Danish Emigration to Canada

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Danish Minister for Foreign Affairs, Uffe Ellemann-Jensen.

THE MINISTER FOR
FOREIGN AFFAIRS

April, 1991

Dear Friends,

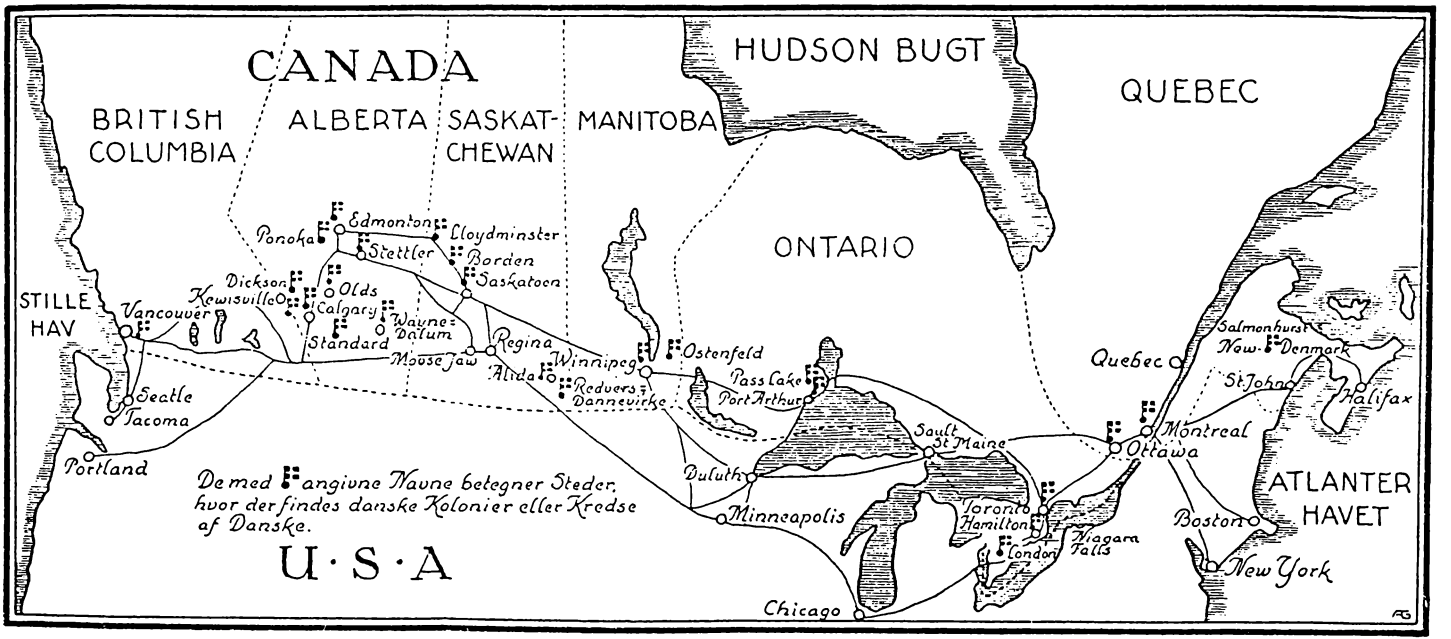
The publication of "Danish Emigration to Canada" provides me with a welcome opportunity to send my warm greetings to Canada.

During the 20th century more Danes have emigrated to Canada than to any other country outside Europe. This emigration and the proximity of Greenland to Canada have led to close ties between our two countries and a rich economic, political and cultural cooperation.

The Danes Worldwide Archives together with the Federation of Danish Associations in Canada present us with an interesting document on the history of Denmark in Canada. The contributions to this book by Canadian and Danish authors on a wide range of topics shed a new light on Danish-Canadian relations and will undoubtedly add to the interest taken in Danish-Canadian history. Furthermore, the book is a timely contribution to the celebration in Copenhagen in June 1991 of the Tenth Anniversary of the founding of the Federation of Danish Associations in Canada.

Finally, I wish to thank the Danes Worldwide Archives for taking the initiative to publish "Danish Emigration to Canada". I also want to thank the private and public foundations which have provided financial support for the book.

Uffe Elleman-Jensen
Minister for Foreign Affairs



Each flag indicates the site of a Danish colony or settlement.

Preface

When it came to the attention of the Danes Worldwide Archives that the Federation of Danish Associations in Canada would celebrate its tenth anniversary in 1991, the idea of publishing a book about Danish emigration to Canada in that same year immediately suggested itself. We promptly contacted a number of authors and researchers on either side of the Atlantic, and their willingness to contribute to such an endeavour made this publication possible. It is our sincere hope that this book will inspire to continuing research in the area of Danish emigration to Canada.

The first Europeans to set foot on Canadian soil were Danish and Norwegian Vikings. Archaeological excavations at L'Anse aux Meadows in northernmost Canada prove that Norsemen settled there long before Columbus discovered North America. Helge Ingstad introduces this volume with an exciting glimpse of the expeditions he and his wife, archaeologist Anne Stine Ingstad, made to the site of the Norse settlement in the 1960s.

Next we move forward in history to make the acquaintance of explorer Jens Munk, sent out by King Christian IV in 1619 to find the Northwest Passage. Two ships set out, but only one returned. Jørn Carlsen describes the dangerous voyage made by Munk and his men. They, too, left their mark on North America, and many years later it proved possible to identify the exact spot where these brave Danes spent the winter of 1619.

Jette Ashlee takes us to arctic Canada and shares her interest in the Danish-born adventurer, Christian Klengenberg Jørgensen, said to have been the first white man to trade with the "Copper Eskimos". Ms Ashlee's warm portrayal of this relatively unknown Danish-Canadian provides insights into life in one of the coldest regions of the world.

With the passage of the *Free Grants Act 1872*, the Canadian government attempted to turn the tide of immigration to the United States towards Canada. One group of some twenty Danes was "lured" into embarking on a long voyage in the hope of finding happiness on foreign shores. Others joined them. Together they founded the first Danish settlement in Canada, New Denmark, in the province of New Brunswick. Palle Bo Bojesen tells the story of their initial difficulties and successes.

Those Danes who settled on the Canadian prairie in the early 1900s lived under conditions comparable to those experienced thirty or forty years earlier by settlers on the prairies of the United States. Only the most robust and perservering took on the hard work required by such an existence and survived its economic challenge and often oppressive loneliness. In describing life on the prairie we have focused on the Dickson colony in the pro-

vince of Alberta. The article about Dickson is the result of the cooperative efforts of Margarethe Nissen, Esther Thesberg and Andy Kjearsgaard who touch on many aspects of life in the colony.

Henrik Bredmose Simonsen gives us an in-depth look at the early Danish churches in Canada. In Canada, as in the United States, there were two Danish churches, the *Danish Church* and the *United Church*. One of the major goals of the former was the preservation of the Danish language among the immigrants as well as the maintenance of close connections with the homeland. The latter church was more involved in missionary work. Regardless of where their sympathies lay, however, Danish immigrants often developed closer ties to their church on foreign soil than they had ever had to the more stiff and formal church in Denmark.

The Danish folk high schools played a significant role in maintaining the language and culture of their homeland among Danes in Canada. Every school has its own story, and in "Danish Folk Schools", Rolf Buschardt Christensen reviews the background and special influence of each. This author has also described the activities of the Federation of Danish Associations in Canada which concludes this volume. The Federation represents the many associations throughout Canada which strive to help maintain family ties and bonds of friendship across the Atlantic.

In the 1920s, Canadian authorities became interested in increasing immigration as a means of alleviating the effects of the depression. This interest coincided with the passing of legislation in the United States limiting the number of immigrants that country would receive, and the Canadian provinces became a popular immigrant destination. The Canadian government was not, however, interested in immigration at any price. They primarily wanted people who could be easily assimilated into a largely Anglo-Saxon society. The procedure, common in Denmark until the 1920s, of providing former convicts with tickets to Canada was far from popular on the Canadian side of the Atlantic! Danish immigration to Canada in the 1920s and how this was viewed in Denmark is described by Poul Erik Olsen.

The Danish press showed great interest in the emigration issue around the turn of the century, and the large Copenhagen newspaper, *Berlingske Tidende*, went so far as to send a special emigration correspondent to Canada. This was none other than the author, Aksel Sandemose. Christopher S. Hale describes Sandmose's visits to Danish settlements in Canada and the close contact with Danish pioneers which inspired his trilogy about the Danes in Canada.

It is often claimed that it was Danes with a special background in farming who chose to emigrate to Canada. Research on Danish emigration to Canada has yet to confirm or deny that claim. In this volume we shall simply

conclude that many Danes found jobs in agriculture in the Canadian prairie provinces. In his article, Erik Helmer Pedersen describes the significant differences between Danish and Canadian farming, and the many problems faced by the Danish farmer as he adapted to new farming techniques.

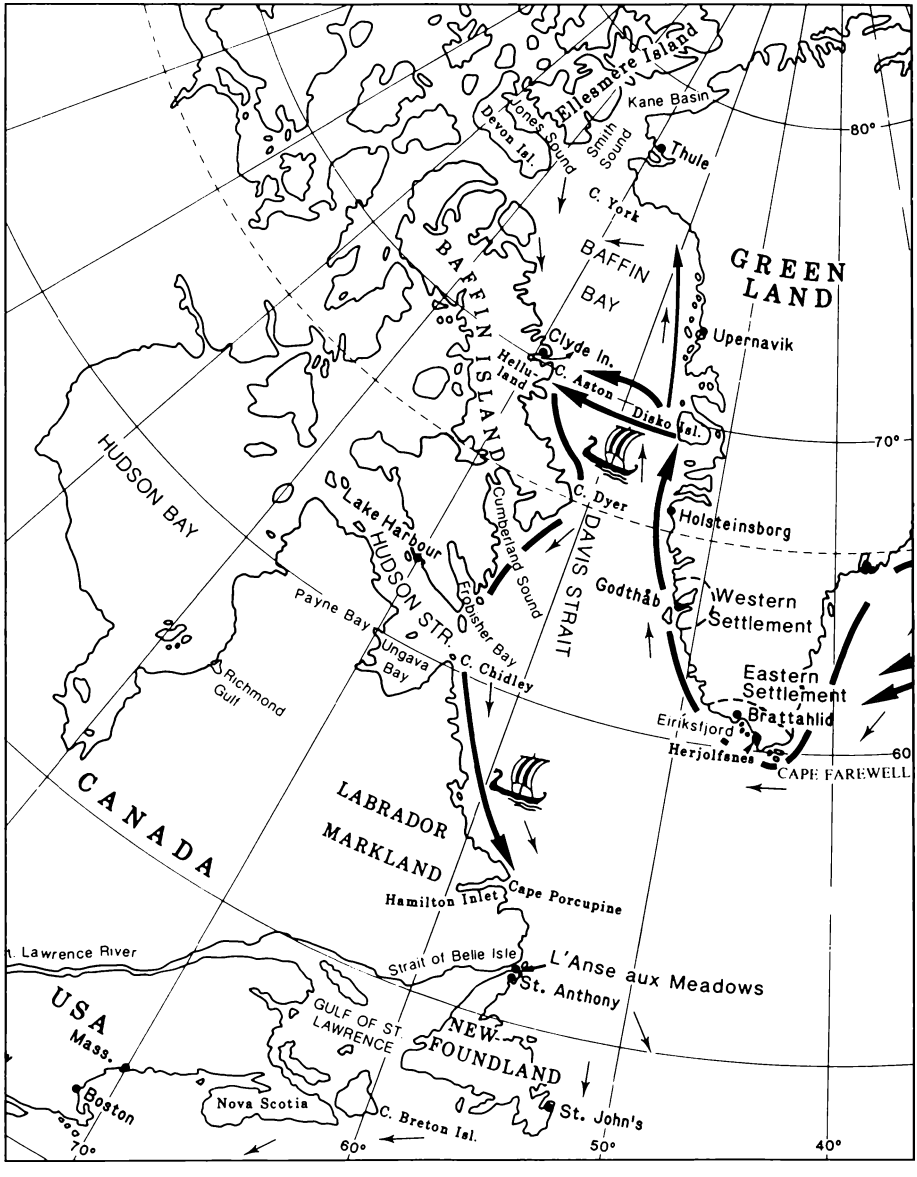
Howard S. Wood has called his contribution to this volume "The Influence of Danish on Canadian English". It can hardly be said to be common knowledge that the Danish language has influenced Canadian English. This influence can, however, be traced to about the year 500 A.D., when Jutes, Saxons and Angles invaded England. They were followed by the Vikings who left remnants of their language in the form of Scandinavian place names. Scandinavian emigration to the United States and Canada brought a third wave of influence to the English spoken in North America. The author provides many interesting examples of how the Scandinavian languages have influenced and enriched Canadian English.

The Danes Worldwide Archives are very grateful for the interest in this publication shown by a number of Danish foundations and institutions. It would have been impossible to complete this project without their generous financial support. We sincerely wish to thank all of those who made this book possible.

Henning Bender Birgit Flemming Larsen

The Norse Discovery of America

by Helge Ingstad



Map of the Vinland route from the Norse settlements in Greenland to North America (L'Anse aux Meadows). © Helge Ingstad.

Eirik Raude [Eric the Red] colonized Greenland in 986 and made North America a neighbour to Norway. Only the Davis Strait separated the two countries, and, at its narrowest, it is no more than approx. 200 nautical miles wide. Norse sailors had no difficulty in crossing it, and these same sailors established a fixed route between Greenland and the west coast of Norway – a distance of about 1500 nautical miles.

These Norsemen of Greenland (called Greenlanders in the Icelandic sagas) travelled far afield on hunting expeditions, and they must have discovered early on that another land mass lay to the west. It would have been strange indeed had their expeditions not shown them the mighty mountains of Baffin Island. If we consider that this society existed for approx. 500 years, then we must assume that *these Greenlanders could scarcely have avoided discovering North America!* It seems fair to make such an assumption, in spite of the fact that there are no written records upon which to base it.

Fortunately, however, we do have written records of various journeys to the new world. On the one hand there are a number of individual, rather brief reports, on the other hand, there are the Icelandic Sagas: the *Greenlanders' Saga* and the *Saga of Eirik Raude*. These sagas, written several hundred years after the events they describe, nonetheless contain many details of the various journeys to the new land west and southwest of Greenland made by Norsemen and women around the year 1000 A.D.

The *Greenlanders' Saga*, which is thought to be the most reliable, relates first of all the story of Bjarne Herjolfsson, who sailed from Iceland to visit his father's farm on Greenland. He sailed into a storm, and his boat was driven to the southwest, where he saw unfamiliar coasts but made no attempt to go ashore. Finally he reached Greenland.

After this came the expedition of Leiv Eiriksson [Leif Ericsson] which was planned as a journey of exploration. He sailed from Greenland with 35 men on board and reached, first of all, a northern land, last seen by Bjarne Herjolfsson, where there were glaciers. He called it Helluland (The land as flat as a 'helle' or slab of rock). He then sailed southward and discovered a land which he called Markland or Skogland [Wood Land]. Finally, he reached a fertile land which he called Vinland [Wineland]. Here he built a 'great house' where he lived for one winter before returning to Greenland.

Later his brother Torvald carried out an expedition. He found Leiv Eiriksson's house in Vinland and set up his camp there. While exploring the land east of his encampment, he engaged in a fight with the natives (the 'wretches') and was killed. He is the first European known to have seen the American natives. After a period of two years, his expedition returned to Greenland.

The first women

Torfinn Karlsevne's expedition was at least as remarkable as Torvald's. He sailed from Greenland with 60 men and a number of women as well as some cattle. (According to the *Saga of Eirik Raude* Torfinn had 3 ships, 160 men, some women and cattle). His plan was to establish a colony in the new land. He, too, set up camp in Leiv Eiriksson's house. He found the land good and fertile, but also fought with the natives. He felt it would never be possible to make peace with them, and after two years his expedition returned to Greenland.

Finally, we are told of the one-year expedition to Vinland made by Frøydis, and of an Icelandic expedition which took place at the same time. On these two ships there was a total of 65 men and a few women. Frøydis was a 'Valkyrie' and saw to it that all the Icelanders were slain during their stay in Vinland.

It is easy enough to point out discrepancies and exaggerations in these sagas. The strange thing is that they contain so many significant factual details, leaving little doubt that these Norsemen did, in fact, sail to North America about one thousand years ago.

A number of things indicate that Norsemen also sailed to the new world at a later date. From the year 1121 A.D. we hear of a Bishop Eirik who set out from Greenland to find Vinland. In 1347 a Norse ship sailed from Markland (probably Labrador) to Iceland and then on to the west coast of Norway (Bergen?).

But it is one thing for historical sources to show that Norsemen sailed to America one thousand years ago and again later, and quite another to answer the burning question: where in North America is the Vinland of the sagas? Where did Leiv Eiriksson build his 'great house'?

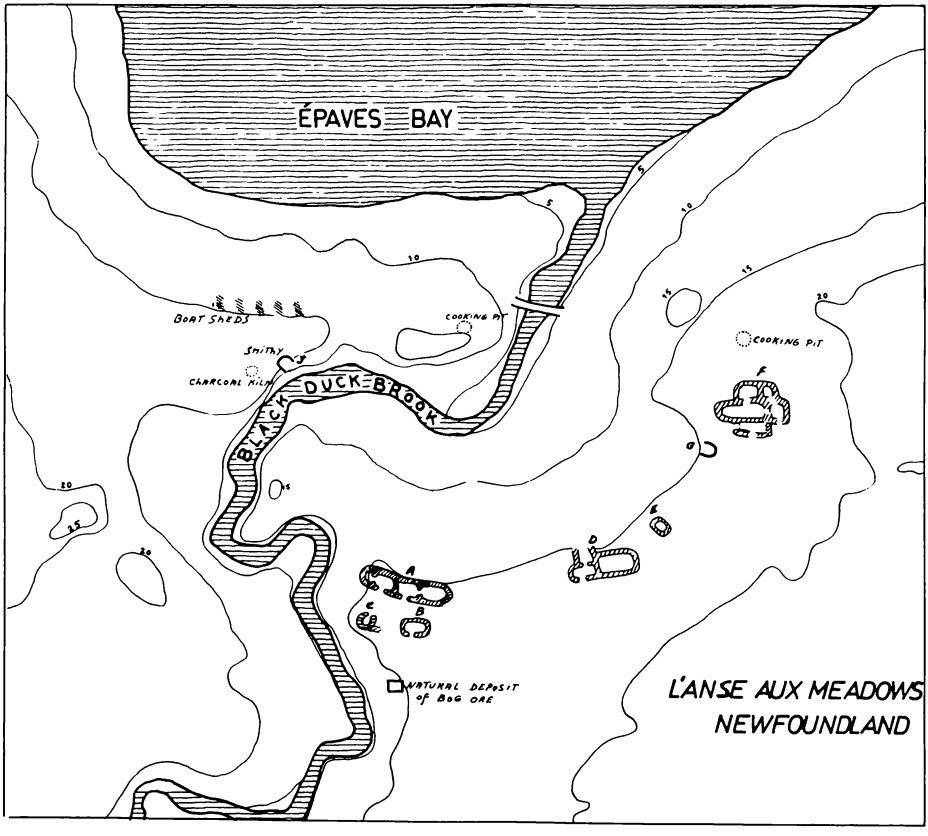
Over the past two hundred years a number of well-known scientists have attempted to answer this question. Several theories have been put forward, and localities from Florida in the south to Hudson Bay in the north have been suggested. But, thus far, it has not been possible to find a single definite trace of Norsemen in North America. Most researchers have fastened upon the fact that the sagas mention grapes, and they have, therefore, felt that Vinland must be found far to the south in Massachusetts, Rhode Island, New York, etc. In short, in an area where wild grapes grow.

After travelling to the old Norse settlements in Greenland together with my wife, Anne Stine, in order to study conditions there, I reached a different conclusion. It is my opinion that Vinland must lie much further north than ordinarily assumed. A number of things suggest this, among them the description of sailing routes in the sagas and two old Icelandic maps. In addition, I felt that the Swedish language expert, Sven Søderberg,

must have been correct when he showed that the prefix 'vin' in Vinland had nothing to do with grapes, but was the old Norse word for fields of grass which is a part of many old Norwegian place names such as Vinås, Bjørgvin, etc. After careful consideration, I reached the conclusion that the Helluland of the saga was, in fact, Baffin Island, that Markland was Labrador and that Vinland was to be found in Newfoundland.

Furthermore, I felt it should be possible to find traces of the Norse settlement by systematically examining the coastline of North America from the air and by sailing the length of it.

In 1960 I carried out an extensive exploration of the coastline, and, finally, luck was with me. On the northernmost point of Newfoundland I discovered a lovely, remote district called L'Anse aux Meadows. Here there was a small fishing village where about 70 people lived in virtual isolation.



Plan of the excavations at L'Anse aux Meadows. A-G: Turf houses along the marine terrace; J: The smithy, with traces of boat-houses in the background. © Helge Ingstad.

The coaster didn't call there, and no roads led to the village (there is a road today).

George Decker, a dynamic man of great good humor welcomed me. When I began to ask my standard questions about ruins, he answered that there were some, and we made a short trek to the west to see them. We came to Épaves Bay and the small stream known as Black Duck Brook which bubbled happily through fields of grass and clumps of willow.

On a marine terrace, now a short distance from the bay, I found them – some slight elevations in the ground. Overgrown now, they were undoubtedly the remains of old foundations. Facing the sea there was a wide expanse of grass, the likes of which I had not previously seen this far north. It was pasture land such as this the Norsemen had sought for their cattle. The sea was to the north, and far away the bluish outline of the coast of Labrador was just visible. The route of the first travellers to Vinland had taken them south along this coast. I had a strong feeling that the Norsemen would have wished to settle right here, at L'Anse aux Meadows. Now if only the excavations could bear this out.

Finding the proof

During the following years (1961-68), I organized eight archaeological expeditions in which scientists from Norway, Iceland, Sweden, Canada and the United States participated. Archaeologist Anne Stine Ingstad was in charge of the excavations throughout this period.

Carrying out the excavations was hard, but exciting, work. There were three possibilities: the foundations could have been made by the natives, Eskimos or Indians, or by fishermen and whalers in the period following the rediscovery of the land by Cabot in 1497, or, finally, by the Norsemen.

As the digging continued, it became clear that we had discovered the remains of a Norse settlement. The foundations of eight buildings were excavated, including a primitive smithy and a small outbuilding which may have been used for taking hot steam baths. Traces of five 'nausts' or boathouses were found standing in a row near Épaves Bay. Two large outdoor cooking pits and a charcoal kiln were also uncovered. The dwellings had been built of turf, as in Iceland, and several were surprisingly large. One was approx. 20 metres long and 16 metres wide and contained six rooms. One of these was a large hall with a long central hearth in the earth floor and benches along the walls. There was also a small stone-lined enclosure where hot coals could be placed and covered with ash in the evening to preserve the fire until morning, and hence save the work of starting it again. There were hearths in all the rooms, as well as many cooking pits containing

One of the largest of the excavated turf houses. This 24 m. long house was divided into four rooms. © Helge Ingstad.

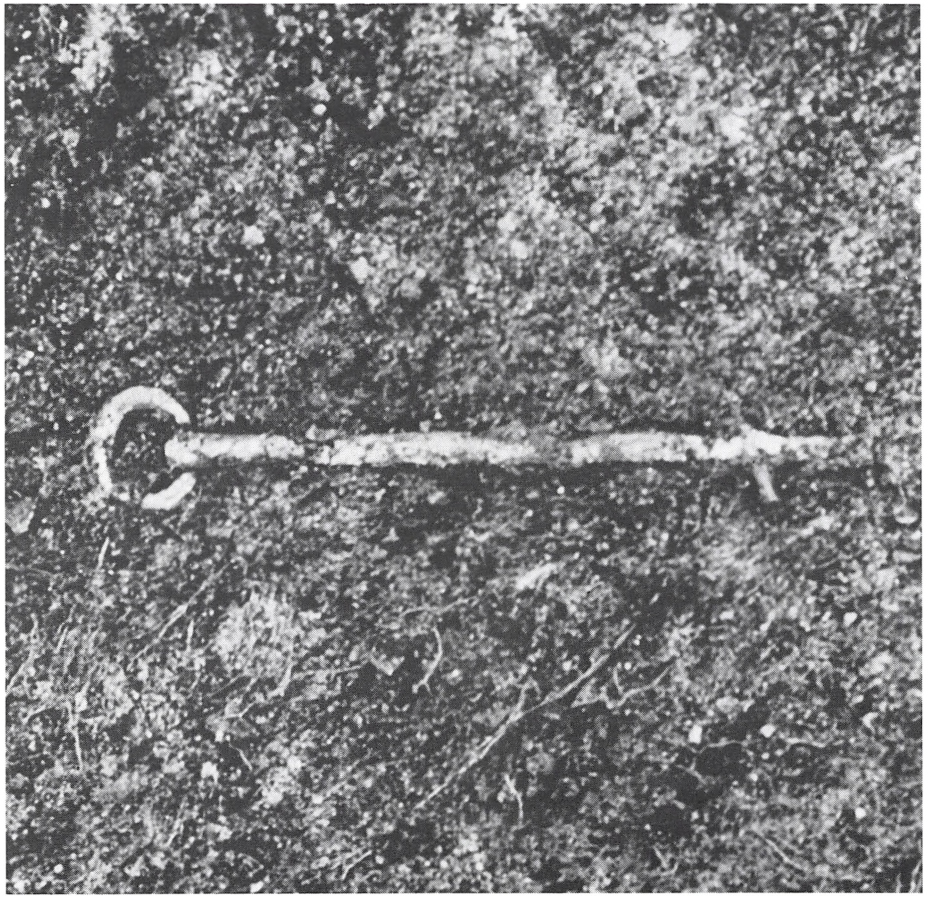
stones made brittle by fire. In one room there was the clear imprint in the earth floor of a bowl or pot which had stood there.

One of the most interesting discoveries was the smithy. It was dug into the bank near Black Duck Brook and measured 3.75 x 2.75 m. In the centre of the structure there was a flat, slightly broken stone pushed firmly into the bank; this had served as the anvil. On the soot-covered earth floor we found several hundred lumps of slag, small fragments of iron and a few lumps of bog iron.

A short distance from the smithy there was quite a large hollow in the edge of the terrace, and when it was excavated, a thick layer of coal was uncovered. Here the charcoal kiln for producing the coal used in the smithy and probably also melting bog ore to make iron had once stood. Upon turning the turf in an area near the foundations, we uncovered generous deposits of bog iron.

Making iron from bog iron was a fine art mastered by the Norsemen, and traces of this type of activity have been found in Norway, Iceland and Greenland.

The conditions of preservation in the shallows and in the acidic soil of the area were very poor, but some important items were found: some very rusty iron rivets, a needle hone, a fragment of bone needle of a Norse type, an oil lamp made of stone of a type well-known in Iceland, a small piece of copper, etc. The most important items included an approx. 10 cm. long ring-headed pin of bronze of a type familiar in the Viking Age, probably used by the men to fasten their capes on the right shoulder so as to leave the right arm free to wield a sword. There was also a small spindle-whorl of soapstone of a specifically Norse type.

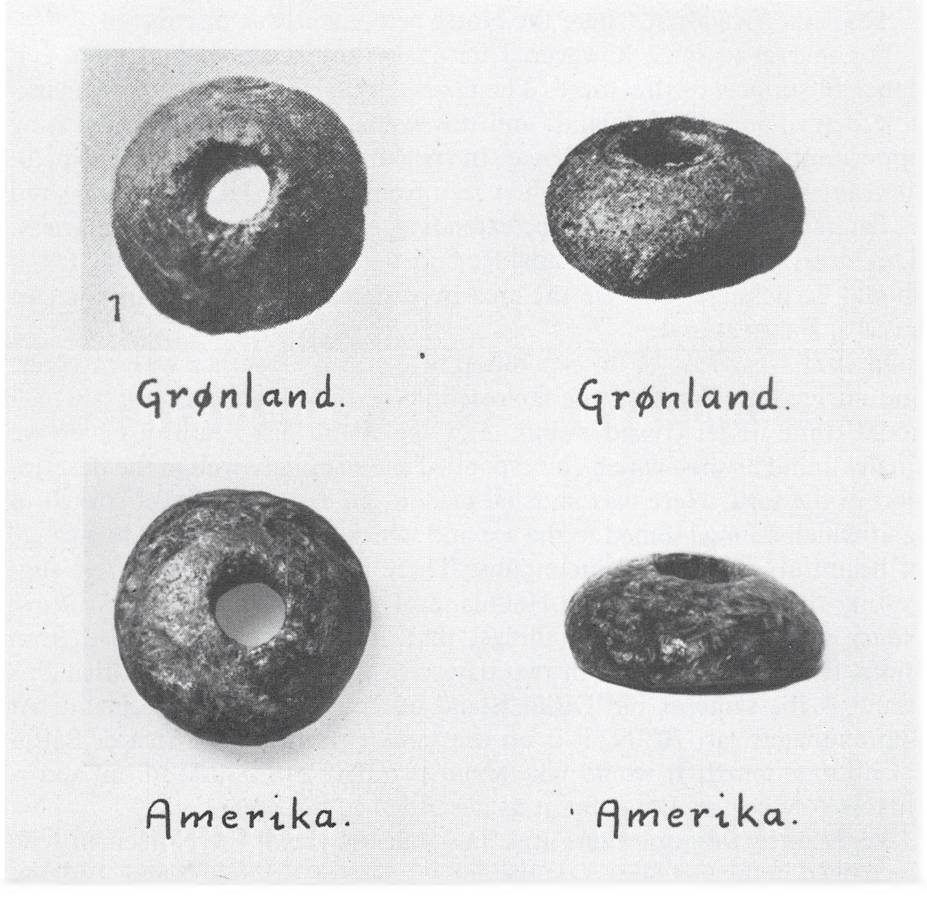


A Viking Age ring-headed bronze pin about 10 cm long. © Helge Ingstad.

The spindle-whorl told us that Norse women had also lived in the turf houses of L'Anse aux Meadows. This corresponds to the sagas, which tell us there were women on the expedition to Vinland made by Torfinn Karlsevnes. The spindle-whorl was found outside a door in the south wall of the largest of the houses. Perhaps a woman had leaned against that sunny wall while spinning her yarn a thousand years ago.

It should be noted that we found no items related to fishing or whaling.

What can we conclude from these excavations? It can hardly be doubted that the houses, the hearths, etc. are of a Norse type. The same is true of many of the items found. An archaeological evaluation of all the material has led to the conclusion that the settlement at L'Anse aux Meadows was Norse, pre-Columbian and probably from between 1000 and 1100 A.D.



Norse-type soap stone spindle whorls. At the top, spindle whorls found in Greenland, at the bottom those found at L'Anse aux Meadows. © Helge Ingstad.

Sixteen radio-carbon analyses of items found in and around the various foundations were carried out, making it possible to date the settlement to around the year 1000 A.D. – the time when the sagas tell us the expeditions to Vinland were taking place.

Tracing the route

I have already briefly mentioned the route to Vinland. My evaluation of the sources indicates that the Vinland explorers sailed from the village of Auster northward along the west coast of Greenland and then crossed the narrowest point of the Davis Strait to reach the east coast of Baffin Island and from there sailed southward along Labrador. That would have placed the northernmost tip of Newfoundland directly off their bows, where they could scarcely have avoided seeing it. It is on this northern tip that we find L'Anse aux Meadows, where the Norse settlement was discovered.

For several reasons, however, I felt it was important to find more evidence in support of this route. The *Greenlanders' Saga* contains a remarkable description of Helluland, and this seemed to provide an interesting opportunity to find such evidence. In speaking of Leiv Eiriksson's expedition, the saga mentions that, when seen from the sea, Helluland appeared as flat as a 'helle', or rock slab, extending inland to many large glaciers. This description seems dependable, and it is so distinctive that I felt it should be possible to locate the area by systematically examining the east coast of Baffin Island.

In 1972 I carried out an expedition to this site. Together with my crew and an Eskimo I studied the far-reaching section of the east coast which could come under consideration. At Cape Aston just south of Clyde we finally found an area which corresponded astonishingly well to the description in the saga. Here was unusual terrain, an enormous, level stretch of land which seemed joined to the sea and which extended inland to a range of beautiful, glacier-clad mountains. There are other circumstances suggesting that this must be the Helluland of the saga. In the *Saga of Eirik Raude* it says, among other things, that Torfinn Karlsevne sailed from Bjørn Island to Helluland in two days. An old source indicates that this island is the same as big Disko Island off the west coast Greenland. At approximately lat. 70° N, it is on the same latitude as the area of Baffin Island mentioned. It would take about two days (48 hours) to sail across this narrow part of Davis Strait as described in the saga.

Many intriguing questions arise in connection with the Norsemen who once lived in the turf houses on the northern tip of Newfoundland. Judging from the large size of these houses there must have been many people, perhaps as many as one hundred. We cannot know, of course, if all the

houses were occupied at the same time. Did all of these Norsemen return to Greenland, or were there some who continued to live in North America? We don't know, but if any did decide to remain in the new land, the natives, the Indians and Eskimos, must have been a problem. Columbus had the advantage of gunpowder; the Norsemen, however, had to fight their battles with almost the same weapons as those used by the natives, who outnumbered them. The Norse discovery of America and attempts to colonize the land probably took place several hundred years too soon.

The people who had once populated it were constantly in my thoughts during my years of work at the old settlement. They must have been knowledgeable people of strong character, these Norsemen and the women who, after crossing the great sea in open ships with no compass, settled on a foreign shore. In addition to the spirit of adventure, they must above all have been filled with a burning desire to find a new, good land where their families could settle and live.

And then one day these young sailors stood beneath their square sails and caught the first glimpse of an unfamiliar coastline looming in the distance – a new world.

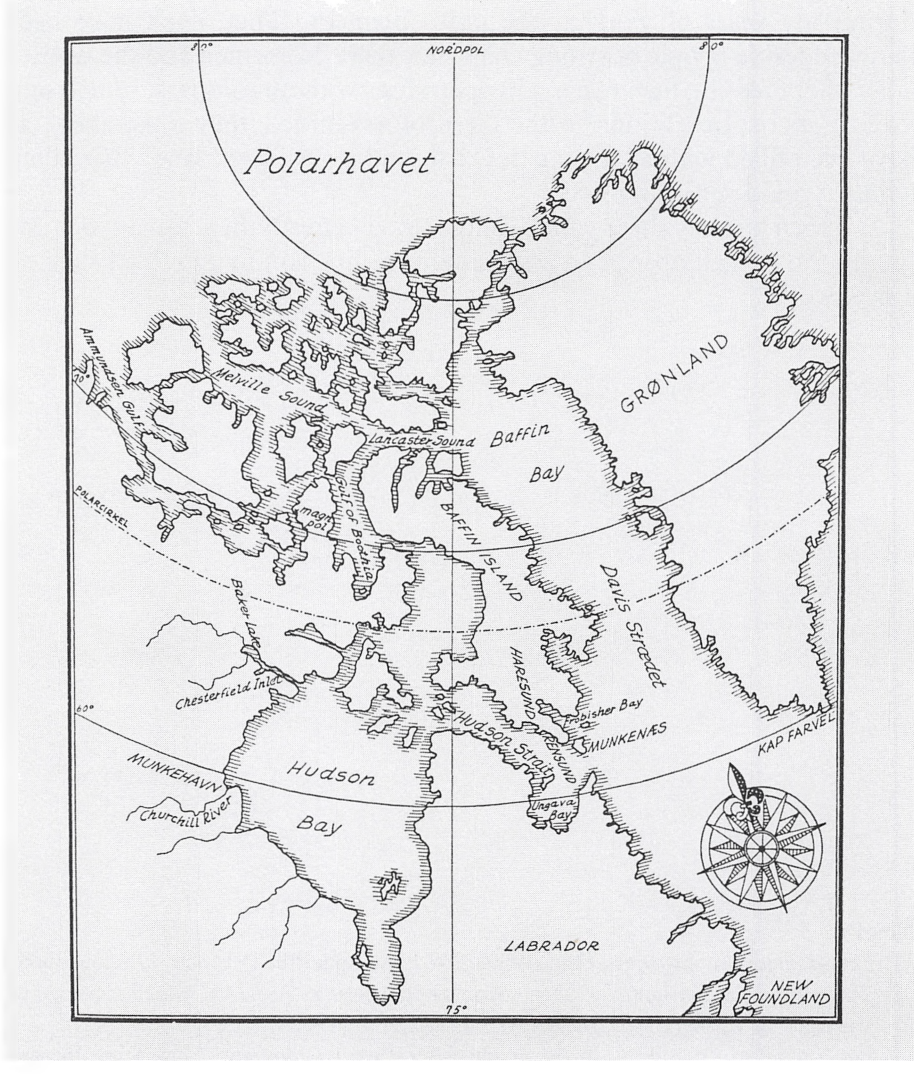
Notes:

1. *Landet under Leidarstjernen*, Oslo, 1959. (The Land under the Pole Star, London, 1966.)
2. This article is a translation of "Den norrøne oppdagelse av Amerika" which appeared in: *Vikingtog og Vikingtid* Chr. Schibsteds Forlag, Oslo, 1977.
3. For a detailed description of the archaeological excavations see: Anne Stine Ingstad. "The Norse settlement of L'Anse Aux Meadows, Newfoundland" *Acta Archeologica* 1970; 41: 109-54.

Jens Munk's Search for the Northwest Passage

The Winter of 1619-20 at *Nova Dania*, Manitoba

by Jørn Carlsen



A map of the Northwest Passage showing the location of *Munkenes*, *Rensund*, *Haresund* and *Munkehavn*. (Reproduced with the permission of Gyldendal, Copenhagen).

We know that during the Viking age people from the Nordic countries set out from settlements in Greenland to explore the unknown land further west. The sagas tell us that Norsemen settled there about 1000 A.D. This was proved in the 1960s when Helge and Anne Stine Ingstad found and excavated a Viking settlement at L'Anse aux Meadows on the northernmost tip of Newfoundland.[1] It is also known that the Norse settlements in Greenland and Vinland disappeared, probably due to climatic changes and pressure from Indians and Eskimos.

The next "Norseman" to make a recorded appearance on the North American continent was Captain Jens Munk (1579-1628).

On 9 May, 1619, two Danish naval vessels, *Enhiørningen (The Unicorn)*, a frigate, and *Lamprenen (The Lamprey)*, a sloop, sailed from Copenhagen, ordered by King Christian IV of Denmark and Norway to find the North-west Passage to China and the Far East. Since 1500 British merchants and explorers, in particular, had tried to find such an assumed passage north of the American continent. A passage like that would mean a short-cut to gold and spices, safe from Spanish and Portuguese men-of-war.

Arctic explorers

In 1624, Jens Munk, who was commander of the expedition, published his diary, *Navigatio Septentrionalis*, in Danish. In that diary, Jens Munk gives a vivid description of what it was like to explore the arctic region and to be forced to winter in Hudson Bay, a situation that had not been foreseen at all. It is well-known that Munk lost sixty-two out of sixty-five crew and the bigger of two ships belonging to the Danish navy.

The King's instructions to Jens Munk may or may not have been detailed and have never been found. At that time, Denmark was a considerable naval power and in the early years of the century pushed northwards into the arctic seas north, east, and west of Norway. In 1605, 1606 and 1607, the King had sent three arctic expeditions to Greenland.[2] This was done not only to discover what had happened to the Nordic colonists there, but also to establish trade and to ascertain the best sea route to Greenland, the old dominion of the Danish-Norwegian crown. In 1609 Jens Munk was sent out to find a navigable Northeast Passage, north of Siberia, but ice conditions forced him to return.

The early Danish expeditions seem to have relied on British navigational expertise. There was nearly always at least one Englishman on board who had experience concerning the ice flow round the southern tip of Greenland and between Greenland and the North American continent. Martin Frobisher had made three voyages, in 1576, 1577, and 1578, in search of a passage to China.[3] On his last expedition he commanded a flotilla of fifteen

vessels, so quite a number of British mariners had arctic experience. Later, in 1585, 1586, and 1587, John Davis made a similar search, exploring the strait named after him and rediscovering Greenland.[4]

In 1610, Henry Hudson was also sent out to find the navigable passage to the Far East, the Northwest Passage or the legendary strait of Anian[5] that supposedly offered a shortcut to the Pacific through the unexplored North American continent. After incredible hardships, Hudson passed through the strait and into the bay, both of which bear his name. He continued along the east coast of the bay where, in order to winter, he beached his ship, the *Discovery*, at the mouth of what was presumably the Rupert River at the bottom of James Bay. The mutiny among the crew and the tragic fate of Hudson, his son and seven others who were placed in a shallop and cut loose in open sea to disappear, is well known.

A year later, in 1612, Sir Thomas Button was sent out in search of Hudson and, of course, the Northwest Passage. Survivors from Hudson's expedition, who had returned in 1611, had told of his optimism concerning a passage. Both the printer of Hudson's chart, Hessel Gerritszoon,[6] and Samuel Purchas[7] seem to have believed that Hudson had found a passage. Button wintered at the Nelson River which he named.

The search for the Northwest Passage continued; almost every year expeditions were sent out, financed by London or Bristol merchants.

After Button's voyage to Hudson Bay in 1612-12, no one, as far as we know, managed to enter it until Jens Munk did so in 1619. Other explorers, like Bylot and Baffin, surveyed Hudson Strait carefully, and they noticed the strong tidal current that, according to both Hudson and Button, might be indicative of a passage. However, when Baffin returned to England in 1615, he said with confidence that no passage existed via Hudson Strait.[8]

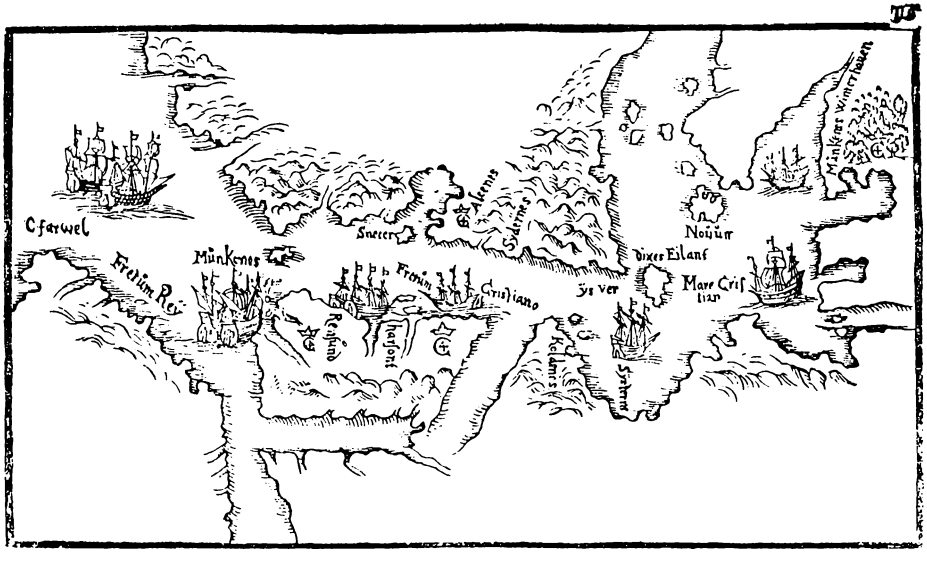
A statement like that, if Munk knew of it, would probably not have discouraged him in the least. In fact, it was not until 150 years after Munk's expedition to Hudson Bay in 1619-20 that the world was finally convinced that there was no passage to the Pacific from Hudson Bay. By then all the deep inlets had been explored, including the Wager in 1747 and in 1762 Chesterfield Inlet. In 1769 the Hudson's Bay Company explorer and fur trader, Samuel Hearne, and his Indian guide, Matonabbee, went overland to the Arctic Ocean without finding the passage.[9]

Caught in the ice

Towards the end of June 1619, Munk's small two-ship flotilla sighted Greenland. Cape Farewell was recognized by one of the Englishmen on board, William Gordon. From then on Munk seems to have relied on Hudson's chart which, undoubtedly, was in his possession. As noted,

Munk's sailing instructions no longer exist, but it is clear from his diary that he planned to enter Hudson Strait at latitude 65½° N. North America was sighted on 8 July. The two ships sailed wrongly into Frobisher Bay, but Munk realized his mistake and turned into the strait itself at the south-eastern point of Resolution Island. Munk named the cape there after himself: *Munkenes*.

It goes without saying that navigation in this labyrinthine archipelago was difficult. Charts were sketchy and unreliable, and ice conditions often dictated the course taken. From Munk's diary we learn how many near misses they had in the ice. They sailed west along the south coast of Baffin Island. On 17 July the strait (i.e. Hudson Strait which Munk renamed *Fretum Christian*) was blocked with ice, and the two ships found shelter in a small sound which Munk named *Rensund*. Here they shot reindeer and made the only contact they had during the expedition with the native population of North America. They had a friendly meeting with the Eskimos with an exchange of gifts. Munk gave them knives and pieces of iron in exchange for seal meat and birds. Although they saw signs of human presence where they wintered, at what was to become Port Churchill, they never saw any Indians.



A woodcut of Munk's chart from Cape Farewell to Munk's *Vindterhaffn* at Churchill, Manitoba. (From *Navigatio Septentrionalis*, 1624).

The expedition spent precious time here and at another shelter named *Haresund* further west in Hudson Strait. When the ice conditions improved they sailed west again, but turned south too early and ended up in what is now Ungava Bay. After this blunder, made by the English navigator William Gordon, it would appear that Munk followed his own instincts, developed through long experience in the Barents Sea north of Norway and Russia. On 20 August, they were back in Hudson Strait, having lost ten days.

Seen from our vantage point, and certainly from Munk's after his return to Denmark, it was a race against time. It must have crossed Munk's mind that the ice conditions, already unbelievably bad, would soon be worse and that the strait would, in fact, freeze solid. Nevertheless, one is deeply impressed with his drive to go on. What kept up the spirits of the commander and the crew was no doubt the assumption that after the passage of Hudson Strait, the course would be set more southerly, and they would soon be in well-known latitudes, hopefully with a climate similar to that of Scandinavia. However, they had no knowledge of the chilling Labrador Current affecting water temperatures in Hudson Strait and Bay; nor did they know of the benevolent influence of the Gulf Stream on the climate in Scandinavia. Certainly everybody was still warmed by the thought that they would find the passage and would not have to return by the same icy route, especially not at a bad time of the year.

Winter harbour in Hudson Bay

In early September, Munk explored the Digges Islands which he renamed *Søstrene* [The Sisters], even though he knew their name and position from Hessel Gerritszoon's chart. Munk was now in Hudson Bay, which he renamed *Novum Marum*, and a southwesterly course was set after the passage of Mansel Island. That course must have been in his instructions and fits very well with the west side of Hudson Bay where neither Hudson nor Button had been.

On 7 September, during a violent storm from the northwest, which had separated the two ships, Munk made a daring entry into the mouth of what was later called the Churchill River and found a sheltered anchorage for *Enhiørningen*. A few days later, smoke and fire signals brought the smaller *Lamprenen* into what is a unique natural harbour. Munk took the surrounding land in the name of the Danish King and called it *Nova Dania*.

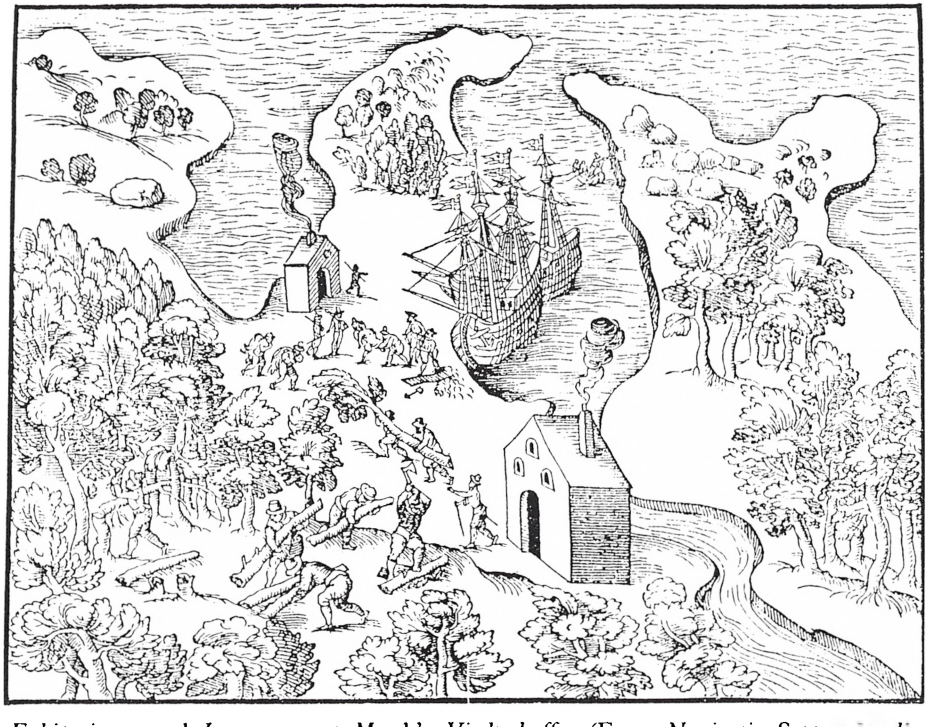
Soon after their arrival at what Munk later called his *Vindterhaffn* [Winter harbour] in *Nova Dania*, a fall in temperature and the appearance of ice made it necessary to stay there for the winter. First it was important to find a place where the ships could be safe from the ice flow in what is really a

tidal river. At a place approximately 10 km. from the mouth of the Churchill River, Munk took his ships across the shallow water at high tide and, coming as close as possible to the west bank, made docks of branches for the ships. At low tide the men could walk around the vessels and to the shore. This place was identified by Thorkild Hansen and Peter Seeberg during The Munk Memorial Expedition in the summer of 1964.[10] Hansen and Seeberg found chiselled-out holes in five big stones to which it is likely that at least *Enhiørningen* was moored.

From Munk's diary we learn that heavy cannon were placed at the bottom of the hull in order to keep the ship stable while out of the water. In this way the battery deck of *Enhiørningen* was cleared and turned into a common room with two fireplaces that, it was hoped, could warm the crews of both ships.

This woodcut shows Munk's meeting with the Eskimos, reindeer shooting and the ice-filled river. (From *Navigatio Septentrionalis*, 1624).

The diary reveals hectic activity. The signs of a coming winter were everywhere. Firewood was cut and hauled to the ship. There was still a lot of game to be shot, a welcome relief from the standard diet of salted meat and dry biscuits brought from home. Munk seems to have been good at activating his men as long as the weather and the cold was bearable. The ships' carpenters built a couple of sheds ashore for the storage of, among other things, gun powder. But soon the cold began to bite in earnest. As we heard earlier on, no member of the crew, and that included Munk himself, was equipped for an arctic expedition. On 4 October Munk distributed among the crew all the clothes, shirts, shoes and boots available in the ships' stores. It was also at this time, before the ground was covered with snow, that Munk became aware that the people of the land had apparently had a summer camp at this place. According to Munk, some flat stones arranged in an altar-like fashion were found.



Enhiørningen and *Lamprenen* at Munk's *Vindterhaffn*. (From *Navigatio Septentrionalis*, 1624).

One night, some weeks later, the guard shot a black animal which turne out to be a dog with its mouth tied together. Munk writes that alive it coulc have been sent back to its owner with gifts, and contact could have been established.

From 22 October the ice moved no more, and from then on *Enhiørningen* was secure in its "dock".

On 10 November, Martinmas Eve was celebrated. Some grouse took the place of a goose, and the crew were treated to wine. Munk points out that the beer was now frozen, but that the crew could drink *ad libitum* what they managed to thaw.

Christmas was celebrated in an optimistic mood. Rev. Rasmus Jensen delivered the first Protestant Christmas sermon in *Nova Dania*, and for that matter in Canada. The crew ate grouse and a hare and were given wine and strong beer to drink. They got "half drunk", but were happy and well behaved, according to Munk.

The homeward voyage

After the New Year, however, living conditions began to deteriorate quickly. They had to give up hunting due to extreme frost and snow. The lack of fresh meat and exercise made the crew an easy prey to scurvy. From the New Year, Munk's diary becomes first of all a record of the many deaths which occurred. In the beginning they managed to bury the dead, in the end there were dead bodies everywhere. On 4 June, Munk is so weak and near the end that he asks the finder of his diary to kindly bury him and his crew and to take "denne min relation" [this, my story] to the King. On 8 June he is still alive and manages to crawl out on deck to escape the stench of the dead bodies. Here he is seen by two surviving crew members who had found shelter on the shore.

Spring came and fresh meat and green shoots quickly revived Munk and the 2 surviving crew members. They began to prepare *Lamprenen* for the return voyage and managed to get it out of its dock at spring tide. Normally, a ship like *Lamprenen* required a crew of 16, and Munk and his two men obviously faced a superhuman task.

On 16 July, before the homeward voyage began, Munk drilled three holes in *Enhiørningen* so that it would remain in its dock until he could return for it. He named the bay in which he had wintered after himself: *Jens Munckes Bay [sic]*.

The passage back to Denmark/Norway was a dramatic one. The small crew fought both ice and storm, and the ship leaked so badly that one man had to be at the pump all the time. They were too few to operate the sails

optimally. On 20 September they sighted Norway, and the following day they made landfall at Dalsfjorden, south of Trondhjem. According to Munk, they cried for joy and thanked God for their deliverance.

Where did Munk winter?

The rumours of what had happened to Munk's expedition were very slow to spread and to find their way into written records. From 1624 to 1897 Munk's diary was available only in Danish. In 1897 C.C.A. Gosch translated it into English for the Hakluyt Society. In the summer of 1631, Captain Luke Fox and Captain Thomas James, sponsored by merchants in Bristol and in London, respectively, both circumnavigated Hudson Bay. The two ships met accidentally off Cape Henrietta Maria. In their published reports we find no reference to Munk, even though Fox entered the mouth of the Churchill River where Munk wintered. He did not land, but the topography and the landing conditions he describes are recognizable from Munk's report.[12] The search for the Northwest Passage stopped for nearly one hundred years after these futile attempts to find it, but that is another story altogether.

For quite some time, the position of Munk's winter harbour was uncertain and disputed. Today, however, it is beyond doubt that Munk wintered on the west bank of the mouth of the Churchill River, approximately 10 km. up the river and 6 km. southwest of present-day Port Churchill, situated on the opposite bank. The reason for the uncertainty concerning the location was that Munk left no exact position in his diary. It was not that he was unable to state one, as there are a number of fairly accurate positions in his diary.[13] It seems to have been left out on purpose, perhaps by royal command. One should bear in mind that a valuable vessel belonging to the Danish Navy had been left in near-perfect condition. If it had not been for a serious political weakening of the King's position in Northern Europe, Munk would no doubt have been ordered to return to *Nova Dania* with settlers the following year (1621).

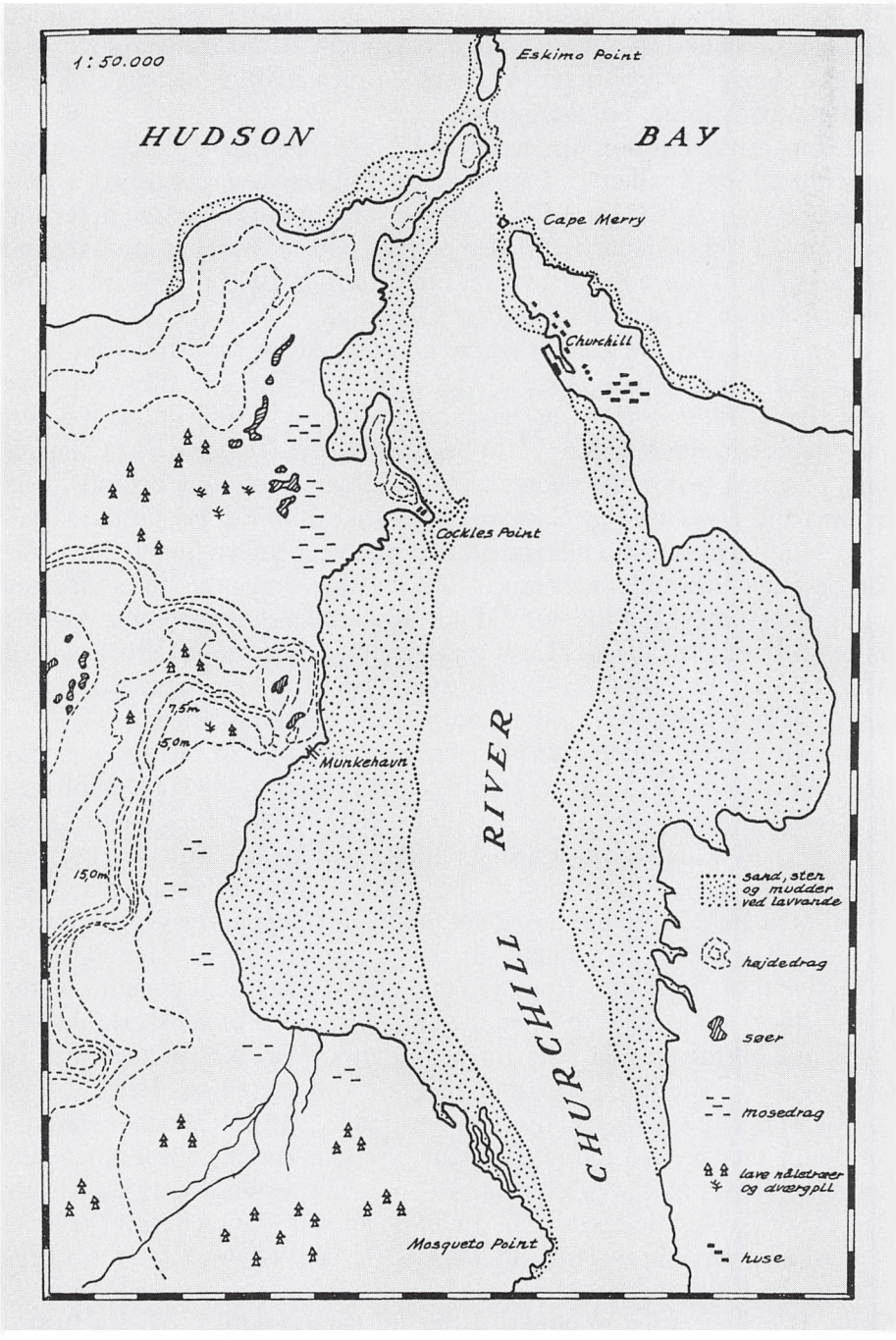
One source, in particular, is responsible for the confusion concerning the correct position of Munk's *Vindterhaffn* in *Nova Dania*, and that is Isaac de la Peyrère's *Relation du Groenlande*, published in Paris in 1647. La Peyrère was a French diplomat with a great interest in arctic matters. While posted in Scandinavia, he collected information concerning Danish activities in the arctic. He did not know Danish well enough to translate correctly from Munk's report and determine Munk's last position before he left Hudson Strait for his *Vindterhaffn*. Peyrère gave that position as latitude 63°, 20' N, or nearly 5° north of the true position of Port Churchill (59° N). He also offered his own estimation of the longitude, i.e. 4° further west than the

true position. La Peyrère made public that Munk had wintered at a position near Chesterfield Inlet, for some time thought to be the entrance of a possible passage to the Pacific. He even corrected Munk's chart and supplied it with latitudes and longitudes.

This incorrect position was accepted by other Danish explorers and scientists until 1883 when P. Lauridsen in Copenhagen published a new edition of Munk's *Navigatio Septentrionalis* with an introduction, notes and a reprint of Munk's maps. Lauridsen pointed out La Peyrère's mistakes and the existence of other literary sources that substantiated that Munk's *Vindterhaffn* had been very close to Port Churchill.

After Munk left the locality where he beached his two ships, no other white man seems to have made a landfall there for the next fifty years. We know that a *Hudson's Bay Company* ship was there in 1685 and that a post was established there in 1689.[14] To begin with, the *Hudson's Bay Company* ships returned before the winter without leaving personnel behind. Soon the area and *Hudson's Bay Company* posts, like *York Factory* on the Hayes River south of Port Churchill and other posts, were drawn into the fur trade war between England and France. During that time, the posts changed hands many times, and the war did not stop until a settlement was reached at the Peace of Utrecht in 1713. It is known that the famous D'Iberville led his attacks on the British in the Bay area from what he recognized to be a superb natural harbour, i.e. the mouth of the Churchill River.

Another French officer, Nicolas Jérémie, who was in the Hudson Bay area from 1694 to 1714 and served as governor from 1708-1714, published an account of his experiences.[15] In his book, Jérémie writes about Munk and especially what he had heard about him and his fate from the Indians. It is he who relates the story of the Indians' astonishment when they, probably in 1620-21, found the site of the *Vindterhaffn* and saw what the ice had left of the ship and found all the unburied corpses of men of an unknown race. It is also from Jérémie that we learn how some of the Indians blew themselves up when they lit a fire in one of the sheds built by Munk and his men for the safe storage of gunpowder. We also hear that for many years the site was a cherished place for collecting iron. Jérémie, who knew La Peyrère's book and his false position for Munk's *Vindterhaffn*, did not doubt that he had found the right position. Among the French, the Churchill River, as it was later named[16] was always known as La Rivière Danoise or Rivière de Monc. The Indians called it Manoteousibi (River of Foreigners). As late as 1744, in De Charlevoix, *Historie de la Nouvelle France*, the Churchill River is called La Rivière Danoise and Rivière de Monc. It is interesting to note that the old name is still used in a British source from the same year. In his *Accounts of Hudson's Bay Company*, Arthur Dobbs refers to "The Danish or Churchill River".[17] It can be said



A modern map of the fjord at the mouth of the Churchill River. (Reproduced with the permission of Gyldendal, Copenhagen).

that with the disappearance of French influence from the Hudson Bay area, the place names referring to Munk's presence were lost.

Not until 1704 did written sources in English make any reference to Munk and his expedition. In that year John Churchill's *Collection of Voyages and Travels* appeared with a translation of La Peyrère's problematic book.[18] From 1719, however, there is an on-location report by Captain James Knight, the *Hudson's Bay Company* Governor-in-Chief on Hudson Bay.[19] Knight re-built the *Hudson's Bay Company* post on the Churchill River on a low wind-swept hill where many of the graves of Munk's crew are located. At that time, nearly a hundred years later, the landscape was still marked by Munk's wintering and the ensuing catastrophe. In his diary, Knight returns repeatedly to the visible and sad fate of the Danes. He also mentions finding two brass cannon and several cast iron bars (ballast objects) that he obviously relates to the Danish presence.

A cannon referred to by Nicolas Jérémie was probably found as early as 1689 when the *Hudson's Bay Company* was first established at Port Churchill.[20] The cannon mentioned here was marked with King Christian IV's insignia: C IV.[21] Unfortunately, all the cannon referred to in the literary sources have disappeared.

Jens Munk's Maps

In *Navigatio Septentrionalis* (1624) Munk printed three woodcuts by an anonymous artist. One is a chart covering the area from Cape Farewell to "Munkenes Winterhauen" (or *Vindterhaffn*) in *Nova Dania*. Although compressed, the chart is fairly accurate for that time. It is also easy to see the consequences of La Peyrère's 5° error. The other woodcut renders three incidents from the voyage: the meeting with the native population, the reindeer shooting, and the two vessels in strong tidal current and ice. The third woodcut shows the *Vindterhaffn* at the mouth of the Churchill River. The estuary is also recognizable when compared with a modern map. This woodcut gives an idea of the brisk activity before the coming of winter. The sailors are hunting, building and cutting fire wood. Two sheds have already been built on shore. From Munk's diary we know that coniferous trees could be cut near by, but not the deciduous trees seen in the picture. Today the area is above the treeline.

In 1965 Thorkild Hansen's book on Jens Munk became a bestseller in Denmark, and in 1976 it was translated into English.[22] In 1964, Thorkild Hansen and writer and archaeologist, Peter Seeberg, carried out the Jens Munk Memorial Expedition sponsored by the National Museum of Canada. The main objective of the expedition was to find the exact location of Munk's *Vindterhaffn* in the mouth of the Churchill River. Using Munk's

own description of the topography of the area, how he went about beaching his ships and, of course, his map, Hansen and Seeberg approached the problem with well-established archaeological tools. Their report,[23] which appeared in 1965, convincingly identifies the exact location of Munk's *Vindterhaffn*. They found two cannon balls and a bar of cast iron in the shallow water, items which with great certainty can be identified as having been made at foundries in the Copenhagen area.

Nothing came of Jens Munk's *Nova Dania* in Canada; the names he gave to islands, promontories, straits and bodies of water disappeared, and today there is nothing to remind a visitor to Port Churchill of the heroism of Jens Munk and his men.

Notes:

1. Anne Stine Ingstad, Helge Ingstad, *The Discovery of a Norse Settlement in America*, 2 vols. (Oslo, 1977-1985).
2. C.C.A. Gosch, *Danish Arctic Expeditions 1605-20*, Vol. I (London, 1897).
3. Vilhjalmur Stefansson, ed., *The Three Voyages of Martin Frobisher*, Vols. 1-2 (London, 1938).
4. John J. Shillinglaw, *A Narrative of Arctic Discovery*, Chap. V (London, 1850).
5. In the second half of the 16th century, cartographers showed such a passage between North American and Asia in the far north. By the 17th century this passage had moved south in the minds of mariners and explorers. Shortly after the mid-18th century, the Strait of Anian was imagined to go from Hudson Bay to the Pacific. British explorers talked about the Northwest Passage, the French referred to "Detroit d'Anian" and the Strait of Anian. In 1624 Jens Munk wrote in his report: "Nordvestiske Passagie".
6. (Amsterdam, 1612).
7. Samuel Purchas, *Hakluytus Posthumus or Purchas His Pilgrimes* (1625; Glasgow, 1906).
8. Glyndwr Williams, *The British Search for the Northwest Passage in the Eighteenth Century* (Imperial Studies No. XXIV, 1962).
9. Samuel Hearne, *A Journey from Prince of Wales's Fort in Hudson's Bay to the Northern Ocean, 1795*. New ed. with introduction, notes and illustrations by J.B. Tyrell. (Toronto, 1911), (Repr. New York, 1968).
10. Thorkild Hansen and Peter Seeberg, *Jens Munks Minde-Ekspedition* (Gyldendal, 1965). (A report to the National Museum of Canada).
11. C.C.A. Gosch, *The Danish Arctic Expeditions 1605-20*, Vol. II (London, 1897).
12. *The Voyages of Captain Luke Fox and Captain Thomas James in Search of a North-West Passage 1631-32*, ed. by Miller Christy, 2 vols. (London, 1894).
13. Munk gives a fairly accurate position, i.e. 63° 20' N, before setting the southwesterly course. (See diary entry for 20 August 1619).

14. In 1670 the *Hudson's Bay Company* had been given the charter to trade in all of the Hudson Bay drainage area = Prince Rupert's Land. The post mentioned here was most likely built on the site where James Knight (see note 18) rebuilt a post after the French had left the area after 1714; it was built on a location where James Knight found significant evidence of Jens Munk's presence. This post, or fort, was called the Prince of Wales's Fort and was situated 11 km from the mouth of the Churchill River. From the 1730s and onwards, a stone fort (the new Prince of Wales's Fort) was constructed on Eskimo Point overlooking the entrance of the river. In 1782 the French captured the fort and blew it up. When Samuel Hearne returned in 1783, he moved up river to the old location at Munk's *Vindterhaffn*, where he established a *Hudson's Bay Company* post that was active until 1938 (Hansen & Seeberg, p. 60).
15. Jérémie's account appears in Bernard's *Recueil de Voyages au Nord* (Amsterdam, 1720). See also Nicolas Jérémie, *Twenty Years of York Factory 1694-1714. Jérémie's Account of Hudson Strait and Bay* (Ottawa, 1926; translated from the French edition of 1720).
16. The river was named after John Churchill, Duke of Marlborough, and Governor of the *Hudson's Bay Company*, 1685-91.
17. Arthur Dobbs, *Accounts of Hudson's Bay Company* (London, 1744), pp. 8, 18.
18. Gosch, Vol II, p. 180.
19. James Knight, *The Founding of Churchill. Being the Journal of Captain James Knight Governor-in-Chief in Hudson Bay, from the 14th of July to the 13th of September 1717.* Edited with a Historical Introduction by James F. Kenney (Toronto, 1932).
20. Sir John Richardson, *The Polar Regions*, p. 107 and Gosch, Vol II, p. 134.
21. Gosch, Vol. II, pp. 134-135.
22. Thorkild Hansen, *Jens Munk* (Gyldendal, 1965). Thorkild Hansen, *The Way to Hudson Bay: The Life and Times of Jens Munk* (New York, 1976).
23. Hansen & Seeberg, op.cit. pp. 61-68.

Klengenberg: A Danish Adventurer in Arctic Canada

by Jette E. Ashlee

The Dane, Christian Klengenberg Jørgensen, followed a tradition of interaction between Vikings and Eskimos[1] that dates back to the 9th century. Viking voyages to Canada were commonplace until the fifteenth century when the Vikings held trading monopolies in Markland, Vinland, Iceland and Greenland. However, by the end of the fifteenth century, British explorers came to dominate the Arctic waters in their search for a northwest passage. The tragic fate of the Franklin Expedition, and the realization that the waterways of Arctic Canada would never provide a satisfactory commercial route to Asia, slowed British exploration and saw Viking descendants, such as Nansen, Amundsen, Sverdrup, Stefansson, and later, Larsen, re-assert their supremacy in Arctic exploration. The most remarkable of these explorers was Vilhjalmur Stefansson who discovered the last new lands in North America. And, it was the Norwegian, Roald Amundsen, who finally discovered the Northwest Passage in 1903, two years before Klengenberg came to trade with the 'Copper Eskimos'.

Canada was a fledgling new nation when the Northwest Passage was discovered. The Arctic lands remained largely *terra incognita* at the time, and were sparsely populated by small bands of Indians, Eskimos, and a handful of whaling men and fur traders. The indigenous Eskimos who inhabited the mainland coast of Arctic Canada, between approximately long. 102° W and 118° W, and the southern and western coast of Victoria Island, along the Coronation Gulf and the southern end of Banks Island, came to be called the 'Copper Eskimos'. The appellation is derived from their use of native copper for tools, in place of the stone used by other Eskimos prior to the European introduction of iron. There is no evidence that the Copper Eskimos had any previous experience with European or American whalers who plied the waters west of Victoria Island in the decade before Klengenberg arrived. This is not surprising, as the waters of the Coronation Gulf are too sheltered to harbour the large Arctic mammals. None of the other European explorers and whalers who preceded Klengenberg left written accounts of the local people.

Klengenberg's activities belong to the second of the two major fur trading periods in Canadian history. The initial fur trade with the indigenous Indians commenced in the seventeenth century in the lowlands of the St. Lawrence River and extended westward across the continent. It was based on the beaver, since made the national symbol of Canada. The second major fur trading period took place in the northern reaches of the continent and was based on the fur of the white fox. Klengenberg is designated a 'free trader' because when he, and others like him, entered the Canadian Arctic, the monopoly of the *Hudson's Bay Company* was broken by the cession of their lands, Rupert's Land and the Northwestern Territory, to the Dominion of Canada. The *Hudson's Bay Company* was not a pioneer in the Arctic

fur trade here as they had been on earlier Canadian frontiers.

Fur trading was introduced to the Eskimos by former whaling captains, such as Klengenberg, who came north on American whaling ships after 1889 to harvest the bowhead whale in the Beaufort Sea. By 1895, as many as fifteen vessels wintered off Herschel Island in the Mackenzie Delta. During the winters, the whalers introduced steel traps to the Eskimos in order to supplement their whaling income with white fox furs.

Trading in Alaska

Klengenberg came to the northern whaling grounds by a circuitous route. By the age of twenty, he had sailed on all the world's oceans before landing in San Francisco, where he was offered a job on a ship bound for the salmon grounds off King William Sound. Alaska immediately captivated his Viking vision; he "wanted right knowledge of the North even then" and felt like his Viking ancestors who hankered for a "land of the long day and the long night".[2] In 1893, he returned to Alaska and lived at a trading post near Marryatt Inlet for two years. The experience gave Klengenberg his first opportunity to trade walrus ivory and reindeer skins with the Eskimos of Little Diomede Island.

During his trading 'apprenticeship' in Alaska, Klengenberg realized that he wanted to learn the Eskimo language, as there was an Eskimo girl in the village who attracted him strongly and who was beginning to let herself look at him when she thought he was not looking. The Eskimo girl, Gremnia, and Klengenberg were married, in the 'natural way', about 1895. "Since I had chosen a wife for life in the Arctic" he told his biographer, "I felt that I must make up my mind to settle there, as she likely would not be happy anywhere else." Besides that, the area offered an order of life which attracted him. As a result, he "accepted the challenge to conquer the Arctic".

Shortly after his marriage, Klengenberg learned that a whaling captain was in a hurry to take his ship to Herschel Island, near the mouth of the Mackenzie River in Canada. Klengenberg joined the crew and, while on Banks Island, came across human footprints, a discovery that fuelled his imagination and led him to reason: "if there were unknown bands of Eskimos on Banks Island, and if a trader could get into their country with a good supply of trade goods, he might have a chance to get furs cheaper than elsewhere in the Arctic and become wealthy." He concluded that if the owners of the tracks did not actually live on Banks Island, they probably lived further to the east and to the north.

On his return to Point Hope, Klengenberg was delighted to learn that he had become the father of a baby daughter. After a short stay, he left

Gremnia and his infant daughter, Weena, for San Francisco where he bought his first schooner, the *Etna*, with the proceeds from whalebone. Back home in Point Hope, he learned that he had become the father of a second daughter. She was named Etna for his ship.

Klengenberg whaled off the coast of Alaska until 1905, when a new opportunity arose for him to return to Canada. A Captain McKenna was looking for someone to take his schooner "to do business with the Eskimos". This was the very thing he had been dreaming of since 1894 when he saw the footprints on Banks Island. Klengenberg, Gremnia, Weena, Etna, and now, their first son, Patsy, sailed from Point Hope to Herschel Island where he assumed the captainship of the *Olga*.

Poor weather and severe ice and wind conditions forced them to moor the ship for the winter in a sheltered bay off Wollaston Land, Victoria Island. As the ship had only one month's provisions, it was incumbent on everyone on board to cooperatively hunt for meat and collect driftwood for their survival through the winter. But from the start, there was dissension among the crew members. A man named Jackson, who had been chief engineer on Captain McKenna's ship, the *Charles Hansen*, had been transferred to the Olga as he was something of a trouble-maker. Although there was a lot of animosity between Jackson and Hermann, the assistant engineer, they banded together in their dislike of Klengenberg. There were also three Eskimo families on board which, together with Klengenberg's own family, made a total of twenty passengers.

Violence on board

The winter of 1905-1906 was long and cold. Locked in ice for a long stretch of time, the morale of the crew fell to low levels, and the inter-personal rivalry between Jackson and Hermann increased with each passing day. Gremnia was due to deliver her fourth child, Patsy was still a baby, and the two little girls were nine and eleven years of age. Any attempt at a normal, albeit unusual, family life for the Klengenberg's was marred by the antics of Jackson and Hermann. Jackson often ranted at Klengenberg during the dinner period for no apparent reason, and, on one occasion pointed his rifle at Klengenberg. From that time forward, serious tension grew between the two men. A few days later, Klengenberg caught Jackson brewing whisky in a makeshift still in the ship's engine room. He ordered Jackson to stop his "hooch-making", but Jackson refused to obey. At dinner that evening, Jackson pointed his rifle at Klengenberg and in foul language told him that he had no intention of following orders.

The affairs of the ship began to take on the appearance of a general mutiny. Klengenberg felt his crew was plotting against him. He visualized

that they would kill him, put Gremnia and Patsy ashore to perish, take his two daughters, and sail away when spring came. Relations worsened until one day when Jackson fired his rifle squarely at Klengenberg's heart. He missed. The bullet passed through Klengenberg's cap and seared his forehead. Jackson aimed again, but Klengenberg beat him to the draw and shot him first. Klengenberg killed Jackson before Jackson could kill him.

In the midst of all the turmoil on the ship, Gremnia gave birth to Jørgen, who was named for his grandfather in Denmark. During the birth Klengenberg held Gremnia closely in his arms while keeping his rifle firmly by his side. The little boy was born with the North Star directly overhead. Experiencing the two fundamental life forces, birth and death, in a short space of time in the confined quarters of the ice-locked ship helped restore basic discipline on board.

Trade with the Eskimos

As a diversion from the trouble and strife on the ship, Klengenberg made a sledge journey into the interior of Victoria Island. There he met Kolmak, an Eskimo who told him about his father who had seen two communities of wild men with red hair, beards and blue eyes. Another man, the one who appeared to be the leader of the "new people", as Klengenberg called them, said that they had heard stories of men like him, but had never seen a European before. "These people were true Stone Age men on the bare edge of the Bronze Age. Their knives, spear-heads and arrowheads were hammered out of native copper and their lamps and cooking utensils made out of soapstone." On a second journey to Victoria Island, Klengenberg packed two sledges with trade goods and took along his elder daughter, Weena, then thirteen years old. The Eskimos were surprised to see that he had brought a daughter with him instead of a son. He tried to explain to them that in Denmark daughters were considered equal to sons, and sometimes more so. Father and daughter made a little feast for their hosts which included bannock, an unleavened bread. In a few years, bannock would become a dietary staple for Eskimo trappers, but in 1906 it was unknown to these people. After three days of trading, father and daughter returned to their ship laden with Eskimo artifacts. Klengenberg was a happy man; at long last he had found a land where he could be the first trader. At that time, he made up his mind that eventually he would buy his own outfit and return to Victoria Island to establish a trading post.

The "blond Eskimos"

When Klengenberg returned the *Olga* to Captain McKenna at Herschel Island, he met two explorers who made enormous contributions to the geography of Canada. One was Roald Amundsen from Norway who, just a few years before, had successfully navigated the Northwest Passage. The other was the Icelandic-Canadian explorer, Vilhjalmur Stefansson, then the ethnographer on the Leffingwell-Mikkelsen Expedition. From Klengenberg, Stefansson learned of the "new people". Largely because of Stefansson's chance meeting with Klengenberg, he would become the greatest of all the Arctic explorers and make the Copper Eskimos the best-known of all the Arctic peoples.

Stefansson was able to convince the Government of Canada to allow him to mount the Canadian Arctic Expedition a few years later, from 1913 to 1918, on the premise that this was "a once in a lifetime, ethnographical venture". Because, he reasoned, "before long, civilization in the form of numerous Klengenbergs might reach these isolated people and ruin [his] chances for original, ground-breaking work. Contamination from the ...vanguard of civilization – the hunter, the trader and the missionary – is spreading so fast that, in most sections, ethnological work could be much more successfully carried forward now than ten years hence."[3]

Whaling men on Herschel Island discounted Klengenberg's experience, but Eskimo seamen confirmed it. In his own words, Stefansson wrote: "I knew the tale of the missing Norse colony in Greenland, and I knew that Sir John Franklin's crew of more than one hundred, lost in the vicinity of King William Island in 1847 or 1848, had never been entirely accounted for. I could not resist trying to connect what I knew of these events with the presence in Victoria Island of Eskimo-like people with light hair and blue eyes." These people would become the subject of Stefansson's controversial "blond Eskimos" theory which postulated that the Copper Eskimos had physical characteristics suggestive of Norse admixture. For Klengenberg, who was above all an adventurer, the thrill of original discovery lay in the opportunity for trade. For Stefansson, the thrill of learning about the "new people" meant that he "might be the first trained white person to observe them. What a thrill for an anthropologist – and what an opportunity for scholarly recognition!"[4]

The long arm of the law

However, before Klengenberg could make trading plans with the Copper Eskimos, there was the unfinished business of Jackson's death to report to the authorities. At Herschel Island, Klengenberg reported the Jackson

incident to the North West Mounted Police, then the only arm of law and order in that part of Canada. Following their inquiry, the police were satisfied that Klengenberg had acted in self-defence, and he was free to return to Alaska with his family. In Point Barrow an American inquiry was also made into the incident, and it, too, concluded that Klengenberg had acted in self-defence. When spring came, Klengenberg's plans for returning to Victoria Island were further delayed by more trouble from the Jackson affair. A former Alaskan whaling captain wrote to Klengenberg from San Francisco, enclosing a newspaper clipping stating that Klengenberg had been indicted by a grand jury in California for the murder of Jackson. Years later, Klengenberg learned that the 'news story' was based on a trick played by a jealous enemy. However, at the time, he wanted to do all he could to free himself of the black cloud following him since the Jackson incident. To go on the run, or to evade the issue, could only bring harm to his family, he reasoned.

Some of the Klengenberg clan on Victoria Island, *circa* 1925. (The National Archives of Canada/PA-164642).

In June of 1907, Klengenberg packed some of his curios and whalebone from Victoria Island and travelled to San Francisco. He told his biographer that he wore his best skin garments "which Gremnia had trimmed with the prettiest furs she could find, thinking poor girl, to have me looking my best and bravest when I came before the judge in San Francisco. ...I was so weary of the whole affair, having been called to account three times in three different places about it, and with the same result each time." Klengenberg was acquitted for the third and final time in the murder of Jackson on the grounds of self-defence. As it was already September when the jury handed down their ruling, it was too late to return to Alaska. Ironically, Klengenberg found work on board the *Charles Hansen*, one of Captain McKenna's ships moored in San Francisco, the very one that Jackson had worked on before being transferred to the *Olga*. Klengenberg returned to his family in May 1908.

From bad luck to good

During the winter of 1908-09, the Klengenberg's little schooner homestead in Alaska sank in a terrible storm. Gremnia just managed to get the family safely ashore before giving birth to their third daughter. Klengenberg's pride in his wife is evident from this statement made to his biographer: "That wife of mine certainly has had a strenuous and changeful life, ...she stands up bravely against whatever comes, and she makes the best of the little good times as they arrive."

At long last, the opportunity arose for the family to return to Canada in July 1909. On the way, they picked up the Norwegian explorer, Storker Storkersen, from the Leffingwell-Mikkelsen Expedition. Storkersen later joined Stefansson in the Canadian Arctic Expedition. Remembering this period of his life, Klengenberg recalled: "So it was that three years after leaving Herschel Island I was back with a final acquittal of murder, a new daughter whom we called Lena, my first son-in-law, Storker T. Storkersen, my good wife Gremnia and the rest of the family sound and healthy, and my old whale boat, with a small dinghy attached. Not so bad! But still I was a poor man, depending upon rifle and harpoon and traps for meat and clothing!" There were still hard years ahead for the family, times when he and Gremnia went without food so that the children could eat. Their luck finally changed in the bountiful summer of 1914.

In the spring of 1915, two geologists from the Canadian Arctic Expedition, under Stefansson's command, came into Darnley Bay to investigate the coast along to Bathurst Inlet. Stefansson himself was on Victoria Island researching Klengenberg's story about the "new people". Patsy joined the geologists as their guide and interpreter. The family prospered enough that

Patsy Klengenberg with his wife, Ekaloon, and their two children at Rymer Point, 1924. (From the Henry Larsen Collection, The National Archives of Canada/PA-180913).

year to put a down payment of furs on a better ship. Patsy returned the following spring "looking wonderfully well, and full of new notions and knowledge," said his proud father. There was a likely-looking young Eskimo with the Expedition, Ikey Bolt, who was Patsy's chum. Bolt had come from Alaska to work as Diamond Jenness's interpreter. Jenness was the ethnographer of the southern party of the Canadian Arctic Expedition and would publish the most comprehensive description of a single Eskimo group ever written.[5]

A dream comes true

Klengenberg's experience among the "new people" was the link between his family and Stefansson, and the organizational principle behind the Expedition itself. Those links became permanent when Ikey and Etna were married in 1916, the same year that Bob, Klengenberg's fourth son, was born.

Finally, Klengenberg realized his long held dream of establishing an independent trading post. In 1916 he chose a site near the mouth of the Coppermine River, the location of present day Coppermine. His whaling ship was turned into a 'go-down' – a sort of warehouse, alongside of which he built a cabin from driftwood. It was big enough to have a separate living room for the stove they made from an old oil tank. A layer of turf was packed against the outside walls to keep the little house as snug as possible. This was the first home on land that the family had had since leaving Alaska eight years before. They had been hard years for Klengenberg, but at the age of forty-seven, his dream came into focus. During this time, he made elaborate and detailed plans for establishing other trading posts, hiring the people who would run them and putting in the supplies he would need for each one. If his dream had sometimes appeared unattainable in the years before 1916, the period afterwards, until the end of his life, was crowded with happy activity, wealth and good works.

Fur prices were good and the Eskimos were eager to trade. In the space of fourteen years, Klengenberg and his family established eight trading posts in Copper Eskimo territory.

The establishment of the fur trading posts allowed the Klengenberg family to colonize Victoria Island and the coastal region of Copper Eskimo territory and actively compete with the *Hudson's Bay Company*. The years between 1916 and 1930 were busy years for the family. The Klengenberg children were getting married, having babies and making trade connections along the Pacific coast. Klengenberg purchased *The Maid of Orleans* in Seattle in 1924 and used it to supply the trading posts and transport the furs south to markets in Seattle and Vancouver. On one return journey from Seattle his ship was loaded with a cargo of fuel, boats, lumber and other building materials for constructing trading posts and building a schoolhouse at Rymer Point. In return for white fox furs there were also quantities of flour, tea, cotton, sugar, metal cups and tools that the Eskimos had come to covet. One of Klengenberg's crew members was Henry Larsen, the first man to navigate the Northwest Passage from east to west in the *St. Roche* in 1944 on what was his first trip into the Arctic. Also on board Klengenberg's ship was Miss Alice Supplee, whom Klengenberg hired to teach children in the school that he planned to build at Rymer Point.

The passing of an era

Unlike many European explorers and traders who left offspring among the Indians and Eskimos on Canadian frontiers, Klengenberg stood by his family and taught his eight children European ways whenever he could.

Klengenberg was at home in the Arctic largely because Gremnia's con-

Klengenberg on board *The Maid of Orleans*, Vancouver, 1924. (From the Henry Larsen Collection, The National Archives of Canada/PA-180912).

siderable Eskimo skills allowed the family to live and thrive from the bounty of land and sea. He loved and respected her for her skills as conveyed to his biographer in this colourful passage:

> Together we have camped on every sand-spit and lagoon and island along the Arctic coast of Alaska, and over half of the Canadian Arctic, shore side and interior. We have lived in igloos and tents and on schooners, and have seen them all go in the ups and downs of life. Our babies would come out on the ice when floor whaling in the spring, and at sea in oomiaks, and in snow houses when blizzards were howling around us. I have seen Gremnia sit up through the long nights mending and darning our clothes, and making moccasins and mukluks so that we could continue travelling the next day. I have known her to go without food, pretending that she had eaten, so that the rest of us might have a few morsels to divide against our big appetities. She has followed the trap lines in winter when she could only be away from a tent a few hours because of leaving a nursing child in it. And when I have been sick and unable to hunt, and the children too young to do so, she would take a rifle and start out in the morning through weather that would keep an Arctic explorer indoors, and after long hours out alone in the hill, she would always come back with meat for the family.

In his early sixties, Klengenberg began to feel the burden of his years. He slowed down a little and stayed for long periods of time in Vancouver where he shared a house with his eldest daughter, Weena, and her three daughters. Storker Storkersen had returned to Norway. Gremnia preferred to stay behind at Rymer Point. Two of his ships, including *The Maid of Orleans*, and some of the trading posts were sold to the *Hudson's Bay Company*, while the others continued to be operated by the family. The family made annual journeys to Vancouver to sell furs and replenish supplies for the remaining posts during the 1930s. In Vancouver they stayed with their father and sister and any one of a constant stream of guests who came to visit Klengenberg in his last years. For Klengenberg was well-known in all the seaports of the western Pacific to Siberia, Alaska and Northern Canada as a gregarious and generous man whose home was always open to friends and acquaintances. These were usually old-time whalers and fur traders. Men who, like himself, had witnessed the passage of an era much of their own making. A twilight time, when men and women carved out their existence in a freedom limited only by their imagination and ability. To the end of his life, Klengenberg kept faith with his family and friends and earned the respect of all who knew him.

Klengenberg died suddenly of a heart attack in 1931. As he had requested in his will, his ashes were taken to Rymer Point and cast to the

winds. His body, if not his spirit, will forever inhabit Victoria Island in Arctic Canada. Gremnia lived on until 1945 when she left this world in the traditional Eskimo way. When she must have felt herself a burden on her family, she walked into a blizzard and was never seen again. With their passing, the first chapter in the history of the Copper Eskimos came to a close. A chapter which shows the magnitude of determined human endeavour in a harsh and often hostile environment. The union between Klengenberg, a sailor from Denmark, and Gremnia, an Alaskan Eskimo woman, is a story of courage and enterprise that forged a new society in Arctic Canada.

Notes:

1. Since about 1970 the term, 'Inuit', the word they use to describe themselves, has generally replaced 'Eskimo'. However, I have chosen to use the older term as the period covered in this paper ends well before World War II and, therefore, allows for a certain historical continuity.
2. The passages ascribed to Klengenberg in this paper are taken from Tom MacInnes, ed. *Klengenberg of the Arctic*. London and Toronto: Jonathan Cape, 1932. Klengenberg dictated his memoirs to Tom MacInnes in Vancouver during 1930-31. This book, published after Klengenberg's death, is the result.
3. Vilhjalmur Stefansson, The Home Life of the Eskimo, in *Harper's Monthly Magazine* No. 117, October 1908, p. 730; quoted in Richard J. Diubaldo, *Stefansson and the Canadian Arctic*, Montreal: McGill-Queen's University press, 1978, p. 25.
4. Vilhjalmur Stefansson, *Discovery: The Autobiography of Vilhjalmur Stefansson*. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1964. pp. 73-75.
5. Diamond Jenness, "The Copper Eskimos", *Report of the Canadian Arctic Expedition, 1913-1918*. Volume 12, Parts A, B, C, 1923; *Songs of the Copper Eskimos*, King's Printers, 1925; *The People of the Twilight*, New York, 1928; *Material Culture of the Copper Eskimos*, 1946. Among Jenness's later work is "The Indians of Canada", *National Museum of Canada Bulletin* 65, Anthropological Series 15. Ottawa, 1932. It is the definitive work on the ethnology and history of the indigenous people of Canada.

New Denmark – The Oldest Danish Colony in Canada

by Palle Bo Bojesen

The New Denmark memorial stone. (Photo: PBB).

How it all began

The citizens of Copenhagen had grown accustomed to seeing throngs of people and piles of baggage on the Kvæsthus Quay. So there was nothing unusual about a group of travellers preparing to leave the capital city of Denmark by steamship on May 31st, 1882 – bound for their first port of call, Hull, England. Neither was there a word about it in the daily newspapers, *Berlingske Tidende* and *Dagstelegrafen*. And yet it was something of an occasion and marked the beginning of something new. These people, like many before them, were on their way to America, but, for the first time, not to what was normally thought of as America.

Their destination was Canada.

People wanted!

Until 1867 Canada was the name of the large province which bordered on the St. Lawrence River and extended from the Atlantic Ocean to the Niagara peninsula.

The 'united' province included Lower Canada – Quebec – and Upper Canada – Ontario – but from July 1st, 1867, when the new confederation was formed, the name Canada was used to designate the entire country, even though from the beginning this included only Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Quebec and Ontario.

Canada had one basic difficulty in common with the United States: there was too much land for too few settlers. But while immigrants continued to cultivate new land in the western United States, Canada had no share in this development. This was a problem which called for immediate action.

Representatives from the 4 original provinces met with members of the government in Ottawa to deal with this problem in 1871. The result was a decision to copy the *Homestead Act* which had proved so successful in the United States. Under the provisions of this act, 'government land' – federal or provincial – was made available to immigrants free of charge on fulfilment of certain conditions, including the obligation to live on and cultivate the land. It was left to the provinces to initiate their own legislation and settlement programs. They were, however, to receive some financial support from Ottawa, and the services of the Canadian emigration office in London were placed at the disposal of the provinces.

The government of the Atlantic seaboard province of New Brunswick took quick action: The *Rivière du Loup Railway Co.* was already laying a railway north through the St. John Valley and the province of Quebec to the harbour town of Rivière du Loup on the St. Lawrence River. From here there was already a railway connection to Quebec, the capital of the

province, and to Montreal, Canada's largest, most rapidly developing town. This connection would have great impact on the development of the most populated part of New Brunswick and, not least, the northernmost area of the province. Until now this area had depended largely on river transport, only truly efficient in the spring months, when the river steamers could sail all the way up to the huge waterfalls at Grand Falls.

As was the custom in the United States, the railway company was granted large areas of land on either side of the tracks. In due time, this land could be sold on easy terms to immigrants. In the long run, the greatest profit was to be made not from the sale of land or railway tickets, but in supplying the goods needed by the immigrants, and in transporting their produce from the small stations to the big towns. This business was described by the railway companies as "intelligent self-interest", whereas the farmers often called it "the octopus policy". The government now made an agreement with the railway whereby 300 immigrants would be employed in the construction of the railway for a daily wage of $1.10 plus 30 acres of land for 1 year of work, 60 acres for 2 years and 100 acres for 3 years of work.

Another government initiative was taken in connection with the forthcoming emigration campaign in Europe: The newly appointed Surveyor General, Benjamin R. Stevenson, who was responsible for all the practical details of immigration, prepared a brochure entitled: *A New Brunswick Pamphlet on Immigration*. This pamphlet was to serve as an instruction for agents and emigrants in Europe and was therefore translated into many languages – including the Scandinavian languages. It was distributed via the representatives of the various steamship lines, including, of course, the Canadian *Allan Steamship Co.*

Free enterprise

These government initiatives were public knowledge, and they quickly gave rise to an interesting development, one which was typical of the spirit of private enterprise in the new world: On the 22nd of January, 1872, the government received a letter containing the draft of a contract. The first paragraph read as follows:

> Each male Immigrant over 18 years of age to have 100 acres of land, with good accessible roads. A chopping of two acres to be made on each lot of 100 acres. A suitable temporary building or buildings to be provided for the reception of the Immigrants within a short distance of their lots. The Immigrants shall be employed to do the aforesaid chopping. The temporary building to be reserved for school or other public purposes of the settlement.

On three years actual residence a grant to issue to each male settling as above.

A lot to be reserved in each settlement for school purposes.

This draft went on to say that the government should guarantee all men over 18 years of age employment – "on the Railways or at other works at not less than one dollar per day, for a period not exceeding two years." The contract stipulated that there would be approximately 500 immigrants and that 2 of 5 would be males of 18 years of age or more. The government was to pay 10 dollars in cash for each person who was "delivered to the Government Agents" at either St. John on the southern coast or in Chatham on the east coast.

The contract also stated that if the government chose to allow the railway company to employ the immigrants, this was to be on the company's terms, and the acquisition of the 100 acres was to take place over a period of 3 years.

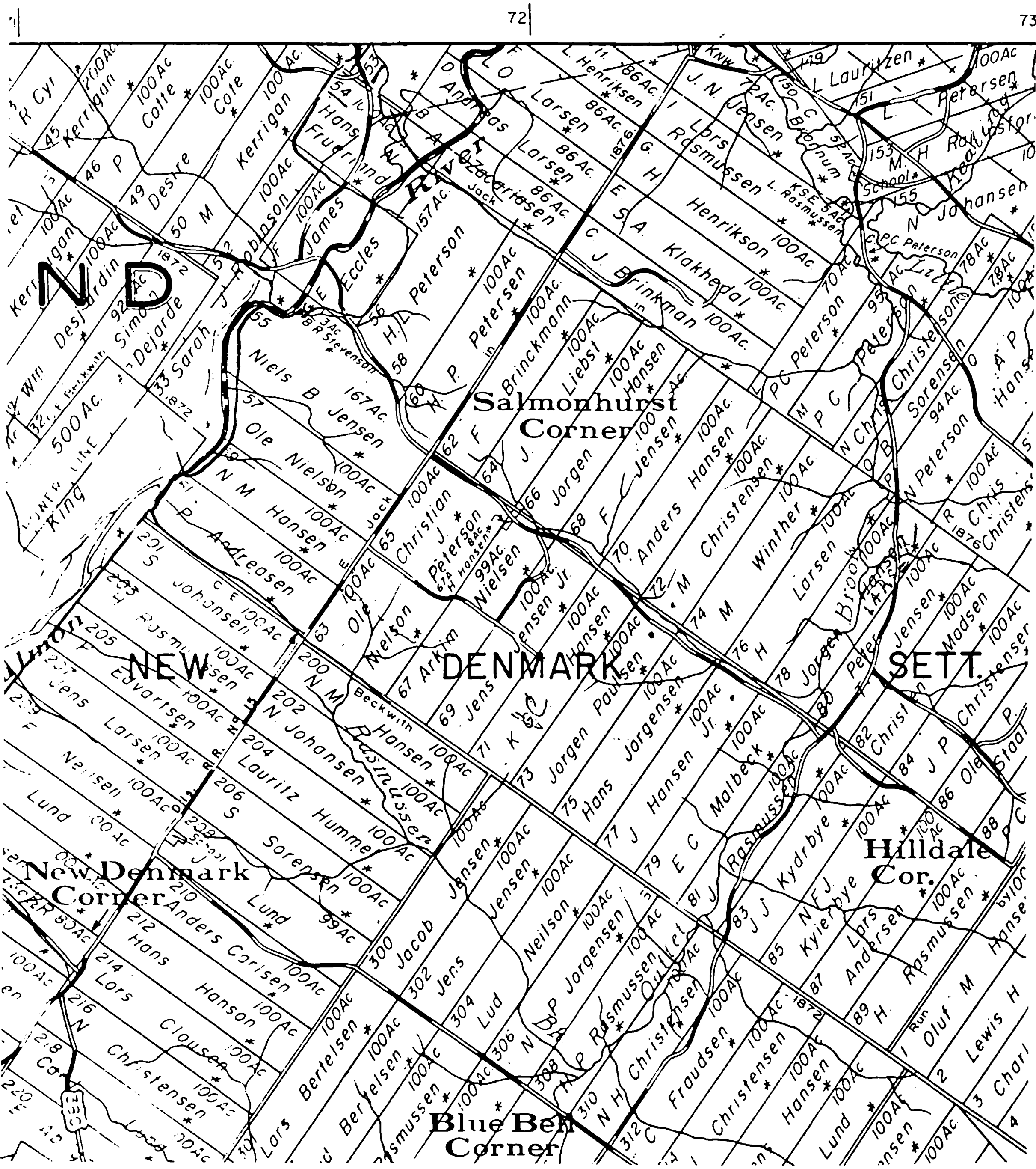
This draft contract is signed by a Mr. George Stymest and a Mr. S.S. Heller, and it was probably the latter who took the initiative in preparing it. It was he who carried out the plan under the name of Captain Heller when, after a brief period of deliberation, the government signed the contract. This confirmation by the government is of interest as it stated that the immigrants in question would come from the Scandinavian countries. It also emphasized that any transfer of land from the railway company to its employees would be guaranteed by the government.

Free land

On April 11, 1872, the parliament of New Brunswick passed the new 'homestead act': *The Free Grants Act 1872* – which guaranteed all immigrants over 18 years of age 100 acres of land free of charge on the fulfilment of certain easy conditions. A deed would be made out after a period of 3 years if the applicant had lived on the property and had cleared and cultivated it in accordance with certain specifications.

By that time Captain Heller was already crossing the Atlantic on his way to Denmark, and Surveyor General Stevenson was parcelling out the area in the northern part of the province which was to become New Denmark: the wooded, undulating ridges east of the Salmon River, a tributary to the St. John River.

Surveyor General Stevenson was a lawyer. He knew only too well how difficult it would be to settle in an area as isolated as the one allotted to the Danes. They would have some very unpleasant years until the roads reached an acceptable standard and the railway connection was established.



New Brunswick's Grant Reference Plan no. 63. There are 170 lots with Danish owners.

Almost all the land immediately north of the area allotted to the Danes was owned by the French. It is quite possible that there was some truth to the claim that the Danes were "banished" to this area to serve as a "buffer" which could put a stop to French "infiltration". If a political decision of this nature were to cause trouble for the Danes, it would certainly also cause trouble for Stevenson. His situation would be made all the more difficult because he had failed to keep the imaginative, stubborn Scotsman, Captain Brown, from acquiring a large area just south of the Tobique River. This area was now being portioned out to his countrymen from Kincardinshire in Scotland. This land was just as hilly as what the Scotsmen were used to, and, in Brown's eyes, this made it ideal. He, too, had signed a contract with the government of New Brunswick which varied in a number of ways from Heller's, and was in some respects more advantageous.

The *Legislative Council Journal* of 1872 provides a detailed description of Victoria County – where the Danes were to settle. It was written by Charles A. Lugrin, secretary of the county agricultural society.

> The ridges are mostly covered with a luxurious growth of Rock Maple, Yellow Birch and other hard woods. The soil is deep, mellow, rich and free from stone – One cannot speak too highly of the fertility of these ridges – the giant trees stand wide apart, very little underbrush obstructs the view, and the whole scene looks more like a beautiful park than an unclaimed wilderness. – The open character of the forest renders it easily cleared.

Lugrin went on to say that Victoria County comprised 2,872,000 acres [1/4 the area of Denmark]. According to the 1871 census there were 11,641 persons living in the county. Although this gave each of them plenty of space to move about in, most lived very near the rivers which provided the preferred means of transportation and also served as the basic 'lines' for the distribution of land. Lugrin said that the French population spoke a very mixed kind of French and stubbornly maintained old customs and traditions. He felt the French were far too fond of horses. Where a poor farmer could have made good use of two oxen, the Frenchman had a small "hack", good only for carrying him to mass or a load of roofing shingles to the grocer. It was not unusual to see a horse and a cow – or a horse, a cow and an ox – pulling a plow.

In the southern part of the county, where the population was a mixture of English, Irish and Scottish – and "blue nose" – he described farming as a far from methodical business. The lack of cash forced many farmers to put too much effort into work in the forests. This work was carried out from early autumn to late spring and left little time for cultivation of the land which, after all, was to provide the long term profits.

But Lugrin felt things were about to change for the better. He ended his report by noting that new school legislation had been passed and that a railway was under construction.

Recruiting in Denmark

One of Denmark's biggest 'travel agents' was owned by the merchant, Wilken Horneman. He represented the Canadian Atlantic Ocean line, *Allan Steamship Co.*, and when he arrived in Denmark, Captain Heller looked him up at his office at 13 Nyhavn in Copenhagen.

Horneman had an extensive network of agents or head clerks in all the large towns in Denmark and often in small country villages as well. Naturally, an emigration agent cared not a whit for whether a Dane wished to travel to the United States or to Canada. He made his living selling tickets, and his interest was to make as many destinations available as possible.

Captain Heller's offer must have seemed attractive, and one would think it could have provided the basis and outline of a recruiting campaign of some dimension. It should therefore be a simple matter to find Horneman's advertisements in the Danish newspapers of April, 1872. This, however, is not the case.

Systematic examination turned up only two advertisements, one in the Copenhagen newspaper *Dagstelegrafen* of May 5th and one in *Møns Folkeblad* of May 17th. Both dates are unreasonable in light of the fact that the first departure took place on May 31st. The two advertisements are very different in both format and content, but one thing they have in common is that neither makes any mention of Canada. They, or at least Horneman, must have feared that the name of that country would result in just the opposite of what they hoped to achieve. The advertisement in *Dagstelegrafen* is based on Heller's contract. Written in very readable language, it appears to have been intended for the average wage earner. The advertisement in *Møns Folkeblad*, on the other hand, is based on the government agreement with the railway company. It seems a bit stuffy and 'government certified', as if to inspire confidence, and was directed to the farmer or farm labourer with a desire to own something of his own one day.

But why was there no advertising campaign?

It is perhaps fair to assume that Heller/Horneman started too late (Heller says this in an interview upon his return home). The advertisement was undoubtedly sent to all of Horneman's agents, who must have felt that it was scarcely worth the expense to begin beating the drum at so late a date. The agent on the island of Møn may have decided to use the advertisement simply because, as he was a printer and editor of the newspaper, this was easily done.

An advertisement is a kind of invitation to stop in and make further inquiry. It is therefore interesting to consider what exactly was covered by General Agent Horneman's claim that "any desired information will be given".

Another question which comes to mind is how – with virtually no advertising – Horneman managed to assemble such a large group of emigrants – from all corners of Denmark. The fact is that a group of 27 people did leave Copenhagen on May 31st, 1872, and they must have had sufficient information to make them dare to lift anchor. Unless, of course, they were 'entrapped'. There was undoubtedly a steady flow of customers through the offices at 13 Nyhavn as well as the other agencies in Copenhagen and provincial towns. Some of these customers had definite plans for which they were prepared to pay. Many others must have found it difficult to put a plan into practice for which they barely had the means. It is both expensive and hard to be poor and forced to choose second best. It was worst of all for the prospective emigrant who had no hire for the summer months. He would have to do whatever work he could get, for whatever wage, if he did not emigrate.

You could travel "free of charge" to Australia as this country would pay your passage. You could go to Santos, Brazil for 44 'rigsdaler' (corresponding to around $25), while the fare to New York amounted to 66 rigsdaler.

What would the agent recommend?

This is where Captain Heller entered the picture! He inspired confidence with his guarantee of land, work and wages and the promise of the market's lowest price for passage to North America. Horneman backed him up. It can only be a fine journey. The Captain will accompany you all the way – there will be no American 'sharks' waiting when you dock. A house has been built for you – for the whole family.

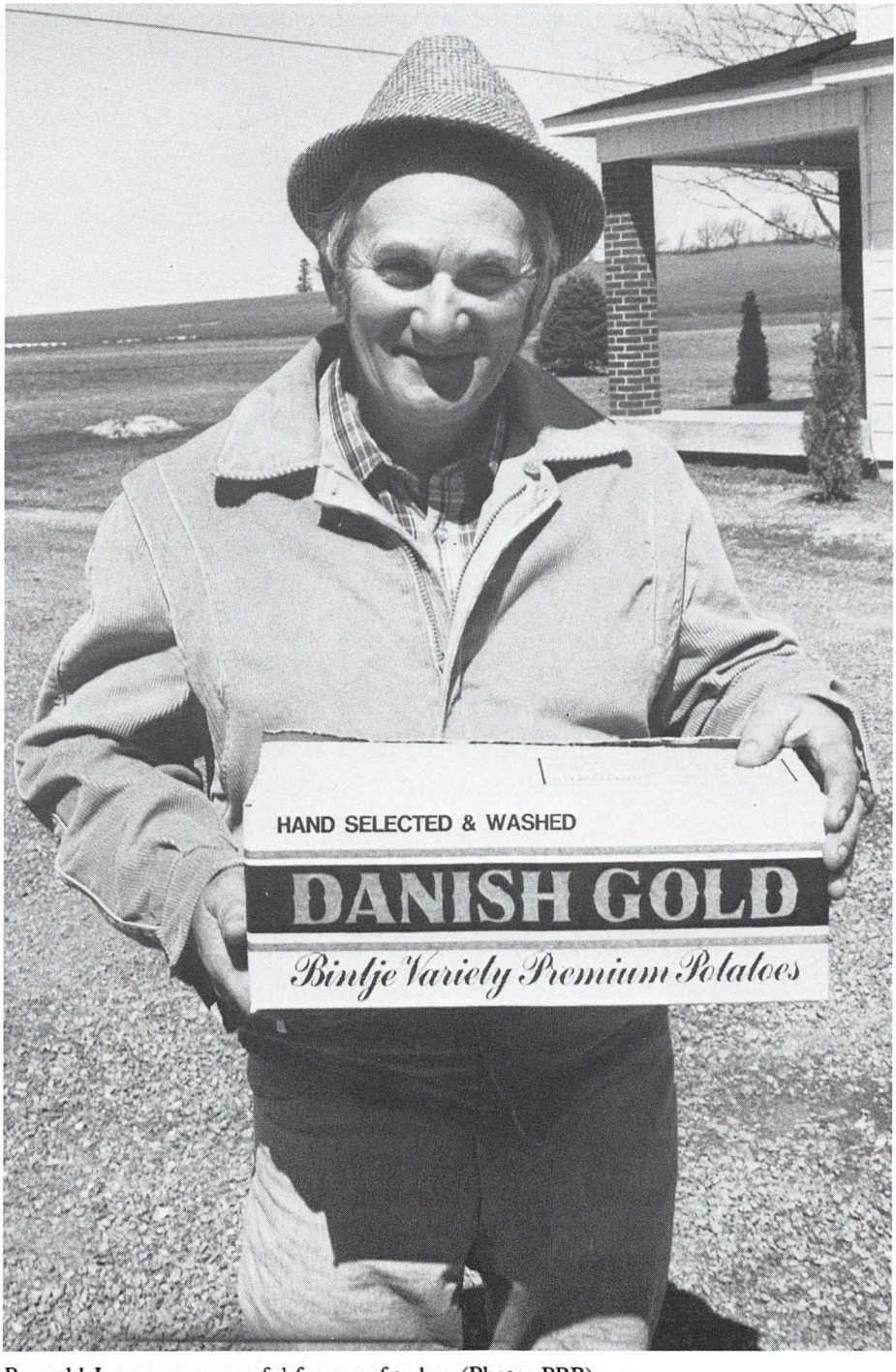
Look here! Read and decide for yourself!

Then they were given General Surveyor Stevenson's Danish-language pamphlet – any desired information will be given!

There was a lot of information – here is just a taste of it:

> Emigrants from – Denmark will come to a country as advanced in all respects of civilization as the country they have left, but free from many of the social, legal and economic drawbacks which often render life in the older countries unpleasant and labour unremunerative.

Fair words – but one bit of information, which appeared a couple of years later, was missing: the most important baggage an emigrant could carry was a strong axe and a hoe!



Raynald Jensen, a successful farmer of today. (Photo: PBB).

There was not a word about the fact that the entire 100 acres of fertile farmland due every man was covered with forest that no immigrant would describe as beautiful or lovely. In short – had the Danes been entrapped?

It seems fair to claim that in 1872 it was a matter of general knowledge that all the uncultivated land in eastern North America was covered with forest; it would therefore hardly have been necessary to write this. It was simply a natural obstruction that had to be cleared out of the way, and now with far better tools than those previously available.

There is little room for indignation. The Danes learned quickly to use their axes and hoes, and they themselves had no hesitancy in 'luring' others of their countrymen in the years shortly thereafter.

New Denmark could scarcely have survived, developed and grown if the work of clearing the land had been impossible. In the American magazine *Dannevirke* there was an advertisement from Dansk Folkesamfund's [The Danish People's Society] colony, Askov, in Minnesota. It said: "...We have excellent uncultivated land for sale...at reasonable prices." There was not a word about the 15 to 20 foot high scrub and huge stumps covering tons of rocks which had to be moved before the land could be ploughed. And this was from countryman to countryman in 1920!

Identifying the emigrants

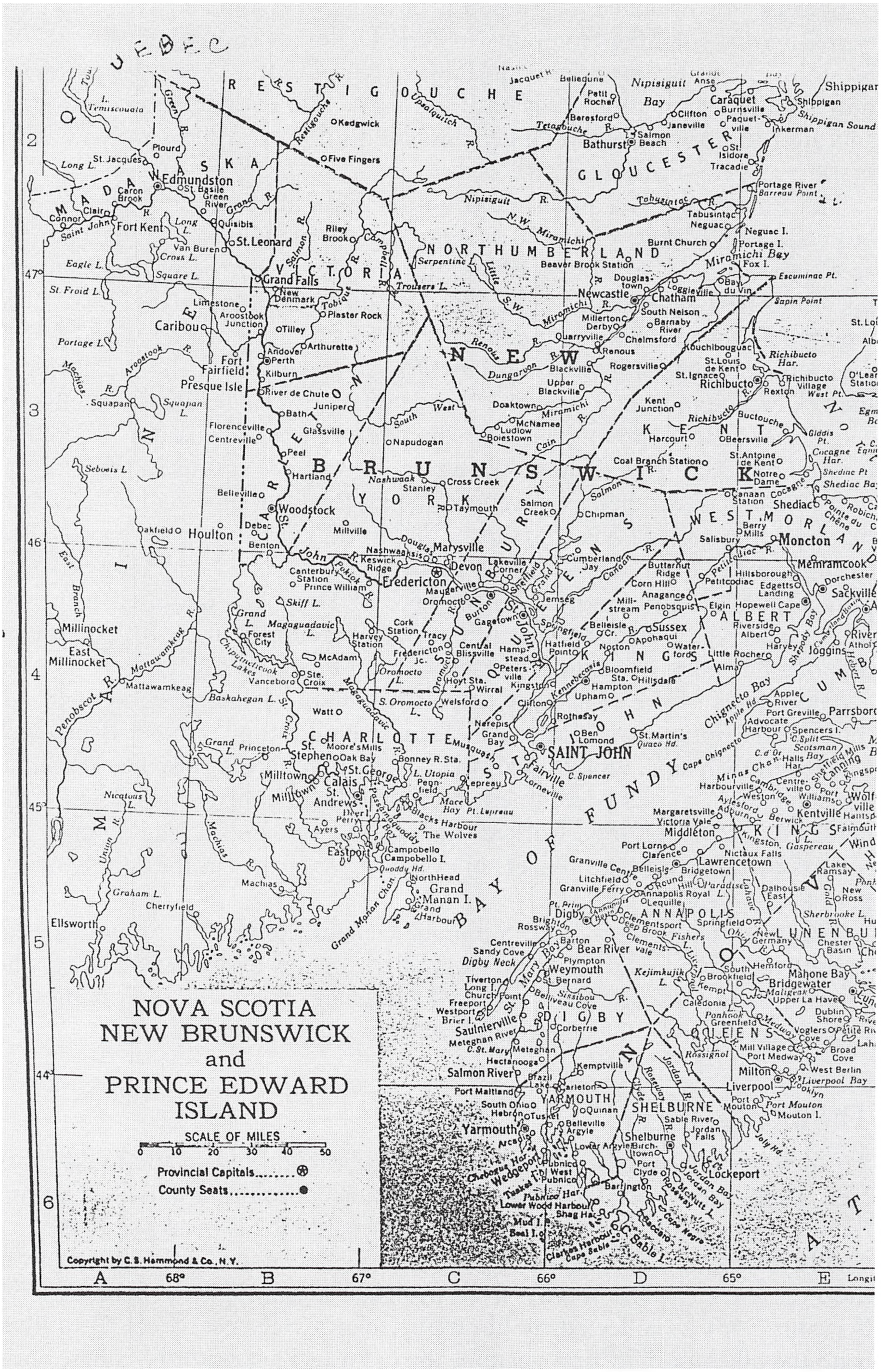
In the enormous list of emigrants to all parts of the world in the *Danish Emigration Records*, it is, of course, possible to identify those who travelled to Canada.

There were not many.

In the years until 1900 I counted a total of 4,644. Although this seems a small number, the number of those who remained in Canada was probably smaller still. Many emigrants listed Quebec as their destination, and we know that after 1873, when the Ottawa government decided to generously subsidize Canadian traffic over the Atlantic, Quebec became a much-used harbour of transit, also for those travelling to the midwestern United States.

Captain Heller was a methodical man, and, thanks to this, all the Danes who emigrated with him consistently listed St. John, New Brunswick, as their destination. Prior to 1872, St. John, New Brunswick, does not appear in the Danish Emigration Records. Captain Heller's efforts did contribute to the prospective emigrant's awareness of Canada.

There is little doubt that when an emigrant listed St. John, New Brunswick, as his destination, he was on his way to what was to become New Denmark. That not all emigrants reached this destination is another matter. There are always a few who change course along the way and are none the worse off for that.


NOVA SCOTIA
NEW BRUNSWICK
and
PRINCE EDWARD
ISLAND
SCALE OF MILES
0 10 20 30 40 50
Provincial Capitals
County Seats
Copyright by C. S. Hammond & Co., N.Y.
QUEBEC
RESTIGOUCHE
GLOUCESTER
MADAWASKA
VICTORIA
NORTHUMBERLAND
CARLETON
YORK
SUNBURY
QUEENS
KENT
WESTMORLAND
ALBERT
KINGS
SAINT JOHN
CHARLOTTE
NEW BRUNSWICK
BAY OF FUNDY
ANNAPOLIS
DIGBY
YARMOUTH
SHELBURNE
LUNENBURG
Edmundston
Bathurst
Newcastle
Chatham
Fredericton
Woodstock
Moncton
Saint John
Richibucto
Dorchester
Kentville
Digby
Yarmouth
Shelburne
Liverpool
Bridgewater
Annapolis Royal
Houlton
Calais
Eastport
Grand Manan I.
Chignecto Bay
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Because of its isolated location, it is possible with some degree of certainty to identify potential emigrants to New Denmark throughout the 1870s. St. John, New Brunswick, and Halifax, Nova Scotia, were the preferred ports of disembarkation. Not until the early 1880s was Quebec included, and after that time it is no longer possible to trace travellers to New Denmark using the Emigration Records.

The Emigration Records should not be thought of simply as an enormous collection of pages, with 20 or more names listed on each, to be counted and organized for study in tables and graphs. Each name represents a person of flesh and blood: fathers and mothers, sons and daughters, all of whom left loved ones behind forever. Many can be traced – in church registers and census lists, in *History of New Denmark*, in the memories of their descendants and on the headstones in the colony's well-kept cemeteries. How moving it is to discover that it is possible to follow, throughout their lives, Danes one has 'met' for the first time in the Emigration Records. Also their children can be traced from christening to confirmation and marriage, via court cases, letters and various other records, and through two world wars in which many were wounded and some killed.

It is possible to identify a small piece of Denmark mounted in a new frame, and – in contrast to the other Danish colonies in North America – this one has been maintained intact with no form for subsidy.

The names of the emigrants can also be found in another context. Although the initiative which led to Danish emigration to New Brunswick was taken by a single individual, the government of the province served as the sponsor. And this government wanted to be kept up-to-date on how the new *Free Grants Act 1872* worked. Statistical statements were prepared and reports made about the progress of every single farmer in the colony over a period of 6 years.

These annual reports from Surveyor General Stevenson provide an exceptional source material. Here we find the names of all those Danes who reached their destination and received a free land grant – all their names are written in the *LCJ – Legislative Council Journal.*

The pioneers of 1872

An unbelievable number of things have been collected in the museum in New Denmark – so many that the important items are almost lost among the unimportant. Some significant written material has been preserved in a small cupboard. There is, among other things, a collection of articles from the *Legislative Council Journal* from the 1870's. Entitled "As Seen by Civil Servants", it was collected by librarian Helen Craig (née Nielsen) to illustrate the all important first years of the colony. There can, of course, be a

St. Ansgar's Cemetery. The Carlsen family tombstone. (Photo: PBB).

world of difference between the way something is viewed by well-set-up civil servants and the tales of despair and hopelessness otherwise passed down from generation to generation.

There is only one thing to do when dealing with such material: collect as much of it as possible from both sides and then attempt to describe without passing judgement. I owe Helen Craig my thanks, as it was the reading of her little collection that inspired me to start digging. The book, *History of New Denmark* points out that the group who left Denmark on May 31st, 1872 with Captain Heller as their leader counted 29 persons: 6 families with a total of 10 children and 7 bachelors. We also learn that 5 of the 6 families remained in New Denmark and have descendants there. They were: "Anders Carlsen, Niels Christensen and Lars Clausen, as well as Sigvald Johansen and Ferdinand Nielsen." The way this is written leaves it open to doubt as to whether precisely these 5 families were among Heller's pioneers. According to the Danish Emigration Records they were not. We know definitely 1) that there was a departure on May 31st, 1872 and 2) that the people on that ship were destined for St. John and New Brunswick. This gives us 27 names distributed among 5 families with 7 children and 10 bachelors. Only 2 of the families, those of Anders Carlsen and Lars Clausen are included in the list in *History of New Denmark*. The Emigration Records

The descendants of pioneer Anders Carlsen. (Photo: PBB).

tell us that the Niels Christensen family made their journey in April, 1873, and that Ferdinand Nielsen's family departed in May, 1873.

We are left with the family of Sigvald Johansen, and according to the Emigration Records he didn't go to New Denmark at all. No one of that name travelled to St. John, New Brunswick. There are about 50 pages of 20 names each beginning with the letter J. Sigvald is listed as Poul Sivert Johansen. He was a tailor from Bjerre in Vejle county, and according to the Emigration Records he and his wife and child departed for Racine, Wisconsin, USA, on May 25th, 1872. While crossing the Atlantic he must have been talked into changing his destination, or perhaps he couldn't help joining the big, merry company of countrymen.

There was another interesting family in this flock of pioneers, and that was the family of Hans Peter Petersen from Copenhagen. Hans Peter was unquestionably the person with the greatest influence on the start and further development of the colony, but the family left New Denmark in 1893 – in disgrace – and did not leave descendants there.

In Halifax, Nova Scotia, the Danish group changed ships. They left the *Caspian* and boarded the *Empress* which carried them to St. John. From there they travelled by river steamer to the capital of Fredericton, where

they were met by Surveyor General Stevenson. He and one of his employees accompanied the group on the remainder of their journey up the mighty St. John River. They reached the mouth of the Salmon River the next morning, and here they were put ashore with all their baggage. Stevenson's vivid description of the trip concludes as follows: "There were shouts of 'Hurra' as the steamer put off again." And now they faced the hardest part of the journey, a two mile climb from the river up an extremely steep hill following a scarcely cleared trail to the Emigrant House.

The first days

The following passage is from *History of New Denmark*.

> They landed on the Whitehead Flats on June 19th, 1872. As two of the women were ill, they sought aid from the settlers living on the flats. One of these settlers, Charles Watson, with a team of horses and a sled, took them up the two-mile trail through the woods to their destination. The route which they travelled was slightly south of the road which is now known as the 'Lucy Gulch Road'.

Stevenson wrote:

> The house was not in the state of preparation I had contracted for, and I felt at first uneasy lest dissatisfaction should be expressed. In this, however, I was mistaken. In a few minutes the party with me seemed determined cheerfully to make the best of it, and set to work preparing their beds for the night, on the floor of the building. I had arranged that straw should be on the ground ready for use; and by eight o'clock all were comfortably cared for and went to bed contented, though tired, having had little sleep on board the steamer the night before.
>
> Next morning all were in good spirits, and went vigorously to work under the direction of the Hon. Mr. Beckwith and myself, to pile and burn the acre of land that had been chopped down around the building. On consultation with Mr. Beckwith, I determined to remain at this place until matters were fully arranged, and organization perfected for the employment of the men on the roads to be made to and through the settlement. By Saturday night the land had been cleared, and some potatoes planted, and the house had assumed a very homelike appearance, and all seemed contented and satisfied, having received their pay for their work and seen the beginning of the work that was before them as new settlers, and in twenty-two days after leaving Copenhagen having seeded land which is to be theirs under the *Free Grants Act*.

Emigrant House in New Denmark. (Photo: PANB, George Taylor Collection).

On Sunday, a religious service, consisting of the reading of part of the Lutheran Church Service, with prayers and singing of hymns specially selected as suitable to the occasion, was conducted with very becoming spirit by Mr. Petersen, and many seemed touched by the references to their fatherland, their new home, and the prospect before them.

History of New Denmark describes life in the forest:

The experience of others was of little use to them, because they were unfamiliar with the language of their adopted country. At first, in frenzied hopelessness, they attempted with inexperienced hands to fell the giant trees; then, not knowing the uses to which fire can be put in an extremity, they set to work to bury the hardwood logs in order that they might snatch from the forest a small area on which to raise some precious grain.

Frequently, today, when excavations are undertaken in this district, the remains of these logs are unearthed.

Stevenson continued his report:

> Next day all went to examine the lots which were located to them. These lots were drawn by ballot, and all seemed satisfied with their selections. I remained fourteen days with these settlers... Captain Heller remained with me four days, and it is due to him to remark that the kindly feeling expressed in the moist eyes of many, and the hearty cheer of all the party as he left, was the strongest testimony that they had been well cared for by him, and were satisfied with his fulfilment of the assurances which had induced them to come to this country. Before leaving he named the settlement "Hellerup", the name of a place not far from Copenhagen, and not inappropriate from its association of their own country with himself who had sought out this new home for them.
>
> I found the employment of some of our own people to work with the Danes was highly advantageous, as thereby they soon learned the use of the axe, as also to take advantage of many means of more expeditiously doing work which they could not otherwise have so readily learned.

History of New Denmark continues:

> Terrible must have been the misgivings of those early inmates of the old Emigrant House, where they all lived packed together. They had come from a country that resembled a gigantic garden, and now they looked out on endless forest... Many of the weaker hearts, whose hopes had been reduced to dust and ashes at the first sight of their new home, sought solace in useless tears. The stouter characters, however, faced the future with grim determination.

It is undoubtedly correct that, compared with New Brunswick in the year 1872, Denmark was a gigantic garden. But few of those who emigrated in the 1870s had been allowed to pluck their own flowers or harvest their own fields: they had toiled with little hope for change, which probably contributed to their decision to leave it all behind. Not many years passed before their hard work was rewarded: a new 'gigantic garden' was created in New Denmark. A similar metamorphosis created the pioneers who remained at home to cultivate the Danish moors, but this took many more years, in much poorer soil, under even more primitive conditions, requiring even harder work.

Life in the forest

But life went on. Many of those who could afford it left. The poorer people, those with families, stayed.

"A child has been born in the settlement, and everyone has had good health." A rather strange comment in light of the next sentence which reads: "Scarlet fever... 3 children died of it in September."

Pastor Leopold Hoyt was a minister of the Anglican church in Andover, approximately 20 km. down the St. John River. In his *Reminiscences* he describes how his life was affected when immigrants came to Victoria County.

> I also visited the Danish colony and was received very cordially. Upon their invitation I visited this colony several times but a part of the people, who had been warned by their pastor in the old country that "America was the home of strange religions," became suspicious, and rather than be a cause of strife among them, I withdrew my services.

Pastor Hoyt's church register lists Danish names under both "Christenings" and "Marriages" in the years up to 1875, but none under "Funerals". On January 15, 1873, the Petersen family had a little girl christened, and her home is listed as "Hellerup", but on May 27, 1873, when Jens Christensen from Aalborg and Ane Marie Christensen from the Danish island of Læsø were married in the colony's first wedding ceremony, they listed their home as "New Denmark".

There is no mention of the name "Hellerup" in *History of New Denmark*, and it was discarded even before Captain Heller was out of the picture. According to Pastor Hoyt's church register, 3 children were christened on October 31, and all were from New Denmark.

Reinforcements from Denmark

Stevenson's report for the next fiscal year (October 1872-October 1873) is once again full of detail and extremely interesting. The winter had been hard and unusually long. But the Danes pulled through and continued to clear the land in preparation for the next group of settlers and to construct roads. A new Emigrant House measuring 100 ft. x 18 ft. (30.5 x 5.5 m.) was built. It was divided into 8 rooms, each with its own stove. There was still deep snow late in April, and as the group of 100 Danes arrived just at that time, Stevenson stopped them in St. John, where they were lodged in a barracks and given work laying water pipe. The local newspapers carried this account of the Danes, who were apparently much sought after:

The Fredericton Reporter, April 30, 1873:

An offer was made by the managers of *Western Extension* and the *Fredericton Branch* to carry the immigrants as far on their journey as this city, at the rate of $1.00 per head. This offer the government declined. The result is that on Monday morning last over twenty of them left for the United States, and there are indications that a number of others are about to follow suit. Had they been removed to Fredericton they would have been placed beyond the reach of Yankee crimps and sharpers, and in all probability would have become useful and thriving inhabitants of New Brunswick.

Spring came – the St. John River was ice free – and a reporter from the *Colonial Farmer* joined 80 Danish immigrants on the river steamer. His article appeared in the June 2nd issue of the paper:

A finer looking set of fellows than the men, or more active women than the ladies of the party, it would be difficult to find. Full of life and good spirits, they enlivened the tedious journey with song and sport... I cannot speak too highly of their musical talents, especially in the matter of time and expression. Their precision in this respect is unusual, so much so, that by paying strict attention, you could gather the general import of the song without understanding a single word. ... their spirits heightened when the steamer's whistle gave out a greeting to their friends over the hills – they were not so far away after all; and when at length, waiting on the hillside, were seen a dozen or more of their countrymen, their joy found vent in ringing cheers. Landed at Salmon River in a quarter of an hour, the most affectionate feelings were exchanged.

This report is signed CH – which stood for Charles Lugrin who was also secretary of the agricultural society, and he promised his readers that he would soon visit the colony and give a report of how his fellow passengers were getting on. He kept this promise 14 days later. On June 16 a well-written, enthusiastic article appeared in the *Colonial Farmer* – but it was not without a 'dig': "Quite a number of acres are 'junked and piled' as the phrase is. The population now amounts to a little over 150."

The American depression also left its mark on Canada. Very few Danes travelled further west in 1874. But in one special area there was a new Danish initiative under way. The Home Mission was preparing to send clergymen to America so that the churchless, godless Danes in a foreign land would not have to make do with pastors or laymen who were followers of the Danish educator and minister, Nikolai Frederik Severin Grundtvig.

Dear Brothers and Sisters in the Lord, let us who call ourselves

> friends of the Home Mission bear in mind what a blessed field now lies before us ready for harvest. How many shriveled Danish souls there must now be in America, longing to hear the Saviour's gospel in a language they can understand.

This message appeared in *Den Indre Missions Tidende* [The Home Mission Times] under the pseudonym "Monitor" in 1874 (no. 22, page 346) The message continued:

> We must either support the Grundtvigian mission in America or – if we are unable, or will not do this – begin ourselves.

This topic had concerned Monitor since 1867, and now the idea began to bear fruit: Vilhelm Beck and the Home Mission's board were in favour of such an initiative. And in August, 1875, he reported that the first pastor to receive support from the Home Mission had left for the colony "Hellerup" in Canada, which for several years had continued to ask the Home Mission to secure a pastor for them.

Beck wrote:

> ...having referred them to school teacher Hansen in Hallensløv, they offered him the post as pastor and teacher for their children some time ago, and he has now this summer decided to accept this call. He – like myself – has proven his friendship for the Home Mission throughout the past many years... in addition, it is he, who with his articles in *Den Indre Missions Tidende* under the pseudonym "Monitor", has probably given the greatest impetus to the task of creating a mission among our countrymen in America.

Shortly after Pastor Beck's report appeared, N.M. Hansen (Monitor) wrote the following:

> God willing, I shall depart on August 20 for the Danish colony "Hellerup" in Canada... (he was meant to have left on August 13).

We can also find teacher Hansen in the Danish Emigration Records of 1875 where he and his family take up almost half a page. There are 8 children. His profession is listed as clergyman. Quite a number of his parishioners set out with him to settle in New Denmark: Smallholder Hans Nielsen with his wife and 2 children, farmer Ole Nielsen with his wife and 7 children and 2 young people described as domestic servants. A widow and her sister, a bricklayer, an agricultural trainee, and yet another domestic servant, making a total of 30 persons.

In this way New Denmark got its own pastor. And although those who had called him apparently had moved further west by the time Hansen arrived, he succeeded – in spite of many difficulties – in obtaining a position with the Anglican church. This was accomplished with the aid of the good minister, Leopold Hoyt, who had continuously, however, to pull chestnuts out of the fire for him.

Rasmus Andersen, one of the first Danish pastors in the United States, wrote a book about Hansen/Monitor. In this book he frequently quotes one of the best sources of church information in New Denmark, Pastor Hansen's eldest daughter, Rosa. The church for which the foundation stone was laid in 1877 was not dedicated until 1884. In a letter to Dean Vahl of Karrebæk, Denmark, printed in *Almindelig Kirketidende* [The Ordinary Church Times] (1884, page 237) Pastor Hansen wrote:

> I and my small, faithful flock have completed our church, which has taken us just as long to build as it took Solomon to build his temple. It has the same form as a Danish country church. I must tell you that this is a great triumph as there were just as many who tried to hinder the building of this church as to assist it.

Confirmation in St. Ansgar's Church in 1898. (Photo: PANB).

Tremendous differences of opinion were developing in New Denmark – many of these centred on the person of the pastor.

Pastor Hansen stayed in New Denmark until 1895, when he retired. The Anglican church, St. Ansgar's Church, stands on its hilltop. And on the other side of the road – the colony's Main Road – stands St. Peter's. One might think this was a Catholic church, but it is the protestant church built in 1905, by which time it had become apparent that there were differences. Differences which never took on much significance in Pastor Hansen's time, where as much as possible was done exactly as it had been in the church in Hallensløv. The 1881 census showed that few Danes were aware of the differences: of 396 people, 128 said they were members of the Anglican church – the remainder – 2/3's of the total, are listed as Lutherans. Today the differences are negligible.

Due to the material in the Danish Emigration Records, as well as in the statistics prepared by the provincial government, church registers, congregational records, census reports and surveyor's maps, there are few, if any, Danish settlements in North America as well documented as New Denmark.

Taken together, these sources make it possible to make 'cross references' and determine just exactly who is who.

It is exciting to sit down with older and old 'Danes' in New Denmark and examine the Danish Emigration Records. Great is their desire to try to trace families and the past.

Among young people, who no longer speak Danish, there is a surprising eagerness to identify themselves with their heritage.

The province of New Brunswick can still be thought of as a developing area – the price of land is not sky-high as it is in the west, where oil and natural gas have been discovered. Land speculators have left the 'Danes' in New Denmark alone – they, on the other hand, mourn the loss of the many young people who want to move west – where "things are happening".

Notes:

1. *History of New Denmark*. New Denmark Women's Institute, 1967.
2. Rasmus Andersen *Pastor N. M. Hansen (Monitor)*. Minneapolis, Minn., American Press Co., 1930.

A History of Dickson, Alberta, Canada

Margarethe Nissen, Esther Thesberg and Andy Kjearsgaard
with the editorial assistance of Juanita Nissen and Barry Dowler

Ready for the parade at the Markerville School Fair.

The Dickson church

Bethany is the name of the Lutheran Church in Dickson, Alberta, Canada, and there has been a congregation as long as this Danish settlement has existed. The first Danes who came to Dickson had been living in Omaha, Nebraska, U.S.A. for a few years when they heard that homestead land for $10 per 160 acres was available about 20 miles west of Innisfail and just north of the Red Deer River in Alberta. When the group finally, on the advice of the two scouts who had been sent up to investigate, decided to move to Canada, they met in the home of Carl Christiansens in February 1903 to form a congregation; they named it Pella after their congregation in Omaha.

When Fred Pedersens, Laust Christensens and John Jensen, as the vanguard, arrived on their homesteads early in May 1903, they were absolutely dependent on God and on one another. During the week they worked together to get their log houses built, and on Sundays they gathered in one another's tents with their Danish Bibles, hymnbooks and a book of sermons for services.

Carl Christiansens, Henry Larsens, Chris Larsens and Chris Christiansen, arriving in July, joined their fellow members in worship. That first Christmas Eve and Christmas Day they celebrated together in Henry Larsen's and in Fred Pedersen's homes, respectively.

About this time the group decided they needed their own pastor and church building. Pastor J.C. Gundesens arrived in September 1904, and took up a homestead just west of the quarter he had bought from G.B. Christiansen, the Synod President, who took great interest in his former parishioners from Omaha.

As "Pella" most likely had not been officially registered it was decided to form a new congregation, Siloam, on September 11, 1904, and from then on Pastor Gundesen led the services, held mostly in his home, as it was the roomiest, when it was finished for Christmas 1904.

New settlers kept arriving – some from and around Blair, others from North Dakota and still others from Chicago. The need for a church home became more pressing. Fred Pedersens had donated 5 acres a mile east of where the church is today, and some logs had already been gathered. As later settlers had had to take up land farther south and west because the Icelanders occupied the land north and east, the centre of the settlement had shifted and some felt that a new site should be chosen.

Hurt feelings resulted, and in July 1906 the old Pella congregation was revived and there were two congregations in the small colony. Pastor Gundesen served both. By the grace of God, the two factions came together again, and in December that same year Bethany congregation was formed,

Bethany Lutheran Church, *circa* 1940. (Photo: M. Nissen).

and most of the services were held in the school house which had just been built.

In 1907, the congregation decided to build a church on land across from the school, donated by Marius Eliassen. Lonneberg and L. Adamsen went out west that winter to fell logs and have them sawed into lumber. The church was dedicated in 1911.

In 1909, Bethany had called a new pastor, Rev. J.G.V. Magnussen, who served until 1914. Pastor Gundesen stayed on and served the people when they had no pastor, while also trying to gather the Danes around Olds and Calgary for service. Congregations were later formed in both places. Pastor Gundesen died in 1920.

Senior Citizens' Day at Dickson Church, *circa* 1929-30.

Very early, Bethany had organized a Sunday school, a young peoples' society, a ladies' aid, a mission society and a choir (led by Fred Pedersen for many years), a string band, and later, a drum and fife band. The church was the centre of the community, providing confirmation instruction, special fall meetings with guest speakers, a Dominion Day picnic and Mother's Day program. The ladies put on bazaars, suppers for special occasions, and also served coffee and cake for weddings and funerals. The church basement was a busy place.

The church building, the parsonage, and the cemetery were faithfully maintained; this together with paying the pastor's salary, etc. was a sacred trust to the comparatively few and struggling farmers who made up the congregation. Attendance was good even when the congregation was without a pastor. Services were held as usual, the choir sang, the sermon was read by one of the deacons, Fred Pedersen and John Petersen led the singing, while other talented members played the organ.

The settlement kept on growing; new people were drawn by the fact that there was a live church. In spite of poverty, stubbornness, clannishness, and other human frailties, the Kingdom of God came first with these people.

Quite a number of pastors have served Bethany faithfully – small salaries, primitive conditions, poor roads, and often inclement weather, notwithstanding. Each contributed to the life of the congregation and the community in his own special way. The names of the pastors are:

J.C. Gundesen 1904-9; 1914-15
J.G.V. Magnussen 1909-14
H.P.A. Andersen 1915-21
C. Sorensen 1921-23
N. Bentzen 1926-29
P. Nyholm 1929-35
K. Ludvigsen – Interim
J. Ravnkilde-Moller 1936-39
P. Thorslev 1940-44
E. Olsen 1945-51
E. Romer 1951-52
O. Larsen 1952-58
C. Hansen 1959-69
H. Rasmussen 1969-72
W. Josephson 1972-74
D. Rasmussen 1974-88
R. Randoy – Interim
H. Eriksson – Interim
L. Kochendorfer 1989-
Others who served:
Pastor Daleske
Mr. Jens Dixen
Mr. Elmer Rawling

It was in 1929, after a time of spiritual renewal during Bentzen's time, and after Dixen conducted a short high school course for about 10 young people, that this layman felt led to ask Paul Nyholm to consider a call to Bethany. He felt there were opportunities for growth, especially among the young people. It can only be considered an answer to prayer when Pastor Nyholm gave up his city congregation in Des Moines, Iowa, U.S.A., as well as his part-time teaching position at Grand View College, and came to the two small country congregations, Bethany at Dickson and Emmanuel in Kevisville, in Western Canada.

Along with his congregations, Nyholm started the high school in Dickson, the Lutheran Bible Camp at Sylvan Lake and co-operated in establishing the Lutheran Bible Institute in Camrose. In his spare time he visited the scattered Danes in Alberta and started the paper, *Kirken og Hjemmet* which gained a wide circulation in all of Canada; it even survived the transition to English as *Church and Home*.

In 1935 Nyholm was asked by the Synod to teach at its seminary for pastors in Blair, Nebraska, and the congregation lost its beloved pastor, but the connection lasted until his death.

In the sixties, while Carl Hansen was the pastor, it was felt that the old building was too small, though it had been enlarged in the thirties during Ravnkilde-Moller's time. As it needed rather costly repair, it was decided to erect a new church connecting it to the vacated, comparatively new, six-room school building across the road. This property had come into the possession of the congregation via the High School Association, which had obtained it for $1.

The new church was dedicated June 23, 1968. The spacious sanctuary, the Sunday school rooms, the church parlour, and the kitchen have greatly enhanced the work of the congregation.

The first many years, Danish was used at all gatherings, but as the children grew up, in spite of Danish Summer School, English was the

Choir reunion, *circa* 1950.

language they preferred, so there was a request for some English. It became a problem. The old generation loved their mother tongue, for their culture and spiritual life had been nurtured in the Danish language. Confirmation classes and the Sunday school introduced some English in the thirties, and for the future of the church, and for the sake of the young people, some English services, too, were introduced. It was also increasingly difficult to get pastors who could master Danish, as all their education had been in English, so by 1955 only English was used in the church.

But that does not mean that our Danish heritage has been forgotten; some of the Danish customs have been adopted and are cherished by people whose roots are not Danish. In fact, many of Bethany's members today are of non-Danish background, but there is a vibrant and loving atmosphere in the congregation and great loyalty to the church.

Dickson Public School

The first recorded school meeting is dated January 23, 1906. The board consisted of Henry Larsen, senior trustee and treasurer, Mr. J.P. Tromburg and Anton Laursen. The school district was named Kingo after the

Danish poet, but the Department of Education thought the "o" was "s", so the district was registered as Kings.

On May 11, 1906, fifteen double desks, a teacher's desk and chair, a case of maps, one globe and a band bell were ordered for the total sum of $190. On June 27, a bid for the erection of the school from H. Matson for $823 was accepted. On September 12, 1906 a meeting was held in the new schoolhouse at which it was decided to pay Mr. Matson in full as soon as the outhouses were completed.

Miss Elmhurst was the first teacher. Pupils ranged in age from 7 years old to 15 and 16 years old.

Much credit goes to those early teachers who boarded with families in the area and had to make their way to the school to start a fire in the heater so the chill was somewhat out of the room before the children arrived.

Getting to school was not easy, especially in the cold winter months. Those who lived nearby walked, but others from further away rode horseback. The horses were tied in the school barn, and at noon the children went out to feed them some oats that had been tied to the saddle with the children's mid day school lunch.

Frequent absences of the pupils due to helping at home and bad weather made teaching difficult, but, in spite of these obstacles, most teachers were able to instill a love of learning in the children which enriched their lives. A small school library was a great asset to the pioneer families.

Dickson School, grades 1 through 12, *circa* 1944. (Photo: M. Nissen).

The annual Christmas concert was the big event of the year. Teacher and students spent weeks practising for the program. Plays, recitations, musical numbers, and drills entertained parents and friends who packed the little schoolhouse. Some of the performers were very self-assured and remembered their parts beautifully, but others developed stage fright and had to be prompted. However, each number was heartily applauded by the appreciative audience. Santa Claus usually arrived with treats for all the children.

During the summer, field days were held, games were played outdoors, and everyone participated in preparation for the annual Markerville School Fair. Spelling bees and other contests were held.

In 1922 the name of the school district was changed to Dickson to correspond with the name of the Post Office.

It was fortunate that during 1927-30, when there was an influx of immigrants directly from Denmark, Miss Ruth Tomsen, a local girl with knowledge of the Danish language, was teacher, making the transition period easier for the immigrant children.

The old school has been stabilized and restored. It is now operated by the Dickson Fish and Game Association and it is also the meeting place for the Boy Scouts. However, many people have memories of the old school where they were challenged to learn and improve themselves and become good citizens who, in return, have contributed to the development of Canada.

Dickson High School 1930-59

Before 1930 few Dickson young people had had the opportunity to go beyond Grade 8 in school. The nearest town, Innisfail, was 32 km. away over poor roads, and few families could afford to pay room and board for their youth to go to school in town.

When Pastor Paul Nyholm arrived from the States in 1929, he realized at once that the community needed a high school. He talked to his church council and to Miss Elsa Gundesen, the daughter of Dickson's first pastor. She had been teaching two winters at Dana Folk High School in Calgary, where Danish immigrants came to learn English. Miss Gundesen agreed to teach the proposed school, even if she were paid no more than the students' fees.

A high school association was formed by people from the congregation, who placed the church basement at the disposal of the school. Tables and blackboards were made and chairs were bought.

Then Pastor Nyholm and Miss Gundesen went to Edmonton to see the Department of Education. They laid the plans for a rural high school in

Teacher and students of the first Dickson High School class, 1930. (Photo: M. Nissen).

Dickson before Mr. McNally, the head of the department, and were greatly encouraged by his interest. He promised them a grant.

During the summer, all prospective students in the surrounding school districts were visited by Pastor Nyholm and urged to attend the new high school.

When the school opened in September 1930, students who had just finished their Grade 8 and the new Canadians went into Grade 9, and a number of students who already had their Grade 9, went into Grade 10. Nineteen students attended that first year with Miss Gundesen as teacher. As additional subjects were needed because more grades were added, part-time teachers taught some of the subjects until a second teacher could be hired. Pastor Nyholm taught Latin, E. Costella, algebra, Chris Christiansen, trigonometry and M. Nissen, German.

The young Danish men stayed in the home of Mrs. Gundesen, but it was difficult to find accommodation for girls from other districts who wished to attend the school. What was needed was a girls' dormitory. In spite of the fact that the country was in a depression and that there would be no grant available, the high school association, encouraged by the congregation, decided to build.

Pastor Bentzen, who had kept in touch with the congregation, had a farm in Dickson, and gave 5 acres for a site of the dormitory about 1 km. south of

the store. Architect Holm-Moller, Pastor Nyholm's father-in-law, offered to draw the plans and assist in the construction. Mr. Lonneberg was asked to be the master-builder. People helped in the ways they were able. Some gave grain, others a steer, one lady gave 2 geese, cash donations were given ranging from $5 to $100, and people donated their labour. The ladies served meals and later helped with the lathing, papering, and painting.

The dormitory was dedicated in 1933, and 12 girls moved in. In 1935 classes were moved from the church basement to the dormitory.

In 1938, as enrollment had steadily increased, the provincial government had built a new school in Dickson, and the high school moved into bigger facilities across the road from the church. Due to the consolidation of a large number of school districts, a much larger school complex was built in Spruce View, 3 km. north of Dickson, and the Dickson High School was absorbed into the Spruce View School in 1959, ending its 29 years of service to the community. The dormitory closed a few years later and was sold.

The Misses E. Gundesen and M. Nissen as well as Mrs. L. Westergaard and Mr. W. Sloan, were among the teachers who taught at the high school. Many of the students were confirmed while at the school; there developed a bond of friendship between the students and the members of the congregation.

Dickson Dormitory, *circa* 1939.

Quite a number of the students went on to further education. Some became businessmen, farmers, doctors, housewives, nurses, teachers, and university professors, as well as missionaries and pastors. All have become good citizens who love their Alma Mater and hold her in high esteem. Several reunions have been held, and people have travelled great distances to meet with former fellow students and teachers. The Dickson congregation has felt richly repaid for efforts and love poured into the Dickson High School.

Agriculture in Dickson and area

They came – they saw – they conquered. This, in one short sentence is the story of the people of Dickson and area. They came to this new land with one resolve – to become farmers. What they saw was most discouraging – in fact a lesser people would have folded their tents and left. They conquered – their pride and circumstances would not allow otherwise. And now residents and visitors alike can appreciate their resolve.

Dickson and the surrounding area have not always been as they now appear. It has been a long, evolutionary process from the stark wilderness area that existed in 1902 when Henry and Jim Larsen (not brothers), as advance scouts, inspected the area as a possible site for homestead settlement.[1] Little or no change in the landscape had taken place during the previous 20 years. It was in 1883, when T. Kairns and J.E. Woods,[2] as dominion land surveyors, described Township 36, Range 3 (in which Dickson and Spruce View are located), and the surrounding area as undulating prairie covered with scattered willows, poplar, short scrub and intermittent wet, swampy areas. These legal land surveys were being conducted in the area as a direct result of the *Dominion Lands Act of 1872*[3] which made it possible for every male over 18 years (or any widow) to acquire one quarter section (160 acres) of land for the nominal fee of $10.00, providing he/she intended to farm the land. To prove their intentions, these homesteaders, as they were called, were required to build a home within the first three years, and bring a minimum of 10 acres of land under cultivation each year. Having met these requirements, the farmer was granted title to his homestead.

This attractive means of obtaining land was responsible for the interest shown by the groups from Omaha, Nebraska. So when the two Larsens returned from their scouting mission, they reported that the area appeared suitable for farming, judging from the sleek and fat cattle grazing on large meadows. However, since their scouting trip had taken place during the winter, they had failed to recognize that the many relatively flat areas with grass protruding through the snow, were actually large sloughs and poorly

drained areas. Great reliance was placed on statements by Canadian government agents who said that a large tract of land west of Innisfail was suitable for mixed farming because of its fertile soil.[4] So these first 17 inexperienced farmers packed their belongings and headed northwestward to the land of promise.

Had they really known how difficult it would be to farm this raw land, they would probably never have claimed their homesteads. However, they persevered. They took advantage of the unwritten rule that the first to cut hay around a meadow on crown land could lay claim to that hay. So they had feed for their cows, and thus, milk and butter. With a few chickens for eggs, their basic food needs were met. Food supplies were augmented by wild berries, fish, and venison. Gradually they managed to break a few acres and could raise grain for their own needs and that of their livestock. Despite the odds, they had become farmers. After 1910, more homesteaders settled in the area, but most of them were experienced farmers. As time went on, more land was cleared, roads were built, and social structures established.

From the beginning it was apparent that farmers in the area could not rely only on field crops, but must diversify. Each farmer was truly a 'mixed farmer'. In addition to his grain crops, he also had livestock. A few milk

Buildings on early homesteads were often crudely built.

cows were a necessity, with excess production being sold to *Morkeberg's Creamery* in Markerville, about 15 km. to the northeast. A flock of hens was another source of income as excess eggs were sold at Carl Christiansen's store to help pay for groceries. With the low prices that seemed always to prevail, many farmers were able to get a better cash return by feeding their grain to hogs, sheep or beef cattle. In recent years, with the increased demand for vegetable oils, canola has become a more popular cash crop.

Gradually, beef cattle production emerged as the most popular enterprise; not only because of the greater profitability, but it was less labor intensive. Realizing the need for better cooperation among the feeder cattle operators, the Raven Feeders Association was formed in 1950[1], with Hans Hindbo as its first chairman. The purpose of the cooperative association was mainly to promote improvements in the local feeder cattle industry. Through its supervisor, it assisted farmers in the purchase of feeder cattle, and advised them in the management of their feed cattle operation. Hans Hindbo acted as its supervisor from 1955 to 1988. Today there are a number of feed lot operations in the area.

As successful farmers, they adapted to the soil and climatic conditions that existed, and made changes where possible to overcome detrimental conditions. Right from the start it was apparent that poor drainage was a very serious roadblock to successful farming. Following passage of the *Drainage Act of 1916*, the Dickson Drainage District was formed[1] whereby it could borrow money to construct drainage ditches. Two main ditches were excavated, one draining Martins Lake northwest of Spruce View, the second draining the area to the northwest of Dickson. They, together with their tributary ditches, drained a total of 15,360 acres of land which gradually became better suited for cultivated agriculture. Although the drainage project was beneficial, it nevertheless represented a severe tax burden to the farmers for many years after its 1922 completion.

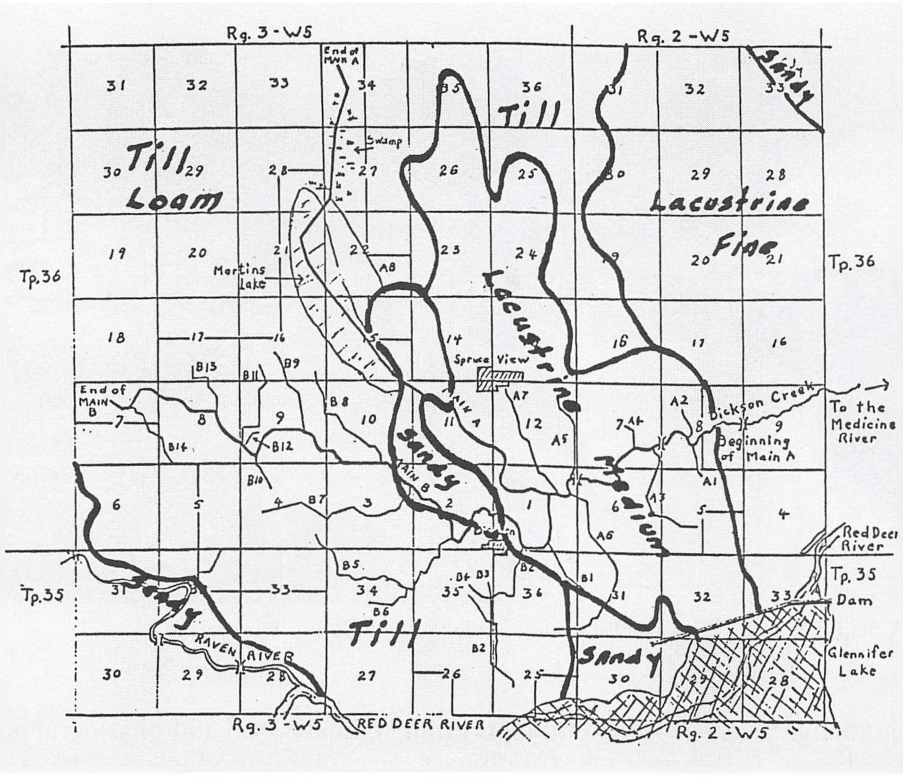
The farmers of the Dickson area have always been progressive in their thinking, and were constantly looking for ways and means of making practical improvements to agriculture in the area. With this in mind, they organized the Dickson Agricultural Association in 1936.[1] Among other things, this group arranged short courses in agriculture, organized youth clubs, arranged for livestock competition, and lobbied municipal and provincial governments for road improvements. It also helped lobby for an illustration station to be located in the Dickson area.

Illustration stations were an extension of the closest experimental farm operated by Agriculture Canada. Having an illustration station in the community meant that farmers could benefit from research in agriculutre. It was also a means of demonstrating good crop improvement programs, and improved animal husbandry techniques.

A typical feedlot operation. (Photo: Hans Hindbo).

These illustration stations were placed in communities with a unique problem related to agriculture. In the Dickson area the problems were: how to farm poorly drained soils, and the lack of early maturing crops suitable to the prevailing short growing season. Having recognized the need, the Lacombe Experimental Farm agreed to establish a station in Dickson. Consequently, the farm of Mr. and Mrs. Andrew Larsen, about 2 kms. north of Dickson, was chosen in 1936.[1] They operated the farm until 1943 when it was sold to John Sandberg. When he sold it in 1950, it ceased to operate as an illustration station.

During its 14-year history, test plots were maintained to test kinds and rates of fertilizer applications, as well as crop varieties and seeding rates. Experiments with various kinds of fruit trees and shrubs were conducted to determine which were the most adaptable to the climate. Regular field days were held to demonstrate to the farmers the benefits and knowledge gained from the experiments. There is no doubt that this venture was of immeasur-



Dickson drainage system.

able benefit to the farmers of the Dickson area, and at no direct cost to them.

Undoubtedly, the positive impact of the illustration station and the benefit of the farmers organizations were factors in this becoming a successful farming area. However, the greatest factor was, and is, the desire of the individual to succeed and achieve. Indicative of this are the recognitions gained by individuals and farm families. In 1950 and 1953, Chris Morck won the World Fall Rye Championship at both the Toronto Royal Fair and the Chicago International Show.[4] Later, in 1971, the Elwood Thompson family received the Master Farm Family Award from the Province of Alberta.[3] Probably no one individual had a greater impact on agriculture in the area than did Dan Morkeberg who operated the Markerville creamery. In addition to his being awarded the Silver Cross by the King of Denmark in 1924, he was elected to the Agriculture Hall of Fame in 1960.[4]

When the original farmers settled in the area, they did so with relatively

A field day at the Dickson Illustration Station. (Photo: Ruth Hjelmeland).

no thought or knowledge of the prevailing climatic, soil and physiographic conditions – all factors which influence agricultural production. The area enjoys moderately warm summers, but must endure long, cold winters, which, fortunately, are often interrupted by warm chinook winds from the west.

An average annual precipitation of 508 mm. (20 in.) was recorded from 1950 to 1980[5] at a weather station south of Eckville, about 25 km. north of Dickson. At the Dickson Illustration Station the comparable precipitation average was 556 mm. (21.9 in.) for the period 1941 to 1951.[1] Fortunately, about two-thirds of this precipitation falls during the growing season April to October.

Devastating hailstorms frequently sweep through the area leaving promising crops completely destroyed, to say nothing of the damage to buildings and discomfort to livestock. In fact, the *Alberta Hail and Crop Insurance Cooperation* has determined that the Dickson area has one of the highest hail index values in Alberta.[6]

With minor modifications, today's topographic features have existed since the Wisconsin glacier receded some 10,000 years ago.[3] It left behind a variety of deposits on which present day soils have developed. In Dickson and surrounding area, the majority of the deposits are glacial till,[7] with lesser amounts of medium (silt loam) and fine (clay loam) textured lacus-

trine (lake) deposits. A few areas of sandy fluvial (stream) deposits occur, usually associated with river and stream channels.

Being in the Black Soil Zone,[7] all the soils have black surface colors indicative of a relatively high organic matter content. Potentially, all are highly productive, given an adequate moisture supply. Overall, the topography is gently undulating, and therefore is of little or no hindrance to cultivation. The elevation in the Dickson area is about 945 m. (3,100 ft.) above sea level, and increases as one proceeds westward.

For purposes of rating land for agriculture, a system has been devised in Alberta which recognizes the three major components of climate, soil characteristics, and landscape features, and their influence on agricultural production.[8] This system places the Dickson area in Agroclimatic Area 3H, which has been defined as having a moderate heat limitation because of the relatively short frost-free period of about 80 days.[9]

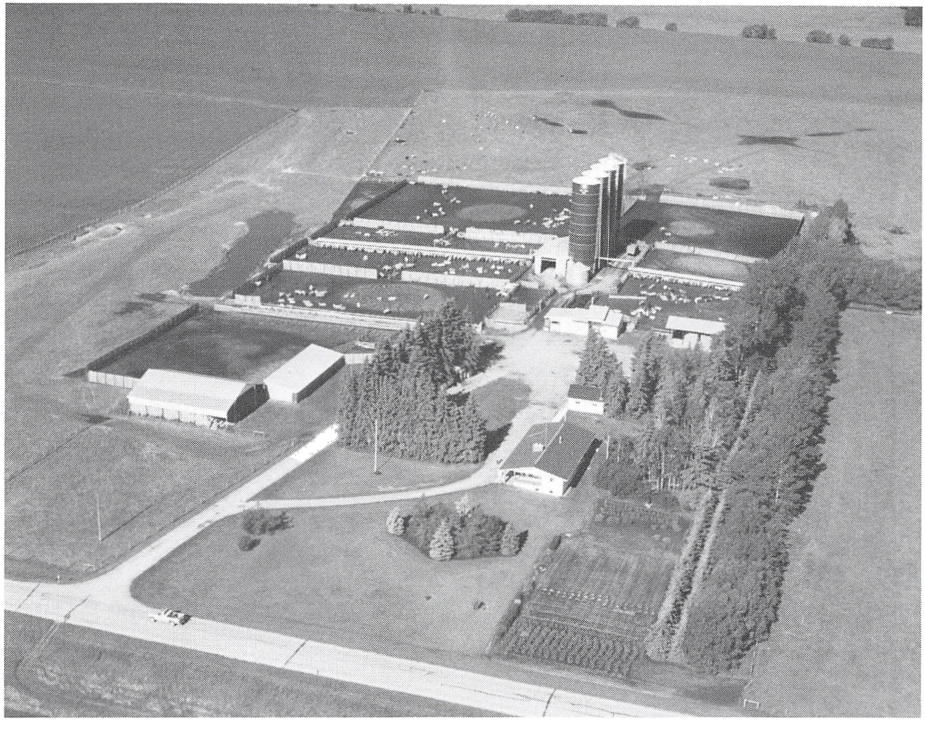
Current land use practices in this general area reflect the fact that it is a mixed farming area. Researchers report that about 72% of the area is cropland, and the remaining 28% is pasture.[10] Of the cropland, about 58% is in barley, 34% is used for feeds and forages, 4% is used for oil seeds production, and only 2% grows wheat.

If you visit this farming community, think back to the early pioneers and imagine the countryside as it was then. Compare that to what you now see – well kept farmsteads nestling within neatly trimmed shelterbelts – painted farm houses surrounded by lawns and gardens – nearby barns and granaries awaiting the hoped-for rich harvest – huge tractors and farm machinery ready to do their bit – rectangular fields of grain fenced to keep cattle in adjacent pastures. As you view this scene, remember – it is a tribute to the early settlers who laid the foundation for this successful mixed farming community.

Leisure time

Out of necessity, leisure activities often centered around church and school. Sunday afternoon visits to each others' homes gave the adults a chance to discuss events and share experiences, while the younger generation played games. Fellowship over a cup of coffee was enjoyed before everyone returned home to attend to evening chores.

The 1st of July (Dominion Day) picnic was an important social event attended by people from surrounding areas. Usually there was a political speaker plus entertainment by the choir and other musical groups. There were races for all ages including ring-riding followed by ball games. Of course, there was lots of good food and other treats including ice cream, sometimes homemade – all available at modest prices.



A modern farmstead and feedlot near Dickson.

Sunday school picnics at Dickson and Kevisville were also highlights.

Occasionally, box socials were held, where ladies brought decorated boxes containing enough goodies for two people. Their names were attached, but carefully concealed. The boxes were auctioned to the highest bidder. The bidding became lively when a young swain thought he knew which box belonged to the lady of his choice, for then he would be her companion at lunch!

The Young People's Society held formal debates dealing with subjects such as: "Be it resolved that the present depression is a blessing in disguise."

Fishing and hunting were respites from the daily routine as well as providing food for the table. Even the children got into the act because the Department of Agriculture paid them a few pennies for gopher tails and crow and magpie legs, pests to the farmers. It fell to the lot of the school teacher to count the bounty, which was brought to the school in match boxes, and then dispense the money.

In late summer an enjoyable outing was going to the West Country to pick blueberries and cranberries. Several families would plan to go together

by horse and buggy and, in later years, by car. The ladies packed a substantial lunch, including fresh farm cream to be served with the freshly picked blueberries – a feast fit for a king. A friendly rivalry went on to see who could pick the most berries to take home.

Since horses played an important part in pioneer life, pitching horse shoes became a popular form of recreation. Playing chess or checkers passed long winter evenings as they could be played by the flickering light of coal oil lamps.

For the studious ones, there were the small school and church libraries providing reading material in both English and Danish. Later a community library was formed.

The Boy Scout movement has been and is an active program for boys and young men of the area. For the girls, the Girl Guide program is available.

In the late forties, a fish and game association was organized in Dickson. Its purpose is to promote the conservation (wise use and enjoyment) of Alberta's fish and wildlife. The organization is a member of the Federation of Alberta Fish and Game Associations. A boys' group was founded and the first ladies' fish and game group in Alberta was formed in Dickson. The annual fish supper, sponsored and served by the Dickson Fish and Game Association draws a big crowd.

Dickson has usually had a hockey team. At first it was called the Dickson Vikings until the name was changed to the Dickson Rye Kings. The years have brought improved sport and recreation facilities, such as the modern Dickson arena which provides ice during the winter months for hockey, figure and family skating. Horse shows, high school and amateur rodeos are held during the summer months. Also, the man-made Gleniffer Lake provides an excellent spot for water sports.

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The Early Life of the Danish Churches in Canada

by Henrik Bredmose Simonsen

Digging the foundation of Dalum church. Summer, 1929.

The American background

In the early 1900s, when Danish immigration to Canada began to increase significantly, there were already more than 150,000 Danes living in the United States. These immigrants, together with their American-born children, made up a national minority of over 300,000 people. These Danish-Americans were firmly established as a group and had their own clubs, churches, schools, folk high schools and colonies, and the number of Danish-American organizations continued to grow after the turn of the century. The existence of such a large national minority south of the American-Canadian border had, of course, some influence on church activities and other cultural development among Danes in Canada. One of the results of this was that the Danish Lutheran churches in Canada were only indirectly influenced by the church in Denmark. The Danish-American religious community, on the other hand, played a major role in the establishment of congregations and regional communities in Canada.

Around the turn of the century, there were two very different Danish churches in the United States. The *Danish Church* was founded in 1872 and was from the beginning greatly influenced by the ideas and teachings of the Danish preacher and hymn writer, N.F.S. Grundtvig. In keeping with Grundtvig's philosophy of "learning for life", the Danish Church set itself the task of founding parish schools and folk high schools in addition to preaching the gospel. It was the aim of the church to help immigrants retain the Danish language as well as a connection to the Danish homeland. Later, ministers and congregations alike also had as their goal the establishment of Danish colonies, where it would be possible to live like Danes in every aspect of daily life.[1] Members of the Danish Church became so involved in stressing the importance of things Danish that more outgoing missionary work was somewhat neglected.

The special aims of the Danish Church led to conflict and finally resulted in a division of the church. In 1896, a gathering of fundamentalist ministers and congregations joined in forming a new church which they called the *United Church*. Modelled on the Home Mission, a revivalistic movement in Denmark, these people made the Word of the Bible, personal conversion and missionary work the basis of their new church.

Great efforts were made to gather people for revival meetings. Again and again, congregations were encouraged to allow their pastors to travel to new missions for days at a time to hold revival meetings and win converts. Whenever a small group of the 'holy' were gathered together, it was felt that a new congregation, which would receive support from the older ones, should be founded.[2]

For a church like the United Church, which put such emphasis on the

importance of missionary work, it was of crucial importance to know where the members lived, where they might move to and where there were concentrations of Danes with no church affiliation. Until the 1890s, the Danes had primarily settled in the central midwestern United States, and both Danish churches had therefore turned their eyes and their efforts to this area. But now it was no longer as easy as it had once been to obtain cheap land in these states. By the end of the 1890s, a number of Danes had therefore decided to follow the course of many others seeking new land and move further north, toward the cold and desolate, but inexpensive, Homestead land in North Dakota and Montana and on into Canada.

The established congregations were inevitably divided, and the churches attempted to counter this by actively working to found colonies. In 1896, under the leadership of the United Church, a Danish colony was founded near Kenmare in North Dakota. After 5 or 6 years the population numbered over 1,000 Danes, and there was room for no more.[3] Here, and in other Danish congregations in the United States, more and more people began to look longingly toward the wide, open prairies of Canada.

A church service on the prairie in Dalum. 1920.

The church colonies in Alberta
The Dickson colony

Among the members of the United Church's congregation in Omaha, Nebraska, there was at that time a group of young craftsmen and workers who dreamed of owning their own farms. At the same time, they could see that it would be very difficult to achieve their goal with the current price of land in the Midwest. At a meeting held in Jens Larsen's bicycle workshop in the autumn of 1902 it was, therefore, decided that two 'scouts' should be sent to Canada on behalf of the entire group to examine a piece of land recommended to them by an agent of the *Canadian Pacific Railway*. On their return, the two gave an enthusiastic report of their journey and of the land west of Innisfail, Alberta, which they had inspected.

In the early spring of 1903, the group began to prepare to leave Omaha and move to Canada. A number of the older members of the congregation, however, and among them Pastor G.B. Christiansen, objected to the project. Their chief objection was that the congregation would be greatly weakened by the departure of so many young people. This could not stop the plans, but the 'colonists' did agree to found a new congregation prior to their departure. It was felt that "more united they could work toward obtaining their own church services and building". The first Danish Lutheran congregation in Canada was therefore founded in Omaha, Nebraska, in February, 1903.[4]

Later in the spring of 1903, the first new colonists left Omaha, and, after many difficulties, they finally pitched their tents on Homestead land near Dickson. At that time, Dickson was no more than a destination on the map – there was only one log cabin in the entire area. The remainder of the people arrived later in the summer, and the little colony was started. In her reminiscences, Mrs L.B. Christensen, one of the women among this first group, provides an impression of the primitive conditions under which the colonists lived during the summer of 1903 and the following winter:

> That first winter we lived mostly on dried apples and pork bought on credit from the grocer in Markerville. The log cabin we built had a flat roof made of turf. We couldn't keep dry. The rain poured down everywhere; there wasn't even a dry place for the bed. Therefore, when the sun did shine, I had to move everything outside to dry it.[5]

The start in Dickson was more difficult than in many of the other colonies founded both before and after. The land was soft, and it was covered with water until late in the spring of 1903. It took a long time before the settlers could begin any kind of farming, and many sought work in the nearby towns and on the railway to at least enable them to earn a wage.

Mrs Christensen also relates how Sunday was spent in Dickson:

> On Sunday all of us gathered for a reading service in our homes. We sang a lot, and God was very near us. After the church service we discussed the events of the week over a cup of coffee, and we were like one big family. ... All of us were poor, but we lived and worked in hopes of progress. There were many disappointments, but we also learned to take them to God.[6]

Devotional meetings held in the homes continued to play an important role in the lives of the settlers, but other church activities were soon begun. As early as September, 1904, the little colony got its own pastor, when Pastor J.C. Gundesen settled there with his family. He immediately obtained some Homestead land and began to farm in addition to serving as minister for the community. One of the first results of his presence was that the colonists decided to start a Sunday school for the children of the colony. There was also soon talk of constructing a church building, but these plans could not be carried out for many years for lack of money.

Within the United Church there was great satisfaction that the Omaha group had founded a congregation so quickly. However, the leaders questioned how much more the church should do in Canada. They were probably at a loss as to how to go about the work in a new country. At the annual meeting of the United Church held in 1905, some doubt was expressed as to whether, in accordance with its own laws, the church was even permitted to work "in this province".[7]. It was quickly made clear, however, that the United Church had a new and very important missionary task in Canada, where it would also be possible for the church's members to settle as a group.

The Standard colony

The colonization committee of the United Church was very interested in groups of Danes settling together. There had been great success in founding colonies in North Dakota and Montana, but the church had been about to give up the work because it was so difficult to find good land in the United States. The colonization committee realized that there were fine opportunities in Canada, however, and in September, 1908, its members travelled there to, among other things, inspect the area east of Calgary. It was owned by the *Canadian Pacific Railway* and had been opened for settlers just a few years previously. The committee's members were very enthusiastic about what they saw. On their recommendation, two farmers from Elk Horn, Iowa, went to make a closer inspection of the land in March, 1909. They, too, were pleased with conditions there, and each

immediately purchased 160 acres of land before continuing to Calgary to request that the railway company hold back a large tract of land to sell to Danes.

In fact, the two farmers succeeded in getting the company to hold back about 17,000 acres of land if, in the course of the summer, they could get a sufficient number of Danish purchasers together. The two emissaries reported that there were very favourable prospects for a Danish colony at this site: It was about 15 miles from the town and the railway, and in 1911 a branch line would be laid through the area. In addition, the two Danes had reached an agreement with the *Canadian Pacific Railway* whereby the company would arrange cheap 'land seeker' excursions for those who wished to visit the area.[8]

It soon became apparent that there was genuine interest in this land east of Calgary among the members of the United Church. The first excursion to Canada with participants from Elk Horn, Iowa, in particular, took place in August, 1909. Most of the 23 who made the journey bought their land on this trip. The following month, J.N.K. Macalister, "General Representative, Canadian Pacific Railway, Colonization Dept. Council Bluffs, Iowa" inserted an advertisement in the United Church weekly *Danskeren* [The Dane]. In this, he stated that the Danish colony was already ensured, as more than 5,000 acres of land had already been sold to people from Elk Horn and other places in Iowa, as well as a few from the Danish colonies in North Dakota and Montana.[9]

The actual move to Standard Colony, as it came to be called, began slowly in the spring of 1910, and, like others before it, the colony had a difficult start. Prairie fires, the hard soil which had to be broken before crops could be planted, and the primitive living conditions were among the early difficulties mentioned by settlers. Not until May, 1911, could 31 colonists found a congregation within the United Church, and the first pastor arrived the following year. The colony's situation improved over the next few years, and it eventually covered more than the original 17,000 acres of land.[10]

Dickson, Standard and other colonies founded in the following years became the basis for the United Church's missionary work in Canada. They supported the church work carried out in the towns of Calgary, Winnipeg and Edmonton, in which more and more Danish immigrants settled. The town mission in Calgary was started by Pastor J.G. Magnussen from Dickson in 1912. In the following years, ministers from the United Church's North Dakota district held many missionary meetings in nearby Canadian prairie villages. The result was well-organized missionary work in the country districts, including routine visits by ministers and missionaries. Pastor Magnussen, then at Flaxton, started missionary work among the Danes in

Redvers and Milestone, Saskatchewan in 1917, and the following year, this work was also begun in Goodland by the minister from Norma in North Dakota.

The founders of the Bethlehem congregation in Dalum. 5 May, 1918.

The Dalum colony

The Grundtvigian church in the United States, the Danish Church, was, of course, also aware that good and plentiful farm land was available in Canada and that this was a temptation to many Danes now living in the United States. In addition, the Danish Church and the associated organization, Dansk Folkesamfund [The Danish People's Society], had for many years had the founding of Danish colonies as their goal. Tyler and Askov in Minnesota, Dannevang in Texas and Solvang in California were founded on the initiative of these organizations. It was hardly surprising, therefore, that The Danish People's Society now also began to think of Canada as a new area for settlement. In 1916 the society approached the *Canadian Pacific Railway*, and, as the company was also interested in selling additional land, the two parties signed a contract in January, 1917, for the sale of approx. 20,000 acres of land near Wayne in Alberta.

Pastor Peter Rasmussen and his wife.

The colony of Dalum was founded here, and it got off to a very good start. Especially people from the established Danish Church congregations in the United States moved to Dalum. As early as 1918, the colonists here founded a Danish congregation and built a meeting house, and two years later they got their own pastor. This was Peter Rasmussen, who had been the principal of the recently closed Ashland folk high school in Michigan. Before long, he and the colonists decided that there should be a Danish folk high school in Dalum. It was established in 1921 and had many pupils in the following years. A well-functioning and varied social life soon developed in the Dalum colony. Children from other small villages in Canada came to the Danish school in their summer holidays, and young people gathered to hear lectures and to sing and dance at the folk high school and in the meeting house. And everyone came to the church to hear the gospel and sing hymns.[11]

Missionary work in the towns

Danish immigration directly to Canadian towns increased greatly around 1920. Members of the United Church, in particular, saw this as a challenge and worked to bring the gospel to as many of these new immigrants as possible. In 1919, Pastor Niels Damskov from Sidney, Montana, was hired in Winnipeg as the first 'town pastor'. Soon there were also plans afoot to build a church there, but this was not accomplished until some years later. Help for this purpose became available when the Danish bishop Henrik Ostenfeld, who visited the congregation in 1923, obtained a grant of 10,000 kroner from Dansk Kirke i Udlandet [the Danish Church Abroad]. The flow of Danish immigrants to Calgary also increased, and in 1923 Pastor M.G. Christensen was sent there as the first permanent minister.[12]

Pleased with this progress, the United Church quickly moved to take advantage of the opportunities it opened. The central leadership repeatedly emphasized the importance of missionary work in Canada. In the early 1920s the United Church continued to have a rule that the congregations should hold at least two annual missionary meetings where, it was said, "our people are called to conversion and holiness, and where our sacrificing people can be encouraged to offer even more for the Kingdom of God."[13] It was time to cultivate the missionary 'field' in Canada, and the sooner this could be done the better. As the chairman stated in his annual report of 1922: "If we brought this message and its treasures too late to some of our brethren in America, let us be in good time in reaching our brethren in Canada."[14]

Things went very much according to plan in the following years. In 1923 there were 5 congregations and 4 missionary outposts in western Canada

under the auspices of the United Church's North Dakota district. Most of these were in the country, but in the mid-1920s many of the Danish immigrants settled in towns – in particular, Winnipeg, where another Danish minister had been hired. In 1925 a Danish winter folk high school was started in Calgary. It was the stated purpose of this school to, among other things, help recently arrived Danes adjust to their new country.

But now a problem began to develop which had also become a familiar one in the United States: In their search for good, cheap farm land, the Danes were soon spread over a wide area, and thus lost to church and congregation. At the United Church's Annual Meeting in 1926 an attempt was made to address this problem with the suggestion that the efforts of the church should be more concentrated. It was felt that those areas where there seemed to be little hope of success for the United Church should be abandoned. Once again, those present at the meeting set up a committee "to lead our immigrated countrymen from Denmark to places in Canada where colonies can be founded. This Committee shall attempt to obtain large areas of land which are suitable for new colonies."[15]

Nothing came of this statement of intent, however, and in 1927 it was decided instead that a West-Canada district should be established with the direct aim of doing missionary work on the Canadian prairie. The eastern Danish-Canadian congregations were to be supported through close cooperation among the United Church's various American congregations.

As previously mentioned, the Danish Church held a different view of the task of the immigrant church than the United Church – whose purpose was to gather people to conversion in the Faith. By tradition, the Danish Church was interested in the cultural outlook, which meant that no distinction was made between the strictly Christian and other aspects of life. The Danish Church attempted, furthermore, to maintain 'Danishness', more specifically the language and the cultural aspects of daily living, as a basis for the church, in spite of the fact that this work was being carried out in a foreign country. In many respects, this helped to develop an inner strength, but it also tended to lessen interest in more outgoing missionary work.

In the early 1920s, however, there was also some interest within the Danish Church for how the gospel could be brought to the many Danes in Canada. For those of the church's members who lived in Danish colonies in the United States, it was natural to think of the colony of Dalum as a bastion from which the Danish Church's missionary work in Canada could be carried out. But, of course, there were limits to how much this small colony could accomplish. In the mid-1920s, Pastor Peter Rasmussen in Dalum did, however, take some important initiatives for Danish church work in, among other places, Holden north of Edmonton, and as far away as Vancouver, B.C.

The Danish congregation in Vancouver holds an open-air meeting.

In spite of this, it was not difficult toward the end of the 1920s to see that the position of the Danish Church in Canada was a weak one. The board of the Danish Church spoke often of doing more about church work among the many new immigrants. In 1927 it was stated that this should be done because "they must not become a rootless people, those who settle the prairie up there."[16] But they were forced to admit that they did not have the same missionary zeal as members of their sister organization, and neither did they have the financial means to support church activities. However, in 1927 Pastor Juhl was hired as a travelling minister in Saskatchewan, and the following year a minister was also hired in Vancouver, B.C. with, incidently, support from the Danish Church Abroad.

Great difficulties were encountered in preaching the gospel to landsmen in the huge country of Canada, and the small, widely separated flocks of Danes could rarely support a congregation or pay a pastor's salary. Where the Danes were far too few to have their own congregation, they often joined the churches and societies of other immigrant groups. It was for that reason that the idea of founding colonies – providing church support in order to gather people in a few localities – remained a popular one among

the people of the Danish Church. The chairman's report of a meeting in Canada in 1929 reads as follows:

> I had the impression that because the Danes live together in small flocks, it is it very difficult for them to cover the expense of having their own minister. More work is needed up there, but there is also a need for money and perhaps most of all for a determined effort to gather our landsmen in colonies such as the ones we have ourselves.[17]

But it was one thing to wish for new colonies and quite another to convince people to leave together at a certain time to settle in a new place, and nothing more came of the colonization idea.

The difference between the United Church's virtually systematic concentration on the gospel and laying of plans for missionary work, and the Danish Church's more incidental way of dealing with this matter, was reflected in the outwardly measurable church 'results': In 1921 the Danish Church had only two congregations in Canada with a total membership of about 100 Danes. In 1929 there were still only two congregations of now approx. 200 'souls' as well as a few missionary outposts. In 1921 the United Church already had 6 congregations in Canada with a membership of about 400 people. Nine years later there was a total of 13 congregations with about 1,500 members and 4 missionary outposts.[18]

The Danish church in Vancouver. 1984.

Crisis in society and church

Around 1930, Danish church activities in Canada were well-etablished in the towns and in many small villages which had their own churches, growing congregations and salaried ministers. Immigration from Denmark in the preceding years had reached previously unknown heights, but the good times were not to last. The economic crisis of 1929 made itself felt throughout the population; in larger towns unemployment grew to catastrophic heights, and in the country the people were plagued with drought and poor harvests.

Canadian towns reported that the constant westward flow of people from Denmark had turned and that now it was more common to see people travelling in the opposite direction – to Denmark. This crisis was also felt in Denmark as witnessed by, among other things, a reduction in the annual subsidies from the Danish Church Abroad to Danish church work in Canada.

In the early 1930s the records of both Danish churches indicated that the economic depression had not made people turn to the church – on the contrary – and throughout the 1930s, the Danish congregations reported declining membership. The Canadian congregations were vulnerable – probably more so than the corresponding congregations in the United States. In Canada most people were new to the country and not, therefore, well-established as farmers or in other jobs. The congregations were also new and often small and, consequently, rarely able to meet the financial demands of building churches and homes for the pastors. In addition, there was not yet a local tradition for independent church activity. Those newly arrived from Denmark were familiar only with a state church and had to get used to paying for their own church.

Toward the end of the 1930s things began gradually to change for the better, both in society at large and in the church. As the decade drew to a close, the Danish minister in Calgary, P.C. Paulsen, described this renewed hope among his landsmen in the town:

> Reports from here through the last four years have not been encouraging though they have been hopeful. Several factors have played a part in making the picture rather dark, namely the constant exodus of families, lack of employment, restlessness, the traditional green pastures elsewhere, drouth, worldliness, slow amalgamation of people coming from all corners of Denmark, and a host of other things almost too numerous to mention. But the picture is changing and changing quite fast at that. People have started to return from Denmark with their avowed intention to stay in Canada. Of late the crops have been good with resultant improvement in business. The passing

of time has settled old scores which no amount of persuasion could settle. And our faithful people have worked with a will and determination that is little short of surprising.[19]

The Danish immigrants who had stood up to crisis and misfortune, and had remained in their new country, began to put down roots in Canada. The pioneering period was almost over, likewise the pioneering efforts of Danish country colonies and town congregations. In retrospect, we can conclude that the Danish congregations and the church environment in Canada provided direction and the very basis of existence for many immigrants. For many of them, the church in Denmark had been a stiff and formal affair – something controlled by the authorities and the government. In the small Danish-Canadian congregations, the growth and strength of their fellowship depended solely on their own efforts. Those who engaged in the activities and life of the church found, too, that they could begin life in a new country without immediately having to give up everything they had brought with them from home.

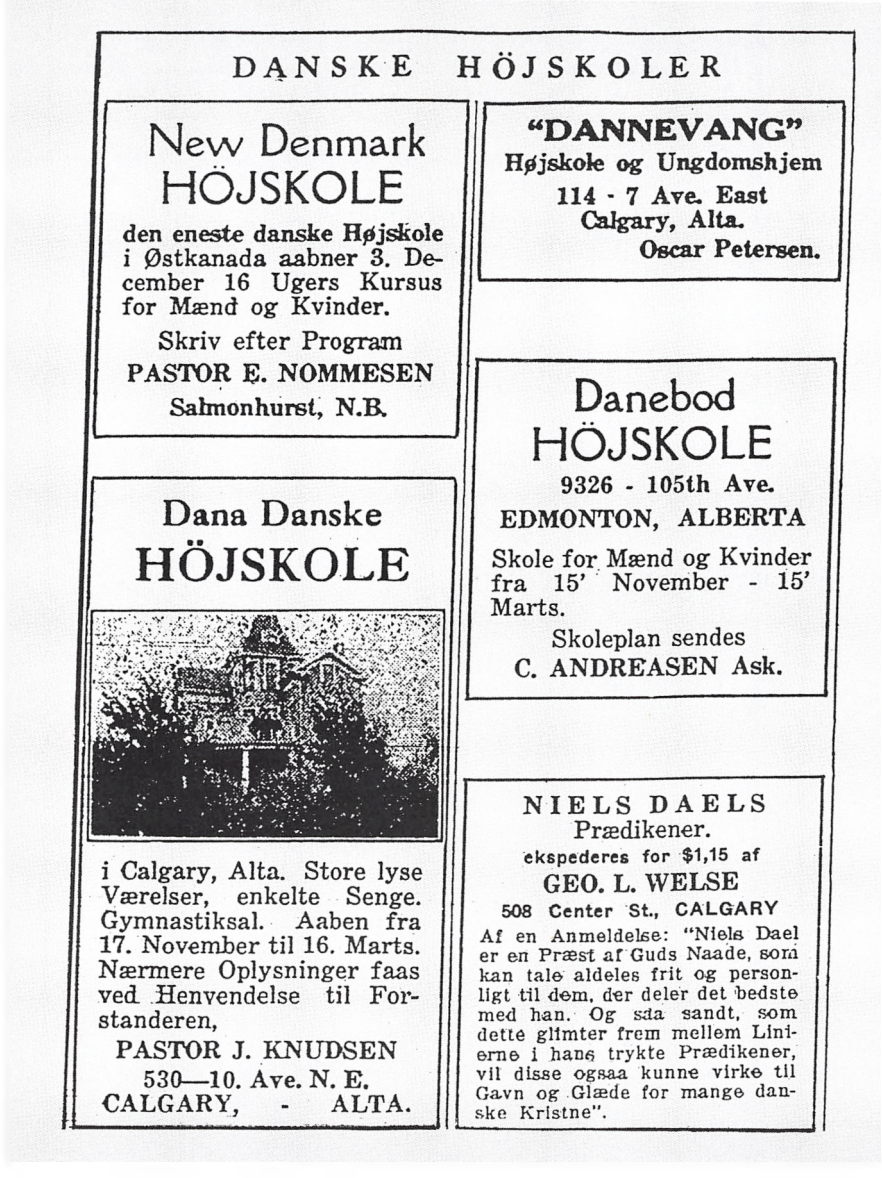
Notes:

1. The background of the Danish church colonies in the United States is described in Henrik Bredmose Simonsen: *Kampen om danskheden. Tro og nationalitet i de danske kirkesamfund i Amerika.* [The Struggle for a Danish Identity. Faith and Nationality in the Danish Churches in America]. Århus, 1990.
2. Ibid., pp. 122-123.
3. Ibid., pp. 128-130; p. 134.
4. *Dickson Koloniens Historie. Et Mindeskrift om vore Pioneerer.* [The History of the Dickson Colony. A Memorial to Our Pioneers] Blair, 1948, pp.4-5.
5. Ibid., p. 12.
6. Ibid., p. 13.
7. *Beretning om Den forenede danske evangelisk-lutherske Kirkes niende Aarsmøde.* [Report of the United Danish Evangelical Lutheran Church's Ninth Annual Meeting] Blair, 1905, p. 43.
8. *Danskeren* [The Dane], 20 April 1909, p. 3.
9. *Danskeren*, 31 August 1909, p. 2; *Danskeren* 17 September 1909, p. 5.
10. Jens Rasmussen: *History of the Standard Colony.* Standard, Alberta, 1943, pp. 12, 16 and 22.
11. *The History of Dalum.* Sponsored by the Bethlehem Lutheran Church Commemorating its 50th Anniversary, May 5, 1968. Drumheller, Alberta.

12. *A History of the North Dakota-Montana District of the United Evangelical Lutheran Church*. 1901-1960, p. 15.
13. *Den forenede danske evangelisk-lutherske Kirkes seksogtyvende Aarsmøde* [The United Danish Evangelical Lutheran Church's Twenty-sixth Annual Meeting]. Blair, 1922, p. 9.
14. Ibid., p. 11.
15. *Den forenede danske evangelisk-lutherske Kirkes tredivte Aarsmøde* [The United Danish Evangelical Lutheran Church's Thirtieth Annual Meeting]. Blair, 1926, p. 145.
16. *Beretning fra Den Danske evangelisk-lutherske Kirkes 50. Aarsmøde* [Report from the Danish Evangelical Lutheran Church's 50th Annual Meeting]. Cedar Falls, 1927, p. 17.
17. *Beretning fra Den Danske evangelisk-lutherske Kirkes 52. Aarsmøde* [Report from the Danish Evangelical Lutheran Church's 52nd Annual Meeting]. Cedar Falls, 1929, p. 23.
18. *Årsmødeberetningerne fra de to danske kirkesamfund 1922, 1930 and 1931*. [Reports from the annual meetings of the two Danish churches].
19. *Yearbook. 43rd Annual Convention of the United Danish Evangelical Lutheran Church*. Blair, 1939, pp. 40-41.

Danish Folk Schools in Canada

by Rolf Buschardt Christensen



Advertisement for Danish Folk Schools in the *Viking* August 16, 1929. (Photo: RBC).

Five folk schools were established by the Danes in Canada in the 1920s. They were founded to help the large influx of Danish immigrants adapt to their new country as quickly and easily as possible. The primary focus of the schools was the teaching of English, and an attempt was also made to give the students a good understanding of Canada's political, economic and social background. The folk school was an institution with which the Danish immigrants were familiar, and it provided a practical solution to their immediate needs by offering them room and board as well as schooling.

The three largest and most successful folk schools were Dalum Folk School, situated between Calgary and Drumheller, Dana Folk School in Calgary, and Danebyrd Folk School in New Denmark, New Brunswick. All three schools were founded by Danish Lutheran ministers, with the support of their respective congregations. The two other schools, Dannevang Folk School in Calgary and Danebod Folk School in Edmonton existed for only two and three years, respectively. These two schools were private enterprises, founded by teachers.

It is interesting to note that these folk schools sometimes took in boarders who were not students and that they also occasionally served as employment agencies for the students.

The Great Depression of the 1930s had far-reaching consequences for the residential folk schools in Canada. Virtually no Danish immigrants came to Canada during the "Dirty Thirties" and, with little or no money to continue their educational and cultural work, the five schools established in the 1920s by Danish immigrants had to close.

In addition to the five schools mentioned above, there was the John Madsen Folk School at Cherry Hill Farm in Unionville, north of Toronto. It existed much later, from 1946 to 1957, and was neither a language school nor a boarding house. The focus there was largely on gymnastics, folk dancing, leadership training and arts and crafts. This school catered not only to Danish immigrants, but to Canadians in general.

The Danish folk schools in Canada were all schools for young adults, based on the prototype Danish *folkehøjskole*, literally folk high school, here referred to as folk school as this has become the norm in Canada.

The folk schools in Denmark were founded in order to foster a sense of cultural identity, Christian faith and national pride. After Denmark's defeat by Germany in 1864, they became a powerful instrument of national regeneration.

The first folk school in Denmark in Rødding in South Jutland was founded in 1844. After the loss of South Jutland in the War of 1864, the school was moved north of the new border to Askov, and, in time, it became the largest folk school in Denmark.

In 1851, Christian Kold, assisted by N.F.S. Grundtvig, the father of the

folk school movement, established a school at Ryslinge. It was this school which became the prototype of the well over 80 such schools founded in Denmark.

The folk schools are residential schools with courses lasting from 1 to 40 weeks. There are no entrance requirements or examinations, nor are graduation certificates issued. These "schools for life" are primarily concerned with subjects of general human and social appeal. The schools are meant to develop the individual intellectually and prepare him for civic life. Indeed, many Danish farmers who became active in the cooperative movement, or in politics, received their first training at the folk schools.

The method of teaching is by "the living word", that is, by lectures, discussion groups, seminars and other educational forms, based on student participation. Originally, the curriculum had a very strong national and Christian orientation.

Attending a Danish folk school is an experience which often influences the individual for the rest of his life. This is mainly due to the environment created by these residential schools, where everybody eats, sleeps and studies together for the duration of the course. Major emphasis is placed on discussion and the sharing of ideas and experiences.

The folk schools are not a part of the general educational system in Denmark. They are *popular*, or *folk* schools, in contrast to academic or vocational schools which grant degrees or award diplomas. The folk schools, nearly all located in the country, also function as community and cultural centres. The folk schools are widely used by local groups for their gatherings, and they are increasingly used as conference centres.

The following is a brief account of the six folk schools which were established by Danish immigrants in Canada. It is a story which reveals yet another aspect of the history of the Danes in Canada. While the first five folk schools were founded solely to serve Danish immigrants, the John Madsen Folk School was an earnest attempt to transplant the folk school concept to Canada.

Dalum Folk School, Dalum, Alberta

The first Danish folk school in Canada was established in Dalum, between Calgary and Drumheller, by Pastor Peter Rasmussen in 1921. Dalum was a Danish farming community, settled under the auspices of the Danish People's Society [Dansk Folkesamfund].

The Bethlehem congregation in Dalum was established in 1918. Shortly afterwards, an assembly hall was built, where meetings and church services could be held.

Pastor Peter Rasmussen's Folk School in Dalum, Alberta. (Photo: RBC).

Pastor Rasmussen arrived in Dalum in 1920. Already the following year, he started a folk school, and the first course began in the fall of 1921. He felt his farm provided the best location for the school, and he therefore asked the congregation if the assembly hall could be moved by tractors to his property. The assembly hall was used for lectures and classes, which ran from 8 o'clock in the morning until 6 o'clock at night.

Two bunkhouses, each housing six men, were built.

Each evening the students would gather in the living room where the piano was. Here they sang, listened to someone read aloud or just met for fellowship.

The curriculum had two major themes. One was the teaching of the English language, literature and Canadian history, the other Danish literature and history.

Assisting Pastor Rasmussen as teachers that first winter were Oskar Sorensen and Elisa Hermansen.

While the Dalum Folk School primarily served the Danes in Dalum, young Danish men from all over Alberta and other parts of Canada came to Dalum to attend the winter course held there. Every summer a Folk Fest which drew large crowds was held at the school.

During the Depression no new Danish immigrants arrived, and enrollment declined. Scheduled classes had repeatedly to be cancelled due to the lack of students. The last regular folk school course in Dalum was held in 1935. After that time, only short, one-week courses were held during the winter.

Pastor Rasmussen made an immeasurable contribution to Dalum. Despite crowded and primitive conditions at Dalum Folk School, the undertaking must be rated as a success, both in terms of number of students and in the influence made on the lives of a large number of young men.

Dana Folk School, Calgary, Alberta

The second Danish Folk School in Canada was established in Calgary which, with the exception of Vancouver, had the largest Danish population of any city in Canada in the late 1920s. Many of the young Danish farm workers on the prairies sought refuge in Calgary during the winter, making this city an ideal location for a folk school.

Dana Folk School was affiliated with the United Danish Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, and it was thus a rival to the folk school in Dalum, which was associated with the Danish Evangelical Lutheran Church. Although they were associated with two different Synods, the competition between the two folk schools centred primarily on attracting students.

Sharon Danish Evangelical Lutheran Church of Calgary was officially founded by thirteen Danes on January 1, 1913. The new congregation remained small, however, and could not afford to call a pastor, nor to build a church.

With the arrival of new Danish immigrants in the early 1920s, the congregation's prospects began to improve. In late 1922, a decision was made to hold a young people's meeting once a week for the many young Danes who were coming to Calgary. Once a month, these meetings were held at the Norwegian Church, which provided the proper Christian setting.

Dana Folk School, Calgary. (Photo: RBC).

At about the same time, it was decided that a pastor should be called. The Synod, together with the West Canada District of the United Danish Church, called a pastor to Sharon who was to serve both Calgary and Olds.

Pastor Mathias Gammelgaard Christensen arrived in Calgary in June, 1923. He was the first permanent pastor at Sharon Danish Lutheran Church, and he became the founder of Dana Folk School.

He took a keen interest in the young immigrants and the Danish Young People's Association. Within a year of his arrival, the Young People's Association was able to rent a large and stately home at 322 1st Avenue N.E. to be used as a meeting place and boarding house for young people. It was located high on the ridge on the north bank of the Bow River, overlooking the river and the city centre. This mansion was given the name Dana Young People's Home and Folk School. It opened on June 10, 1924, and was rented on a monthly basis for three years.

Mikkel Martinus Nielsen was hired as the manager of the Dana school, and he was followed in this position by Peter Alling, Christian Boel, Mads Petersen and Frode Andersen.

It came as a surprise when, in April 1926, Pastor Christensen handed in his resignation as pastor of Sharon. He had accepted a call from a Danish congregation in Harlan, Iowa. The church secretary immediately wrote a letter to the Synod asking for a replacement. The Synod informed Sharon that Pastor Jens Knudsen of Brooklyn, New York, would be willing to accept the call and requested them to contact him.

Pastor Jens Knudsen arrived in Calgary in the early fall of 1926. Ordained in 1910, he had served Danish congregations at Beresford, South Dakota, and Kenmare, North Dakota. From 1919-1920 he was director of the Brorson Folk School in Kenmare. Before coming to Calgary, he had spent 6 years in Brooklyn.

With his experience from Brorson, Pastor Knudsen knew how to manage a folk school. When the three-year lease on the first building expired in 1927, the Danish Young People's Association bought the stately Beveridge House further up the block on the corner at 304 1st Avenue N.E. It was purchased for $12,000.00, with a down payment of $4,250, and interim payments of $3,875 due on June 1, 1929, and on June 1, 1930. Most of the money for the down payment was provided by the Danes in Standard, a Danish settlement west of Calgary.

The bylaws of Dana Young People's Home and Folk School specified that the board of directors was to be chaired by the pastor of Sharon who was also dean of the Folk School. The board had to be made up of seven directors: three from Calgary, two from Standard, and one each from Dickson and Olds.

At Dana Folk School the emphasis was on learning English, as "knowledge of English is the key to success in Canada". Other subjects were Canadian history, geography, social studies, agriculture, arithmetic and Bible studies. The lectures focused on literature, church history and world history.

The teachers were all Danes. Mr S.K.A. Winter, a graduate of Dana College in Nebraska, was hired as a teacher for a total remuneration of $300 plus room and board for one year. He taught at Dana for three years. From 1929 to 1932 he edited *Danskeren* [The Dane], a small Danish language newspaper.

Frode Andersen taught gymnastics, one of the mandatory subjects. He taught Fundamental Gymnastics, a system developed by Niels Bukh at Ollerup Folk School in Denmark.

The tuition fees for students were originally $25 per month, and this included instruction, room and board, utilities and bedding. Later, the fees

Dana Folk School in Calgary existed from 1924 to 1935. (Photo: RBC).

were raised to $35 per month. The course ran from mid-November to mid-March. After the course, the school helped the students find jobs.

Enrollment at Dana averaged between 50 and 55 students during the winter. However, in 1929-30 enrollment reached 112 students.

Most of the efforts and resources of the congregation were devoted to Dana Folk School. By 1928, fifteen years after its formation, the congregation still did not have a church building, but it did operate a successful folk school.

Not until 1931 did Sharon build and consecrate a church. It was built at a cost of about $8,000 in the typical Danish village-church style, designed by architect Anton Holm-Møller, who had also designed the church in Dalum.

The Depression continued. It became increasingly difficult to attract students to Dana and to raise money for the church. By mid-1933, the congregation had difficulty in paying the mortgage.

Due to the economic situation, Dana was forced to scale down its activities. Gradually, Dana became a boarding house for young, single men. In the Danish-language newspapers in Canada, Dana Home advertised that

a clean bed, three solid Danish meals and coffee in the evening could be had for just one dollar per day.

At the same time, Pastor Knudsen felt there was now a need for Danish language classes for second-generation Danes. In the summer of 1933, he therefore held a two-week Summer School at Dana, teaching Danish and religion. The course was repeated in August 1934.

The economic situation of both Dana and the Sharon congregation continued to deteriorate. The Danish Young People's Association was unable to make the final payment of $3,875 on the house on June 1, 1930.

Moreover, the time had come when Dana and Sharon could no longer count on financial support from the Synod. Indeed, the Synod was now demanding a larger contribution from the congregation. Dana and Sharon's future prospects did not look promising. Under these circumstances, as well as his own personal ones, Pastor Knudsen decided to hand in his resignation. In late October 1934, he informed the Church Council that he had sent his resignation to the Synod, effective March 15, 1935. Pastor Knudsen had decided to return to Denmark, and he left Calgary in June, 1935.

Sharon Lutheran Church was fortunate in quickly getting a new minister to replace Pastor Knudsen. The new minister was Pastor P.C. Poulsen, who had been born in Denmark and was a graduate of Dana College and Seminary in Nebraska.

The folk school was no longer profitable, indeed, it could no longer break even financially. It was therefore decided to close Dana Folk School as of May 1, 1935. The building was rented to Christian Boel, who had been manager of the school for five years. Dana now became a boarding house, even though Pastor Poulsen did, on occasion, conduct some classes there.

Dana Home existed until August, 1939, when the mortgage company repossessed the property to cover all outstanding debts. An era came to an end.

While this was a sad ending for Dana, the raison d'être of Dana Folk School had ceased to exist years earlier. But, while it existed, Dana had enriched the lives of hundreds of students, and had taught them English. Many students have testified to the fact that their stay at Dana contributed substantially to their success in later life.

Dannevang Folk School, Calgary, Alberta

Due to the success Dana Folk School was enjoying in 1927-28, Oscar A. Petersen thought it would be a good idea to establish yet another folk school

in Calgary. There was obviously a demand. He therefore started Dannevang Folk School at 114 Seventh Avenue E. in the fall of 1928.

All the courses at Dannevang were conducted in English and these included reading, writing, grammar, spelling, translation, mathematics, geography, the history of Great Britain and Canada, bookkeeping and gymnastics. There were also lectures on various subjects, occasionally by guest lecturers.

One of the guest lecturers was Pastor Peter Rasmussen of Dalum. Another was Jens Dixen, a self-appointed missionary and colporteur, and a genuinely inspired and inspiring speaker. Jens Dixen was also the driving force behind the high school in Dickson established in the early 1930s.

Tuition fees at Dannevang were $120 for four months or $32.50 for one month and included instruction and room and board. As the advertisement in the Danish newspaper *Viking* said, all rooms were equipped with electrical lights. The Scandinavian Employment Club, which was associated with the school, tried to help the students get jobs after their stay at Dannevang.

The director of Dannevang, Oscar A. Petersen, had been a teacher at the Brorson Folk School in 1919-20, while Pastor Jens Knudsen was the director there. Now they met again in Calgary, where they competed for students.

Oscar Petersen was also one of the founders of Sygekassen Finsen, a society formed in Calgary in 1929 to provide benefits in the event of illness.

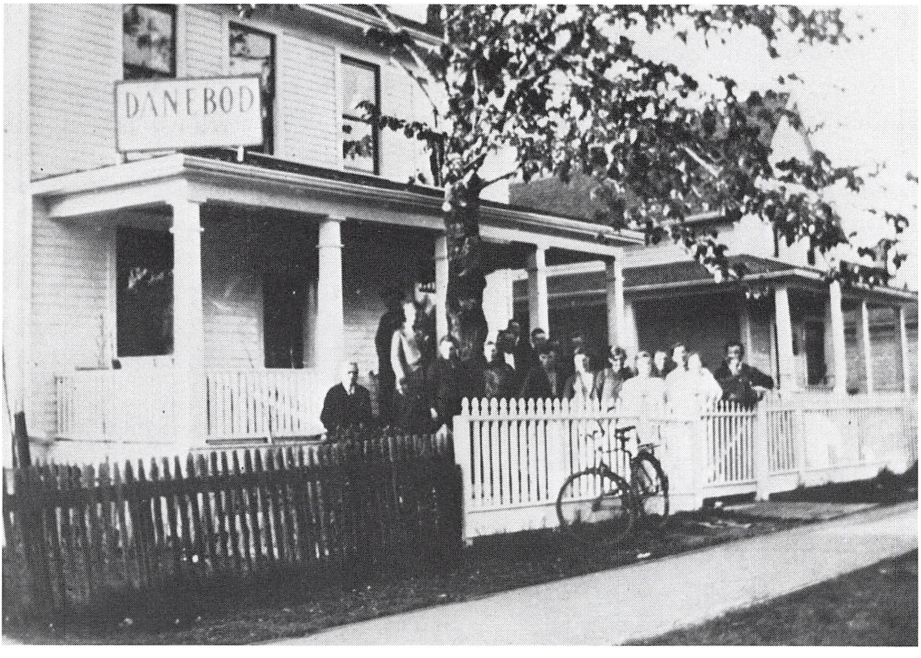
Dannevang Folk School existed for only two winters, and closed its doors in March, 1930. For a short time afterwards, the building was operated as a boarding house.

Danebod Folk School, Edmonton, Alberta

The fourth Danish folk school in Alberta was established at Edmonton in 1928 by Carl Andreasen Ask and his wife Johanne. In Denmark, Carl Ask had been a teacher. In 1920, he had taught Danish and mathematics at beautiful Ryslinge Folk School on the Danish island of Fyn.

In 1926, shortly after his marriage to Johanne Hune, he and his wife emigrated to Canada. In Edmonton, at 9326 105th Avenue, Carl Ask bought a very large house which could be turned into a boarding house and folk school. With the many young Danish immigrants in Edmonton, there was a need for boarding houses in addition to those already operated by Michael Jensen and L.P. Juul, especially if it was to be operated in conjunction with a folk school.

While boarders were welcome year-round, Danebod Folk School operated from mid-November to mid-March.. The cost was $30 per month.



Danebod Folk School in Edmonton was owned and managed by Mr and Mrs Carl Andreasen Ask from 1928 to 1931. (Photo: RBC).

While Danebod could accommodate 40 students, only half actually attended the school; the other half were boarders.

Danebod had a Grundtvigian orientation which meant that there was some teaching of Christianity and gymnastics and a lot of singing. Carl Ask himself taught social studies, whereby the students were informed of various aspects of life in Canada. From time to time, a guest lecturer would visit Danebod, and these included Pastor Peter Rasmussen from Dalum.

In order to promote Danebod Folk School, Carl Ask placed ads in the Danish-language press. His ads appeared in *Viking*, published by Bertel Fuglsang in Toronto and in *Dansk Canadisk Tidende* [Danish Canadian Times], published by Helge Borup in Montreal. He advertised Danebod as a Folk School for young men and women. Unlike the other Danish folk schools in Canada, however, there were never any substantial articles about Danebod in these newspapers, explaining the school's aims, courses or activities.

Carl Ask had a close working relationship with St. Ansgar Danish Lutheran Church and, in particular, with pastor Max Mathiesen, who arrived in Edmonton in May, 1928, and who was the first Danish pastor to be sent

to Canada by Dansk Kirke i Udlandet [the Danish Church Abroad]. It was Pastor Mathiesen's custom to meet Danish immigrants at the railway station and then take them to Danebod which, in this way, became a meeting place for Danes.

Carl and Johanne Ask were naturally closely involved with the Danish community in Edmonton. Carl Ask helped many a Danish immigrant to find a job.

Danebod Folk School existed as a combined boarding house and folk school for Danish immigrants from 1928 to 1931. The primary purpose of the school was to teach Danish immigrants English. When Danish immigrants stopped coming to Canada, due to the Depression and subsequent immigration restrictions, the Asks, like many other Danes in Canada at the time, decided to return to Denmark.

Danebyrd Folk School, New Denmark, New Brunswick

Of the five Danish folk schools established in Canada in the 1920s, only one was located outside Alberta. That was Danebyrd Folk School in New Denmark, the oldest Danish settlement in Canada. New Denmark, situated southeast of Grand Falls, New Brunswick, was settled by Danish immigrants in 1872. A number of new Danish immigrants arrived in New Denmark in 1927. "The New Danes", as they were called, were eager to learn English. Therefore, in 1928, a folk school was started with Pastor Emil Nommesen as the director.

The folk school in New Denmark was at first called *Luther Højskole* [Luther Folk School], but in 1930 the name was changed to Danebyrd. Classes were held in the new Parish Hall, situated next to St. Peter's Church. In 1928, the school's first year, there were 15 students. During the first two years, the students received room and board on nearby farms. By the third year of operation, a dormitory was acquired. The boys lived on the first floor with Ravnkilde Møller, a theologian and teacher at Danebyrd. The girls lived on the second floor with Miss Elise Rasmussen, the owner of the dormitory. Each room was shared by two to four students. The cost was $30 per month for instruction, meals and accommodation, including heat and electricity.

In the classroom the emphasis was on learning English. The English teacher was the local teacher, Miss Margaret Connors. In addition to learning English for four to five hours daily, there were classes in history and literature, as well as music and gymnastics.

Friday evenings were special, as there was always a guest lecturer. It was often Vilhelm Larsen who spoke about the founders of the folk schools in

Danebyrd Folk School in New Denmark was originally called Luther Højskole. On the left gymnastics instructor John A. Madsen. (Photo: RBC).

Denmark, Christian Kold and Ernst Trier. Vilhelm Larsen had taught at various folk schools in Denmark and had been director of Sorø Højskole in Sorø, Denmark, before coming to New Denmark, where he bought a farm in 1928. He gradually became more and more involved with Danebyrd, both as a teacher and an administrator, and he became its director in 1930.

Many people, in addition to the students, attended the classes in gymnastics at Danebyrd. In fact, when the school closed, the gym classes continued.

It was the aim of Danebyrd Folk School to become a symbol of unity for Danish Canadian youth in eastern Canada. For a time this aim was accomplished. However, due to the Depression and the lack of Danish immigrants, the school closed in the spring of 1932.

The John Madsen Folk School, Unionville, Ontario

A number of students who had attended the Ollerup Gymnastics Folk School in Denmark emigrated to Canada in the 1920s. Some of them taught

gymnastics at the Danish folk schools in Canada, while others worked for local school boards or the YMCA. One of these former students of Ollerup, John Madsen, eventually started his own folk school.

John Madsen, born Jens Anker Madsen on a farm north of Århus, Denmark, in 1905, landed in Halifax in 1929 with little money and practically no knowledge of English. He took a job as a farm labourer on Prince Edward Island.

In late 1929, John Madsen was hired as a gymnastics instructor at Danebyrd Folk School in New Denmark. When Danebyrd closed in 1932, he headed for Toronto, Ontario, where he also taught gymnastics as well as Danish folk dancing.

In Toronto, John met Betty Hansen, a young Danish artist from near Randers, Denmark, who had come to Canada in 1929. The two were married in September, 1935. Together, John and Betty Madsen created one of the most successful dancing schools in Toronto. In 1942, John Madsen and Helen L. Bryans of the Ontario College of Education published the two volume work, *Scandinavian Dances*.

In 1936, John Madsen began to make both tumbling mats and other gymnastic equipment for the John Madsen School of Recreation and Physical Education on Wellesley Street.

The Madsen Manufacturing Company eventually expanded, and in addition to gym equipment made other sporting goods, as well as playground and swimming pool equipment.

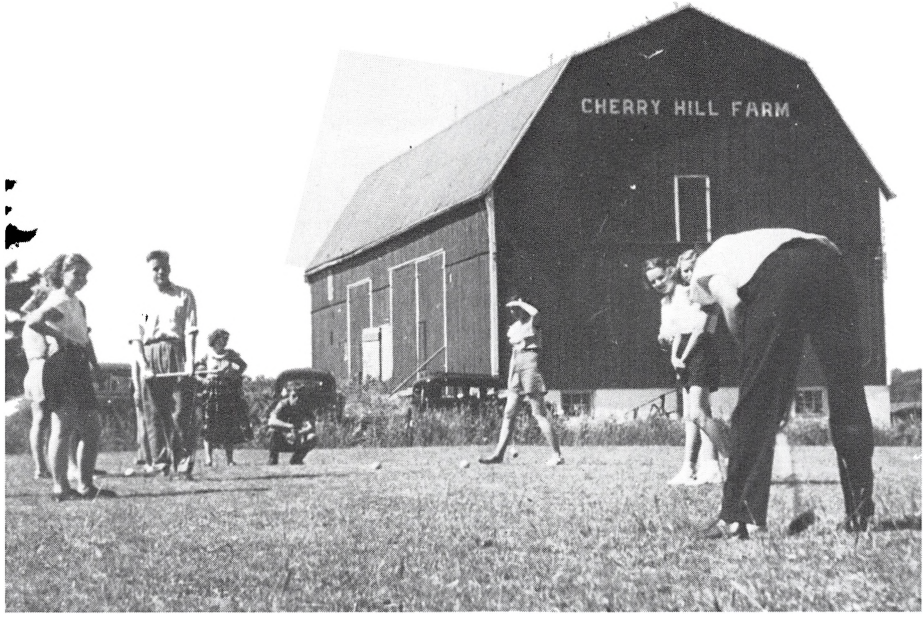
In the spring of 1936, John Madsen helped to arrange a display of gymnastics and Scandinavian folk dancing at Massey Hall. Later that year, he took twenty-five Canadian physical education teachers to Denmark where they attended a six-week course at Ollerup Gymnastics Folk School.

Towards the end of World War II it became necessary to expand the gym equipment factory. Ideally, the Madsens felt it should be situated on a farm, where John could also establish the folk school he had always dreamed of. John and Betty Madsen moved into Cherry Hill Farm on the 1st of April, 1945. The new Madsen Manufacturing Company building was completed in 1946.

In that same year, John and Betty Madsen held the first folk school course at Cherry Hill Farm. Every Saturday, Betty taught weaving and ceramics in the stable, and John taught woodworking and metalworking in the factory.

Gradually, the farm buildings were converted into a residential folk school with accommodation for 35 students. The chicken house, with a piggery below, was converted into a dormitory with bunk beds acquired from the army camps. The horse stable became Cherry Hall, a cozy living and lecture room centred around a spacious stone fireplace.

John A. Madsen 1905-1952. (Photo: RBC).



The John A. Madsen Folk School was located at Cherry Hill Farm in Unionville. (Photo: RBC).

A Folk School Movement in Canada

John and Betty Madsen were not the only ones to establish a folk school after the war. Various one or two-week courses, known as folk schools, were held at several farms throughout Ontario between 1939 and 1941. The war interrupted the schools, but they sprang to life again in 1947.

The emergence of folk schools in Ontario was partly due to visits to Denmark made by various farm leaders in the 1930s. The resulting Folk School Movement was spontaneous, and some leaders thought the work should be coordinated through a federation or council.

In January, 1948, a meeting was called by the Educational Committee of the United Farmers Cooperative Company to coordinate and organize a

number of folk schools in Ontario. People who operated folk schools, as well as those interested in organizing such schools were invited. John Madsen was also invited.

This ad hoc committee met several times during 1948, and a folk school program was developed for the winter of 1948-49. The season started with a two-week Pilot Folk School for the training of leaders. These people then assisted at the ten one-week folk schools held at various farms throughout Ontario. The Pilot Folk School was held at the John Madsen Folk School at Cherry Hill Farm. Twenty-one leaders, representing twelve Ontario counties attended the first Pilot Folk School course.

In 1949-50, the season began with a Folk School Conference at Cherry Hill Farm followed by ten folk school sessions held at various farms. It was clear, however, that something more than just an ad hoc committee was needed. Consequently, the Ontario Folk School Council was formed. The Council, which consisted of all the folk schools in Ontario, hired a director in November 1950. John Madsen was elected to the board of fifteen directors.

In addition to training folk school leaders, the John Madsen Folk School held its own classes. The subjects taught included ceramics, woodcarving, art, petit point, leather working, weaving, public speaking, drama, gymnastics and folk dancing.

The John Madsen folk dancers.

The annual Folk Festival at Cherry Hill Farm was a major event. The flags of many nations lined the long driveway leading up to the red and white buildings. About 2,000 people, representing over thirty ethnic groups, would often attend. The Danish Canadian Folk Dancers provided entertainment on the outdoor stage, together with song and dance groups from many nations. Gymnastic performances were presented by Finnish, Czechoslovakian, and Estonian gymnasts as well as gymnasts from other countries.

The Folk Festival at Cherry Hill Farm was billed as a multi-cultural and multi-ethnic event. John Madsen saw the Folk Festival as "a wonderful medium for the creation of understanding, appreciation and respect for each of the national groups contributing".

John Madsen died in Copenhagen in July, 1952, on his way to the Olympic Games in Finland, at the age of 47. He was a man of vision and idealism who once wrote, "I hope you will all find a place where your contribution is needed, and do not be afraid to tackle a big job! You will grow with the responsibilities if you are sincere, unselfish and willing to work... I don't need to tell you how important your contribution can be. Each one of you knows what a folk school is. You can just visualize what it would do to your country if we had 10,000 young people going to Folk School every year. We will have that some day – and don't forget that each man with a conviction is stronger than a hundred men with just an interest."

Betty Madsen continued the work of managing the factory, operating the folk school and holding the annual Folk Festivals alone. Governor General Vincent Massey invited her to Government House to tell her how much Canada appreciated her community work, in particular, the organization of the Folk Festivals. She was also elected to the Ontario Folk School Council, serving on the board of directors until April, 1957.

Cherry Hill Farm was increasingly used by church youth groups in the Toronto area as a place for weekend retreats. It was, naturally, also used by St. Ansgar Lutheran Church.

By the end of the 1970s, Unionville had become a suburb of Toronto. City planners wanted to develop the Markville Shopping Centre. In June, 1980, Betty Madsen and her daughters moved from the farm. In a matter of weeks, the century-old home, and what had been the John Madsen Folk School, was erased. Not one trace remains of what was once Cherry Hill Farm.

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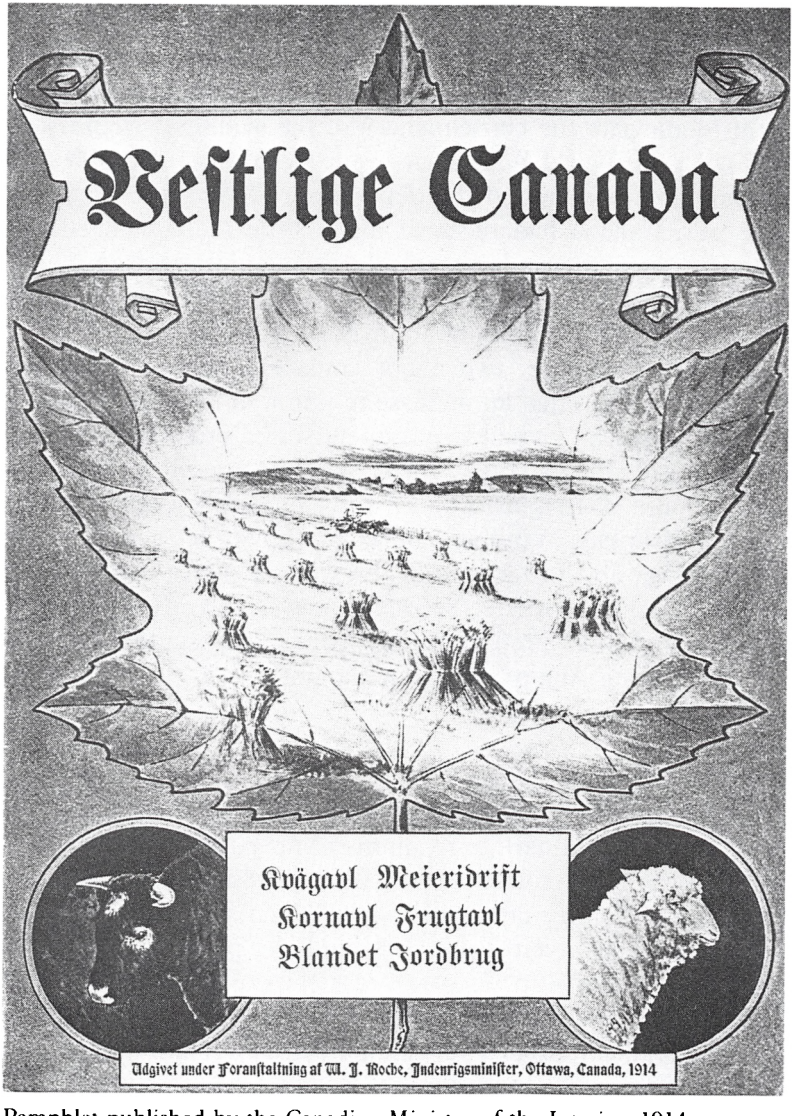
Emigration from Denmark to Canada in the 1920s

by Poul Erik Olsen



Pamphlet published by the Canadian Ministry of the Interior. 1914.

Until World War I, the United States was the main destination of Danish emigrants. In the years immediately following the war, emigration to the U.S. was greatly limited by the so-called quota laws. In future, the United States would receive only a predetermined number of immigrants every year. This partial closing of the door to "the promised land" meant that Europeans who wanted to emigrate were forced to seek new destinations. In 1921, the United States set the Danish quota of immigrants at 5,694 per year, and this number was further reduced in 1924 and 1927 to 2,789 and 1,181, respectively.

At the same time as the large, traditional destinations began to reduce the number of immigrants they would accept, Canada adopted a policy of increasing immigration. Here it was felt that actively encouraging immigration could help to alleviate the consequences of the economic depression which had followed the World War. There were even those who felt that the lack of immigrants had caused the depression. During the first four years after the war, Canada had received just a little more than 80,000 immigrants, and, in fact, an even larger number had emigrated from Canada to the United States. It was, therefore, the Canadian government's specific political aim to increase immigration as much as possible. When it came to financing this venture, two major considerations were kept in mind. First of all, it was felt that an increase in immigration would benefit the railway companies, who owned large, uncultivated areas of land, and were naturally interested in any policy which would increase the number of passengers and amount of freight to be carried. Such an increase would, likewise, be to the advantage of industry, always happy to see a build-up of the manpower reserve, and to farmers in the western states who needed large numbers of seasonal workers. Secondly, it was the official opinion that the immigrants should preferably be people who could easily be assimilated in the existing Anglo-Saxon population.

No more convicts!

Not all immigrants, however, were equally welcome. In the 1920s, it was still common practice in Denmark to recommend for pardon those prisoners who agreed to leave the country upon their release; some were also required to settle in a country outside Europe. When such a pardon was granted, the prisoner was given a passport, and the police then accompanied him to an immigrant ship. As of 1927, such people could no longer be sent to Canada. On 9 July 1927, Danish Minister of Justice Svenning Rytter issued a government circular to all chief constables and prison governors which read as follows: "Inasmuch as Canadian immigration legislation prohibits foreigners who have been found guilty of an act considered

by the general public to be dishonourable to travel to Canada, or, if they have arrived, to remain there, it shall be noted that such persons are not to be encouraged to, nor assisted in, emigrating to Canada." This circular was issued after the British ambassador in Copenhagen, on behalf of the Canadian government, had protested this practice in connection with the granting of pardons. Up until that time, numerous organizations and institutions had eagerly encouraged the 'export' of former convicts to Canada. The State Prison in Horsens, Denmark, for example, had requisitioned a generous supply of brochures about Canada from the Information Bureau of the Foreign Ministry. Up until this time, the National Association of Discharged Prisoners' Aid Societies and the Salvation Army had assisted a number of former convicts in emigrating to Canada. Some of these had later been expelled from that country, and although this had not occasioned an exchange of diplomatic notes, Canadian patience had finally run out.[1]

It was, of course, not unknown to other emigrants in the 1920s that former convicts had been provided with tickets paid for by the prison administration. Many prospective Danish emigrants felt this was an unreasonable practice, when it was virtually impossible for honest people to obtain public support in their endeavour to seek a better life on foreign shores. A relatively large number of applications for financial assistance were sent to the authorities by prospective emigrants in the 1920s. The 'officialese' of the letters of refusal to these applications may have given rise to some misunderstanding of the circumstances under which support could, in fact, be granted. The Ministry of the Interior often wrote as follows: "We regret to inform you that the Ministry does not have at its disposal a grant to cover the purpose of your application" or "The Ministry does not find itself able to comply with your request at this time".

The great interest of the countries of destination in increasing immigration, and the corresponding desire of the Danish people to emigrate led, of course, to widespread public awareness of this issue. In the 1920s, a number of books on emigration and emigrants were published, and also the newspapers kept abreast of the topic. The Copenhagen daily, *Berlingske Tidende*, even sent the journalist, Aksel Sandemose, to Canada as a special emigration correspondent.

Providing the emigrants with information

Politics in Denmark in the years immediately following World War I were characterized by an increased interest in emigration. Danish emigration legislation, passed in 1868, chiefly provided rules for the transport of emigrants to the country which was to receive them and regulated the work of emigration agents. Now the issue became a broader one: Should the mother

country take additional responsibility for its emigrants by providing information, or by other means helping them to establish themselves in the country of destination? The question of whether or not there should be an official information service for emigrants had been taken up as early as in 1872, in connection with a revision of the law of 1868, but no specific answer had ever been given.[2] After World War I, the information question was raised again, not least because the Canadian government stepped up the publication of propaganda directed at potential emigrants.

Upon the reorganization of the Danish foreign service in 1921, a new department, called the Information Bureau for the Trades was established within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Even before World War I, such a bureau had been designated to provide assistance to Danish exporters who wished to enter new foreign markets.[3] Now the Information Bureau was given the additional task of collecting and disseminating information about "conditions abroad of interest to Danish emigrants". This meant that the emigration issue had become the responsibility of three separate ministries: the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, which in future would be the official source of information; the Ministry of the Interior, which would send delegations to study conditions in foreign countries and to participate in international conferences on emigration, as well as cooperate with domestic business organizations, etc.; and the Ministry of Justice, which would monitor the work of the emigration agents in accordance with the *Emigration Act of 1872*. The responsibility of the Ministry of Justice included deciding cases regarding illegal propaganda – emigration agents and others who had an economic interest in transporting emigrants were prohibited from encouraging emigration in any way.

There was a very fine line between the duties of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of the Interior with regard to emigration.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the emigration agents were not the only ones engaged in providing information. Any number of disinterested private organizations, for example the YMCA and YWCA, took it upon themselves to supply information about countries to which Danes could emigrate, and in some cases even assisted them in finding employment in the country of destination. There was, however, no clear Danish policy on the subject of emigration. When questions were asked about the policy, the standard official answer was that it was neither possible to hinder nor to encourage emigration. The information at hand would be made available, and that was that.

Emigration societies

There is no doubt that there was a need for information. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs, as well as private organizations, received a steady stream of inquiries about the opportunities available to Danish emigrants. These queries came both from individuals and from the so-called emigration societies. It was the purpose of the latter to attempt to organize collective emigration for members of a particular society and to help them become established in their new homeland. Only a few of these societies actually carried out such a venture. Those societies which succeeded in organizing group emigration were rarely successful in setting up a colony. A colonization attempt in Nicaragua, based on the membership of such a society, had tragic consequences for most of the participants, and a project in Paraguay also met with a certain degree of failure.

In 1922, one such society, Dansk Emigrantforening [Danish Emigrant Society], requested information about Brazil with an eye to the establishment of a colony there. Their advertisements brought the society to the attention of the authorities, and this attempt to settle a group of Danes in Brazil was discouraged.[4]

Dansk Emigrantforening then began to plan a settlement in Canada. Also this project received a certain amount of press coverage, and this, among other things, forced the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to give the information question higher priority.

It was more than obvious that the information available from the emigration societies had been supplied primarily by the emigration agents or the propaganda offices of the various countries of destination. Not surprisingly, they presented a very rosy picture of the future new settlers could expect, a picture which stood in sharp contrast to the one provided by the Danish consulates.

It was, therefore, most welcome when in 1923 it suddenly became possible to send a Danish government delegation to Canada to study conditions there. This would provide the ministry with much needed information when – in competition with the Copenhagen-based agents of the *Canadian Pacific Railway* or the *Cunard Line* – they had to answer the questions of prospective Danish emigrants.

A Canadian immigration office in Copenhagen

Prior to receipt of the Canadian invitation, some consideration had been given to opening a Canadian immigration office in Copenhagen. The Canadian immigration rules had been changed in May, 1922. A previous provision requiring immigrants to have at least $250 upon arrival in Canada had

been revoked. Instead, there was now a provision stating that immigrants had to obtain a visa from a Canadian immigration official, and such officials were posted to London, Paris, The Hague and Antwerpen. It was feared that this provision would mean that emigrants from Denmark to Canada would no longer take passage on the Danish trans-Atlantic ships. The Consulate General in Montreal was therefore requested to attempt to ease this provision or to convince the Canadian government to set up an immigration office in Copenhagen.

The Canadians responded by saying that until further notice Danish immigrants could obtain a visa from the British consulate in Copenhagen. They added that, if encouraged to do so by the Danish government, they would be happy to post an immigration officer to Copenhagen. In January, 1923, the head of the Canadian immigration office in Antwerpen, Mr Mitton, visited Denmark and negotiated the establishment of a Canadian Government Immigration Office in Copenhagen. The stated purpose of this office was "to give reliable and truthful information about Canada, to examine possible emigrants and to assist them in finding suitable jobs in Canada and in any other way to help them, and to advise unsuitable persons not to emigrate".[5]

The information provided would consist of the Canadian government's official publications, and it was emphasized that this part of the work would be carried out under the control of the Danish government. Likewise, it was stressed that it would not be the task of the office to take responsibility for the transport of the emigrants. They were to receive the same consideration whether they took passage on an English, a Canadian or a Danish ship.

The Danish government had no objection to the opening of such an office. The Ministry of Justice felt that it could be established under the terms of existing emigration legislation as it would not be the task of the immigration office to provide information to or assist emigrants but only to keep "unfortunate elements" from emigrating.[6] Everything appeared to be in readiness, but nothing came of the plans to open the office. The new provision regarding the obtaining of a visa was thought to be an attempt to stop the flow of immigrants from southern and eastern Europe. This thought gained credibility when in March, 1923, the Canadian government confidentially made it known that the provision would not apply to immigrants from western and northern Europe. Danish immigrants would continue to be admitted even without the stamp of approval of an "immigration officer" in their passports. This being the case, the Canadian immigration authorities in Europe no longer had the same interest in opening a branch office in Denmark.

Emigration Agent Olaf Lassen's headquarters at 19 Nyhavn, Copenhagen.

"Ask *Canadian Pacific* about Canada!"

The Canadian government continued, however, to be interested in opening a propaganda office in Copenhagen. By the time the Canadians let this fact be known, the Danes had already been invited to send a delegation to Canada, and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs took that opportunity to postpone the final decision about whether or not to open an official Canadian propaganda office until such time as this delegation had returned to Denmark.

The truth was that there was no real need for a Canadian propaganda office in Denmark. The *Canadian Pacific Railway Company* had an office in Copenhagen, and the head of this office, M.B. Sørensen, was associated with *Canadian Pacific*'s Department of Colonization and Development. M.B. Sørensen actively encouraged Danes with a desire to emigrate to choose Canada as their destination and *Canadian Pacific* as their means of getting there! Because of this activity, he was charged with violating the Danish *Emigration Act of 1872*. One condition for working as an emigration agent was that one had to have had a permanent residence in Denmark for at least 5 years, and Mr Sørensen did not fulfil this requirement. Another of *Canadian Pacific*'s representatives in Denmark, Carl Jacobsen, also violated the Danish regulations in his work as an emigration agent. He combined the sale of tickets to Canada with extensive propaganda about the prosperous future awaiting any Canadian immigrant.

The Danish government delegation

The invitation to the Danish government arrived on 20 April 1923. It was sent by T.B. Williams, head of the Canadian immigration office in Antwerpen, the main headquarters in Europe. He wrote that a representative of the Danish government would be very welcome in Canada "to see for himself the conditions and be in a position to report fully to the Danish Government on his return as to Canada being a suitable field for Danish emigrants".[7]

Mr Williams addressed his invitation to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs; a little less than a month later a similar invitation was extended to the Minister himself to send a representative to Canada. This latter invitation came from the *Canadian Pacific Railway* and was signed by C. Evan Moore, the head of the *CPR*'s European Department of Colonization and Development. He took that opportunity to inform the Danish Foreign Minister that Danish emigration legislation appeared to be somewhat old-fashioned: "The laws governing the work of Emigration officers in Denmark were formulated many years ago when conditions of emigrant travel were very different. Modern conditions offer emigrants not only comfortable transportation but every care and consideration from the Government and Railway officials in Canada on their arrival."[8]

Furthermore, it was suggested that the Danish government should not, in the interests of the population, hinder the work of *Canadian Pacific* representatives in informing of conditions in Canada by fining these representatives if the people who heard them purchased tickets, as had the Messrs Sørensen and Jacobsen and a number of their employees. At the same time, *Canadian Pacific* promised to loyally respect Danish legislation.

Two invitations, arriving at almost the same time, gave the Danish government a temptation they could scarcely resist. Added to this was the fact that Sweden and Norway had received similar invitations. The Danish government accepted. Sweden and Norway turned down the invitations, and the Swedish press claimed that Denmark was making preparations to sell its population to the Canadians. Perhaps this was why the Danish government agreed not to send a delegation of civil servants; that would have given the visit a very official appearance. But that was all the government could agree on. Two of the ministers concerned openly disagreed about who should make up the delegation. These difficulties were finally resolved, and it was agreed that the Danish representatives should be the editor Christian Reventlow, a former politician, and at that time a much respected author of a series of books on international topics, and an agricultural expert, Marius Gormsen.

A *Canadian Pacific Railway* passenger train.

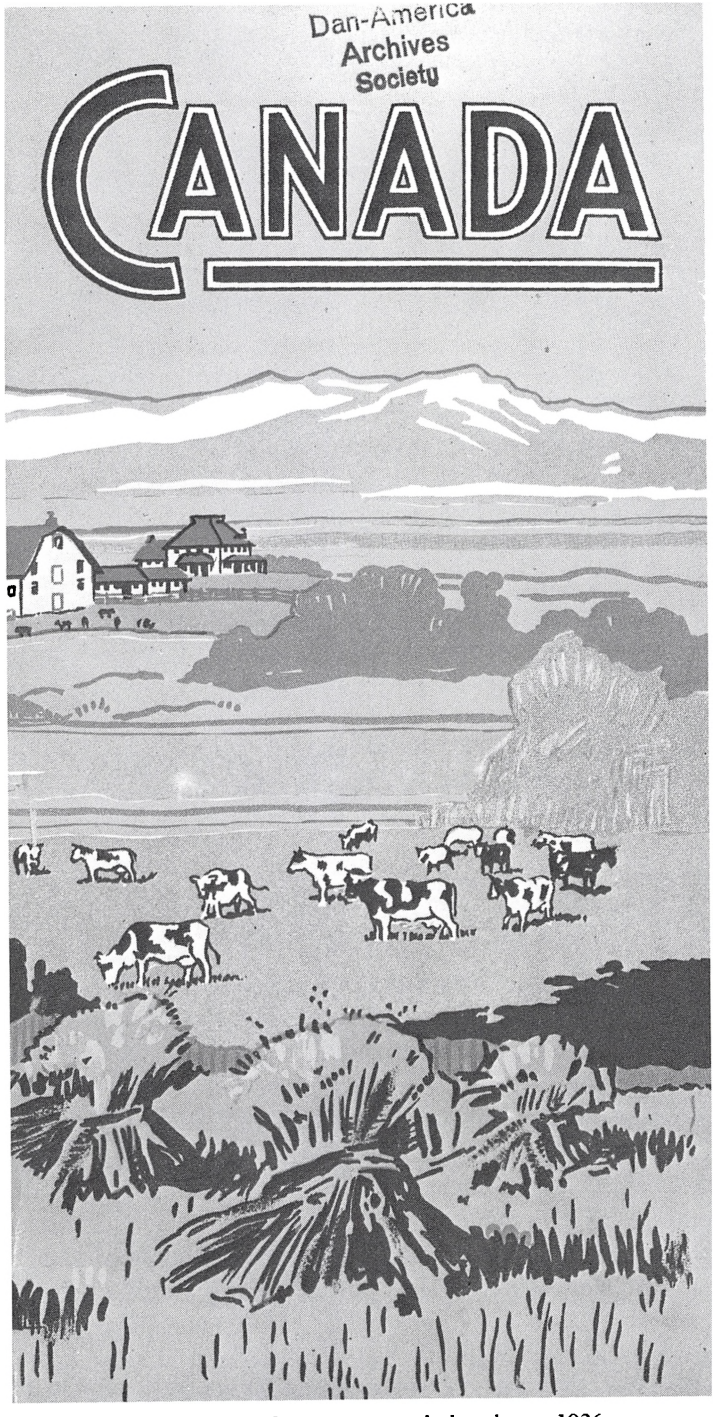
The Danish delegation visits Canada

Editor Reventlow and Mr Gormsen embarked for Canada on 5 August 1923 aboard the *CPR* trans-Atlantic liner *Empress of France*, and they docked in Quebec harbour on 15 August. The next two months were spent visiting various provinces, where information was gathered. The delegation's major purpose was to obtain information about the opportunities for Danes in Canadian agriculture. They were particularly interested in which geographic areas would be most suitable for Danish emigrants, where the best job opportunities were, and where farms, or uncultivated land, could be purchased, perhaps with an eye to establishing whole colonies.

In order to obtain the most complete information, Christian Reventlow had prepared a questionnaire which he distributed among immigration authorities, railway company officials, etc. in Canada. Not surprisingly, he received a wide range of answers. Among other things, Reventlow had

asked whether farm labourers with no capital of their own could expect to find good jobs, and whether or not they would be able to find work outside of agriculture during the winter. The *Crown Lands Agency* in Port Arthur was optimistic: "The possibility for settlers to obtain work during the winter months is exceedingly good. In fact, I could now place between 100 and 150 men in positions for the winter, and have wired Mr Carl Jacobsen to this effect."

The *Canadian Colonization Agency* was more cautious: "It is possible that farm labourers could get employment on farms during the winter in areas where mixed and dairy farming are carried on; farmers in some cases retain the help the year round." Reventlow's own comment, written in the margin was: "far too optimistic". *Dominion Canners Ltd.*, who also had land for sale, had a different view of the situation: "The Danish farm labourers will be assured of employment because the organization of the *Canadian National Railways* and that of the Government will develop amongst its people



A *Canadian National Railway* propaganda brochure. 1926.

in the West, openings of a suitable character and all year round employment."[9]

In Reventlow's final report he concluded that, of course, all those who emigrated had a chance of finding well-paid, permanent work. But he went on to add: "But great disappointments await those who emigrate in the belief that such opportunities are there just for the taking, and that all you have to do is bend down and pick them up."

Reventlow had very definite opinions about the propaganda activities of the Canadian authorities and the semi-public railway companies, as well as private organizations. Minister for Immigration Robb had described big, new immigrant projects and then in an interview just a week later had said that immigration was necessary simply as a means of lowering the wage level in Canada. The work of the labour exchange was not very well organized, as is apparent from a description printed in certain railway company brochures: "While the transportation companies have a direct interest in transporting the largest number of emigrants, and the land owners in getting as many as possible to settle on the land, there has been little in the way of rational behaviour and treatment of the immigrants."

In his report, Reventlow mentioned one of the topics which was central to the Danish emigration debate, namely, the possibilities for joint, colony-wise emigration. The geographical requirements could certainly be met in Canada, and there was no legal obstacle for those wishing to establish a colony. The answers to the questionnaire had, however, shown that the Canadian authorities were not especially interested in colonies, as this

Alone on the prairie. 1920.

would delay the assimilation of the immigrants. According to Reventlow, the fact that colonies were tolerated, and in a few instances had even been encouraged, was due to the great interest in the railway companies and others in the sale of their land.

Reventlow did not recommend settling in colonies in Canada. He felt that colonies should be established only where it was necessary for the immigrants to protect themselves against the native population, and this was unlikely to be the case in Canada.

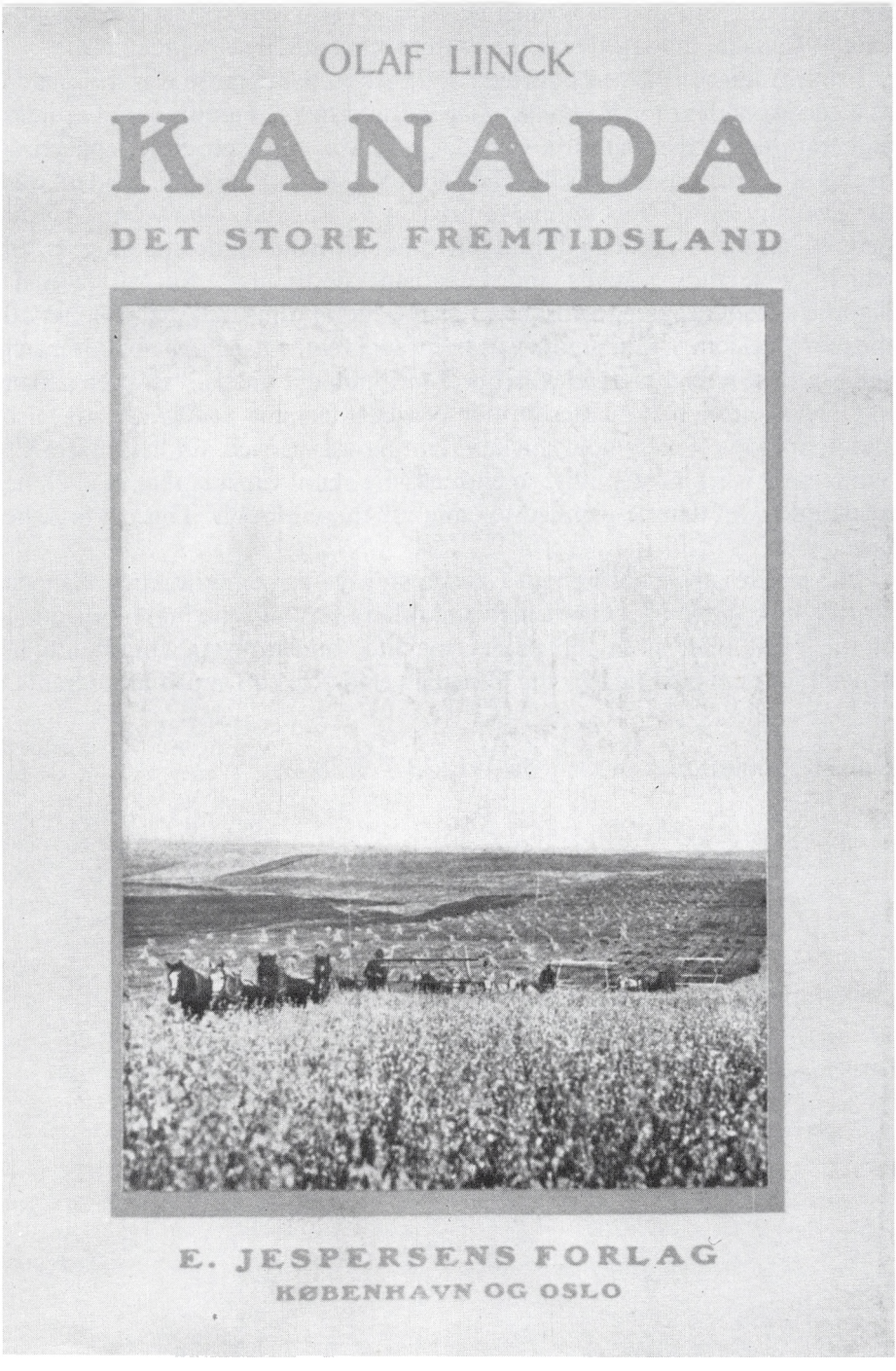
No attempt was made to conceal the fact that immigrants in Canada could have other than economic difficulties. In discussing the problem of finding work during the winter months, Reventlow described the winter activities of a wheat farmer and his family: "There is hard work in the months when the ploughing and sowing is done and at harvest time, but during the long and cold winter, the family, which as far as is possible has no hired help, goes into a kind of hibernation, broken by a few get-togethers where they play poker and listen to gramophone records. They also visit the church, usually not a superior religious institution, but a social gathering place. This life on the endless, flat prairie seems to effect the minds of the people, making them gloomy, and sometimes even lethargic; especially the women often become quite melancholy." This description coincides rather well with Aksel Sandemose's novels about the Danes in Canada.

In the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, however, Reventlow's report was felt to provide excellent and neutral information to those considering emigration to Canada. The report was published in *Udenrigsministeriets Tidsskrift* [The Foreign Ministry Journal] of 3 January 1924. Several thousand reprints of the report were distributed during the 1920s and '30s to prospective emigrants.[10]

Neutral information

The Danish delegation's expedition had been a success. A lot of information had been gathered about the price of land, opportunities for jobs in farming and other areas, etc. which was, undoubtedly, helpful to those contemplating emigration. That most of the information in the report could just as well have been taken from the reports of the Consulate General in Montreal previously published in *Udenrigsministeriets Tidsskrift*, was of lesser importance.

There was a market for neutral information, defined as information which did not come from emigration agents or from the railway companies. This is apparent from the fact that after Reventlow and Gormsen's trip, a number of delegations financed by, among others, the YMCA in Denmark



The title-page of Olaf Linck's book *Kanada. Det Store Fremtidsland.*

were sent to Canada. The Danish newspapers also sent special correspondents to Canada, among these, the aforementioned Aksel Sandemose.

From August, 1927, to February 1928 Aksel Sandemose was in Canada as a correspondent for *Berlingske Tidende*, and he filed a number of articles and features on the Danes in Canada, while, at the same time, collecting background material for his novel *Ross Dane* (1928). One of his readers was the Danish Consul General in Montreal, J.E. Bøggild, who wrote to Sandemose and complimented him on "the intimate understanding [with which] you study Canada and Canadian conditions". Not all of Sandemose's readers agreed with the Consul General, thus making his letter all the more welcome. Sandemose was frustrated by the need to defend himself against those who disagreed with his description of Canada, "as when a man in Ontario wrote that my description of wheat farming in Alberta was false and he told me exactly how chicken farming was carried out in Ontario."[11] Sandemose was, incidentally, so enthusiastic about Canada that in 1928 he made it known that he planned to emigrate there himself. This, in fact, he never did.

The articles and books about Canada and Danish emigration to Canada written by Sandemose, Olaf Linck and others serve as one more indication of the great interest in the pioneering life, or simply in emigration in general, as demonstrated by the Canadian statistics on Danish immigrants.

Danish immigration to Canada 1912/13 – 1928/29

1912/13	798
1913/14	871
1914/15	326
1915/16	167
1916/17	145
1917/18	74
1918/19	44
1919/20	233
1920/21	511
1921/22	541
1922/23	382
1923/24	1,355
1924/25	1.830
1925/26	1,112
1926/27	2,030
1927/28	3,835
1928/29	3,311
1929/30	2,685
1930/31	820

"The wrong idea of Canada"

As the number of Danish immigrants in Canada grew, reports of the sad fates of some of them increased. Danish authorities were quick to ask whether the misfortunes of the immigrants were due to their having been lured to Canada under false pretences, seduced by unscrupulous ticket agents. It was not felt to be correct to question whether the personal qualifications of the immigrants themselves had been lacking.

The Danish Vice-consul in Alberta filed a report on the newly arrived Danes in Alberta in January, 1929: "...the most outstanding and disappointing fact of all is the apparent misunderstanding or wrong idea these people have of Canada. In the first place, they expect to get work, and plenty of it, and I presume most of them get a job good or bad after arriving here; however, in many cases it appears to me to be only a transfer from Railway Companies' responsibility and, these people, most of them arriving without funds, are more or less up against it immediately."[12]

The railway companies could sell a ticket in Denmark as well as secure a job in Canada, but if the immigrant lost this first job, he was completely on his own. The Consul General in Montreal felt, however, that, on the whole, the employment service provided by the railway companies was satisfactory.[13] From the mid-1920s the Consul General set up an arrangement whereby the *Canadian National Railways* provided him with regular reports of the placement of Danish immigrants. Later, a similar arrangement was made with *Canadian Pacific Railways*. But some problems could not be avoided: Toward the end of the 1920s, a group of Danish farm labourers obtained work on Prince William Island. The representative of the railway company had "attempted to help the newcomers understand that they could not leave the island without first obtaining the permission of the Ministry of Agriculture. Their passports were taken from them, and they had to sign a contract which included the condition that they were not allowed to correspond with anyone outside the island about obtaining work in another place." The Consulate General was helpful in resolving these difficulties.

The problem was a much worse one when the immigrants experienced real need. Then it could be difficult to obtain the necessary assistance. Neither the federal government, the provincial government, nor the local authorities in Canada provided assistance to newly arrived immigrants in the event of illness or unemployment, and the Danish representatives could offer only limited emergency help. Throughout the 1920s numerous reports of unfortunate emigrants made their way into the Danish newspapers, in particular those published by the Social Democratic party, and these reports increased as the employment situation in Canada worsened toward the end of the 1920s.

Help from Denmark?

In Denmark the political debate about emigration focused primarily on how extensive Danish responsibility for the emigrants should be: Should special relief measures be provided for emigrants in need? The general opinion was that emigration was the sole responsibility of the emigrant and, therefore, that the country he left behind had no special responsibility for him. This view prevailed in the discussions surrounding the passing of a new Danish *Emigration Act* in the 1920s and, throughout this period, formed the basis of the work of Foreign Ministry representatives.[14] But the issue of the conditions of Danish immigrants in Canada, in particular, continued to be of such political interest that in March, 1929, the Minister for Foreign Affairs was called before the Finance Committee of the Parliament. The Minister was accompanied by Consul General Bøggild from Montreal, currently on a visit to Denmark.

The Consul General had no solution to the social problems of the emigrants, but he came out in favour of a grant in support of cultural activities for and among the Danes in Canada. Financial support in this area would perhaps strengthen the feeling of solidarity between already established Danish immigrants and their newly arrived countrymen in need. The Danish Immigration Aid Society of Canada, founded by private persons in Alberta in 1927, was a clear indication that such a feeling of solidarity

On the way to Canada. 1929.

existed. The president, Anton M. Rasmussen, declared in an interview in April 1928, that the Society could guarantee that no Dane would remain helpless in Canada.

But the recommendation of the Consul General did not result in increased support for cultural activities – or, incidentally, for the social work for which there would soon become a need.

The 1929 crisis and immigration

In July, 1928, Canada's Department of Trade and Commerce could report that the employment situation was the best it had ever been. Just a few months later the first warnings were received from the Danish consulates that farm labourers could probably not expect to obtain permanent jobs, i.e. work during the winter months, and that other workers would also have difficulty in finding jobs.

In the summer of 1929, Canada began to change its immigration policy. The number of immigrants was to be limited. As indicated by the above statistics, the number of immigrants began to fall in 1929, and this decrease continued in the first months of 1930.

In May, 1930, the Consul General in Montreal telegraphed the Foreign Ministry and warned that an improvement in the employment situation was not immediately forthcoming. Those with no special knowledge of farming should be warned not to emigrate to Canada. In reality, in the summer of 1930, Canada closed its borders to immigrants. Only those immigrants who had sufficient capital were admitted.

The Danish government, which was gradually changing its attitude to emigration, was not pleased about this closing of the Canadian borders. The policy of neutral information, prevalent in the 1920s, had now made way for a more active emigration policy – for the same reason that the Canadians were limiting immigration, the unemployment statistics.

This Danish change in attitude was of no help to those who had already emigrated. From the winter of 1929/30, the Danish consulates in Canada sent numerous reports to the Consulate General and to the Foreign Ministry about unemployed Danes who were applying for help. Some consuls found themselves operating an employment service, but there was little work to be had.

Some Danes attempted to take matters into their own hands. On 6 October, 1931, a group of unemployed Danes in Port Arthur held a meeting in the Scandinavian Home Society Building. At this meeting a resolution was passed to seek an answer to the question: "Who, according to international law, is responsible for the Danish immigrants, those who landed lawfully in Canada these past few years? Is it Canada, or is it Denmark?" The question

was asked of the Canadian Ministry of Agriculture, but, as far as is known, no answer was received. The question was also asked of the Consulate General in Montreal via the Danish Vice-consul in Fort William. This time an answer was given. Responsibility lay with the Canadian authorities. The Danish consulates could provide no more than a meal ticket and perhaps travel expenses, "preferably not more than a couple of dollars".

Many disappointed Danes therefore returned to Denmark in the early 1930s. However, the majority, approximately 60%, of those Danes who emigrated to Canada remained there, and the 1931 census showed a total of 31,118 persons of Danish descent living in Canada.

A higher percentage Danish immigrants of the 1920s remained in Canada than immigrants from the other Scandinavian countries. Only 50% of the Norwegians remained and approximately 33% of the Swedish immigrants stayed in Canada. When this was reported by the Consulate General in 1934, it was pointed out that this was in part due to the full reports and study tours made by Danish officials, as well as the high quality of the information service they had provided.

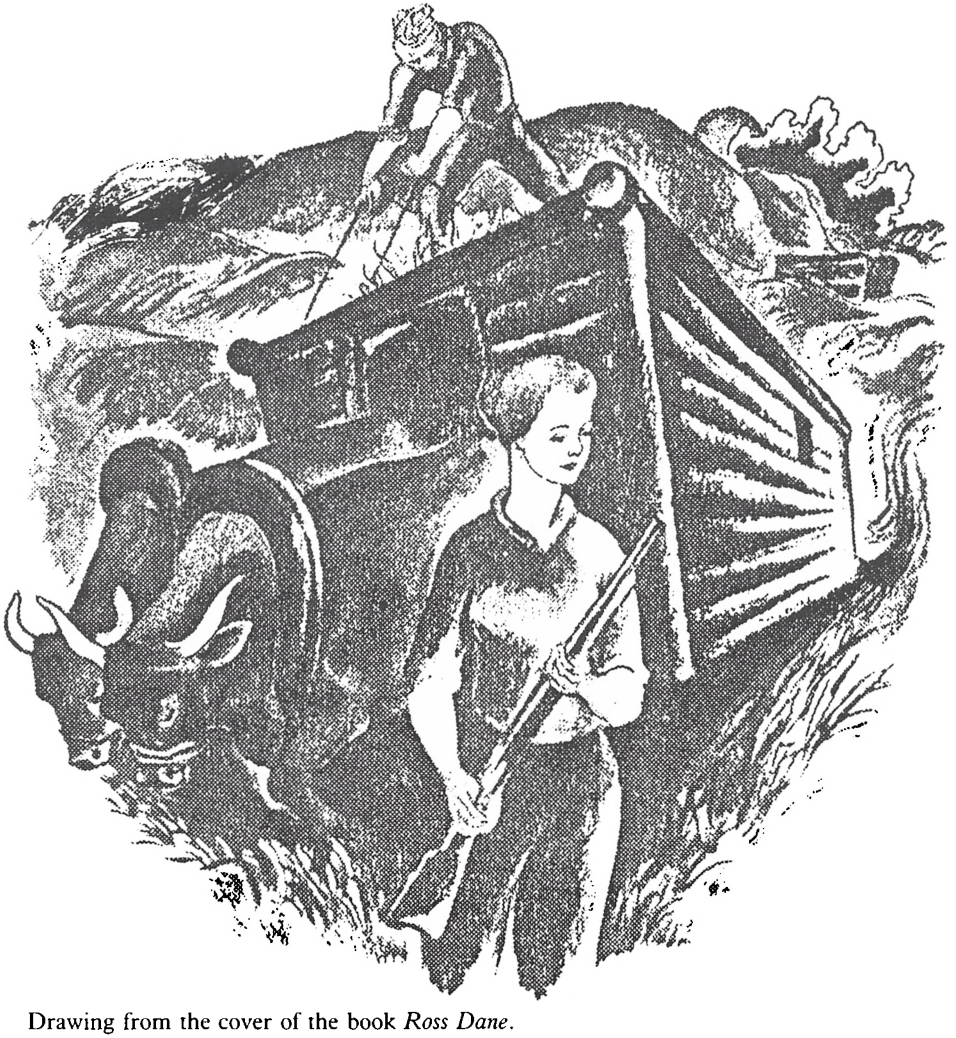
Notes:

1. Justitsministeriets 3. kontor, j.nr. 1926/1350 [Ministry of Justice 3rd office, Journal no. 1926/1350].
2. Poul Erik Olsen and Helle Otte: "En statsansat udvandrertante?" [A government employed emigration nanny?" in *Spor – arkiver og historie*, [Traces – archives and history] Studier og Kilder 4, Rigsarkivet, 1987, p. 247 ff.
3. August Wiemann Eriksen: *Eksportrådgivning i Danmark 1910-1921 – privat eller statslig opgave?*, [Export advice in Denmark 1910-1921 – a private or a government task?], 1984, p. 88 ff.
4. Indenrigsministeriets Socialkontor, j.nr. 1922/390. [Ministry of the Interior Social office, Journal no. 1922/390].
5. Justitsministeriet 3. kontor, j.nr. 1920/12-20A. [Ministry of Justice 3rd office, Journal no. 1920/12-20A].
6. Udenrigsministeriet. Akter 1909 ff. Gruppe nr. 96.M.1.; [Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Documents 1909 ff. Group no. 96.M.1.]. Justitsministeriet 3. kontor j.nr. 1920/12-20A. [Ministry of Justice 3rd office, Journal no. 1920/12-20A].
7. Udenrigsministeriet. Akter 1909 ff. Gruppe nr. 96.M.7.; [Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Documents 1909 ff. Group no. 96.M.7].
8. Ibid.

9. Udenrigsministeriet. Oplysningsbureauet for Erhvervene: Canada. 20.K.1: Muligheder for danske 1920-23. [Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Information Bureau for the Trades: Canada. 20.K.1: Opportunities for Danes 1920-23].
10. Ibid., pk. I.
11. Aksel Sandemose til generalkonsul Bøggild 10.11.1928. Generalkonsulatet i Montreal, gruppe O-17-VII. [Aksel Sandemose to Consul General Bøggild 10.11.1928. Consulate General in Montreal, group O-17-VII].
12. Udenrigsministeriet. Akter 1909 ff. Gruppe nr. 96.L.1. Canada, pk. II. [Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Documents 1909 ff. Group no. 96.L.1. Canada, pk. II].
13. Consul-general Bøggilds redegørelse 30.4.1929. Udenrigsministeriet. Akter 1909 ff. Gruppe 96.L.1., pk. II. [Consul General Bøggild's report 30.4.1029. Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Documents 1909 ff. Group 96.L.1., pk. II].
14. Poul Erik Olsen and Helle Otte, op.cit.

Aksel Sandemose and Canada

by Christopher Hale



Drawing from the cover of the book *Ross Dane*.

One of the few Scandinavian authors to have visited Canada and written about it was Aksel Sandemose. In 1927, the *Canadian Pacific Railway* paid his travel expenses to come to this country to report on the conditions for immigration in the prairie provinces of Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta. On returning to Denmark, he wrote numerous articles for newspapers about his trip, as well as three novels, based on his experiences on the western Canadian prairies.

The first of these novels *Ross Dane*, published in 1928, is about a Danish immigrant of this name who journeys up to Canada from South Dakota in search of some runaway horses. He joins up with a Métis[1] and several newly arrived Danes with whom he then travels west to Alberta. When they arrive at a fictitious place called Beaver Coulee, they establish a predominantly Scandinavian colony of which Ross eventually becomes the leader. The book traces the development of the settlement from the 1880s to the 1920s, its struggle to overcome the harse environment of the Canadian prairies and the conflicts among its members. The second novel, *En Sømand Går i Land* [A Sailor Goes Ashore], from 1931, deals with Sandemose's alter ego, Espen Arnakke. After killing a man in Newfoundland, Espen eventually flees to Canada, where he finally comes to Beaver Coulee. Here he attempts to establish himself and to come to terms with the fact that he is a murderer. The final part of the trilogy, *September*, from 1939, takes place in Beaver Coulee at the outbreak of World War II. It is primarily about a love triangle but also looks at how Beaver Coulee's immigrants have either become successfully integrated Canadians or remained spiritually citizens of the old country.[2]

Sandemose was born in Nykøbing, Mors, Denmark in 1899, one of nine siblings. His father was a smith, and of Danish heritage, while his mother was a Norwegian. She had moved to Denmark in the early 1880s and served for a while as a servant girl on an estate near Silkeborg. After training to become a part-time teacher, Sandemose was hired as a crew member on one of the few remaining Danish sailing ships, carrying cargo at first to Iceland and eventually Newfoundland. While in port at the village of Fogo, Newfoundland, Sandemose jumped ship and spent the next couple of months working in a logging camp near Millertown in the interior of the island. He was then hired aboard another Danish ship heading back home, which stopped on the way in such places as Spain and Portugal and the Faroe Islands.

The budding author

On his return, he moved to Copenhagen where he enrolled in a university preparatory course. In 1921, he married Dagmar Ditlevsen, the daughter of

a farmer on Mors, and soon became interested in a career as a writer. He had very little success at first, but in 1923, with help from the influential author Johannes V. Jensen, he managed to get his first book published, *Fortællinger fra Labrador* [Tales from Labrador], a collection of short stories based on his experiences in Newfoundland. This book was followed by a series of novels, primarily about life at sea, but they were not nearly as successful as his first volume. Since his writing provided little income, Sandemose was soon deep in debt. While working as a guard at the Copenhagen museum, Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek, a position he found very degrading, he continued writing novels, as well as articles for journals and newspapers. After a couple of years, he had run out of material for his novels and wanted to leave Denmark to gain new experience. In 1926, an opportunity presented itself when he was offered the position of guest lecturer at a Danish school in Cascallares, Argentina, near the town of Tres Arroyos. He accepted this, but shortly afterward, problems at the school caused the offer to be withdrawn.

The United States' *Immigration Law of 1924* imposed strict quotas on the number of people allowed into the country. Therefore, if a person wished to immigrate to North America after that date, Canada was the only place without significant restrictions. In addition, the Canadian railway companies, particularly the *Canadian National Railway* and the *Canadian Pacific Railway*, were actively encouraging people to move to Canada and settle in the west. As a consequence, Canada was very much in the news in Denmark and a frequent topic of discussion. Several books and pamphlets had appeared, painting a rosy picture of the immigrants' life there.[3]

Sandemose was familiar with at least one of these books on Canada, Christian Mikkelsen's *Canada som Fremtidsland* [Canada as a Land of the Future], as he wrote a review of it for a local Copenhagen area newspaper in July, 1927.[4] Mikkelsen had travelled primarily to various Danish settlements in Saskatchewan and Alberta, accompanied by the *Canadian Pacific* agent in Copenhagen, M.B. Sørensen. In his book, Mikkelsen praised highly the conditions for the immigrant and urged Danes to consider the possibility of starting a new life on the Canadian prairies. This book, in addition to Canada's newsworthiness, undoubtedly gave Sandemose the idea of going there to see for himself. In addition, of course, such a journey would provide him with much needed material for his writings. He was able to persuade M.B. Sørensen to pay his way to Canada to report on conditions there, and he also managed to get the leading Copenhagen newspaper, *Berlingske Tidende*, to give him a business card as 'special correspondent' and pay him for any articles he might write about Canada. In order to have a record of his trip, Sandemose kept a very detailed diary, from which he drew a great deal of material for his articles and later his

Canada novels. The entries in this often witty account show Sandemose's excellent powers of observation.

Aksel Sandemose, 1927. (Photo: Christopher Hale).

"The fallen Dane"

On August 10, 1927, Sandemose left Esbjerg for Liverpool, England, where he boarded the *CPR* ship *S.S. Montcalm*. She set sail on August 12, and after a brief stop to process immigrants in Quebec City, docked at Montreal on August 21. A couple of days later, he took a train to Toronto and then one to Erie, Pennsylvania. Already in 1920, Sandemose's sister, Anna, had immigrated to the United States, as had his brother, Anton, a few years prior to that. Both had settled in Erie. Sandemose appears to have visited them for about a week at this point, before he again got on a train which, this time, eventually took him to Winnipeg.

He arrived in Winnipeg on September 9, and before starting out on his journey further west, he spent a day or two looking around the city. Winnipeg, at the time, was the hub where virtually all immigrants to the prairies first came before heading to their ultimate destinations. Sandemose was immediately struck by what he called "the fallen Dane", the one who couldn't make it and who ended up walking the streets of Winnipeg, asking for handouts or picking pockets. These people, notes Sandemose in his diary, were obviously not suited to the hard work which tilling the soil of the prairies demanded of them. They had therefore left the countryside and come into town, where they probably had thought life would be easier, only to find that no one had any use for them there.

Soon the eagerness to see what lay further west could no longer be resisted. On September 12, Sandemose took the train to Maryfield, just across the Manitoba border in Saskatchewan. Here he visited a young farmer by the name of John Østergaard who owned a quarter section six miles southwest of the town. Østergaard evidently told Sandemose a great deal about the rigours of life on the prairies, in particular how hard the work was. In his diary, Sandemose describes some of Østergaard's experiences.

> The work is too hard. It leaves a person incapable of anything, destroys any interest or joy, is a dismal, unimaginable drudgery, the same thing over and over again without any letup in tempo. Up at 5 or 5:30, breakfast, in the field at 6, working at lightening speed without rest or pause until 12. At the end you are staggering blindly, the stubble field rears up, the sheaves become enemies, hateful creatures that defy you, your nails are torn without your realizing it, go ahead, go ahead! Dinner at 12 o'clock, eat like an animal, supposed to be back in the field at 1, go ahead! Mosquitoes and flies eat you up, chaff and seeds dig into every inch of you, as if you were being stung by a legion of wasps, go ahead! When finally at 7 the day is at an end, quitting time holds no joy, everything is irrelevant, you drag yourself

> home, eat, creep out into the leaky bunkhouse where a few men are already asleep, flop down and pass out. The next morning at 5 o'clock – come along! When you have been in that orgy of work for a week, you are no longer a man, just an emasculated, mechanical creature, mumbling awake and asleep: Go ahead, go ahead, go ahead. You would also give the same answer if someone put a revolver to your head: Are you going to shoot me? For God's sake! Go ahead![5]

Østergaard's experiences evidently impressed Sandemose so much that he adopted them as his own. In a number of articles, he describes in Østergaard's words how he, Sandemose, slaved in the fields of western Canada helping to bring in the harvest.[6] In actual fact, there is no evidence at all that Sandemose ever worked as a hired hand while in Canada. His Maryfield experiences, if we can believe a couple of articles he wrote about Saskatchewan,[7] consisted mainly in riding around the countryside on a broken-down nag, observing the landscape and the farmers at work.

First visit to Redvers

After a short return to Winnipeg, Sandemose set out again on September 27 for the town of Redvers, 28 miles southwest of Maryfield. Mikkelsen had visited here on his trip, as there was a fairly large Danish immigrant population in the area. Sandemose's contact was Godfred Madsen who was supposed to be in town with a load of wheat, but he had not yet arrived. Therefore, Sandemose, now having caught a bad cold, had to find lodgings at the local hotel.

> I'm sorry that Redvers has only one hotel. It looks very elegant from the outside, is of stone, a real palace. But inside you find out emphatically you have come to the far west. And it serves you right... It is unusually cheerless in this grubby place, the staff are stupid, holes in everything: in doors, pillows, table cloths, blankets and floors, as if at some point the bedbugs had been eradicated in some diabolical offensive.

A couple of days later, Madsen finally showed up, and invited Sandemose to stay with him on his farm. The two drove around in Madsen's car observing the threshing activity and meeting various people. During the day, Sandemose also hunted for ducks on the numerous sloughs in the area. On Saturday night he observed how Redvers became a centre of activity.

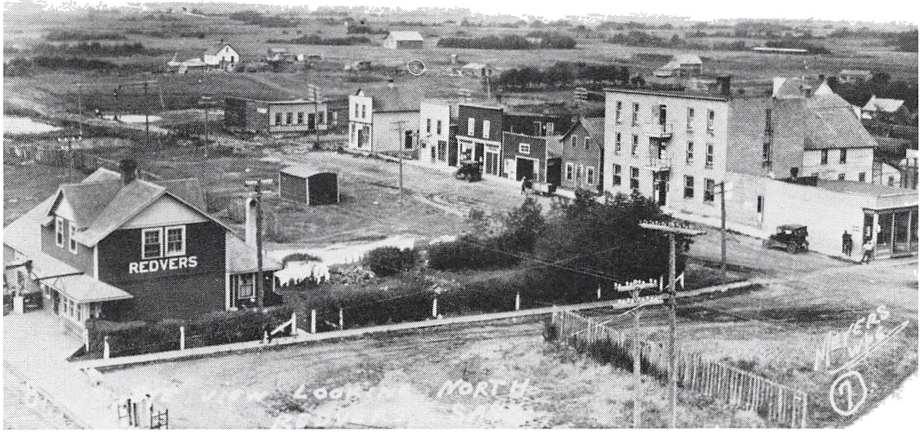
> Cars appear like a swarm of insects up from the prairie, as tonight there's a movie in Redvers. Young men dressed in working clothes fill the streets and tease the much sought after women. Thin, tender

prairie girls, patent leather shoes, silk, bashful smiles. A bearded Irishman in dirty working clothes, fat cigar with a band. Redvers Saturday evening. Dancing so the post office shakes. The various types: Danes, Russians, Canadians, Frenchmen, their clothes, the faces, their character. What's the name of this town? Extra show at the movie house. At the Chinaman's café sits a newly washed lad with his girlfriend licking ice cream. Harvest workers stand under the lamps, chomping bananas and rolling cigarettes. Short leather or woollen jackets, multicoloured as well. No use for sentimental talk about the old country here. After midnight, the cars spread out into the prairie, where straw fires lick toward the starry sky.

Women on the prairie

There had been a lot of talk back in Denmark about the loneliness and depression that women often suffered living on the prairies. This was brought home to Sandemose particularly vividly on one of the outings he and Madsen made.

Suddenly out of a thicket of scrub birch, which lashed the car like falling hail, we came in front of a wooden house, a barn, it looked like. At the sound of the motor a woman appeared in the open barn-



Redvers, Saskatchewan in the 1920s. (Photo: Christopher Hale).

door, and seldom have I seen a more dreary sight than that dejected face against the background of darkness inside. By her petticoat two small faces peeked out, she walked out into the wet grass and stood waiting there as the car stopped. The sight struck into me as something full of horror, a human being who had met with a punishment from Hell. Pale, hollow-cheeked and disheartened she stood there, flaccid, hopeless features. All around stretched the prairie for miles, here she was alone, alone – and Denmark lay thousands of miles away like the promised land. Do you live *there?* Yes, my husband is off doing harvest work in Alberta. Alas, I read in that face and heard in her voice that she was on the point of grieving to death. Denmark was far, far away, here she stood having not even enough strength left to be able to curse the new land.

Later on, Sandemose included a description of this experience in his novel *Ross Dane*.[8]

Dannevirke

25 miles southwest of Redvers is the town of Alida, Saskatchewan. It was near here that one of the best known Danish immigrants, Simon Hjortnæs, lived. Hjortnæs had come to North America as a young boy with his parents and settled in South Dakota. According to legend, around the turn of the century, he travelled up to Saskatchewan in search of some runaway horses, liked the lie of the land and eventually moved there, setting up a Danish colony called Dannevirke. As time passed, the colony grew, and Hjortnæs was widely known for helping newly arrived immigrants from his country to get started in Canada.[9] It was even rumoured that the *CPR* paid him $25 a head for every person he encouraged to come to the Canadian prairies. He was constantly being besieged with letters from people asking for help in emigrating from Denmark, and on several occasions, he returned to Denmark to talk about life in Canada.

Sandemose had met Hjortnæs one Sunday at the recently built Danish church between Redvers and Alida and received an invitation to visit. Madsen drove Sandemose down to Hjortnæs' farm on October 6, and Sandemose stayed here for the next week or so. He discussed the situation of the Danish immigrant with Hjortnæs and looked over the farm and the work that was going on. It was quite evident to Sandemose that Hjortnæs was the ideal type of person to immigrate and start a new life on the prairies. He loved work, was good with his hands and had boundless energy. Sandemose admired Hjortnæs a great deal and later used him and his legend as a model for the title character in *Ross Dane*.

Simon Hjortnæs on his 100th birthday 1980.

Ostenfeld

At this juncture, Sandemose was out of money, a state he often found himself in all through his life. He was expecting some money from Denmark, and so he returned to Winnipeg on October 13 to wait for it to be telegraphed. Sandemose spent his days walking around town and continually checking on whether or not the expected money had arrived. He also went on several hunting expeditions with John Mikkelsen, including one up to Lake Manitoba.

While in Winnipeg, Sandemose also made the acquaintance of Pastor Niels Damskov, a well-known name among western Canadian Danes. Damskov would make an effort to meet the immigrant trains carrying Danes. He would then try to help the new arrivals by seeing to it that they had food and a temporary place to stay until they were ready to continue their journeys west. In 1926, Damskov had purchased a tract of land about 40 miles east of Winnipeg, just beyond the point where the prairie ends and the land becomes hilly and forested. The minister's plans were to start a Danish colony here, and he called it Ostenfeld after a bishop friend. According to his diary, Sandemose, together with John Mikkelsen and his brother Carl, made a hunting trip into the Ostenfeld area, but Sandemose was not impressed. It was

> not forest, not grassland, it was wilderness, a quiet, dead land where neither people nor animals lived... The river, the railroad, the cemetery, here they had toiled and laid their bones as the wilderness grew over their dust: Peace Perfect Peace... The sky hung so strangely rust-coloured and dry over the autumnal woods, when suddenly I felt a burning thirst. I drank cold coffee from a bottle, but it didn't assuage my craving. Confronted by this dead land, for a moment I felt gripped by a sudden need for alcohol, until what I wanted spread out in a vision before my eyes: THE SEA. It came over me like an excruciating pain that we were hundreds of miles away from it, that even on an express train I couldn't reach it either tomorrow or the day after tomorrow. I am seized by a desire to take this land and spread it out on the coasts of Vancouver Island, so these wretched trees and miserable scrub would overhang the splashing waves of the Pacific Ocean.

In *Ross Dane*, this description of the Ostenfeld area is transferred to a desolate district in eastern Alberta, where as Ross and his companions learn while travelling through it to Beaver Coulee, at least one family has tried to settle but failed.[10]

Racial prejudice

It seems that Sandemose's money never came. This time he had been in Winnipeg for more than a month, and he was desperate to continue his journey, as he had planned to go all the way to the west coast before returning to Denmark. According to a letter from Christine Mikkelsen's father,[11] Sandemose somehow persuaded the Mikkelsens to lend him the equivalent of 1000 kroner (over 200 dollars at the time). It is also possible that he got a free pass to travel with the *Canadian National Railway*. At any rate, on November 3, he left Winnipeg for Holden, Alberta, where a farmer named Peter Sørensen lived. Simon Hjortnæs in Alida had recommended that Sandemose get in touch with Sørensen, and the two had exchanged letters.

Sørensen was well known in the Holden/Camrose area for helping immigrants get started. He drove Sandemose around the district where they met and talked to many local people. Sørensen was very familiar with local history, and he was constantly telling Sandemose anecdotes about people in the vicinity. Sandemose wrote down many of these stories in his diary and used them later on in *Ross Dane*. For example, Sørensen told him about a Métis, Arsené Bourque, who had died only a couple of years previously. He had been a man of great strength and was much admired by the Scandinavians. What Sandemose heard about him formed the basis for the character Charles Villeneuve in *Ross Dane*.

It was in Alberta that Sandemose really experienced first hand racial prejudice in Canada. This was directed chiefly against east Europeans who were known as 'Galicians'.

> The Scandinavian calls them ingratiating, payers of lip service, dishonest, lying, inclined to drink, and they avenge both real and imagined insults. The term Galician comprises all Slavic peoples, and it is used indiscriminately of Greeks and others. Dark, bearded people, who don't speak English, are Galicians.

Sandemose was quite shocked by this attitude, and it figures as a prominent motif in *Ross Dane*. However, the Scandinavians were not totally free from being looked down on by others or at least being met with indifference.

> Blond people are 'Swedes' – and Icelanders, Danes and Norwegians, in addition to many Germans, have to put up with this blanket term. They are Swedes. It's a hard blow to many a self-satisfied Dane, who believes that all of Canada's farmers will be standing at the gangplank shouting hurrah when he comes, that no one is interested in where he hails from. The Canadian, in most cases, knows exactly as much about Denmark as the Dane about Canada. The one says, 'woof', the other answers, 'meow'.

Sharp winds and timeless mountains

There were only a few Danish families around Holden, certainly not enough to support a church. As a result, the minister from the Dalum colony near Drumheller, Alberta, Peter Rasmussen, would drive up every so often and give a church service at the home of Chris Sorensen, a former soldier from Viborg, Denmark. Sandemose met Pastor Rasmussen at one of these services and, hearing about the Dalum settlement from him, decided to go down for a visit. On a very cold November day, Sandemose arrived at the train station in Wayne, a mining town in a coulee,[12] just south of the Dalum crossroads.

Pastor Rasmussen had moved to Dalum from the Grand Rapids, Michigan area in the United States in 1920. He built a house next to Home Coulee, an offshoot of the coulee where Wayne is situated. The main house and a bunkhouse were used as a school for young Danish immigrants where

Home Coulee, Dalum, Alberta. (Photo: Christopher Hale).

they could learn English and something about their new homeland. Rasmussen thought this knowledge essential for newcomers to succeed on the prairies. When Sandemose arrived, there was barely any room on the farm for extra guests,[13] however, he was accommodated. Sandemose admired the work Pastor Rasmussen was doing for his countrymen. He also met John Andersen, a sort of left wing intellectual who had served during World War I in the same unit as the American literary critic, Edmund Wilson. Wilson had encouraged Andersen to do some writing, but as of then he had not had anything published.[14] While at Rasmussen's school, Sandemose, judging from a couple of brief entries in his diary, held a couple of lectures on evolution and agitation which caused a number of heated discussions afterward.

Andersen had converted an old granary into a shack and wanted to move it into a small coulee. He was able to get Sandemose to help him do this, and since it was so crowded at the Pastor's farm, Sandemose was invited to stay with Andersen. For five days they were snowed in by a fierce storm.

> When the wind comes to the coulee it uses the hills like strings. In the south a sharp cliff edge jutted out, it shrieked there like the fine, frozen snow under horses running. Then the wind shouted over to the next hill, roared around it, gave a whine and went on to the next one... From hour to hour the coulee changes its mood, eternally the same yet never the same. And if you walk on the hills along it, it opens up visions which remind you of everything you have dreamed, from Denmark to Mount Everest and the moon's dead craters.

This experience gave Sandemose material for several articles,[15] and he used it also in several vivid descriptions of a prairie winter in both *Ross Dane* and *A Sailor Goes Ashore*.

Sandemose's entire Dalum visit proved to be central to the composition of the Canada trilogy. The fictional setting of Beaver Coulee for all three novels is clearly based on the Dalum colony, and in particular Home Coulee. Indeed, the descriptions of the prairie settlement in these books are founded almost entirely on the district around Wayne, whether one thinks of the coulees or the farms or Sandemose's perception of the people and their attitudes. Many of his characters are remodellings of the people he met here. In particular, the good friend of Espen Arnakke, Vilfred Larsen, in *A Sailor Goes Ashore* is to a great extent formed by Sandemose's impressions of John Andersen.

A couple of weeks before Christmas, Sandemose decided he ought to continue his trip if he were ever to reach the coast, so on December 14, he left Wayne for Calgary. In Calgary, he stayed at the Palliser Hotel in a room overlooking the city.

> Outside lies Calgary, I am staying high up and look far out over the city where the smoke in the twilight is drawn in compact masses in the crisp air. The snow-covered square roofs form a broken, tangled, but nevertheless calming mosaic... Calgary's streets are like all other Canadian ones: a couple of main streets well lit, the others pitch black crevasses, so that you instinctively move your revolver over into your coat pocket before you go through them... To the west you look into the mountains, pinnacles and spires, they are no stage wings like mountains from a distance often are otherwise, you look into them and sense their timelessness.

Homesick for Denmark

Sandemose spent some time discussing the question of immigration with the Danish Consul Peter Pallesen and visited the Dana Højskole [Dana Folk School], a school formed along similar lines to Rasmussen's in Dalum, where he gave a lecture entitled "What an Immigrant in Canada Should Relinquish or Maintain". But as time went on, he began to get more and more lonely and homesick.

> I am tired of this country now and long for home. Yet I don't actually suffer from homesickness, just get tired and sluggish, don't remember well, forget everything. I wish I were back in Copenhagen. I have to deal with the most pressing problem here and now which is to escape safe and sound from Calgary.

Finally, on the morning of December 19, he boarded the express train for Toronto, giving up any plans to see more of Canada.

Before leaving for Denmark, Sandemose went back to Erie, Pennsylvania to visit his sister. He stayed with her for about a month and then travelled to Montreal to get the ship home. On February 10, 1928, just before boarding the *S.S. Metagama*, he gave an interview to the *Montreal Herald*.[16] Here he told about some of his experiences on the prairies.

> Danish settlers in the Prairie Provinces suffer terribly from sea-sickness – not, of course, from heaving on the sea but from being absent from it... for you must remember that it is almost impossible to live anywhere in Denmark without being in sight or sound of the sea. But,' Mr. Sandemose hastened to add, 'this terrible sea-sickness gradually wears off after a year or so, and once the settlers have dug themselves in and got used to the new horizons they do well, even in wheat growing which is new to them, and very few of them return to the Homeland. In cases where Danes do not succeed here, it is not the fault of the country. I have seen enough to be quite certain of that.

On February 21, Sandemose arrived back in Denmark.

It is evident from reading his diary that Sandemose never really considered immigrating to Canada himself. Scattered entries reveal his ambivalent view toward the country, now feeling, "Canada is the worst country in the world to go to" and later saying "am beginning to be fond of the country". However, Sandemose was a writer, and in western Canada of the 1920s there was no place for that kind of profession, as he himself admits. "Culture on the prairies, out of the question, there isn't any. There can't be any, it isn't missed, isn't wanted. It will be created by future generations." And, "You can play with your good manners, neat handwriting and fine talents on Sunday. The weekdays demand muscles of steel and not very much else... there is no other nobility than that of work, and it stands etched in fire over this enormous land: Help thyself or die."[17] The ideal immigrant to Canada, in Sandemose's view, was a farmer, preferably one who owned no land, was under 35 and willing to work with his hands for long hours at a stretch. That type of person could survive and even become very successful.

According to some diary entries Sandemose made in 1929,[18] he made an attempt to get a job with *Canadian Pacific* that year as a representative for the railway in Canada. Evidently, M.B. Sørensen felt that he was not reliable, and Sandemose was never offered any employment. Once again in 1930, he tried to get a job in Canada, this time as an immigration officer with the Nova Scotia government. He was turned down this time too, the reason being that, while he might be familiar with conditions in western Canada, this by no means made him an expert on the situation in the eastern part of the country.[19] Sandemose did emigrate from Denmark, however, but not to Canada. Instead he moved to Norway, the homeland of his mother, in 1930, and from then on he wrote in Norwegian.

Notes:

1. A Métis is a person of mixed blood, usually French and North American Indian.
2. Only one of Sandemose's Canada novels has appeared in English so far: *Ross Dane*, translated by Christopher Hale, Department of Germanic Languages, University of Alberta, Edmonton.
3. Examples of these are Christian Reventlow, "Canada som Indvandringsland: Beretning afgivet af den til Undersøgelse af Betingelserne for dansk Udvandring til Canada Delegation" [Canada as a Country of Immigration: Report of the Delegation for the Study of Conditions for Danish Emigration to Canada], *Udenrigsministeriets Tidsskrift* [Journal of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs], January 3, 1924; Olaf Linck, *Kanada det store Fremtidsland* [Canada, the Great Land of the Future], (Copenhagen, Aschehoug, 1927).

4. Aksel Sandemose, "Canada som Fremtidsland" [Canada as a Country of the Future], *Hareskov Grundejerblad*, no. 14, July 15, 1927.
5. This and all other quotes, unless specifically stated, are from Sandemose's Canada diary. I am deeply indebted to Johannes Væth of Nærum, Denmark for allowing me to have access to and to quote from his copy of this diary. The translations are my own.
6. For example, Aksel Sandemose, "Høst i Canada" [Harvest Time in Canada] *Berlingske Tidende*, evening edition, December 23, 1927.
7. Aksel Sandemose, "Saskatchewan, I-II," *Berlingske Tidende*, July 9-10, 1928.
8. *Ross Dane*, pp. 105-6.
9. For a fuller English version of the Hjortnæs legend, see Frank M. Paulsen, *Danish Settlements on the Canadian Prairies* (Ottawa: National Museums of Canada, 1974) pp. 72-76.
10. *Ross Dane*, pp. 33-5.
11. Letter dated October 11, from Valdemar Henriksen to Johannes Væth, in the possession of Johannes Væth, Nærum, Denmark.
12. A 'coulee' is a deep valley or ravine through which flows a river or stream, usually dry in summer.
13. This information according to Thora Jorgensen, the eldest daughter of Pastor Rasmussen, who remembers Sandemose's visit to her father's farm. Interview in November, 1989 in Langley, British Columbia.
14. In 1939, Andersen did finally have a book published called *The Road We have Covered.*
15. Cf, for example, Aksel Sandemose, "East Coulee", *Berlingske Tidende*, evening edition, September 29, 1928.
16. "Danish Settlers in Prairie Provinces Terribly Sea-Sick", *Montreal Herald*, February 10, 1928.
17. Aksel Sandemose, "Livet paa Canadas Prærie. I. Indledning" [Life on Canada's Prairie. I. Introduction], *Aarhuus Stiftstidende*, May 2, 1928.
18. Transcript of diary in the possession of Johannes Væth, Nærum, Denmark.
19. Source, two letters: Aksel Sandemose to the Department of Industries and Immigration, Halifax, Nova Scotia, January 27, 1930 and H.H. Congdon, Department of Natural Resources, Halifax, Nova Scotia to Aksel Sandemose, February 15, 1930. Copies in the possession of Johannes Væth, Nærum, Denmark.

Danish Farmers in Canada

by Erik Helmer Pedersen

A propaganda brochure. *Circa 1925.*

The great majority of Danes who emigrated to Canada were undoubtedly from rural areas. And it is probably fair to assume that they emigrated in the hope of one day owning their own land. The high price of land in Denmark made it impossible for poor farm labourers and domestic servants ever to own their own farms. It had to have been a great temptation to travel to a place where there was a promise of free or, in any case, cheap land.

As labourers and servants on Danish farms they had learned modern Danish agricultural methods, which meant having a good balance between the raising of crops and animal husbandry. However, Danish agriculture had undergone a period of reorganization in the 1800s due, among other things, to an increased demand for processed foods from Great Britain and Germany. This led to a greater emphasis on stock breeding than on the growing of field crops. Danish farmers, and their hired help, had learned to appreciate the advantages of producing such raw products as milk, meat and eggs and letting the dairies, slaughterhouses and egg packing stations turn these raw materials into first class foodstuffs.

A young Danish farm hand who dreamed of a life in the United States or Canada must have known it would not be possible to transplant Danish animal husbandry to the prairies of North America. All the letters and reports which reached the often gloomy, semi-darkness of his sparsely furnished room told him they grew grain over there, primarily wheat.

And, while Danish emigrants from farms were fairly well informed when it came to animal husbandry, they knew very little about the growing of grain on a sun-parched prairie. Here it was important to rely on and learn from a neighbour who knew what to do. In other words, the Danes had to learn the techniques of dry farming little by little, as they went along.

A Danish farmer met with enormous difficulties in his attempt to make a Canadian future for himself and his family. In addition to the new techniques he needed to learn, there was also the question of capital. Most had very little money with them from home. Even though Canadian homestead legislation of 1872 gave a man the right of ownership to 160 acres of land after a trial period of three years, he still needed about $1,000 just to purchase the most important tools, machines and animals.

A look at Canada's agricultural development

When in 1867, Canada changed its status and became a Dominion with home rule rather than a British Crown Colony, agricultural changes were taking place in the province of Ontario. Mixed farming was introduced on land once primarily used for growing grain. The first creamery was established in 1864, and in the course of the next ten years, the production and

export of cheese became fundamental to the Canadian economy. The export of animal products was made even more important by the stiff competition Canadian wheat was facing from American wheat. Next after cheese, livestock was the product of greatest interest from 1875 to 1890. On the tablelands of Alberta large herds of beef cattle were bred, specially intended for the export market.

The change to mixed farming led to a relatively large production of pigs, but most of the pork was sold on the domestic market.

As far as both bacon and butter were concerned, Canadian products also faced competition on many markets from agricultural exports from northwestern Europe, not least from Denmark. On the positive side, Canadian farmers were finding a fast growing market for their goods, especially livestock and butter, in the United States.

Around the turn of the century, however, the position of wheat became stronger, and this crop became the symbol of modern Canadian agricultural production and export. This development has later been referred to as the Wheat Economy. The expansion of the Canadian railways, crowned by the founding of the *Canadian Pacific Railway* in 1881-86, made it possible to transport great quantities of grain, as well as other farm products, from the Canadian prairies in the west to export harbours in the United States or to the east. Ever since that time, Canadian researchers have been unable to agree on which factor was of the greatest importance in this development.

The traditionalists feel the most important factor was, naturally enough, a combination of the increase in wheat prices after 1896, falling freight costs and the influx of both the necessary work force and capital. In 1893, the American historian, Frederick Jackson Turner, formulated his thesis that the cultivation of the American prairie took place in one giant thrust along a cultural border between civilization's outposts and the wilderness. According to Turner, the pioneers could survive only if they forgot everything they had learned in the past and began to farm as demanded by conditions in America. This frontier theory has since played a major role in the writing of American history, and there were also those in Canada who subscribed to it. The cultivation of the American and the Canadian prairies were defined as parallel events, and one could then assume that the great cultural thrust from Manitoba westward to Saskatchewan and Alberta was a displacement, or shifting, of the frontier.

In Canada, as in the United States, scholars have questioned the legitimacy of this "frontier" theory. Over the past 10 to 15 years, such publications as the *Journal of Economic History* and *Explorations in Economic History* have carried a number of econometric studies in which statistical comparisons are made of a number of factors which influenced development of the prairies.

The last word has not been said in this debate, but there seems to be some agreement that the use of the dry farming technique together with the increasing price of wheat made it profitable for American farmers to emigrate to Canada in order to make use of their head start in this area. This immigration created the necessary basis for maintaining and continuing the development of this special method of cultivation. The development of quickly maturing strains of wheat such as *Red Fife* and *Marquis* made it possible to grow wheat further north, where long, cold winters would otherwise have made the growing season too short. The result was that Canadian wheat, marketed under the name, Manitoba No. 1, was everywhere considered to be the best wheat for baking bread. Thus, its sale was ensured, and around 1910, it was so successful that Canadian wheat exports made up more than 20% of the total volume of wheat sold for baking bread.

Danish pioneers in Canada

No studies have as yet defined the mechanisms behind Danish emigration to Canada. It is little more than a postulate, therefore, when it is claimed that the majority of Danes who emigrated to Canada had a rural background. We are skating on equally thin ice when we claim that most of them wanted a farm in Canada. It is quite possible, perhaps even likely, that other, equally tempting, job opportunities turned up on the way to the prairie and were taken. Future research will one day provide the answer.

The postulate that the Danes were rural folk is based on the fact that most available reports on emigration to this part of the world focus on the lives of farmers who settled there. Virtually all such reports have a personal dimension, personifying the entire sequence of events, from the germination of the plan to emigrate, to the actual transplantation to foreign soil.

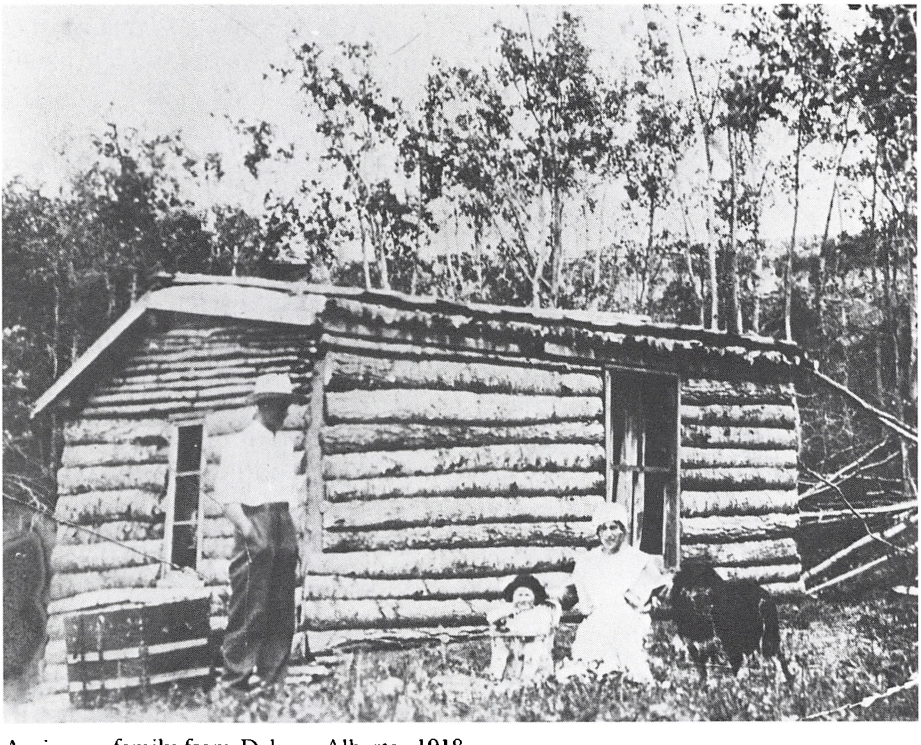
Another article in this volume describes early Danish emigration to New Brunswick. It was here, in New Denmark, on the St. John River, that the somewhat sad, but also optimistic, story of Cathrine and Valdemar[1] from "Allinggaard" near Silkeborg, Denmark, took place in the 1880s.

This novel, depicting real life, was not published until 100 years after the event. Not so the letters written by an emigrant from the island of Zealand to his family from various addresses in Canada from 1905 to 1910. An edited collection of these letters has been published by the author Karl Larsen.[2]

Karl Larsen's collections of emigrant letters created something of a stir, and similar publications soon followed. One of the best known examples was the publication by the ethnologist H.F. Feilberg of the letters of Julie and Ditlev Feilberg who emigrated to Canada in 1910.[3] They depict one

family's determined, and in many ways heroic, attempt to tackle the harsh reality of life on the Canadian prairie.

We don't know why Ditlev Feilberg decided to emigrate. What we do know is that among the Danes at that time there was great awareness of the opportunities available to young farmers in Canada. Perhaps Ditlev Feilberg read the travel reports published in the farmer's journal *Ugeskrift for Landmænd*. In this publication in October 1907 there appeared an article on farming conditions in Canada by an agronomist named Conrad Christensen. In describing Canada as a significant factor in Denmark's competition for the British market, he pointed out that farmers in western Canada could be expected to produce large quantities of bacon in future. He did not feel there was any immediate danger of such competition, however, as Canadian agriculture was still in many respects rather primitive and suffered from a lack of labour. It was his opinion that Danish farmers contemplating emigration should first learn something about Canadian farming before purchasing land there. One could expect a wage of about $1 per day plus room and board, but work was usually only available during the summer



A pioneer family from Dalum, Alberta. 1918.

months. He didn't feel, however, that the Danes could learn much from Canadian farmers. The latter knew nothing of working together on a cooperative basis, and this was, as he put it, "largely due to the population's characteristic self-reliance and stubbornness...". He went on to say that dairying was not at a very advanced level, primarily because there was too little knowledge of modern methods of breeding and feeding. Christensen felt the Canadians had a great need of agricultural advisers.

Springtime on the prairie. 1936.

In letters to the same publication, the young farmer F. Holskov described his experience in Canada. According to Holskov, clearing the land of bushes and trees was an enormous task, as was the filling in of water holes. But, as he put it, the settlers were forced to carry out methodical clearing in order to plough and otherwise cultivate the soil. The following spring, wheat could be sown on the stubble and then, if drought didn't destroy the crop, a harvest of from 15 to 20 bushels an acre could be expected. Even though most farmers had a couple of cows, dairying was not yet common. Homemade butter was sold to the local grocer for 60-65 øre per pound, and in the winter for as much as 1 kroner per pound. He didn't believe that Canada would become a serious competitor to Danish agricultural products within the next generation. He went on to say that as the Canadian pioneer farmer could not afford to hire the necessary hands, he

had to stick to extensive cultivation with a consequent waste of resources. The climate was unstable. But if one was lucky during the first 3 or 4 years in Canada, he felt the chances of long-term success were pretty good.

Holskov's first letters were sent from Saskatchewan. Later, he became the foreman on a big farm in southern Alberta. Here he found good, rich top soil like that of his Danish home islands of Lolland-Falster.

Earlier, oxen or horses had been used to pull ploughs and other farm equipment. When a hand with his team had ploughed 8 times around a section of land, day was done, and the result was a ploughed field of 2 1/4 "tønde land" [a little over 3 acres]. A mechanized plough, or multi-furrow plough pulled by a steam or motor-driven tractor, was used on the farm where Holskov worked. This made it possible to plough from 16 to 20 tønder [21 to 27 acres] a day. A reaper-binder was used at harvest time. The threshing was usually done on contract by a man who brought his own 10 to 12 man crew. A self-propelled tractor engine connected to a modern threshing machine with a self-feeder could thresh up to 2,700 acres a day. Holskov had not seen many of his own countrymen in the area, and he felt this was probably just as well. In his opinion, many dangers lay in wait for those who insisted on settling the land without the necessary experience. Shady land dealers, bad roads, the harsh climate and language difficulties were all factors which could crush those high hopes of one day owning a farm of your own.

A Danish view of Canadian farming

In 1909 a farmer's meeting was held in the province of Manitoba. Among the participants was the Danish veterinarian and consultant for the Royal Danish Agricultural Society, Peter A. Mørkeberg. In his work as a consultant, Mørkeberg had studied closely the Danish competition in the area of foodstuffs on the British market. Canadian bacon had recently become a troublesome competitor there. Mørkeberg had the opportunity to study Canadian conditions at first hand when he was invited to take part in the British Association for the Advancement of Science's annual meeting in Winnipeg. A grant from the Danish Ministry of Agriculture made it possible for him to extend his trip to include a study of agricultural economics.

Several excursions were planned in connection with the annual meeting. As it was autumn, he would be able to see the harvesting of Canadian wheat. The wheat was threshed in the field and the stubble burned. Mørkeberg visited two of his countrymen, the well-known dairymen, Christian Peter Marker, who in 1906 was appointed Dairy Commissioner for the province of Alberta, and Peter Pallesen. The men exchanged views on the differences and similarities between Canadian and Danish farming.

A combine for cutting and threshing in a single operation.

Mørkeberg also accomplished what, in fact, had been the main purpose of his trip: to study at first hand how farmers in southern Ontario had managed the shift from growing field crops to keeping livestock after an increase in United States tariffs in 1890 had stopped the import of Canadian barley. Now Canadian farmers, like their Danish colleagues, fed the grain they grew to their livestock with an eye to producing processed foods. This meant that, with regard to the sale of pork, Canada, or, for all practical purposes, the province of Ontario, was now a major competitor to Denmark on the British market.

In his thorough report of his study tour, Mørkeberg described the competition which, at that point, he did not find alarming. The production of bacon and its export to England had recently declined somewhat. His Canadian hosts felt this was because of an increasing demand on the domestic market, while Mørkeberg was more inclined to see it as the farmers' reluctance to increase production. The prices were not high enough in his view, probably because the processing plants were taking too large a share of the pie. He made the same observation regarding dairying in Ontario. At a typical creamery, the farmer paid to have the cheese made and the whey returned to him for feed. In return, he was allowed the total sale price of the cheese. He concluded, undoubtedly with some relief, that "the stronghold of the genuine cooperative movement has not as yet been breached by the Canadians".

Mørkeberg certainly realized, however, that Canadian stock breeding could provide the Danes with serious competition on the British market. Canadian pig farmers were developing a good breed of pig, based, like the Danish breed, on the Yorkshire. However, Canadian pork often left an unpleasant after-taste – of the preservative borax. But with advances in refrigeration technology, this problem could be eliminated. "And then what?", Peter A. Mørkeberg asked himself uncomfortably.

As far as the education of farmers and their professional advisers was concerned, Canada was tops. "The time will soon come when, in spite of a growing domestic market, the export of animal products will again increase, this time to an extent we have not yet seen," he wrote.

His report made no mention of Canada as a destination for emigrants, in spite of the fact that this topic was undoubtedly of interest to his readers, especially the younger farmers. In the years after 1900, the price of land increased year for year in step with the conversion from animal husbandry to more industrialized farming. Young farmers would therefore stand a much better chance of owning their own farms in a country like Canada. If

An Alberta pig ranch.

the immigrants settled on the prairie and grew grain, emigration could almost be seen as an advantage for Danish agriculture which imported large quantities of grain and other feeds from abroad. If, on the other hand, these Danish emigrants became stock breeders planning to enter the British market, former countrymen would soon become competitors.

Canada's prairies

In 1912, a young Dane by the name of A. Vester travelled to Canada, and after a brief stay in Montreal, he continued to Calgary, then a town of 60,000 people. He soon got a job with the *Canadian Pacific Railway* digging irrigation channels on the bone-dry prairie. It wasn't a permanent job, however, and Vester left it to seek employment in the colony of Standard in Alberta. Here he found a job with a farmer who taught him modern farming methods. By connecting a reaper-binder, an 8-furrow plough and a harrow to a tractor at the same time, it was possible to do the harvesting and other autumn work in the same operation. The grain could then be threshed in portable wheat sheds, and teams of 4 to 6 horses would pull the heavy load of wheat No. 1 to the nearest town.

From Alberta, Vester travelled to the United States where he worked on various farms in the states of Washington, Montana and Minnesota before returning to Canada.

The war in Europe made itself felt in North America. In the summer of 1916, with wheat prices at their highest, people once more began to seek their fortunes in western Canada, where free land was still available to anyone who would farm it. Vester decided to give it a try, but he and other Scandinavians soon discovered that many thought of them as German sympathizers. Vester obtained a homestead near Bingville, Alta. where, after starting from scratch, he worked for five years.

On the one hand, Vester's life as a wheat farmer was characterized by the many difficulties caused by drought, freezing temperatures and the elements in general, and, on the other hand, by the high price he got for his crops in those years. The situation changed radically, however, when the price of wheat fell drastically in the autumn of 1920. It was then that Vester decided to return to Denmark.[4]

The changing need for agricultural products

The Canadian harvest of 1914 was a poor one, and this and other difficulties caused something of an agricultural crisis. The world situation contributed to changing this. By this time the Great War was a reality. With the increased need for food in Europe, prices increased accordingly. Overseas

suppliers of processed agricultural products found themselves in an advantageous position on the British market, as it became more and more difficult for their competition on the continent to make deliveries. Denmark was no exception.

Not only did the war create problems for the transport of goods, but it also put a stop to emigration from Europe. Emigration from Europe to Canada peaked in 1913, with a total of 385,000 immigrants. In the next few years, this number fell to 50,000 per year, and most of these people came from the United States or Great Britain. Only 74 Danes entered Canada as immigrants in 1918, and in 1919 the number was 44.

Although grain prices continued to remain unstable after the drastic fall from 1910 to 1921, Canadian agriculture got back on its feet relatively quickly. Cooperative organizations for the sale of wheat were established in 1923-24, the first of these being the Alberta Co-operative Wheat Producers Limited. Commonly known as "wheat pools", these organizations were responsible for the sale of up to half of the wheat grown on the prairies. Wheat growers had 5-year contracts. Money was advanced to them under the terms of these contracts, and a final accounting was made after the results of the harvest were known.

This created the basis for renewed propaganda to encourage the immigration of young farmers who were ready to take over the last available Canadian farm land, primarily on the prairies. Following a study tour of Canada in 1921, the Swedish cultural geographer, Helge Nelson, noted that the central area of the prairie was now cultivated. The only remaining land was a wide belt of forest east and north of the prairies and the Foothills to the west.[5]

As before, the *Canadian Pacific Railway* led the way in the campaign to attract additional Scandinavian prairie farmers. For this purpose, a well-known Danish-Canadian, Chas. W. Petersen, was asked to write a series of articles entitled "The Great West – National Prosperity" to appear in the railway company's propaganda publication *Agricultural & Industrial Progress*. Earlier, the same magazine had published a flattering description of the Danish settlement, Standard, in Alberta. The author had depicted the Danes as clever and hard-working farmers who were good judges of soil quality and made especially good dairymen. The settlement was described as no-less than a perfect example of the many new colonies founded in Canada over the past decade.

The Canadian authorities were also active in attempting to attract more immigrants. A Danish-Canadian, Carl Jacobsen, who had lived in Canada for 14 years, was appointed as the Canadian emigration agent in Denmark in 1924. Pastor Niels Damskov of the Danish church in Winnipeg was made immigration minister.

Grain elevators in Barons, Alberta.

There were probably several reasons for the latter choice. For many years, Winnipeg had been a central meeting place for Danes seeking a future in western Canada. When immigrants stepped from the train in Winnipeg, they were often personally met by Pastor Damskov who hustled them past the suspicious-looking characters, always ready to take advantage of an exhausted, homeless immigrant. Private accommodations were found for the Danish immigrants, and from about 1928 they could stay at the Dansk Kristeligt Ungdomshjem (Danish Christian Youth Home). There was also the Danish Immigration Aid Society which took on the task of helping young farmers purchase their own farms. The Society, which had representatives in all three prairie provinces, worked closely together with the Canada Colonization Board.[6]

The many newspaper articles about emigration to Canada stirred the interest of a number of travel book authors and other writers who travelled to Canada to gather information for an eagerly waiting public. One such author was C. Mikkelsen from Hjørring, a town in North Jutland, Denmark, who made the trip in the summer of 1926.[7]

He wrote that the Danes were everywhere held in high esteem and that decent people could easily find work and save many hundreds of dollars in a year. Thirty to forty miles from Winnipeg an immigrant could still get himself a homestead for 7 dollars an acre. The down payment was modest,

and the remaining purchase price could be paid over 15 years at 6% interest. From the beginning it would be possible to earn money from the sale of one's own products. When 10 to 15 families had settled in an area, the government would start a school, and the Danish church would take care of religious services. On his trip, Mikkelsen also visited the colony of Standard, the largest of the Danish settlements in Canada. Almost 120 Danes lived there, and if the book is to be believed, most were doing quite well. There had been a few bankruptcies along the way, but although it had been expensive for those who had lost their money, they had learned from it, according to Mikkelsen.

Canada in depression

The consequences of the world crisis of the 1930s greatly increased the risks of farming in both Denmark and Canada. Decreases in exports and falling prices led to the passing of emergency legislation in both countries. Canada was hit by several successive summers of drought, making the situation there even more grim. Thousands of farmers were forced to give up and leave the prairie sand to more hardy creatures. In the period from 1931 to 1941, almost one-fourth of all those who had settled the prairies left the land. This forced action on the part of the federal government, and from 1931 to 1938, 140 million dollars in emergency aid in the form of direct and indirect subsidies were granted to the province of Saskatchewan, one of those hardest hit.

During World War II, an attempt was made to prevent the inflation which had so harmed Canadian agriculture during the first war. A quota, for example, was put on the number of acres on which wheat could be grown, limiting this to ⅔ of the area sown with wheat in 1940. The lack of manpower itself put a natural limit on expansion. Canada entered an era of mechanization, and the number of tractors increased from 160,000 in 1941 to 400,000 in 1951.

One thing which characterized the 1930s was that most countries attempted to limit economic cooperation with the outside world to little more than the simple exchange of goods. In reality, previous areas of expansion, like the United States and Canada, all but closed their borders to immigrants. Danes with wanderlust were forced to stay at home and wait for times to change.

Epilogue

Did the majority of those Danes who emigrated to Canada have a rural background and desire to become farmers? Even though it is impossible to

Out for a ride in the "Cutter" on a Danish-Canadian farm. *Circa* 1946.

give a precise answer to this question, if we assume that it is "Yes", there is little doubt that few of them fulfilled this dream. The economic crisis and droughts of the 1930s drove many from the prairies, and we know virtually nothing about what kind of lives they were then able to make for themselves in Canada.

In "Canada's Immigration Policy and Danish Emigration to Canada", Dr. Edgar Ziegler shows that Danish emigration to Canada resumed after 1945.[8] The Canadian immigration records list nearly 42,000 Danish immigrants from 1944 to 1988. More than half of the names were recorded in the years from 1951 to 1957, with a record of no fewer than 7,700 Danish immigrants set in 1957. After that, the number decreased rapidly, and only 115 are listed in 1987 and 141 in 1988. We can be almost certain that none of these travelled to the prairie to become farmers. This chapter of Danish-Canadian emigration history is in every respect a story of the past. Fragments of reminiscences and a few remains of buildings in Danish settlements on the prairie, together with some farms still owned by the descendants of Danes, are the last remnants of an exciting and, until now, little known period in the history of Danes in America and Canada.

Notes:

1. Benedicte Mahler, *"Cathrine og Valdemar". Et udvandrerpars skæbne skildret gennem breve.* ["Cathrine and Valdemar" The fate of an emigrant couple depicted in their letters]. Fremad, 1975.
2. Karl Larsen, *De der tog hjemmefra*, bd. 1, [Those Who Left Home], Vol. 1. Copenhagen 1910-1914.
3. Henning Frederik Feilberg, *Hjemliv på Prærien; de derovre. En Række Breve fra Canada [Life on the Prairie; those over there. Letters from Canada]*. Copenhagen, 1927.
4. A. Vester, *Blandt danske på Canadas prærie. Virkelighedsskildring efter ni års ophold i Canada og USA* [Among the Danes on the Canadian Prairie. A True Life Story after Nine Years in Canada and the USA]. Viborg, 1922.
5. Helge Nelson, Canada, Nybyggerlandet [Canada, Land of Pioneers]. Stockholm, 1922.
6. Rolf Buschardt Christensen, "The Danes in Winnipeg in the 1920s and 30s" in *7th Danish Canadian Conference*, Winnipeg, Manitoba, 1988.
7. C. Mikkelsen, *Canada som fremtidsland. Danske udvandreres vilkår* [Canada Land of the Future. The Life of Danish Emigrants]. *Copenhagen, 1927.*
8. *Edgar Ziegler, "Canada's Immigration Policy and Danish Emigration to Canada". 9th Danish Canadian Conference*, Vancouver, 1990. Federation of Danish Associations in Canada. 1990.

The Influence of Danish on Canadian English

by Howard B. Woods

Introduction

Emigrants from Denmark have had a profound and continuing influence on the English language from the time that some Jutes, Angles and Saxons established English in Britain, to the Viking conquest of England, to the settlement of America and Canada. Each wave of Danes brought a similar type of linguistic mixing which resulted in the enrichment of the languages through the addition of useful, common expressions, and a simplification of grammatical inflections. This article will review the highlights of this history in order to set the scene for an analysis of the changes which occurred when Danish and other Scandinavian immigrants started speaking English in North America. Next, we will look at settlement patterns in the United States and Canada. Then, the article will describe the origin and nature of Canadian English, and finally the article will present and examine 74 idiomatic phrases and 9 morphological and syntactic items which demonstrate the extent to which Danish and other Scandinavian immigrants have influenced a change in the English spoken in Canada. All items presented have been researched to establish that their usage originated in North America or are characteristic of North American English. Similarly, all items have been researched to establish that Danish and other Scandinavian languages served as the sole source, or as a major contributing source, of the innovations to Canadian and American English.

Background

Jutes, Angles, and Saxons force English on Celtic Britain. Starting in 449 A.D., the Jutes, the Angles, and the Saxons invaded and later settled Britain just as the Roman legions were withdrawing from these isles. These three sea-roving tribes were all from the peninsula of Jutland; the Saxons reached as far north as Kiel, the Angles as far north as Flensburg, and the Jutes probably as far north as Skagen. They are all said to have spoken northern dialects of Old Low German. Strictly speaking, they were not speakers of Danish, but certainly many, if not most, present-day Danes

would have some Jutish, Anglish, or Saxon blood in their veins. (The Danish language later spread into Jutland from the islands and Skåne.)

Within a century of the first invasion of England, i.e. by 550 A.D., these tribes had conquered almost all of England, and had imposed their language on the Celts who had been living there. Their language, Anglo-Saxon, and even the words "England" and "English" are derived from the Angles.

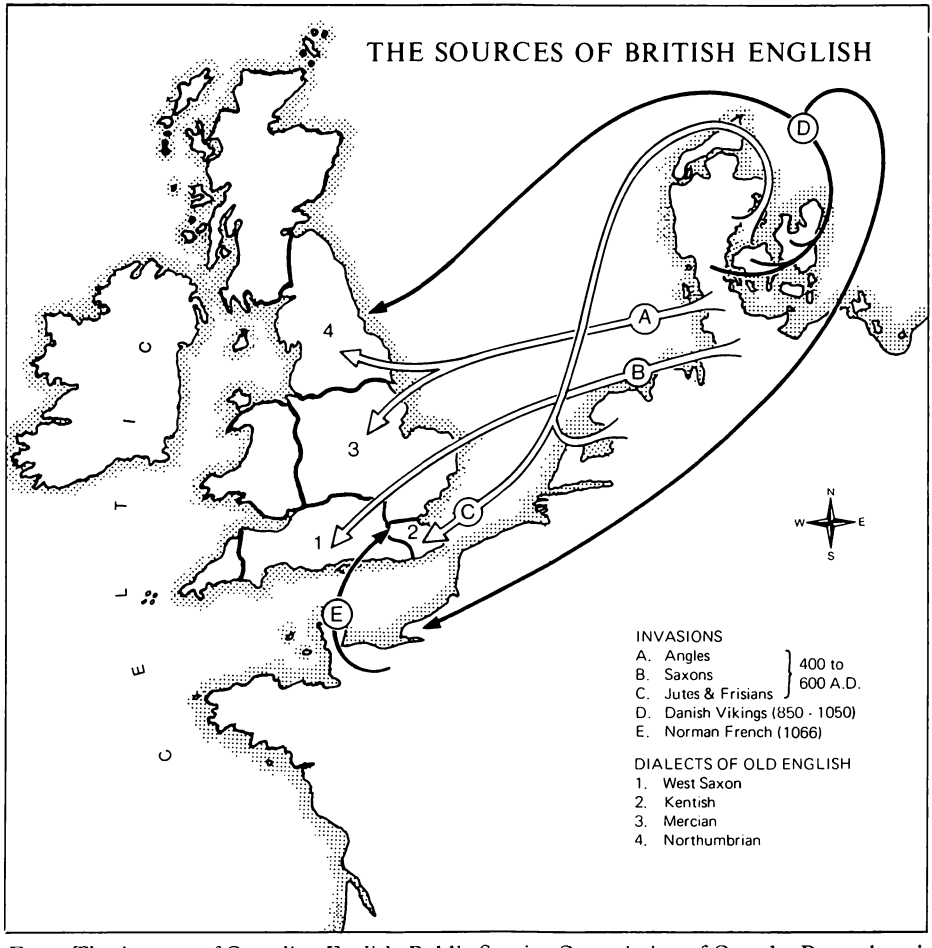
Danish Vikings Alter English

In 787, a second wave of sea-rovers, the Vikings, began attacking England. However, this time the invaders attacked a Britain which was ruled and settled by former Jutlanders. Although these Vikings began as pirates, raiding the coast line and escaping with their booty, they soon settled down and assimilated with their distant cousins. These Danes eventually gained control over central and northern England where they ruled with Danish law and administration, the Danelaw, from 865 to 924. Even in defeat, the Danish region was allowed to keep its laws and own administration from 924 to 1013.

In 1013, the Danish Viking Svend Tveskæg conquered all of England, and in 1016 his son Knud Svendsen was crowned king of all England. In turn, his sons Harald and Hardeknud Knudsen ruled England until 1042. The extent of the Danish presence and influence can be measured by the fact that 1,400 Danish place-names exist in England today.

Regarding the fusion of these two similar languages, Anglo-Saxon and Danish, we can see that it really was the case of two dialects influencing each other. The two cultures were approximately equal as well, unlike the Romans and the Celts, for example. English incorporated about 600 homely words like 'egg on', 'give', 'get', 'law', 'by-law', 'outlaw', 'sky', 'skin', 'score', 'scrape', 'take', 'target', and words which differentiate meaning, such as 'skirt' from 'shirt' and 'dike' from 'ditch'. Furthermore, Danish grammatical elements were borrowed to both simplify and clarify Old English, for example, the pronouns 'they', 'them', and 'their' as well as the verb form 'are'. The plural '-s' form was added and the prefix 'ge-' of the past participle was dropped. Also, where the grammatical endings were not the same, speakers of both dialects would simply drop the unnecessary endings, thus simplifying both languages.

So far, this background information on the Danish influence on the English language has not taken the other Scandinavians into account. It should be mentioned that the Norwegian Vikings settled parts of Ireland, Scotland, Wales, and the northwestern portion of the Danelaw. Their linguistic influence was relatively small. However, when we look at the influ-



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ence of Danish in the new world, we must recognize that this influence is the result of the combined force of immigrants from Sweden, Norway, Finland, and Iceland as well as from Denmark.

Settlement in America

The immigration of Scandinavians to North America began as early as 1637 with the founding of New Sweden, a colony which was situated at the present location of Wilmington, Delaware, and the surrounding area. Scandinavian immigration has continued ever since, mainly into the Great Lakes

basin, the Upper Midwest, and the Pacific Northwest. Presently, the number of direct Scandinavian immigrants exceeds four million. The main influx began in the 1880s and continued until World War I. Just before the turn of the century, the Scandinavians were numerically inferior to the English-speaking and German-speaking groups only. In many areas, the Germans and/or the Scandinavians formed the majority population; other settlers had to conform, to some extent at least, to this majority.

Small countries – big influence on American English

Many factors combined to create a favourable climate for the significant influence on American English by immigrants from the relatively small Scandinavian countries; among these are: 1) the timing – the Scandinavians emigrated to America in the early period 1637 – WWI, when American English was being formed; 2) the numbers – the Scandinavians formed the second largest ethnic group, smaller than the German-speaking group, but larger than the Italians, French, Russians, Dutch, etc.; 3) the location – the area into which most of the Scandinavian immigrants settled was the Great Lakes basin and the Upper Midwest. This area was to become the industrial heartland of America; and, as is often the case, the variety of language spoken in such an area becomes the standard language for that nation; 4) the similarity of languages – a great number of Scandinavian phrases and words could be literally translated and accepted without feeling that they were foreign or strange; 5) the assimilation factor – among all the immigrants, the Scandinavians were the first and quickest to assimilate and to speak English. They translated their thoughts and mixed the languages more than the other groups who relied more heavily on the second generation to pick up English; 6) socio-economic factors – the Scandinavians had a high level of literacy and education among the settlers, and their crime rates and pauper rates were very low; 7) the leadership role – the first, second, and later generations quickly assumed roles of leadership in industry, agriculture, cooperative movements, commerce, education and the trades; 8) socio-political – in America, there remained some resentment towards the English from colonial times, and mistrust of the Germans because of the many wars in Europe. The Scandinavians became a preferred group.

Settlement in Canada

The first Scandinavian settlement in Canada was in New Denmark, New Brunswick in 1872. It was followed by the Icelandic settlement of Gimli,

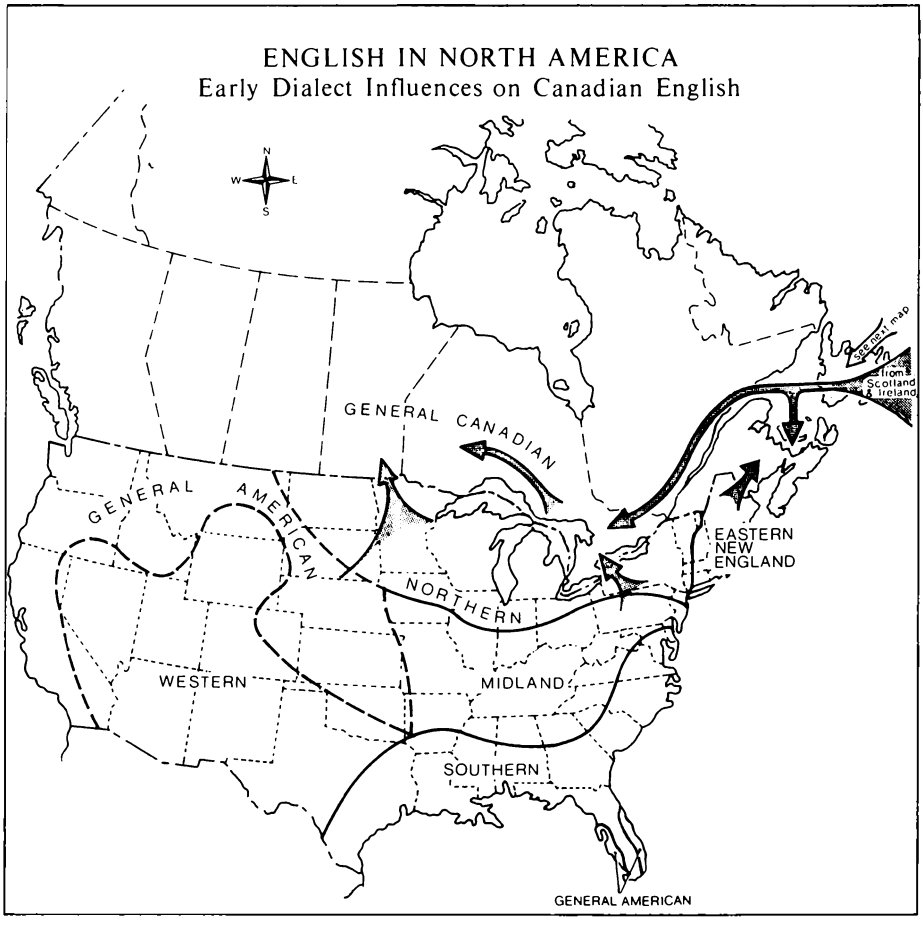
Manitoba, in 1875. Immigation from Scandinavia has continued since then, mainly into Ontario, the prairie provinces, and British Columbia. In comparison, the numbers and percentages appear to be lower than for Scandinavian immigration to the United States. Nevertheless, today Toronto is said to be the city which has the greatest number of Danes outside of Denmark, and Vancouver is said to have more than 200,000 inhabitants of Scandinavian descent. The real picture of Scandinavian immigration to Canada is blurred, however, by the fact that the majority of Scandinavians who came to Canada came through the United States. They were counted and recorded as Americans. These immigrants first lived in the northern states, and later they, or the second generation, moved across the border. In Canada's formative years, immigration from the northern states was always larger than from any other region of the world.

Historians who study the Vikings in England demonstrate the strength of Viking influence by citing the 1,400 place-names in England. In Canada, my preliminary study shows that nearly 1,000 place-names of Scandinavian origin have been recorded.

Canadian English

Canadian English is, historically, an off-shoot of American English. It was originally formed by those people who moved north to the wilderness of Canada from the northern states after the War of Independence. People moved north because they wanted to live under the order and stability of the British Crown. During the colonial period which followed, many British terms and phrases were superimposed on this variety of North American English, especially in the areas of politics, law enforcement, justice, government administration, defence, academe, and church. However, the continued and overwhelming immigration from the United States, close business and family ties, and the impact of American publications, radio, films, and television have all contributed to keeping Canadian English a branch of North American English.

The case for Scandinavian linguistic influence on Canadian English can be claimed from the following sources: 1) from the immigrants who came directly from their homelands; 2) from the first, second, and later generations who came to Canada from the United States (as referred to above); and 3) from the Scandinavian linguistic influences which had already occurred in the States and were transferred to Canada by non-Scandinavians, as well as via the media. Thus, the Scandinavian influence on Canadian English at different times coincides with, reinforces, and derives from the Scandinavian influence on American English.



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Canadian and Northern American English versus Standard British English

Canadian English and Northern American English differ from Standard British English mainly because of the millions of German and Scandinavian-speaking immigrants who settled North America. Another source of difference is the fact that the majority of English-speaking immigrants to North America came from Northern England and Scotland rather than from Southern England. These latter regions happened to be the regions most influenced by the former Viking settlement of Britain, and many

Viking elements remained in the dialects and were later revived and reinforced in the new world. The influence of German speaking immigrants on North American English is well documented and widely accepted by linguists internationally. The case for Scandinavian influence has yet to be stated. This article, and the academic study from which it is derived, will contribute to proving the importance of the role of Danish and Scandinavian immigrants in the formation of Canadian and American English.

Linguistic influence

As in the Viking Age, the linguistic influences were not of a superior or substantially different culture, giving new philosophical concepts and words, but of cousins who had different dialects working side by side. In the new world, the Scandinavian immigrants translated their thoughts and idioms, many of which were accepted into English, sounding correct and appropriate.

Phrases and word usage – loan translations

The following list of phrases and word usage is presented in the following manner: first the phrase is given, then three sentences follow:

* A sentence in Canadian English with the borrowed phrase in italics (CDN).
* A sentence in Standard Southern British English to demonstrate how the thought would be expressed in British English (SSB).
* A sentence in Danish with the lent phrase in italics (DAN).

A comment is added after each item, which at various times examines the source of the item, compares the British and North American usage and meaning, or makes reference to previous research. Unless otherwise indicated, the phrases listed below are "North Americanisms", i.e. these particular phrases or meanings originated in North America and are characteristic of North American English. They have in many cases spread to other English speaking countries. All the phrases have been recorded in Canada and the United States and are commonly heard.

1. ALL IN ALL
   CDN: *All in all* this was a pretty good day.
   SSB : All things considered this was a pretty good day.
   DAN: *Alt i alt* var det en ganske god dag.
   Comment: Note the less equivalent German *alles in allem genommen*. Danish *Alt i alt* is the most likely source for this North Americanism.

2. ALL TIME
   CDN: This is an *all time* record low, today.
   SSB : This is the worst cold spell ever.
   DAN: Det var *alle tiders* værste kulde i dag.
   Comment: Danish and other Scandinavian immigrants no doubt created this idiom in North American English. This idiom was transferred to Britain from American film advertising. Headline writers and advertisers have patterned much from the terse continental Germanic languages (Foster, p. 331).

3. ANY
   CDN: That didn't help him *any*.
   SSB : That didn't help him at all.
   DAN: Det hjalp ham ikke *noget*.
   Comment: This Danish element is the most likely source for this North Americanism.

4. ANYPLACE
   CDN: I can't go *anyplace*.
   SSB : I can't go anywhere.
   DAN: Jeg kan ikke gå *nogen steder* hen.
   Comment: The *-place* morpheme seems to be based in part at least on a Scandinavian loan translation of *sted* found so symmetrically in Danish and Canadian English:

CDN:	place	anyplace	everyplace
SSB :	place	anywhere	everywhere
DAN:	sted	nogle steder	alle steder
CDN:	noplace	someplace	another place
SSB :	nowhere	somewhere	another place
DAN:	ingen steder	nogle steder	et andet sted

5. ANYMORE
   CDN: They don't work here *anymore*.
   SSB : They no longer work here.
   DAN: De arbejder her *ikke mere*.
   Comment: Millions of immigrants from Scandinavia and Germany must have created this usage. The Scandinavian semantic preference would naturally be *more*, and the syntactic preference would be subject, verb, adverb of place, adverb of time.

6. AROUND
   CDN: We left *around* ten o'clock.
   SSB : We left about ten o'clock.
   DAN: Vi tog afsted *omkring* klokken ti.
   Comment: The Danish *omkring* may have been the source of this North Americanism, and if not, it certainly reinforced *around* to its high frequency rating. It is interesting here also to note that Northern American *approximately* is not restricted to indicate 'approaching closely', 'coming near to', but it also means 'to *exceed slightly*', i.e. a synomym for *around*.

7. ASIDE FROM
   CDN: *Aside from* the material, it cost $200.
   SSB : In addition to the material, it cost $200.
   DAN: *Ved siden af* materialet kostede det kr. 200.
   Comment: The *Dansk Engelsk Ordbog* (Gyldendal) designates this usage as U.S. and translates it *ved siden af*. This translation may also indicate a source of this North Americanism.

8. AUTOMOBILE
   CDN: *automobile*, auto.
   SSB : motor-car.
   DAN: *automobil, bil.*
   Comment: Of interest here is the continued use of *automobile* in America. An explanation could well be the German use of *Auto* and the Scandinavian use of *(automo)bil*. Together these Germanic languages have kept alive the usage of *automobile*.

9. BACKED
   CDN: I *backed* the car into the garage.
   SSB : I reversed the car.
   DAN: Jeg *bakkede* bilen ind i garagen.
   Comment: This Scandinavian element is the most likely source of this North Americanism.

10. BACK OF
    CDN: (In) *back of* the store.
    SSB : Behind the shop.
    DAN: *Bag ved* butikken.
    Comment: *In back of* is no doubt formed on analogy with *in front of* and is preferred sometimes to the clipped *back of*. The Danish *bagved* and the Swedish *bakom* (*bakom* affären) are the most likely sources.

11. BAGGAGE
CDN: Lay your *baggage* here.
SSB : Lay your luggage here.
DAN: Læg *bagagen* her.
Comment: The English travel by land with luggage and by sea and air with baggage. North Americans travel everywhere with baggage. Danish has only *bagage* which may have swayed North American usage. All immigration groups would have had a tendency to eliminate such unnecessary distinctions.

12. BEAN POLE
CDN: He is as thin as a *bean pole*.
SSB : He is as thin as a lath.
DAN: Han er så tynd som en *bønnestage*.
Comment: A good correlation not commented on yet by other scholars.

13. BELONG
CDN: This tape doesn't *belong* here.
She actually *belongs* in a higher grade.
This book *belongs* among the reserve collection.
This pan *belongs* with the other teflons.
SSB : This tape shouldn't be here.
She actually should be placed in a higher class.
This book belongs to the reserve collection.
This pan should be with the other teflons.
DAN: Dette bånd *hører* ikke *hjemme* her.
Hun *hører* faktisk *hjemme* i næste klasse.
Denne bog *hører til* blandt de reserverede bøger.
Denne pande *hører hjemme* blandt de andre Teflon-pander.
Comment: In collocation with the prepositions *in*, *with*, *among*, or no preposition at all, North American *belong* indicates being an integral part of something, or a member of some group, and of being accepted. Before 1932, the British usage was invariably followed by *to*. The Danish *høre hjemme* and *høre til* are probably precursors to the North American usage.

14. BETTER THAN
CDN: I like my work *better than* yours.
SSB : I like my work more than yours.
DAN: Jeg kan lide mit arbejde *bedre end* dit.
Comment: Swedish also reinforced this usage. Example: Han behöver det *bättre än* jag (He needs it *better than* I do).

15. BLANK
CDN: Fill out the *blank* on the counter.
SSB : Fill in the form on the counter.
DAN: Udfyld *blanketten* på disken.
Comment: The *Oxford English Dictionary* marks this usage as obsolete in Britain. Scandinavian immigrants probably played a role in reviving it in North America.

16. CANDY
CDN: I love *candy*.
SSB : I love sweets.
DAN: Jeg elsker *kandis*.
Comment: In the 19th century, Danish *kandis* was the only sweet Danish children could normally obtain; the word became a generic term for all sweets in Danish and later in North American English. (North American 'cookie' was derived similarly from the Dutch 'koekje').

17. CLOUDBURST
CDN: The *cloudburst* flooded the streets.
SSB : The downpour flooded the streets.
DAN: *Skybruddet* oversvømmede gaderne.
Comment: Danish 'sky' means 'cloud', and 'brud' means 'burst', a straightforward loan translation.

18. COME BY
CDN: It was nice to have him *come by* after church.
SSB : It was nice of him to call after church.
DAN: Det var pænt af ham at *komme forbi* efter gudstjenesten.
Comment: The Scandinavian, German, and Dutch immigrants jointly contributed to this new usage.

19. COOKBOOK
CDN: *Cookbook*.
SSB : Cookery book.
DAN: *Kogebog*.
Comment: This North Americanism is derived from all the continental Germanic languages.

20. CONDUCTOR
CDN: The *conductor* punched my ticket.
SSB : The guard punched my ticket.
DAN: *Konduktøren* klippede min billet.
Comment: This is a case of a job title being transferred to North America.

21. COWORKER
CDN: *Coworker.*
SSB : Co-worker, fellow worker, colleague.
DAN: *Medarbejder.*
Comment: The prefix *co-* itself seems to be a North Americanism, a loan creation from the Danish *med-*and the German *Mit-*.

22. DOCTOR
CDN: Good morning, *Dr.* Jones; may I help you?
SSB : Good morning, Mr. Jones; may I help you?
DAN: God morgen *Dr.* Jensen, er De blevet betjent?
Comment: "In England, you may be a doctor of science or music or philosophy, or almost anything but medicine, yet be plain 'Mr.' just the same. Even dentists are not referred to as 'doctor'. It is a safe bet than anyone known as 'Doctor Someone' is either a medical doctor, or else a foreign scholar (probably of economics or philosophy)." (Glendening, p. 46). In America, as in continental Europe generally, it seems one is more title conscious than in England.

23. DOLLAR
CDN: *Dollar.* (A large unit of currency.)
SSB : Pound. (A large unit of currency.)
DAN: *Daler.* (A large unit of currency.)
Comment: Friedrich Kluge, in his *Etymologisches Wörterbuch der deutschen Sprache* (Berlin, 1963), states that *Taler*, the original German form, is an abbreviation of *Joachimstaler* which in turn was a coinage meaning "of the silver mined in the Joachim Valley". The Danish *daler* derives from the German *Taler*, and it used to be the common larger unit of currency. Danish immigrants would certainly have reinforced the usage of *dollar.*

24. DUMB
CDN: He is really *dumb.*
SSB : He is rather stupid.
DAN: Nej, hvor er han *dum.*
Comment: Because of the "new" meaning of *dumb* of 'stupid' rather than 'mute', the expression 'deaf and dumb' is now being phased out and replaced by 'deaf mute'. Note also the productivity of *dumb* in e.g. 'dumb-bell', 'dumb-head', 'dumb egg', 'rumdumb', 'dumb cluck', 'dumb blondes', and others. Scholars have credited German and Dutch for this development, but have neglected the Scandinavian factor.

25. IN THE EVENT THAT
CDN: *In the event* that he comes, tell him a lie.
SSB : If he comes tell him a lie.
DAN: *I tilfælde af* at han kommer, skal du bare lyve.
Comment: A direct loan translation.

26. FEVER
CDN: She had a pretty bad *fever*.
SSB : She had a rather high temperature.
DAN: Hun havde en ganske slem *feber*.
Comment: The word 'temperature' probably began as a euphemism to avoid the once frightening connotations of *fever*. Scandinavian and other Germanic languages served to keep the original usage.

27. FILL OUT
CDN: *Fill* out this form in BLOCK LETTERS.
SSB : Fill in this form. Please print.
DAN: *Udfyld* blanketten med blokbogstaver.
Comment: The German influence on this phrasing has been established. The Scandinavian immigrants should be credited, too.

28. FINALLY
CDN: *Finally* the north wind gave up.
SSB : At last the north wind gave up.
DAN: *Endelig* gav nordenvinden op.
Comment: "In British English this adverb normally marks the last stage in a series fully stated: 'He stopped, stared at me, stammered something, and finally turned and ran.' American uses it far more freely, often with little to lead up to it." (CAR, p. 50). The Danish *endelig* contributed to this North American usage. See also *hopefully* (No. 39).

29. FIRE
CDN: Joan got *fired* yesterday.
SSB : Joan was sacked yesterday.
DAN: Johanne blev *fyret* igår.
Comment: A direct loan translation.

30. FIRST NAME
CDN: Remember: last name first and *first name* last.
SSB : Remember: surname first and Christian name last.
DAN: Husk nu at anbringe efternavnet først og *fornavnet* sidst.
Comment: In North America, the terms *first name* and last name are used more frequently than 'Christian name' and 'surname'. In England, this frequency rating is reversed. This constitutes another case of Scandinavian influence and of immigrants choosing the clearer and simpler forms.

31. FREEZING
CDN: I am *freezing*.
SSB : I am so cold, it's quite chilly.
DAN: Jeg *fryser*.
Comment: This idiom is used with great frequency in both Denmark and North America. Often the temperature can be quite comfortable, e.g. 20°C, but still one hears *I'm freezing/jeg fryser*. Swedish and Norwegian would also have reinforced this idiom.

32. FRESH
CDN: He is awfully *fresh*.
SSB : He is very cheeky.
DAN: Han er meget *fræk*.
Comment: The Danish and North American meanings 'to flirt impudently' are identical. Cf. German *frech* with similar connotations.

33. GET ANYTHING OUT OF
CDN: Are you *getting anything out of* your club?
SSB : Do you feel your club is worth while?
DAN: *Får du noget ud af* klubben?
Comment: The parallel structure between North American usage and Danish is striking and undoubtedly the source of this North American usage.

34. GIVE
CDN: This farm will *give* 40 bushels per acre.
SSB : This farm will yield 40 bushels an acre.
DAN: Denne gård *giver* 40 skæpper pr. hektar.
Comment: The German influence regarding this expression has been established. The Scandinavian languages have contributed as well.

35. GREET
CDN: *Greet* my friends for me.
SSB : Give my regards to my friends.
DAN: *Hils* mine venner fra mig.
Comment: The loan translation of this Danish phrase contributed to the formation of this North Americanism.

36. HELP
CDN: The *help* will be moving soon.
SSB : The (domestic) servant will be moving soon.
DAN: Hus*hjælpen* flytter snart.
Comment: This Scandinavian euphemism was adopted in North America.

37. HI

CDN: *Hi*, how's it going?

SSB : Hello, how are you?

SWD: *Hej, hej* på dig!

Comment: Although this is a Swedish greeting, it would have been familiar to the Danish immigrants who would likely have reinforced the usage of *hi*. The North American usage of *hi* is more closely patterned on the Swedish greeting than on the Middle English interjection 'hey'. 'Bye' and 'bye-bye' appear to be modelled on 'hi' and 'hi-hi'. *Hej-hej* now means 'good-bye' in Danish.

38. HOME

CDN: No one was *home* when I called.

SSB : No one was at home when I called.

DAN: Der var ingen *hjemme*, da jeg ringede.

Comment: The deletion of *at* in North American has its forerunner in the Danish postposited adverbial particle. Thus we have *hjem* (home) and *hjemme* (at home). The schwa ending is reduced further to a zero grade in Jutlandish, thus making immigrants from Jutland the most likely source of *home* rather than *at home*.

39. HOPEFULLY

CDN: *Hopefully*, a decision will be made soon.

SSB : We hope that a decision will be made soon.

DAN: *Forhåbentlig* bliver der snart truffet en afgørelse.

Comment: The British usage of *hopefully* is very infrequent and always much later in the sentence. The *Oxford English Dictionary* cites: 'He set to work hopefully.' In this case, *hopefully* is used to modify the verb *work*. North American usage allows *hopefully* to modify the whole sentence. A similar syntactical pattern is to be found with *finally* (*endelig*), *strangely* (*mærkværdigvis*), and *luckily* (*heldigvis*).

40. IN-BUILT

CDN: There is an *in-built* cooler in this unit.

SSB : This unit contains a cooler.

DAN: Der er en *indbygget* køler i den her tingest.

Comment: Both *built-in* and *in-built* may have been modelled on Danish and German *eingebaut*.

41. LONESOME

CDN: I feel *lonesome* these days.

SSB : I feel lonely these days.

DAN: Jeg føler mig *ensom* i disse dage.

Comment: Foster (p. 85) gives the credit for the tremendous popularity of this word to the German *einsam*. Given a choice between *lonely* and *lonesome*, the German immigrants would prefer the latter because its second syllable would remind them of their own *-sam*. The Scandinavian immigrants, however, would be reminded even more of their *-som*. The *Oxford English Dictionary* indicates that *lonesome* comes from the Scotch; perhaps a Viking loan revived in North America.

42. MAD

CDN: Are you *mad* at me?

SSB : Are you angry with me?

DAN: Er du *gal* på mig?

Comment: The *Oxford English Dictionary* notes that *mad* is "only colloquial". North American *mad* and Danish *gal* both have dual meanings of 'angry' and 'rabid'.

43. MAKE DINNER

CDN: Haven't you *made dinner* yet?

SSB : Haven't you cooked dinner yet?

DAN: Har du ikke *lavet aftensmad* endnu?

Comment: In North America, *to make dinner* is the preferred expression. Harris cites this as a Germanism (p. 106). Danish has the same structure, too.

44. MAYBE

CDN: *Maybe* he is tired.

SSB : Perhaps he is tired.

DAN: *Måske* er han træt.

Comment: *Maybe* is the word that Danish immigrants most easily chose to express their *måske*. *Maybe* enjoys very wide popularity in North America. It has now spread back to England. *Måske* is the best source for this North Americanism.

45. MEAN

CDN: He is awfully *mean*.

SSB : He is terribly nasty.

DAN: Han er rigtig *gemen*.

Comment: While the British usage of *mean* signifies 'stingy', 'petty', 'inferior', or 'humble', the North American meaning of *mean* is parallel to the Danish *gemen* (and German *gemein*): 'cruel', 'evil', 'nasty', and 'bad'.

46. (TO BE) NOT MUCH FOR
CDN: I am *not much for* pink.
SSB : I don't care for pink.
DAN: Jeg er *ikke meget for* lyserødt.
Comment: No scholar has yet commented on this co-occurrence. The Danish idiom is the most likely source of this North Americanism.

47. NAME
CDN: The Prime Minister *named* Clark Minister for External Affairs.
SSB : The Prime Minister appointed Clark Minister for External Affairs.
DAN: Statsministeren *udnævnte* Clark til udenrigsminister.
Comment: The similarity between North American and Swedish *utnämnde* has been pointed out by Allwood (p. 137).

48. IN THE NEIGHBOURHOOD OF
CDN: It cost *in the neighbourhood* of $5,000.
SSB : It cost about $5,000.
DAN: Det kostede *i nærheden af* kr. 5.000.
Comment: British scholars deplore the fact that this standard North American "repulsive combination of polysyllabic humour and periphrasis" (Fowler) has been catching on in England.

49. OUT FRONT, OUT BACK
CDN: He is *out front/out back*.
SSB : He is in front of the house/behind the house.
DAN: Han er *ude foran/ude bagved*.
Comment: The similarity in structure and meaning is striking.

50. PREPOSITIONS
CDN: She lives *on* Maple Street.
SSB : She lives in Maple Street.
DAN: Hun bor *på* Ahornvej.

CDN: I haven't seen him *in* years.
SSB : I haven't seen him for years.
DAN: Jeg har ikke set ham *i* årevis.
Comment: The above North American usage of prepositions varies with Standard British English, while they agree with Danish.

51. RIGHT (away, after, across, now, there, etc.)
CDN: I can't answer *right* now.
SSB : I can't answer at the moment.
DAN: Jeg kan ikke svare *lige* nu.
Comment: Many scholars have established this usage as a North Americanism. The Danish *lige* (and Norwegian *rett*) have had this intensive adverb usage for centuries.

52. SAIL-BOAT
CDN: The *sail-boat* has sunk.
SSB : The sailing-boat has sunk.
DAN: *Sejlbåden* er sunket.
Comment: The deletion of the *-ing* is a North Americanism which likely originated from Scandinavian and German speaking immigrants.

53. SCAREDY-PANTS
CDN: He called John a *scaredy-pants*.
SSB : He called John a coward.
DAN: Han kaldte Hans en *bangebuks*.
Comment: Danish *bange+buks* is literally *scared+pants*. The North American term is no doubt a loan translation from Danish and other Scandinavian languages.

54. WE'LL SEE YOU
CDN: *We'll see you*.
SSB : Cheerio.
DAN: *Vi ses*.
Comment: The North American usage of *see you* upon taking leave appears to be a loan translation based on Danish *på gensyn* and German *auf Wiedersehen*. It is worth noting that 'we' is often used instead of 'I' in the North American phrase. The Danish reflexive passive, which blurs the initiator and leaves the action to happenstance, may have triggered this usage.

55. SEMESTER
CDN: This *semester* has just begun.
SSB : This term has just begun. ('term' = one of three divisions)
DAN: Dette *semester* er lige begyndt.
Comment: The *Dansk Engelsk Ordbog* establishes this word to be a North Americanism and notes the similarity between the North American and Danish usage.

56. (GERMAN) SHEPHERD
CDN: *German shepherds* are very obedient.
SSB : Alsatians are very obedient.
DAN: En *schæferhund* er meget lydig.
Comment: The designation *German* in the North American term for this dog indicates that someone other than the German immigrants named this race of dogs in North America. The co-occurrence of *shepherd* and *schæfer* makes a good case for Scandinavian influence.

57. SICK
CDN: My husband is *sick*.
SSB : My husband is ill.
DAN: Min mand er *syg*.
Comment: This archaic and dialectal form in Britain was revived and reinforced by Danish immigrants to North America.

58. (I CAN) SO
CDN: You can't sing. *I can so!*
SSB : You can't sing. Yes I can.
DAN: Du kan ikke synge. Jo, *jeg kan så!*
Comment: The Danish and North American forms are strikingly parallel. This usage also occurs in British dialects. A case for Scandinavian reinforcement can be made.

59. (IS THAT) SO?
CDN: I'm Lord Nelson! – *So? / Is that so?*
SSB : I'm Lord Nelson! – Indeed? / Yes?
DAN: Jeg er Lord Nelson! – *Så?*
Comment: Comment: The *Dansk Engelsk Ordbog* observes that *Is that so?* is particularly American. Danish *så?/såh?* is pronounced as a long vowel with a rising pitch. The North American *so?* and *Is that so?* may be derived from Danish *så?/såh?*.

60. SO LONG
CDN: See you tomorrow. Yeah, *so long*.
SSB : Cheerio. Toodaloo.
DAN: Farvel *så længe*.
Comment: Danish *så længe* is a plausible source for *so long*, especially when it is seen in the same context of familiarity as 'hi', 'yep', 'greet', 'how's it going', 'bye', 'we'll see you', etc.

61. SO WHAT?
CDN: Petersen chose me! *So what?*
SSB : Petersen chose me! He did, did he?
DAN: Petersen valgte mig! Og *hvad så?*
Comment: The usage of Danish *så* and English *so* are often parallel in North America. Yiddish, another Germanic language, has also been considered the originating source for this item.

62. STEM FROM

CDN: Clearly, all these words *stem from* a common source.

SSB : Clearly all these words originate in a common source.

DAN: Det er klart, at alle disse ord *stammer fra* en fælles kilde.

Comment: This is a case of an extension in meaning due to language interference. English has long had *to stem* meaning 'to stop', 'to delay', 'to dam up', and 'to make headway against', but *stem from* is a recent calque from the Scandinavian languages.

63. TELL ME

CDN: *Tell me*, what do you think of Glistrup?

SSB : Hm, hm (coughing and clearing of throat), what do you think of Glistrup?

DAN: *Sig mig* engang, hvad mener du om Glistrup?

Comment: A conversation gambit introducing a question has been lacking in British English. *I say, ...*, does not signal a question exclusively. In North America, the immigrants from Northern Europe simply translated their expressions. The Scottish usage of this gambit may have originated from the Viking era. It was reinforced in North America by Scandinavian immigrants.

64. TWO TIMES

CDN: I have been there *two times* this week.

SSB : I have been there twice this week.

DAN: Jeg har været der *to gange* i denne uge.

Comment: This may be an internal analogy on 'four times', 'five times', etc. reinforced by a loan translation from *to gange* (and German *zweimal)*. Also, non-English speaking immigrants will prefer regular paradigms to irregular forms.

65. TWO WEEKS

CDN: We stayed at Banff for *two weeks*.

SSB : We stayed at Banff for a fortnight.

DAN: Vi blev i Banff i *to uger*.

Comment: *Two weeks* may, in part, be a loan translation of *to uger* (and German *zwei Wochen*). However, the analogy of 'three weeks', 'four weeks', etc. may have been an even stronger force, reinforced by all non-English speaking immigrants. It is also worth noting that the word *sennight* retreated to oblivion in British English without continental Germanic assistance.

66. VIEWPOINT
CDN: He sees things from a Catholic *viewpoint*.
SSB : He sees things from a Catholic point of view.
DAN: Han ser på det fra et katolsk *synspunkt*.
Comment: The awkwardness of 'the point of view of something' with two 'of's' gave Scandinavian and German speaking immigrants the impetus to create *viewpoint* and *standpoint*, two examples of front loaded compound nouns which are found so frequently in North American English. The two loan creations are modelled on Danish *synspunkt* and *standpunkt*.

67. WANT (down, in, off, out, up, etc.)
CDN: He *wants down, in, out, up*, ...
SSB : He wants to go down, in, on, ...
DAN: Han *vil ned, ind, ud, op*, ...
Comment: This elipsis was first brought over to North America by the Scots and Northern Irish. This widespread dialectal usage must have been strengthened by the Scandinavian settlers in the Midwest.

68. (DO YOU) WANT TO?
CDN: *Do you want to* go down in the basement and get my wrench?
SSB : Would you please go down in the cellar and get my spanner?
DAN: *Vil du gerne* gå ned i kælderen og hente min skruenøgle?
Comment: This "imperative" takes advantage of an informal relationship between two persons; a negative reply is never expected, and is seldom given. This Scandinavian idiom is the most likely source.

69. WAY OF LIFE
CDN: The American *way of life*.
SSB : The pace of things in America is ...
DAN: Amerikansk *levevis*.
Comment: Danish *levevis* has long denoted what this Americanism expresses. *Way of life* is possibly a loan creation from levevis, reinforced by German *Lebensweise*.

70. WENT UP
CDN: My skirt *went up* in the seam.
SSB : My skirt ripped along the seam.
DAN: Min nederdel *gik op* i sømmen.
Comment: Another loan translation spoken by millions of non-Scandinavians in North America.

71. WHAT FOR?
CDN: *What* did you do that *for?*
SSB : Why did you do that?
DAN: *Hvad* gjorde du det *for?*
Comment: This usage is much more frequent in North America than in Britain. *Hvad... for* is a likely source.

72. YEAH/YEP

CDN:	*Yeah!*	*Yep*, I agree.
SSB :	Yes!	Yes, I agree.
DAN:	*Ja!*	*Jep*, det mener jeg også.

Comment: These Danish and North American informal affirmatives sound identical. *Yeah* and *yep* are most likely Danish transferrals. The colloquial *yep* is used by practically all North Americans. The Danish informal pronunciation of 'ja' as *jep* is not listed in the average dictionary. 'Nope' may have been created by analogy with 'yep'.

73. YES (as intensifier)
CDN: It is difficult, *yes* impossible, to comprehend that.
SSB : It is difficult, nay impossible, to comprehend that.
DAN: Det er vanskeligt, *ja* det er umuligt at forstå det.
Comment: This co-occurrence is found in literary usage in North American English. Generally speaking, literary usage has not been affected much by Scandinavian influence. It is usually the colloquial usage which has experienced the most interference and mixture. The usage of *ja* in this context is both literary and colloquial in Danish.

74. YOU KNOW
CDN: He is, *you know*, kind of tall.
SSB : He is rather tall.
DAN: Han er *jo* temmelig høj.
Comment: North Americans say *you know* much more often than what is considered acceptable in Britain. This is so because so many millions of immigrants from Europe had a "particle of obviousness" in their language, e.g. German *ja*, French *donc*, Russian *ved'*, Danish *jo*. The European particle of obviousness signifies a culturally accepted "fact", and it is directed toward an indefinite hearer. *You know* seems to be a poor substitute in that it unintentionally involves the person(s) to whom a remark has been directed.

Morphology and syntax

Regarding the categories of morphology and syntax, there are some observations to be made: In the main, the Scandinavian immigrants conformed rather well to the established norms in North America. Furthermore, most of the English inflectional endings had already been leveled by the intrusions of the Vikings and the French, and by the passage of time. A few Scandinavian structural and inflectional influences are evident. Most of the items listed below were reinforced by other Scandinavian, German, and Dutch immigrants.

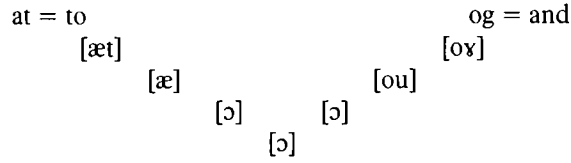
I Affixes:

1. *-dom* (Danish *-dom*). This suffix was revived in North America to produce 'boredom', 'butlerdom', 'officialdom', 'stardom', etc.
2. *-fest* (Danish *-fest*). This Danish suffix reinforced German *-fest* ('Oktoberfest') to produce 'lobsterfest', 'songfest', 'winterfest', 'skyfest', etc.
3. *-free* (Danish *-fri*). This Danish suffix contributed to formations, such as 'ice-free', 'germ-free', 'alcohol-free', 'sugar-free', etc.
4. *-ize* (Danish *-sere*). This Danish suffix contributed to the non-British word formations 'computerize', 'finalize', 'hospitalize', 'modernize', etc.
5. *-wise* (Danish *-vis*). This Danish meaning of 'in regard to' of this suffix has contributed to North Americanisms, such as 'climatewise', 'moneywise', 'priority wise', 'transportationwise', 'timewise', 'weatherwise', etc.
6. *un-* (Danish *u-*). This prefix was previously limited to attributive adjectives, such as 'unjust'. After the immigration wave, the following North Americanisms are now possible: 'unAmerican', 'unstress', 'unfreedom', 'unrich', 'unfunny', 'un-radio', 'uncola', etc.

II Verb structures:

1. TO GET TO
   This is a verb structure which had not been possible in British English before North America was settled. It means 'managed to' and 'received permission to' as in *He finally got to see her* and *She got to take the test early*. This is a direct loan translation of the Danish *Han fik hende endelig at se* and the Swedish *Hon fick ta provet tidig*. Note that the equivalent German structure *Er krieft ... zu sehen* is restricted to verbs of sense and cannot generate the second example.

2. TRY AND DO
   This is a frequently used North American structure which is not "prescriptively correct". It appears to be a direct loan translation from an "incorrect" Danish structure which reduced the pronunciation of the infinitive particle *at* to [ɔ], the same pronunciation as the reduced form of the conjunction *og*.



The following examples with translation will demonstrate the most likely source for this North American usage:
CDN: *Try 'and' do it now.*
DAN: *Prøv 'og' gøre det nu.*

CDN: *Be sure 'and' watch* next week's show.
DAN: *Vær sikker på 'og' se* næste uges udsendelse.

3. Irregular verbs made regular:
The Scandinavian immigrants along with all other non-English speaking immigrants contributed toward the regularization of the past tense and past participle of irregular verbs, e.g. 'burned' for 'burnt', 'dreamed' for 'dreamt', 'dived' for 'dove', 'leaned' for 'leant', 'leaped' for 'leapt', 'learned' for 'learnt', 'smelled' for 'smelt', 'spelled' for 'spelt', 'spoiled' for 'spoilt', 'strived' for 'strove', and 'waked' for 'woke'.

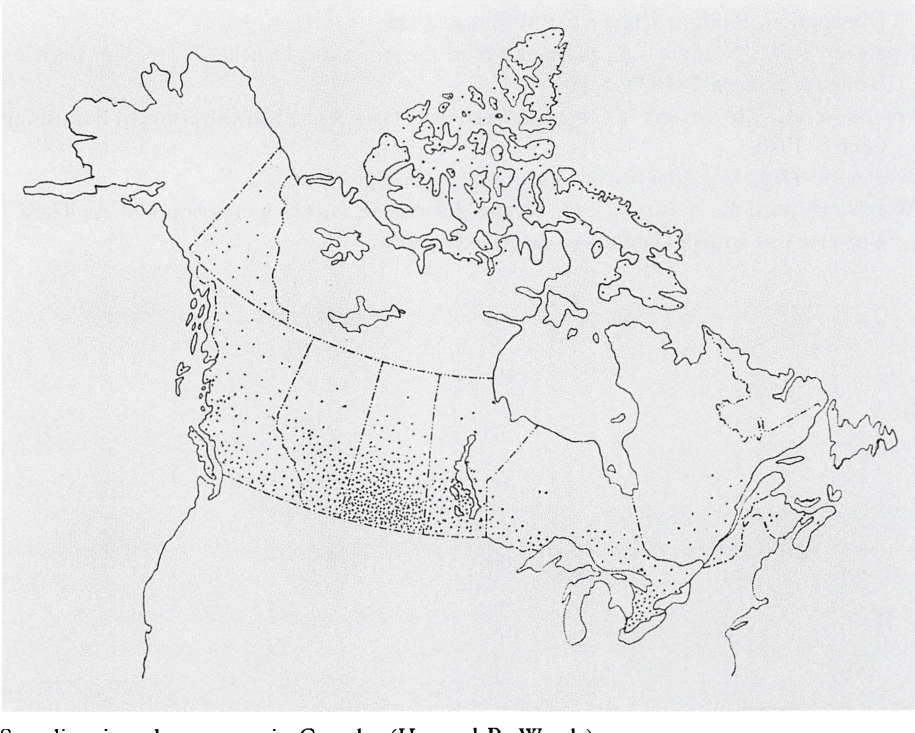
Conclusion

The beginning of this article reviews the history of Danish linguistic influence on English, resulting from the settlement of England by the Jutes, Angles, and Saxons and later by the Vikings. This historical overview was presented in order to establish the similarity between the Danish and English languages to reveal some recurring patterns of linguistic borrowing, and to set the scene for the next wave of Scandinavian immigrants to English speaking territory.

The major purpose of this article has been to present the concrete results of the linguistic influence of Danish, and other Scandinavian immigrants, on North American English in general and Canadian English in particular. To this end, a representative sampling of 74 idiomatic expressions and 9 morphological and syntactic phrases have been presented, compared, and commented upon. These 83 loan translations demonstrate the extent and the type of linguistic change which occurred mainly in the 19th and the early 20th centuries, when Danish and other Scandinavian immigrants translated their thoughts and language into English.

It is well accepted by linguists internationally that non-English speaking immigrants were one of the major contributing forces in creating the difference between British English and North American English. Danes and

other Scandinavians comprised the second largest non-English speaking immigrant group in North America at the turn of the century, when North American English was experiencing its formative years. This article demonstrates that the timing, location, and cultural characteristics, as well as the language of this group of immigrants were favourable in affecting linguistic change even beyond that which their rather substantial numbers would warrant.



Scandinavian place-names in Canada. (Howard B. Woods).

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The Federation of Danish Associations in Canada

by Rolf Buschardt Christensen

The delegates at the Danish Federation's founding meeting at Sunset Villa on June 7, 1981. (Photo: RBC).

The Federation of Danish Associations in Canada was established in 1981 to bring together all of the many Danish organizations in Canada and create a permanent framework for cooperation among them. As a nationwide organization, the Danish Federation is a 'club of clubs' for all the Danes in Canada.

At the present time, the Danish Federation consists of 30 member organizations all across Canada – in New Brunswick, Quebec, Ontario, Manitoba, Alberta and British Columbia. Member organizations include churches, homes for senior citizens, Royal Danish Guards' associations, businessmen's associations, fraternities, social clubs, historical societies and museums, as well as publications. Foreningen Dansk Samvirke [The Association of Danes Living Abroad] and the Scandinavian Canadian Friendship Association in Denmark are associate members.

Many of the local Danish associations which belong to the Danish Federation celebrate such Danish occasions as Fastelavn [Shrovetide], the Queen's birthday, Danish Constitution Day [June 5], Sankt Hansaften [Midsummer Eve, June 23] and Mortensaften [Martinmas Eve, Nov. 10], and many put on a children's Christmas party. By maintaining these Danish traditions, the members are preserving their Danish heritage and passing it on to the next generation. In many cases, these Danish traditions are shared with Canadians who are not of Danish descent.

From time to time, these organizations host events at which singers, folk dancers, majorettes, gymnasts, sports teams, bands, and speakers from Denmark participate. Such visits are enriching and enable Danes in Canada to maintain contact with Denmark and to keep abreast of contemporary developments in Danish culture and society.

Most of the Danish clubs in Canada are social clubs, where the members get together with other Danes. This social aspect is probably the primary raison d'être of the Danish clubs, and leads naturally to the many other cultural, educational, recreational, religious, benevolent, academic and political activities carried out by virtually all the Danish clubs in Canada.

In addition to cultivating their Danish heritage and maintaining their Danish traditions, most clubs are also actively involved in Canadian society, participating in Canadian national events and celebrations, including Canada Day celebrations and parades on July 1st. The Danish Canadian Club in Calgary, for instance, has on several occasions won first prize for its float in the Stampede Parade. Other clubs are very active in annual multicultural festivals, such as Folklore in Kingston or Folklorama in Winnipeg. By their participation and involvement in Canadian events and activities, the Danes are stating that they are proud of their own heritage and also to be a part of Canada.

In addition to the many social clubs, offering a host of varied activities,

many Danish organizations have been established for a particular purpose or to provide for specific needs. The Danish churches, for example, are not just used on Sundays, but are important community centres which daily serve both the spiritual and secular needs of the Danes.

The Danish homes for senior citizens were also established to address a particular need and provide a specific service within the Danish community in Canada. It is interesting to note that all Danish senior citizen homes in Canada were either established by Danish congregations or by members of a Danish congregation who felt that it was their duty to provide affordable housing, and in some cases health care, for their elderly. It was natural for the Danes to build senior citizen homes, an institution they were familiar with in Denmark.

A number of Danish societies were formed to provide financial assistance in the event of illness or to cover funeral expenses. One of the first of these, the Danish Brotherhood in Canada, was established in Winnipeg in 1913. It was modelled on the Danish Brotherhood in America and created Dannevirke Lodge No. 1, the first step in becoming a Canada-wide organization.

In 1928, Dannevirke Lodge No. 1 established a lodge in Toronto which was officially inaugurated in May 1929.

In 1929 the Danes in Calgary founded Sygekassen Finsen, a health insurance organization. Most of its members lived in Calgary, but the society gradually expanded its field of operation to all of Alberta.

In 1931, another group of Danes in Calgary founded Logen Dansk Samarbejde i Canada [The Lodge, Danish Cooperation in Canada] The goal of this group was to unite all Danish organizations in Canada in a national federation. The president, Jacob Holst, succeeded to some degree in achieving this goal over the next two years.

During 1932, quite a few Danes wrote articles about the proposed federation in *Den Danske Herold* [The Danish Herald], a newspaper published by Odin Kuntze in Kentville, Nova Scotia.

One such article was written by Peter Beck of Olds, Alberta. It was Peter Beck's article, "Start en dansk forening for hele Canada" [Start a Danish organization for all of Canada] of June 27, 1933, which got the ball rolling. Within three weeks of his article, 150 Danes, gathered for a Summer Festival at Wallace Beach in Nova Scotia, endorsed his proposal to create a federation, to be named The Danish Canadian Society.

The Danes had dreamed for years of establishing a Canada-wide federation. The resolution adopted at Wallace Beach on July 16, 1933, called for the creation of a Danish Canadian federation which would support the Danish churches, establish societies to provide benefits in the event of sickness or death, and speak on behalf of all the Danes in Canada.

Odin Kuntze became one of the strongest agitators for a Danish Canadian Society, and he seldom missed an opportunity to write about the Society in *Den Danske Herold*. Many others also wrote articles about the Society in his newspaper.

Branches of the Danish Canadian Society were established in Calgary in 1933 and in Montreal in 1934. They both still exist, and both are charter members of today's Federation of Danish Associations in Canada.

In 1934 and in the following years, other branches of the Danish Canadian Society were established in Wallace and Pugwash, Nova Scotia, in New Denmark and Saint John, New Brunswick, in Hamilton, Ontario, and in Dickson, Alberta. The Danes in Canada now had a national organization with branches all across the country.

In the late 1950s, a group of Danes in Montreal, headed by Jan Eisenhardt, created Canadania with the purpose of uniting the Danes in Canada and promoting cooperation between Canada and Denmark. They worked very closely with Dansk Canadisk Selskab [The Danish Canadian Society] in Denmark, which was established in 1959. Together, Canadania and Dansk Canadisk Selskab held some large and very successful summer meetings in Denmark on or around Canada Day, at which the Danish prime minister or other ministers participated. Dansk Canadisk Selskab still exists in Denmark, and an annual luncheon is held to commemorate Canada Day.

The idea of creating a nationwide organization for the Danes in Canada was therefore not a novel one when the Danish Club of Ottawa and others began discussing this idea in the late 1970s. But instead of creating a completely new organization with individual memberships, it was decided that the Danish Federation should bring together all existing Danish organizations in Canada to create a permanent network of cooperation. The Danish Federation would therefore be a 'club of clubs' which would act as a liaison through which Danes in Canada could exchange ideas and cooperate on joint projects. Indeed, a Federation would be able to coordinate major projects which could not be tackled by one organization alone, such as holding seminars or conferences, starting folk high school classes or backing the building of a National Museum.

At Sunset Villa, a Danish club and senior citizen residence in Puslinch, Ontario, halfway between Hamilton and Guelph, the idea of creating a Danish Federation was discussed by various Danish clubs at a meeting on June 1, 1980. These clubs agreed to keep in contact as well as to find out if other Danish clubs in Canada would be interested in forming a Federation. Many Danish organizations across Canada were contacted, and many gave a favourable response to the proposal.

Delegates from all across Canada met for the Danish Federation's found-

ing meeting a year later at Sunset Villa, on June 7, 1981. It was decided that each member organization would have one vote, regardless of size, and that there should be regional representation from all parts of Canada on the Federation's board of directors. Subsequently, it was agreed that the Danish Federation should be managed by a president, a secretary, a treasurer, and five regional presidents and directors. The regional presidents and directors were to be elected in the five regions, designated as Atlantic, Quebec, Ontario, Prairies and Pacific. The Federation's president, secretary and treasurer were to be elected yearly at the Annual General Meeting, which would be held in connection with a national Danish Canadian Conference. Regional meetings to elect a president and director would be held in each region, many of which have since initiated their own regional projects.

It was decided to hold the Annual General Meetings and Conferences in various locations across Canada, to ensure that the Federation would truly become a national organization and to provide an opportunity for everyone to participate in the meetings and to host the conference. Each conference would focus on a specific issue or project pertinent to the Danish community in Canada.

The participants at the Danish Canadian Conference in Winnipeg held at the Scandinavian Cultural Centre in May, 1988. (Photo: RBC).

At the first conference in Vancouver in May 1982, the theme was Danish Canadian Priorities, and here the Federation determined what its priorities would be. Other conferences have focused on Youth Involvement, Documenting Our History, Communication, Volunteers, Preserving Our Heritage, and Our Future.

The 1982 conference in Vancouver was probably the first national Danish Canadian Conference ever held in Canada with delegates from all across the country. The conferences provide a forum in which to discuss issues and concerns, exchange ideas and plan national projects. During the course of the two-day conferences, the Federation also holds its Annual General Meeting. Since the 1982 Vancouver conference, Danish Canadian conferences have been held in Montreal, Calgary, New Denmark, Toronto, Kolding (in Denmark), Winnipeg, Ottawa and again in Vancouver in 1990. The 1991 conference is being held in Copenhagen, and the 1992 conference will be held in Dickson.

For each Danish Canadian Conference, the Federation publishes a prestigious 125 to 175 page book with articles, reports, biographies and histories, mostly written by the club historians, which each member organization has been asked to appoint. The annual Conference Book is yet another way of recording and documenting the history of the Danes in Canada, as well as their activities and contributions. It is a sad fact that the Danes in Canada have not, generally speaking, been diligent in researching and documenting their history, a situation the Danish Federation is trying to change.

At the Federation's founding meeting it was decided that one of the Federation's projects would be to publish a *List of Danish Organizations in Canada*. The list, which has since been updated and published every year, is distributed free of charge. It includes all Danish organizations in Canada of which the Federation is aware, whether they are Federation members or not. The Danish Federation has been very fortunate in obtaining grants from the Secretary of State for Multiculturalism, as well as from provincial and municipal authorities, enabling it to finance its national meetings, conferences and workshops.

Shortly after its formation, the Danish Federation joined the Canadian Ethnocultural Council, a coalition of national ethnic organizations. The Council has been an inspiration and has provided support, ideas and many useful contacts.

The Federation has also sought to have Danes represented on the various Multiculturalism Councils in Canada. The Federation was very pleased when a Dane was appointed to the Canadian Multiculturalism Council in 1982 and to the Multiculturalism Council of Ontario in 1983.

Moreover, the Danish Federation has submitted candidates to the now

defunct King Christian X Jubilee Foundation, which provided travel grants to Denmark. In 1986, Danish actress Anne Jensen toured Canada, visiting New Denmark, Toronto, Winnipeg and Vancouver, where she read Hans Christian Andersen's fairy tales. And in June 1990, the Danish Minister of Education and Research, Mr. Bertel Haarder, gave talks on recent political developments in Denmark and Europe in both Vancouver and in Ottawa.

The Danish Federation naturally takes a keen interest in the history of the Danes in Canada. At the 1985 conference, which was hosted by the New Denmark Historical Society and held in New Denmark, the oldest Danish settlement in Canada, the Federation requested each member organization to appoint a club historian. It was envisaged that each club historian would ensure that archival material and documents were properly kept and preserved. The historian would also see to it that documents were deposited or donated to an archives and would also collect material, interview people and write biographies and histories. Many of their write-ups have appeared in the annual Conference Book.

From the beginning, the Danish Federation has naturally been greatly interested in the preservation of the *Christiansen General Store* in Dickson, Alberta, and at the 1988 Danish Canadian Conference in Winnipeg, the Federation fully endorsed the Dickson Society's plans for a National Danish Canadian Museum. Moreover, the Federation assisted in the appointment of National Museum representatives throughout Canada. The National Museum is now a permanent point on the agenda of Federation meetings.

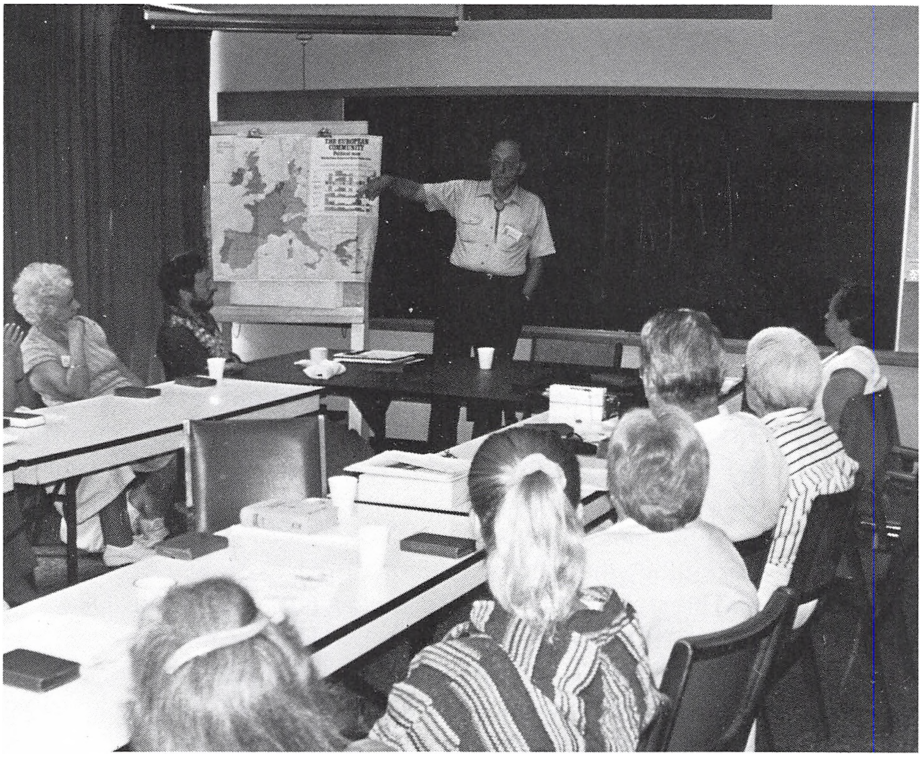
For a number of years, the Danish Federation offered Danish folk high school courses at The International College in Elsinore, Denmark. The courses were held in English, and the participants from Canada spoke very highly of them, but attendance was disappointing.

In 1988, it was decided to conduct a Danish folk high school course in Canada. In the summer of 1989, the Federation arranged a very successful one-week course on Danish history and culture at the YMCA's Geneva Park Conference Centre near Orillia, Ontario. The course had a typical Danish folk high school atmosphere, in spite of the fact that it was held in Canada. The twenty-three participants from Quebec, Ontario and British Columbia found the course inspiring and educational as well as a lot of fun.

The Federation's one-week course at Geneva Park was repeated in August 1990, with about the same number of enthusiastic participants.

The next folk high school course is planned for the summer of 1992 and will be held at the Banff Centre in the Rocky Mountains immediately following the 1992 Danish Canadian Conference in Dickson.

In short, by establishing the Danish Federation, the Danes in Canada finally created their own national organization. The Federation, which can



Professor Erik Jørgensen lectures at the Danish Federation's Folk School course at the Geneva park Conference Centre in Orillia, Ontario in August, 1990. (Photo: RBC).

celebrate its tenth anniversary in 1991, aims to preserve and promote the Danish community's rich heritage. It also encourages the Danes to share their culture and traditions with other Canadians, as the Federation wants the Danish community in Canada to be heard and seen, and in this way be counted in. But the primary objective of the Federation is to promote and facilitate cooperation among Danish organizations in Canada. And each and every Danish organization wants to hoist and show the Danish flag. The best and most effective way of holding the flag high is by raising it in unison, and that is why Danish organizations all across Canada have rallied behind the Danish Federation.

Members of the
FEDERATION OF DANISH ASSOCIATIONS IN CANADA

Danish Canadian Society of Saint John, N.B.
New Denmark Historical Society, New Denmark, N.B.
The Danish Canadian Society, Montreal
The Danish Club of Ottawa
The Danish-Canadian Club of Kingston
The Danish Lutheran Church, Toronto
Scandinavian Forum, Toronto
The Royal Danish Guards' Association, Eastern Canada
Sunset Villa Association, Puslinch, Ontario
The Danish Women's Association, Toronto
The Danish Lutheran Church of the Niagara Peninsula, Grimsby
The Danish Canadian Club, Winnipeg
The Danish Canadian Club, Calgary
Calgary Danish Businessmen's Association
The Danish Lutheran Church, Calgary
The Royal Danish Guards' Association, Western Canada
The Danish Senior Citizens Apartment Foundation, Calgary
The Danish Heritage Society of Dickson
Red Deer Danish Canadian Club
The Danish Canadian Society "Dania", Edmonton
Ansgar Danish Lutheran Church, Edmonton
The Danish Community Centre of Vancouver
The Danish Brotherhood in America, Lodge 328, Vancouver
The Royal Danish Guards' Association, Pacific Northwest
The Danish Evangelical Lutheran Church, Vancouver
Dania Society, Senior Citizen Residence, Burnaby, B.C.
Granly Danish Lutheran Church, Surrey, B.C.
Vancouver Mid-Island Danish Canadian Club, Ladysmith, B.C.
Scandinavian Canadian Friendship Association, Kolding
Foreningen Dansk Samvirke, Copenhagen

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Danish Society for Emigration History

It is the aim of the Society to promote and provide information about the study of Danish emigration history.

For information regarding membership please contact the Danes World-wide Archives.

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