

John O. Gaare

In 1862 the Homestead Act passed the U.S. government which granted the immigrant approximately 160 acres of land in return for five years of farming including some improvements. This was "manna from heaven" for cotters from Selbu who earlier had tried to survive on a couple of acres of unproductive, stony ground.

In 1866 Haldor Guldseth went back to Selbu to lead a group of prospective emigrants. He reported a land "of milk and honey", and the "fever" became an epidemic. On May 5th 1866 the *Neptunus*, with Hermann Ludvigsen as its captain, left Trondheim with 300 emigrants. Nearly all came from Selbu. The ship arrived in Quebec on June 9th. Ole Johnsen Gaare, his wife Sigrid Pedersdtr, sons John and Peter and daughter Susan are listed in entries 20 through 24 on the [passenger list](#). During the voyage there were two deaths: a woman died of pneumonia and a child of bronchitis.

The family's first home in America was in Allamakee County, Iowa. In 1880, Ole and his family moved to Norman County where Ole and Sigrid lived out their lives. John's sister Carrie married Ferdinand Baker.

John Oleson Gaare was born October 13, 1858. He was 7 years old when the family left Norway, and he grew to manhood in Iowa. In 1880, he homesteaded 160 acres of land in Clay County. After marrying Anna Kroshus, he purchased a farm in Lee township, Norman County, which he made the family's permanent home. John served in a number of positions on the school board and in Bethania Lutheran Church.

John Oleson Gaare died on January 9, 1950, at 91 years of age.