

Evidently, the death of Jasper Petersen in July, 1887, affected Jens and made him think about what would happen if he died while on his mission. The result was that he made a will in August, 1887, while in Odense, Denmark. The original will was probably written in Danish and is not available at the time of publication (June, 2005); however, the translation is given here. It is interesting to note that he did not feel it necessary to give specific details as to who received what, but gave guidelines and trusted his family to follow those guidelines.

WILL & TESTAMENT OF JENS HANSEN

Spanish Fork, Utah
Odense, Denmark - 23 August 1887

To Whom it may concern, greeting:

I, Jens Hansen of Spanish Fork, Utah of, Utah Territory on this twenty-third day of August in the year of our Lord, One Thousand Eight Hundred and Eighty Seven have solemnly, thoughtfully and on my own free will and accord as witness before God, angels and men that this is my last will and testament and further witness that all testaments, wills, documents baring upon the same are null and void. That all others of whatever form they may appear written verbal or otherwise up to the day and date of this my last will and testament are void and illegal, so help me God.

My instructions for the division of all property, real, personal or otherwise shall be disposed according to the following:

My oldest son living shall have the right to call the family together, as far as it can be done, and they shall there agree upon five men to divide the property real or personal according to instructions.

First - Every honest debt shall be paid.

Second – The boys laboring on the farm shall receive their compensation and pay for labor in this property.

Third – That each woman sealed to me shall have twice as much as each child. And here the five judges shall take in consideration.

1. Some of the children may be small.
2. They are to be raised.
3. Those already on their own responsibility
4. Those able to earn their livelihood
5. That those already raised must get minus the amount necessary to bring all the children to that stage.

Fourth – That the judges use their discretion and divide the property and give to each woman and child their respective legacy. And that the mother shall be made responsible for the child's part and raising. This making it so that each one can receive their legacy when on their responsibility.

I would and do desire that as we have lived together in unison and labored for one common purpose, you should continue and as many of you can do so, thereby receiving the blessings thereof.

Some of you have ever been faithful and diligent and should have had more than others, but God will still prosper you and He will be the divider in the next life.

In witness here unto I here signed my name in the presence of these witnesses here unto attached.

Witnesses

P H Larsen – Woodland Summit
Simon P. Eggertsen – Provo, Utah
G.O. Eggertsen – Provo, Utah

Jens Hansen
Done in Odense, Denmark 23rd Aug. 1887

The following are the notes of the meetings held by Jens' family to read the will and discuss how best to carry out Jens' wishes.

July 26 1897 Spanish Fork, Utah

A record of a meeting held on the above named date by the members of Jens Hansen's family which meeting was held at Spanish Fork for the purpose of devising some means by which the property of Jens Hansen may be cared for. Meeting was called to order by Joseph Hansen. Prayer by Abraham.

The will of Jens Hansen was read by Elias. Joseph spoke of the appropriateness of the will and gave an account of the development of the family from his early remembrance. He also spoke of his desire to follow the will as near as possible and to use economy in the dividing of the property by not allowing it to go into the hands of lawyers. In order that it should not go to people outside of the family he suggested that the family choose five or seven members of the family to dispense of the property. In concluding, Joseph said that he thought seven men should be appointed as administrators instead of five, so that they could do business though some of the members be absent.

Peter spoke of his desire to appoint members of the family as administrators and suggested that one of each of the five or seven families as the case may be should be chosen as a representative of that family so that they may do the business as it is difficult to get the family together.

Abraham spoke of his desire to follow the will except that if any deviation should be made it should be in regard to the number of administrators and that one of each of the different families should be chosen as representatives of that family. He also spoke of the necessity of work in unison by being honest and humble and having all business done by the family except such business as could not be legally done by them.

On motion made by Ephraim, the Will was again read. Joseph made a motion that we follow the Will as near as possible using it for a foundation, which motion was unanimously carried.

Joseph said that he preferred having seven administrators, but if anyone desired members out of the family it should be stated today and that he thought it right that those chosen should receive a compensation for their labor.

Karen said that she thought the plan of the boys was a good one, and that she was willing to uphold the course which they would take.

Mary said she desired to have the directors chosen from the family and she thought they would do just.

Trena said that the members of the family were her choice.

Maren said that she desired to have the property divided in peace.

Mary H said she would be satisfied with the work done by the members chosen by the family and that she desired to follow the will.

Stena said that she was willing to uphold those who were appointed as directors.

Ephraim made a motion that an amendment be made to the following of the Will and that seven men instead of five be appointed as administrators, which amendment was carried.

Joseph spoke of the necessity of providing for Uncle and his desire to have all the family express their feelings and that he desired to have all business done legally to prevent any disturbance. He also thought the

directors or administrators should have a great amount of scope and authority.

Abraham made a motion that Joseph be appointed a member of the committee of directors which motion was unanimously carried.

Ephraim made a motion that Peter be appointed a member of the committee of directors, which motion was carried.

Joseph made a motion that Jacob be appointed a member of the committee of directors which motion was carried.

John made a motion that Ephraim be appointed a member of the committee of directors which motion carried.

Jacob made a motion that Abraham be appointed a member of the committee of directors which motion was carried.

Abraham made a motion that John be appointed a member of the committee of directors, which motion was carried.

Abraham made a motion that Alma be appointed a member of the committee of directions which motion carried.

Benjamin made a motion that Elias be appointed Secretary of the committee of directors, which motion was carried.

Joseph then spoke of his desire to have the family uphold this committee and to sympathize with them and not try to tear down the work which they may have done. He also spoke of the complexity of the work as the Life Leases which had been granted the women would make it an almost impossibility to divide any property while such leases were held.

Karen said that if it were necessary to give up the Life Leases which she held that she was willing to do so.

Mary S. said she was willing to give up her lease, but that she desired to receive pay for the improvements which she had placed there.

Peter said that he thought it was not necessary to rush through with this dividing as it could not be lawfully complete for at least one year.

Maren said she was willing to give up her lease and that she was satisfied with the committee.

Mary H. said she was willing to give up her Life Lease if necessary.

Joseph said that he thought the women could be provided for by the children or who they desired to have and could get, and he thought a monument should be procured for the lot at the graveyard.

Abraham expressed his desire to have the graveyard fixed up.

Benjamin said that he was highly in favor of having the graveyard decorated with a monument.

Meeting adjourned until 2:30. Prayer by Joseph.

Afternoon Meeting: Called to order by Joseph. Prayer by Peter.

Joseph spoke of the monument and thought it proper to have an agreement as to the appropriating of money for it.

Abraham made a motion that three hundred dollars be appropriated from the estate to fix up the graveyard with a monument, headstones, fences or other decorations which motion was carried.

Joseph then called up the question of allowing a recompensation for those who do work as a committee for time put in for the firm.

Karen made a motion that----- (Page missing)

Abraham said that he thought George Peter should receive at least as much property as any one of the women.

Karen said that she did not know whether or not she could take care of him because he may not remain as he is.

Jacob and Joseph expressed themselves in being of the opinion that George Peter should receive as much property as any one of the women. Joseph made the motion that George Peter receive as much property from the estate of Jens Hansen as any of the women, which motion was unanimously carried.

Ephraim then said that he thought Sarah and Peter should each have a cow inasmuch as they had not had any. Peter said that he was not desirous of having any cow.

Joseph said that he thought father's account should be closed at the store and that the women who had not received their shares at the store should receive them. Also that one of the members of the committee of Administrators should be appointed as lawful administrator by petitioning the court and suggested that Peter should be chosen, but that Peter should be under the direction of the committee.

Peter expressed his desire of having Abraham as lawful administrator if such were possible.

Abraham thought Peter was more capable of performing the task and wished to see him appointed.

Joseph made a motion that Peter be appointed administrator of the estate of Jens Hansen by petitioning the court and that becoming the lawful administrator, and he was appointed.

Ephraim made a motion that Sarah Swenson be given a cow from the estate, which motion was carried.

Peter said that he thought Joseph should receive credit upon land bought from Jens Hansen for his home.

Ephraim said that he thought Joseph should receive more than his for his trouble.

Peter made a motion that Joseph be allowed fifty dollars to apply on his land for his trips up here, which motion carried.

Joseph expressed his thanks for the liberality of the family. The minutes were then read. Abraham offered a correction regarding the shares being given to women which was accepted.

Joseph made a motion that minutes be accepted as criticized and that we abide by them, which motion was carried. Meeting then adjourned.

Prayer by Jacob Hansen.