

Hans Peter Iverson

MORE THAN STONE AND MORTAR



Family History StoryBooks

Hans Peter Iverson was born in 1835 in a small village in Denmark. His parents were hardworking farmers, and Hans spent his childhood helping them grow food for the family. He loved playing in the fields and caring for animals.

As a teenager, Hans became an apprentice to a stone mason. The man he worked for was harsh and firm, but Hans did his best to be obedient and master the craft. He learned how to shape and fit stones so they could be used to build buildings. This skill would be important through his whole life.







In March of 1854, something exciting happened. Latter-day Saint missionaries arrived in town, and Hans listened to their message with his family. The message about Jesus Christ and the restoration of the true gospel touched his heart, and he knew it was true. Hans, along with most of his family, was baptized. He was 19 years old.

His parents decided to sell their farm, leave Denmark, and move to Utah to be with other Church members. Hans chose to stay behind for a few years and serve as a missionary. He wanted to share what he believed with his people.



Hans and his companion traveled far and wide as missionaries, just like the Disciples of Christ in ancient times. They had little money, relying on the kindness of those they met for food, shelter, and clothing. Hans loved being a missionary.

He enjoyed sharing stories from the Bible and the Book of Mormon and helping people to come closer to Christ. He spread the news that God had again called a prophet on the earth. Over the course of four and a half years, he taught many people and helped them get baptized







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While preaching in a town in Denmark, Hans and his companion faced a difficult trial. They were arrested for talking about the Book of Mormon and put in prison.

Even while locked up, Hans didn't lose hope. He remembered stories of missionaries and believers in the scriptures who also suffered persecution and imprisonment. He drew strength from their examples.

Instead of sitting back and just waiting for his freedom, Hans used his time in prison wisely. He studied English, knowing that this new language would help him when he eventually traveled to America to join his family and the rest of the Saints.



After finally being released, Hans and his companion continued preaching. They were arrested again and spent more time in jail. When he got out, he decided it was time to follow his family to America. Hans joined a group of Latter-day Saint converts (including 30 people he had baptized) who were destined for Utah.

Leaving Denmark wasn't easy for Hans. He had to sneak on board the ship because he wasn't allowed to leave the country. It was a daring and risky escape to freedom and a new life. As the ship raised its sails, Hans finally had the chance to begin thinking about his future.







The journey across the ocean was long -- it took seven weeks! The saints passed the time by discussing what life would be like in Utah. They sang hymns and enjoyed socializing. Many of them would settle in the same towns and raise their children together.

Something wonderful happened on the ship. Hans married Annie D. Nissen, a woman he had taught and baptized as a missionary. They had a simple wedding on the ship, surrounded by the vast sea and their fellow travelers. Their love story began on the waves of the ocean.



When Hans and Annie arrived in America, their journey had just begun. They didn't have money to take the train, so they crossed the vast plains in a cart pulled by a great white ox they named Columbus. It was a long and difficult journey, but they were happy to do it together.

They finally reached Mt. Pleasant, Utah, where the rest of the Iversons had settled. There, they built a small, cozy cabin. Soon their family grew with the arrival of a baby daughter, whom they named Anna Christina. They were happy in their new home, surrounded by beautiful mountains and clear skies.







Brigham Young had a special task for the Iversons. They were asked to move to Southern Utah to help settle the land and grow cotton. They packed up their meager possessions into a wagon and again led their ox Columbus into an unknown future.

The Iversons, along with several other Danish families, chose to live on the foothills of Pine Mountain because St. George was just too hot for them. This settlement came to be known as the Danish Ranch. It was a new beginning in a new place, with new challenges and opportunities. They built homes, redirected streams, and started growing food.



In Southern Utah, Hans used his stone mason skills to build homes for himself and his family and neighbors. He worked on the cotton factory in Washington, which was used to spin cotton from the fields into cloth for clothing and blankets. His craftsmanship was admired by everyone in town, and he took great pride in his work.

His greatest construction project was the St. George Temple. He was honored to help build the Temple, and understood that the Temple was more than just stone and mortar- it was a symbol of the saints' devotion to God. He was humbled that a young boy from a small town in Denmark was now building a Temple of the Lord in a far away land.







Hans had a great sense of humor and loved to pull pranks and make people laugh. One time, he and a friend made shoes shaped like enormous footprints. They left tracks all over their town. This puzzled some neighbors, and scared others. They thought that a giant must live in the nearby woods!

The prank went on for several weeks with Hans and his friend leaving footprints in places where they would be found. When the townspeople were so scared of the giant that they set up guards around the city, Hans finally told them what they had been doing.



In 1874, Hans felt a strong prompting that he needed to return to Scandinavia as a missionary. A few months later he received a letter from Brigham Young who asked Hans to go back to Denmark. It was a difficult decision because he had to say goodbye to his six children and pregnant wife, but he knew he was needed to share the Gospel again.

With a heavy heart, Hans left his family, trusting that he was fulfilling a special purpose for the Lord. He travelled by train across the United States this time and then by boat all the way back to Denmark where he'd left many years earlier.







During his mission in Scandinavia, Hans and his companion experienced many miracles. In one instance, they met a lame woman who had been using crutches for three years. They gave her a Priesthood blessing, and she was immediately healed.

This miracle amazed many people who knew her, and they joined the Church. Hans baptized 78 people during this two and a half year mission. His faith and dedication were an inspiration to many.



After returning home, Hans had a beautiful dream. He saw a clear stream and fields of grain, so vivid and real that he knew he needed to find the place when he awoke. After months of searching and exploring the nearby area, he caught sight of the scene from his dream.

This dream came to life when he and his family settled in Littlefield, Arizona. In this new home, Hans developed his love for poetry. He wrote verses about the desert's beauty, expressing his deep feelings for this special place.



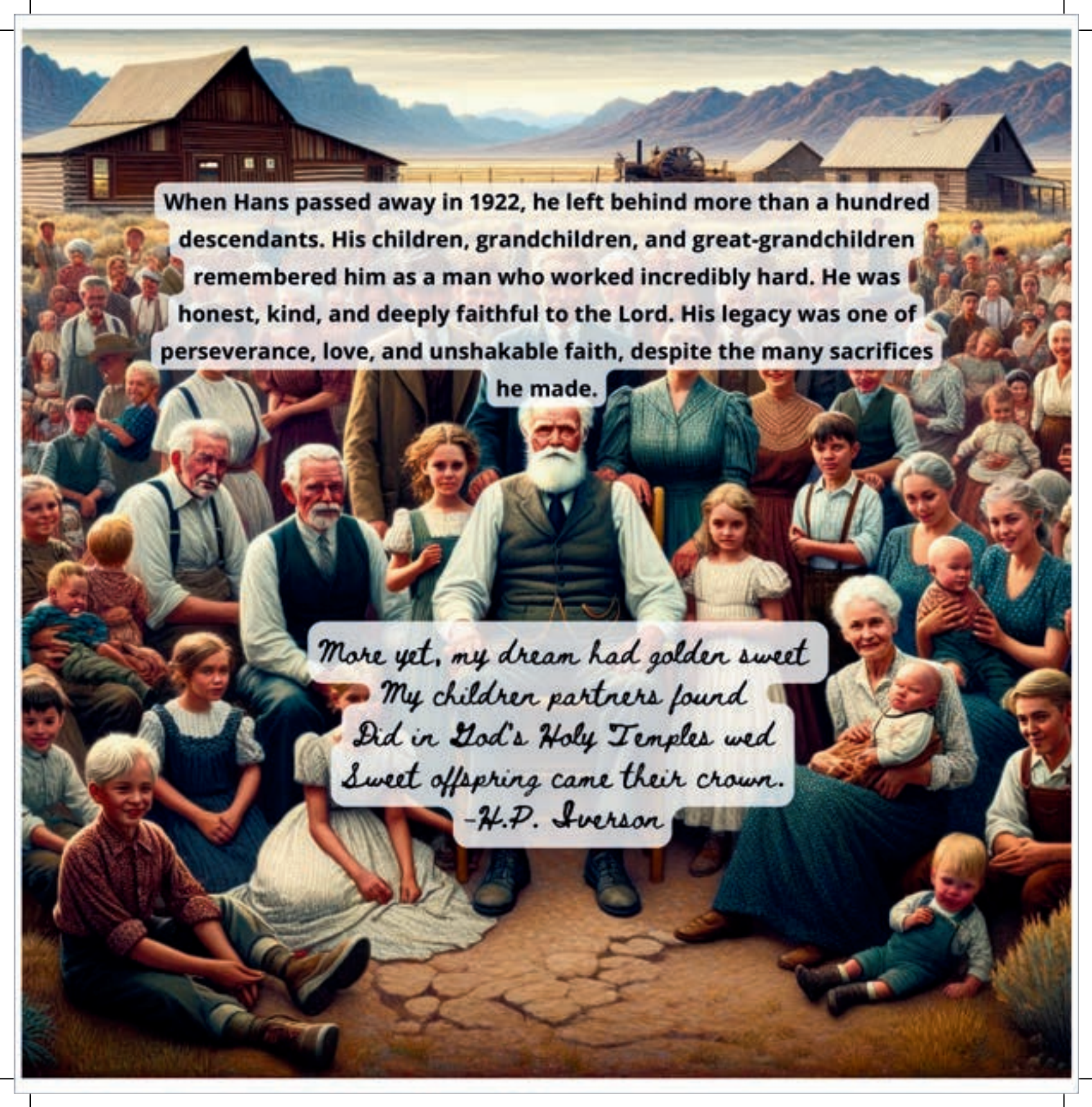




The home in Littlefield was on the bank of the Virgin River. In 1910 a flash flood came through, destroying his house and much of his farm equipment. It was a difficult time for the family, but Hans's spirit remained strong. He worked hard to rebuild what he had lost.

The river wasn't always a problem though. It was also a source of excitement, as many travelers, including many Native Americans, traveled through on canoes. Hans had a reputation for being kind to travelers, and set up a campground near the river where they could stay the night and share a meal at his table. Some travelers who had stayed on his land before the flood donated money to help with repairs.



A large, multi-generational family gathering in a rural setting. In the center, an elderly man with a long white beard and a dark vest sits prominently. He is surrounded by his children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren of various ages, from infants to young adults. The background features a wooden barn, a tractor, and rolling hills under a soft sky. The overall atmosphere is one of a close-knit community.

When Hans passed away in 1922, he left behind more than a hundred descendants. His children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren remembered him as a man who worked incredibly hard. He was honest, kind, and deeply faithful to the Lord. His legacy was one of perseverance, love, and unshakable faith, despite the many sacrifices he made.

*More yet, my dream had golden sweet
My children partners found
Did in God's Holy Temples wed
Sweet offspring came their crown.
-H.P. Iverson*

Hans Peter Iverson

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Hans Peter Jackson



Hans as a Young Man



Photo Colorized



The Iversons



Hans' Family in Washington, Utah



Remains of the Home in Littlefield, Arizona



Photo Colorized



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