

A Compilation of Clues to the Origins of PDH

This is the information I have gathered that contains clues to the origins of Peter David Hansell.

The Holland Connection

Mrs. Anne Hansell Lane Scollay, *Hansell Family* compiled 1895, revised 1901 and 1913, held by the Philadelphia Historical Society:

"Peter David Hansell.....He came from Holland, according to family tradition.....Hannah Hansell Shibe, who lived to be almost a century old, stated that he came from Holland to Philadelphia."

Hannah Hansell Shibe (1800-1899) was a granddaughter of Peter David Hansell.

In March of 2012, Ed Bradford discovered someone on the internet who stated that Peter David Hansell was born in Born, Limburg, Netherlands. But the fellow got it from somebody else on the internet and a source is not available for this statement.

An England Connection

The 1908 William Henry Hansell application to the PA Genealogical Society and subsequent applications to the Sons of the American Revolution by his descendants state:

Peter David Hansell was born about 1724 in England, probably Norfolk Co.

There are basic errors in these applications (William Henry Hansell mistakenly claimed PDH as an ancestor), but one supposes this statement wasn't plucked entirely out of thin air.

The Neutral Connection

Howard Barclay French in his *Genealogy of the Descendants of Thomas French* (1913) reports:

"Peter David and Ann Dorethea (Hencht) Hansell came to Philadelphia about 1754 and settled in Kingsessing township."

Mr. French refers to PDH as the "pioneer Hansell."

Internet Sources

I think all information I have seen posted on the internet about the origin of PDH is derivative of the above sources.

England Connection via Descendants of the William Hansell and Sarah Morris Branch

A descendant of the William Hansell/Thomas Hansell/James Stiner Hansell branch of the family (Betty Bright) let me search through her cardboard box of family memorabilia and out came a tattered piece of paper with a bit of family history that included the following. This was written probably between 1923 and 1945 by Elizabeth Engle Hansell, wife of Albert Hansell, Jr.

"Three brothers of Hansells came over from England (they were weavers in England) one went to Canada and two came to U.S. before Wm Penn. Settled and landed below Philadelphia."

Biographical Review: Containing Life Sketches of Leading Citizens of Camden & Burlington Counties, NJ, 1897 includes the following:

Albert Hansell, a well-known farmer and fruit-grower of Willingboro, Burlington County, NJ and an ex-Representative of the district, was born in Philadelphia, PA April 17, 1846, his parents being James S. and Hannah (Heaton) Hansell. On both his paternal and maternal sides he represents old families of this part of our country. His grandfather Hansell and family settled in Darby, Pa., where he for many years carried on general farming.

In the lapse of time he and his son, James S., the father, removed to Philadelphia...

And:

Richard H. Hansell...born July 11, 1852, son of James S. and Hannah (Heaton) Hansell...suffice to state here that he is a representative of the pioneer settlers of this part of the United States, being on the paternal side a descendant of a eighteenth-century English family of Eastern Pennsylvania, and, on the maternal side, of primitive English colonizers, who, immigrating to the new World at about the middle of the seven-teenth century.....

The above Albert is the same Albert Hansell found in a photograph herein.

There is an inaccuracy in the Albert Hansell sketch. "His grandfather Hansell" would be Thomas Hansell (turner) who always worked and lived in downtown Philadelphia. But it does place the original family in Darby.

The sketch of Richard Hansell reiterates the idea of an English family of the 1700s.

What's In a Surname?

Mrs. Scollay suggests Hennezel, Henzel, and Hansel, with a French connection. Here is a clear history of the Hennezel family's migration from France to England:

<http://familytreemaker.genealogy.com/users/h/e/n/Barry-M-Henzell/FILE/0002page.html>

Mr. Michael W. Hansell, keeper of the Hansell Family of Lythe & Whitby, Yorkshire website, relates his knowledge about Hansells in England.

Email from Michael W. Hansell to Nancy Ettensperger, February 18, 2012

I have done family research for nearly 50 years.

Obviously my main interest was in Hansell & for many years I collected every reference to the name. I had things sent by friends in America who I was doing research for here in England. Most of the items sent to me were of Hansells in America & included Peter David Hansell & Barnett Hansell & descendants. I tried to link it to the numerous Hansell references I had but to no avail.

The only place in England where Peter was a common name in the Hansell (Ansell) family was in Norfolk especially around Norwich. Nearly all early references to Ansell or Hansell in England are in the south east, Kent, Sussex, Suffolk etc which seems to indicate coming in from the continent. I think the origins lie in Alsace & Lombardy moving across to Normandy & then to England. Earliest references in my Hansells are in & around the lower Tees Valley at Ormesby near Middlesbrough c 1300. Ingleby Greenhow Parish Registers have Hansells c 1538 & from then on all the local villages & towns. I believe my family of Loftus & Whitby come from there. From this I believe my Hansells came over with William the Conqueror c 1066 or shortly after. When he divided the lands in England between his nobles, the noble who took over the Tees Valley area would take his supporters to the area to live & work in the area.

A trip to the local library for a search through books about family names reveals a range of origins for Hansel, Hansell and Hanzel: English, German, Czechoslovakian, Jewish, Dutch, and Swedish.

First Names of the Children of Peter David Hansell

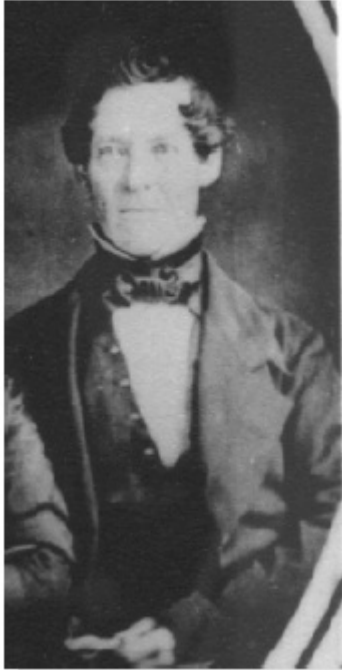
With the exception of Barnett, all of the children's names seem to be as English as you can get: David, William, George, Jacob, John, Mary, Elizabeth, Charles, Peter and Andrew. Barnett is the odd ball.

Information I have about naming patterns for the children of Dutch, English and German families in the 1700s is contradictory and may not be helpful for identifying the parents of PDH and Dorothy. The German naming conventions for the Ettensperger family fit perfectly!

Facial Morphology and Geographic Origin

Can you tell where someone came from by photos? Probably not; but here is a very small photo collection of Peter David Hansell’s descendants.

The following are grandchildren of PDH. Their parents are William Hansell (1757-1800, second child of PDH) and Sarah Morris (English and Welsh).



Left: **James Morris Hansell (1791-1865)** James was the fourth child of William Hansell and Sarah Morris. He was a clockmaker in Philadelphia. Photo courtesy of Stacy B.C. Wood, Jr. of Philadelphia

No photo for **Morris Hansell (1794-1839)**, a hatter by trade in West Virginia and Philadelphia. A physical description of Morris at age 25 is in his pension records. Morris was the sixth child of William Hansell and Sarah Morris.






War of 1812, Claim of Widow for Service Pension:

“She further states that the following is a full description of her said husband at the time of his enlistment, viz: Born Delaware Co. Pa., Hatter, Age 25 years, 5 feet 8½ inches, light complexion, brown hair, blue eyes.”

Next are great grandchildren of PDH. They are the children of William Morris Hansell (1795-1846, fifth child of William Hansell and Sarah Morris) and Eliza Anne Berrett.

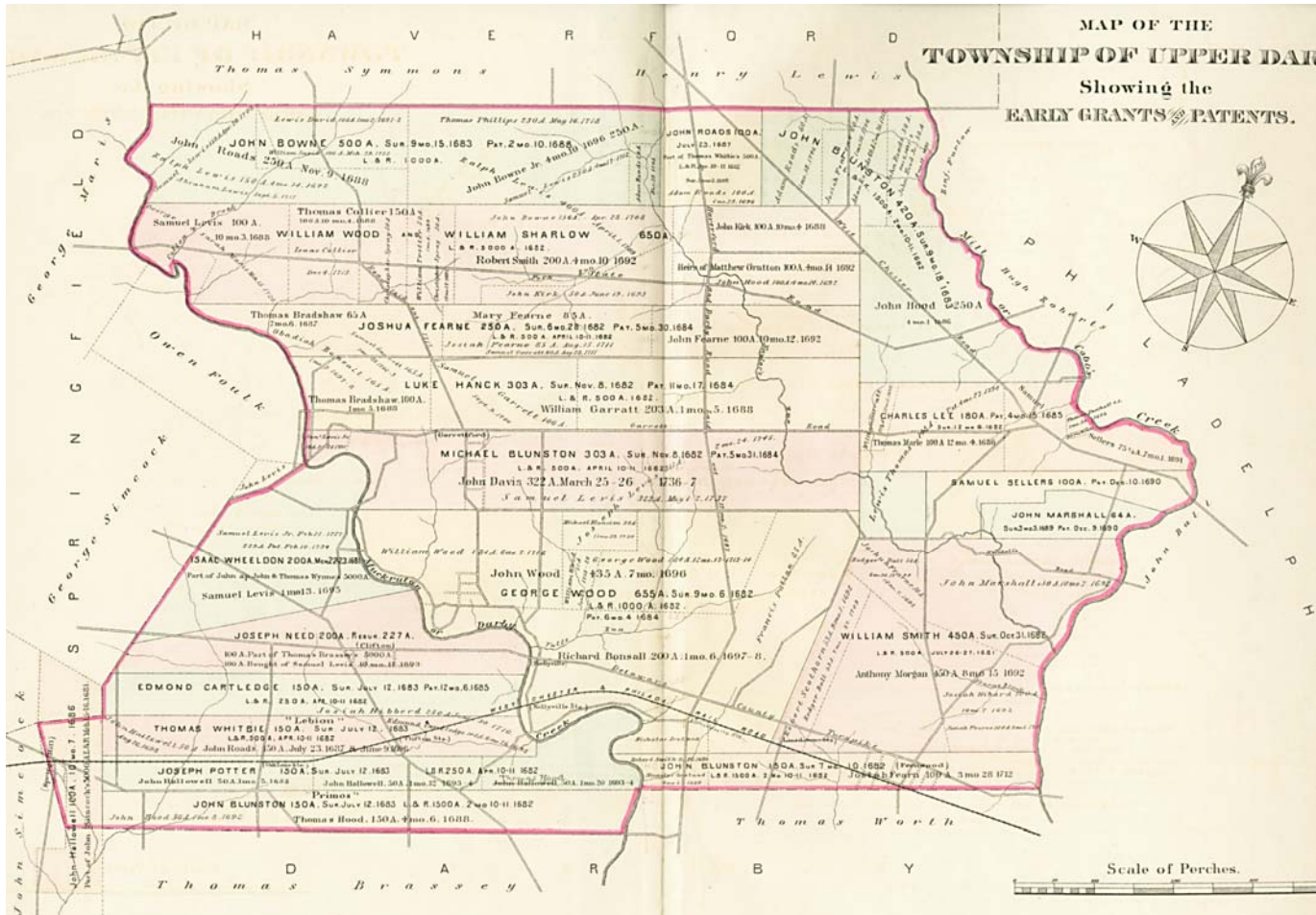
<p>Edmund Morris Hansell 1822-1911</p>	<p>Henry Johnson Hansell 1835-1913 Photos posted at ancestry.com by mairby2 of central Illinois</p>

The following gallery has some of the great great grandchildren of PDH. The first four photos are children of James Stiner Hansell (mother German) and Hannah Heaton (parents English). James Stiner Hansell (1811-1881) is the son of Thomas, who is the son of William, who is the second child of PDH. William Peter Hansell descends from David Hansell, first child of PDH.

		
<p>Left – George Hansell 1840-1910 Right – Milton Hansell 1839-1898 Post civil war – tintype – held by Ruth Mason/Howard Mason.</p>	<p>Ella Hansell (Lippincott) 1844-1914 Pre civil war photo, held by Nancy Ettensperger</p>	<p>Albert Hansell 1846-1924 Held by Betty Bright</p>
		
<p>Wilmot Hansell 1849-1933 Held by Ruth Mason</p>		<p>William Peter Hansell 1854-1927 Held by Creston F. Laager IV</p>

Does Where You Live Indicate Where You Might Have Come From?

PDH is first noted in 1754 in Upper Darby, Pennsylvania (probably Garrettford), which, as far as I can tell, was predominately owned/occupied at that time by the grandchildren of the English Quakers who purchased land directly from William Penn.



Religion

Mrs. Scollay reports the names Henzel and Hensel are found in the St. Michael's and Zion Church records. These German Lutheran churches were located in downtown Philadelphia. (I wonder if anyone has recently researched early Hansell entries in these records).

Mr. French reports the Hansells were "among the earliest pewholders in the...colonial Swedish Lutheran Church, now St. James P.E. Church in Kingsessing."

DNA

Any volunteers?

Summation

I don't think ordering these known bits of information reveals anything new or useful. They just give rise to all sorts of speculation.

END NOTES

I have not provided footnotes. This is not intended for publication. On the other hand, I haven't plucked this information from thin air; there is a source for all this material. My interpretations and attributions may be incorrect. If anyone wants to know where specific information came from, just let me know!

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Hansell Family Book by Ed Bradford – includes Ann Hansell Lane Scollay Compilation and Genealogical Society Application of William H. Hansell
(<http://freepages.genealogy.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~edbradford/ed/books/hansell.pdf>)

Genealogy of the Descendants of Thomas French, by Howard Barclay French, (1913), Vol. II, page 273, Ancestry of Catharine Ann Hansell

Delaware County PA History (<http://delawarecountyhistory.com/>)
Map of Upper Darby

Pennsylvania German Pioneers: A Publication of the Original Lists of Arrivals in the Port of Philadelphia from 1727 to 1808 by Ralph Beaver Strassburger and William John Hinke.

Hansell Family of Lythe & Whitby, Yorkshire – Michael W. Hansell
<http://red123family.tribalpages.com/tribe/browse?userid=red123family&view=9&ver=738>

A few notes about the problematic application of William Henry Hansell

There is a similarity of information presented by Michael W. Hansell of the Hansell Family of Lythe & Whitby:

“the only place in England where Peter was a common name in the Hansell (Ansell) family was in Norfolk especially around Norwich. Nearly all early references to Ansell or Hansell in England are in the south east, Kent, Sussex, Suffolk etc which seems to indicate coming in from the continent”

and the 1908 PA Genealogical Society application of William Henry Hansell stating: *“Peter David Hansell was born about 1724 in England, probably Norfolk Co.”* and then choosing the name Peter (x) Ansel from the signers of the Oath of Abjuration.

An interesting coincidence is that John Bentley Hansell, the 1910 English visitor to Philadelphia reported by Mrs. Scollay and a member of the above Lythe & Whitby Hansell family, was 24 years old in 1910 and studying electrical engineering. William Henry Hansell of the genealogical application was 37 in 1910 and a mechanical engineer living in Philadelphia.