

BOLETTA MARIE RASMUSSEN AAGARD  
NOV 27, 1855 - FEB 2, 1910  
(2<sup>ND</sup> WIFE OF NIELS JENSEN AAGARD)

*This story of the life of Boletta Marie Rasmussen Aagard was compiled by Dora Aagard Butterfield, a granddaughter, from stories and recollections of family members*

Boletta Marie Rasmussen was born 27 Nov. 1855 at Norre Tranders, Aalborg, Denmark, to a Danish clockmaker Rasmus Christensen and his wife, Dorthea Marie Jensen. Boletta was the sixth of nine children born to this family. Other members of her family were her oldest brother, Christian who was born 20 Dec 1844. He was followed by Else, born 27 Jun 1846; Jens, born 1 Sep 1848; Mette, born 12 Mar 1851 and Karen Kirstine who was born 19 May 1853. Next came Boletta and she was followed by Peder Christen who was born four years later, on 6 May 1861. Peder Christen died as a two year old. When the next son was born on 24 Apr 1862 he was also given the name of Peder Christen.

Only three of these children lived to marry. Seven months after the first Peder Christian's death, Mette died on 28 Dec 1861 when only ten year old. Then on 12 Jun 1863, two year old and Dorthea dies. In 1876 when Boletta was just past 20 years old her father and oldest brother died, her father on 27 Jan 1876 and her brother Christen on Aug 15, 1876. He was 31 years old and had never married.

On 26 Mar 1872 Boletta's sister Karen Kirstine married Jens Christen Paystrip. They joined the Church there and remained in Denmark until after Boletta and her mother had emigrated to Utah. They then came with their two small children to join Boletta in Levan. Karen died at 67 years of age on 25 Feb 1921.



Else and Jens did not come to America but both died in Denmark, Else in March 1881 at age 34 and Jens four years later on 31 Jul 1881. Neither had married.

Peder Christen came to America at age 19. He joined the Mormon church and was baptized 2 Jun 1887. He married Elise Osmunda Nielsen on 26 Feb 1908 and died 31 Dec or 1 Jan 1945 at age 81 in Levan Utah.

The year after Boletta's father and brother died, she and her mother heard the gospel of Jesus Christ from some Utah missionaries. They accepted the message and joined the Church. Boletta was baptized 1 Apr 1877 and her mother on 20 Apr 1877. They at once made arrangement to come to America. They left in September and arrived in October 1877.

Knute Brown, the missionary who had converted them was on the same train returning to his home in Nephi Utah. He took Boletta and her mother home with him for the night. On the train ride to Nephi Boletta met Niels Aagard. He was the Bishop of the Levan Ward and the authorities had suggested that he take a second wife. He was shopping around by meeting the emigrant trains. He saw Boletta, a 22 year old Danish girl with her mother talking to Elder Brown. Niels asked to meet her, he also spoke Danish, they got along well together.

After a nights stay at the Brown home in Nephi, Elder Brown had his son take Boletta and her mother to Bishop Aagard in Levan. After a short stay at the Aagard home, Niels rented a small home for them on the other side of town. In two months after their arrival, Niels and Boletta were married in the old Endowment House in Salt Lake City on 29 Dec 1877. This must



have been a great disappointment to Boletta's boy friend who had come to America earlier with Boletta's help. He never married but taught school in Sanpete County until he died.

Boletta's married life was hard. Polygamy in Utah was causing a great deal of trouble with the U.S. government and the taking of a second wife was not easy. It was also required by the Church that the consent of the first wife, Sorena, consented on one condition, and that was that the first two children born to the new marriage had to belong to her. She had been married to Niels for seventeen childless years and her love for children helped her to give consent for a second wife.

Levan was a farming area. The people lived mostly in town, but Niels had a small two room log house on his farm near the north side of town. Sorena would move out there in the summer to cook for the working men. This house became Boletta's first home. Her first child, Sorena, was born 24 Jul 1879 and died the same year on the 7 Sep 1879. Child number two was another girl born 3 Mar 1881 and was named Mary. The first son arrived 12 May 1883 and was named after his father, Niels. Two years later little James joined the family on 23 May 1885.

The Edmunds act had been passed in 1882 prohibiting a man from having more than one wife and providing a \$500 fine and five years in prison for anyone convicted of polygamy. There were several polygamous families in Levan. When the Marshal was seen coming over the ridge from Nephi the husbands of these plural wives disappeared until the Marshal, on his galloping horse, rode on to the next town. The Marshal was a friend of these people, He had talked to Niels about choosing between his two wives so he wouldn't be imprisoned. Niels refused to do this and Boletta moved into the tithing granary for a while so it would



look like she had left town. She only came out after dark. There was no solution to this problem and with baby number five on the way arrangements were made for Boletta to go to Mendon and stay with the Sonne's. Niels had sponsored Mr. Sonne when he came to Utah and they had married sisters.

In Feb 1887 Niels took Boletta with her small son James, almost two, and a load of supplies in his wagon and made the trip to Mendon, which took eight days. Boletta suffered in silence when she left her Levan home, her husband and her two small children, her mother and many friends and her one brother and one sister who were living in Levan. She did this to avoid having her husband pay the penalty for have two wives. This was the time when the two older children, Mary 6 and Niels 4, went to live with Sorena, ("Mot"), in the big red house.

Boletta's last child was born in Mendon on 24 Jul 1887 and was named Ollie Sonnnie Aagard. Niels did not see this child for two years.

Niels finally decided to surrender to Marshal McCleenen, a good friend of the family, to stand trial. As Niels wasn't in very good physical condition he feared that wearing the light-weight prison "stripes" and having his head shaved might be dangerous to his health, he requested one provision be made. That was that he wasn't to have his head shaved and that he be permitted to wear his own woolen suit. This condition was met and his sentence was light. Niels came before the District Court in Provo on 23 Mar 1888, was found guilty and was sentenced to serve fifty days in jail and to pay a fine of \$50.

He served until 11 May 1889 when he was released. Levan declared the day Niels was released as a holiday. He arrived



home in the evening and was met at the edge of town with the band playing and the townspeople all there to greet him. Food was served at the Aagard home on this happy occasion. Niels was still Bishop and his counselors had carried on while he was away. His next move was to bring Boletta back home from Mendon. Her home was the two room house, south across the road from Sorena's home.

Boletta was both thrifty and ambitious. She wove carpets, sold eggs, milk and butter when she could spare it. She raised chickens and sold apples from her trees.

The time actually spent with her husband was short lived as he died on 4 Feb 1892. As the Government did not recognize plural wives, Sorena was listed as the only survivor. Niels did not have a will and Boletta had to go to court to get her home or any of her husband's property. She finally received one third of the property because of her children.

Boletta's youngest brother, Peder Christian, was living with his mother a block west of Sorena's home. His mother Dorthea, had worked in homes in Levan. She had worked for Olaf Johnson's mother and was given the home there. Peder Christian (Uncle) lived there with his mother until she died on 3 Sep 1904 then three and one half years later he married a Norwiegen convert that Uncle James Anderson had brought home with him when he came home from his mission. Her name was Elise Osmunda Nielsen. Uncle was age 45 and she was quite near his age. Uncle helped his sister, Boletta, run her farm with the aid of James and Sonnie. They learned it was necessary to work early in life.



The boys didn't learn English until they entered school at the age of six. It was necessary for them to herd the cows during the summer months and on into the fall as long as there was food for them to graze on and then again early in the spring as soon as any green began to show. They took the cows of other people along with their own and were paid something for herding them. This caused them to miss school in the fall and again in the spring. Catching up was impossible and so they dropped out of school at an early age. Sonnie only finished the fourth grade. Mary and Niels were more fortunate. Live with "Mot" they were able to get some high schooling in Provo.

James and Sonnie took any jobs that were available but they were both full of mischief as they grew older. Sometimes Boletta received reports of the boys fooling around late at night. She knew this couldn't be true. The boys had gone to bed early and she hadn't left the house. She didn't realize how easily the window near their bed could be lifted.

Their mother taught them love, honesty, how to work, and the truthfulness of the gospel. She took pride in making their Sunday clothes from scratch. After her sheep were sheared she washed the wool, dyed it, picked it apart, carded it, and spun it into thread and then wove it into cloth, cut it to the right size for the largest son and sewed it into a Sunday suit. It was always the biggest boy who got the new suit because it was passed on to the next one when the first one had outgrown it.

Boletta was tall, thin, and beautiful and 20 years younger than her husband. This caused Sorena to become jealous even though she was Number One and mistress of the big house where Church and Government Authorities stopped over when traveling across the state. Boletta had a stiff hand because of an injury



and no doctor to set it. She believed everyone should have their blood purified every spring by drinking sagebrush tea. She was a real pioneer.

Her church meant everything to her and she lived by its principles. The Aagards as a family were interested in Temple work and performed many ordinances in the Manti Temple. Boletta and her mother and brother Christen had the genealogy of their ancestors gathered in Denmark by Jens Jensen and then they did the work for them in the Manti Temple.

Boletta's mother died 2 Sep 1904 at age 85 in Levan and about 5 years later Boletta passed away on 2 Feb 1910 at age 54 from dropsy and heart trouble after only about 24 days of illness. She was buried seven days later, on the 9<sup>th</sup> of February.

Boletta had a fear of being buried alive because at the time her husband had died, the casket had a flat lid with a glass window in it and some moisture had gathered on the window before he was buried. She wondered if he had been placed in the casket before he was dead.

Boletta was survived by her husband's first wife, Sorena, and four children, Mary Anderson, wife of James Anderson; Niels Aagard, married to Laura Memmott; James Aagard, married to Annie Winter, and Sonnie Aagard, married to Sarah Jane Jensen. She was also survived by 9 grandchildren, one sister, Karen Paystrip, and one brother, Peder Christen Rasmussen.