

Hansen Volume, Chapter 1 - Hansen Family Overview

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My Hansen great-grandparents Peter Hansen and Dorthe (Hansen) Hansen, and their three oldest children emigrated from the island of Lolland to Pottawattamie County, Iowa in 1886.

This is their story, and the story of their sons in Hazel Dell Township and their older relatives in Denmark and Nebraska.

- Chapter 1 is a summary. Most of the material therein is amplified in later chapters.
- Chapter 2 covers the lives of my great-grandparents, Peter and Dorthe Hansen.
- Chapter 3 touches briefly on Karen Margrethe "Maggie" and Ellen Marie "Ellie", who married the Larsen brothers, Andrew and Henry. Their story is in the *Larsen* volume. Chapter 3 also tells about Mads Adolf, who died in Denmark as a child, and whose brief life is the subject of a small book.
- Chapter 4 is a memorial to my unique bachelor great-uncle, Hans Peter Hansen.
- Chapter 5 sketches the lives and family of my great-uncle, Rev. Laurits Christian "L. C." Hansen, and his wife, Agatha Mengers. The chapter includes a short appendix on the Mengers family.
- Chapter 6, *Peter Hansen's Other Relatives*, covers Peter Hansen's siblings. Three siblings immigrated to Nebraska. I have found very little information for the siblings who remained in Denmark.
- Chapter 7, *Dorthe Hansen's Other Relatives*, covers the siblings of Dorthe Hansen. All are thought to have remained in Denmark. I have found very little information about Dorthe's siblings.
- Chapter 8, Notes, includes Hansen-specific sources and acknowledgments and useful information for anyone researching relatives of this family in Denmark.

Need help? Use your browser to return to the preface; then click on *Show Me Help*.

Hansen Family Origins - a Summary

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map of Denmark courtesy Google.com

My great-grandparents, Peter Hansen and Dorthe Hansen, were born and raised in the eastern part of the island of Lolland (Lolland is the island at the bottom of the above map with Nakskov at the west end). Peter and Dorthe remained in Lolland until emigrating in 1886 with their three oldest children.

The *Hansen Family Roots* section contains a more-detailed map.

The Hansen's area in Denmark was about 80 miles south of Copenhagen, between the cities of Nykøbing on the island of Falster and Saksøbing on Lolland. About six miles further west from Saksøbing is the city of Maribo. The Hansen's area was part of Maribo Amt (county). The Sløsserup area is about nine miles southeast of the Langet area.

Both Peter's parents and Dorthe's parents owned small farms, and both Peter and Dorthe grew up in large families.

In the United States:

After immigrating to Pottawattamie County, Iowa, Peter worked for the Rock Island and the Northwestern Railroads before moving to a rented farm north of Council Bluffs.

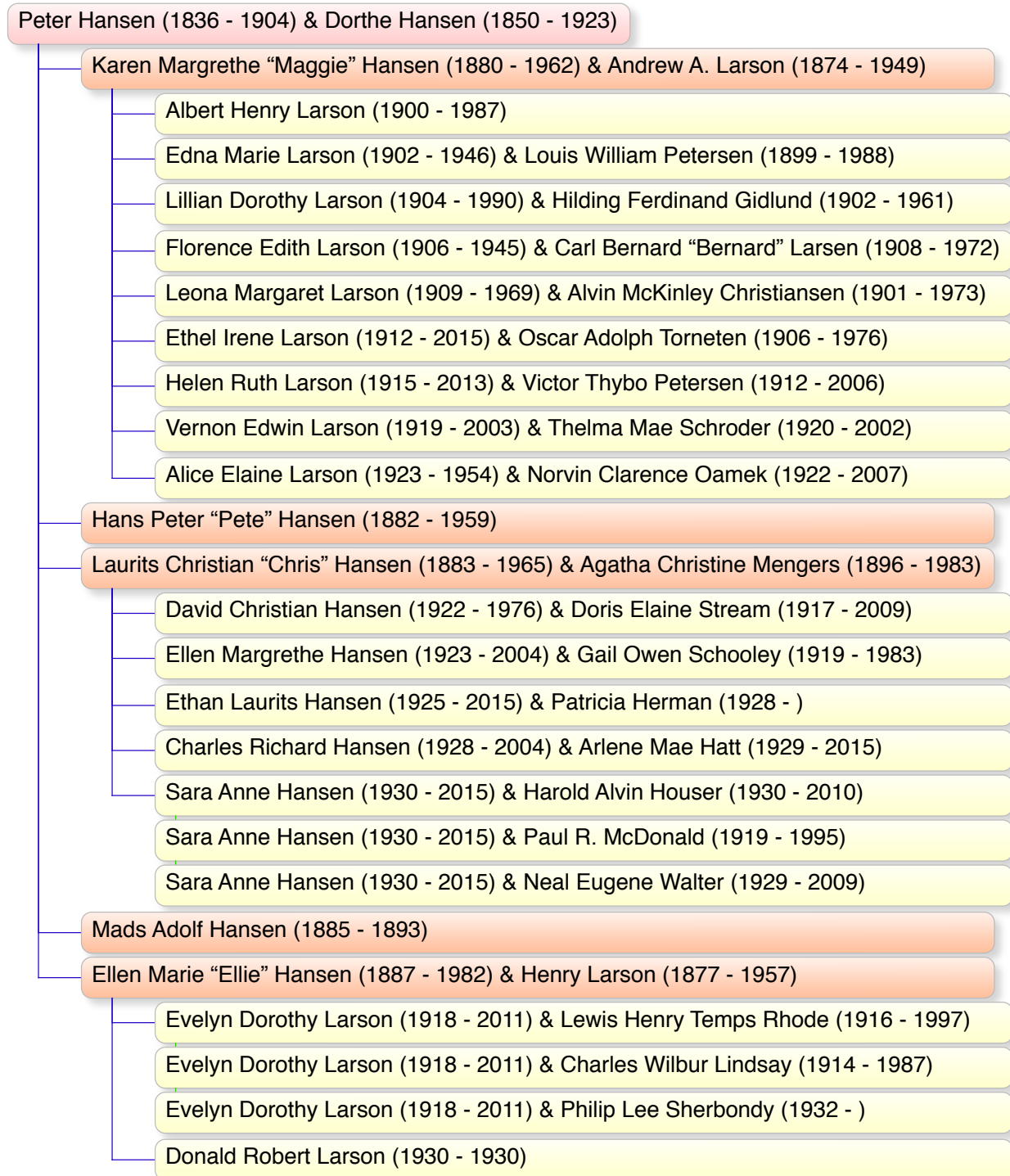
- The Peter Hansen family first lived in Weston, Iowa where their youngest child, Ellen Marie, was born in 1887.
- The Hansen family then lived in Council Bluffs, in the North Eighth Street area.
- In 1895 the family settled in Hazel Dell Township, Section 10, about five miles west of Underwood and a mile to the north of my Larsen great-grandparents. Peter and Dorthe remained in this neighborhood for the remainder of their lives.

Peter and Dorthe Hansen and three of their children rest a few miles north of their Hazel Dell home in the St. Paul's Lutheran Church Cemetery.

Peter and Dorthe Hansen's children and grandchildren appear in the chart on the following page. All the grandchildren are now deceased.

More-detailed charts are later in the Hansen volume.

Peter and Dorthe Hansen's Older Descendants



(above chart created from Robert Christiansen's *St. Paul's* database Mar 2016)

End of the *Hansen Family Origins* section
of the *Hansen* volume of *Robert Christiansen's Family History*.

Hansen Family Roots - a Summary

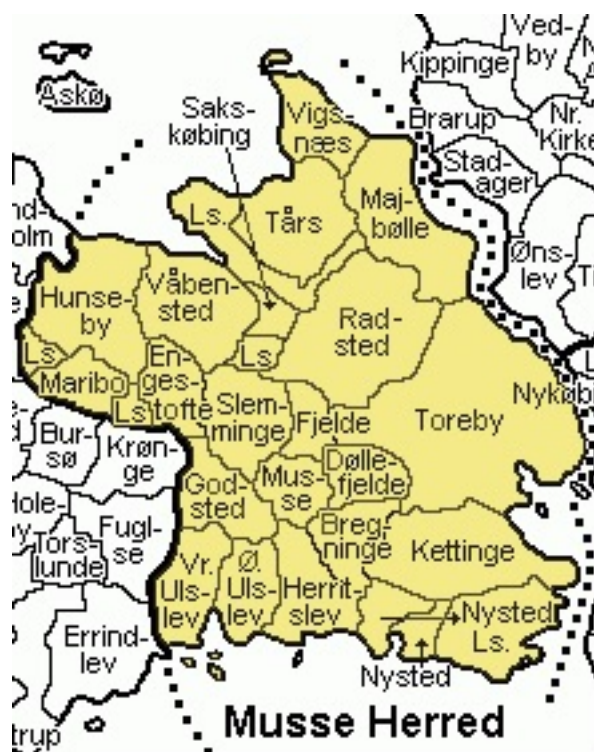
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During the 19th century Denmark was divided into counties, called *Amter*. Counties in turn were divided into districts, called *Herred*. Finally each district consisted of a number of parishes, called *Sogne*.

Below is an index map showing Musse Herred, Maribo Amt which Peter and Dorthé Hansen were born and lived before emigrating.

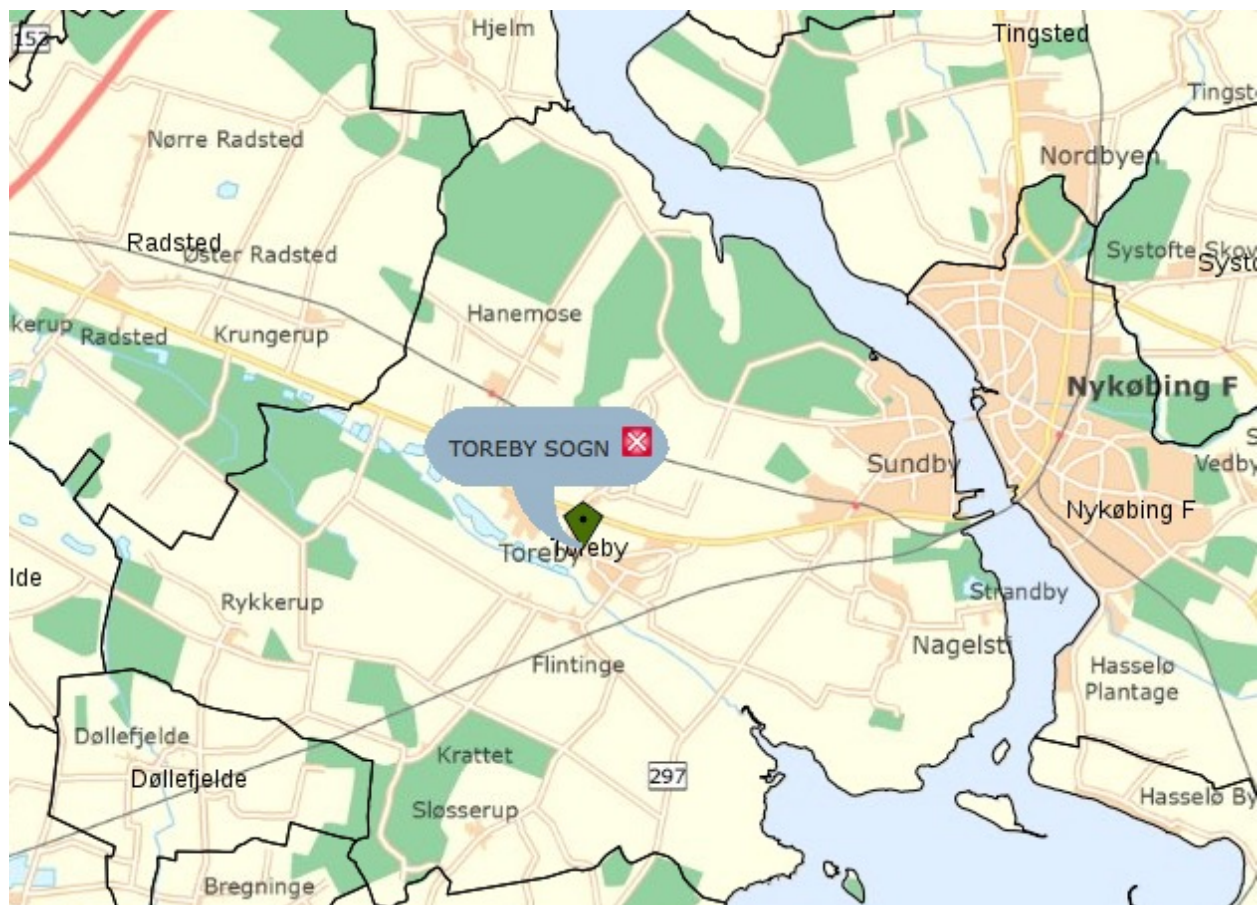
- Peter Hansen was born in Toreby Sogn, Musse Herred, Maribo Amt, Denmark on December 2, 1836.
- Dorthé Hansen was born nearby in Radsted Sogn, Musse Herred on January 30, 1850.

The following page contains a more-detailed map.



Musse Herred (courtesy of da.wikipedia.org/wiki)

In the 1800s the Sogne mentioned above were all in Maribo Amt. Today they are all in Guldborgsund Kommune (municipality) in Sjælland Region.



Toreby and Radsted Sogne (courtesy of viskort.dk)

The above map shows a portion of the eastern island of Lolland, with Nykøbing, on the island of Falster, on the right-hand side.

Peter Hansen was born to Hans Jensen and Karen Larsdatter in Sløsserup, Toreby Sogn.

- The Toreby parish church is located in Toreby By (village).
- The Sløsserup rural neighborhood is in the bottom left-hand corner about two miles south of Toreby.
- Peter Hansen's mother was born in Grænge By, northwest of Toreby By and still in Toreby Sogn.

Dorthe Hansen was born in Langet, Radsted Sogn to Hans Jacobsen and Karen Margrethe Hansdatter.

- The Radsted parish church is located in Radsted By northwest of Toreby By.
- Langet, now known as Radsted Langet, is a rural neighborhood about two miles northwest of Radsted on the far side of the highway.

Peter Hansen's Parents and Grandparents



Hans Jensen was born in Toreby Sogn. I know little about Hans Jensen's parents; evidently they died before the 1834 census.

Karen Larsdatter was born in Grænge By northwest of Toreby By.

Hans Jensen and Karen Larsdatter married in Toreby Sogn and probably remained in Toreby Sogn their entire lives. Unfortunately the 1860 census transcript for Toreby Sogn fails to list the family.

Hans Jensen was a farmer (*gaardmand* in the census). The Hansen farm was at Sløsserup south of the village of Toreby.

Peter Hansen's Collateral Relatives

As the following chart shows, Peter Hansen was the third of ten children born to Hans Jensen and Karen Larsdatter. The three youngest children immigrated to Nebraska in the 1870s. Otherwise I know remarkably little about Peter's siblings.



In the 1850 census, Peter, age 13, was living with his uncle, Mads Larsen, and widowed grandmother, Maren Poulsdatter, on a farm in Grænge about two miles northwest of Toreby. In 1855 Peter was again living in his parents' household.

Unfortunately the 1860 Toreby Sogn census, although transcribed and on-line, evidently does not contain the Hans Jensen and Karen Larsdatter household.

I understand that Peter served in one of the Schleswig wars between Denmark and Prussia.

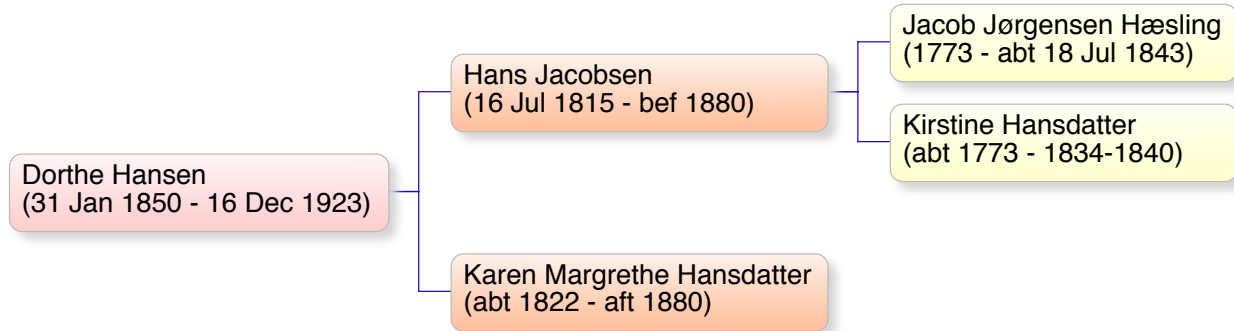
Peter Hansen married my great-grandmother, Dorthe Hansen, on December 14, 1877 in Radsted Sogn, which borders Toreby Sogn to the northwest.

By 1880, Hans Jensen and Karen Larsdatter are both deceased and Peter is the only sibling living on the farm.

I am told that the Hans Jensen farm was then sold to settle the estate, precipitating Peter and Dorthe Hansen's decision to emigrate.

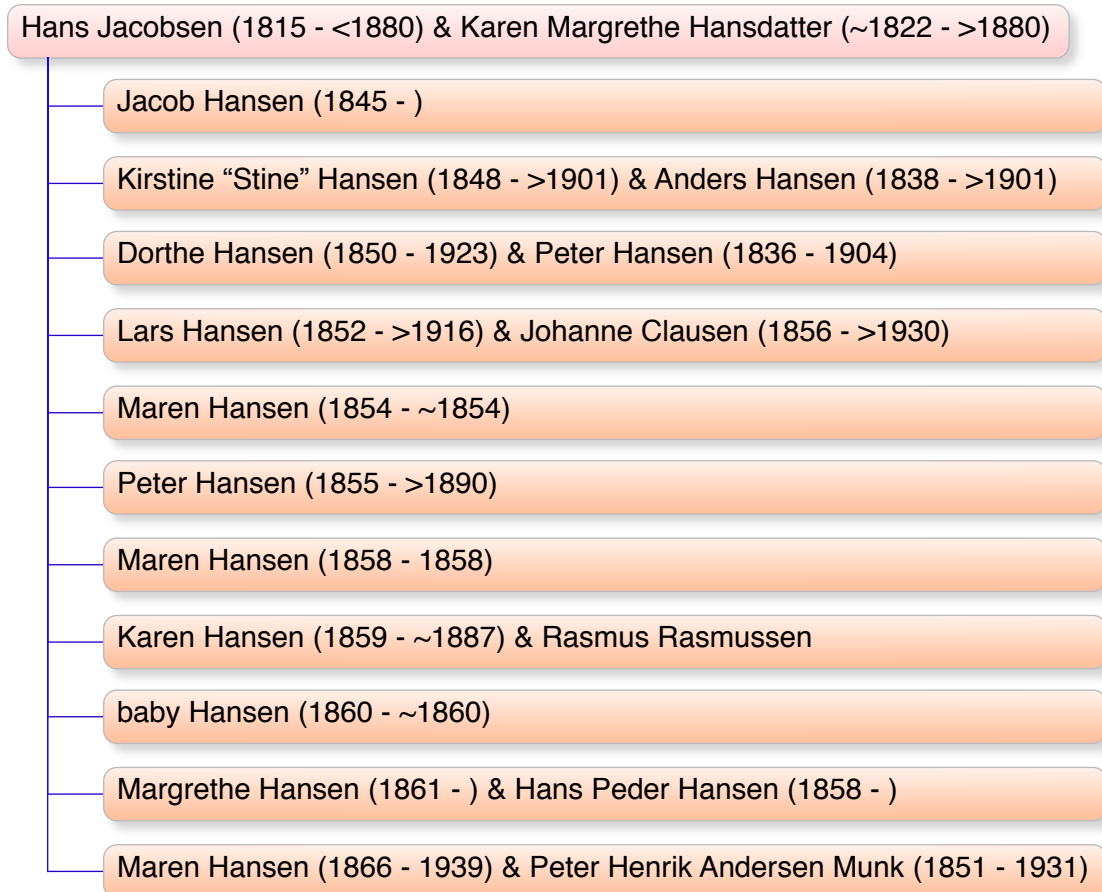
Of interest: Like many rural churches in Denmark, the Toreby Sogn church, where the three oldest children of Peter and Dorte Hansen were christened, dates from medieval days around 800 years ago. Kai Munk, the most famous Dane killed by the Germans during World War II, worshipped at the Toreby church when he was a high school student in Nykøbing boarding in Toreby parish.

Dorthe Hansen's Parents and Grandparents



Dorthe Hansen's Collateral Relatives

As the following chart shows, my great-grandmother, Dorthe Hansen was the third of eleven children born to Hans Jacobsen and Karen Margrethe Hansdatter. As far as I know, Dorthe was the only child to emigrate.



Maren Hansen, the youngest of Dorthe Hansen's siblings, married Peter Henrik Andersen Munk, a farmer in western Lolland. As far as I know, the descendants of Peter Munk and Maren Hansen are the only Hansen relatives that my family had contact with during the 20th century.

Of Interest: The adoptive father of Kai Munk, mentioned a few pages earlier, was also named Peter Munk and was also from Lolland. Some claim a connection between Kai Munk's father, Peter Munk, and my great-great-uncle by marriage, Peter Munk. I have even seen it claimed that they are half-brothers who just happen to have the same name! Unfortunately I have been unable to find any connection.

End of the *Hansen Roots* section
of the *Hansen* volume of *Robert Christiansen's Family History*.

End of Chapter 1 - *Hansen Family Overview*
of the *Hansen* volume of *Robert Christiansen's Family History*.