

Larsen Volume, Chapter 5 - Henry Larson and Ellen Hansen

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My great-uncle, Henry Larson, was born in Pottawattamie County, Iowa, the youngest of three children of Danish immigrants Niels (Christensen) Larsen and Maren Larsen. Henry and his wife, Ellen Marie Hansen, had but two children, one of whom died but a few days after birth.

The Lives of Henry Larson and Ellen Hansen

- **Henry Larson**, the third and youngest child of my great-grandparents, Niels (Christensen) Larsen and Maren Larsen, was born in Hazel Dell Township in Pottawattamie County, Iowa, in 1877. Before marrying at the age of 38, Henry generally remained with his parents on the Larsen home place and assisted with the Larsen farming operation. However, around 1902 Henry spent some time in Oklahoma.

In 1912 Henry's mother died and his father subsequently moved to northern Boomer Township to live in the household of Henry's sister, Annie Johnson. Henry then became a bachelor farmer for a few years.

On February 28, 1916 Henry bought a 40-acre farm in Section 10 near the Niels Larsen home place from Alfred Nelson. Alfred, the son of neighbors Lars and Carrie Nelson, was moving to southern Boomer Township.

The next month, on March 19, Henry married Ellen Marie "Ellie" Hansen, the daughter of Peter and Dorthe Hansen and the sister of my grandmother, Karen Margrethe "Maggie" (Hansen) Larson. Henry and Ellen, who married in the old courthouse in Council Bluffs, were respectively 38 and 28 when they married.

After marrying, Henry and Ellen settled on their new farm in Hazel Dell Township. Henry also inherited an adjoining 40 acres to the south from his father's estate. Many years later he bought an additional 80 acres to the east from the Graham estate.

My mother and her siblings lived in a large family with meager resources a half mile south of Henry and Ellen's farm. I am grateful to Henry and Ellen for the help they provided to my mother and her siblings as they were growing up.

As the years passed, Ellen thought about enjoying the amenities of living in town. So Henry and Ellen had a farm sale in February 1946, rented their farm to Freddie and Arda Schroder, and moved to 14 Lainson Avenue in Council Bluffs, the same house where their daughter, Evelyn, lived for many years.

I was told that Henry and Ellen didn't like town living and moved back to the country after less than a year. Since the lease on their farm hadn't expired, they bought and temporarily lived on the Christena Jensen farm in Hazel Dell Township, Section 9. They then returned to their home place, where they lived most of the remainder of their lives.

I was serving in the United States Army in Germany when my great-uncle, Henry Larson, died. I last saw Uncle Henry one Sunday in March 1956 at my parents' farm near Avoca, Iowa, when I was on leave before going overseas. I remember Uncle Henry, who was 78 years old at the time, riding my bicycle down the road. Thinking of Uncle Henry as a senior citizen on a bicycle, I asked my wife to buy me a new bicycle for my 70th birthday. I still ride my bicycle today at age 76.

Henry Larson died in 1957 at the age of 79 after several weeks in the hospital.

After Henry's death, Ellen lived independently in her farm home until she was past

90. For the first five years after Henry's death, her widowed sister, Maggie Larson, lived nearby and Maggie and Ellie were fixtures at family gatherings, chauffeured by my bachelor uncle, Albert.

In her 80s my great-aunt, Ellen, began talking with me about family history. I owe much of my passion for, and knowledge of, family history to my dear Aunt Ellie.

During her last year or two, Ellen lived nearby in the home of her daughter and son-in-law, Evelyn and Phil Sherbondy. Ellen died in Evelyn and Phil's home at the age of 94.

Of interest: Like both of my grandfathers, my great-uncle, Henry Larson, did not have a middle name. He sometimes called himself "Henry Q. Larson."

The children and grandchildren of Henry and Ellen Larson, along with their spouses, are listed below. Due to adoption, there is some duplication among the grandchildren. Since most of the grandchildren are living, I have not included birth dates.

Henry Larson & Ellen Marie "Ellie" Hansen
| Evelyn Dorothy Larson* & Lewis Henry Temps Rhode
| | Edwin Richard Rhode* & Maydean Jones
| | Edwin Richard Rhode* & Nancy V. Glidden
| | Edwin Richard Rhode* & Patricia A. "Patty" Pauley
| | David LeRoy Rhode* & Nancy Stewart
| | David LeRoy Rhode* & Dianne Petersen
| | Jo Ellen Sherbondy & James L. Kill
| | Richard Lane & Donna Glodowski
| Evelyn Dorothy Larson* & Charles Wilbur Lindsay
| | John Robert Sherbondy & Katherine Ilene "Kip" Peterson
| | Kathleen Marie Sherbondy & James Meyer
| Evelyn Dorothy Larson* & Philip Lee Sherbondy
| | Jo Ellen Sherbondy & James L. Kill
| | John Robert Sherbondy & Katherine Ilene "Kip" Peterson
| | Kathleen Marie Sherbondy & James Meyer
| | Andrea Leigh Sherbondy & Daniel Kenton Reasoner
| Donald Robert Larson

My maternal great-uncle and aunt, Henry and Ellen Larson, and their daughter, Evelyn (Larson) Rhode Sherbondy, are interred in St. Paul's Lutheran Church Cemetery in Boomer Township, along with my aunt and uncle, Helen and Victor Petersen, my bachelor uncle, Albert Larson, and my bachelor great-uncle, Hans Peter Hansen. They are all interred in the plot of my paternal grandparents, James P. and Rasmine Christiansen, my father having sold this plot to Uncle Henry around 1948.

- **Evelyn Dorothy Larson** was the first-born child of my great-uncle and aunt, Henry and Ellen Larson. My sketch of Evelyn's family appears on the following pages.
- **Donald Robert Larson**, the second and last child of Henry and Ellen Larson, died in the hospital in Council Bluffs at three days. Donald Robert Larson is

interred near other relatives near the south end of St. Paul's Cemetery.

End of the **Lives of *Henry Larson and Ellen Hansen Family*** section
of the *Larsen* volume of *Robert Christiansen's Family History*.

The following pages sketch the life of their daughter, Evelyn, along with Evelyn's
family.

Evelyn (Larson) Rhode Sherbondy Family

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Reviewed by Jo Ellen (Sherbondy) Kill Sep 2012.

- **Evelyn Dorothy Larson** (12 May 1918 – 10 Apr 2011) was the daughter of my great-uncle and great-aunt, Henry and Ellen Larson. Henry Larson was my grandfather's brother and Ellen my grandmother's sister. Evelyn grew up without siblings in close proximity to my mother and my mother's eight siblings and was always an integral part of my mother's extended family. Thus I always considered Evelyn as an aunt, even though technically she was my first cousin once removed.

Evelyn attended the rural one-room Parish School (Hazel Dell #2) while her nine Larson cousins attended Center School (Hazel Dell #5), two miles to the south.

In 1931 Evelyn, along with her cousin, Helen, was confirmed at St. Paul's Lutheran Church in Boomer Township, about four miles north of the Andrew Larson farm.

Evelyn graduated from Abraham Lincoln High School in Council Bluffs and attended Dana College for two years. Evelyn then taught at the one-room Hardin #4 school for the 1938-1939 school year, living with my uncle and aunt, Oscar and Ethel Torneten.

Evelyn's first husband, **Lewis Henry Temps Rhode**, was born in Kearney, Nebraska, to Reverend Herman Oscar Rhode and Sophia Gertrude Temps.

About Lewis Rhode's parents and sibling:

Lewis Rhode's father, Herman Rhode (27 Aug 1890 – 12 Mar 1982) was born in Germany to August Karl Frederic Rhode and Ida Caroline Augusta Kieseler. Herman Rhode immigrated as a young man around 1911. Herman Rhode and Sophia Gertrude Temps (7 May 1883 – after 1964), also a native of Germany, married around 1914.

Herman Rhode was a clergyman in the Lutheran Church and I've been told served as a missionary in Africa at one time. I don't know all the locations where Herman and Sophia lived, but they were in Kearney in central Nebraska in 1916, in Dodge County northwest of Omaha in 1930, and in Darrouzett in the extreme northwestern panhandle of Texas after World War II. Late in his career Herman Rhode lived in Council Bluffs, where he was assistant pastor of St. John's Lutheran Church.

The two known children of Herman and Sophia Gertrude Rhode were twins and are listed below.

- **Lewis Henry Temps Rhode** (21 Jan 1916 – 2 Jul 1997) was the first husband of **Evelyn Larson**.
- **Esther Charlotte Rhode** (21 Jan 1916 – 26 Nov 1995) married **Edwin Henry Blomendahl** (1911 – 1982). Edwin and Esther Blomendahl lived in Council Bluffs where Edwin managed a lumberyard.

Edwin and Esther Blomendahl had three known children, Lewis E. (12 Apr 1939 – 27 Aug 2002), Harriett and Patricia.

About Lewis Rhode:

Louis Rhode joined the United States Navy in Omaha, Nebraska, on January 8, 1937 when he was twenty years old. After training, he was assigned to the light cruiser *Memphis* on April 15, 1937. He was on the *Memphis* for the next three years. In early 1941 he was serving on the destroyer *Rathburne*, a training ship in San Diego.

Lewis and Evelyn Rhode:

Evelyn Larson and Lewis Rhode married at Our Savior's Lutheran Church in Council Bluffs on October 19, 1939.

While Lewis was in the navy, Lewis and Evelyn's first child, Edwin, was born at the naval hospital in San Diego, California, in 1940.

Sometime in 1941, Lewis left the navy and he, Evelyn and baby Edwin returned to Pottawattamie County. For a time they rented a house in Hazel Dell Township from the Parish family. This house, which still stands, was on the northeast corner of the four corners near the Parish school. Evelyn once told me the rental was \$15 per month.

In 1942 Lewis and Evelyn were living at 214 Hyde Ave. in Council Bluffs while Lewis worked at the Omaha Steel Works.

Before September 1943 Lewis and Evelyn moved to 14 Lainson Avenue in Council Bluffs, where Evelyn subsequently lived for many years.

Evelyn once told me that during this interlude in Iowa, Lewis worked at the Martin bomber plant south of Omaha, subsequently the site of Offutt Air Force Base.

In 1943 Lewis Rhode attended the United States Maritime Service officers school in New London, Connecticut. In October 1943 Lewis received his license as a 3rd mate and was commissioned an ensign in the United States Maritime Service. He was then assigned as a navigation instructor in St. Petersburg, Florida.

Lewis and Evelyn's second child, David, was born at St. Petersburg, Florida, in 1945.

For a few years after World War II ended, Lewis remained in the Merchant Marine serving as a 2nd mate and 3rd mate on ships sailing from the eastern coast of the United States.

Lewis served as 2nd mate on the *S. S. Julius Olsen*, a Liberty ship, between New York and Copenhagen in early 1946.

In late 1946 and the first seven months of 1947, Lewis made a number of trips as 3rd mate on the *M. V. Coastal Stevedore* between New York and the Dominican Republic. Data found on the Internet indicates that in January 1948 the *Coastal Stevedore* was sold to the government of Cuba.

I was told that during this period Evelyn sometimes left 14 Lainson Avenue in Council Bluffs and joined Lewis in New York and Philadelphia.

I have also heard that during Lewis's absences at sea Evelyn sometimes lacked funds to care for their two young children, and sang to help support the family.

I believe Lewis may have had trouble finding regular work in the Merchant Marine after World War II ended. He lacked experience at sea on merchant ships, since he had been a navigation instructor on shore before the war ended. Also, not long after World War II ended the Merchant Marine began to downsize drastically.

Lewis and Evelyn's third child, Jo Ellen, was born in Council Bluffs in 1947.

Lewis and Evelyn divorced in 1948. Subsequent to their divorce, Lewis and Evelyn's fourth child, Richard, was born in Council Bluffs in 1949. Richard was adopted and raised by the Lane family of Villisca, Iowa.

About Lewis Rhode, continued:

After Lewis and Evelyn divorced, Lewis married **Esther Helder**.

About Esther Helder: Esther Helder (10 Nov 1915 – 6 Oct 1966) was born in Carson, North Dakota, to Mr. and Mrs. Arthur Helder who subsequently moved to Rock Valley in Sioux County in northwestern Iowa.

About Lewis and Esther Rhode:

Lewis Rhode and Esther Helder married on April 9, 1949. The marriage took place in Darrouzett, Texas, where his parents were then living.

Lewis Rhode was a teacher in the Rock Valley schools. However, he and Evelyn were living in Anita, Iowa, in 1956-57.

The two children of Lewis Rhode by his marriage to Esther Helder are listed below.

- ▲ Rhonda Lou Rhode (22 Sep 1951 – 10 Mar 2002).
- ▲ Jon Temps Rhode (22 Feb 1954 - 15 Mar 2013) was born in Atlantic in southwestern Iowa, raised in Rock Valley in northwestern Iowa, and died at home in Mapleton in west central Iowa. John and his wife, Nelinda, had a large family, consisting of over 300 foster children, five children they adopted, and three born to Nelinda.

Around 1967 Lewis Rhode married **Ellen M. _____** (4 Jul 1927 -), the widow of Edward Hoekstra of Rock Valley. Ellen brought two children to this marriage.

Lewis and Ellen Rhode were living in Hartford and Madison, South Dakota, around 1990.

By 1993 Lewis and Ellen Rhode had moved to Florida, where they lived in New Smyrna Beach. Lewis died nearby in a hospital in Daytona Beach.

As of 2013 Ellen Rhode was living in Rapid City, South Dakota.

Evelyn as a single parent:

After Lewis and Evelyn Rhode divorced, Evelyn remained in the Council Bluffs area in Pottawattamie County for the remainder of her life. She resumed her college education and became a special education teacher at Iowa School for the Deaf near Council Bluffs.

I remember Sunday afternoons in the late 1940s at Evelyn's house at 14 Lainson Avenue. Her house backed on a steep wooded slope. A trail of sorts led up this

slope to Fairview Cemetery at the top of the bluff. The opportunities for exploration by curious school-aged cousins seemed infinite.

During the early and middle 1950s, **Charles Wilbur Lindsay** (2 May 1914 – 2 Feb 1987) was Evelyn's partner. Wilbur and Evelyn had two children, John born in 1951 and Kathleen born in 1954.

About Charles Wilbur Lindsay:

Wilbur Lindsay was born in Missouri to Charles F. Lindsay and Bessie L. Halterman, farmers who were Missouri natives. Around 1922 the Lindsay family moved to Mahaska County, Iowa, and in the late 1920s they moved to Kent County, Maryland, on the eastern shore of Chesapeake Bay. Charles F. and Bessie Lindsay may have remained in Kent County for the remainder of their lives.

During World War II Wilbur Lindsay served in the United States Army for over five years, enlisting on February 3, 1941 and leaving the service on May 16, 1946. He may have suffered a disability as a result of his military service. I once heard that Wilbur left the service as a master sergeant.

At some point in the 1950s, perhaps in 1958, Evelyn and Wilbur separated and Wilbur returned to the east coast where he and his wife, Anne (Price) Lindsay, raised three sons.

Evelyn Larson and Phil Sherbondy:

Evelyn's second husband and the love of her life, **Philip Lee "Phil" Sherbondy** (30 Apr 1932 -), was born in Council Bluffs to Robert Scott Sherbondy and Helen Viola Brown.

About Phil Sherbondy's family:

Phil Sherbondy's father, Robert Scott Sherbondy (1909 – 1 Dec 1984) was born in Council Bluffs to Warren Sherbondy and Florence Covalt. He married Helen Viola Brown in Council Bluffs in 1930. Robert and Helen Sherbondy divorced before 1950.

I know of the following children of Robert Sherbondy. There are others.

- **Don Michael Sherbondy** (3 May 1931 – 5 Mar 1985) married **Donna P. (Jensen) Dunblazier**. Donna was the daughter of Donald Elvin Jensen and Phyllis P. Wight of the Underwood, Iowa area.
- **Philip Sherbondy** was the second husband of **Evelyn Larson**.

When Phil was nine, his family moved to California, but the family moved back to Council Bluffs while Phil was in high school. In 1953 Phil's family returned to California, where his parents died, but Phil remained in Council Bluffs.

Phil graduated from Abraham Lincoln High School in Council Bluffs in 1950

and served as a musician in the United States Army at Fort Chaffee, Arkansas.

Phil Sherbondy and Evelyn (Larson) Rhode married in Omaha on New Year's Eve, December 31, 1958.

After Evelyn and Phil Sherbondy married, Evelyn's three younger children, Jo Ellen Rhode, John Lindsay and Kathleen Lindsay, began using the surname Sherbondy.

After marrying, Phil and Evelyn had a daughter, Andrea.

Phil Sherbondy worked as a commercial artist in Omaha.

Aunt Evelyn had an impressive energy level. In addition to raising six children, she was the only one of my aunts to work outside of the home. Evelyn was also one of the few members of my extended family with significant musical talents.

After Phil and Evelyn married, they lived in Evelyn's house at 14 Lainson Avenue off of Harrison Street in Council Bluffs for a number of years. Around 1971 they moved to the Wildwood subdivision on the east edge of Council Bluffs. Around 1980 they built a geodesic dome house on the ridge near Evelyn's parents' home place in Hazel Dell Township. Around 1990 they retired to Ridge Road in Council Bluffs. As of 2012, Phil Sherbondy is still living in their Ridge Road home.

In her latter decades Aunt Evelyn, along with other members of her family, added a deeply spiritual component to her life.

Phil and Evelyn Sherbondy were married for over fifty-two years before her death in April 2011.

Evelyn's oldest child, Edwin Richard Rhode (9 May 1940 – 27 Mar 2005) died at age 64.

As of 2017 Evelyn's surviving children were living in Omaha, Nebraska (David Rhode), Muscatine, Iowa (Jo Ellen Kill), Burbank, California (Richard Lane), Council Bluffs (John Sherbondy) the Des Moines area (Kathleen Sherbondy) and Iowa City, Iowa (Andrea Reasoner).

End of the public portion of the Evelyn (Larson) Rhode Sherbondy Family sketch.
The following six-page private portion, written for Evelyn's descendants, sketches the lives of Evelyn's children.

➔(Six pages omitted from the web version.)

End of the Evelyn (Larson) Rhode Sherbondy Family sketch.

End of Chapter 5 - *Henry Larson and Ellen Hansen*
of the *Larsen* volume of *Robert Christiansen's Family History*.