

Vilhelm Pedersen and Maren Olsen Family

(parents of members)

(Nine-page sketch excerpted from *St. Paul's Boomer-Neola Early Families* by Robert A. Christiansen. Reviewed by Cleo Christoffersen. Revised by RAC Jul 2011.)

Both Vilhelm Pedersen and Maren Olsen remained in Denmark, but three of their sons immigrated to the Neola area. The two sons listed below lived on farms in Neola Township east of St. Paul's and west of the town of Neola.

Pedersen, Vilhelm & Maren Olsen (parents of members, remained in Denmark)

Hans Andersen Petersen & Christine Marie "Mary" Christoffersen

Lars C. Petersen & Inger Marie Jensen

Vilhelm Pedersen (4 or 7 Nov 1832 – after 1925) was born in Spjellerup Sogn, Præstø Amt, Denmark to **Peder Larsen and Kirsten Jacobsdatter** and died in Denmark.

Maren Olsen (13 Nov 1836 – after 1901) was born in Smerup Sogn, Præstø Amt, Denmark to **Ole Pedersen and Grethe Poulsdatter** and died in Denmark.

Vilhelm Pedersen and Maren Olsen married in Vemmetofte Sogn, Præstø Amt, Denmark on February 23, 1861.

The three parishes mentioned above, Spjellerup, Smerup and Vemmeltofte, lie on the island of Sjaelland in eastern Denmark, east of the small industrial city of Fakse, and about forty miles south of Copenhagen.

It appears that after marrying in Vemmeltofte Sogn, Vilhelm and Maren lived in Smerup Sogn until around 1878 when then moved to Spjellerup Sogn. In Spjellerup Sogn Vilhelm Pedersen owned a farm called Vilhelmsminde in the village of Spjellerup diagonally across the road from Spjellerup Kirke.

Of interest: Among the 43 extended families who comprise the early families of St. Paul's, I know of four who had family members who at one time lived in the rural parish of Smerup:

- * Hans Andersen Petersen and Lars C. Petersen.
- * Christian Christiansen and Anna Jensen and their son, Jens (my great-grandparents and grandfather).
- * Marie Jensen and her brother, Peter. (Marie married Isaac Hansen after losing her first family in an epidemic.)
- * Niels Nielsen, his daughter, Anna Margrethe, who married Peter Rasmussen, and his daughter, Inger Marie, who married Peter Hansen of Norwalk Township.

The eight known children of Vilhelm and Maren Pedersen are listed below. Records suggest that the first four children were born in Smerup Sogn and the last four in Spjellerup Sogn.

The three oldest children immigrated as young adults to the Neola, Iowa area, and two were St. Paul's early members.

- **Peter Larsen Petersen** (31 Dec 1861 -) immigrated to Council Bluffs from Spjellerup in the spring of 1885 on the steamship *Hekla*.

In 1895, Peter Petersen was living with his brother, Lars. Later he moved to the Seattle area. He is thought to have married late in life and to have had no children.

- **Hans Andersen Petersen** (30 Nov 1863 – 24 Feb 1937) immigrated to Council Bluffs from Copenhagen in the spring of 1886 on the steamship *Thingvalla*.

Christine Marie Christoffersen (5 Mar 1875 – 12 Nov 1956) was born in Veggerby Sogn, Aalborg Amt, Denmark to **Soren Kristoffersen and Dorte Marie Jensdatter**. Christine was one of eight known children.

Veggerby is on the Jutland peninsula in northern Denmark about 15 miles southwest of Aalborg.

Christine Christoffersen's family lived in meager circumstances. Her family moved from parish to parish, finally settling south of Veggerby Sogn in Skivum Sogn where Christine's father worked as a day laborer.

According to family stories, when Christine was around eight years old she was sent to live as a goose girl with another family. In 1890 at the age of 13 she was working as a servant girl in the family of Søren Kristian Kristensen in Ejdrup Sogn to the west of Veggerby Sogn.

Christine immigrated about 1894 to Pilger, Nebraska, following a brother, Jens, who had immigrated earlier. Christine did housework in Pilger and in Avoca, Iowa before marrying.

Hans Petersen and Christine Christoffersen married in Pottawattamie County on October 26, 1898.

Hans and Christine Petersen farmed in south central Neola Township, in Section 28.

The six children of Hans and Christine Petersen are listed below. The two oldest children, Louis and Louise, were twins.

- **Louis William Petersen** (23 May 1899 – 4 Mar 1988, conf. 1915) married **Edna Marie Larson** (4 Jul 1902 – 22 Feb 1946) in Pottawattamie County on December 31, 1924. Edna Larson was the daughter of **Andrew A. Larson and Karen Margrethe "Maggie" Hansen** of Hazel Dell Township, Section 15.

Louis Petersen worked at the Ford Motors assembly plant in Omaha for a number of years before taking over his parents' farm in Neola Township in 1933.

In 1939 Edna (Larson) Petersen was hospitalized with tuberculosis at the state hospital in Oakdale. In 1943 Louis moved to a farm near Columbus Junction, which was closer to Oakdale.

In 1945 Louis Petersen moved to a farm near Keswick in Keokuk County, where he lived for many years.

After Edna's death from tuberculosis, Louis married **Pearl Ethel Severn** (6 Mar 1909 -) on April 4, 1948. Pearl Severn was the daughter of John W. Severn and

Edna Carman and was a graduate of Abraham Lincoln High School in Council Bluffs.

Of interest: Louis Petersen had first met Pearl Severn when Pearl was a teacher at the Neola #8 rural school.

In 1978 Louis and Pearl moved to northeastern Kansas to be near his daughter. After Louis Petersen died in Kansas, Pearl returned to Iowa to live near her son.

The three children of Louis and Edna Petersen are listed below.

- ▲ **Alvin Louis Petersen** (12 Jan 1926 –15 Jun 2003, conf. 1940) married **Marie Dorothy Ullerich** (9 Jul 1931 – 5 Aug 2007) in Vinton, Iowa on June 9, 1956.

Alvin and Marie Petersen had three children and lived in Bettendorf, Iowa.

- ▲ **Donald Eugene Petersen** (26 May 1927 -, conf. 1940) married **Agnes Lorraine "Lorraine" Ware**.

Donald and Lorraine Petersen had three children and as of 2011 were living in Prescott, Arizona.

- ▲ **Phyllis Jean Petersen** (11 Sep 1930 -) married **Floyd Arnold Rauch**. Floyd and Phyllis divorced and Phyllis subsequently married **Alton F. Carey** (9 Aug 1929 – 27 Aug 2002). After Alton's death, Phyllis married **Marshall L. Werth Jr.**

Floyd and Phyllis Rauch had three children, one of whom died in infancy. Alton and Phyllis Carey had one child.

As of 2011, Phyllis was living in Princeton, Kansas.

The one child of Louis and Pearl Petersen is listed below.

- ▲ **Louis W. Petersen Jr.** (1950 -)

Louis Petersen is interred in the Ottawa Cemetery in Franklin County, Kansas, while his first wife, Edna, is interred in the Sorden Cemetery in Keokuk County, Iowa. Alvin Petersen is interred in Davenport Memorial Park in Davenport, Iowa.

- **Louise Christine Petersen** (23 May 1899 – Mar 1980, conf. 1915) married **Melvin Bennie Paulson** (18 Apr 1897 -) at St. Paul's on April 20, 1921.

Melvin Paulson was the son of **Carl Paulson and Ida Peterson**.

Melvin and Louise Paulson lived in Ames, Iowa.

The six children of Melvin and Louise Paulson are listed below. Roland and Rodney were identical twins.

- ▲ **Gertrude L. Paulson** (about 1922 - before 1998) married **William Armstrong**.

Gertrude (Paulson) Armstrong visited Denmark with her husband in 1980 and 1988 and did some work on her family history.

William and Gertrude Armstrong had three children and Gertrude had two stepdaughters.

▲ **Ralph L. Paulson** (4 Apr 1923 – 27 Nov 1943) served in the Marine Corps and was killed at Tarawa in the Pacific during World War II.

▲ **Roland A. Paulson** (about 1924 -) was a B-17 bombardier in Italy during World War II.

Ronald Paulson had two children and was believed to be living in Colorado in 2011.

▲ **Rodney H. Paulson** (about 1924 – 29 Mar 1954) was a B-17 tail gunner in Italy during World War II and was killed in the crash of a B-36 bomber at Fairchild Air Force Base near Spokane, Washington.

▲ **Leonard Irving Paulson** (1931-) married **Corrine**.

Leonard and Corrine Paulson had three children and as of 2011 were living in Sun Lakes, Arizona.

▲ **Franklin Paulson** (-) died in infancy.

Melvin and Louise Paulson are interred in the Ames, Iowa Municipal Cemetery, as is their son, Franklin. Ralph Paulson is interred in the National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific in the Punchbowl in Honolulu, Hawaii.

Of interest: Roland Paulson has written of his childhood and military service, focusing on his relationship with his late twin brother, Rodney, in a book, *Valley of the Skunk*.

- **Martin Francis Petersen** (17 Jan 1901 – Dec 1973, conf. 1915) married **Erna** around 1927 and lived in Wisconsin.

The three children of Martin and Erna Petersen are listed below.

▲ **Gladys E. Petersen** (-)

▲ **Doris Petersen** (-)

▲ **Howard Petersen** (-)

- **Henry Theodore Peterson** (29 Sep 1902 – 6 Nov 1977, conf. 1917) married **Edna Mathilda Nelson** (26 Mar 1902 – 29 Nov 1964) at St. Paul's on March 11, 1925. Edna Nelson was the daughter of **St. Paul's early members Christian Peter Thomas Nelson and Jennie Nelson**.

Henry T. and Edna Peterson lived on his parents' farm after marrying, and then lived near Bentley in the Underwood-McClelland area. Around 1928 they bought the farm of her grandparents, Lars and Carrie Nelson, in Hazel Dell Township, Section 10. They sold this farm to John Larsen in the early 1950s at which time they moved to southwestern Hazel Dell Township.

Henry T. Peterson legally changed his family's surname from "Petersen" to "Peterson".

The five children of Henry T. and Edna Peterson, including twins and a child who died in infancy, are listed below.

- ▲ **Calvin Philip Peterson** (9 Mar 1926 – 2 Nov 1976, conf. 1940), a World War II veteran, married **Elvera Esther Magnussen** (18 May 1923 – 23 Aug 2008) at St. Paul's on March 16, 1947. Elvera Magnussen was the daughter of **St. Paul's early members Carl Magnussen and Esther Bondo**.

Calvin and Elvera Peterson had two children and remained in the Omaha-Council Bluffs area.

- ▲ **Orvan Bernard Peterson** (23 Mar 1927 -, conf. 1940) married **Ann Louise Wickstrom** on August 15, 1959.

Orvan Peterson lived in Butler, Pennsylvania.

- ▲ **Ophra Beulah Peterson** (23 Mar 1927 – 24 May 2011, conf. 1940) married **Jack Welsh** (25 Aug 1925 – 9 Feb 2009), a World War II veteran, at St. Paul's on May 2, 1945. Jack Welsh was the son of **James E. Welsh and Nellie E. Cutler** and spent the later part of his childhood living with the William Driver family just east and north of St. Paul's.

Jack and Orpha Welsh had three children and remained in the Omaha-Council Bluffs area.

- ▲ **Clyde Eugene Peterson** (Apr 1929? – 23 May 1929?) died as a small child. The dates given may be inaccurate.

- ▲ **Cleo Gretchen Peterson** (13 Aug 1930 -, conf. 1944) married **Arthur Otto Christoffersen** (7 Jul 1926 – 27 Nov 1978) at St. Paul's on March 14, 1948. Arthur Christoffersen was the son of **St. Paul's early members Otto Christoffersen and Anna Christensen**.

Arthur and Cleo Christoffersen lived on his parents' farm in southern Neola Township. Later Cleo lived in Underwood, Iowa.

Arthur and Cleo Christoffersen had four children, one of whom died as a teenager.

As of 2011, Cleo (Peterson) Christoffersen was living in Council Bluffs, Iowa.

Henry T. and Edna Peterson are interred in the Hazel Dell Cemetery. Their sons, Calvin and Clyde Peterson, are interred in the St. Paul's Cemetery. Orpha (Peterson) Welsh is interred in Memorial Park Cemetery in Council Bluffs.

- **Elsie Marie Petersen** (30 Apr 1904 – Aug 1972, conf. 1919) married **Tom T. Blakesley** in Hollywood, California on August 9, 1930.

Tom and Elsie Blakesley divorced around 1932. Their one child is listed below.

- ▲ **Bonita Louise Blakesley** (6 May 1931 – 21 Jul 1998) married **Mr. Mueller**.

Bonita had two children and may have died in Madison, Wisconsin.

Elsie Marie Petersen married **Joseph Coffman** (28 Jan 1907 – Apr 1980) in 1937. Joseph Coffman was from North English, Iowa.

Joseph and Elsie Coffman lived in Illinois and Wisconsin and had no children.

- **Julia Dortha Petersen** (2 Mar 1909 – 4 Sep 2002, conf. 1923) married **Kenneth Martin** (- 1958). Kenneth and Julia Martin divorced around 1956.

The three children of Kenneth and Julia Martin are listed below.

- ▲ **David Martin** (-) probably never married and did not have children.
- ▲ **Kenneth Martin** (-) married and was living in Thornton, Colorado as of 2003.
- ▲ **Constance “Connie” Martin** (-) married **John W. Klockentager**.

John and Connie Klockentager had three or four children and were living in Monmouth, Illinois in 2003.

Hans and Mary (sic) Petersen head family #59 in the St. Paul’s family register begun in 1900.

Hans and Christine Marie Petersen are interred in the St. Paul’s Cemetery. Louis Petersen is interred in the Ottawa Cemetery in Franklin County, Kansas and his twin sister, Louise (Petersen) Paulson, is interred in the Ames, Iowa municipal cemetery. Henry T. Petersen is interred in the Hazel Dell Cemetery. Elsie (Petersen) Blakesley Coffman is interred in Madison, Wisconsin. Julia (Petersen) Martin is interred in the Highland Park Cemetery in Des Moines. I don’t know where Martin Petersen is interred.

- **Lars C. Petersen** (30 Sep 1865 – 10 Apr 1951) immigrated to Council Bluffs from Copenhagen in the early spring of 1887 on the steamship *Hekla*.

Lars Petersen's future wife, **Inger Marie “Mary” Jensen** (8 Feb 1868 – 24 Apr 1956) was born in Denmark and immigrated around 1894. She was married twice.

Inger Marie Jensen’s first husband was Jens P. Larsen, and they married, probably in Council Bluffs, on October 8, 1894.

About Jens P. Larsen: Jens P. Larsen was married twice. He divorced his first wife, Johanna M. Jensen, whom he had married in Pottawattamie County on October 8, 1885. He and Johanna had one child, Frank, who lived in Spokane, Washington. Johanna also had a child, called Jens Jensen in emigration records and Alfred Simonsen in the 1895 census, who was born in Denmark and immigrated with Johanna. I don't know what happened to this child.

Before his death, Jens P. Larsen had bought an 80-acre farm in Neola Township, Section 33. This became the nucleus of the Lars Petersen farm, and later the Otto Christoffersen farm.

The one child of Inger Marie Jensen and Jens P. Larsen is listed below. She generally seems to have used her stepfather’s surname.

- **Jensine Christine “Christine” Petersen** (5 Sep 1897 – 21 Aug 1988, conf. 1913) married **Viggo Bondo Peterson** (9 Apr 1897 – 24 Nov 1945) at St. Paul’s on March 24, 1920. Viggo Peterson was the son of **St. Paul’s early members Thomas Peterson and Mary Bondo**.

Viggo and Christine Peterson had three children, one of whom died in early childhood. See the *Thomas Peterson section* of the *Christian Bondo Family sketch* for additional information.

Lars Petersen and Inger Marie Jensen married in Pottawattamie County on April 19, 1899.

Lars and Mary Petersen farmed in south central Neola Township in Section 33. Between 1920 and 1925 they sold their farm to Otto Christoffersen and moved to Underwood.

The five children of Lars and Mary Petersen are listed below.

- **William Martin "Bill" Petersen** (25 Oct 1899 – 9 Feb 1965, conf. 1915) married **Opal Olive Jensen** (1900 – 1996) at Opal's home in Hazel Dell Township on October 10, 1923. Opal Jensen was the daughter of Hazel Dell Township residents Hans C. Jensen and Olive Scott and the granddaughter of **St. Paul's charter members Jens Jensen and Theresa Sorensen**.

After marrying, William Martin and Opal Petersen farmed in Neola Township. Sometime after 1930 William and Opal moved to the Council Bluffs area. From about 1939 to early 1945 they managed Grandview Farm, a 24-acre county facility for dependent and neglected children, near Council Bluffs. Late in 1945 Grandview Farm was sold and the children moved to a facility in Council Bluffs.

William Martin and Opal Petersen had no children.

- An **unnamed infant** was born and died on October 27, 1901.
- **Maren Katrine "Mamie" Petersen** (27 Nov 1902 – 29 May 1991, conf. 1917) never married and was a nurse in San Francisco, California.

Mamie Petersen died in San Mateo County, California and was cremated.

- **Paul Christian Petersen** (11 Feb 1905 – 15 Mar 1995, conf. 1919) married Lilly M. ____ (20 Mar 1904 – 27 Aug 1972. Paul Petersen was a sailor in early life.

Paul and Lilly Petersen were living in Los Angeles, California as early as 1932. By 1940 they were living in Van Nuys in the San Fernando Valley.

Paul Petersen died in Los Angeles County and his wife, Lilly, died earlier in Placer County.

The one known child of Paul and Lilly Petersen is listed below.

▲ **Gayle Petersen (-)**

- **Emma Marie Petersen** (20 Jan 1908 – 21 Apr 1997, conf. 1923) married **Mac McKinnon**.

Emma (Petersen) McKinnon lived in Los Angeles in the 1950s but later moved to Maryville, Blount County, Tennessee where her son, Ronald, lived.

The two children of Mac and Emma McKinnon are listed below.

▲ **Ronald K. McKinnon** (-)

▲ **Dianne McKinnon** (-)

Lars and Inger Marie Petersen head family #36 in the St. Paul's family roster begun in 1900.

Lars and Inger Marie Petersen are interred in the St. Paul's Cemetery, along with a marker for their daughter, Maren. Their son, William Martin Petersen, is interred in the Cedar Lawn Cemetery in Council Bluffs. I don't know where Paul Petersen and Emma (Petersen) McKinnon are interred.

- **Ole Pedersen** (27 Jun 1868 – 1868) died as an infant.
- **Ane Cathrine "Trina" Pedersen** (7 Jun 1869 -) stayed in Denmark and married Niels Larsen. Niels and Trina Larsen had two children.
- **Grethe Pedersen** (18 Mar 1871 -) immigrated to Omaha in April 1890 on the steamship *Hekla*. Grethe married a man named Nelson in Omaha, and probably spelled her name "Greta" in the United States.
Greta (Pedersen) Nelson had five children.
- **Ole Pedersen** (11 Aug 1873 -) remained in Denmark where he married and had five children, Pauline, Marie, Ingeborg, Akole or Axel, and Jens. (The 2 Feb 1885 birth date for Ole that I have seen is probably incorrect.)
Ole Pedersen's son, Jens, spent some time in the Neola area with his uncle, Hans Andersen Petersen, and returned to Denmark around 1920.
- **Poul Pedersen** (23 Oct 1876 -) appears as a three-year old in the 1880 census for Spjellerup Sogn but does not appear in the 1890 census. I assume he died as a child.

Sources Specific to the Vilhelm Pedersen and Maren Olsen Family:

- For more information about the following families outlined in the above sketch, see these additional sketches in *St. Paul's Boomer-Neola Early Families*:
 - For the relatives of Edna (Nelson) Peterson, the wife of Henry T. Peterson, see the *Christian Peter Thomas "C. P. T." Nelson* section of the *Peter Nielsen Family sketch*.
 - For the relatives of Elvera (Magnussen) Peterson, the wife of Calvin Peterson, see the *Peter Bondo* section of the *Christian Bondo Family sketch*. Elvera was the granddaughter of Peter Bondo.
 - For the relatives of Arthur Christoffersen, the husband of Cleo (Peterson) Christoffersen, see the *Martin Christoffersen* section of the *Jorgen Christoffersen Family sketch*. Arthur Christoffersen was the grandson of Martin Christoffersen.

- For the family of Viggo Bondo Peterson, the husband of Christine Petersen, see the *Viggo Bondo Peterson section* of the *Christian Bondo Family sketch*. Viggo Bondo Peterson was the grandson of Christian Bondo.
- For the relatives of Opal (Jenson) Petersen, the wife of William Martin Petersen, see the *Jens Jensen Family sketch*. Opal Jenson was the granddaughter of Jens Jensen.
- For more information about the following families outlined in the above sketch, see the indicated chapter of Robert A. Christiansen's family history, *Christiansen, Rasmussen, Larsen/Larson & Hansen Families*:
 - See the *Andrew Larson section* of the *Larsen/Larson chapter* for Edna Larson, married to Louis Petersen, the son of Hans Andersen Petersen. Edna (Larson) Petersen was the daughter of Andrew Larson.
- "Valley of the Skunk", by Roland Paulson (National Writers Press 1996).
- "Kristine and Hans Petersen", three-page manuscript by Gertrude (Paulson) Armstrong produced in 1990.
- Danish Emigration Archives (ddd.dda.dk):
 - Peter L. Petersen registered 4/15/1885. Hans And. Petersen registered 4/14/1886. Lars Pedersen registered 3/28/1887. Grete Petersen registered 4/9/1890.

End of the Vilhelm Pedersen and Maren Olsen Family Sketch