

From Rags to Reverend: The Life of Jens Peter Hansen (1872-1903)

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Abstract

In the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, hundreds of thousands of Danes left their homeland and came to the United States. Leaving what were often harsh conditions due to the numerous losses militarily and economically that Denmark had suffered, they came to the States, bringing many unique experiences. This essay tells the tale of one of these immigrants named Jens Peter Hansen. It looks into the life of this young worker in the Pentecost Bands of the World, a radical holiness movement and offshoot of the Free Methodist Church, who worked to establish his own missions in Scandinavia. Peter Hansen was well-loved, verbose, and prolific in his work, but he has been rather neglected in research on the Bands, in no small part due to his short tenure there.

Keywords: Pentecost Bands, Peter Hansen, Denmark, Missionary

Introduction

In the United States today, many people can trace their ancestry back to the country of Denmark through an immigrant who came here in the late 19th century. Jeffrey Hancks notes that between (approximately) the mid-19th century and 1930, there were around 300,000 Danish migrants to the United

States.¹ This essay discusses one of these many immigrants from Denmark, who came to America and became a missionary and leader within the Pentecost Bands of the World, a radical holiness movement which broke away from the Free Methodist Church.

Jens Peter Hansen (the present author's second great-grandfather²) was a young man when he entered the United States in 1891 after having lived eighteen years (and some months) suffering. He was beaten, poorly paid, and his own personal journey was greatly motivated by a desire for spiritual growth which felt stagnate in his homeland. He entered the United States and quickly became involved in the Pentecost Bands under Thomas Hiram Nelson.³ Jens Peter Hansen was a part of the group throughout this process, quickly rising in popularity to become one of the highest-ranking members in the Bands. In 1899, he married Ina Belle Cone. He returned to Denmark only once in his life, in April 1901-July 1902. He returned and Ina gave birth to his only child in November of 1902, after he was elected the assistant-leader of the Bands. He passed at a young age of thirty, however, having contracted tuberculosis some years earlier.

This essay seeks to give a biographical overview of Peter's life and further his role in the Pentecost Bands, as part of an ongoing venture to further elucidate the work of the Bands in

¹ Jeffrey Hancks, *Scandinavians in Michigan* (Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 2010), 2.

² Jens Peter Hansen married Ina Belle Cone. They had one child, James Winfred Hansen. He had three children: Richard Ray, Benjamin Jehart, and John Wesley. The present author is descended from the lattermost. Benjamin Jehart Hansen was named after a Pentecost Bands missionary of the similar name: Benjamin Jehart Hanson (spelled *-on*).

³ David Bundy, "Holiness Churches," in David J. Bodenhamer and Robert G. Barrows (eds.), *The Encyclopedia of Indianapolis* (Bloomington: University of Indianapolis Press, 1994), 696-700. For more on the Bands before their split from the Methodist Church, see Thomas Hiram Nelson, *The Life and Labors of Vivian Dake, Organizer and Leader of Pentecost Bands* (Chicago: T. B. Arnold, 1894) and Ida Dake Parsons, *Being a Brief Sketch of the Life of Rev. Vivian A. Dake* (Chicago: Free Methodist Publishing House, 1915).

Scandinavia, as well as their work under Thomas Hiram Nelson in general. It is also, on a personal note, the work of a descendant of Peter Hansen and meant to preserve the life of an ancestor which has been otherwise neglected. Peter was one of the more notable members under Nelson, and as such serves as a good focus for examination and biography. This essay was made possible by the constant help of the Hansen family, including giving me access to documents, photos, and allowing me to record oral lore from them (though little remains).

Methodology

As Jens Peter Hansen (better known simply as “Peter” by the family) died while his son (James Winfred “Win” Hansen) was less than a year old, and Ina Belle (Cone) Hansen, his wife, died when Win was only twenty-six, there was not a lot of oral lore that was transmitted about him or his family, and that which was relayed has come under question. As oral lore and memory in general can be subject to change and alteration,⁴ and creating a time frame for reliable oral history is likewise a mistaken endeavor,⁵ the little that was transmitted down had

⁴ Studies of those remembering the 9/11 Attacks in particular have been studied with a noticeable phenomenon that those who recovered from the attacks or were less effected created more distant or “benign” memories of the event as time went on, while those suffering more concrete PTSD also far less altered memories relatively, see Sharon Dekel and George A. Bonanno, “Changes in Trauma Memory and Patterns of Posttraumatic Stress,” *Psychological Trauma: Theory, Research, Practice, and Policy* 5, no. 1 (2013): 26–34.

⁵ As the factors and criteria by which elements of history are transmitted are variant across cultures, no cross-cultural timeframe or cutoff for “accurate” oral history seems possible, see Ernest S. Burch Jr., “More on the Reliability of Oral and Traditional History,” *American Ethnologist* 23, no. 1 (1996): 131. Authors attempting to create such limits as anywhere from one to six generations will find little consistency as this paper notes. Within two generations, one accurate account of Peter Hansen’s death (via tuberculosis) emerged, while two increasingly inaccurate ones did as well (that he died from influenza or from being kicked in the chest by a mule). As such, evaluating oral history for a very modernist and arguably Eurocentric interest in factual accuracy will require much erudition and up to individual historians quite often to decide what is most likely, as noted William Skiles, “Gisela Kriebel: A History of a German War Bride,” *Journal of Genealogy and Family*

to be verified against official documentation. To supplement this, I have also made use of Ina Belle's journal that was started 1 January 1901 and ended on 21 February 1902.⁶ The journal records their return trip to Denmark which took place from April 24, 1901 to July of 1902 just before the Pentecost Bands' annual Harvest Home celebration which Peter and Ina attended.

Peter Hansen's general lifespan was first gathered from his gravestone located in Crown Hill Cemetery, Indianapolis, Marion Co., Indiana. Online databases provided a large amount of information for gathering a rough outline of Peter's life. The largest sources of information were from Peter Hansen's own journal/memoirs (which are fragmentary, pieces from the 1887 onward), his wife Ina Belle Cone's journal (written from 1901–1902), and an autobiographical sketch which he entitled "From Bondage to Liberty" and wrote in April of 1901 before his missionary trip to Denmark, which began late in that month. The next main sources of information came from various newspaper clippings that mentioned him and events with which he was associated, mostly after 1898. Many events that he records were able to be validated by the census records uploaded to online databases. These databases included FamilySearch.com, Ancestry.com, DanishFamilySearch.com,

History 5, no. 1 (2021): 29–40, specifically 30. Such concerns with factual history may have the disastrous effect of distorting how we interpret the accounts handed down, since what is being passed on is not analyzed on its own terms, but on the concerns of dissecting it either for the purposes of validating or invalidating the words of the speaker, and not accounting for how these memories function to the speaker themself. A similar issue has been noted in Biblical studies since the so-called "Enlightenment" era, see John M. Bracke and Karen B. Tye, *Teaching the Bible in the Church* (Des Peres: Chalice Press, 2003), 90. Factual accuracy may simply not be a concern to the teller and may be missing the point of such a tradition existing to begin with, therefore scrounging it for factually accurate tidbits distorts the reason for its existence.

⁶ The journals of Ina Belle Hansen, Peter's autobiography and memoir fragment, and other documents are held privately by the Hansen family unless otherwise noted. They were printed in Christopher M. Hansen (ed.), *The Reverend's Poetry: The Poetry of James Winfred Hansen* (Independently Published, 2022).

and Newspapers.com. These are widely accessible to laymen aside from the language barrier, which may present a hinderance to monolingual Danish or English speakers.

Due to the relative scarcity of information about Peter's life in Denmark, but knowing he was from a poor, rural, agrarian farm-family, the first part of this essay is to emphasize the socio-economic landscape and history of Denmark at the time, by which we may garner some generalizations about the Hansens, especially as a way to elucidate what Peter's life would have generally been like in addition to the facts that can be discerned from the available sources. Emphasizing the nature of the socio-economic base of Danish society at the time and then finding what class the Hansens belonged to can help to determine what their lifestyle was like, or why certain known characteristics of the family were the way they were.

Historical Context in Denmark

Denmark had collapsed from being a dominating power in Europe by the time that Peter Hansen was born in 1872. There are multiple reasons for their fall from being the ruling supreme Nordic nation, to then collapsing economically and militarily, all of which are relevant for discussing the conditions in which Peter Hansen then grew up.

Historically, the ambitions of King Christian IV had left Denmark in turmoil during the Thirty Years War, when it effectively lost its status as the reigning Nordic state in Christian's failed bid to take control of Saxony.⁷ This was followed by Christian's attempt to restrict Swedish control in the Baltic, which after two years resulted in yet another failure, draining the nation economically once even more, and losing much land to Swedish control.⁸ Christian's successor, Frederik III only made these conditions worse. While Sweden was in an

⁷ George R. Nielsen, *The Danish Americans* (Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1981), 20.

⁸ Nielsen, *The Danish Americans*, 20.

intense war in Poland, Frederik saw an opportunity to retake the lands which Sweden had taken under Christian, and had conditions been optimal, this may have worked. The results were disastrous, however. Despite the Swedish army being in Poland, a quick maneuver and the aid of a harsh winter which froze the Little and Great Belts in the sea, permitted to cross on foot to Denmark. The Swedish army was rerouted to Zealand and crossed the frozen sea on foot, and in a stunning defeat Denmark was forced to yield, losing a third of the land and populace under its dominion to Sweden.⁹ Tensions became further exacerbated into the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries and the disparity between the ruling and peasant classes was evident, a hardship only made worse by the (in all but name) slave labor system of villeinage service (a contract clause requiring peasants to work at a landowner's manor without compensation).¹⁰

By far, one of the most influential events to have happened before Peter Hansen was born was the conflict for Slesvig-Holstein, which was not officially a part of Denmark or Germany but operated as an independent duchy and as a semi-sovereign state (its ties being to the Danish king, but not to Denmark itself). The Slesvig-Holstein Wars had several motivating factors. In no small part, the rise of nationalism in both Denmark and Germany became prevalent. Additional problems were that as Slesvig-Holstein had previously enjoyed near autonomy, and in these recent years "were drawn more closely to Holstein than to Denmark," there was tension, especially as the nobility and ruling classes had desired to unify outside Danish rule.¹¹ On the converse, Northern Slesvig remained stubbornly Danish, and resented the rising German nationalism, and the fact that German was soon becoming the dominant language of business and day-to-day activity,

⁹ Nielsen, *The Danish Americans*, 20–1.

¹⁰ In 1700, peasants only owned 2% of the land, despite being 80% of the Danish population at the time (Nielsen, *The Danish Americans*, 22–3).

¹¹ Nielsen, *The Danish Americans*, 25.

gradually rising northward (though many of these German speaking people still identified as Danish).¹² Responding to this, Danes demanded that Danish be made the legal and recognized language of Slesvig (despite the Southern dominance of German), and this was ratified in the 1830s, exacerbating tensions once again, and Danish nationalists called for a unification with Denmark.¹³

Danish and German nationalism became principal causes for the First War for Slesvig-Holstein, though Danish nationalism, it should be noted, developed in no small part due to what they perceived as the loss of Danish identity, and further by the actual aggression of German nationalists. All of this was in near inherent contradiction to the entire existence of Slesvig-Holstein, a semi-independent duchy, incompatible with nationalistic concerns. The nationalisms of both sides could only serve to tear it apart. For Denmark, this manifested in a distinctly anti-German atmosphere (often declaring Germans the enemy of God himself), while German nationalists saw Danish language and identity as a degraded form of German identity. In this, the people of Slesvig-Holstein, a mix of Danish, Frisian, and German ethnic groups who had for centuries lived in peaceful ease with each other, were now radicalized against their neighbors.

Christian VIII only further made the situation worse, as lineal claims to the duchy arose. As Frederik VII could not beget an heir, Slesvig-Holstein was likely to fall under the reign of the House of Oldenburg as the old succession laws established. Christian thought of possibly then declaring that the line of *all* duchies then tied to the Danish crown could be succeeded via the female line, and against the advice of some of his ministers, who rightfully perceived that any declaration of such would radicalize the populace, Christian VIII declared in an Open Letter in 1848 that succession would occur in Slesvig and

¹² Nielsen, *The Danish Americans*, 25.

¹³ Nielsen, *The Danish Americans*, 25–6.

Lauenburg via the female line, which was technically illegal and led to mass protest.¹⁴ Slesvig-Holstein, which had previously seen German and Danish people living side by side, and at relative ease, often in cross-cultural families, was divided. Jens Wullfs, a lace dealer, wrote in his diary in April 1848 (during the First War): “Germans and Danes lived so peacefully together in times past, but now within the same country the different nationalities face each other with enmity”¹⁵ which he blamed on the intellectual elite, and these sentiments were expressed throughout Slesvig and Holstein among commoners,¹⁶ while nationalists applauded the divisions.

The 1848 constitution in Denmark, which Frederik VII had granted, was “envisioned [...] for all of Denmark including Slesvig,” which further angered the self-identified Germans in southern Slesvig, who called for it to join the German Confederation and unite with Holstein.¹⁷ When Denmark refused this, they rose up in revolt, sparking the First War for Slesvig-Holstein. The German military also became involved, but not without resistance both external and internal (King Fredrich Wilhelm ordered the army out of the duchies, but his generals refused to comply; worrying that Russia also would aid Denmark). Russia came in response to this to the aid of Denmark. German Nationalists insisted on continuing the conflict, but Fredrich Wilhelm, under pressure of the other European powers and seeing this war as a threat to German security, declined to prolong it. The results were a resounding Danish victory in theory,¹⁸ but the Treaty of London was signed in 1850, assigning Slesvig-Holstein their relative independence and restricting Danish authority.¹⁹ In the end, both Danish and

¹⁴ David Kirby, *The Baltic World 1772–1993: Europe’s Northern Periphery in an Age of Change* (London: Routledge, 2013), 94–5.

¹⁵ Inge Adriansen and Jens Ole Christensen, *The First Schleswig War: 1848–1851* (Sønderborg: Museum Sønderjylland, 2015), 13.

¹⁶ Adriansen and Christensen, *The First Schleswig War*, 13.

¹⁷ Nielsen, *The Danish Americans*, 26.

¹⁸ Nielsen, *The Danish Americans*, 26.

¹⁹ Nielsen, *The Danish Americans*, 26.

German nationalists were unhappy with the treaty and wished to not recognize it. Partitioning the land was supposed based on linguistic grounds, but this was opposed by Frederik VII, and realistically may have only created a worse situation at the time (tearing apart old families and creating harsher and more nationalistic lines between ethnic groups). In 1851, seeing German language as a threat to Danish identity, laws were passed that mandated Danish as the language of schools, church, etc. once again heightening resentment among the German populace.²⁰

As Nielsen notes, the National Liberals in Denmark broke the Treaty of London in 1863, drafting a constitution that would place Slesvig under Danish rule.²¹ Otto von Bismarck, an ardent German nationalist with a “program of German unification” seized upon this to invade and he won a swift and decisive victory. Approximately, 1,700 Danes died in the Second Slesvig-Holstein War, and 1,200 Germans and it ended with German sovereignty over Slesvig. As with Denmark’s attempted policies to instill Danish as the official language of Slesvig, Germany did likewise with German.²² The roughly 150,000 Danes in Slesvig-Holstein resented this and had further lost faith in the Danish government and its failed promises. Around 50,000 Danes from Slesvig would emigrate via Hamburg to the United States.²³ Slesvig was eventually partitioned in 1920, with the Northern section inhabited predominantly by ethnic Danes returning to Denmark, while the rest remaining in Germany, which has drawn the modern boundaries to this day.

Denmark, itself, was ravished economically, politically, and culturally by this. It was further harmed by the internal policies of its conservative leadership. The shift to a conservative

²⁰ Lorenz Rerup, “National Minorities in South Jutland/Schleswig,” in Sven Tågil (ed.), *Ethnicity and Nation Building in the Nordic World* (London: Hurst, 1995), 247–81.

²¹ Nielsen, *The Danish Americans*, 26.

²² Nielsen, *The Danish Americans*, 26–7.

²³ Nielsen, *The Danish Americans*, 27.

capitalist economic system led to the largely agrarian working-class citizens being left destitute. Sofie Nielsen indicates that between 85–90% of the average working family’s income was spent on food, housing, and heating alone, leaving many unable to save for emergencies or elder age/retirement effectively.²⁴ Denmark’s adoption of a conservative Protestant work-ethic led to begging being made illegal, ineffectual social-security nets for those in need, and the social-relief that was in place would entail a loss of civil rights for those who received aid.²⁵ The Lutheran Church, which was dominant in Denmark, held stringently to Martin Luther’s position that hard work would alleviate poverty, and a disparagement and stigmatism against charity developed.²⁶ With this, the stage was set in Denmark for masses to leave the country and hope to find better fortune abroad. Denmark turned after this to focus on reconstruction, and the failed aggression of its previous rulers was left behind in favor of attempting to rebuild what they had, which was further antagonized when the United States demolished Denmark’s grain trade, as they were able to produce wheat cheaper and more efficiently and export it for less.²⁷ The conservative element took power until 1901, leading to numerous freedoms being restricted. The conservative party jailed opponents, weaponized the police against political protesters and rivals, and eliminated freedom of the press, and further made restrictions to the constitution, attempting to ensure their power be retained, and the king supported these actions.²⁸ Danish Americans would express love for their nation, but reviled their king. The shift to a Left government did lead to more protections for the people, and a third party was also introduced, Social Democrats, but not before hundreds of

²⁴ Sofie Krogh Nielsen, “Daily Life in Denmark in the 19th Century,” *The Bridge* 37, no. 1 (2014): 41–52 (specifically 45).

²⁵ Nielsen, “Daily Life in Denmark in the 19th Century,” 45.

²⁶ Cathie Jo Martin and Tom Chevalier, *What We Talk about When We Talk about Poverty* (Harvard Center for European Studies and Boston University, 2018), 6.

²⁷ Nielsen, *The Danish Americans*, 28.

²⁸ Nielsen, *The Danish Americans*, 29–30.

thousands of Danes had left the country,²⁹ two fifths of whom were Jutlanders, including one Jens Peter Hansen.³⁰

Early Life of Jens Peter Hansen

Jens Peter Hansen was born on 23 June 1872 in Randlev, Århus, Denmark, and was the eighth (and last) child of Jørgen Hansen and Mette Kathrine Rasmussen (also spelled Rasmusdatter). Denmark in the 1800s had seen a drastic series of changes in terms of its economic structure. The Hansens being both farmers traditionally,³¹ and extremely poor according to Peter's autobiographical sketch,³² were therefore accustomed to the harsh conditions that Denmark treated its poor- and working-classes at the time.

The Hansens in Denmark were some of the victims of the economic disparities created in Denmark. Jørgen Hansen was one of the last children of farmer Hans Jensen and Maren Stephansdatter, and by age fourteen he was sent out to work on another farm as a servant according to census data.³³ Maren Stephansdatter, his mother, sold the farm and took the youngest two children to live with her daughter Maren Hansen (or Maren H and her family bought the farm).³⁴ The census records for 1850 and 1860 in Denmark list her as "aftægtsenke,"³⁵ which indicates a widow who had sold off her property in exchange for being taken care of by the new owners,

²⁹ Nielsen, *The Danish Americans*, 30–1.

³⁰ Nielsen, *The Danish Americans*, 33.

³¹ Hans Jensen and all his family going back appear to have been farmers, listed regularly as "Gårdmand."

³² This was recently republished in Peter Hansen, "From Bondage to Liberty," in Hansen, *The Reverend's Poetry*, 189–195. Pages 189–192 discuss his economic status.

³³ Danish National Census 1850, <https://www.danishfamilysearch.com/cid6771134>.

³⁴ Danish National Census 1860, <https://www.danishfamilysearch.com/cid8685926>.

³⁵ Danish National Census 1860, <https://www.danishfamilysearch.com/cid8685926> and Danish National Census 1850, <https://www.danishfamilysearch.com/cid6951284>.

a common way of taking care of the elderly who otherwise had no means of support.³⁶



Figure 1. Jørgen Hansen and Mette Kathrine Rasmussen

³⁶ There was no old age pension in Denmark or social security net for them until 1891, see Sigurd Kristensen, "Om aftægtskontrakter og aftægtsfolk belyst gennem kontrakter fra Ribe Amt," *Fra Ribe Amt* 16-17 (1965): 241-81.

Jørgen at some point then came to own land in Randlev and began a farm there and the children all worked it for some years, before being sent out for other jobs. In 1870, two years before Peter was born, the first tragedy reached the family which was the death of Barbara Hansen, at approximately six years old.³⁷ Dying young in Denmark was not uncommon, the average man would expect to live only around 40 years, while the average woman around 43.³⁸ Barbara would be the first of several Hansen children to die at a relatively young age. She would be followed by Hans Hansen in 1883 at the age of twenty-three (and some months),³⁹ Niels at near twenty-four,⁴⁰ and Rasmus Hansen in 1899 at forty-one.⁴¹ Though the causes of death are unknown, a very likely candidate is a contagion such as tuberculosis, particularly for Hans and Niels, as they died so young.⁴²

Peter's experiences in Denmark were rooted in abject poverty. His family, though rather Christian, did not own a Bible until one devout uncle (unknown whom) gave them one, according to

³⁷ Rigsarkivet; Danmark; Kontraministerialbog; Reference: 8033600921.

<https://www.ancestry.com/discoveryui-content/view/13595684:61607?ssrc=pt&tid=173134239&pid=272301464725>.

³⁸ Nielsen, "Daily Life in Denmark in the 19th Century," 42.

³⁹ Rigsarkivet; Danmark; Kontraministerialbog; Reference: 8033600921.

<https://www.ancestry.com/discoveryui-content/view/13595544:61607?ssrc=pt&tid=173134239&pid=272301467857>.

⁴⁰ Rigsarkivet; Danmark; Kontraministerialbog; Reference:

AOdata01\Kirkeboeger1892\48551\C376\G\006.

<https://www.ancestry.com/discoveryui-content/view/4533210:61607?ssrc=pt&tid=173134239&pid=272301361539>. Also recorded in a newspaper, see *Jyllandsposten*, no. 73 (15 March 1894), side 2 sec. 1.

⁴¹ Rigsarkivet; Danmark; Kontraministerialbog; Reference:

AOdata01\Kirkeboeger1892\48551\C376\G\006.

<https://www.ancestry.com/discoveryui-content/view/4533240:61607?ssrc=pt&tid=173134239&pid=272301463339>.

⁴² Ida Blom, "Contagion and Cultural Perceptions of Accepted Behaviour Tuberculosis and Venereal Diseases in Scandinavia c.1900–c.1950," *Hygeia Internationalis* 6, no. 2 (2007): 121–33.

Peter's autobiographical sketch. Peter wrote that his father attempted to read the Bible but was so flustered with all the difficult names and places that he gave up.⁴³ The concept of Salvation, particularly important in many American brands of Christianity, was unheard of in the Hansen family in Denmark, but Peter's mother still sought to instill an awe and fear of God in him, telling him to pray any time he was in trouble.⁴⁴ Peter's church was no more helpful in this either. Peter wrote rather sharply of the Danish National Church in Randlev:

The State Church, to which we belonged, was but little comfort. When any of us went to church it was partly for the sake of appearances and was confined to very few Sundays during the year, especially Christmas and Easter. [...] When in winter time, we did go to church we had to walk a long way, and as it was customary not to have fire in the church, I confess the two hours of service, sitting in a cold church with our feet on the stone floor and forced to sit as in the stillness of death, made Christianity seem rather hard. The whole affair was done more as a duty than for real worship, and it was so formal that little impression for good was made. The priest was considered (at least he considered himself) so far above common men, there was but little affection or sympathy shown, but he got his wages and lived in luxury, while the poor were oppressed.⁴⁵

This division wherein the Church was an oppressive force and unconcerned with the little people would probably become very important in his later conversion to the Pentecost Bands of the World, which focused on denying worldly pleasures and concerns, and actively reached out to the underclasses of society, the poor, ex-convicts and prisoners, etc. Peter was confirmed in the National Church when he turned fourteen on

⁴³ Peter Hansen, "From Bondage to Liberty," 190.

⁴⁴ Peter Hansen, "From Bondage to Liberty," 190.

⁴⁵ Peter Hansen, "From Bondage to Liberty," 191.

3 Oct. 1886, but this did not improve his own faith life in Denmark.⁴⁶ In Peter's mind it seemed to just continue a bitter circle of unsatisfying and sinful faith, while longing for God in the meantime.



Figure 2. Parish for the Danish National Church in Randlev, ca. 1910

Work life was no better for him either. By age eleven he was sent out to work with the farmers in the fields, and during which church attendance was rare to nonexistent, especially during the summer and harvest seasons.⁴⁷ He began work for a horticulturist (whom Peter called a “florist”) known as Georg Julius Bøgh in Horsens, Denmark. He worked there till at least 1890 as he was still on record there during the census.⁴⁸ According to Peter, Bøgh was a brutal taskmaster, who would

⁴⁶ Peter Hansen, “From Bondage to Liberty,” 191–2. His confirmation can be dated from official records, see Rigsarkivet; Danmark; Kontraminsterialbog; Reference: 8033600921. <https://www.ancestry.com/discoveryui-content/view/13594554:61607?ssrc=pt&tid=173134239&pid=272245806787>.

⁴⁷ Peter Hansen, “From Bondage to Liberty,” 191.

⁴⁸ Known from the Danish 1890 National Census, see <https://www.danishfamilysearch.com/cid20574080>.

beat him and verbally abuse him and threaten him regularly.⁴⁹ He worked long hours almost every day and was only allowed to return home once per year at Christmas time, during which he had to walk around 30 kilometers from Horsens to Randlev. Christmas time at the Hansen home was a modest event, populated only by the immediate family (and maybe a few uncles or aunts), with no great presents or gifts. Peter wrote: “Though I walked most of the way, it was a great joy to go home and for a few days have kind words spoken to me.”⁵⁰ He would return to work with bread and meats from his mother, walking all the way back. He worked in Horsens for three years and then was moved to another establishment, possibly another one of Bøgh’s though the details of his employment are largely unknown.⁵¹ He hoped this would lead to improvement, but his new boss was just as brutal, and he endured more of the same hardships. What he did at this job is unknown, but he says that he worked there for a year and three months before he finally decided that he would leave for America.⁵² A possible inspiration for this could be his sister Foghgine. Foghgine Hansen was Peter’s elder by seven years and had left for America in 1889, but she remained in contact with the family.⁵³

⁴⁹ Peter Hansen, “From Bondage to Liberty,” 192.

⁵⁰ Peter Hansen, “From Bondage to Liberty,” 192.

⁵¹ The *SS Rugia* passenger list (Staatsarchiv Hamburg; Hamburg, Deutschland; *Hamburger Passagierlisten*; Volume: 373-7 I, VIII A 1 Band 070; Page: 140; Microfilm No.: K_1743. <https://www.ancestry.com/discoveryui-content/view/157105:1068?ssrc=pt&tid=173134239&pid=272245806787>) has Peter working in Randers at the time, however it seems likely that this was a mistake on the part of the transcriber. As Peter was working with Georg Julius Bøgh during the 1890 census and he left for America 1 March 1891, he could not have worked for a year and three months starting in November in Randers. My own thesis is that Peter had stated he was from Randlev, but the Hamburg transcriber did not quite understand Peter, and so wrote Randers, which would be far more well-known than the tiny rural town of Randlev.

⁵² Peter Hansen, “From Bondage to Liberty,” 192–3.

⁵³ Year: 1930; Census Place: Marion, Lincoln, Kansas; Page: 1A; Enumeration District: 0016; FHL microfilm: 2340443. <https://www.ancestry.com/discoveryui-content/view/33130321:6224?ssrc=pt&tid=173134239&pid=272301464726>.

In total, life in Denmark had become too hard and too draining for Peter. He decided to move away.

America and the Pentecost Bands

As noted above, around 300,000 Danes left their homeland from the mid-nineteenth century to 1920. The greatest period between 1861-1930.⁵⁴ The nation had a lower emigration rate than the neighboring nations of Norway and Sweden in no small part due to the fact that Denmark was somewhat better off than those countries in way of farming (much more fertile soil and flat land which made it easier for agricultural development), however, the near feudal way of life for many farmers (not owning their land and working off the land of wealthy landowners) became a motivating factor in many leaving Denmark.⁵⁵ These conditions were what Peter left under, as stated in his autobiographical sketch. Finally, realizing this was his life in Denmark, he chose to leave the country “at all hazards” for America.⁵⁶ Peter left for Hamburg, Germany in February of 1891, and booked passage to America on the *SS Rugia*.⁵⁷ He departed for America on March 1 and likely arrived some two weeks later in New York.⁵⁸ He would only make one return journey a decade later in 1901, discussed below.

It is unknown what work Peter Hansen did prior to becoming a member of the Pentecost Bands, or even when precisely he joined the Pentecost Bands, however Peter did record some (undated) material of how he came to be involved in their work.

⁵⁴ Hancks, *Scandinavians in Michigan*, 5.

⁵⁵ Hancks, *Scandinavians in Michigan*, 6-7.

⁵⁶ Peter Hansen, “From Bondage to Liberty,” 192.

⁵⁷ Staatsarchiv Hamburg; Hamburg, Deutschland; *Hamburger Passagierlisten*; Volume: 373-7 I, VIII A 1 Band 070; Page: 140; Microfilm No.: K_1743. <https://www.ancestry.com/discoveryui-content/view/157105:1068?ssrc=pt&tid=173134239&pid=272245806787>.

⁵⁸ Sometime between the 12th and 16th of March, see *The Daily Brooklyn Eagle* (7 March 1891), 2 which lists ship schedules and *Buffalo Courier* (16 March 1891), 1 which notes the arrival of steamer ships including the *SS Rugia* coming from Hamburg.

His first week after getting work in America he received eight dollars (or \$247 USD as of 2022).⁵⁹ Peter paints a startling contrast between how his life in Denmark had been compared to how he then lived in America. Upon coming to the boarding house, he was served a meal. He wrote:

At my first meal at the boarding house I was astonished at the quantity and quality of food set before me. I did not know whether it was all intended for me or not. I looked around at the other boarders to see if they were going to eat all that was set before them, and it was two or three meals before I was fully convinced that I was at liberty to eat anything on the table and that I could eat all I desired of it.⁶⁰

However, he still writes that even with this vast improvement in life, he still felt empty without having a godly presence. There were some impediments, Peter had no idea where to go and his grasp on the English language was weak. However, when people preaching “experimental salvation” visited him, he understood enough to know they were preaching the gospel (though his English still was not fluent). With this he began attending meetings. One night the minister asked if any of the people present wanted to be Christians and to stand if so. Peter did, thinking this was how to join the church, but was disappointed when he did not receive further instruction after leaving the meeting that night.⁶¹ He continued coming several nights until one night he claims he felt such a presence of God that he began to cry out and wail, which was (and is) a fashion in Pentecost traditions, and finding a new joy in the faith he had uncovered set about writing letters to his family back home. He said that he concluded his first letter to his mother (Mette): “Mother, I have the Holy Ghost.”⁶²

⁵⁹ Peter Hansen, “From Bondage to Liberty,” 193.

⁶⁰ Peter Hansen, “From Bondage to Liberty,” 193.

⁶¹ Peter Hansen, “From Bondage to Liberty,” 193.

⁶² Peter Hansen, “From Bondage to Liberty,” 194.

Pentecost Bands Work

The Pentecost Bands of the World were initially a youth ministry organization started by the Free Methodist minister Vivian Dake.⁶³ Under Dake's leadership, the bands were a highly active evangelistic movement, made up of individual groups, usually of around four people of the same gender (except with married couples) and had their origination in 1882.⁶⁴ The first band was started in Parma, Michigan in 1885 and was led by four women.⁶⁵ Soon, several more followed, and with this also began tensions with the Free Methodist Church, which Vivian Dake belonged to, as the Bands appreciated being a semi-autonomous collective. They survived from offerings and donations from people wishing to support them (both of Ina Belle Cone's surviving journals indicate this was prevalent even after Dake passed), and often lived in modest ways or even poverty for many as their work was getting started. This may have been attractive for Peter, who came from a poor family in Denmark, where, as stated above, the Church emphasized luxury for the priests in the face of the poverty-stricken farmers. When Peter joined the Bands exactly is unknown, though it

⁶³ For more on Vivian Dake and the start of the Bands, see Howard A. Snyder, *Populist Saints: B. T. and Ellen Roberts and the First Free Methodists* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2006), 700–7; Howard A. Snyder, "Radical Holiness Evangelism: Vivian Dake and the Pentecost Bands," in William Kostlevy and Wallace Thornton Jr. (eds.), *The Radical Holiness Movement in the Christian Tradition: A Festschrift for Larry D. Smith* (Lexington: Emeth Press, 2016), 69–84; Charles Edwin Jones, *Perfectionist Persuasion: The Holiness Movement and American Methodism, 1867-1936* (Lanham: Scarecrow Press, 2002), 66, 69; and Robert A. Danielson, "Pandita Ramabai, the Holiness Movement, and the Mukti Revival of 1905," in David Bundy, Geordan Hammond, and David Sang-Ehil Han (eds.), *Holiness and Pentecostal Movements: Intertwined Pasts, Presents, and Futures* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2022), 52–71. See also Robert Danielson, "The Pentecost Bands in India: Radical Holiness Revivals and the Mukti Revival," *Asian Journal of Pentecostal Studies* 23, no. 2 (2020): 147–68 and Robert A. Danielson, "'When We are Going to Preach the Word, Jesus will Meet Us: Ernest and Phebe Ward and Pandita Ramabai,'" *Asbury Journal* 75, no. 1 (2020): 88–106.

⁶⁴ Snyder, "Radical Holiness Evangelism," 72–3.

⁶⁵ Snyder, "Radical Holiness Evangelism," 72.

seems to have been before he had thoroughly picked up the English language, as his autobiographical sketch notes that when he was first invited to a meeting, he did not thoroughly understand what they were saying.⁶⁶ So perhaps we could approximate a date of 1892–1893 for when he joined, depending on how fast his language acquisition was.

Vivian Dake died on a missionary trip in Africa in 1892, after contracting malaria. Due to a lack of leadership, Thomas Hiram Nelson (1864–1953) took over leadership of the bands and in 1895 the total separation of the Bands from the Free Methodist Church was announced.⁶⁷ The precise reasons for this are numerous, but in large part this came down to the FMC wishing to enact a greater degree of control over the Bands and restrict their autonomous movement. Nelson's takeover of the Bands was consequently a reason for the noted pastor E. E. Shelhamer leaving their work, as Nelson refused to share leadership among the divisional leadership.⁶⁸

Peter Hansen and his eventual wife Ina Belle Cone were both involved in the Bands at this early juncture. Peter's earliest known records in the Bands begin in 1896. Ina, on the other hand, we know was active earlier still, as her personal journal from 1895 still survives (though it preserves no mention of Peter). However, we know that she was active at least from Sept. 1889 to Oct. 1891 as there exists a group photo of the Pentecost Bands taken while Vivian Dake, and Ina's sister Hattie Cone is present.⁶⁹

⁶⁶ Peter Hansen, "From Bondage to Liberty," 193.

⁶⁷ Snyder, "Radical Holiness Evangelism," 74–82.

⁶⁸ Snyder, "Radical Holiness Evangelism," 74.

⁶⁹ The photo is currently held by the Marston Memorial Historical Center. It can be dated this precisely due to Thomas Hiram Nelson and Flora Birdsall Nelson being already married (which occurred in Sept. 1889) and Vivian Dake left for Africa in Oct. 1891 where he died the following year. The MMHC stated the photo was taken in Iowa. Ina's parents also appear to be present in the photo, though Peter is not, indicating either that this was from 1890 (before he immigrated), he had not yet joined



Figure 3. Peter Hansen in Mt. Pleasant, Iowa (ca. 1890s)

The typical Bands mission work seems to have involved a set number of Bands members “calling” upon various houses, attempting to procure meeting places (often with other local churches), and also seeking donations for continued activity. The “calling” involved going to different houses and then

the Bands in 1891, or he was with the Bands but busy elsewhere. Documentation is too sparse to know for sure.

conversing with residents about faith, often encouraging them to adopt the radical holiness doctrines of the Bands, along with other codes that went along with this (such as the plain dress code, i.e., they were not to dress in worldly manners which espoused a demonstration of wealth or power). Ina recorded many of these occasions and discussions in her two surviving journals (the eldest being from 1895 and the youngest from 1901–1902, which recorded her and Peter’s missionary activity in the USA and more, see below). A number of photos have been found of Peter Hansen from the 1890s, which show he was variously in Mt. Pleasant, IA., Chicago, Ill., Indianapolis, Ind., and Sherburne, Minn. throughout his life, and his ministry work with the Bands took him further through several other states as well.

As noted, when Peter joined is unknown at the present, though it must have taken place prior to 1896. By 1896, Peter was now already known enough to be leading the missionary efforts in Sherburne, Minnesota. Not much detail is known for sure about Peter Hansen’s time in Minnesota, save for a fragment of Peter’s memoir written in 1896 which was preserved. Peter details that by September 17 he and one Bro. Bartlett had traveled to Sherburne and were working to secure a “Band home” (i.e., a place to hold meetings). They found a hall for eight dollars per month, but on his entry for October 9 Peter writes they never would have been able to continue affording the rent.⁷⁰ They found a Band home at the Baptist church in Sherburne, but aside from this nothing else is known, save Peter’s feelings that “I don’t know if I have ever seen sin in its awfulness as I have here.”⁷¹ In July 1897 at the Annual Harvest Home, Peter was still working in Minnesota and was the division leader. Bro. Bartlett appears to have left and Peter was now the leader of Band No. 25 and working with David Parry and John Hannah. The three moved from Sherburne to Jackson, Minnesota

⁷⁰ Peter Hansen, “Memoirs,” entries for 17 Sept. and 9 Oct., printed in Hansen, *The Reverend’s Poetry*, 200–1.

⁷¹ Peter Hansen, “Memoirs,” entry for 9 Oct., printed in Hansen, *The Reverend’s Poetry*, 200–1.

instead.⁷² At the same time, Ina Belle Cone was recorded now leading Band No. 1 in Indiana at Broad Ripple. Ina had already been working in the Bands for some time, since at least 1895, which she recorded much of in a private journal. It is likely that they would have begun meeting each other on occasion by this time, though nothing is known for certain on this matter.

Additionally, Peter is known to have spent time in Iowa and Indianapolis preaching and doing other work. A number of photos of him were taken while in Mt. Pleasant, Iowa, often present with other Pentecost Bands workers, and newspapers record him working in various places throughout the 1890s.⁷³ Chicago, however, seems to have been the main place of residence that he stayed at, being known as “of Chicago” in newspaper articles that commented on his activities.⁷⁴ This may have been also due to the fact that he had family in Chicago, his sister Foghgine Hansen, who worked at the Old Folks home on Michigan Avenue.⁷⁵

On Christmas of 1898, Peter Hansen proposed to Ina Belle Cone and on 12 April 1899 they were married and would continue their Bands missionary work together from that point onward.⁷⁶ Their wedding was performed by Thomas H. Nelson, leader of the Bands.

⁷² *Indianapolis Journal* (29 Jul 1897), 5; *The Sunday Journal* (15 August 1897), Part 1, 8.

⁷³ *Indianapolis Journal* (26 July 1897), 9; *Indianapolis Journal* (25 December 1898), 6 and *Indianapolis Journal* (27 December 1898), 8.

⁷⁴ *Indianapolis Journal* (25 December 1898), 6 and *Indianapolis Journal* (27 December 1898), 8.

⁷⁵ This is known from a biographical sketch on J. A. Skov (Foghgine’s husband) held by the Museum of Danish America, see <https://danishmuseum.pastperfectonline.com/archive/71CF12DD-8525-4259-9381-509187147712>.

⁷⁶ The marriage was also noted in the Cone family genealogy, see William Whitney Cone, *Some Account of the Cone Family in America* (Topeka: Crane & Co., 1903), 478. Ina writes of their engagement in her diary entry for 25 Dec 1901.



Figure 4. Peter and Ina Hansen Wedding Photo, 1899

Mission Trip to Denmark and Norway

At the end of 1900, Peter and Ina proposed to the Pentecost Bands leaders an evangelistic mission to the lands of Denmark and Norway. Denmark, being Peter's homeland, was a place he had longed to return to and also to share his faith with, as he came to view Denmark as not having a true Christian faith, but instead a sterile and lifeless one, which did not know the message of Salvation preached by the Pentecost Bands.⁷⁷ This was approved and at the beginning of 1901, they began an extensive tour of several states fundraising money for it. Ina Belle's journal records numerous donations being made, many solicited by Peter and Ina on their preaching work, especially in Indiana and Illinois, while some also simply came due to word of mouth spreading.⁷⁸ Peter's sister Foghgine Hansen gave them ten dollars of her own money for the trip, approximately \$328 USD today. Ina's journal entries indicate that from 1 January 1901 to when they left for Denmark on 24 April, that they raised at least \$200 (plus an unspecified amount of change) or approximately \$6,560 as of January of 2022, adjusting for inflation. The veracity of their traveling can be substantiated by newspaper articles announcing their departures and arrivals variously.⁷⁹ They began their journey on the 15 April heading through the states and reached New York on 19 April, where they spent a few days attending meetings and then getting their ship.⁸⁰ They sailed on the SS Oceanic.⁸¹ Their trip took them to

⁷⁷ Ina Belle Hansen, "Journal of Ina Belle Hansen," entries for 1 Jan. 1901, journal privately owned. Unpaginated.

⁷⁸ Ina Belle Hansen, "Journal of Ina Belle Hansen," entries for 1 Jan.-24 April 1901, journal privately owned. Unpaginated.

⁷⁹ See *The Daily Mail* (23 Feb 1901, Bedford), 1; *The Daily Mail* (25 Feb 1901, Bedford), 1; *The Indianapolis News* (15 March 1901), 9.

⁸⁰ Ina Belle Hansen, "Journal of Ina Belle Hansen," entries for 15-23 April 1901, journal privately owned. Unpaginated.

⁸¹ The National Archives of the UK; Kew, Surrey, England; Board of Trade: Commercial and Statistical Department and successors: Inwards Passenger Lists.; Class: BT26; Piece: 174; Item: 25

Liverpool, England on 30 April, and then took another ship on 3 May, which took them to Denmark.

Ina and Peter arrived in Randlev, Denmark on 4 May 1901 and traveled via nonstop connections to Randlev.⁸² They first stopped at one of Peter's uncles (unknown who) to arrange for their baggage and stay. Ina states that Peter seemed to attain new life there, as he found familiar landmarks and soon smiled and overcome with emotion when seeing the trees at his family's home. They were greeted by Peter's mother, Mette, and a young boy (presumably one of Peter's nephews) on the way up.⁸³ Their time spent in Denmark was rather pleasant, though at times Ina describes some rather melancholy scenes, such as when Peter met with his sister Maren for the first time in years, and she cried because "she said seeing Peter made her think of her brothers that are dead. Then she thinks Peter looks bad too."⁸⁴ Peter, who at the time was most certainly suffering from his later fatal disease, was likely thin and ill.

Though the extent of the planning for their missionary activity is unknown, it is evident that the trip was planned out with Pentecost Band allies abroad, such as Rev. Sivert Ulness, a Norwegian immigrant and minister who had previously returned to Norway and met them there on their arrival in June.⁸⁵ Ulness had already been working in Norway for quite some time at this point, over a decade, and had been translating the works of various people including Thomas Nelson and Vivian Dake into Norwegian.⁸⁶ Peter and Ina did not apparently

⁸² Ina Belle Hansen, "Journal of Ina Belle Hansen," entries for 24 April-4 May 1901, journal privately owned. Unpaginated.

⁸³ Ina Belle Hansen, "Journal of Ina Belle Hansen," entry for 4 May 1901, journal privately owned. Unpaginated.

⁸⁴ Ina Belle Hansen, "Journal of Ina Belle Hansen," entry for 11 May 1901, journal privately owned. Unpaginated.

⁸⁵ Ina Belle Hansen, "Journal of Ina Belle Hansen," entry for 27 June 1901, journal privately owned. Unpaginated.

⁸⁶ Parsons, *Kindling Watch-Fires*, 83-8; Nelson, *Life and Labors*, 146-7. By the far the most detailed analysis of Ulness' ministry work is Inge

get on well with Ulness, though the details of their disagreements is unknown, and the evidence of this conflict is known from a letter written to them by Flora Nelson. Peter and Ina may have accused Ulness of heresy.⁸⁷ Peter and Ina primarily stationed themselves in the town of Vik, Norway.

By all indications their time in Norway was difficult and often miserable. Ina still knew little of the language, though her acquisition of it was improving, and the Bands meetings were routinely harassed by rambunctious young boys who made it nearly impossible to work there at times.⁸⁸ Ina considered the place a haven of the devil's influences, essentially. To add to this, Peter was sick throughout much of their journey still, sometimes too weak to walk.⁸⁹ As a result, they sought to leave and spent much time praying in the hopes that God would tell them what to do. The Norway mission was not all in vain, as it appears they were at least able to start a temporary presence for the Bands there and had a number of people interested, including a prospective publisher.⁹⁰ By 1902, however, they bid farewell to Norway, and they returned to Denmark for a few months in February of that year.⁹¹

What occurred on their return to Denmark is not well documented in Ina's journal, which ended in February of 1902, and so it is not known what all transpired there. Presumably, Peter and Ina attempted to form a Band around the Odder and Randlev areas (as they had begun the process of early on), along

Bjørnevoll, *Ild-Tungen. Norsk pentekostalisme 1890 til om lag 1910* (Isdalstø: Ursidae Forlag, 2017).

⁸⁷ Flora Nelson, Letter to Ina and Peter Hansen, Dated 30 Aug 1901. For more on Ulness, see David Bundy, *Visions of Apostolic Mission: Scandinavian Pentecostal Mission to 1935* (Uppsala: Uppsala Universitet, 2009), 90–94.

⁸⁸ Ina Belle Hansen, "Journal of Ina Belle Hansen," entry for 25 Dec. 1901, journal privately owned. Unpaginated.

⁸⁹ This is frequently recounting throughout Ina's diary.

⁹⁰ Ina Belle Hansen, "Journal of Ina Belle Hansen," entry for 7 Sept. 1901, journal privately owned. Unpaginated.

⁹¹ Ina Belle Hansen, "Journal of Ina Belle Hansen," entry for 21 Feb. 1902, journal privately owned. Unpaginated.

with also catching some much-needed rest there. It is certain that while Peter and Ina were in Denmark, their son James Winfred Hansen was conceived, as he would be born 24 November 1902 and they returned in July of that year.⁹² As Peter's father and his sister Maren, according to Ina's journal, were very positive toward the Bands and Peter's work, it seems likely that they may have aided in providing spaces and the few opportunities they could for the Bands work to succeed.⁹³



Figure 5. Ina Hansen; Peter Hansen; Ralph Roy Cone (Ina's brother and brief treasurer for the Bands); Harriett "Hattie" Cone (Ina's sister and devout Bands worker)

⁹² *Indianapolis News* (5 August 1902), 2. See also note below.

⁹³ Ina Belle Hansen, "Journal of Ina Belle Hansen," entries 11-14 May 1901, journal privately owned. Unpaginated.

Return, Tuberculosis, Death, Legacy

The family returned from Denmark in July of 1902.⁹⁴ Their return from Denmark would bring with it both joy and sadness for the Hansen household. Ina was pregnant at this point with their first (and only) child and on their return from Denmark they were then able to reunite with all of their friends and family and attend the Annual Harvest Home meeting of the Pentecost Bands later that month. Peter's attendance was noted in newspapers of the time. During the meeting, elections were held, and which point Peter was then elected, along with Thomas Nelson's wife Flora, were elected to be assistant superintendents, the second highest positions in the Bands, both serving under Thomas Nelson. Ralph Roy Cone (Ina's youngest brother) was elected the treasurer of the Pentecost Bands, and Hattie (Cone) Klein and her new husband Matthias

⁹⁴ They were present for elections held in late July-August as known from records (see below), and further type written note in the family's possession recorded their return. This was written some time in 1902 or 1903, the precise date at present is unknown.

On April 12, 1899, he was united in marriage to Miss Ina Cone, formerly of Lovington, Ill., who was also in the work, and truly their union has been a divinely ordered and honored one. Together they endured hardships, self-denials and rejoiced in the privilege. They were impressed of the Spirit to visit his native country, Denmark, and let the blessed light of the gospel shine on his own loved people. They spent over a year there and in other countries holding meetings wherever doors were opened to them and disseminating the blessed truths of the Bible among the people. They were opposed and ignored by some; they were received and sought for by those whose hearts were hungry for rest. God graciously honored their humble, holy, consecrated lives and precious results followed their labors. Some found peace to their souls, while others received light which will never leave them and will yet guide them into the narrow way. Thank God. They returned to this country in July, 1902, in time to attend the annual Harvest Home Camp Meeting, held at La Fayette, Ind. (reprinted in Hansen, *The Reverend's Poetry*, 195).

This gives confirmation of their return. The other "countries" mentioned were England and Norway. It is unknown currently who the writer of this note was. This was in a collection of clippings sent to James Winfred Hansen on 4 April 1920 by his grandmother Eleanor (Hill) Cone (Ina's mother). See also *Indianapolis News* (5 August 1902), 2.

Klein were both elected division leaders.⁹⁵ Ralph would eventually marry the niece of Flora Birdsall Nelson, thus, linking several of the leading families in the Bands together through marriage.⁹⁶

Not all was entirely happy for the Hansens. Foghine Hansen who had been residing in Chicago up to this point, had been a close friend of Jens Peter Skov, the brother of Johannes Andreasen Skov of Minnesota. Johannes Skov's first wife had passed away and having numerous children and a house in need of care, it appears that through his brother Jens, he was then able to hire Foghine as a housekeeper and she was working there by December of 1902,⁹⁷ taking with her a bundle of photos and documents as well, which included pictures of the family in Denmark.⁹⁸ Foghine and Johannes would eventually have a single child of their own, Ejnar Skov, and they lived in Kansas later on in their lives.⁹⁹ Peter and Ina's only child was born on 24 Nov. 1902. His name is somewhat of a mystery, however, as an early photo printed in a paper recorded his name as "Peter James Winfred Hansen" (see below),¹⁰⁰ but all subsequent records and official ones record only "James Winfred Hansen" as his name, and the family exclusively knew him as such in his life.

⁹⁵ *The Daily Mail* (30 July 1902), 4.

⁹⁶ "Indiana Marriages, 1780-1992", database, *FamilySearch* (<https://familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:XF8V-6ZZ>; 13 January 2020), Ralph Roy Cone, 1906.

⁹⁷ Letter from Lara Strandskov (15 Dec. 1902). The relevant portions can be read via the Museum of Danish America's online archive: <https://danishmuseum.pastperfectonline.com/archive/71CF12DD-8525-4259-9381-509187147712>.

⁹⁸ Copies of many of these are held by the Danish Museum archives.

⁹⁹ See Cora E. Fagre, Mark D. Strandskov, and Cheryl A. Strandskov, *The Lars Strandskov Family* (n. p., 2001), 33-6 for more on the Skov family.

¹⁰⁰ This photo is known from a set of articles that were clipped out of a newspaper by Eleanor Cone, and then sent to James Winfred Hansen on 4 April 1920, now held by the family. Photo is reproduced below (see Figure 7).



PETER J. W. HANSEN.

Figure 6.

During this time, as well, Peter's health evidently deteriorated once again, and he would be given the official diagnosis of tuberculosis in late 1902 or early 1903. Though "consumption" (an older colloquialism for tuberculosis) is what Peter is officially recorded as dying from on his death records and such, Peter's death had been a bit of contention in family lore. Those raised by Peter's grandson John were told that he died after being kicked in the chest by a mule. Meanwhile, those raised by Peter's grandson Benjamin were told he died from influenza. Descendants of Richard Hansen, however, were told he died from tuberculosis, which as noted above is the accurate account.¹⁰¹ As tuberculosis typically takes a few years before it finally kills the infected, if left untreated (or without cure), a rough estimated date could be placed approximately around 1898–99 for when he may have contracted the disease, in which case it could have been on one of his missions in Iowa or in Indiana where he was exposed, though this remains speculation. Other members of the Bands suffered from the disease.¹⁰² His death certificate records that he had suffered from it for two years, but this is likely only when he was diagnosed (rather than how long he had actually suffered from the disease). By the time of his return to Denmark in 1901, he had most certainly contracted the disease. His wife Ina wrote that previously in their marriage up to 1901:

¹⁰¹ Indiana Archives and Records Administration; Indianapolis, IN, USA; Death Certificates; Year: 1903; Roll: 07.

¹⁰² Lola Pruett, a friend of Ina's, would die from it in 1908. Lola was the wife of Joseph Carson McCaw, who would later remarry to Ina Belle Hansen after Peter's death. Ina also records in her journal that David Parry (Peter's coworker) was suffering from it (entry for 6 March 1901). She wrote:

We arrived there after 3 o'clock and after hunting for Bro. Parry for a good while finally found them. Found David in pretty bad shape, think he has consumption, poor boy. He looks very thin, don't think he will live long.

As Bands members frequented the houses of the general public and had large meetings, it is no surprise that Peter would have contracted it. The present author speculates that Peter may have contracted his tuberculosis in Minnesota along with Parry.

[*illegible water damaged lines previous*] Christmas day three years ago [25 Dec 1898] was a marked day to me as it was there that I consented to be Peter Hansen's wife, which I have never had cause to regret, praise God. The Lord has been with us and it has been a three years of love and unity and we have united our forces to fight for Lord and souls. God has done much for my dear husband bodily in that time as he has been in a critical condition several times and I doubtless would have been a widow today had God not in his goodness and mercy healed him and raised him up again.¹⁰³

Symptoms recorded in Ina's journal included fever, troubled breathing, sweats and chills, excruciating pains in his side, and similar, all typical of the disease. Photos of him in rough chronological order also show his generally poor health, as he began losing weight, another symptom. Unfortunately, even if they had known of this disease, little could be done to treat it the first years of the 1900s. The mixture of having no regular salary, and also poor understanding of the disease would have contributed to this situation.¹⁰⁴ As such, for Peter Hansen it was a death sentence. This great variance in the oral lore on Peter's death remains unexplained, but the present author suggests (and this may become relevant to future genealogists dealing with the Coronavirus era) that stigmatism about the disease of tuberculosis led to changes in the lore over time. Another explanation is that various other stories about Hansen individuals were confused with that of Peter's and created a conglomerate a short time after his life.

¹⁰³ Ina Belle Hansen, "Journal of Ina Belle Hansen," entry for 25 Dec. 1901, journal privately owned. Unpaginated.

¹⁰⁴ Barbara Bates, *Bargaining for Life: A Social History of Tuberculosis, 1876-1938* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1992), 16-18.



Peter Hansen's obituary photo

Regardless, newspapers write that Peter had suffered from the disease for three months by the time he died on 3 April 1903, but this was likely only for how long he sought treatment

publicly.¹⁰⁵ This is probably when he was first diagnosed officially with the disease and not how long he had actually suffered from it (as evidenced above, he had suffered for some years and had nearly died on other occasions from it). He died at Broad Ripple and was surrounded by close friends and family. One person who is known to have been there was Minnie R. Willing who recorded this about his passing:

Through all his long illness of hereditary consumption Bro. Peter Hansen was never heard to utter one impatient word or complaint. His sufferings were great, but God kept him through it all. It was a triumph of redeeming grace. When the end came there was no pain, all was peaceful and calm. Weeping friends stood around his bed, but he quietly slipped away. His last words were: "Glory to God. Glory to God. Amen." And so his life went out, "as sets the morning star which goeth not down behind the darkened West but melts away into the brightness of the sun."¹⁰⁶

A preliminary service for friends and family was held on 4 April, and then 5 April there was a public funeral held at the Pentecost Tabernacle in Indianapolis.¹⁰⁷ At the funeral, it was said that three people ended up converting to the Pentecost Band faith.¹⁰⁸ Peter was buried in Crown Hill Cemetery (section 37, lot 1197)

¹⁰⁵ *The Indianapolis Journal* (5 April 1903), 12.

¹⁰⁶ This was in a collection of clippings sent to James Winfred Hansen on 4 April 1920 by his grandmother Eleanor (Hill) Cone (Ina's mother).

¹⁰⁷ *The Indianapolis Journal* (5 April 1903), 12; *Indianapolis News* (4 April 1903), 2.

¹⁰⁸ This was in a collection of clippings sent to James Winfred Hansen on 4 April 1920 by his grandmother Eleanor (Hill) Cone (Ina's mother):

The night following the funeral service of Bro. Hansen, three souls cried to God for mercy and were saved. Others were wrought upon by the Spirit, through his death and a good meeting is in progress every night, conducted by Brother and Sister Higgins. Sister Hansen, who is spending a few weeks at her father's home in Chicago, will soon return and put her energies into soulsaving work again, where our brother died. May God send a gracious outpouring at Broad Ripple. Amen.

This clipping was likely from the obituary in the *Pentecost Herald* in 1903, though this is not yet confirmed.

with a small headstone. After his death, Ina retired for a few weeks to her parents' home in Chicago with the infant James Winfred, before eventually returning to Pentecost Bands work again.¹⁰⁹ James Winfred Hansen would also work in the Pentecost Bands, where he eventually met his wife Marie Ione Berg, published many poems, and continued his affiliation with at least throughout the 1930s.

Ina Hansen remarried to Joseph C. McCaw. Ina maintained her missionary and preaching work, while James Winfred Hansen was raised in the Pentecost Bands Faith Orphanage, which was run by McCaw. Ina died of myocarditis on 5 April 1929 a few months before James Hansen's marriage to Marie Berg.¹¹⁰ James would follow his father in becoming a pastor, working first with the Pentecost Bands (renamed then the Missionary Bands of the World), and then the Free Methodist Church directly.

Conclusions

The story of Jens Peter Hansen is one of both triumph and sadness. He went from an exceptionally poor farm child in Denmark to a ranking member of a radical holiness denomination, orchestrating missionary work in several states and in Denmark-Norway. This story helps to further elucidate the work of the Pentecost Bands, a group which has been understudied and undervalued in the opinion of the current author. More research on the Scandinavian radical holiness movements is needed, especially on the Pentecost Bands. The current author is aware of only a few studies which discuss

¹⁰⁹ *The Daily Mail* (8 Dec. 1903), 4. See the above note as well.

¹¹⁰ Indiana Archives and Records Administration; Indianapolis, IN, USA; Death Certificates; Year: 1929; Roll: 07.
<https://search.ancestry.com/cgi-bin/sse.dll?indiv=1&dbid=60716&h=3132001&ssrc=pt&tid=173134239&pid=272245807815&usePUB=true>.

them in Norway,¹¹¹ and outside of this the missions in Denmark and Sweden have been unexplored.¹¹²

This paper contributes to the Danish mission and helps to elucidate the life of its founder. More research is needed on Peter Hansen, particularly his early years in Denmark and the first years he spent in the United States. Further, more is still needed on his missions in Norway and Denmark. This article was not able to, at time of publication, gain access to the *Pentecost Herald* paper, which Peter contributed writings to, nor to *Ild-Tungen* which was the paper of Sivert V. Ulness, and may have published work from Peter and Ina while they were there. As such, there are still many more sources that can be utilized to further discover more about the life, missions, theology, and impact that Peter and others had in Scandinavian Pentecostal history.

Appendix: An Excurses on Peter Hansen's Theology

Peter Hansen expressed rather curious theological positions, as the above notes. Alcohol was expressly something disliked by the Pentecost Bands, a position which Peter agreed with, and he spoke at temperance unions against the evils of alcohol and the tempting nature of it, considering it of the devil. Peter was, in general, anti-materialist in various respects. He was a critic of large churches, along with his wife, whose journal has a number of disapproving remarks about the lavish adornments of mainstream churches, and the riches that they accrued. Peter's own account of his life has no kind word to say about how priests or pastors would accumulate wealth.

¹¹¹ Bundy, *Visions of Apostolic Mission*; David Bundy, "The Holiness Movements in World Christianity: Historiographical Questions," *Wesleyan Theological Journal* 38, no. 1 (2003): 21–53; Bjørnevoll, *Ild-Tungen*.

¹¹² In *The Herald of Light and Zion's Watchman* Vol. 35, no. 35(1 Oct 1934): 16 it is found that that Pentecost Bands (now renamed the Missionary Bands of the World) had a worker in Sweden building a movement, Bessie Swanson. Additionally, Peter Hansen's son, James Winfred Hansen, was working with the Bands in Pulaskieville, Ohio.

Peter's ideas of salvation, with this radical holiness edge, meant that he did not view the Lutherans of his own country as actually saved, but instead locked in a bout of darkness and ignorance. As a result, he viewed his evangelistic mission as bringing a new development to them that could save the unsaved Danes. Peter's views of anti-materialism, shared by his wife and many of the Bands people, came to be expressed in extreme senses of modesty. This meant that they wore no lace, no lavish clothes, etc. They dressed very plainly as photos of Peter and Ina consistently attest. Further, this extended to the adoption of the Bands views on sexual intercourse (i.e., that sex was only for reproductive purposes, which preserved "marital purity"). In some sense, then, Peter would have likely been seen by some as "fanatical" as many Bands members were.¹¹³ No doubt this anti-materialism may have also contributed to other issues. Though he was frequently in poor health, as Ina attested in her journals, Peter seldom seems to have seen doctors or medical professionals of his day for care. To the contrary, Ina and Peter both appear to have indulged in the concept of faith healing. Peter himself attests to this "gift of healing" as one bestowed to Christians in a sermon he gave in Denmark (discussed below). Thus, while suffering from it for at least two years, he was not officially diagnosed until months before his death from the disease, likely as it was becoming too strong and difficult for him to manage. Ina, and her second husband Carson McCaw, would engage in this while running the Pentecost Bands Faith Orphanage in Indiana, which would lead to quite devastating results for some of the children and a large scandal for the Bands taking place from 1910–1911.¹¹⁴

¹¹³ Snyder, "Vivian Dake and the Pentecost Bands," 78.

¹¹⁴ The whole issue was covered in a series of several newspaper articles, see *Indianapolis News* (1 Aug 1910), p. 1; *Indianapolis News* (7 Sept 1910), p. 9; *Indianapolis News* (9 Sep 1910), p. 11; *Indianapolis News* (10 Sep 1910), p. 3; *Indianapolis News* (15 Sep 1910), p. 4; *Indianapolis News* (17 Sep 1910), p. 24; *Indianapolis News* (27 Sep 1910), p. 17; *Indianapolis News* (4 Nov 1910), p. 9; *Indianapolis News* (16 Feb 1911), p. 8; *Indianapolis News* (8 May 1911), p. 5; *Indianapolis News* (2 Oct

A few writings and a sermon of Peter's are preserved by the Hansen family. These are entitled "Backslider's Hell", "Holiness" (printed posthumously on 15 June 1934 in the *Herald of Light and Zion's Watchman*) and then a sermon from Denmark.¹¹⁵ In these, Peter's own views are expressed a bit more. In his sermon from Denmark, he focused on a concept of "perfect love" as the most desirable "Christian grace." In Wesleyan fashion, this is a sanctification which eradicates the "Adam nature" (which Peter speaks of elsewhere).¹¹⁶ He denigrates those who focus on other gifts over love, or those who seek to imitate faith healing and miracles, and then comes to declare a host of other denominations as "hellish" in nature (specifically Mormons and Christian Scientists). Peter, himself, was (as noted before) one to shy away from accusing one group or person of heresy, as he seems to have done with Sivert V. Ulness in Norway. His ultimate declaration is:

It [perfect love] gathers up treasures for eternity, flourishes in defeat, becomes rich in poverty, patient in tribulation, submissive in affliction. It is the kingdom of heaven in the soul, the highest achievement, for God is love.¹¹⁷

Thus, perfect love is the way of the Christian and the way of God. The way to reach this, for Peter, is the experience of Holiness. In his article on "Holiness," Peter contends that it is an experience that one does not gain via good works, deeds, prayer, fasting, etc. but that these may in some way lead to that experience. Instead, the experience of holiness came via a death and resurrection with God, thus Peter writes: "So may we pass

1911), p. 3; *Indianapolis News* (19 Oct 1911), p. 13; *Indianapolis News* (15 Dec 1911), p. 3.

¹¹⁵ All have been reprinted in *The Reverend's Poetry* (ed. Christopher M. Hansen), 195–8. A copy of this volume is available at the Museum of Danish America Genealogy Center in Elk Horn, Iowa.

¹¹⁶ For discussion of this death and resurrection salvation, see Snyder, "Vivian Dake and the Pentecost Bands."

¹¹⁷ *The Reverend's Poetry*, 196.

through Jordan buried in His death, and come out on the other side resurrected, to walk in newness of life[.]”¹¹⁸ For Peter, there seemed to be this divide between the Christian and the sinner, in that Christians, via this eradication of the Adam nature, are above willful sin in some fashion, or at least above it in the way other people are.

Extending from this, after one converted, there is a special problem that Peter shares. For Peter there seemed to be a special torment for those who “backslide” from the faith, that is, a convert who then deconverts afterward. He quotes Jesus of Nazareth as saying, “The kingdom of heaven is within you,” which he takes to mean that heaven is within the Christian. He then extends this to saying that “hell is within the sinner.” Through this, he forges the idea that sinners who store up hell on earth will store up that amount in death, and thus, the most horrible experience for one would be the backsliding ex-Christian, who had achieved heaven and then fell away or rejected it, for they had seen God’s grace and lost it. Peter seemed to then share a special distaste for backsliding Christians, and how they may “deceive” many others with their words and deeds, and so they carry with them a special hell in eternity.¹¹⁹

Peter’s theology emerges as well in line with the other Pentecost Band members of the time. He gave fiery speeches and was rather popular as a result, and so it is no surprise he was elected to be second under Thomas H. Nelson in the movement.

¹¹⁸ *The Reverend’s Poetry*, 198.

¹¹⁹ How Peter justified the conception of an eternal torment and the “perfect love” that is God’s nature he does not say.

Appendix:

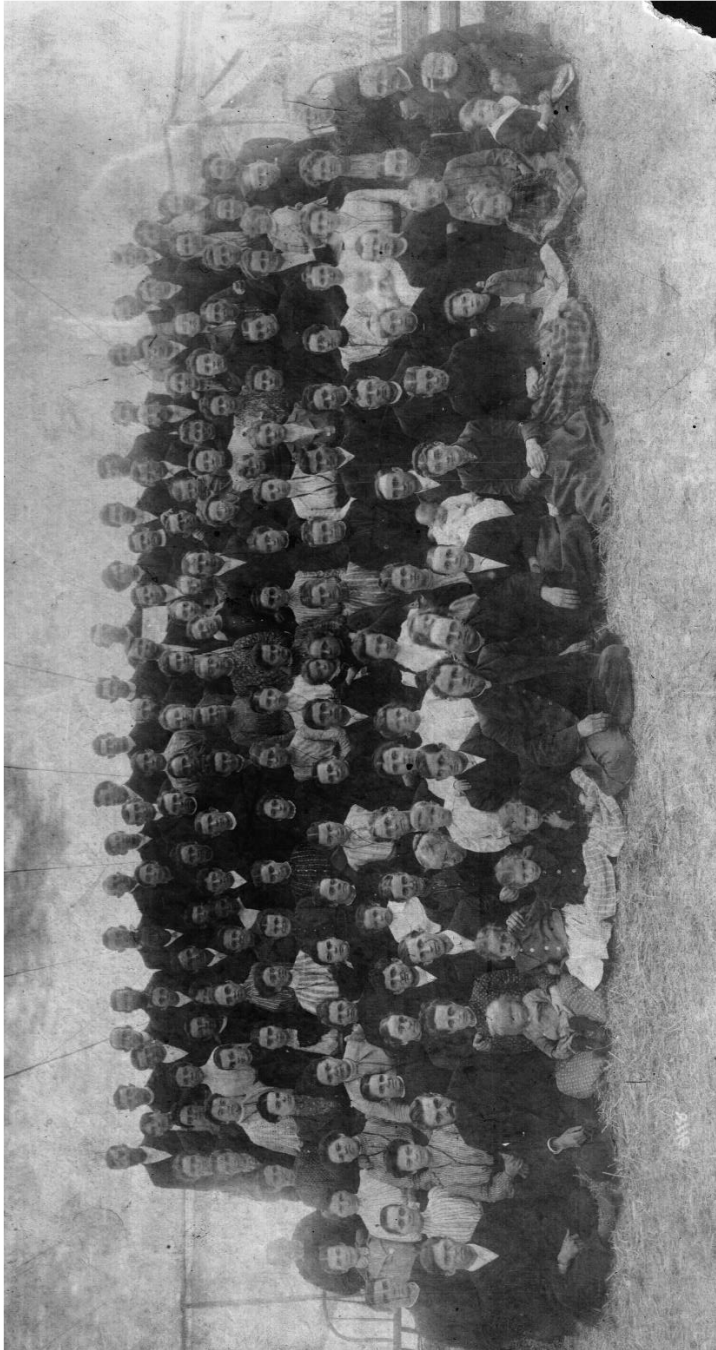
Photos of the Bands from the Hansen Family



1. Pentecost Bands in Terre Haute, Indiana (ca. 1900)
Peter and Ina in front row (seventh and eight from the right)



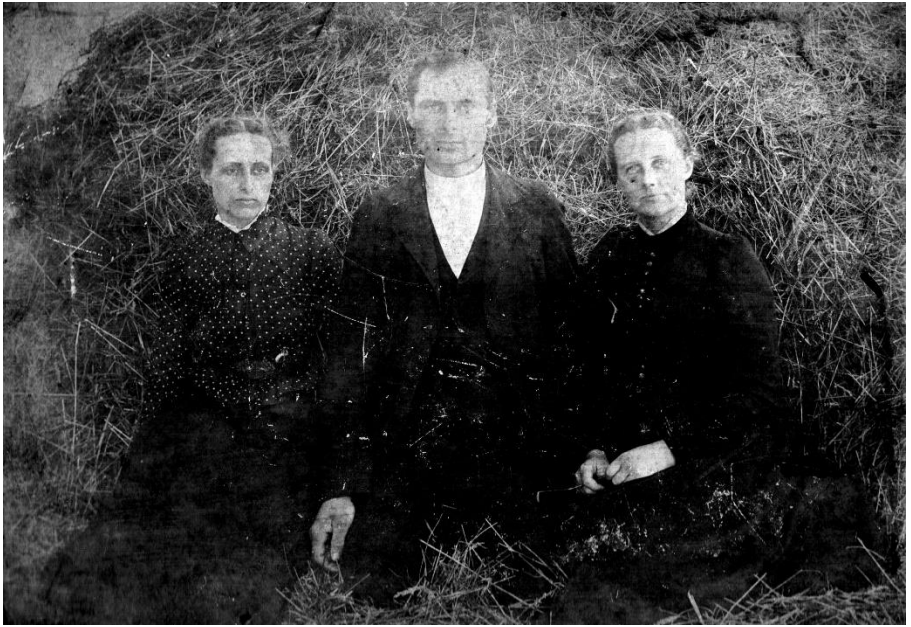
2. Pentecost Bands ca. 1901 (writing was done by Marie Ione Berg, James Winfred Hansen's wife)



3. *Pentecost Bands in 1903–1904 after Peter’s Death*



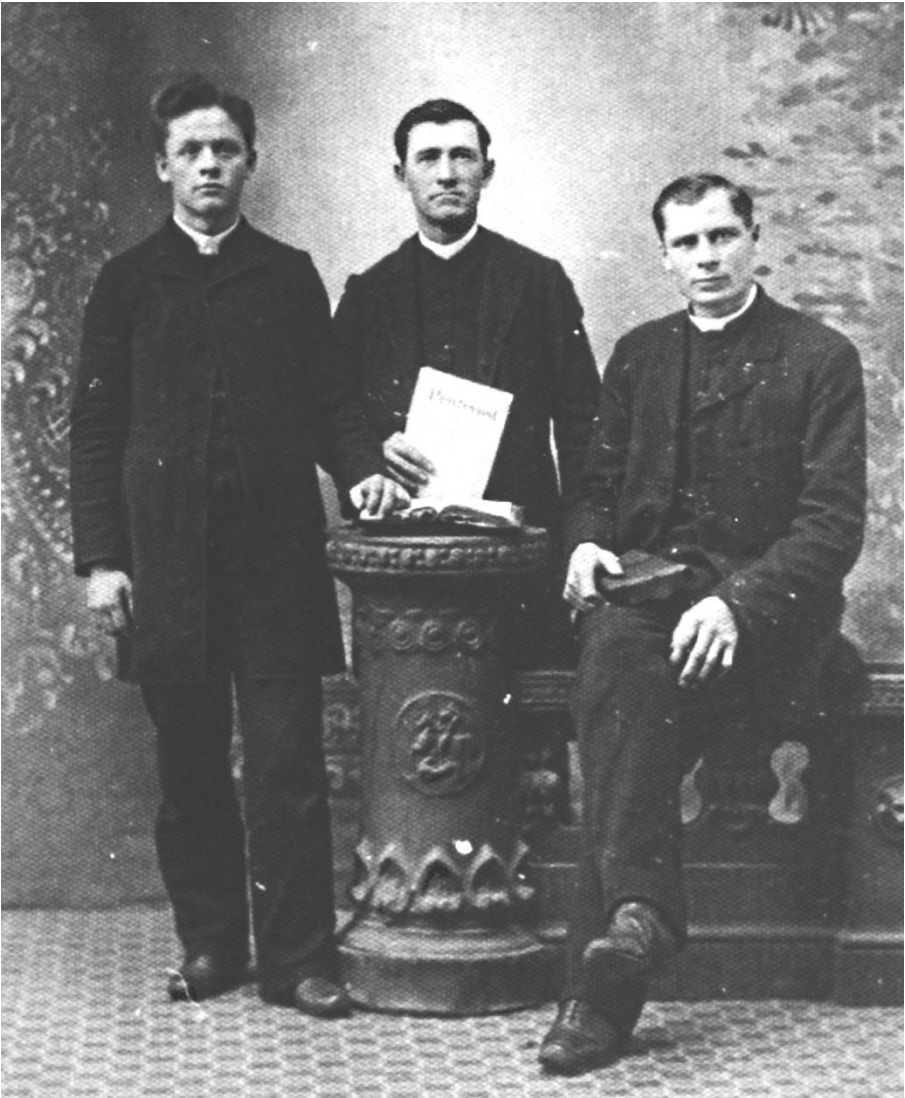
4. *Believed to be the Pentecost Bands, ca. 1910*



5. *Ina (right) and Peter Hansen (middle), and Harriett Cone (left) sitting in a haystack*



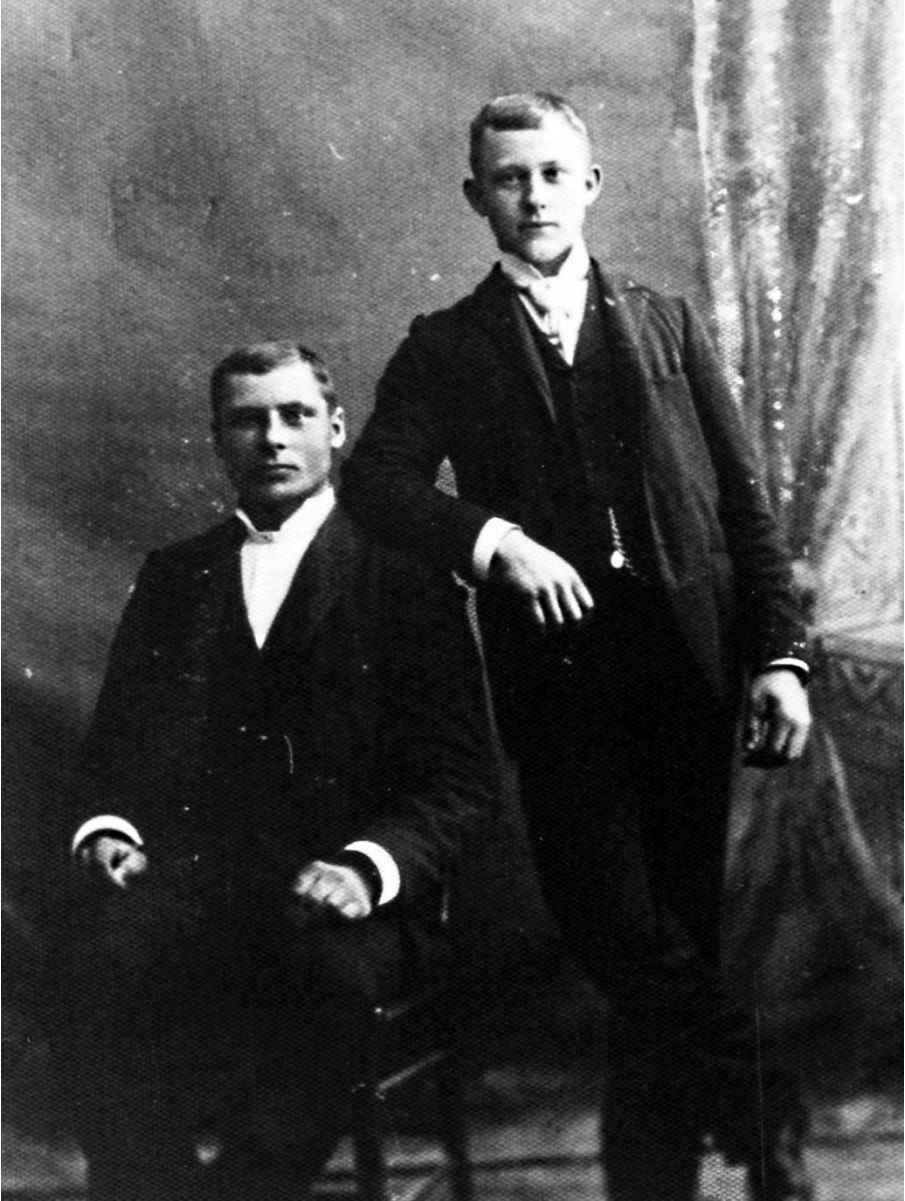
6. *Harriett Cone*



7. Peter Hansen (sitting right) in Sherburne, Minnesota. Other two believed to be John Hannah and David Parry, uncertain order



8. Women of the Bands



9. Jens Peter Hansen (sitting) and unknown man in Mt. Pleasant, Iowa.

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¹²⁰ I have not included here all the various primary sources I have used, but all are within the footnotes of this article.

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¹²¹ Privately printed. A public edition is available at the Museum of Danish America Genealogy Center in Elkhorn, Iowa.