

# **Christiansen Volume, Chapter 4 - Nels Christiansen and Mette Marie "Mary" Rasmussen**

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<b>Contents of Christiansen Volume, Chapter 4</b>	<b>page</b>
The Lives of Nels Christiansen and Mette Marie "Mary" Rasmussen	2
The Other Children of Nels and Mary Christiansen	5
Raymond and Esther (Ericksen) Christiansen Family	6
Clarence and Loretta (Olsen) Christiansen Family	8

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## The Lives of Nels Christiansen and Mette Marie "Mary" Rasmussen

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- **Nels Christiansen**, the younger child of my great-grandparents Christian Christiansen and Anna Jensen, was born in May 1871 in Pottawattamie County. Nels grew up on the Christiansen farm in central Boomer Township along with his older brother, Jim, and their older half-brother, Ole Christen.

In June 1871, just a month after Nels was born, Christian Christiansen bought the original 40 acres of his farm from E. A. Huber and Joseph McCoid. A few years later Christian added 40 acres adjoining to the west.

Nels married Mette Marie "Mary" Rasmussen in 1898.

**Mette Marie "Mary" Rasmussen** was the daughter of Lars Christian Rasmussen and Karen Marie Andersen. Lars and Karen and their five daughters immigrated to Pottawattamie County from Voer Sogn in northern Jutland in 1882. After living briefly in Council Bluffs, the Rasmussen family settled in Boomer Township just west of St. Paul's Lutheran Church in 1883. Mary Rasmussen's older sister, Rasmine "Minnie", married Nels Christiansen's older brother, James P. "Jim".

After marrying, Nels and Mary and their growing family shared the Christiansen residence in Boomer Township, Section 22 with his parents while Nels continued farming the Christiansen home place with his aging father. Around 1905 Nels acquired title to the 80-acre home place from his parents.

Nels and Mary Christiansen had four children before Mary's early death in 1917 at the age of 41. The children are listed later.

Between 1930 and 1935 Nels Christiansen bought additional two additional farms in Boomer Township.

- Nels Christiansen bought the adjoining 40-acre Hans Olsen/Peter Olsen farm, which also included nine acres along the Pigeon Creek bottom, land that had originally been slough grass.

Notes on the Hans Olsen family: Hans Olsen, his wife, Bodil Madsen and their three children settled in Boomer Township, Section 28, in the 1870s. Bodil's sister, Anna Dorothea Madsen, married Jacob Jensen, a neighbor to the west. Hans and Bodil's daughter, Karen Marie Olsen, married Jacob's brother, Ole, who lived just north of Jacob. (Jacob and Ole Jensen were brothers-in-law of Christian Christiansen.) Hans and Bodil's sons, Peter and Alfred, never married.

Notes on the Hans Olsen farm: I don't know who lived on the Hans Olsen farm after Peter Olsen died in 1913. The buildings disappeared before 1940. After Nels bought the Olsen farm, it was incorporated into the land farmed by his son, Clarence.

- Nels Christiansen bought the 98-acre Ben Smith farm in southern Boomer Township.

Notes on the Ben Smith family: Benjamin Albert "Ben" Smith was the grandson

of Isaac Smith and Charlotte Eagle, early settlers in Boomer Township in the 1850s. Ben's brother, David Dexter Smith, built the Boomer Store in 1896.

Notes on the Ben Smith farm: The Ben Smith farm was located in Section 34 at the very south end of Boomer Township. This possibly was the Smith home place. After Ben Smith moved to the Missouri Valley area around 1934, Nels Christiansen's son, Raymond, lived on the Ben Smith farm until 1940 when he moved to a farm west of Shelby, Iowa. By 1950 Nels had sold the Ben Smith farm to Don Anderson, another Boomer Township farmer.

Nels Christiansen never remarried after his wife, Mary, died in 1917. He raised the four children listed on the following page and then remained on the Christiansen home place until around 1947.

In 1934 Nels' older son, Raymond, married Esther Ericksen and left the household. Initially Raymond and Esther lived on a farm several miles south of the Christiansen home place, later moving to a farm west of Shelby, Iowa.

In 1939 Nels' younger son, Clarence, married Loretta Olsen. Clarence and Loretta shared the Christiansen residence with Nels and with Clarence's sisters.

Around 1947 Nels and his daughter, Agnes moved to Avoca, Iowa, turning over the Christiansen home place to his son, Clarence.

In Avoca, Nels and Agnes lived in a new two-bedroom house on Frost Avenue in Buttermilk Flat, on the west edge of Avoca. Nels kept a beautiful vegetable garden well into his 80s.

Nels died in the Jennie Edmundson Hospital in Council Bluffs in 1958 at the age of 87.

Nels and Mary Christiansen and three of their children, Anneta, Agnes and Raymond, are interred in the St. Paul's Lutheran Church Cemetery in Boomer Township. Clarence is interred in the Grange Cemetery in Boomer Township.

After the chart on the following page is a brief section on Nels and Mary's daughters, Anneta and Agnes, followed by sections covering the lives of Nels and Mary Christiansen's sons, Raymond and Clarence.

## The Children of Nels Christiansen and Mette Marie "Mary" Rasmussen

### Nels Christiansen

b. 26 May 1871, Boomer T., Pott. Co., IA?  
d. 20 Dec 1958, Jennie Edmundson Hosp., Council Bluffs, Pott. Co., IA  
brp. St. Paul's Luth. Cem., Boomer T., Pott. Co., IA  
& Mette Marie "Mary" Rasmussen  
b. 26 Feb 1876, Voer Sogn, Hjørring Amt, Denmark  
d. 26 Nov 1917, Boomer T., Pott. Co., IA  
bur. 28 Nov 1917, St. Paul's Luth. Cem., Boomer T., Pott. Co., IA  
m. 26 Oct 1898, St. Paul's Luth. Ch., Boomer T., Pott. Co., IA

### Anneta Viola Christiansen

b. 19 Jul 1906, Boomer T., Pott. Co., IA  
d. 11 Jul 1942, at home, Boomer T., Pott. Co., IA  
brp. St. Paul's Luth. Cem., Boomer T., Pott. Co., IA

### Agnes Clarette Christiansen

b. 24 Jun 1908, Boomer T., Pott. Co., IA  
d. 15 Mar 1973, Jennie Edmundson Hosp., Council Bluffs, Pott. Co., IA  
bur. 18 Mar 1973, St. Paul's Luth. Cem., Boomer T., Pott. Co., IA

### Raymond Roosevelt Christiansen

b. 14 Nov 1910, Boomer T., Pott. Co., IA  
d. 17 Aug 1986, Bethany Home, Council Bluffs, Pott. Co., IA  
bur. 20 Aug 1986, St. Paul's Luth. Cem., Boomer T., Pott. Co., IA  
& Esther Elizabeth Ericksen  
b. 28 Dec 1913, Neola T., Pott. Co., IA  
d. 29 Jun 2000, Mercy Hosp., Council Bluffs, Pott. Co., IA  
bur. 2 Jul 2000, St. Paul's Luth. Cem., Boomer T., Pott. Co., IA  
m. 20 Feb 1934, St. Paul's Luth. Ch., Boomer T., Pott. Co., IA

### Clarence Rudolph Christiansen

b. 29 Aug 1914, Boomer T., Pott. Co., IA  
d. 28 Apr 1997, Jennie Edmundson Hosp., Council Bluffs, Pott. Co., IA  
bur. 1 May 1997, Grange Cem., Boomer T., Pott. Co., IA  
& Loretta Eleanor Olsen  
b. 20 Jan 1917, Boomer T., Pott. Co., IA  
d. 8 Dec 2009, Midlands Living Ctr., Council Bluffs, Pott. Co., IA  
bur. 11 Dec 2009, Grange Cem., Boomer T., Pott. Co., IA  
m. 20 Jun 1939, St. Paul's Luth. Ch., Boomer T., Pott. Co., IA

End of the *Lives of Nels Christiansen and Mette Marie "Mary" Rasmussen* section  
of the *Christiansen* chapter of *Robert Christiansen's Family History*.

## The Other Children of Nels and Mary Christiansen (Anneta and Agnes)

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- **Anneta Viola Christiansen** suffered from ill health. Anneta remained in the household of her father and sister, never married, and died at home in 1942 at the age of 35. On the 1940 census she was listed as an invalid.
- **Agnes Clarette Christiansen** spent her whole life caring for others. She never married and remained with her father, Nels, until his death, in 1958.

In 1962 Agnes moved from Avoca to Council Bluffs, where she cared for elderly boarders in her home at 442 Glen Avenue. I remember two of her boarders:

- † Robert Dodson Hessey was born in western England in 1870 and immigrated to western Nebraska in 1892, where he became a rancher. He subsequently lived in Kansas City and Florida before settling in the Chicago area around 1913 where he worked in the real estate business.

Around 1912 Robert Hessey married Margaret Loretta Maher of Iowa City. Margaret's sister, Mary, was Mrs. Hubert Lorenzo Tinley, Hubert Tinley being one of the eight Tinley siblings prominent in Council Bluffs life in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century.

The one child of Robert and Margaret Hessey, Robert M. Hessey, died in Chicago in 1918 at the age of four after having been struck by a streetcar.

After Margaret Hessey died in 1937, Robert moved from Highland Park north of Chicago into a residential hotel in Chicago.

Eventually Robert Hessey moved to Council Bluffs. By 1964 he was living with Agnes Christiansen at 442 Glen Avenue.

Robert Hessey died in Council Bluffs in 1968 at the age of 97.

- † When Agnes died, she was caring for her father's first cousin, Emma (Jensen) Young, the daughter of Ole Jensen and the widow of Henry Young. Henry and Emma Young had lived in rural Underwood, Iowa before moving to Council Bluffs around 1930.

See the section *Relatives of Ane Kirstine "Anna" (Jensen) Christiansen* for more information about the family of Emma (Jensen) Young.

Agnes died in the Jennie Edmundson Hospital in Council Bluffs at the age of 64 after a short illness.

End of the *Other Children and Nels and Mary Rasmussen* section of the *Christiansen* chapter of *Robert Christiansen's Family History*.

## **Raymond and Esther (Ericksen) Christiansen Family**

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- **Raymond Roosevelt Christiansen** (14 Nov 1910 – 17 Aug 1986) was the third child of Nels and Mary (Rasmussen) Christiansen. Raymond was born and raised on the Christiansen home place in central Boomer Township and remained on the home place, working with his father as a farmer, until he married

Raymond married **Esther Ericksen** in 1934. Esther Ericksen, a member of the St. Paul's Lutheran Church community, was raised in southwestern Neola Township.

### **About Esther Ericksen's family:**

Esther Elizabeth Ericksen was the daughter of Erik Elias "Eli" Ericksen and Johanne Thode, who farmed in Neola Township about two miles east of St. Paul's.

**The four children of Eli and Johanne Ericksen are listed below.**

- **Lydia Johanne Christine Ericksen** (1907 – 2007) remained at home until she was 42. She then moved to Council Bluffs and married Gus Axelsen (1914 – 1975), a Danish immigrant. She then married Lester R. Young (1896 – 1983). Lydia Ericksen had no children.
- **Nels Henry "Henry" Ericksen** (1909 – 2005) married Arlene Bernice Levine Jensen (1916 – 2001), the daughter of Chris Jensen and Christine Hansen of Hazel Dell Township.  
  
Henry and Arlene Ericksen lived in the Oakland, Iowa area and had three children, Sharon, Ronald LeRoy and Renee Beth.
- **Esther Elizabeth Ericksen** (28 Dec 1913 – 29 Jun 2000) married my father's cousin, Raymond Christiansen.
- **Clarence Harvey Ericksen** (1920 – 1986) married Bernice Agnes Olsen (1923 - ). Bernice was the daughter of John Olsen and Dagma Thomsen of Boomer Township and the sister-in-law of Clarence Christiansen.

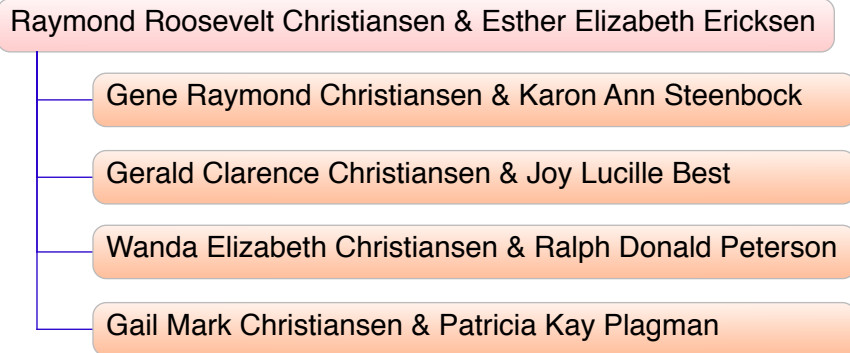
Clarence Ericksen lived west of Neola most of his life. Clarence and Bernice Ericksen had one child, Cynthia Elise.

For additional information about Esther Ericksen's relatives, see the *Niels Eriksen and Maren Kirstine Henriksen Family* sketch in my *St. Paul's Boomer-Neola Early Families* report.

Raymond and Esther Christiansen farmed the Ben Smith place in southern Boomer Township until 1940. Raymond's father, Nels, owned this farm at the time. In 1940 the Raymond Christiansen family moved to a farm in Harrison County four miles west of Shelby, Iowa. They sold their farm and moved to the town of Shelby in 1968.

In 1970, Raymond and Esther moved to Council Bluffs, where they lived at 198 East Orchard Avenue, just off of North Broadway. They worked at the Jennie Edmundson hospital. Later Esther worked at Mercy Hospital and the Bethany Nursing Home, where she was a resident in her last years.

The four children of Raymond and Esther Christiansen are shown below:



As of 2016 all of the children and spouses shown on the above chart are living.

End of the *Raymond and Esther (Ericksen) Christiansen Family* public section.  
The following three-page private section, written for Raymond and Esther's descendants, sketches the lives of Raymond and Esther's children.

**Private Section of the *Raymond and Esther (Ericksen) Christiansen Family Sketch***

**The End - Private Section of the *Raymond and Esther (Ericksen) Christiansen Family***

**The End - *Raymond and Esther (Ericksen) Christiansen Family* section  
of the Nels Christiansen chapter of *Robert Christiansen's Family History*.**

## Clarence and Loretta (Olsen) Christiansen Family

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- **Clarence Rudolph Christiansen** (29 Aug 1914 – 28 Apr 1997) was the fourth and youngest child of Nels and Mary (Rasmussen) Christiansen. Clarence was born and raised on the Christiansen home place in central Boomer Township and remained on the home place, working as a farmer, until moving to the Council Bluffs area.

**Clarence** married **Loretta Olsen** in 1939. Loretta Olsen, a member of the St. Paul's Lutheran Church community, was raised in north central Boomer Township.

### About Loretta Olsen's family:

Loretta Eleanor Olsen was the daughter of John H. Olsen and Dagma Thomsen, who farmed about six miles northwest of St. Paul's.

**The eight children of John H. and Dagma Olsen are listed below.**

- **Loretta Eleanor Olsen** (21 Jan 1917 – 8 Dec 2009) married my father's cousin, Clarence Christiansen.
- **Glen Arthur Olsen** (8 Oct 1919 – 27 Dec 2007) married Lucille Clementine Craig (6 Mar 1921 – 27 May 1999), the daughter of Edward Craig and Cynthia Fox of the Missouri Valley, Iowa area.

Glen Olsen farmed in Boomer Township and in the Persia, Iowa area.

Glen and Lucille Olsen had five children, Gary Glen, Rodney Dean, Joyce Jean, Lyle Eugene and Ricky Bruce.

- **Esther Irene Olsen** (23 Oct 1921 -) married Bernard Nelson (24 May 1917 – 23 Jul 1959), the son of Hans Nelson and Hilma Sandberg of Hazel Dell Township.

Bernard and Esther Nelson had one child, Dennis Duane.

- **Bernice Agnes Olsen** (3 Oct 1923 -) married Clarence Harvey Ericksen (28 Sep 1920 – 20 Jul 1986), the son of Eli Ericksen and Johanne Thode of Neola Township. Clarence Ericksen's sister, Esther, married Raymond Christiansen. After Clarence Ericksen's death, Bernice married Lowell Hooge.

Clarence Ericksen lived west of Neola most of his life. Clarence and Bernice Ericksen had one child, Cynthia Elise.

- **Dean Howard Olsen** (28 Mar 1926 – 23 Jan 2012) married Nadine Christine England (8 Apr 1931 – 30 Mar 2010). Nadine England was born in Red Oak, Iowa to Edward England and Ada Fike and was the foster child of Donald Hansen and Leona Spencer of the St. Paul's community.

Dean Olsen farmed in the Missouri Valley and Beebeetown area until 1954 when he took a job at Armour and Co. in Omaha, eventually moving his family to Omaha.



Before divorcing, Dean and Nadine Olsen had nine children, Rita Jean, Linda Sue, Connie Rae, Bonnie Gay, Gary Dean, Debra Lynn, Sandra Lee, Michael Eugene and John Edward.

- **Eugene Harlan Olsen** (20 Jan 1930 -) married Betty Delores Tietsort, the daughter of George Tietsort. Eugene Olsen was living in Council Bluffs in 2009 and 2012.

Eugene and Betty Olsen had two known children, Carolyn Ann and Duane Michael.

- **John Duane Olsen** (11 Feb 1932 – 21 May 1932) died as a baby.
- **Kenneth Ellis Olsen** (5 Jun 1937 -) married Marilyn Marie Hopkins. Kenneth Olsen was living in Tulsa, Oklahoma in 2009 and 1912.

Kenneth and Marilyn Olsen had three known children, Ann Kristine, Andrea Paige and Susan Marie.

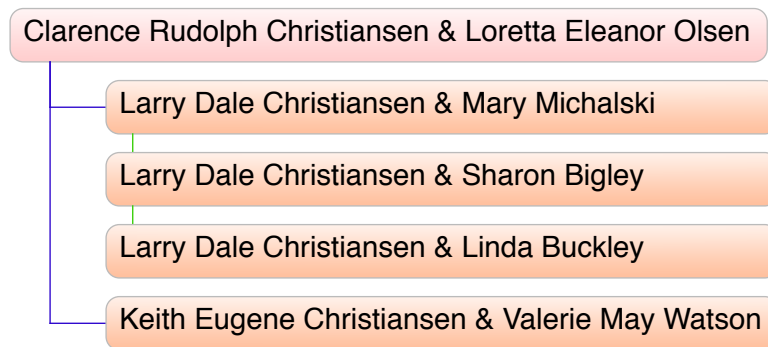
Clarence Christiansen was the third generation to farm the Christian Christiansen home place in Boomer Township.

After marrying, Clarence and Loretta lived with his father and his two older sisters until around 1947 when his father and sister, Agnes, moved to Avoca, Iowa.

Between 1983 and 1985, Clarence and Loretta sold the Christiansen home place and moved to the Council Bluffs area. Their son, Keith, was living on an acreage located on the Old Lincoln Highway, a mile or two north of the Christy Crème ice cream shop. Clarence and Loretta bought a trailer house and had it moved onto Keith's acreage.

In addition to farming, Clarence worked as a custodian at the Gunn School in Council Bluffs both before and after moving to their Old Lincoln Highway home.

The two children of Clarence and Loretta Christiansen are listed below.



The following children and spouses shown on the above chart are deceased:

- Valerie May Watson (20 Sep 1950 - 17 Mar 2011).

End of the *Clarence and Loretta (Olsen) Christiansen Family* public section.

The following one-page private section, written for Clarence and Loretta's descendants, sketches the lives of Clarence and Loretta's children.

**Private Section of the *Clarence and Loretta (Olsen) Christiansen Family Sketch***

**The End - Private Section of the *Clarence and Loretta (Olsen) Christiansen Family***

**The End - *Clarence and Loretta (Olsen) Christiansen Family* section  
of the Nels Christiansen chapter of *Robert Christiansen's Family History*.**

**The End - *Nels Christiansen and Mette Marie "Mary" Rasmussen* chapter  
of the *Christiansen* volume of *Robert Christiansen's Family History*.**