



# The Story Begins with a Sword

*The Iverson Brothers in Cuba*

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The Falmouth Historical Society

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Falmouth Heritage Museum

Images: unless otherwise attributed, are  
from The Falmouth Historical Society



# Falmouth Memorial Library

## The Rededication

- Ceremony to rededicate the Library following a major renovation was held on 2 Nov 2022
- Former home of Iver Iverson became the Library in June 1951.
- During the ceremony, a sword carried by Iver during his military service in Cuba was displayed
  - Sword was donated to the Library by an Iverson family member



*Images, FHS, FML*

Falmouth Heritage Museum





# The Saber



Model 1860 Light Cavalry Saber

*Type issued to cavalry troopers during the Spanish-American War*

How did the son of a Danish immigrant in Falmouth come to serve in the US Army in Cuba?





# Iver's Father

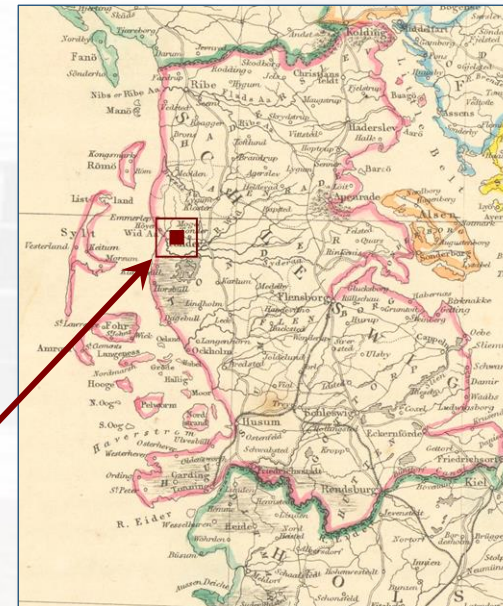
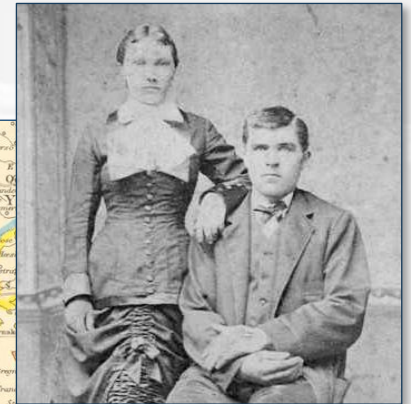
Martin Hansen Iversen (1854-1932)

- Born in a rural hamlet in Schleswig

Danish Duchy of Schleswig

- Home to Danes, Germans, Frisians
- Claimed by German-speaking nations
- Seized by Prussia in 1864
- Ceded by Denmark
- Led to an exodus of Danes
- Martin Iversen emigrated to Maine in 1872

*Martin and Elise  
Hansen*



*Daler Parish, Tønder,  
Duchy of Schleswig, Denmark*

*Daler Church*



*Images: Abe Books, Google*



# Iversen Family

Martin became a farmer in Falmouth

Martin married Elise Boetilda Miller (1861-1941)

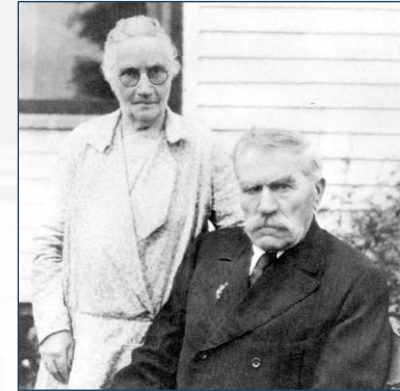
- Emigrated from Denmark in 1874

They had four children

- Iver Hansen Iversen (1880-1948)
- Lawrence Martin Iversen (1882-1959)
- Martin Hansen Iversen (1885-1951)
- Lillian Elizabeth Iversen (1896-1965)



*Iver, Lawrence  
& Martin Jr*



*Martin & Elise*

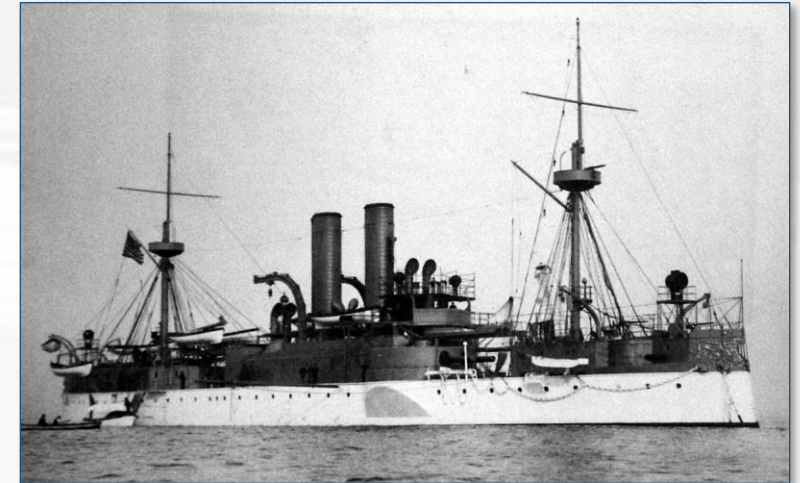




# Spanish-American War

## The “Splendid Little War” of 1898

- Apr 21 US declared war on Spain
- Jun 10 US forces began landing on Cuba
- Aug 7 Most US forces withdrew
  - 24<sup>th</sup> US Inf, 9<sup>th</sup> & 10<sup>th</sup> US Cav remained
- Aug 12 Hostilities ceased
- Dec 10 Treaty of Paris was signed
  - War officially ended on Apr 11 the following year
  - Cuba became a US protectorate



*USS Maine*  
*Battleship exploded and sank in*  
*Havana Harbor on Feb 15, 1898*



# Army of Cuban Occupation

## Army units deployed to Cuba

- 2nd Cav in the west
- 8th Cav in the center
- 7th Cav in the east

8<sup>th</sup> Cav arrived in Nov 1898

- Headquarters was at Puerto Principe (now Camaguey)
- Garrison was established at Nuevitas



Map: Wikipedia





# Iver Enlists in the Army!

## Chronology

- Enlisted at Portland in Nov 1900 for three years
  - Assigned to 8<sup>th</sup> US Cavalry
  - Arrives in Cuba in Dec 1900
- Assigned to L Troop, 8<sup>th</sup> Cav
  - Spent next 15 months patrolling and providing armed escorts in Puerto Principe Province
  - Advanced from raw recruit to corporal
  - Departed Cuba in Feb 1902
- 8<sup>th</sup> Cav returned to Fort Riley, Kansas
  - Garrison duty
  - Honorably discharged in Nov 1903



*Nuevitas, Puerto Principe Province, ca 1900*



*Cavalry Training, Fort Riley, ca 1903*

*Images: Wikipedia, eBay*





# Return to Cuba

## Cuban self-governance established

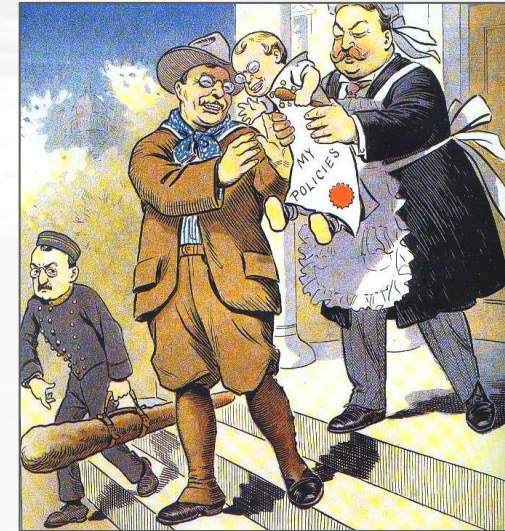
- US forces left Cuba in 1902
- US-Cuba Treaty signed in 1903
- Granted US right to intervene

## Rigged Cuban election in 1905

- Led to revolt in 1906
- Government collapsed

## US invoked 1903 treaty

- Sent Army back to Cuba in 1906
- Took over governance of Cuba



*Political cartoon of Teddy Roosevelt leaving problems in Latin America to incoming President Taft*



# Lawrence Enlists the Army!

## Chronology

- Enlisted at Portland in Apr 1904 for three years
  - Assigned to I Troop, 15<sup>th</sup> US Cavalry
  - Garrison duty at Fort Ethan Allen, Vermont
- 15<sup>th</sup> Cav sent to Cuba in Oct 1906
  - Lawrence promoted to corporal and served as leader of a machine gun section
  - Provided security at fixed locations around Cienfuegos
- Enlistment ends
  - Departed Cuba for Fort Monroe, Virginia, in Mar 1907
  - Honorably discharged in Apr 1907



*Fort Ethan Allen*



*Cienfuegos, Cuba*



*Colt-Browning M1885 Machine Gun*

Images: eBay, Wikipedia, Alamy

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# Veterans Back in Maine

## Iver Hansen Iverson

- Married Laura Jensen in 1905
- Became a carpenter
- Lived on Depot Road
- Died Mar 1948
- Laura died Mar 1950
  - Buried at Pine Grove



*Army of  
Occupation Medal*

## Lawrence Martin Iverson

- Married Wilhemina Wibe (1888-1916) in 1912
  - Lawrence Martin Iverson
  - Minnie Iverson
- Married Alice Lund (1894-1962) in 1920
  - Ruth Iverson
- Became a carpenter
- Lived on Depot Road
- Died 1959
  - Buried at Pine Grove



*Army of  
Pacification Medal*

Images: FHS, Wikipedia







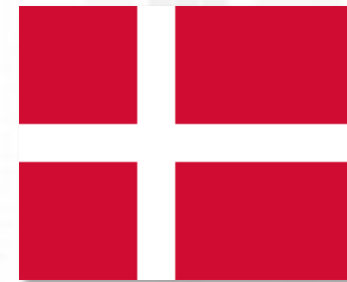
# A Recurring Theme

Falmouth is built on waves of immigration

- Many fleeing oppression and persecution
- Seeking refuge and opportunity
- Military service by immigrant families is common

Iverson Family is another chapter in this story

- Three Iverson brothers and a sister
- Emigrated to Maine soon after Schleswig was invaded by Prussia
- Part of the large influx of Danes who settled and thrived in Falmouth after 1864
  - Lots of Falmouth names ending in “sen” or “son”



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