

Gulbrand Thonvold and Mathea Eriksdatter, Charter members East Norway Lake Church

Gulbrand Olsen was born 23 Mai 1839 and baptized 23 June. He was born and baptized in Otsinni [Gaarder] local parish, Land parish, Oppland, Norway to Ole Hanssen and Marte Gulbrandsdatter Tonvold. He had 2 older sisters Ingeborg and Helene.

He married Mathea Eriksdatter 11 June 1862 in Hov local parish, Land Parish, Oppland, Norway. She was the daughter of Erik Olsen and Christence Christendatter Bjorglien. Mathea was born 24 Juli 1841 in Hov[Hoff] local parish, Land Parish, Oppland Norway.

The 1865 Norway census places the couple on Thonvold farm, Land, Oppland, Norway, with 2 children: Ole and Martha.

The family signed out of the parish for America on 27 Mar 1868. The first leg of their journey is via the "feeder ship" S.S. Oder, one of 2 vessels making weekly trips between Christiania {Oslo} and Hull, England with a stop in Christiansand. They departed 10 Mai 1868 on the Oder. Gulbrand is listed as Gulbrand Olsen Tonvold and their destination LaCrosse. Upon arrival in Hull emigrants traveled by train usually to Liverpool or Grimsby to board another vessel for the transatlantic trip. I was unable to find any further records of their journey.

According to Festskrift the family arrived in Goodhue County in 1868 and the Norway Lake area in 1870. They may have stayed with Gulbrand's sister Ingeborg and her husband Martin Gjelhaug in Goodhue County. Both families arrived in Norway Lake in 1870 and homesteaded adjoining acres in Arctander Township. Gulbrand farmed 80 acres in Sec 32 [N1/2 of NW ¼]. Martin and Ingeborg are also charter members of the East Norway Lake Church and have a separate biography.

Gulbrand and Mathea have 2 more children, Clara Marie and Edward Julius, both baptized at the Norway Lake church.

Gulbrand passed away 13 Juni 1882 at age 43. Services were held 16 Juni at East Norway Lake.

Gulbrand's homestead is still listed in his name in the 1886 plat map but has been sold by the 1900 map.

Mathea, Clara and Edward are on the farm in the 1885 census but Mathea and Edward are living in Colfax Township by 1895. Also, listed in the household is a John Thonvold, age 55. By 1910 Mathea is living with her daughter Clara Marie and her family in Colfax Township and remains there through the 1920 census.

Mathea passed away 10 April 1921. I was unable to find a record of a funeral service in the East Norway Lake church. According to Find A Grave she and Gulbrand are buried in the Sunburg Free Church cemetery as Gulbrand H. Olsen and Mathea Olsen. There are no markers on their gravesite.

Further information on Gulbrands and Mathea's children:

1. Ole: born 6 Dec 1862, died 23 July 1945, married Brithe Eilefsdatter Henjum, 3 children, merchant in Kerkhoven
2. Marie: born 6 Oct 1864, died before 1875
3. Clara Marie: born 11 Juli 1873, died 24 Aug 1940, married Nicolai Johnsen Stai, 5 children
4. Edward Julius: born 28 April 1879, died 26 Sept 1933, married Lena Kallevig, 12 children, farmer

Written by Carole Heimdahl, March 2020.

Sources:

- Digitalarkviet- birth, marriage and emigration records
- Festskrift
- 1905 Illustrated History of Kandiyohi County
- Kandiyohi County Historical Association
- My Heritage
- Family Search
- Ancestry.Com and Ancestry public member trees
- 1886 and 1900 Arctander Township plat maps

Footnotes:

1. There are no other records that I could find of a John Thonvold or Tonvold other than the mention in the 1895 census.
2. The 1905 Illustrated History, in the section about Arctander Township homesteaders, states that Mathea married an I. Stai and moved to Colfax Township. I was unable to find any records of another marriage. She continued to use Thonvold or a variation until her death.