raaen, Raan, Roen, Nelson, Nilsen) of the family name. Thankfully, information provided by descendants Kathy Monson and Bernice Leite, and shared by another descendant, Dan Leite, have made it possible to write this summary.
- 2 Baptism record Krødsherad kirkebøker, F/Fa/L0002: Ministerialbok nr. 2, 1829-1851, s. 24, Viewed at media.arkivverket.no
- 3 *Krødsherad Gard og Slekt, Bind I,*
- 4 1865 census of Norway, viewed at http://www.rhd.uit.no/folketellinger/folketellinger_avansert_e.aspx
- 5 This information is from Raaen descendants.
- 6 1865 census of Norway, viewed at http://www.rhd.uit.no/folketellinger/folketellinger_avansert_e.aspx
- 7 Krødsherad kirkebøker, F/Fa/L0003: Ministerialbok nr. 3, 1851-1872, s. 211. Viewed at media.arkivverket.no
- 8 Krødsherad kirkebøker, F/Fa/L0003: Ministerialbok nr. 3, 1851-1872, s.315. Viewed at media.arkivverket.no
- 9 Viewed on norwayheritage.com.
- 10 Illustrated History of Kandiyohi County, 1905, p.343; viewed at reflections.mndigital.org/catalog/p15160coll5:42
- 11 All MN census data were viewed via Ancestry.com.
- 12 Illustrated History of Kandiyohi County, 1905, p.338; viewed at reflections.mndigital.org/catalog/p15160coll5:42
- 13 Illustrated History of Kandiyohi County, 1905, pp.340 and 341; viewed at reflections.mndigital.org/catalog/p15160coll5:42