

# **Guide to the John Peter Ingerslew Papers**

1922-1979



## **ARCHIVES & HISTORY**

General Commission on Archives and History

**THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH**



## John Peter Ingerslew Papers

1922-1979

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The purpose of this finding aid is to help you understand the nature of this collection and to assist you in the retrieval of material from this collection. The following pages contain a brief biographical history of the person, or persons, who created or collected these papers, followed by a general description of the collection in the scope and content note. If more detailed information is warranted then series descriptions also appear. The container listing appears last and is the listing of material in each box, or container, of this collection. To request material you need to turn to the container listing section. It is essentially a listing of file folders, or artifact items, in the collection. Each folder, or item, has a call number associated with it. Each folder also lists the inclusive dates of the material in the folder. On the material request form list both the call number and the folder, or item, title. Use a different line for each folder, or item, requested. When your request sheet is complete, or full, bring it to the archivist and the material will be retrieved.

### Biographical Note

John Ingerslew (1887-1985), American Methodist minister and missionary to Denmark, was born on Dec. 31, 1887 in Asaa Jutland, Denmark, to Martinus Pederson and Dorthea Ingerslew Lauritsen, and immigrated to the United States in 1904. While in the United States he attended Garrett Theological Seminary in Evanston, Illinois. He worked as a pastor from 1913 to 1917 at the Norwegian Methodist Episcopal Church, Berlin, New Hampshire, and worked with the Seaman's Mission as pastor of the Scandinavian Methodist Episcopal Church of Baltimore, Maryland from 1917 to 1919. He was married to Anina Fladborg in 1910.

Ingerslew returned to Denmark to be with his dying mother in 1919. On the voyage, he met Bishop William Anderson, who insisted that he move to Copenhagen to assist Anton Bast. Ingerslew returned to the United States for a short time and in November of 1919 moved, with his two children, to Copenhagen. His wife, Anina (Nina) delayed by pregnancy and ill health, joined him nine months later. Ingerslew began work immediately as Bast's secretary and instructor of the Theological School.

Reservations about Bast's behavior had been expressed long before Ingerslew's arrival. Concerns had been raised as early as at the 1912 General Conference about possible financial misconduct. Ingerslew thought the charges might be true, but he wasn't responsible for finances, and therefore didn't occupy himself with the charges.

Ingerslew was responsible for the translation of Anton Bast's book, *The Central Mission Through Ten Years*, for presentation to the General Conference in 1920. Ingerslew was troubled by misrepresentations in the book and the allegations that Bast was selling the book for personal profit. Bast presented the book to the General Conference and returned as Bishop. Ingerslew then succeeded Bast as pastor of the Jerusalem Church in Copenhagen, gaining responsibility for the finances of the Central Mission. In 1921 tensions about the financial management, private enterprises and moral conduct of Bishop Bast arose. Ingerslew became the spokesman of the charges brought forward by the trustees of the Jerusalem church. In Denmark, the judicial process within the Church was blocked and in the United States the authorities did not take seriously the complaints in an early stage. The affair grew to a major crisis. At the end of 1924, when Bast came back from a visit in the United States, he was arrested by the police and released after ten days. The Danish Conference in 1925 expelled Ingerslew and eight trustees who continued to carry charges against Bast before Danish courts. Ingerslew also had legal troubles with the new Trustees of the Jerusalem Church. Some of his charges were received by the court, but the Jerusalem church

appealed to the Supreme Court where it was finally defeated in 1929. Ingerslew went back to the United States. Bishop Bast was tried in the Court of Copenhagen upon several charges for misappropriation of funds in 1926. All but one were dropped. The jury found Bast guilty on the charge of having made profit from the Missions' weekly paper. Bast had maintained that the paper made no profit when it did. Bast was sentenced to three months in prison. Only after the State Court decision was there an investigation by the Church. The church trial was held at The Hague, Holland, in 1927. Bast was permanently suspended from the exercise of the office of bishop.

Ingerslew returned to America in April 1929, but was unable to get an appointment, and was forced to live in tents with three of his four children for four months before being appointed to the church at Grant City, Missouri, where he stayed until 1932. In 1929 he was married to Lissa A. Madsen.

Ingerslew served in Edina, Missouri, from 1932 to 1937; Morberly Missouri, from 1937 to about 1939; Milan, Missouri, from 1939 to 1942; and Trenton, Missouri, from 1943 to 1946. After Trenton, he moved to Hannibal, where he worked with the First Methodist Church. In 1951 he transferred to Washington, Missouri and then Eureka, Missouri, where he stayed until 1960. In May 1960 he retired to Hannibal, Missouri. From 1963 to 1970, he served part-time with the Oakwood Methodist Church in Oakwood, Missouri. He later moved to Nebraska and died in Seward, Nebraska on June 4, 1985 at the age of 97.

## Scope Note

Record types include: oral history, manuscript, deposition, extract, correspondence, article, legal papers, newspaper, publications, post card, and police record. This collection deals with the background and events leading up to the confrontation between Ingerslew and then Bishop Anton Bast. Also included are documents supporting Ingerslew and a transcription of an oral history from the Ingerslew family in 1975. Also contained in this collection are documents used to support John Ingerslew's case for pension and recognition of his years served in Denmark.

## Arrangement

Material has been arranged in the following manner. *Series: Trial. Series: Post-Trial.*

## Access Restrictions

There are no restrictions regarding this collection.

## Restrictions on Use

Detailed use restrictions relating to our collections can be requested from the office of the archivist at the General Commission on Archives and History. Photocopying is handled by the staff and may be limited in certain instances. Before using any material for publication from this collection a formal request for permission to publish is expected and required.

## Preferred Citation

When citing material from this collection please use the following format: Direct reference to the item or its file folder, John Peter Ingerslew Collection, United Methodist Church Archives - GCAH, Madison, New Jersey. Do not make use of the item's call number as that is not a stable descriptor.

## Subject Terms

### *Additional Creators - Personal*

Bast, Anton

Fabricius, Otto.



***Subject Names - Corporate***

Methodist Episcopal Church

***Subject Topics***

Trials (Embezzlement).

***Subject Geographic***

Denmark

***Genre***

Clippings  
Correspondence  
Legal documents  
Manuscripts  
Oral histories  
Publications

***Occupations***

Minister.  
Missionary

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## Container List

### *Trial*

Call Number	Folder Title	Date(s)
1553-6-5:1	Correspondences	1926-1927
1553-6-5:2	Clippings	1926-1929
1553-6-5:3	Statement to Mr. Stamm (Police Assessor)	Undated
1553-6-5:4	Court Documents	1925-1926
1553-6-5:5	Manuscript	1928
1553-6-5:6	Publication	1922
1553-6-5:7	Synopsis of Case 1924-1928	Undated

### *Post-Trial*

Call Number	Folder Title	Date(s)
1553-6-5:8	Correspondences: Pension	1961-1979
1553-6-5:9	Manuscript: 5 Aar Hos Biskop Bast	Undated
1553-6-5:10	Publication: 5 Aar Hos Biskop Bast	1925
1553-6-5:11	Oral History	1975
1553-6-5:12	Chronology	Undated