

843 E. Vera Ln.  
Tempe, AZ 85284  
April 28, 2014

Kori L. Nelson, Executive Director  
The Historic General Dodge House  
621 Third Street, Council Bluffs, IA 51503

Dear Ms. Nelson,

At the request of my second cousin, Alvina Hjortsvang, I am sending you this contextual information about the clothing Alvina has donated to the Dodge House.

- Around ten years ago Alvina donated three garments, namely a christening gown worn by Raymond Christiansen when he was baptized at St. Paul's Lutheran Church in Boomer Township the age of one month on December 18, 1910 and two dresses worn by his older sisters, Anneta and Agnes Christiansen, at that time. Alvina included a studio photo from early 1911 of the children wearing these garments.

Ownership: Nels Christiansen family → Agnes Christiansen → Lillie (Bondo) Larsen → Alvina (Larsen) Hjortsvang → Dodge House

- In the summer of 2013 Alvina donated an apron made by Bendine Rasmussen, the maiden aunt of the three Christiansen children.

Ownership: Bendine Rasmussen → Winnie (Rasmussen) Bondo → Lillie (Bondo) Larsen → Dorothy Larsen → Alvina (Larsen) Hjortsvang → Dodge House

As the following chart shows, Anneta, Agnes and Raymond Christiansen were first cousins of Alvina's mother, Lillie.

Lars Christian Rasmussen (1851 - 1934) & Karen Marie Andersen (1843 - 1928)  
| Mette Marie "Mary" Rasmussen (1876 - 1917) & Nels Christiansen (1871 - 1958)  
| | Anneta Viola Christiansen (1906 - 1942)  
| | Agnes Clarette Christiansen (1908 - 1973)  
| | Raymond Roosevelt Christiansen (1910 - 1986) & Esther Elizabeth Ericksen (1913 - 2000)  
| Alvina "Winnie" Rasmussen (1878 - 1975) & Oluf Peter "Peter" Bondo (1869 - 1939)  
| | Lillie Martha Bondo (1899 - 1978) & Oluf Larsen (1896 - 1991)  
| | | Alvina Marie Larsen (1927 - ) & Herbert Augustine Hjortsvang (1924 - 2001)  
| Bendine Rasmussen (1881 - 1918)

Alvina's parents, Oluf and Lillie (Bondo) Larsen, farmed in Hazel Dell Township north of Council Bluffs. Oluf had emigrated from Denmark in 1913. When the United States entered World War I joined the Dodge Engineers of the Iowa National Guard, which later became Company B of the 109<sup>th</sup> Engineering Battalion.

In May 1953 the Oluf Larsen farm home burned. All of the family treasures were lost.

After the Larsen home burned, Lillie's cousin, Agnes Christiansen, gave Lillie some treasured mementoes from the Christiansen household, namely the three garments pictured herein. Lillie subsequently acquired the apron from her mother, Winnie (Rasmussen) Bondo.

The photograph on the following page shows the three Christiansen children wearing the garments now in the Dodge House collection. I have seen a copy in which the children are misidentified. If possible, please check your copy to ensure that identifications are correct, namely from left to right Anneta, Raymond and Agnes.

Anneta, Agnes and Raymond Christiansen, the children on this 1911 photograph, were later to experience more than their share of loss.

- In 1917 their mother died, leaving them and their toddler brother, Clarence, to grow up without a mother as their father never remarried.
- In 1918 their Aunt Bendine, who lived nearby, died in the influenza pandemic.
- Anneta Christiansen experienced poor health and died at home at the age of 35.
- Agnes Christiansen remained at home as housekeeper for her father, first on the Boomer Township farm, then in Avoca. After her father's death she cared for elderly men and women in her home on Glen Avenue in Council Bluffs. I remember well one of her boarders, Robert Hessey, an in-law of the Tinley family.
- Raymond Christiansen married Esther Ericksen from the St. Paul's congregation. Raymond and Esther raised four children and farmed west of Shelby, Iowa before retiring to Council Bluffs.

Enclosed are excerpts from my extended family history, *Ancestors and Older Relatives of Robert Christiansen – Christiansen, Rasmussen, Larsen/Larson and Hansen*:

- ◆ *Lars Christian Rasmussen and Karen Marie Andersen Family* (Bendine & Mary's parents, 7 pages)
- ◆ *Nels and Mary (Rasmussen) Christiansen Family* (parents of Anneta, Raymond, and Agnes, 3 pages) and *Raymond and Loretta (Ericksen) Christiansen Family* (2 pages)

The Danish immigrant families mentioned herein were members of St. Paul's Lutheran Church in Boomer Township, about eight miles west of Neola. Immigrants founded this church, which is still in existence, in 1881.

Sincerely,  
Robert A. "Bob" Christiansen  
480.861.8404

Enc.

**Clothing in the Dodge House collection, Council Bluffs, Iowa**



**From left to right:**

- Annetta Viola Christiansen (19 Jul 1906 – 11 Jul 1942)
- Raymond Roosevelt Christiansen (14 Nov 1910 – 17 Aug 1986)
- Agnes Claretta Christiansen (24 Jun 1908 – 15 Mar 1973)

Children of Nels Christiansen and Mette Marie "Mary" Rasmussen of Boomer Township, Pottawattamie County, Iowa