

History of the John Oscar Larson Family

John Oscar Larson was born in Sweden in 1862 and came to the United States with his parents about 1869 where they located in Chariton, Iowa. There were four brothers--Charlie married and settled down near home. David went to Canada, Saskatchewan where he reared a large family of 12 children. 8 boys and four girls. They lived in the town of Norquay.

John Oscar and Harry drove a team of horses to Oberlin, Kansas in Decatur County, where they took up a homestead in 1844. (Charlie was with them.) John Oscar and Harry married sisters of the Hoaglund family. There were eight girls in that family and John married Josephine Cristina about 1894. The Hoaglunds came from Sweden when Josephine was about eleven years old. JOHN AND Josephine had seven children; Alma (Hemme)--Joseph, Albert, Aaron, Mable (Webb-McMillan), Maude (Eberhardt) and David.

Alma and August Hemme had four children: Della (Habenicht), Leeta, Thelma (Cushman) and Earl. Leeta never married and was a Missionary to the Far East.

Joseph and Dorothy had six children; Gail (Walker), Don, Nancy (Buller), Rollo, Phyllis (Asgeirsson), and Maxine (Center). After Dorothy's death (about 1958) Joseph married Mildred Bird. Joseph died the summer of 1990 and is buried next to Dorothy.

Albert and Lois had two children; Gerald, a doctor in Elk Horn, Iowa; and June (Sutter). Dr. Sutter was medical director of Orlando San. and Hospital in Fla. They also adopted a girl, Arlis (Dixson).

Aaron and Lela had two boys; Marvin a physical therapist and Norman a medical technologist. Both wives are R.N.s. Marvin and Sylvia also went to Central America as missionaries for several years. Norman was for several years in charge of the blood bank at the White Memorial Hospital.

Mable and Lee Webb had four children; Jack, Verda Lyons, Lynn and Fred. Fred and Arlene also went to Africa as missionaries.

Maude and Jake Eberhardt had seven children; Ivanette, Merlyn, Myron, Ardith, Arlene (Musato), Max, and Ron.

David and Opal had one girl, Louise (Clement) who lives in the Portland area. David died about 1933.

The John Oscar Larson family became Adventists about 1902 while living in Kansas. In 1904 they moved to Escondido, California where Maude and David were born. In 1914 the family moved to Chowchilla, Calif. (when Aaron was 14 years old). In the fall of 1914 Aaron went to Lodi Academy and graduated in 1922. The following fall went to Pacific Union College and completed the ministerial course in 1924. He earned scholarships by picking grapes and later canvassing. In July 1924 he was asked by the Calif. Conference to be Literature Evangelist Leader with the headquarters in Oakland, Ca.

Aaron met Lela Wood at P.U.C. in 1923 where she graduated from the secretarial course. She was a graduate of the San Fernando Academy in 1923. This was the last year the Academy operated. It was replaced by La Sierra Academy. On March 4, 1925 when Aaron was 25 and Lela was 21 they were married in her home in Arroyo Grande, Ca.

They lived in Oakland for six months and in October, 1925 answered a call to Panama as colporteur leader which was then called the West Caribbean Conf. and was comprised of Panama, Costa Rica and Nicaragua. In 1927 Aaron became Secretary-treasurer of the West Caribbean Conf. and served as such until their furlough time, Sept. 5, 1927. Lela served as Missionary Volunteer Sec. for the conf.

Marvin was born March 18, 1927 in the Ancon Hospital which was in United States territory and Norman was born August 19, 1928 in the Colon, Panama Hospital which is in Panamanian territory. They were both naturalized U.S. citizens at the time of their birth.

After furlough, in March of 1931 the family went to Tegucigalpa, Honduras by boat, via Puerta Ampala, where Aaron was President and Sec/treas. of the mission. Lela came down with typhoid fever, which along with malaria and amoeba nearly took her life. In October of 1932 the family returned to the USA by flying to Puerto Cortez, Honduras; then on to New Orleans by boat, and train to California. They stayed with Albert and Lois at the St. Helena Sanitarium for a few weeks, then located temporarily in Oak Park, Arroyo Grande, waiting for Lela to regain her health which took ten months.

World affairs were in a state of depression and workers were being turned off and sent home so Aaron and Lela accompanied by Roy and Arreta Haight, Cliff and Irene Hardin with their two children Joanne and Floyd sailed from San Francisco in Sept. of 1933, for Panama as self-supporting missionaries. From Balboa they loaded their few possessions onto a small Panamanian boat and went to David, Chiriqui and then by truck to La Concepcion. The women and children stayed in a house across the street from Thorp's store while the three men scouted the country to find a place to live, which was in Bongo. The Larsons bought two riding horses the day before going to Bongo; Dan a pretty bay and Dolly a roan. Both had a good gate. The household goods were loaded into an ox cart and moved to Bongo where they lived in thatch houses until we able to cut trees, have natives saw boards and build a frame house. Three stones piled in the thatch house served as a cook stove. The thatch house leaked like sieve and bedding had to be dried out each day.

After six months in Bongo the Larsons moved to Bijao (Behow) to live on W.E. Thorpe's sugar cane farm. First a lumber house was constructed from (whip saw) hand sawn lumber, done by two men. Then a cane mill was bought and installed down from the house by the spring. Marvin and Norman were usually on the job at the mill and one afternoon they were playing in the water when a flash of lightning struck very near them and stung their legs till they screamed.

Natives cut the cane and brought it to the mill where it was ground out by oxen each morning and boiled down and poured into wooden molds for sugar cakes. Later two centrifuges were purchased and then the granulated sugar was made from the boiled down syrup. It had to cool and set for several days before being processed.

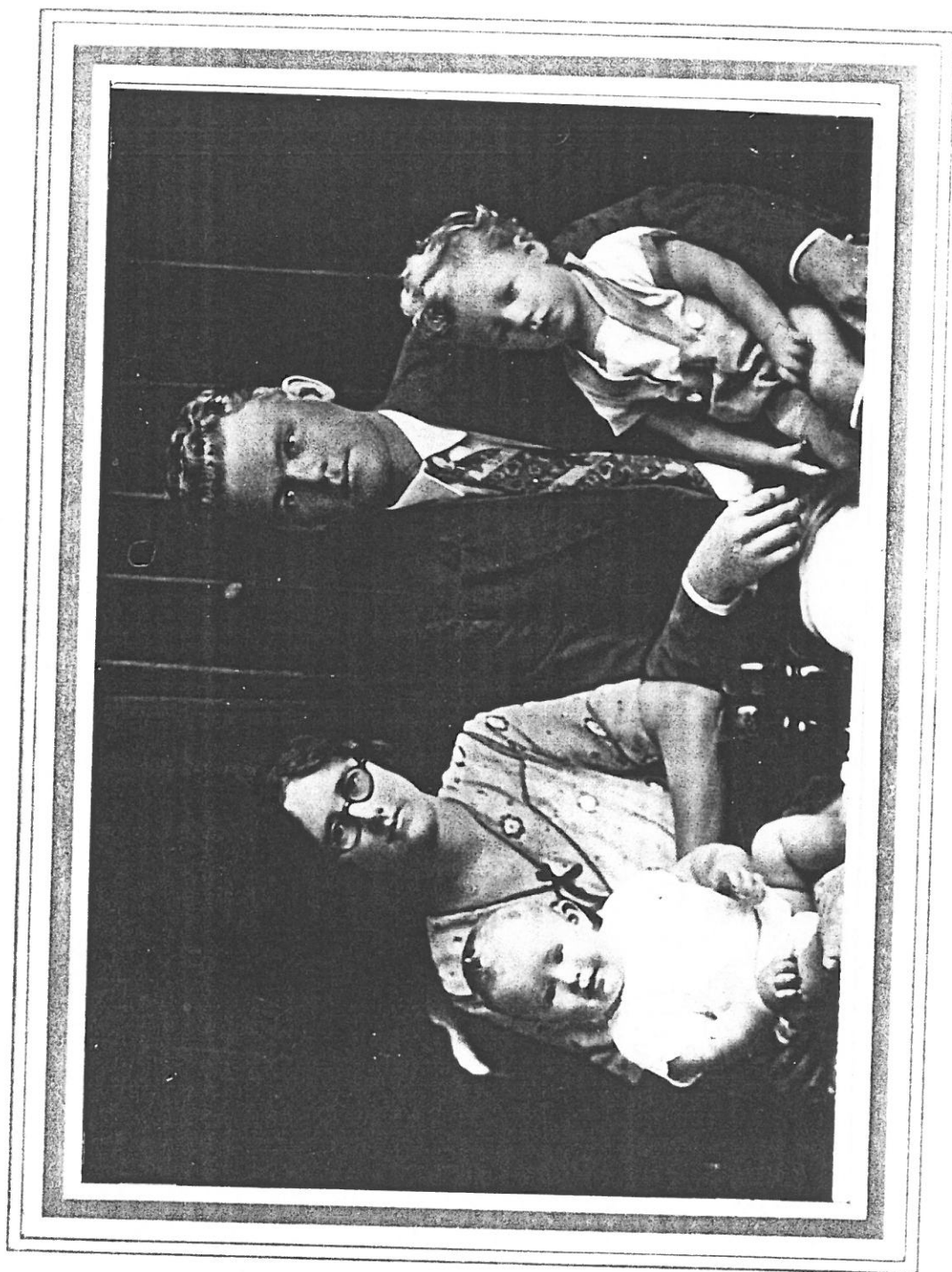
February 1, 1935 the Larsons received a call from the Inter-American Division to serve as President and Sec/treas. of the Atlantic Colombia Mission with the headquarters in Barranquilla, Colombia. They served two years and in Dec. 1936 they were transferred to Caracas Venezuela to serve as Sec/treas. for that mission, where they lived until October of 1939.

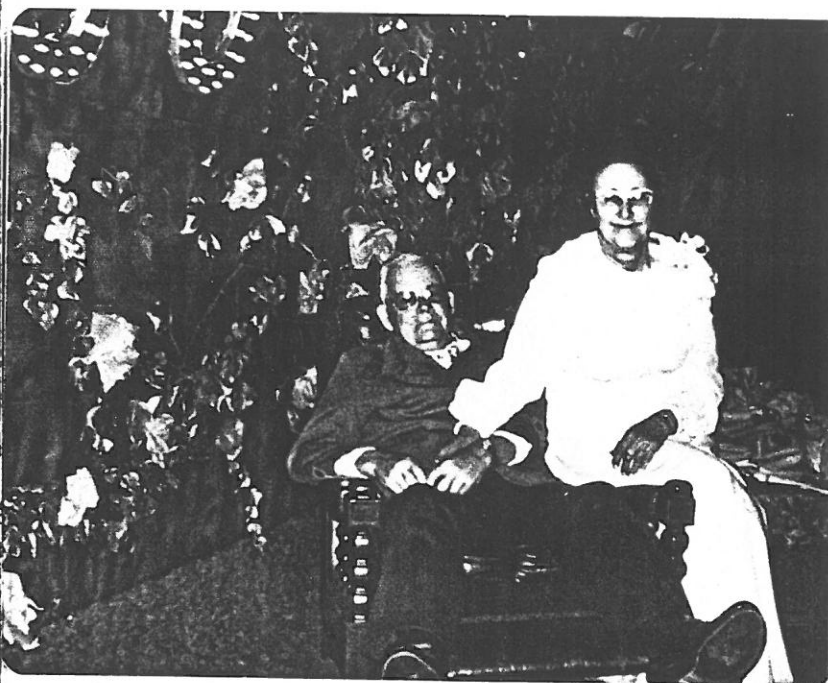
Marvin and Norman had completed 6 grades of school with the help of mother and taking tests that were sent to them from General Conference Education Dept. During 1940 and 1941 they continued studying at home and graduated from the 8th grade. The Odoms lived in a duplex with us and together we taught Bob Odom, Marvin and Norman. In 1942 Marvin went to Colegio in Tres Rios where he took four years of Academic work in Spanish. Norman took correspondence at home for two years, then finished in Spanish at the same academy. Marvin met Sylvia and were good friends in these academy years.

October 1939 we were called by the Pacific Press Pub. Assn. to go to Cristobal, Canal Zone as manager of the Cristobal Branch. The branch printed and sold about \$240,000 worth of books, magazines and tracts each year. We increased this production up to almost a million dollars a year.

In November, 1949 we had a call from the Inter-American Division to go to San Jose, Costa Rica as President of the Central American Union. We had lived most of the 24 years of mission life in hot tropical climates, it seemed wise to accept this call where we could live in a higher altitude where the weather would be cooler and fresh fruits and vegetables would be more plentiful. Here we served till January 1952. By this time Grandpa Wood was 89 years old. His wife Mary was senile and he was responsible for the cooking and managing

of the house and it was too much for him, so we felt it our duty to return to the homeland and terminate our foreign mission service. We were in their home a year, then built a new house near the creek on our land and Dad and Mary moved over there with us. Mary passed away after being in a wheelchair for a year and a bed patient for five months, taking the care of a baby and we cared for her during this time. This was about Oct. 1955. Grandpa Wood was now willing to follow us to where we could again take up demoninational work. Aaron had been pastoring the Santa Maria Spanish church, and helped them contruct a church home. In the fall of 1955 Aaron was called to the Central Calif. Conference as a field representative for the Central Calif. Conf. Association. Grandpa Wood passed away in May 1959. We retired as of July 1, 1960 and moved to our place in Mariposa where we sold and closed escrow August, 1968. Then moved to Oregon and soon to Paradise, Calif.





Aaron & Lela
Married 3-4-1925

50th. Wedding Anniversary

Aaron Larson was born in Oberlin, Kansas. They moved to Escondido, Ca. when Aaron was about 14, and later moved to Chowchilla, ca. where they did dairy farming.

Lela Wood-Larson was born in Nebraska and grew up in Arroyo Grande, Ca. Lela's mother died of cancer but her father lived to be 95. They are buried in the Arroyo Grande

When Lela and Aaron where newlyweds they went to Central America as missionaries. He was a Literature Evangelist, Minister, Businesss Manager of a Publishing House and Inter-American Union Division President.

Aaron died of leukemia in May of 1975 and is buried in Chowchilla, Ca.