

## **PETER CHRISTIAN WANGSGAARD**

### **Biography**

Peter Christian Wangsgaard was born January 21, 1847, in Smidsted, Tedista County, Denmark. He was the eldest son of Kirstine Skriver and Christian Christensen Wangsgaard.

He received a common education, but it was necessary for him to leave school at the age of 14 to assist his parents on the farm. He later learned the brass business and worked in a foundry for three years.

In the year 1866, at the age of nineteen, he together with his parents were converted to the Mormon faith and on May 9th of that year married Karen Jensen whom he met while securing family records from the Luthern Church at Barslev. Karen was a distant relative of Peter's. It has been reported that she was a second cousin, however, this statement cannot be verified. Karen and Peter fell in love, but Peter hesitated about asking Karen to marry him because her people were wealthy. Consequently, she was not accustomed to the hardships which Peter knew were ahead of him in this new land of America. However they were married without the consent of Karen's parents and their honeymoon was spent on the boat coming to New York.

On May 13, Peter and Karen, accompanied by Peter's father, mother and seven of his brothers and sisters, departed on a first class ship to America via Liverpool. However, after arriving at Liverpool, through some unscrupulous dealings by parties unknown they were deprived of their first class accommodation, and it was necessary for them to take passage on the Kennilworth a common sail boat. The voyage from Liverpool to New York required eight weeks and five days making their arrival in America July 17, 1866. The trip from New York to Council Bluffs, Iowa, was made by rail where they arrived July 29th, and immediately began preparations for their trek across the plains under the supervision of Peter Nebeker who was in charge of a company of about four hundred converts. In order to reach Omaha on the far side of the Missouri River it was necessary for the party to be ferried across on flat boats. The trek from Omaha to Salt Lake City, Peter walked all the way pushing a hand cart.

On September 29th they arrived in Salt Lake City but not wishing to remain there they continued on their journey to Huntsville, arriving six months after their departure from Denmark.

Soon after their arrival they constructed a dug-out near Wheeler Canyon consisting of one room which was a very common means of housing at that time. Peter secured work at the Wheeler Saw Mill which enable him to obtain the necessities during that winter. Then, in the spring he and Karen moved to Huntsville and lived in another one room dug-out. During their early residence in Huntsville he secured only temporary work, working in saw mills and on farms.

On August 9, 1867, Peter Junior was born, and shortly after Peter and Karen purchased a lot whereon they erected a one room log cabin 11 1/2 x 13 1/2 feet. It was here that John was born on February 15, 1869.

On March 20 1867, Karen gave birth to a third child a little girl who was named Karen. A week following her birth, Karen passed away leaving Peter with three children to care for. Kirstine, Peter's mother, took the baby into her home to raise but three months later the infant, Karen, passed away.

Ingeborg Nielson, the eldest daughter of Jacob Neilson and Rasmine Sorenson Nielson after conversion to the Latter-Day Saint Church secured permission of her parents to come to America, and in company with the Christian Sorensens departed for America arriving in Huntsville July 19, 1872. Due to the fact that Mrs. Christian Sorenson's mother and sister had located in Huntsville previous to their arrival they also decided to locate there. In as much as Ingeborg Nielson was unable to finance her trip to this country it was agreed that the Sorensens would stand her passage but after arriving in this country and securing employment she was to repay the Sorensens for their expense involved which amounted to ninety dollars.

Soon after her arrival she received several offers of marriage as a plural wife which she rejected but at this time she became acquainted with a young girl who had assisted Peter at various times in caring for his children and through this acquaintance was introduced to Peter.

Ingeborg became very lonesome in her newly adopted land because her household duties at the Sorensens kept her busy from early morning until late at night, not even allowing time enough to attend church. It was at this time she resolved to leave Huntsville for Salt Lake City where she would seek employment. But Peter proposed marriage to her and she accepted. He also paid the Sorensens ninety dollars for her transportation which he secured from the sale of two oxen.

From the family bible we found the account of this marriage;

“Peter Christian Wangsgard and Ingeborg Nielsen were married September 9, 1872 in Endowment House at Salt Lake City Utah. They left Huntsville with the groom's father and mother (Christen and Kirstine Skriver Wangsgaard) on September 7th with a mule team. On the return trip they purchased their stove and dishes in Ogden before going to their log cabin of one room 11 1/2 x 13 1/2 ft. The bride was the eldest daughter of Jacob and Rasmine Sorenson Nielsen of Aarhus, Denmark, while the groom's former home was at Tisted, Demark.”

To this union were born thirteen children: Jacob, Ingeborg, Anna, George Karen, Christen, Thomas, Minnie, Arthur, Samuel, Bertha, Herman and Walter.

After their second child was born the world seemed to frown upon this little family. Crops failed and poverty played its part.

During this time the Church demanded that all members pay their tithing. Peter Wangsgaard was unable to contribute his portion. He offered his services and the services of his family in building and helping to furnish raw material, but this was not sufficient according to the authorities of the church and as time went on things were said and hard feelings were aroused. Therefore Peter left the Church because he felt that he could not give and then ask for charity. At heart he was a religious man and a respecter of the rights of others.

Peter Wanggaard was honest, industrious, courageous, humorous and conservative.

It has been said that he could cradle more grain and chop more timber than any man in the country.

His courage and determination was illustrated by his coming from the old country to a land that he knew very little about. Another illustration of his courage and determination is when he was working on the railroad at Aspin, he walked home to spend the 4th of July.

He took a prominent part in community work. He assisted in building the Huntsville meeting house, the school house and the road through Ogden Canyon. At the age of forty he was stricken with typhoid fever. This left him somewhat broken in health although he never complained. He was a resident of Huntsville for 46 years after which he moved to Five Points where he lived until the time of his death, July 1, 1916.