



A Newsletter of the Norman County Genealogy Society

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The Flood of 1897 Excerpted from "Under Prairie Skies – A Centennial History of Ada, Minnesota" by Lenora I. Johnson

The Wallers of Twin Valley

Christine Halvorson was born December 5, 1869 on the Tangen gaard in Hurdal, Akershus, Norway, to parents Halvor Pedersen and Kirstine Jonasdatter. Christine was their ninth child and second daughter. She was baptized Nicoline Christine on February 6, 1870 in the Hurdal parish, but always went by her middle name, Christine.

She was nine years old when she emigrated to the U.S. with her parents, her sister Marie and brothers

Hans, Syvert and Julius, on May 9, 1879. She and her family took the ship "Angelo" from Olso to Hull, England, a train from Hull to Liverpool, and then the ship "The City of Montreal" from Liverpool to New York. Their destination was listed as Spring Valley, Minnesota.

The family lived in Fillmore County, Minnesota for one or two years before moving to Rockwell Township in Norman County,

Minnesota. They were not listed in the 1880 Census, so most likely they were on the long journey from Fillmore County to Norman County, about 400 miles, at the time the census was being taken.

The 1885 Census for Rockwell Township shows Halvor Peterson – age 64, wife Caroline – age 59, and children Sivert – Age 20, Julius – age 18, and Christine – age 15.

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The Flood of 1897

Ada has experienced many floods in its history, but two of the worst occurred in 1897. The winter of 1896-97 had a very heavy snowfall with drifts reaching 20 to 30 feet in height. In April, the warm weather came suddenly, melting the snow so rapidly that the water flooded into barns in the night, drowning many livestock.

In July of 1897 it rained heavily, soaking the ground, filling the rivers and ditches. On July 19th,

a heavy downpour lasting three days began. 25" of rain were recorded at that time, which caused a devastating flood over the entire country. Bridges were washed out, roads were impassible, and crops were ruined. Grain that stood four feet high on Monday was covered with water Tuesday. Thousands of planted fields were ruined.

The water from Long Lake began overflowing into Ada on Tuesday morning

in a stream large enough for a river, pouring into the low places first, then rising steadily until by Wednesday evening the entire east side was a lake as far southeast as John Pfund's place and all the streets leading south were fair-sized rivers. Wednesday the water crossed the railroad tracks and flooded the west side. Sam Olson navigated around the town in his sailboat. The Great Northern train sent to repair flood damage was marooned.

The Wallers of Twin Valley ... (continued from page 1)

“Mr. Waller says that it is a good proof that he keeps a good stock, but he don’t like this kind of credit system.”

Reprinted with permission of Barb Raaen.

Barb Raaen researched her paternal grandmother’s family history. Her grandmother Marie’s younger sister was Christine Halvorson Waller ...Barb’s great-aunt.

When Christine was 18 years old, she married Christian Pederson Waller. Christian was born on October 4, 1866, on the Vaaler gaard in Grue Parish, Hedmark, Norway. His parents were Peder Olsen Waller and Kristine Kristiansdatter; his brothers and sister were Karelius, Ole, Clara, Olaf, Henry and Petter.

Their marriage took place at the Waller residence on December 13, 1888. They were married by Rev. G. A. Larson, and the witnesses were her father, Halvor Pederson, and the groom’s father, P. O. Vaaler (Waller.)

Christian (C. P.) and Christine had two children:

- Peder Helmer Waller was born July 25, 1889 in Wild Rice Township, Norman County, Minnesota.
- Clara (Klara) Emelia Waller was born March 29, 1891 in Wild Rice Township, and died on December 21, 1892.

Norman County Death Records list Clara Emelia, age 1 year, 7 months and 20 days, dying of lung fever. She is buried in Zion Lutheran Cemetery, Twin Valley, next to her paternal grandmother, Kristine Waller.

The Minnesota Census for 1895 shows the family living in Wild Rice Township – C. P. Waller,

age 28, his wife Christine, age 26, and son Peder Helmer, age 5.

C. P. operated a general store in Twin Valley with his brother Olaf and John Homelvig in the fall of 1895. They opened a branch in Syre, a few miles from Twin Valley. Waller and Homelvig advertised regularly in the Twin Valley Times.

In the April 28, 1897 issue was the following entry:

“Last Friday night a successful attempt was made to burglarize the store of Wall, Homelvig and Co. The thieves by using an augur cut out a hole in the rear door large enough to admit an arm and the door was thus unfastened from within. It seems that the chief aim was to take clothing, and by appearances they must have been hard to suit for sizes, for the goods had been carefully looked over. Mr. Waller estimates a loss of from \$75 to \$100, principally clothing and fine shoes. No trace of the midnight marauders has been found and it is presumed they are wearing their new spring outfits in some other section of the country and praising the quality of goods kept at Twin Valley. This makes twice that this store has been broken into lately, and Mr. Waller says that it is a good proof that he keeps a good stock, but he don’t like this kind of

credit system, where the only entries are by means of a hole in the back door.”

The Twin Valley Times for June 2, 1897 states “Mr. and Mrs. Waller left on Sunday evening’s train for the Twin Cities. Mrs. Waller has been with failing health for some time and went down to consult a doctor.”

Another trip was made in October, but she died on March 15, 1898. On March 16, 1898, The Twin Valley Times had the following notice and obituary for Christine: “Early Tuesday morning Mrs. C. P. Waller, who has been sick for about a year, passed to her long rest. She was about 28 years of age and leaves a loving husband to mourn her death, also a son who will miss the benefit of the loving guidance of a fond mother. The funeral takes place next Friday at 1:30 o’clock pm, from Our Savior’s church.”

Seven months after Christine died, C. P. remarried.

This narrative will be continued in our next issue.

Genealogy News

AMERICAN CIVIL WAR.

Searchable list of 6.2 million Confederate and Union soldiers published by National Park Service.

<http://www.itd.nps.gov/cwss/>

PALATINES TO AMERICA.

This is an outstanding resource and organization for Americans with Germanic ancestry.

<http://www.palam.org/about.htm>

CASTLE GARDEN. If your ancestors arrived at New York prior to when Ellis Island opened, check this site where there are more than 10 million names of those who arrived between 1830 and 1892.

<http://www.castlegarden.org/>

THE SONS OF UNION VETERANS OF THE CIVIL WAR'S NATIONAL GRAVE REGISTRATION DATABASE

website, contains information on more than 367,405 Union soldiers. You can search for your ancestors and relatives then if you wish, register and add any that are not yet listed. With an estimated 4.2-4.8 million Union soldiers this site does not have the names of everyone, but information you have about your ancestor's burial place may be of invaluable help to others and this ongoing project.

<http://www.suvcwdb.org/home/index.php>

NORWEGIAN

RESEARCH. How to Trace Your Ancestors in Norway.

<http://digitalarkivet.uib.no/sab/howto.html>

NORSK UTVANDRING TIL USA 1825-2000

(Norwegian immigration to USA).

<http://digitalarkivet.uib.no/utstilling/>

American Civil War and Palatines to America

Previously published in RootsWeb Review: 25 January 2006, Vol. 9, No. 4.

Castle Garden

Previously published in RootsWeb Review: 22 March 2006, Vol. 9, No. 12.

Union Veterans of the Civil War's National Grave Registration Database

Previously published in RootsWeb Review: 8 March 2006, Vol. 9, No. 10.

Norwegian Research and Norsk Utvandring Til USA 1825-2000

Previously published in RootsWeb Review: 1 February 2006, Vol. 9, No. 5.

Civil War Service Records

The original service records of Union and Confederate Civil War Soldiers and the pension records of Union veterans are maintained at the National Archives Building in Washington, DC, where they are available for research to anyone at least age 16.

The records exist in their originally created form or on microfilm.

Visit the National Archives Web Site to decide if you want to order online or request a paper copy of the form. The address is:

<http://www.archives.gov/research/order/index.html>

The National Archives and Records Administration (NARA), www.archives.gov, does not have custody of Confederate soldier pension files. For additional information regarding Confederate pension files, please contact the State Archives for the state from which the veteran served.

For a successful search of the records, certain specific information is required, including: Full name, state in which he served, and branch of military. You must also indicate the side on which he fought,

Union or Confederate.

If a file is found for the veteran in question, NARA will supply copies of documents that provide pertinent information about the veteran and his family.

The website explains the payment procedure for copies.

Also, Bertram Hawthorne Groene's *"Tracing Your Civil War Ancestor"* (Winston-Salem, N.C.: John F. Blair, 1973) is an easy-to-read guide to sources of information on Civil War soldiers.

Information copied from:
<http://www.itd.nps.gov/cwss/tools.htm>

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Attach Address Label Here

We're on the Web!

See us at:

www.rootsweb.com/~mnnorman

About Our Organization...

The Norman County Genealogy Society was formed on February 27, 1997 in Ada, MN for the purpose of assisting persons interested in research family histories and sharing information.

Charter members of the society were Roland Carpenter, Iris Duklet, Colleen Goltz, Ardis Horn, Sharon Larson, Roger Niebeling, Gladys Prussia, Ronald Rasmuson, Christine Roesch, Ronald Roesch, DeFloren Rude, Edna Rude and Kathleen Skaurud.

A few resources available include:

- Obituaries taken from area newspapers.
- Cemetery records
- Marriage records
- Death records from 1871 to 1981
- Census records
- Civil War Veterans
- 1883 Pensioners on the Roll
- Churches and Towns

Much of this information is posted on our website.

The Society meets on the third Saturday of the month at 10:30 am in the Dekko Center or Norman County Museum, Ada, MN.

Annual Dues are \$10.00 for a family membership (local) and \$5.00 for an associate membership (out of area.) Dues should be sent to the Treasurer in January:

Ardis Horn
101 1st Street East
Ada, MN 56510