

Hansen Volume, Chapter 4 - Hans Peter "Pete" Hansen

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The Life of Hans Peter "Pete" Hansen

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My great-uncle, Hans Peter "Pete" Hansen, the second child of Peter Hansen and Dortha Hansen, was born in Denmark in 1882 and immigrated with his family in 1886, moving with his family to Hazel Dell Township from Council Bluffs in 1895. As an older adult, Hans Peter Hansen was often known as "H. P." or as "Uncle Pete".

(this space is reserved for a photograph)

The Life of Hans Peter "Pete" Hansen

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- **Hans Peter "Pete" Hansen**, the second child of Peter Hansen and Dorthe Hansen, was born in Denmark in 1882 and immigrated with his family in 1886, moving with his family to Hazel Dell Township from Council Bluffs in 1895. Hans Peter Hansen was often known as "H. P." or as "Uncle Pete".

Peter Hansen (2 Dec 1836 - 6 Jun 1904)
& Dorthe Hansen (31 Jan 1850 - 16 Dec 1923)

Karen Margrethe "Maggie" Hansen (31 Aug 1880 - 14 May 1962)
& Andrew A. Larson (26 Apr 1874 - 22 Oct 1949)

Hans Peter "Pete" Hansen (4 Apr 1882 - 25 Jun 1959)

Laurits Christian "Chris" Hansen (6 Nov 1883 - 14 Apr 1965)
& Agatha Christine Mengers (2 Dec 1896 - 12 Apr 1983)

Mads Adolf Hansen (30 Apr 1885 - 17 Mar 1893)

Ellen Marie "Ellie" Hansen (27 Dec 1887 - 25 Jun 1982)
& Henry Larson (15 Apr 1877 - 12 Feb 1957)

Uncle Pete never married. He was a farmer on the Hansen rental farm in Hazel Dell Township, Section 10 until he retired in his early 60s. After his younger brother, Laurits Christian Hansen, married and began his career as a minister in 1921, Pete lived by himself on the Hansen farm.

In 1944 the Hansen farmstead, where family members had lived for nearly 50 years, was sold. Pete gave up his Model T car and moved to Council Bluffs, where for a time he worked as a watchman at the Council Bluffs Hatchery. Later Pete lived at times with the families of several of his nieces, and eventually lived in a Council Bluffs nursing home. Pete died in Council Bluffs in 1959.

Although he was a bit of an eccentric in his latter years, Uncle Pete was active in civic life and was well known in Pottawattamie County. During the 1920s and 1930s he served on the Hazel Dell Township school board and his nieces suspected that he may have helped them find teaching positions during the grim days of the depression.

Hans Peter Hansen was sometimes called "Prairie Pete" to avoid confusion with other Peter Hansens who lived in the St. Paul's area, such as "Pigeon Pete" Hansen. Cleo (Peterson) Christoffersen, who grew up down a long lane and across the creek west of Uncle Pete Hansen's farm, has written the following memoir.

Prairie Pete was the nickname that was given to the old bachelor who lived up the hill from us about a half-mile. He had a telephone, which was of great interest to use kids.

Whenever anything really important came up, mother would let us run up to Prairie Pete's and call. I suppose it was prearranged, and houses were never locked in those days, and we could just go in and use the phone. I cannot remember who I ever called, but I can remember Prairie Pete. There were so many Pete Hansens in the area, one had to distinguish between them. I can remember Pigeon Pete, who lived by Pigeon Creek, etc.

Prairie Pete's house left something to be desired in the way of cleanliness, but he lived a comfortable life, doing his own patching and cooking. His patching was a back and forth, back and forth sort of reinforcing method. His cooking was probably mostly of a soup nature, with few teeth left to chew any kind of meat. I remember in the winter when we went to his house, he used corn on the cob to burn in his cook stove. It was easier than chopping wood and burned quite good. In those days to grow corn was not so expensive. We thought it a terrible waste, but who knows, maybe he helped the price of corn for the rest of us.

...

Prairie Pete was also very kind to us children, I remember one Christmas that he gave each of four children a whole box of chocolate covered cherries. Never before had we seen such a great amount of candy. I do not remember how long I was able to save mine. I had such a sweet tooth and seldom was it satisfied, so I can imagine it did not last long.

Prairie Pete had a Model T Ford, which was very good navigating the mud roads. I can still hear the putt-putt of the car as it chugged along. One would think that it was going to die at any moment, but I'm sure the Ford lasted longer than Pete did.

End of Chapter 4 - *Hans Peter "Pete" Hansen*
of the *Hansen* volume of *Robert Christiansen's Family History*.