

Bjørn Reiersen and Sigrid Olsdatter Lauvli, Charter Members of East Norway Lake Lutheran Church.

The key dates and places for Bjørn and Sigrid Olsdr Lauvli Reiersen were given to their grandchildren including Burton O. Berry and Gladys Berry Madsen, both orally which they later transcribed, and both were given a copy of the Reiersen Oral Tradition Document, all confirmed by Norwegian Records found on ancestry.com and Sigdal bygdebok. Names evolved over time. Reiersen became Rierson with Bjørn and Sigrid's children. Sigrid was generally called Sigri and her last name was referred to as both Reiersen, Rierson and Olsdatter Lauvli (see Willmar Tribune obituary).

According to baptismal records, Bjørn Reiersen, Demma was born April 7, 1831 at Amundrud Farm, Sigdal Parish, Buskerud County, Norway. His parents were Reiedar Bjørnsen, Amundrud and Guri Pedersdatter, Halsteinrud.

Bjørn was married in Norway in 1857 to Ragne Helgesdatter, Rødningen. Bjørn and Ragne resided at Sigdal Parish on a small cottage named Demma on the Amundrud farm. Bjørn and Ragne had 2 children, Guri born 1858 and Gunhild born 1860. Ragne died in childbirth in 1860.

Bjørn and his two daughters emigrated from Norway with his sister Kari and her husband Erik, and their two children in 1861. According to family documents, Bjørn's baby daughter, Gunhild, got sick on the voyage over the Atlantic Ocean and died. She was buried at sea off Newfoundland, Canada. Emigration confirmed by list on sigdalslag.org and family history. Bjørn originally came to Spring Grove, MN and stayed there until 1862. In spring of 1862, he went to Grant County, WI where he stayed until 1865.

Sigrid Olsdatter Lauvli Reiersen was born October 29, 1840 at Lauvli, Sjøle, Sigdal Parish, Buskerud County, Norway. Her parents were Ole Olsen, Lauvli and Ragnhild Reiersedatter, Besserud. Sigrid's entire nuclear family emigrated to America. First to come was Sigrid in 1867. (Found in Reier's Norwegian memoir written in 1914 and later translated for the Sigdalslag Saga Feb 2013 Newsletter.)

According to family records and oral tradition handed down, Bjørn and Sigrid were married in 1865 "by proxy" by Pastor Brandt in Decorah, Iowa followed by a state-sanctioned marriage October 10, 1868 at Madison Lutheran Church in Ridgeway, Iowa. After the proxy wedding, Bjørn made his way to Norway Lake, MN. On Apr 10, 1866 he purchased 40 acres of land south of Lake Andrew from the Land Office in St. Cloud, MN. The land was found at Lake Andrew Township 121-N, Range 35-W, Section 15 and they settled here after their marriage in 1868. Eventually, they increased their holding to 400 acres.

In the 1875 Minnesota state census, the family is listed as

- Bjørn Reierson (age 44),
- Sigri Reierson (age 33)
- Guri Reierson (age 17),
- Martin Reierson (age 4),
- Caroline Reierson (age 2),
- Regina Olina Reierson (age 0).

In the 1880 US census, the listing is Bjørn Reierson (50), Sigri Reierson (39), Guri Reierson (21) Martin Reierson (9), Caroline Reierson (5), Regine Reierson (5), Ragne Reierson (3), Olaus Reierson (1). Reiersen had become Reierson and would later become Rierson.

Bjørn & Sigri Reierson lie in rest in the cemetery at East Norway Lake Lutheran Church of New London Minnesota. Sigri's tombstone inscription was "Mother" "GJEMT MEM IKKE GLEMT". Bjørn's inscription reads "GJEMT MEM IKKE GLEMT".

This summary was prepared by Arla Berry, great-granddaughter of Bjørn & Sigrid.

1. Reiersen Oral Tradition Document. Bjørn & Sigrid Reiersen's life transcribed in Norwegian, translated to English and handed down to following generations. The document was most likely written sometime after 1871 and before 1880 as it references family going to America in 1871, but not Sigrid's brother Reier's immigration of 1880.
2. Handwritten genealogy written by Burton Berry listing Reiersen ancestors.
3. Handwritten genealogy written by Aunt Gladys Berry Madsen listing Reiersen ancestors.
4. Obituaries From Willmar Tribune on Bjørn Reiersen & Sigrid Olsdatter Lauvli
5. FamilySearch.org. Norwegian records: county, parish, name, birth, baptism
6. Pedigree tree constructed by Garth Ulrich based on Sigdal Bygdebøker entries. Names, dates, Bygdebøk page numbers confirmed in Page numbers listed on Reiersen Oral Tradition Document.
7. Sigdalslag.org. Emigration information which includes name, originating gard/bruk, year of birth, year of immigration..
8. Ancestry.com – Norwegian and American public records, birth, baptism, marriage, census, places of residence, death
9. NLLHA.org – Norwegian Lutheran
10. US Evangelical Lutheran Church of America Records