

## **Knut and Marit Sondrol<sup>1</sup>, Charter Members of West Norway Lake Lutheran Church**

Baptism records<sup>2</sup> show that Knut Tostenson Sondrol was born 9 August 1837 in Vang, Oppland, Norway. The parents are Tosten Knudsen Sondrahle-Eie and Marith Olsdatter.

Knut "Thorstajnsen" appears in the 1865 census<sup>3</sup> from Vang. The listed residence is the farm called Viland Øvre and his housemates are his widowed mother Marit Olsdatter and his sister Dorthe Thorstajnsdatter. Their birth years are 1806 and 1848, respectively.

Knut Tostenson, along with his mother Marit Olsdatter and sister Dorthe Tostensdatter are in the passenger list of the ship Fredrick Peterson<sup>4</sup> that sailed from Bergen, Norway on May 1, 1866 and arrived in Quebec on June 2, 1866. All three have the last name Sønnerol and hail from Vang Valdres. Their ages are 30, 59 and 16, respectively. (Dorthe's age mismatches that from the census by 3 years.) It is surprising that they left from Bergen, as that is a long way, across mountains, from Vang.

The name Knut T. Søndreol appears thrice<sup>5</sup> as a parent in baptism records from the Norway lake Congregation. The children are Tosten (born 14 Nov 1872), Theodor (born 4 August 1875), and Martin (born 16 September 1881) The mother of all three is Mari (or Marit) Thostensdatter.

Regarding Marit, her birth and emigration information are uncertain. Census records, below, state that she was born in Norway. There are two possibilities from Vang Parish. She could be from other areas of Norway as well.

The 1875 census<sup>6</sup> of Swift County has Knut T. "Sonderal," age 38, and Marit, age 28. With them are Tosten, age 2, and Marit Olson, age 69. (By coincidence, both the mother and the wife are named Marit.)

The 1880 census of Kerkhoven Township, Swift County has Knut Sundrol (age 42, born Norway) and Marit (33, born Norway). Others: "Fosten" (7), Theodor (4), Ole (3), Mina (5 months) and Marit Sundrol (mother, 73).

Knut's wife Marit passed in 1883. This is indicated by a grave marker at the West Norway Lutheran Church, which reads Marit Sondrol, 1847-1883.

Knut (here spelled Knudt, age 47) is also in the 1885 census, same township. The children in the household are: Tosten, 12; Theodor, 9; Ole, 6; and Martin, 3. Others in the household are: Julia Brandvol, age 32, and Ole Bjornson, 22. Knut's mother Marit Olsdatter, age 78, is listed in the neighboring house. Very likely, Julia was hired to keep house and raise the children after Marit's death. Eventually, Knut and Julia married.

In the 1895 census of Kerkhoven Township, Swift County, we find Knut T. Sondrol (age 57, born in Norway, in MN 29 years, in enumeration district 26 years) and Julia Sondrol (age 48?, born in Norway, in MN and the enumeration district 22 years). There are 5 children, aged 2 to 22, all born in Minnesota, and an adult, Marit Sondrol, age 88, born in Norway.

The 1900 census of Kerkhoven Township, Swift County has Knudt T. Sandrol (born August 1837 in Norway, immigrated 1866) and Julie Sandrol (born April 1852 in Norway, immigrated 1882). Also in the house are 4 sons and a daughter, all born in Minnesota.

In the 1905 census of Kerkhoven Township, Swift County, MN we find Knut T. Sondrol (age 67), born in Norway, a state resident for 39 years, and a resident of the enumeration district for 36 years. Also in the household are Julia (53), born in Norway, an enumeration district resident for 22 years and 10 others, ages 32 to 5 months, all born in Minnesota. Included are a daughter-in-law and 2 grandchildren.

The above census record shows that Knut arrived in Swift County in 1869, having lived the prior three years at another Minnesota location. That location is not known.

Among the many Sondrol grave markers at the West Norway Lake Lutheran Church are these:

- Knut T. Sondrol, 1837-1905
- Marit Sondrol, 1847-1883.
- Julie K. Sondrol, 1852-1932.

Knut's mother Marit Olsdatter deserves special mention. A widow, she emigrated at age 59 and lived to be at least 88. Her date of death and final resting place are not known. In a more gender-equal world, she would surely have been listed as a charter member of the West Norway Lake Church.

Report prepared by Earl O. Knutson, December, 2018.

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1 Much information cited here was found in The Branden Ellingboe family tree, published on Ancestry.com

2 <https://media.digitalarkivet.no/view/9396/16>

3 [https://www.rhd.uit.no/folketelling/ftliste\\_e.aspx?ft=1865&knr=0545&kenr=002&bnr=0043&lnr=000](https://www.rhd.uit.no/folketelling/ftliste_e.aspx?ft=1865&knr=0545&kenr=002&bnr=0043&lnr=000)

4 [http://www.norwayheritage.com/p\\_list.asp?jo=654](http://www.norwayheritage.com/p_list.asp?jo=654)

5 Records of the Norway Lake Congregation, viewed on Ancestry.com under First Lutheran Church of Norway Lake. Images 51, 59, and 78.

6 All US census information accessed via ancestry.com