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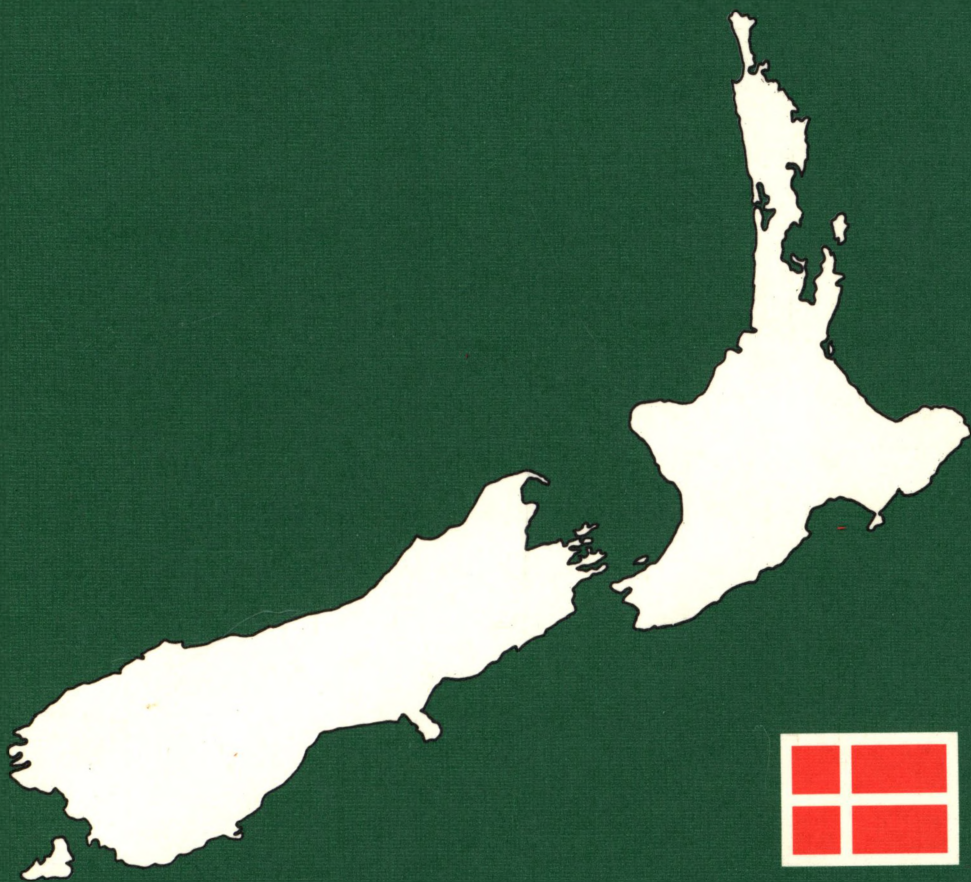
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# Danish Emigration to New Zealand



# Danish Emigration to New Zealand

Published by the Danes Worldwide Archives  
to commemorate New Zealand's Sesquicentennial

Edited  
by  
Henning Bender and Birgit Larsen  
Translations: Karen Veien

1990

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Danish Minister for Foreign Affairs, Uffe Ellemann-Jensen.



THE MINISTER FOR  
FOREIGN AFFAIRS

May, 1990

Dear Friends,

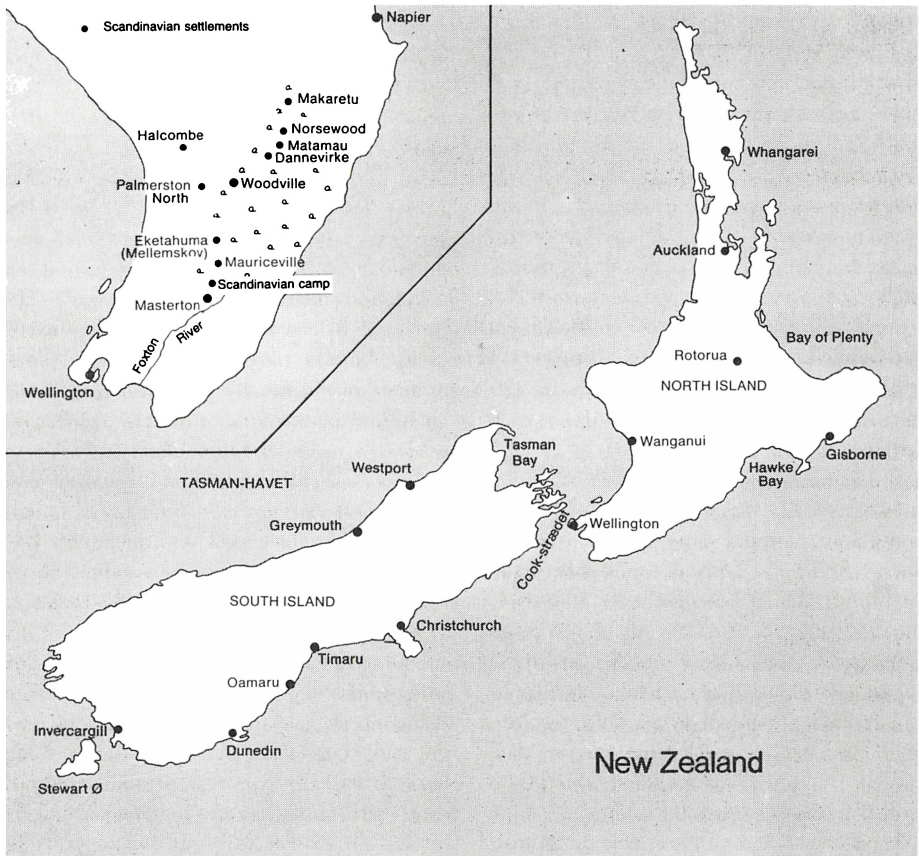
I am pleased that the publication of this book about Danish emigration to New Zealand provides me with the opportunity to send greetings to New Zealand on the occasion of the 150th Anniversary of the signing of the Treaty of Waitangi.

New Zealand has always had a special place in the minds of the Danes as "our antipodes". A country which is so far away and yet at the same time very close when it comes to the organization of society and patterns of trade. Moreover, New Zealand is the country in the world, outside of Europe, which has the largest percentage of people with Danish blood in their veins.

I therefore appreciate the initiative taken by the Danes Worldwide Archives in Aalborg to deal with the subject of Danish emigration to New Zealand. The topic is of interest in Denmark, which is clearly demonstrated both by the wide range of authors who have contributed to this book and by the generous financial contributions from both public institutions and private foundations.

It is my hope that you will accept this book as a gift from Denmark on the occasion of your Sesquicentennial. I trust that it will increase the interest taken in Danish-New Zealand history and provide a basis for strengthening the personal, cultural and commercial bonds between our two countries.

Uffe Ellemann-Jensen  
Minister for Foreign Affairs



Map of New Zealand  
 (Reprinted with the permission of Politikens Forlag, Copenhagen, Denmark).



## Preface

“Danish Emigration to New Zealand” has been published by the Danes Worldwide Archives in commemoration of New Zealand’s one-hundred and fiftieth anniversary.

While Danish emigration westward, to North America, is well-documented, this is not, to the same degree, true of emigration to the opposite side of the world. Since Jens Lyng’s 1939 book, *The Scandinavians in Australia, New Zealand and the Western Pacific*, Danish emigration to New Zealand has been only sporadically dealt with. It is the hope of the Danes Worldwide Archives that the current publication will sharpen interest in research in this area of Danish emigration.

We have chosen to let Peter Birkelund’s article introduce the series of contributions. He deals with the purely statistical aspect of emigration, from its organised beginnings around 1871 up until about 1970. Peter Birkelund concludes that Danish emigration to New Zealand took place in primarily two periods, namely in the early 1870s and in the late 1950s. Both waves were the result of various offers of economic support made by the New Zealand government. A study of the Police Emigration Records shows that the typical emigrant to New Zealand around 1871 was a family man with a wife and often a large number of children. The promise of cheap, fertile land tempted many to leave their homeland. They saw an opportunity to create a future for their families which was better than what they could expect to have at home. While the land they could obtain in New Zealand was certainly fertile, 100-year-old trees had to be felled before it could be cultivated. The Danish families paid for their land with many years of hard work.

This brings us to Poula Christie’s “Danish Yesterdays in New Zealand”. The author is a New Zealander whose Danish parents emigrated to New Zealand in 1907. Poula Christie gives a vivid autobiographical account of the lives of Danish immigrants in the first difficult years, as they attempt to establish new family foundations and the basis for their continued existence.

The Danish church became an important meeting place for Danish immigrants who wished to maintain their ties to the Danish language and to their heritage. In “O Lord, Guide My Feet” Dorte Christensen concerns herself with the Danish church in New Zealand which was strongly influenced by the Home Mission. The article focuses in particular on the Danish clergyman, Mads Christensen, who served the church in Mauriceville for many years.

Three of the book's contributions are based on letters from those who emigrated. Three very different destinies are vividly depicted in these letters sent home to Denmark. The muse of Danish writers and musicians, Ingeborg Stuckenberg, (1866-1904) travelled to New Zealand in 1903. Her letters from the journey itself are of high literary quality intended for publication, while the private letters written later to her sister in Denmark provide a touching glimpse of Ingeborg's longing for her dear ones, not least her children. The letters are introduced and commented on by John Kousgård Sørensen.

Viggo Rasmussen, whose letters from 1874 to 1928 are presented by Niels Peter Stilling, was an altogether different letter-writer. Here we are given a glimpse of an ordinary young man's life as an immigrant with constantly changing jobs. His early letters are characterised by his longing for his family and Denmark. But Viggo Rasmussen finds consolation in the church and in devotional reading. Later on, his letters demonstrate the resignation of a more mature man; Viggo Rasmussen has by now given up the hope of "placing his feet under his own table" and is satisfied with the simple life he leads together with his wife in Kaikoura on the South Island.

The last collection of letters dates from 1863 to 1887. The letter-writer is the Danish photographer Niels Peter Schourup who established his own photographic studio in Christchurch in 1874. The photographer's lense and pen provide us with a view of the exotic nature of the North Island, in particular, with its hot springs and volcanoes. In spite of his success in his adopted country, Schourup continues to long to see his homeland once more. This dream is not fulfilled, however, and he dies at the age of 49. The photographer's letters are introduced and commented on by Birgit Larsen.

As in many other places in the world, the Danes in New Zealand were pioneers in the dairy industry. Erik Helmer Pedersen deals with this subject in his article, "Danish Agricultural Technology and New Zealand Butter". The author points out the curious phenomenon that in the sale of butter to Great Britain, Danish farmers who emigrated to New Zealand became the competitors of those dairymen who remained in Denmark.

What did the Danes who emigrated really know about New Zealand? Jørgen Würtz Sørensen reports on this in his article "The New Workers' Paradise". He illustrates how the Danes imagined New Zealand to be a Paradise, not only for labourers, but also for women, thanks to the New Zealand government's liberal laws and principles. New Zealand became a model for the Social-Liberals in Denmark, and, at the same time, a bugbear for the opponents of state socialism.

In the final contribution, Ivo Holmquist concentrates on both Swedish and Danish immigration in his description of the relationship between

Scandinavia and New Zealand from the time of the arrival of the first Europeans up until the present. Just as in Australia, there are more Danes than other Scandinavians in New Zealand, as 50% of the Scandinavian immigrants come from Denmark. The adjustment of the Scandinavians to their adopted country follows the traditional pattern in which the interest in identifying one's roots is aroused in the 3rd and 4th generations, while the 1st and 2nd generations strive to become 100 per cent assimilated.

This publication was made possible by the generous economic support provided by a number of Danish foundations and institutions. We wish to offer our heartfelt thanks to all those who have contributed to the book.

Henning Bender

Birgit Larsen

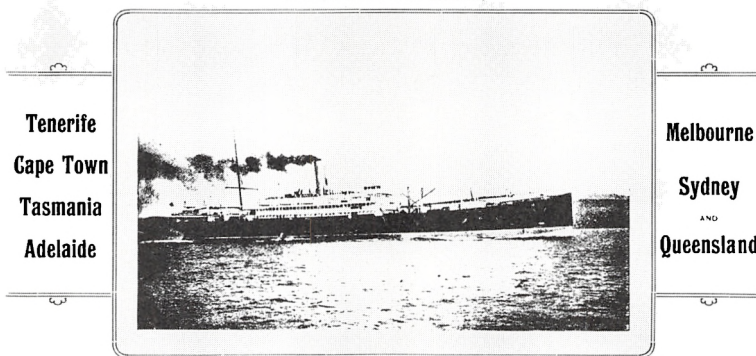
# Danish Emigration to New Zealand

by Peter Birkelund

Nov. 7 14/1911

## The New Zealand Shipping Company, Limited.

(Incorporated in New Zealand.)



Monthly Service.

Direct Line of Royal Mail Steamers between

## LONDON & NEW ZEALAND

*Outwards... via Plymouth, Tenerife, Cape Town and Hobart  
Homewards... via Montevideo, Tenerife and Plymouth*

Taking Passengers for all New Zealand Ports,

And following a special track to ensure the safety and comfort of Passengers.

*Loading Berth, Royal Albert Dock (Central Station).*

Reached by Trains from Fenchurch St. and Liverpool St. Stations every few minutes.

THE FOLLOWING STEAMERS WILL BE DESPATCHED:

1911			
<i>March 16</i>	“ <b>ROTORUA,</b> ”	•	11,500 Tons
	<small>(Triple-Screw)</small>		
<i>April 13</i>	- “ <b>TURAKINA,</b> ”	•	10,960 Tons
	<small>(Twin-Screw)</small>		
<i>May 11</i>	- “ <b>TONGARIRO,</b> ”	•	10,192 Tons
	<small>(Twin-Screw)</small>		
<i>June 8</i>	- “ <b>RUAHINE,</b> ”	•	11,000 Tons
	<small>(Twin-Screw)</small>		

FOR LATER SAILINGS SEE LAST PAGE.

Calling at PLYMOUTH on the SATURDAY following to EMBARK any PASSENGERS for whom this Port may be more convenient.

*These splendid Vessels are of full power and of the highest class.*

EXPERIENCED SURGEONS ALWAYS CARRIED.

An advertisement for *The New Zealand Shipping Company*, 1911  
(The Provincial Archives, Copenhagen, Denmark).

This article is an attempt to describe and explain Danish emigration to New Zealand until about 1970. It will not provide a detailed analysis, but rather a picture of the general trends in Danish emigration to New Zealand. Emigration will be seen from a Danish point of view, that is, focusing on *Danish emigration from Denmark*. Immigration in New Zealand, the establishment of a home there, and the integration of the Danish immigrants will be touched on only rarely.

The sources used in preparing this article originated with the Danish authorities who, over the years, were responsible for emigration: from 1868 the Copenhagen police, from 1934 The Danish Emigration Office and from 1959 The Directorate of Labour, which continues to be responsible for emigration.

The first Danish Emigration Act was passed in 1868, and as of this year there is, in principle, a record of every person who emigrated from Denmark. The statistical information regarding emigration to New Zealand is based on these records, the so-called Emigration Records.

## An Outline of Immigration in New Zealand

Prior to 1840, New Zealand's status was that of a kind of outpost in the South Seas, where whalers, merchants, missionaries and adventurers of all kinds settled. Actual immigration did not begin until after 1840, when New Zealand officially became a British colony.

Immigration programmes were begun in 1840. The British colonial politician, E.G. Wakefield, who was the manager of the New Zealand Company from 1839 to 1849, was against making land in New Zealand available free of charge to new settlers. His idea was that the land should be sold and the profits used to finance the journey for other British immigrants. Wakefield's principle was the basis of all immigration programmes initiated until the turn of the century. Extensive land purchases were made from the country's original inhabitants, the Maories, and the land was then sold to the new settlers. The heavy-handed settlement policy frightened the Maories, and several wars between the whites and the natives resulted. Immigration continued unimpeded, however, and in 1851 the number of settlers was estimated at 26,000.

In 1861 rich deposits of gold were found on the South Island, and throughout the 1860s, while the Maori war ravaged the North Island, on the South Island there was a large-scale gold rush. The population increased from 99,000 in 1861 to 256,000 in 1871. Many gold prospectors came from Australia, where in these years the easily accessible deposits of gold were diminishing.

New Zealand implemented a number of large projects designed to pro-

mote development from 1870 to 1880. The statesman Sir Julius Vogel took the initiative in starting big public works projects, in particular the building of roads and railways. Labour was recruited in England and Northern Europe, and workers were offered full or partial payment of their trip. There was a total of 100,000 assisted and 40,000 unassisted immigrants in this decade. In 1874 a record was set with the arrival of 46,000 immigrants. Towards the end of the 1870s assisted immigration was reduced, and it stopped completely in 1892 due to the worsening of the economic situation in New Zealand. In 1904 travel subsidy was resumed and it continued until 1927, disrupted only by World War I. After World War II, New Zealand cautiously opened its doors to immigrants, and only a limited number of travel grants were made available. This policy remained unchanged until the early 1950s, when large immigration programmes with both free and assisted passage were introduced. A total of 69,000 immigrants received assistance in the period from 1947 to 1963. At the end of the 1960s a more cautious immigration policy was adopted, with limited offers of immigration assistance. In 1966 the population of New Zealand was a little over 2.6 million.

Travel subsidy was primarily given to British subjects, but other nationalities occasionally received grants of money.

## Danish Emigration Prior to 1868

The first Danes in New Zealand were guests; in the early 1800s, Jørgen Jürgensen, among others, stayed there for a time on board a whaler. The first permanent Danish resident in New Zealand about whom we have information was Hans Falk, who in the 1820s set himself up as a merchant on the North Island. The number of Danes who, like Hans Falk, settled prior to 1860 is not known, but there cannot have been many.

Rich deposits of gold found near Otago in 1861, and three years later near Tuapeka, encouraged immigration, and throughout the 1860s a number of people immigrated to the South Island. Among these were several Danes. Some came from the Australian gold fields, others were seamen, and a few came directly from Denmark. It is not possible to determine the exact number of Danes who emigrated to New Zealand during the gold rush, but it was probably not many. The Danish-Australian, Jens Lyng, estimated a Scandinavian population of 500 persons in 1867 and 600 in 1871. Of these half were probably Danes.

The best known Dane who settled in New Zealand was the statesman, Bishop D.G. Monrad. In 1865 he emigrated together with his family to the North Island, where he established himself as a "settler". Monrad's home came to serve as a central meeting place for newly arrived Danes, and many

settled nearby. It is not known how many Danes left Denmark to follow Monrad to New Zealand.

After his return to Denmark in 1869, Monrad worked for a while for New Zealand's agent in London, and in 1871 he sent off the first 120 Danish emigrants.



The former Danish Prime Minister, D.G. Monrad.

## 1868 – 1899

Emigration from Denmark has been recorded since 1868, thus providing a reliable source of information about emigration to New Zealand from that date.

Towards the end of the 1860s, Sir Julius Vogel took the initiative to open in particular the North Island for new immigrants from Europe. A new law, the *Immigration and Public Works Act*, was passed in 1870, and this law presupposed the taking out of a large loan in London in support of immigrants to participate in big public works projects. One million pounds was set aside for the recruiting campaign in Europe, and a Commissioner of Immigration was appointed in London.

Areas on the North Island between Wellington and Napier, called “The Seventy Mile Bush” and “The Forty Mile Bush”, were designated for cultivation. Scandinavian labourers were thought to be best for this work, and immigration agents were sent to Norway, Sweden and Denmark.

In Denmark the agents advertised free passage to New Zealand, but because, in truth, the cost of the journey was to be paid back after a year, the agent was reported to the police and was forced to change his advertisement. By the same token, immigrants were charged 1 £ per acre for the allocated 40 acres of land. Nonetheless, many accepted the offer, and in 1871 the first Danish immigrants came to the North Island. In following years many Danes came to Wellington or Napier, and from there they settled in the bush.

The area was covered with forest which had to be felled before the land could be cultivated. The Scandinavian immigrants built roads 3 or 4 days a week in order to earn money to cover living expenses. The rest of their time could then be spent on their own land. Settlements with Nordic names, like Norsewood, Dannevirke and Mellemskov, were established along the roads built by the immigrants. Subsidized emigration from Scandinavia to New Zealand ceased in 1875, and until October of that year a total of 3,327 Scandinavians had arrived under the terms of Vogel’s immigration programme. Later two more ships with Scandinavian immigrants arrived, and it is therefore estimated that about 5,000 Danes, Swedes and Norwegians emigrated with assisted passage.

It is not possible to give a precise number of Danes who immigrated from Scandinavia. The Danish Emigration Records do not include all the emigrants to New Zealand because the Allan-Line agent in Copenhagen often sold emigrant tickets to London only, and these were, therefore, not recorded. From London the emigrants were sent on to the North Island by the general agent for New Zealand. It is possible, however, to obtain a fair estimate of the situation. From 1871 to 1875 the Danish Emigration Re-



cords list 1,521 emigrants to New Zealand. The unrecorded emigration which resulted from the Allan-Line's breaking of the law is estimated to be an additional 500 to 1,000 persons. This means that between 2,000 and 2,500 Danes emigrated to New Zealand during this period.

New Zealand immigration statistics are not available prior to 1900, but the New Zealand census clearly shows the large Danish immigration. In 1874, 1,172 Danish-born persons living in New Zealand were recorded, and in 1878 there were 2,225.

From the time the immigration programme ended until the turn of the century, there was little Danish immigration. The Danish Emigration Records list 244 persons. The New Zealand census emphasizes this – from 1878 no increase in the Danish-born population is recorded.

## From 1900 to World War I

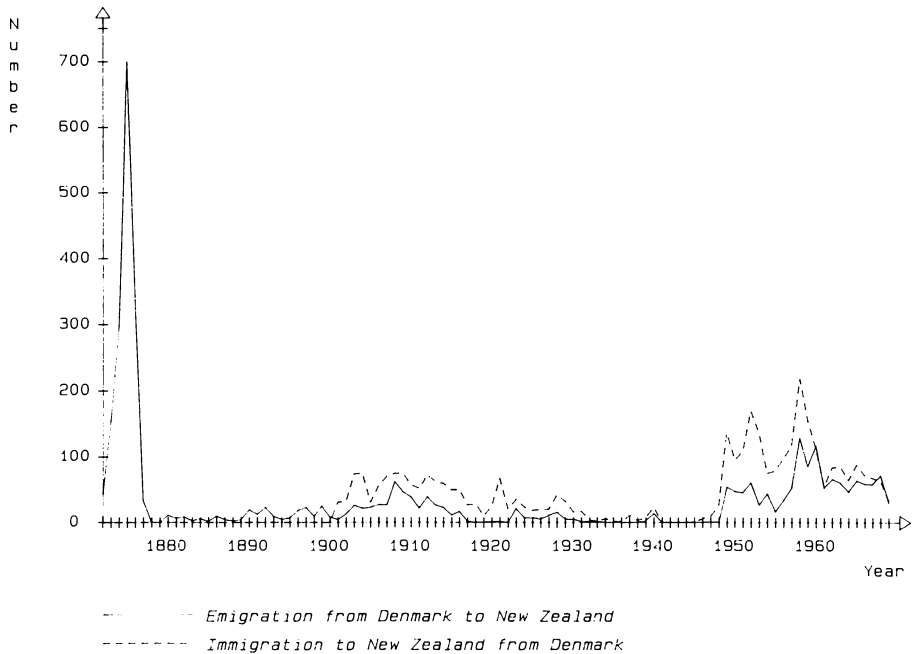
Danish emigration from the turn of the century until World War I was to a great degree influenced by the fact that Danish citizens could at no time during this period receive any kind of travel subsidy. British subjects could to some extent obtain assistance, but this was only for "men with moderate means who intend to take up land and settle in the colony".

Emigration to New Zealand is dealt with in a Danish Foreign Ministry report written in 1910. This report advises mechanics, office workers and sales people not to emigrate. Only young, experienced farmers and maid servants were thought to be able to find good opportunities in New Zealand. The report went on to say that labourers and skilled craftsmen could usually find work, although with difficulty. Times were especially good in May 1910 for construction workers, smiths and coach builders. It was stressed that all immigrants had to be able to read and speak a little English.

The Emigration Records show that 424 Danes emigrated to New Zealand between 1900 and 1916, with the greatest number emigrating in 1907. Immigration statistics in New Zealand indicate that 981 Danish-born persons entered the country during the same period. This discrepancy can be explained by the fact that these statistics include *both* immigrants and other persons. The annual fluctuations (Fig. 1) are, however, in approximate agreement.

According to Danish-Australian Jens Lyng, the increase in butter and cheese production in New Zealand towards the end of the 1890s and in the early 1900s resulted in an increase in the number of Danish dairymen who immigrated. The Danish Emigration Records do not support this theory. Only 20 persons, or 5% of those who emigrated from 1900 to 1916, were dairymen.

Fig. 1. Danish Emigration to New Zealand 1871 - 1968



## Between the World Wars

New Zealand's immigration policy in the years between the World Wars did not make it possible for Danish citizens to secure travel subsidy. There was a "general scheme of Governmental assistance to immigrants", but it was only for British subjects. Other nationalities had to pay the full price, as well as have a valid passport and a "landing permit", in order to obtain an immigrant entry permit.

Assisted immigration was temporarily suspended in 1927, except for single women under the age of 40, and children and wives of previously immigrated Englishmen. This temporary suspension of assistance was extended several times, and the economic crisis of the 1930s forced the government of New Zealand to restrict non-assisted immigration.

During the period when travel subsidy was granted only to British subjects, a number of private associations in New Zealand, among others "The New Zealand Five Million Club", attempted to bring Danes to the country. From 1938 this club cooperated with the Danish Emigration Office, which

had contact with young Danes who wished to emigrate. The club was instrumental in securing entry permits for a number of young girls and craftsmen who emigrated, but the start of World War II put a stop to further emigration.

In the years between the World Wars there was little Danish emigration to New Zealand. Danish records indicate that only 101 persons emigrated during this period, while New Zealand records show 375 immigrants. The curves (Fig. 1) show the same trend, in spite of the fact that the large number of immigrants indicated in New Zealand statistics is not documented in the Danish Emigration Records.

There was little emigration in the 1920s, and the introduction of various provisions designed to limit immigration stopped Danish immigration almost completely in the 1930s. The slight increase seen towards the end of the 1930s was due to the private initiatives taken by organisations in New Zealand.

## From World War II to 1968

In the years following World War II, there was a lack of workers in almost every area in New Zealand. But due to the fear of creating unemployment, a very cautious immigration policy was followed. In principle, New Zealand was in favour of increased immigration, but only to the extent that it could be controlled.

In 1946, a New Zealand parliamentary commission established that there would be no need for foreign manpower in agriculture, as the returning soldiers could cover the need in this area. It was, however, stated that a few semi-skilled labourers, housemaids, nurses, sawmill labourers, etc. would be granted immigration permits. The commission recommended limited and carefully selected immigration when living conditions had improved.

This attitude slowly changed, especially under the influence of the large-scale immigration programmes instituted by Australia and South Africa. There were several problems to be solved before New Zealand could encourage large-scale immigration: the lack of housing, the lack of ship capacity and the demobilisation of New Zealand troops and their ensuing return to the labour market.

In the summer of 1947, New Zealand initiated a more active immigration policy and reintroduced travel subsidy for British immigrants. Young people between the ages of 20 and 35 could receive subsidy amounting to 90% of the ticket price. Free passage was also offered to British who had served in the armed forces during the war. In order to receive subsidy or free passage a prospective emigrant had to agree to work for 2 years in an assigned job.

A new immigration policy was introduced by the New Zealand government in May 1950; under the terms of this new policy it became easier for British and non-British citizens to obtain an immigration permit. The age limit was extended to 45. Single persons could normally obtain permission to immigrate, but married couples had to be assured of housing beforehand.

Travel subsidy was still granted only to British citizens, but it was relatively easy for Danes to obtain an immigration permit. Male construction workers, and labourers in industry and agriculture as well as woodmen were preferred. Among the jobs traditionally held by women, nurses, housemaids and factory workers received preferential treatment.

Due to transportation difficulties, Danish emigrants were rarely permitted passage on English shipping routes. The Danes had to book passage on the Scandinavian lines, where the waiting lists were long, or travel via the United States.

New Zealand Minister of Labour Bockett visited Denmark in July 1950 in connection with an extensive journey throughout Europe. His purpose was to attempt to increase Danish emigration to New Zealand. During the ensuing discussions, Bockett suggested the possibility of covering half of the cost of travelling to New Zealand for certain categories of emigrants. He was particularly interested in construction workers and housemaids, but as there was a lack of these in Denmark, the Danish negotiators could not agree to this. Dutch-New Zealand negotiations, on the other hand, led in October 1950 to an agreement whereby the two countries shared the cost of all travel expenses for Dutch emigrants.

The Danish refusal was felt in the Department of Labour and Employment to indicate a generally antagonistic attitude to Danish emigration, and all attempts on the part of New Zealand to attract Danes were stopped. Not until early in 1954, when the Danish ambassador in Wellington had several times explained the Danes' neutral attitude to emigration to Bockett, were new negotiations begun.

In the meantime, in the summer of 1951, the large New Zealand firm, Fletcher Holding, took the initiative in securing labour in Denmark. Fletcher Holding sought unmarried, skilled and semi-skilled labourers for general construction work and housing construction. The company guaranteed housing and a job, which automatically made it possible to obtain an immigration permit, but didn't cover any of the travel expenses.

The Danish Emigration Office was in favour of this proposal and wrote to all the unmarried craftsmen and semi-skilled workers who had previously contacted that office. The offer was also described in a number of professional periodicals.

Interest was great. In the 4 months following announcement of the offer,

the Danish Emigration Office received over 200 inquiries about it. A total of 68 workers were hired by Fletcher Holding, and most of these arrived in New Zealand towards the end of 1952 and in early 1953.

In the summer of 1954, the New Zealand government decided to grant £50 in travel subsidy to unmarried, skilled builders between the ages of 20 and 45 from a number of countries in northern and western Europe, among these Denmark. The immigrants had to agree to work for 2 years at a job assigned to them by the authorities. The travel subsidy had to be repaid if the immigrant left New Zealand within the 2-year period. In 1955 this arrangement was extended to provide completely free passage from England. The arrangement was valid for all unmarried Danish men and women between the ages of 18 and 45, regardless of their profession. The only requirements were good health and good character. The selection among the emigrants was to be carried out by New Zealand "Selections Officers".

The Danish Emigration Office hesitated to approve the arrangement because it was feared that the free passage would appear to be an encouragement of emigration, which was not permitted under the terms of the Emigration Act, and that "undesirable elements and adventurers" would be attracted. New Zealand's guarantees of careful and bona fide selection paved the way, however, and in May 1956 the arrangement was approved. The New Zealand government felt no unrealistic optimism with regard to mass immigration from Denmark as a consequence of the free travel programme, but calculated that there would be about 100 to 200 immigrants a year.

The first group of Danish emigrants to receive free passage, comprised of 60 men and 6 women, sailed from Glasgow on March 19, 1957, with the government-owned ship *Captain Cook*. As this was the first time the ship had carried other than British emigrants, a representative from the Danish Emigration Office accepted an invitation to witness the sailing.

Due to economic difficulties and complications with the currency in New Zealand, the number of British immigrants in April 1958 was reduced by one-third. By the end of 1958 and the beginning of 1959 immigration was further reduced, and the Danish free passage arrangement was cancelled. Applicants could, however, send applications until the end of January 1959.

A total of 211 unmarried persons, 191 men and 20 women, emigrated from Denmark under the terms of the free passage programme from March 19, 1957 to September 24, 1959.

The free passage arrangement was reintroduced in August 1961, but was cancelled again at the end of that same year. The ordinary "Assisted Passage Scheme" (APS), which until now had only been available to British citizens, was then extended to include Danes, too. As the lack of housing in

New Zealand continued to be a problem, only single persons were eligible. It was still possible for single Danish women to obtain free passage from England, but unmarried men had to pay £25. In August 1963, travel requirements were changed once again so that everyone, both men and women, had to contribute £50 toward the trip from England. This amount was reduced to £25 in June of the following year. The conditions of entry were made more stringent in September 1967, and travel assistance was granted only if there was guarantee of a job in New Zealand. The reason for this was a large increase in the number of unemployed from nearly 1,000 in April 1967, to over 9,000 persons in September of the same year. As a result of the worsened economic situation in New Zealand, all assisted passage programmes from Switzerland, Austria, West Germany and Denmark ceased in December 1967.

While the free passage and APS arrangements were in operation from August 1961 until the end of 1967, 49 Danish emigrants (43 men and 6 women) received assistance in travelling to New Zealand. In almost every case, they travelled in Tourist Class with the ordinary liners from England. Only one emigrant travelled by plane.

Altogether 260 unmarried Danish emigrants, 234 men and 26 women, received economic help in the period from May 1956 to December 1967. In every case the emigrants themselves paid for the journey to England.

Danish emigration statistics show that a total of 1,059 persons emigrated to New Zealand from 1945 to 1968. The corresponding New Zealand records show 2,151 Danish immigrants.

The number recorded in New Zealand is significantly higher than the number in Denmark largely because Danish emigrants who travelled by plane were not registered in Denmark. This was due to the fact that the Danish Emigration Act prescribed the registration of emigrants who travelled by ship but did not mention travel by plane. Another factor accounting for the discrepancy is that Danish immigrants entered New Zealand from other places in the world, and registration was therefore made in New Zealand, but not in Denmark.

Despite the discrepancy between the number of emigrants from Denmark and the number of immigrants to New Zealand, parallel tendencies are shown by the annual fluctuations in number.

## Conclusion

Danish emigration to New Zealand fell in two periods in particular – early in the 1870s and towards the end of the 1950s. The increased emigration was entirely due to New Zealand initiatives, which, with economic support of various kinds, made emigration attractive for a number of Danes.

There was never mass emigration from Denmark to New Zealand; the immigration programmes New Zealand directed towards Danish citizens were too few and too brief for that.

As indicated in the above, it is difficult to provide a precise number to indicate Danish emigration to New Zealand. Danish emigration records show that 1,745 persons emigrated from 1868 to 1899 and 1,584 persons from 1900 to 1968, giving a total of 3,329 persons. The New Zealand immigration statistics are available only for the 20th century and show that 3,507 Danes had immigrated up to the end of 1968.

Unrecorded emigration resulting from the methods of dishonest agents and from the fact that some emigrants travelled by plane make the Danish numbers too low. Registration of other than “genuine” immigrants make the New Zealand numbers too high. The actual number is somewhere in between.

# Danish Yesterdays in New Zealand

by Poula Christie



The author, Poula Langkilde Christie.



“I Danmark er jeg født, der har jeg hjemme”

[Thou land, where I was born, and have my home]

These words written by Hans Christian Andersen are sung with patriotic affection by all Danes, no less so by the Danes who emigrated in the 1870s to the extreme end of the world, New Zealand. It is known that the Vikings were seafarers, pirates, and eventually became rulers of many kingdoms in Northern Europe including England. But that was not the aim of the Danes in the 19th century. Having changed their lifestyle from one of piracy to that of colonization and democratic rule in the early centuries, they became lovers of the land. The natural aspirations of an energetic and enterprising people were curbed by lack of expansion. There was no room in little Denmark, so the Danes sought green pastures elsewhere. Also – the loss of Slesvig caused hundreds of Danes to abandon their land and homes rather than live under German rule.

The main influx of Danish immigrants to New Zealand followed on the heels of Bishop Monrad who had established himself and his family in the Manawatu. The story is well documented elsewhere. We have heard graphic tales of the fight for survival and establishment by the men, but what of the women? With their husbands they shared high hopes and optimism for a better life. That was soon replaced by disillusionment and sometimes utter despair. If they had a degree of apprehension on leaving Denmark, it was increased on the boat out when the captain delighted in relating stories of the fierce cannibals living in New Zealand, adding further gruesome accounts of earthquakes that split open the land and knocked down buildings. And of volcanoes that spewed fiery boulders and ash into the air. Husbands tried to mollify the women, but the seed of fear had been sown. It sprouted when the ship touched the wharf and they were confronted by a group of enthusiastic Maoris performing the “haka”, but on the trek from Wellington to the bush land of the Wairarapa the Danes passed through several Maori “pahs” and found the natives a laughing, friendly people.

When the families were settled into their tents and slab huts the women fought bravely to keep body and soul together under extremely primitive conditions. Food brought into the camp by packhorse was scarce. It was cooked on open fires – the wood often damp. The down draft from the tall trees blew the smoke in all directions. The washing was done in kerosene tins, also on the open fire. The clothes were dried on fencing wire strung between trees.

These early settlers, mostly Scandinavians, (for there were also other Europeans) lived in tight groups, maintaining their customs and supporting each other. A sense of loneliness pressed the women together – kindred souls nourishing a love of the past, thus making the present tolerable



A slab hut.  
(From the book *Forest Homes*).

through companionship. They shared their sorrows and joys. The arrival of mail every two or three months was a time of rejoicing, laughter and tears when the distance shrank and the loved ones were, oh, so close.

Entertainment? They made their own. Get a couple of Danes together and a party is created with coffee, “kiks”, candles and, the Danish flag, Dannebrog. Laughter and song rang out through the forest. Forgotten were the blistered hands, the aches and heavy hearts. The Danes have a yen for life – it will not be quashed. Many children died of fever. Medicine was brought in, but the mothers did not understand the directions written in English. In desperation a doctor would be called. He had to ride 20 miles over muddy bush tracks and over unbridged rivers. In times like these the women felt the need for spiritual support. Brought up in the Lutheran faith, it was not long before the settlement worked together to build their own Lutheran church. It became the focal point for worship and social needs.

As time went by and with the growth of the child population it became evident that a school was necessary. Hitherto the boys and girls roamed free and happy. They fished for eels in the streams and made shanghies for

shooting wild pigeons which the mothers converted to pigeon ragout. Popular also were stilts which lifted the boys above the muddy tracks. The boys collected birds' eggs, and the girls fried them on a tin sheet on the dying embers of the open fire. They raided wild bees' nests and brought the honey in for their lunch. One day Kai said to his friend Preben: "Look, I have some matches. What say we play pioneers and make our own forest fire?" Great idea! Or was it? The two boys collected a pile of twigs into a heap, piled on more branches. The heap, quite close to the camp site, was lit and away it went. The result was that three families lost their homes and were left destitute. Yet they were not roofless, for the now destitute families were sheltered by neighbors already cramped for space. Yes, a school was urgently needed.

The Government finally realized the need for a school, preferably with a bilingual teacher who could also act as interpreter for the Danish settlers. An educated Norwegian with Danish background was brought out and he conducted the school in his kitchen. Arthur Petersen, with a fine military



Happy childhood days.  
(Private photograph).

background found that neither his fine training nor temperament had fitted him as a bush pioneer, so after a brief teaching career in the woods, he, with his wife and two sons, departed for the capital, Wellington. A year later a one-roomed school was erected. The floor and walls were of pit sawn timber, and the roof was of shingles. The new New Zealand teacher was often angered when, if he asked a question in English, a child would answer in either Norwegian or Danish. 90 per cent of the children attending the school were either Swedish, Norwegian or Danish. The two sons of the teacher learnt the Danish language on the playground. It was easier playing that way. This little school served the community for 10 years, during which time the attendance reached almost 100.

What of the community? The men were often gone for several weeks at a time building roads or burning off more forests for creating farm land. While they were away, the women made gardens, mainly for vegetables, but it was not long before red and white geraniums were seen around the huts. They kept fowls and, as more ground was cleared and grass seed sown, cows and goats appeared. Fruit trees were planted. Gradually community life took on a form of settled normality. Birthdays and Christmases were celebrated in typical Scandinavian style with roast pork and “æblekage” or “risengrød”. The men would enter the forest with guns and ammunition, and return shouldering a carcass.

Roaming the forests were plenty of wild pigs. They had been brought to New Zealand by Captain Cook, then escaped from their domestic environment and found food and freedom in the forests.

As the slab huts were too small to entertain more than a couple of guests at any one time, the settlers cleared a flat piece of land where they gathered for dancing and singing. To make the atmosphere festive, lanterns were hung on the branches of the trees.

The long evenings of winter were spent in playing cards and singing popular songs and, as always, “I Danmark er jeg født”.

## The Manawatu

When in 1971 Palmerston North celebrated its Centenary, *The Manawatu Evening Standard* headlined its paper: SCANDINAVIANS PIONEERED THE SETTLEMENT.

That in itself is a tribute to the early Scandinavians, of whom the majority were Danes. Whereas the immigrants to the Wairarapa area were mainly assisted, (financed by the Government) most of the Danes to the Manawatu paid their own passage. The most prominent was Bishop Monrad, who settled at Karere with his wife and family and some attachments, including a maid. He brought out with him some farm implements, much silver,

many books and, of course, his grand piano. The grand piano was strapped across two canoes and brought down the Manawatu River to Karere. In spite of these luxuries, the whole family experienced all the hardships incident to clearing and farming the heavy bush land.

On the Monrad farm was a lagoon, and my mother was one of the many visitors who was rowed across in a Maori canoe. The bishop's wife displayed much strength in supporting her husband physically and spiritually. Their hospitality was unbounded. Bishop Monrad, with his wife and daughter, returned to Denmark less than four years after his pioneer life began in New Zealand. Some descendants remained and have proved to be amongst the best colonists New Zealand has ever had.



The home of the Monrad family in Karere.

When the doors of the 19th century closed, behind them lay the history of the trials and tribulations suffered by the early migrants. The new century saw them prosperous – paucity had given way to plenty. The English language was mastered and dominated – the Danish faded out.

By the time we arrived in the Manawatu, Palmerston North was a well established town. Our countrymen who had arrived in the Monrad era had succeeded on their farms or with their businesses, and all without exception were highly respected. There had been, at that time, quite a strong prejudice against the consideration given to the Scandinavians by the Government. This attitude was soon changed by their steady perseverance towards work. The locals were soon convinced to accept these so-called “foreigners”. It is a known fact that the Anglo-Saxons and the Scandinavians are so closely related socially, that assimilation with the New Zealanders was quite rapid.

Of course I do not remember the trip out to New Zealand in 1907. My record was left on the deck of the *S.S. Athenic* – a snail’s trail left by my wet nappy! I record the arrival of my parents, strangers in a strange land, because it is typical of the lives and feelings of those earlier settlers, especially the women. I quote the first paragraphs of my book *Candles and Canvas*:

“Inge sat on the hard seat of the dray desperately trying to keep her balance as she clung to the edge of the cart. It was raining, softly. Like a photo out of focus the countryside presented itself in its melancholic reality – a country stripped of its virgin forest and not fully cultivated. Raindrops gathered on Inge’s hat, skated round the brim and fell into her lap. Yet as she was bumped along the road metalled with river stones she was quite cheerful. Her romantic nature acted as a shock absorber. Moreover, she and her husband were driving out to the little farm she had not yet seen – their first in New Zealand. Excitement made her skin prickle.

At the end of the eleven-kilometre stretch from Palmerston North, Christoffer turned on to a deep-rutted road of mud, soft mud that spurted from the wheel like leaping frogs. This so fascinated Inge that she was quite unaware of the passing of time or distance – until she was shocked into the present by the stopping of the cart. Christoffer jammed the whip into its socket, jumped down and ran eagerly round to Inge’s side, lifted her bodily and placed her gently on the soggy ground. She smiled at her husband, turned to the gate – and froze.”

What Inge actually saw from the gate was a farm littered with fallen tree trunks, upturned roots, broken fences and a dilapidated cottage, thirsting for paint. This little farm, which was the western portion of Bishop Mon-

rad's farm, had been left vacant for several years. Inge had come from a socially orientated home in central Copenhagen, her husband from a smaller manor on Funen, and now, together, they faced the same primitive conditions as those earlier immigrants who now lived in prosperity. With her husband she walked resolutely into her first home in New Zealand, a four-roomed cottage with glass windows. She remembered stories of the early immigrants to the Wairarapa, and counted her blessings. Together they would work to establish another Danish family in the Manawatu. But for Inge it wasn't as simple as that. It never is for the woman. Coming from a more privileged background, life was for her more grim and heartbreaking than for her contemporaries, who by this time were well adjusted, established and comfortably off.



The Langkilde family outside their home in Manawatu.

Deafness isolated her further and she became withdrawn. But the little family was happy and united, bound together with Danish customs and such glittering gems as the Danish Christmases and birthdays, stories read from *H.C. Andersen's Eventyr*, and the walks and talks out in the fields where the larks sang and the cattle grazed contentedly in the open paddocks. Inge loved the big Friesians. On one of her walks she came face to face with one and gazed straight into the large, liquid eyes. The animal gazed back, shook its horns and quietly walked away. A man came rushing up, "Ak Frue, det var tyren!" [Dear Lady, that was the bull!].

The most exasperating experience for the woman was that Christmas in New Zealand was in the middle of summer, the busiest and hottest time of the year. It was also in the middle of the jam-making season and at the height of hay-making. Women cooked hot meals for the hay-makers, perspiration dripping from their foreheads while flies buzzed overhead, and at night mosquitos zoomed down at their human targets. Yes, Christmas was better in Denmark.

Note:

Poula Christie is the author of the book: *Candles and Canvas*, published in 1987 by New Women's Press in Auckland.



# “O Lord, Guide My Feet”. The Danish Church in New Zealand

by Dorte Christensen



Mads Christensen.  
A clergyman in New Zealand from 1856-1919.

Many emigrants seek to retain something of the cultural heritage of their homeland, some, perhaps, out of habit, but others for the sake of their own identity.

Large numbers of Danes emigrated at the end of the 1800s and in the early 1900s, and in many places these emigrants succeeded in preserving a part of their Danish heritage. Examples of this include Danish/Scandinavian societies, Danish folk high schools, and, not least, religious organisations.

The church in Denmark was a state church, which meant that Danes who emigrated had previously been in contact with the church. For many, therefore, church attendance was a tradition, or at least a habit, and at this time their religion, in general, had great importance for the Danish people.

This was a time of violent disputes within the church in Denmark between the followers of the educator, minister and writer, N.F.S. Grundtvig, and those who supported the Evangelical Movement. Grundtvig emphasized the teaching of national history and literature, and there was a strong element of the secular in the religion of his followers, while the Evangelical Movement, the Home Mission, emphasized more traditional Christian beliefs. This dissension within the church, together with its forerunner, the religious revivals, had made people accustomed to organising into religious groups. On the other hand, they were not accustomed to making a direct economic contribution to the church. The two different views of what the church should stand for were expressed in the way in which Danish emigrants organised their churches abroad. In America, for example, the followers of Grundtvig sought to preserve Danish culture, whereas the Evangelicals largely concentrated their efforts on the saving of souls.

Although the Danish Evangelical Movement was not directly involved in the establishment of churches in New Zealand, the Danish churches there were influenced by evangelical thinking. Later, however, the Home Mission did achieve significant influence and offered support both financially and by attempting to find Danish clergymen for the churches.

In this article I shall try to describe the background and importance of the connection between the Home Mission and the Danish churches in New Zealand.

In order to clarify evangelical thinking, I shall look at the personal views of a Danish lay preacher in New Zealand. The course of his life closely paralleled the development of the church.

The first Danish congregations in New Zealand were established in 1878 with George Sass as the first minister. Jørgen Johansen Sass, as he was originally christened, was the black sheep of his family and had, therefore, gone to Australia at a young age. Grateful to have survived an epidemic of

typhus, he began to preach the gospel. He was ordained as a minister in 1877, and in 1878 went to New Zealand, where he became the minister for the Danish immigrants.<sup>1</sup>



George Sass. A clergyman in New Zealand from 1878-1893.

In 1879 from the vicarage in Norsewood, New Zealand, Sass wrote for the first time to Vilhelm Beck, the head of the Home Mission in Denmark, and told of his work.<sup>2</sup>

By this time 6 Scandinavian Lutheran congregations had already been founded in New Zealand with approximately 1,280 “souls” distributed among Danish, Swedish and Norwegian immigrants; there was also a German Lutheran congregation in Norsewood. The Scandinavian congregations were in Makaretu, Napier, Dannevirke, Mauriceville, Eketahuna and Norsewood. Later there were also congregations in Halcombe and Palmerston North.

Things were going well, Sass wrote. Church construction was well underway, attendance at services was good, and people contributed “their small bits to the furtherance of the Kingdom of God”. Church construction progressed rapidly, and great imagination was exercised in obtaining the money for it. Women sold their handiwork at bazaars, for example, and little girls sold tea and cakes at meetings. According to Sass, these events yielded a nice profit.

Congregational activities later included Bible readings, Sunday schools, youth meetings, welfare work, etc. In addition, in 1881 Sass published a religious magazine, *Evangelisk Luthersk Maanedsskrift [The Evangelical Lutheran Monthly]*.

Because of this progress Sass had invited a Norwegian, Pastor Gaustad, then living in Australia, to join him.

## Connection with the Home Mission

Pastor Beck wrote back to Sass saying that the Home Mission would be happy to offer him a helping hand and that they wished to be kept informed of his church work.

Beck’s letters made reference to the church dispute in Denmark between “the happy followers of Grundtvig” and “the holy Evangelicals”, of which Beck was one. Sass was advised not to join the followers of Grundtvig, because they, in Beck’s opinion, were too worldly.

This advice should be seen in relation to the activities of Grundtvig’s followers in America and the dissension within the Danish church there. It was apparently felt that the church in New Zealand should be affiliated only with the Home Mission.

In spite of the fact that Sass had previously made some rather fierce attacks against the Danish national church, he asked the Home Mission for help because of the big economic and social problems faced by his congregation. Sass’ criticism, printed in his magazine, was that the state church institution made it too easy for people in Denmark to call themselves

Christians.<sup>3</sup> The Danes were accustomed to having automatic access to the church, so they were unwilling to pay anything towards its upkeep when they emigrated to a foreign country.

Pastor Beck prepared the way for the Danish minister until he could come home to Denmark to speak for himself.

In 1883, after Sass' first visit to Denmark as a minister of the church, the Home Mission decided to take up a special collection every year in order to make an annual contribution of 1,800 kroner to Sass' church work.

It is perhaps surprising that the Home Mission agreed to provide this support. In the first place, as the name implies, the Home Mission was primarily involved with work *in Denmark*. In addition, there are examples of the Home Mission's refusal to offer assistance to Danish religious communities in other countries.<sup>4</sup>

The fact that the Home Mission did support the New Zealand minister was in large part due to the "advertising" done by Beck on his behalf. Some of Sass' support may also have come from those who agreed with his criticism of the Danish national church. The support was probably not given on personal grounds alone.

The aforementioned church dissension in both Denmark and America may also have had some significance, and the Home Mission may have wished to stake a claim on New Zealand before the followers of Grundtvig had a chance to do so.

## Dissension and Setbacks

Despite their willingness to participate in church activities once these had received outside support, Pastor Sass' congregations still had no desire to pay anything themselves. Previously the people had provided weak and indifferent support, now they had an excuse to withdraw it altogether. He therefore concluded that support in the form of money had completely missed the mark. This news was, of course, not well received by the Home Mission and led Beck to remind his colleague in New Zealand to be slightly *less candid* in his reports, which were printed in *Den Indre Missions Tidende* [*The Home Mission Times*].

Difficulties also arose between Norwegian Pastor Gaustad and Pastor Sass; these stemmed largely from Gaustad's dissatisfaction because the Home Mission appeared to consider Sass to be the leader of their work. As the older and more experienced of the two, he felt this position should have been his. But the Home Mission continued to support Sass in spite of the Norwegian's protests, and, consequently, Gaustad withdrew almost completely from the work.

This created new problems for Sass, as he could scarcely meet the needs

of all the congregations alone. By the time of the break between the two ministers, 9 congregations with a total of 3,000 “souls” had been established. The work of ministering, with its many journeys from one congregation to another on poor roads was difficult for 2 ministers – alone it was impossible. Sass, therefore, sent numerous requests for assistance to the Home Mission. To add to his difficulties, Sass also had trouble with people who, in his opinion, attempted to thwart his missionary efforts. He fought against various religious sects (in particular the Methodists, led by the powerful Norwegian minister, Edvard Nielsen) and freethinker organisations, while at the same time fighting in general against the use of spirits and dancing.

The lack of cooperation between Pastor Gaustad and Pastor Sass also caused dissension in several of the congregations.

The adversity was not without its effect on Sass, and his correspondence indicates that his enthusiasm began to cool somewhat. At one point, he expressed a desire to leave New Zealand. He wished to move, among other places, to Sydney and to increase his field of activities in Australia. This request was refused by the board of the Home Mission – the support given to New Zealand was an exception and should by no means be extended. Later he wished to travel to Utah and preach against the Mormons, and in 1891 he expressed a desire to return to Denmark.

When in 1893 he did return to Denmark as a representative of the church in New Zealand, he decided to remain there and to work for the Home Mission. In 1896 he and a number of others broke with the Danish national church, for which he had previously shown little sympathy, and formed a free church. With this step he also ended his connection with the Home Mission and his friendship with Beck. Sass returned to New Zealand twice, but stayed each time for only a short period.

## New Ministers

Over a period of several years Sass had tried to find Danish ministers to help him.

The Home Mission, together with a committee formed to deal especially with the church in New Zealand, had attempted to find young men of the faith for the task, but this had proved difficult.

Instead, in 1886 Sass had succeeded in getting A.G. Clausen of Hermansburg, Germany, and H.M. Ries from Breklum, Germany, to travel to New Zealand. Ries was ordained in Norsewood and later moved to Dannevirke, while, after a short time, Clausen began to work for the mission to the heathen.

The Home Mission in Denmark had been casting its nets in the attempt

to find new ministers since the early 1880s, but, as Pastor Beck put it, they had caught but poor fish. In November 1885, however, the word was that a better fish had been found, but there was some question as to whether he would let himself be caught. “The fish” was Mads Christensen, and, as we later learn, he did swim into the net.

Later other ministers, all believers in the work of the Home Mission, came to New Zealand, and after Sass had left, no fewer than 5 ministers took over the work.

In addition to Ries and Mads Christensen, those ministers who stayed on for some time in the country were J.J. Legarth, who came in 1888, and Bjelke Petersen and Kristian Topholm, who came in 1894. Later Pastor Beck himself came to New Zealand.

## Mads Christensen – A Danish Missionary

Mads Christensen, who was born in 1856, was an unmarried, Christian Dane who had put his life into God’s hands. In 1882 he wrote to his brother that the Lord had to decide what he should do with his life, but that the words of the Gospel admonishing one to go into the world and preach for all creatures had a special appeal for him. He was firmly anchored in the evangelical faith, and as his vocation matured, he seemed especially fit for work in New Zealand.

Correspondence from Mads Christensen to his brother indicates that he was to leave in October 1886.<sup>5</sup>

His letters to his brother leave us with a good picture of how Mads Christensen saw himself and his calling as well as of the development of the Danish church in New Zealand. They also provide a good picture of Danish evangelical thinking.

The Danish Emigration Records state that Mads Christensen had taken a degree in theology at the time of his emigration. His age is incorrectly given, and it is possible that also his designation of occupation is incorrect. Although the correspondence does not indicate that he had a degree in theology, there is no doubt that he had prepared for his work in New Zealand, as he had spent long periods of time in the company of ministers from the Home Mission’s New Zealand committee.

Although Mads Christensen felt that in going to New Zealand he was following his calling, he was understandably very moved by the farewells to his family and friends. His longing for those he held dear in Denmark and who shared his religious beliefs is apparent throughout his correspondence. He received numerous greetings from these people and sent many to them in his letters. Rose petals from his mother’s grave were sent to him in New Zealand as well as greetings and news from the country and people he so

missed. In 1893 he wrote: "It awakened thousands of blessed memories from days gone by, and my soul was filled with such an intense awareness of friends and love that I could not contain myself, but kissed the small petal and cried like a child."

In 1927, 2 years before he died, he explained why he had set out, in spite of these ties to his home: "I would never have left if the Lord had not driven me to it. It was unbelievably difficult for me to bid farewell to all I held dear, but I *had* to go and have never regretted it."

Mads Christensen's faith was strong, and it is apparent from all his letters that, although separated from his loved ones on Earth, he had no doubt that he would meet with them all again after death. This thought gave him great comfort and the strength in many difficult situations to quietly state "it was God's will". In addition to the comfort found in this belief in Paradise, his faith can be characterised as humble, self-denying and at times even misanthropic. This last is expressed, for example, in the introductory paragraph of a letter written January 3, 1893: "The Lord will that you should have more taste for Him and greater disgust for yourselves!"

Mads Christensen's impression of all the strange, new things he experienced – the adventure – when he left his homeland in September 1886, is also reflected in his letters. Although his religious attitudes often predominated, he described the things he saw and experienced with enthusiasm, astonishment and occasionally also indignation. His tendency to seasickness was a problem for the young Dane, and on September 21, with a little self-pity mixed with his familiar source of comfort, he wrote: "The Lord does not abandon His own despite seasickness, poverty and sin, He is faithful, His name is Jesus. I am travelling to New Zealand. O Lord, guide my feet."

He arrived at his destination in good condition in spite of the seasickness and was allowed a short period of introduction to the work with Sass before he was examined and ordained in Mauriceville on December 19, 1886.

Just as his journey had astonished him, so did New Zealand astonish him. The huge forests, the difference in time which meant that when it was time for his family at home to go to bed, he was holding Sunday church services, raspberries and strawberries half the size of hens' eggs, as well as warm weather at Christmas were just a few of the things he described for his no doubt equally surprised family in Denmark.

In contrast to the reports Sass sent home, Mads Christensen's first reports were optimistic. But neither was it easy for him to serve as a minister in a foreign land. He was sometimes plagued by a guilty conscience and lack of self-confidence. In February 1888 he wrote home with a request for intercession because he was a poor, miserable man who loved his Saviour too little, but as the Lord had placed him where he was, he had to stay





The church in Mauriceville.  
(From the book *Forest Homes*).

there. His concern for his own abilities should probably be taken with a grain of salt, as his view of Christianity required that he have a good measure of self-contempt and lack of faith in his own worth. He had, furthermore, left behind all that was familiar and had taken on a task which was both physically and mentally demanding, perhaps with too little training. It is hardly surprising that, as a consequence, he felt insecure and lacked faith in himself. Furthermore, the Danish ministers had many obligations. Mads Christensen worked in several areas. In order to reach the most distant parish once a week he had to walk 22½ miles in “deep mud and stand to preach in a kitchen (as this is the best room) beside the boiling coffee pot or between a couple of hanging hams”.

Every other Sunday he paid his own way to travel 13 miles to Eketahuna. Added to this were several church services a week, Bible readings, prayer meetings, education of both Danish and English children, preparation for confirmation, christenings, weddings and burials, as well as the daily contact with the congregation.

In some quarters he was met with ridicule and contempt, and conflict

regularly arose in connection with dancing and the drinking of spirits. In 1892 he wrote that the people persecuted him and put posters about him on telephone poles because, in his own words, he forbade that money earned from dancing should be used for the church. The minister won his case in the end. His work was not in vain. Later on he could write that dancing and drunken behaviour were less common in Mauriceville than previously.

He also experienced personal joy. In 1887 he became engaged to a Christian Danish girl, Anna Larsen, from Mauriceville, and they were married the following year. After that his letters contained happy reports of additions to the family, the children and family activities – his pleasure in no longer standing alone was obvious.

His future no longer seemed so insecure. He repeatedly encouraged both friends and family to come to New Zealand. The minister himself had no doubt that he would stay there and follow his calling, but the close ties to his homeland continued to have great importance for him.

Early in 1894 he and his family moved to Palmerston North, where he was to take up the position left by Sass. At the same time, he was made chairman of the Danish church's convent in New Zealand – a post later taken over by Pastor Ries. In 1896, after 8 years of marriage and 4 children, Mads Christensen's wife died at the age of 25. As he had so often done before, the minister found comfort in the thought of Paradise.

In 1898 he married his wife's sister, Hedvig Larsen. The many social obligations of the time made it imperative that there was a woman in the minister's house, just as his many trips made it necessary that someone was there to care for the children. The minister had a total of 12 children, and he showed great concern for their welfare, in particular their spiritual welfare. He tried to impart to them his strong faith – and sadly, he found that this was often difficult.

Mads Christensen finally saw his homeland again in 1899, but contrary to his expectations, he was unsuccessful in his attempts to convince anyone to return with him to New Zealand. And, as many of those closest to him, both in Denmark and New Zealand, died, he longed more and more to see them again. The letters from his last 15 years clearly show that, as his love of life began to fade, his longing for death grew stronger.

Sometime toward the end of 1923 or early in 1924 Mads Christensen's son Ansgar travelled to Blair, Nebraska, in the United States to be trained there at the Home Mission seminary. When he returned to New Zealand, the old minister, who had wanted to retire for so long, could finally do so with a clear conscience in January 1927. During the following years he helped his son with his work whenever necessary. In November 1929, knowing he had only a short time left to him, he wrote: "Goodbye until we meet again!" – steadfast in his belief in Paradise. He died shortly thereafter.

Mads Christensen's personal views were in many respects typical of a Danish Home Mission preacher. The desire for salvation, not only for himself, but also for others, is central to the ideology of the Home Mission, as is belief in the inadequacy and sinfulness of man. Mads Christensen was, therefore, far from alone with his feeling of humility and acceptance of life as a preparation for Paradise.

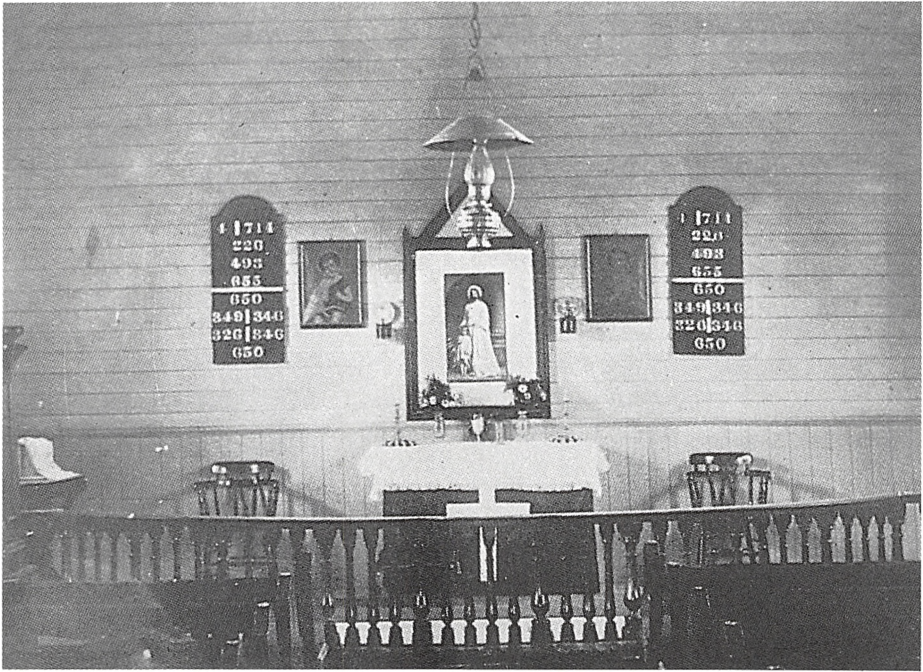
In other words, the Home Mission and the people it sent out worked to secure their fellow countrymen, and, if possible, others, a place in Heaven, but had no personal desire to dominate the lives of these people. They were convinced that this served each individual best. Added to this was the fact that even though missionaries, like, for example, Mads Christensen, had close ties to their families, their homes and their co-religionists in Denmark, they were willing to leave all this behind, thoroughly convinced that they were doing the right and proper thing. They felt, as Mads Christensen expressed it, that God had placed them in New Zealand to work for His Kingdom.

## Assimilate or Terminate

The death of the old minister, Mads Christensen, marked the passing of one more pioneer of the Danish church in New Zealand. When Pastor Ries died in 1926, there were only 2 Danish ministers still in New Zealand. Pastor Legarth of Norsewood died in 1943 at the age of 80, leaving only Ansgar Christensen.

Ansgar Christensen's return to the country in 1927 had insured the continued existence of a congregation in Palmerston North, while the other congregations died out as their ministers died. Ansgar Christensen attempted to maintain congregations in Dannevirke, Mauriceville and Makaretu, but the lack of fuel during the Second World War made travelling to church services expensive and difficult for both minister and congregation alike. Ansgar Christensen also held Danish church services for Danish immigrants who came to New Zealand after the war.

The language used in the Danish churches changed gradually. Soon after he began his work in New Zealand, Pastor Sass had thought about how the church would deal with the situation as the people became English speaking. He delivered some sermons in English early on, just as both English and Danish speaking children were given instruction. Mads Christensen attempted to preserve the Danish language; he sent requests to Denmark, for example, for reading books as well as religious books and writings, both for the use of his own family and to sell. He also occasionally demonstrated his national feeling by flying the Danish flag, which he described as the most beautiful flag in the world.



The Mauriceville church.

The transition to English was not without problems, as many of the older people wanted to keep the Danish language in the church, but up through the 1920s the English language became more common in the churches. As of 1936, all church services in Palmerston North were held in English.

The church in Palmerston North survived and adapted itself to the assimilation of the Danish people. As a consequence, an English-speaking minister from the Evangelical Lutheran Church was assigned to New Zealand when Ansgar Christensen died in 1958. In this way the Evangelical/Lutheran faith, to which Danish nationality was secondary, was maintained in accordance with the Home Mission ideology stating that the faith should be kept and the soul saved, regardless of language and culture.

In 1904 Pastor Ries wrote concerning Danish nationality and the church: "Scandinavian societies have never thrived in New Zealand. All spiritual and intellectual questions seemed automatically to concentrate on the religious, just as all social life was more or less connected to the church."<sup>6</sup>

In other parts of the world which received many emigrants and where there were Scandinavian/Danish societies and clubs, the Danish Home Mission was not as dominant as it was in New Zealand. The fact that there were no other forms of national organisation at this time can probably,

therefore, be attributed to the strong Home Mission opposition to worldliness.<sup>7</sup> But the Home Mission's lack of acceptance of the secular caused many conflicts and led to many confrontations among the people of the church, as not all were willing to accept and submit to the evangelical philosophy of life.<sup>8</sup>

In general it can be said that the attempts of the Danes to maintain a part of their cultural heritage in New Zealand were dependent on the affiliation of their church with the Danish Home Mission movement. Other cultural organisations with a more worldly content played only a secondary roll and have no doubt, for the most part, been forgotten.

This strong evangelical influence was probably also directly connected with church dissension in Denmark, which created great interest in keeping the opposing religious community from gaining too much influence over the souls of countrymen who had emigrated.

Notes:

1. Danish church services had previously been held abroad by, among others, Bishop Monrad, who went to New Zealand after Denmark's defeat in the War of 1864 but returned to Denmark in 1869.
2. Most of Sass' letters to Beck were printed in full or summarized in *Den Indre Missions Tidende*. A collection is on deposit at the Danes Worldwide Archives in Aalborg, Denmark.
3. *Evangelisk Luthersk Maanedsskrift*, no. 1, July, 1881, Napier, New Zealand.
4. In a letter written to Sass in 1884, Beck refused assistance to a Danish lay preacher in Brisbane; he refused even to consider the application. By the same token, co-religionists in America were denied affiliation with the Home Mission after 1882. See for example Helmer Petersen, *Drømmen om Amerika, [The American Dream]*. Copenhagen, Politikens Forlag, 1985, p. 222.
5. Copies of 124 letters from Mads Christensen to his brother and nephew are on deposit at the Danes Worldwide Archives in Aalborg, Denmark.
6. *Vore Udvandrede Landsmænd [Our Emigrated Landsmen]*, Copenhagen, 1904. Pastor Ries himself was not above a little worldly life. He was, among other things, elected mayor of Dannevirke and was involved in the establishment of several dairies. He became known by the not very spiritual title of "The Father of the Butter Industry in Hawkes Bay".
7. Another possible explanation is the strong British influence, together with the small number of Danish immigrants here, compared with other parts of the world where there were a greater number of Danish organisations. The limited number of Danes in New Zealand did, however, succeed in establishing a religious community.
8. Some of the criticism directed at, among others, Pastor Sass is printed in an undated paper "*Et Blik på Pastor Sass' Afskedsaftale*" [*A Look at Pastor Sass' Farewell Speech*] which is on deposit at the Danes Worldwide Archives, Aalborg, Denmark.

# Ingeborg Stuckenberg in New Zealand

by John Kousgård Sørensen



Ingeborg Stuckenberg (1866-1904).

Ingeborg Stuckenberg's last journey began in late March, 1903, on an emigrant ship in Bremerhaven, and ended two months later in the early morning fog of Auckland. It was followed by a year of hard work and disappointment in New Zealand.

The seven letters she wrote during the voyage were probably intended for publication in a newspaper or magazine. In them, an emigrant journey at the turn of the century is described in a lively, very personal style. Sharp-eyed and critical, she observed the absurdities and weaknesses of her fellow passengers – the arrogant upstarts in first-class, the soldiers of fortune and social drop-outs in third-class and the motley jumble of petty-bourgeoisie in her own second-class accommodation. Her senses were open to the various, often exotic, experiences encountered on the trip, as well as to its plagues: the monotony and seasickness.

The description of the greater part of the voyage, from Germany to Sydney, Australia, appeared in English in *Danish Emigration to Australia*, 1988. In Sydney, Ingeborg Stuckenberg and her escort changed ships, and the following letters begin with her depiction of the last 4 to 5 days of her journey, the voyage to Auckland. Next follows a part of her last letter of the trip, a description of New Zealand, the beautiful country with the blue mountains and smooth waters – and the harsh living conditions for immigrants. It provides a more general and sombre picture of the conditions faced by the unprepared emigrant, and of the disappointments and losses which often resulted from them.

We learn more about the personal experiences underlying the pessimistic and cautionary description of the emigrant country, New Zealand, in two of four existing letters Ingeborg Stuckenberg sent home to her sister, Agnes Schwarz. In New Zealand she had no opportunity to give expression to her rich artistic ability; there were no intellectual challenges to face. There were only starvation wages for hard work from morning to evening with little hope for future improvement. Neither was it possible for gardener Madsen from Sorgenfri Castle, who had accompanied her and who shared her life in New Zealand, to make use of his professional talents. Ingeborg Stuckenberg's longing for Denmark, and not least for the two sons she had left behind, could only be strengthened by such circumstances, as was her despair at the futility of ever changing her situation.

Finally, after one year, as a consequence of this futility, she shot herself.

Ingeborg Stuckenberg was the literary Muse of Denmark in the 1890s. In 1887, at the age of 21, she married the author Viggo Stuckenberg and through him entered a circle of young artists, authors, painters and critics. Her confident evaluations and idealism made a deep and inspiring impression on many of them. Uncompromising and proud, she often found it difficult to adjust to everyday realities, or always to be in accord with her

better-known husband's personality. Both husband and wife had great artistic talent, and their literary cooperation gave excellent results for which he, however, did not publicly allow her any credit. Their differences in temperament eventually created a great strain on the marriage.

Near the turn of the century they moved to the gardener's cottage at Sorgenfri Castle north of Copenhagen. Here their closest neighbours were gardener Hans Dines Madsen and his wife Clara. Their relationship was a pleasant but, at the same time, a dangerous one. Madsen fell in love with Ingeborg Stuckenberg. And she, a proud woman who saw with growing irritation that her husband (and to a certain extent she herself) had to compromise with youthful ideals, was not immune. As the new year, 1903, began, they decided to disappear, "to leave by the back door", and attempt to start anew on the opposite side of the world. It is likely that they chose New Zealand because one of her brothers [Aage] had settled there 5 years previously. After they had left Denmark, Viggo Stuckenberg married Clara Madsen.

Ingeborg Stuckenberg and Hans Madsen reached Sydney in the spring of 1903. Here they had to wait for 3 days before boarding the steamer to Auckland.

## Letters from Her Journey

The steamers to Auckland weigh only from 2 to 3,000 tonnes, but they are well fitted out, and the food and service is excellent; there are only Second and Third Classes. – By chance there were two Americans on the same ship, a man and wife who had been to the South Sea Islands and who now, via Auckland, were returning to their dear Dollarland. – The wife was covered in diamonds and pearls and precious stones, the man was a good Danish butcher-type, with big workman's hands, soft from lack of work, and he had a book in his breast pocket on which "Bank of California" was written in gold letters. – The situation was difficult for them. – They, of course, had seats beside the captain at table. – The wife arrived at dinner on the first day in full evening dress and drank champagne, while her husband sat in his grey suit and drank mineral water. – Not for anything would they mix with the other passengers. After that day the wife (who was, of course, accompanied by a ladies' maid whose food was served in the cabin) took her meals on deck or in her private cabin. The man, who ate much and at length, sat silently and drank his mineral water. – That first day they sat in their wicker chairs and looked out over the water; later they turned their backs to the water and the general public and stared at a white wall or read 14-day-old American newspapers. – The name "Thompson" was written in big thick letters on the backs of their chairs. – That was about the most



amusing thing on the entire voyage. – The trip takes 4 to 5 days, and the sea is rough and unpredictable. The weather was anything but pleasant, with wind and showers of rain, and most of the passengers felt slightly ill. We steered due east and had the wind at our heels, so the ship's movements were relatively gentle, but on the last morning we curved round the northernmost point of New Zealand and sailed along the coast all day. A coast which looked anything but friendly, with bare or wooded mountains and wild, rugged cliffs which rose dark and threateningly from the sea where the foaming water splashed its white froth up the steep sides. –

When we awakened the next morning we were in the roadstead of Auckland. – The fog lay in sheets over the town and between the mountains; the sun rose in all its glory over this fairytale land with churches and houses, blue mountains and green forests. – The doctor came onboard; he took pulses and gave friendly smiles as at his request we stuck out our tongues, and as the ship slowly slid toward the quay, the last of the fog lifted in thin wisps like a flimsy, gossamer veil over: “The Promised Land”. –



Auckland harbour.

## New Zealand

The land of blue mountains and blue skies, – the land which flows with milk and honey; where land is cheap and work well paid!

Such are the thoughts inspiring the mind of the Unfortunate as he gathers together the last of his money and his last meagre hope before making a final, risky attempt at life and happiness. –

And, for many, New Zealand is the order of the day. –

Yes, – the mountains are blue, just as the sky is blue, but the sun shines down on thousands of mute, frustrated hopes. –

Homeless and alien they die, – those not strong enough for the terrible work demanded *here* in order to exist. –

Homeless and alien, unable to make themselves understood in their own language; deserted and unheeded they lie and die in their cabins over here. No one has any thought but to save himself. – “Sauve qui peut!” –

And still they come, still hopefully giving up their last savings for this sorry, final disappointment. –

They go from door to door, from man to man. One refers you to another, only to avoid wasting the time to help others with their affairs and show them the ropes. – “No one has sent for you” – they say over here, “there are people enough already”. –

But still they come. –

And they continue to write that more can be expected. –

The land is for the most part wild and deserted, – cliffs and stone with thousand-year-old virgin forest sprinkled with a few cultivated patches. – There are few railway connections, and these are found in only a few parts of the country. – Everything is still in embryo. –

*Nobody* has money here, say the wealthiest men – “go to ‘Frisco!’ *that’s* where the money is” – but people come here from “Frisco” – and regret it. – People come here from Africa and Australia – and regret it; – but those who regret it most of all come from Europe and civilised places. –

Things are in a sorry state here, – false wealth and inefficiency at the top, and poverty, laziness and rags as you go down the scale. –

Auckland is one of the most wonderfully, most beautifully situated towns in the world, – seen from a distance, but filthy, poor and disorderly – seen up close. –

It is a town of wooden houses spread over mountains and valleys; a town full of lovely surprises; – but the dusts flies like clouds over the roads, and ragged clothes and linens fly from fences and verandas all over town. –

And finally there are the people, the most broken-down, tired, wrinkled workers – and dressed up, dirty, shabby women, mostly occupied with showing off their fake finery and flowered hats in the town’s only real street

and promenade. –

Civilisation is hidden in a few large villas which proudly conceal their knowledge behind closed Venetian blinds, so it is rarely seen. – Civilisation is one of the things you first learn to appreciate fully when you are excluded from it – perhaps have said farewell to it forever. –

Europe with its civilisation becomes for Europeans like a closed Garden of Eden. – Too late he who is excluded understands what he has lost. – It is in the civilised world the chances lie – for he who is both *capable of* and *willing to* take them in the midst of the throngs and the struggle. It is *there* they need the *best* men and the *best* work. – Here they don't need them – *yet*. – References and recommendations – even the best have no value. –

*Here* they need only bare fists and raw strength for the axe and hard labour – and then the capital to exploit the strength. – He who has neither money nor strength should make use of his last savings for that final attempt at home. – They all know that over here – they know the longing and the regret, but especially the homesickness, and each bears it in his own way. – Most seek to hide it, some talk freely of their longing, it's as fresh today as in those first days and as it has been every day of the many long years they have lived here in the hope of returning to their homes once again. –

*Nothing* is like *home!* – that is the refrain when talk turns to home – and each has of course his own. –

*Most drown their sorrows in drink.* –

But faces become furrowed and hair turns grey behind this hidden, gnawing longing for home, and in the struggle for daily bread. –

All the people grow old before their time over here, but the ones who age most quickly are those who came from outside, often with bitterness in their hearts for those back home who left them high and dry when it counted. – Back home a helping hand *can* be given in time. – *Here* it most often comes – too late. –

And they *know* that here – all the homeless – each in his own way. –

This land – wild and uncultivated and sad, in spite of all its beauty, a land used in advertisement – promising more than it can provide, a land where only the lawless, or those who have no hope, should take a turn.

But all those who think of New Zealand as the Promised Land should see the madhouses and read the death lists in the newspapers over here. – It is covered up, as far as possible, and the suicides are all considered to have been mentally deranged; but many are the letters left by those who took their own lives, showing that it was *not* madness – but sorrow and disappointment, grief and misery which drove them to it. – Only the worst cases, those which cannot be concealed, reach the newspapers. When they find a man in his cabin – dead and forgotten – Dickens and Tennyson lie

open on his table and his letters are addressed to an English castle. – He has been forgotten for so long that they must burn the cabin down around him – they couldn't stand the smell. –

But there is no news of all of those – alone and old, living in their poor wooden cabins deep in the virgin forest where no one comes – nor of those who live *so far* out in the country with miles to the nearest neighbour. – All came here as young, strong people. – All came here in hope of happiness, and now perhaps they await the same fate as the man they burned the cabin down around – and they *know* it. –

Perhaps it also awaits those who huddle in the streets without work. – They are waiting for happiness – confused because the fight for it is the same here as there, and because it is just as far distant as when they stood with their passage money in their hands – this money was their *chance* – perhaps now it is even more distant. –

It's *too late* when the money is gone; thrown away on this long, miserable journey among frightened, exhausted or demoralized individuals. Step by step the level was lowered and civilisation disappeared beyond the horizon.

–

The traveller stands alone and looks with hate-filled eyes at the much-praised beauty. – No money, no work, not even his daily bread. –

Like a terrible sarcasm in all his misery the land surrounds him – *wonderful*, sunlit, with its blue mountains and glistening fjords, and on all sides – the sea. –

“This great, pacific ocean”.

## Private letters from Ingeborg Stuckenberg

1

[soon after July, 1903]

Dear Sister! Dear Agnes! I hope that *now* you know where in the world I am; I hope that Mother has received the short letter I sent her early in July. I had decided when I left home that I would be as if dead for you; but it is not easy to keep silent and not easy to be so irrevocably far from one another. Although I never wish to return, the thought of a small miracle, like the one you describe, that if you turned round you'd see me coming toward you, – fills my heart with a strange longing.

Dear, Dear Agnes! I think I have never before known how fond I am of you, I never gave it much thought so long as I had you and could see you whenever I wanted. Dear La, take comfort for yourself, and for me as well, in the fact that even if two people are together, they cannot always help each other. I was perhaps further from you when I sat in your sitting-room and couldn't, or wouldn't, tell you my thoughts. I knew that your counsel could not help me and [crossed out: these] the opinions of others even less. Some day! I thought, then Agnes and I will understand each other better than now, and then I received your letter, so comforting and loving, so well-intentioned, oh, if only you knew how welcome! then you would write even more letters like it. I have written to Aage and asked if I may keep it, so I hope he will remember to send it back to me. – It arrived at a good time, when I so needed all the comfort in every word of your letter. I lay in bed and had lain there for 14 days. I have had a bad foot for the past seven weeks. It all began when I scalded it one evening. I went down the next day and worked. – You perhaps know from Mother's letter that I have taken employment on a farm where I cook for the workers and do all other housework? For a week I tried to walk about with big blisters on my foot, then one day I pricked a hole in the biggest of them; the wound became infected and since then I have lain in bed and been up working; I have either sat in the kitchen and washed up from morning to evening for as long as I could, or I have sat in my attic room and sewed, darned and patched for the wife from morning to evening with terrible pains, and am now quite exhausted from being shut in for so long. They have given me a pitiful, poor wage in spite of calling me "a splendid worker", "smart" and "busy". They have been beastly to me, knowing I am without means, – but the moment I am able, I shall pack my clothes – and find another position. For as long as I could put weight on the foot and hobble and limp about I have worked almost fourteen hours a day. – Do you say with Molière, "what the devil was he up to in that galley"? I myself often smile at the thought, because I can no longer recall if we ever learn what he was up to. In any case, you can console yourself that I prefer being where I am than to being at home and that it is best for me and for those I hold dear. Over here I can leave this world with little fuss if it no longer pleases me. At home I should have been an eternal "memento mori" to look at and listen to. I should have been lonely and would have felt so in spite of your goodness and love. We had perhaps been more apart than now, when it is only the days of travel and the money which separate us. The travelling can be done, and perhaps by lucky chance the money come, but anger and resentment are difficult abysses to cross. Had I stayed at home, you could rightfully have reduced me to the rank of poor wretch, for that is what I was in Copenhagen, lonely amongst you all. I remember still how angry Knud became when I walked

backwards and forwards, backwards and forwards in his sitting-room. How difficult to watch for a man who had to make jolly verses to entertain small, cheerful dinner parties. It was in any case hopeless for me to expect any other fate at home than that of the aunts, for example, and I am not so humble. I would choose a greater destiny; and you may think of me as a soldier gone to war; I am not well, far from it unfortunately, – but I am fighting for something, and I hope to win it. Time will show whether I succeed. If you think that someone has left for my sake, well then, so much the better for me if this should prove the case! then I can hope that time will compensate me with something good and gratifying for all the other years I have had. If you, as you say, feel like a partner in this endeavour, then obtain for me *all* the news you can, *anything* you think might have my interest. But remember that my letters are to you *alone*. If you see my boys, please tell them from me that the money I hoped to earn over here is not here at all. Tell them that if they want to see me again, it is they who must be industrious and learn something and work hard, so they themselves can decide when we shall meet! Perhaps they will write to me, if so, they can send their letters to Aage, and *you* must do so, too. Kiss them from me and ask them to remember everything I tried to teach them, but which they had so little time to remember. Perhaps now they will. If they are allowed to write to me, *I* will also write, but I must first know if you still talk of me. Do not let too much time pass before I hear from you again. I know nothing of the future, but for the present I know that I am so hopelessly poor, but that is just something which must be got through! Dear Agnes! you have always been a good and faithful friend! I have never felt so warmed as when I got your letter the other day: help me now as well, in all the ways you can! will you? You must speak sensibly with Mother and say that she must not grieve for me, there was more reason for that when I was there at home; then I no longer believed nor hoped, but now I do, tell her that and kiss her. Ask her, too, to help me as much as she can. Aage feels it is quite nice for him that I am here, he thinks that with any luck it may be possible for us to live together. Help us to do that if you can! and let me hear from you again soon, very soon!

Yours affectionately,  
Ingeborg

2

[autumn 1903]

Dear Agnes!

I have waited and waited for a letter from you, dear Sister! after the good and loving words you wrote in Aage's letter. I was greatly disappointed not

to have a word from you in the last Frisco-post. Is it so comforting that I am here? I feel we have become so distant from each other. I sometimes feel that it would be much easier for you if I were dead, then it would be over and done with. But whenever I think very bitter thoughts about you, the words in Aage's letter appear before me, and I begin to look for reasons and excuses for why you have not yet written. Dear La! I long for you so terribly, for this is a bad place to be. If I could do it all over again, I would now be in England where I could have seen you at just four days' notice. Oh, why is it so easy to be wise after the event. One ponders and ponders and tries to decide what is best to do, and just when you think everything is well thought out and right, you grab the wrong end of the rope after all. Even talking things over with your loved ones doesn't help a bit. That can be a comfort to us. I am now well again, but am not so quick on my feet as before; I can no longer take long walks and strolls, but inside the house I can work without inconvenience. I hope that you are all well at home. *Now* you have autumn and I think with longing of the copper-red forests there. It is enchantingly beautiful here, but nothing is like it is at home. And yet – this is probably just a question of a bowl of porridge and a full stomach being the key to happiness. Once you tuck into it and are well away, you no longer look to the other side of the world, but out of your own window, and appreciate what you have. I am truly becoming convinced of this. It is perhaps not Denmark at all, but a neat little house that I long for? Dear La. If you are to have this letter before Christmas, it must be sent today. It will therefore be no better! My best Christmas greetings! to you and Toms and your boys. Give my best regards to Holger. If you should see my two boys at Christmas, kiss them from me and try cautiously to discover if they are allowed to write to me.

Yours affectionately,  
Ingeborg

3

11/2 04 My address here is Mrs. I.  
Madsen. *Mamaku* per Auckland  
N.Z.

Dear Agnes!

You write that I must have thought you had completely forgotten me, and this, in fact, is just what I thought. I don't understand, and your silence hardly tallies with my recollection of your first letter to Aage. I was about to make the same decision that many emigrants here have made; they don't write home, in that way they avoid the disappointment of waiting in vain, as

well as the disappointment which the contents of the letters may cause. It would be all well and good if it were enough to offer best wishes for the new year; but such idle wishes have no place when you are facing the brutality of everyday life, wondering where the next food for the table shall come from, and waking to nothing but worries every morning. We live now with Aage, – Hans and I – although, in parentheses, I must say that regardless of the source of your information, it could well have been wrong, for Hans and I have come very close to going different ways. It is only my terror of travelling alone that has kept us together. That *people* say that Hans had no small amount of money with him – when he left, is unfortunately a big lie. I wonder what people that could be. We would not have had to suffer so much together had that been the case. Hans paid his debts before he left home, I suppose that is the reason: *People* cannot imagine that the man could be so honest as to do that and also leave his wife and child with something, so they feel no need. We came here with just a little money, which we had planned to use to buy a small piece of land, but all our money was used in making the move to Aage, and in leaving again, when Aage could not have us. We had hoped to keep it as a nest egg and therefore took employment as “a married couple” in Buchland [Auckland ?], and there is no doubt that this would have been a good opportunity for us if I had not become ill, and been unable to stand the heavy work. We took the position because the farm manager, not the farmer – owned one of the biggest seed supply stores in Auckland. When we had to go into town, because I was a convalescent, Hans took work in his private garden and drew up a number of things for him. But this amounted to no more than a day labourer’s job, it was on the farm that we could have had a permanent position and a future. But now we are with Aage, and things look very black indeed. Everything is in the making here. You have to see such a piece of uncultivated land to understand that it will take *years* before it can feed, let alone clothe, three people. The chicken run is certainly also still in the making. Six hens and a cockerel, that’s all we have to provide eggs. All the others are chicks. At present I get *one* egg a day. Aage goes around believing that our happiness is just around the corner: he even sings ballads about it. It is beyond me how he stands the life he has here. On Sunday he puts on a slightly better suit of clothes, the rest of the time he seems not to care and goes about looking like the poorest worker. You write about cotton dresses and about a farm over here. God save you from doing such a thing, forever. You’d do well to keep your boys from making *that* journey. It sounds lovely to say you want to make things nice for the men when they come home. The only problem is that the men are, for the most part, so tired when they come home that they can scarcely eat, let alone talk or notice whether the cloth is clean and the table well laid. They nod lovingly and collapse in a



chair, and their tired eyes stare so hopelessly at nothing that your heart goes out to them, and you see the fairytales of the primitive life for the nonsense they are. People *must* have a future to look forward to. Hans' brother-in-law has sent him two hundred kroner to use to move somewhere else; they know nothing about me, I assume, and believe he would have a greater chance of success in Australia. Do you really think anyone would send money and help him if they didn't know he has none of his own. My convalescence cost most of the small amount of money we had, and I, of course, had nothing with me when I came, neither clothes nor money, aside from what I had on. Hans writes and applies for jobs in every possible place, as we are very uneasy and fearful about staying here in Mamaku. If only Aage had a permanent job at the mill here, but he has made an enemy of the owner. Now he works several miles from here. He had bought a horse, but it walked off, and he did nothing to find it; then he bought another, and of course a neighbour immediately found the first one and bought it cheaply from Aage. But Aage does *a lot* of that sort of thing, and that's the worst of it, as he is otherwise a very good lad; but very rash and unreliable when it comes to money. Perhaps it will seem to you that I am extremely ungrateful to write as I do about him. But if I don't, you won't understand why we feel so insecure with him. I hope you will not take this letter to Father, he must, of course, know Aage better than I have known him. If only we could get him out of the clutches of the people up here, but he is stubborn when it comes to that and very secretive about his activities. I have considered it carefully before writing all this because it could perhaps ruin our life together here, if he doesn't want me to write home about this. But, in my opinion, Aage writes too optimistically, he doesn't write like the person he is. One day he said to me that he had complained in his first letters, but – when no one cares, you soon stop doing that – he said. You see, Agnes, if no one cares, then *I shall write* no more. I think that when people care about each other, then they can also help each other, as little or as much as they are able. *You* write that your home must be mine, but dear Agnes, you cannot imagine a greater tragedy for me than that this should ever come to pass! No, help me in another way, if you can, and will take the trouble, then I shall thank you! Show me that I have friends who care just a little bit for me and who will go to some trouble for me.

But if you allow another six months to pass before you write, then I shall give up on you. [the following is then crossed out: Yours affectionately! and Thank you for the letter. Ingeborg.]

Your letter, dear Agnes, was very loving and nice, and I was very grateful to you for it, but it shows me that you at home look at things here and imagine how they are in the same way as *we* did when we made the decision to come here. There is absolutely *nothing* for a man in Hans' profession to

do here. They want day-labourer work done here, and to them a gardener is a man to shine boots, milk a cow and dig the garden. Nature is so abundant that it can care for itself and requires no greenhouse. Even in the vineyards here they unfortunately want only labourers. We have, therefore, moved up here to Aage, where there is a chance that it will pay to have greenhouses with tomatoes and grapes, and where the market will be nearby in Rotorua; with its hot springs, this is a very popular place to bathe. But as I said, Aage has a total of a little over one-half hectare of land; something *could* be accomplished with that, if only we had something to put in it.

When we came up here, a small piece of the land was cultivated, I think just to feed Aage, with radishes and peas. Now it all looks somewhat different, but it is a slow business; there are big, strong tree roots to struggle with one at a time, with fire and spade and saw and hoe. But Aage is of course at the mill, and it is often a terrible job for one man alone, like, for example, one day when the wind suddenly began to blow, and the fire from a tree root jumped to a tree trunk near the house. There was no water in the tank since it hadn't rained for a long time. Hans put out the fire with dirt, it was a dreadful experience and the work like fighting for life itself. At ten o'clock at night he was still there, throwing one shovelful of dirt after the other on the trunk, and I stood with him wearing his winter overcoat. But if only there were some future to look forward to in all this, then surely we could get through these first, worst years. But the trouble is that we are so short of money. Aage has described everything too cheerfully in his letters. I suppose to comfort Mother and because he probably never imagined that anyone would come to see how things really were. Aage is like Viggo in letting matters take their own course. He never thinks about tomorrow. You can, of course, understand that what I write here must never reach Mother's or Father's or Aage's ears, as I dare say it could cause distress and do harm. I write it to you so that at least someone can know how it really is here. We have a roof over our heads and the food we eat, but how we shall get clothes I do not know. If Aage becomes ill, we'll be without money. When the rainy season comes, he'll be out of work, as there is no work at the mill when it rains. As I'm sure you can see, it is a very frail boat we are in. I do not in any way wish to do Aage harm in thanks for his goodness to me. He is the only one who has helped me, and his intentions, after all, are good. He has worked alone here and arranged his life like the other poor fellows here who live only to pass the time; and now I suppose it is not easy for him to change all that and have something to aim at and work for. I have written to Father about my position and have given him as complete an explanation as I could manage. I wrote to him because he specifically asked in Aage's letter that I should do so, but the answer he sent me was more than surprising. It is strange to know that your Father *could*

help you, if only a little, and that instead he sends four pages of pretty words. I have now written to *Mother* about my papers. Hans has heard from his sisters and friends about the nursery that has been sold. But we are more interested in news of the divorce. It ought not to be so difficult for you who are in the same town to get some news of this. We would like to marry as soon as possible, and just in case, we hereby invite you to our wedding! Could *you* not find out for me whether Viggo really has squandered everything that otherwise might have been allotted to me. It could be the foundation of our existence if only there were a few thousand to put into it here. As things stand now, we could at any time be forced to start all over again, just as when we first came here, and that, as I'm sure you understand, is terrible to contemplate. Both Hans and I would be sorry to leave Aage, it would be awful to think of him alone, now that we know what that means. How they die in their cabins with no one knowing until long after, when someone recalls a man's existence and that he hasn't been seen for some time. But what *can* we do other than what we are doing, seeking out and writing to all those who might reasonably be expected to help and support us. For me it is especially hard that the one who above all others should be my friend and protector shows so little interest in my affairs. Hans has written to his brother-in-law in Flensburg to ask if he will seek a position for him in England. It happens that Hans has excellent references. We must try everything, and as long as we have nothing ourselves we must be satisfied if only we can get one fairly decent position. Obtain one for us in Denmark if you can. We have done nothing so bad that we could not at any time come home again.

But help us in any case by getting news of the divorce and of our boys. Surely you can see them if you really want to.

You can easily ask the children how they live. We want to know everything about them.

Then you could, for example, buy two stamps and send a decent, long letter.

Now I have used *so* much of my time to write this letter that it surely deserves a similar answer.

Say hello to the boys, say hello to Mother and Holger and Tomas from me. Could *he*, Toms, not take the trouble to send a little business-like letter over here?

Hans will write to you once the two of you are truly in the same family.

Yours affectionately,  
Ingeborg.

# Viggo Rasmussen – A New Zealand Immigrant Writes Home 1874-1928

by Niels Peter Stilling



Viggo Rasmussen (1855-1929).

In the mid-1800s the schoolmaster of the small village of Tarm in western Jutland, Denmark, was a man called Jørgen Rasmussen (1811-1883). He hailed from Vejlbj by on the island of Funen. His wife Agnete Jepsdatter (1818-1903) came from southern Jutland. The couple had 6 children, 3 daughters and 3 sons. Their youngest boy, Ole Viggo, was born in 1855, and it is he who is the main character of our story.

The job of schoolmaster in the village school of Tarm was not a very well paid one. Jørgen Rasmussen's family had free living quarters at the school, but a part of their income had to come from the small piece of farmland which went with the mastership. In the 1850s Tarm grew almost to the size of a real town in the otherwise townless southwestern corner of Jutland. A pharmacy opened in 1852. A distillery, a mill and a sawmill were built on the main road connecting the towns of Varde and Ringkøbing, where the school was also situated, and it became possible to find work in areas other than farming. All of this was of great importance to the schoolmaster's sons (one son and one daughter died as small children). In the early 1860s, the second son, Jørgen Victor, (born 1845) became a pharmacist at the new pharmacy in Tarm and later in the larger town of Kolding in southeast Jutland. Victor eventually left Kolding and moved to Copenhagen. The youngest son, Viggo, also chose quite a different walk of life from his father's. He took a job at the Tarm mill and around 1870 made his living as, among other things, a journeyman millwright and labourer. The 3 sisters, Henriette (born 1844), *Erasmie* (born 1846) and *Georgine* (born 1851) all remained in Jutland. Victor eventually left Copenhagen in 1870 to seek his fortune in the "gold country", New Zealand. Viggo followed in 1874, tempted by the New Zealand government's immigration propaganda and the offer of (almost) free passage from 1872 to 1875. Viggo was 18 years old when he emigrated and turned 19 on September 6, 1874, on board the ship carrying him to New Zealand.

Viggo is the main character of our story simply because "chance" has preserved 23 letters from his hand written from the time of his emigration in 1874 until 1928, the year before he died. The letters were written to his parents and his sister "Gine" at the school in their West Jutland hometown. It can scarcely be said that 23 letters written over a period of more than 50 years is a large number. But these letters do provide us with some insights into the life of the immigrant Viggo, or at least into that part of his new life that he wanted his family back home to hear about. Viggo was hardly what one would call a "great" letter-writer. Neither was the story he told an especially significant one. In fact, the most remarkable thing is how little actually happened in his life – how little his situation changed in the course of more than 50 years in New Zealand. But although Viggo may not have been the best of letter-writers, this does not obscure the value of his letters

as a source of information about Danish emigration. It is also the modest story of an ordinary Dane on the larger stage of world history. In a time when letter-writing is becoming a dying art, it is important to remember that during the mass emigration of the 1800s – before the invention of the telephone – so-called ordinary people were forced to take pen in hand if they wanted to maintain overseas contact with their families and friends. Private letters often disclose more about the time of exodus than any other source. In the following we shall follow Viggo's story of life in a foreign country as told in letters to his homeland.

## The Journey

Viggo's "adventure" began in early July 1874. Not until December of that year, however, did he find the time to tell the first part of his story in a letter. This meant that almost a year had passed from the time he left home until word that he was alive and well reached the school in Tarm. His 16 page letter was comprised of two parts. First he described his journey, and then followed a report of his first months in New Zealand. The travelogue is obviously based on a diary kept from the time the steamship left Hamburg on July 3, 1874, to mid-September, when it was just off the coast of South Africa. At this point Viggo apparently gave up the diary. The last part of his journey, until his arrival in Lyttelton on the east coast of the South Island on October 26, takes up only a few lines of the letter.

Viggo provided various, scattered details from his voyage. He was not seasick in spite of the often strong winds. A detailed description of the trip through the English Channel is followed by a description of the food served on board ship. It seems scarcely worth mention: "Every Saturday we got spoiled herring, rotten sauerkraut and uneatable potatoes for dinner, and at other times we were served so little food that we fought over it, even though it was better suited for pigs than for people." Later we hear about heavy fog off the coast of France and about the theft on board of "a hat and a shirt". The hat was, however, returned to its happy owner following "a search in all the chests and bunks". The ship sailed southward. As they passed the island of Tennerifa there was "dancing on the deck to the music of two Swedes". Complaints about the food continued, "but the doctor informed us that the food was so good that any noble family could eat it". As the heat increased, however, they were given a slightly larger ration of water, but according to Viggo "it was only rotten water". The Equator was crossed with good cheer. But then a new problem arose in connection with the aquavit. The sailors accused the steward of selling their ration of aquavit to the passengers, and, as if this were not bad enough, "Thora Petersen from Copenhagen was arrested because she went down to the married passen-

gers". What she was up to there is left to the imagination. Then there was a birth on board. Carpenter Henriksen's wife gave birth to a son. The boy was christened a few days later. There was no clergyman on board, and the christening was performed by a student teacher from Vorbasse by the name of Møller. The next major events were another theft and another birth. They help to emphasise the international atmosphere on board the steamship. The victim of the theft was a Swiss shoemaker, the thief a 16-year-old lad from Alsace, and the woman who gave birth was Swedish.

During the last month on board only two things occurred which appeared to be worth mentioning. "One of the German children died", and the unfortunate steward quarrelled "with the captain. In front of everybody they accused each other of being thieves and rascals." – On October 26, 1874, after sailing for 112 days, the ship reached its destination, the harbour town of Lyttelton on the South Island. Half an ox and the fresh bread delivered to the emigrant ship made a deeper impression on our newly arrived emigrant than the country he now saw for the first time. Even difficulties encountered in the immigration office were overshadowed by the good food served there.

From Lyttelton he was immediately transported further south on a smaller steamship. The final destination was the coastal town of Timaru, where Viggo and 38 other emigrants had a contract to work on the railway being laid on the South Island.

Five days' work as a "roughneck" on the New Zealand railway were enough for Viggo. Apparently it was a question of hard work (compared with Denmark), low pay (for the new arrivals) and expensive food (provided by the railway company). Only 4 of 39 remained when Viggo left the job to seek his fortune as a sheep-shearer on the big sheep stations in the heart of the country. Together with another Dane, Niels Andersen from Gunderup in Mid-Jutland, southeast of Aalborg, he began "a trek which took him from station to station". But in spite of the fact that the two men "askede after work" in English, jobs were hard to come by. They were given food at the various sheep stations, and finally succeeded in getting jobs doing "'fensning', that is, we fenced the fields with posts and wire". But after only two days Viggo had an accident. He fell and sprained his arm. Here, as in every other new country where immigrants settled, help was distant and expensive. The doctor had to be paid, and Viggo soon had to borrow money from his countryman, "who incidentally was a very rude fellow and called all teachers and vicars rascals and scoundrels". Only the help of a well-meaning Scotsman at the sheep station saved the schoolmaster's son Viggo from total bankruptcy. Viggo described the good Scotsman as the ideal immigrant: "He is a carpenter and he can shear sheep, he can plow, harvest and sow and is in every way a genius." Viggo himself was

obviously not so well equipped after only a month in the new country. On the advice of the Scotsman, Viggo decided to try his luck in town, the South Island's largest town, Christchurch, near Lyttelton. Here he was offered a job as a sailor on a ship which via China was on its way to Hamburg. But no! New Zealand must "either give bread or death". And he was finally successful. Another countryman, from the Danish island of Langeland, helped him find work on a large, Danish operated farm twenty kilometres from Christchurch. It is from this farm that Viggo sent his 16-page letter. He ended the long letter with a few comments on his new country. His views were characteristic of a newly arrived immigrant of the late 1800s, whether the land of choice was the United States, Canada, Australia or, as in this case, New Zealand. In the first place it was cursedly expensive to live there. – "Here they don't tip their hats to one another; everyone is equal." – "But I wouldn't advise anyone to come here" if they don't have the guarantee of a job beforehand. – New Zealand is, however, "a very good country for labourers, but the gold does not lie strewn in the streets." – And, finally, there was the homesickness and loneliness that prompted the following attempt to encourage his favourite sister to join him: "She can surely make herself a future here, but it would be a shame to take your last child from you."



On the outskirts of Christchurch.



Viggo concluded the letter by making excuses to his apparently somewhat pedantic father: Don't be "angry, if there here and there are mistakes in punctuation; as you well know, writing has never been one of my strengths."

## Contact with the Family

Almost 4 years passed before Viggo again took pen in hand. There are two letters dated June 3, 1878. One is addressed to his sister, "Gine", the other to his parents. In the latter he pointed out that he "has written home several times, but has not yet had an answer". We could well say that it was high time that contact was renewed.

The letter to his sister Gine was largely an attempt to re-establish this contact. "How have you been these four long years since I left you on that lovely, mild spring evening. How often the memory of that evening has sustained me in the midst of my misfortune. I have struggled and suffered, but I have also won victories." The real victories were that he had survived, had taught himself English and was now able to perform "whatever work there might be". But those were also quite significant achievements. Not all immigrants were so fortunate. Reading between the lines, one can see that it had been four difficult years – and it is perhaps therefore that there are no letters from this period; there was nothing to write home about. Viggo did not have much to tell about himself. He asked mostly about old friends in the hometown area and used many lines in a rather demonstrative appeal to his family to send him some edifying books from home, namely a book of sermons, a hymn book and a Bible. To be sure that everyone at home would know that he had not forgotten his solid Christian upbringing, he specifically asked Gine to go to their father with the task of sending the books.

In the letter to his parents he urgently requested news from home. "I will surely receive the letter this time, as I do not plan to leave this place anymore." By this time he had travelled all over the South Island and had done all kinds of work as a woodsman, a road labourer, a day labourer on farms, as well as a labourer in the island's many sawmills. He had "experienced both good times and bad", but he did not regret having emigrated because "I have learned to know myself and to rely upon myself". Perhaps Viggo was commenting here on his former life in Tarm, but the reader of today must simply accept this as one of the undecipherable signals of the private letter. The fact we can see is that he had by now settled down. He lived in the little sawmill town of Oxford in the district of Canterbury. He had rented lodgings from a countryman, gardener Laugesen from Sorø, and he made good wages at one of the town's sawmills.

In the remainder of this letter he described the beautiful countryside. Oxford was surrounded by mountains, plains and rivers. He wrote of the people and said that the natives were now “siviliserede” (civilised). Viggo gave a short course on the economy of the country, and reported on his progress with the English language. He concluded by saying that he had already described his journey to New Zealand. This reference to his letter of December 1874 more than suggests that there cannot have been many letters written in the interim. It was undoubtedly a dark period, largely taken up with immigrant Viggo’s long, hard struggle to survive and adjust.

Then finally in December 1878 there was a letter from home – and on December 23rd Viggo again took up his pen to begin a long reply: He answered his father’s questions by giving a detailed description of his work at the sawmill. Viggo worked a huge saw together with 2 other men, one of them (Viggo) removed the sawed timber, one pushed the wood into the saw, and one carried the wood to the saw and removed the sawdust. Viggo earned 8 shillings per day (for 10 hours’ work, from 7 a.m. to 6 p.m.), and he paid 15 shillings a week for food “which consists of beef and mutton, wheat bread, potatoes, pudding and a great number of other small delicacies always served with tea”. He was well satisfied with the life a Dane was able to lead so far from home. But he would have liked to have his family closer at hand; that would perhaps have encouraged him (following his father’s suggestion) to think more about buying land in order to “place his feet under his own table”. Viggo approached the question of family emigration again: “I have often thought that it would be wonderful if I could get sister Gine to join me; but I suppose she doesn’t want to go. And then, too, Dear Parents, you can scarcely do without her at home, so I’ll just have to give up that idea... but, if she did come out here, she would never again have to work or worry about the difficulties of this world.” Viggo made no secret of his wishes. He described living conditions in New Zealand: Here, as in other countries which had received many immigrants, the available land was largely occupied, and after 1870 the newcomers had to seek their fortunes by working for others. It was also expensive to live in New Zealand and therefore difficult to save enough to buy land. Viggo wrote a long list of prices and made special note of the cost of various beverages: “You can surely see from this that a man who wants to drink can never get ahead here.”

Viggo also took the time to comment on the English people, whom he found cultured on the surface, but extremely lacking in knowledge of anything outside their own island. That brought him to the political question of the 1870s in Denmark: Viggo did not look with favour on the progress being made by the Danish farmers’ party (today the liberal party called in

Danish “Venstre”).

Viggo had little to report of those he had travelled with or other Danish acquaintances in New Zealand, with the exception of Jens Kogsgaard from Skjern. This unfortunate fellow was in jail in Lyttelton due to a knifing episode and, in all likelihood, because he was in debt. Viggo knew nothing of the fate of his brother Victor. No one, in fact, had heard from Victor since his emigration in 1870.

## Glittering Promises

From here on, there is a letter every 6 months. On June 8, 1879, he answered a letter from home. His father didn't seem to think that work in a sawmill could be very strenuous. But Viggo assured him that it was, even though he was now working with “shovel and spade” to help put a road through the sawmill district where he lived. “I live about 40 English miles north of Christchurch at the edge of a large wood; behind this there is a high mountain range, and in front of it there is a large plain with a few farmers spread here and there across the plain.” But the beauty of the countryside was not enough. “There is no amusement whatsoever... I spend most of my spare time reading, and on Sunday I almost always go to church. But when you cook your own food there isn't much time to spare.” – Furthermore, Viggo did not get on well with the English population which, of course, did not make his daily life any easier.

Viggo wrote that same day to his sister Gine – an unconcealed attempt at enticement describing all the delights of New Zealand and, in particular, what he himself could offer her: A free ticket from England to New Zealand, travelling funds, no work aside from “cooking a little food for me”, a cosy home and everyday life in “peace and happiness and in every way like the old days at home”.

Loneliness in alien surroundings was the faithful companion of most immigrants. Viggo was no exception, and neither was he the only one to make golden promises to restless family members back home.

Just two months later Gine received another letter, written in Oxford, New Zealand, on August 12, 1879. Viggo enclosed what he referred to as a “free ticket”. It was, in fact, no more than a kind of emigrant visa referring her to New Zealand's agent in London. There was also some difficulty about the travelling funds, “as the bank here has no connection with the commercial houses back home, and it is not possible to send registered letters containing money”. But Gine was told not to worry, that the agent in London could take care of everything, and the English emigrant ships were, after all, better than the German (on which Viggo had travelled in 1874). Viggo also promised to be waiting for her on the quay in Lyttelton.

W 406

NEW ZEALAND.

West Oxford Canterbury

August 6<sup>th</sup> 1879

DEAR Sister

I have advised the Immigration Officer here that I think you would be  
willing to emigrate to New Zealand. I advise you to come out to Oxford  
Canterbury. If you are willing to come, you should  
apply to the Agent-General for New Zealand, 7, Westminster Chambers, London,  
S.W., from whom you will obtain all necessary particulars.

Yours, &c.,

Viggo Rasmussen

To Georgine, Agnate Rasmussen  
ward

Larm, Sylland

Boermark

N.B.—The writer can here insert any information concerning the colony, particulars of his own success or arguments in favour of his friend's emigrating, that he pleases.

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The "free ticket" to New Zealand sent to Viggo Rasmussen's sister Gine.

The only things she was to bring on the long voyage were a good blanket and clothes together with “all the books... you can get ahold of”, but, in particular, Christian books, just to make it perfectly clear that it was a good, Christian man she would find in wild New Zealand. In general, Gine was instructed not to worry about anything, “since once you are here, I shall take care of you”. Neither was she to worry that she might be bored, “as you will have enough to do sewing, if that is what you want to do, or knitting or any other kind of needlework”. He finished by saying that she should leave now so she would be able to travel “from summer to summer”.

## Homesickness

Nine months passed before on March 2, 1880, the next letter was written to Gine: “Dear Sister! I received your letter the other day and you write that you cannot come!” – Gine was to be married, but she didn’t say to whom. She hoped that Viggo would forgive her for not coming. Viggo wrote 2 or 3 pages of forgiveness and seemed to seek comfort in his Christian upbringing. In answer to Gine’s questions about fashions and the like, he took the opportunity to write a few more tempting words about the free and pleasant life of women in New Zealand: “When you go out on the street here, you often see women with gold rings on their fingers wearing fine silk or velvet dresses with all kinds of frills, like for example, a parasol in the hand and a hat perched on the very tips of a hairdo at the back of the head.” And Viggo had a surprise up his sleeve: “These ladies are maids.” Married women also dressed in their everyday finery, the difference being that a few steps behind them there was a man in slouch-hat, tattered overcoat and patched trousers with “a look on his face as though he’s going to a funeral”. That was the husband. No doubt about it! A woman from a modest West Jutland home – one with marriage on her mind – should think twice before choosing a man in old, tradition-bound Denmark. But Viggo hoped that Gine “would be as happy as possible, if you decide to accept the bonds of marriage”. He expressed a desire to marry himself and also to “make a little trip home”.

The loneliness and homesickness so apparent in his letters to Gine is repeated in a letter to his parents written a few days later. Here the tone is more religious. Toward the end of the letter the connection becomes obvious. It was a time of crisis in New Zealand, and it was difficult to find work as a labourer. The forest was thinning, and many sawmills were closing down. But Viggo was fortunate; because he was known as a steady worker, spoke English and had remained at the same place for several years, he was to be preferred for what seasonal work was available.

## The Church

More time passed between letters. Those at home were no better at writing. On January 20, 1882, Viggo finally took pen in hand. He had not heard from Tarm since the letters in 1880, nor from other members of the family: “One shouldn’t think you’d be resentful because I have gone over to Christ’s church, as that is so much better than if I had become a drunk, a lying or cursing man, or a lustful, disorderly fellow like, unfortunately, so many in the Lutheran church.” Viggo had, incidentally, recently met someone of that stripe, someone he had known previously, the jailbird Jens Kogsgaard from Skjern. He had come to the sawmill where Viggo worked, looking for a place to stay for the night: “he was poorly dressed and had nothing, so I gave him something to eat and a couple of shillings, but he was about the same as he was at home when he had money in his pocket, he’ll just drink it up and spend most of his time in the jailhouse.” Viggo himself had been more fortunate – not that he was a truly outstanding example of the fate of an immigrant, but he did have a permanent job at the sawmill in Oxford. And when you are only 26 years old and a bachelor with 8 years’ experience in the New World behind you, the world is still your oyster.

A fragment of a letter from 1883 or 1884 to his sister provides more information about Viggo’s religious affiliation. Obviously the church had helped him in his loneliness and in overcoming his homesickness. Viggo enquired nonchalantly about the emigration plans of Jørgen, an older sister’s son, and went on to mention his brother Victor, from whom no one had heard for almost 10 years: “It is very strange to think that we are only 4 or 5 days’ journey from each other, and neither of us knows where the other is.”

## Marriage

Even though there were now years between Viggo’s letters, time seemed to stand still. On March 1, 1888, Viggo wrote from View Hill in Oxford to his sister Gine to tell her he had married – not the day before yesterday, not a month ago, but on December 1, 1886! – The intimacy of the emigrant letters was, in Viggo’s case, obviously fast disappearing. What remained was the more matter-of-fact contact letter, whose purpose was simply to maintain a kind of non-committal contact to the homeland.

Viggo had married Lilly, “a really nice little wife, she is both cleanly and economical”. Lilly had been born in New Zealand, in Lyttelton, where her father worked in the cement industry. Viggo wrote in great detail about her large family. Lilly’s mother had died when Lilly was born. Then he wrote

about his own work. He was still employed at the sawmill. Together with Laugesen, the Danish colleague from Sorø, he had at one point leased a sawmill. But that had not proved successful. The mill burned down, and the owner went bankrupt and was unable to pay what he owed. As the leaseholder, Viggo ended up owing money to the workers he had taken on at the sawmill. Again he remembered the emigration plans of his sister's son Jørgen and wrote: "Jørgen wrote to me some time ago to say he was



Viggo Rasmussen and his wife Lilly.

very interested in coming out here. He wanted me to help him come out, but I don't see how I can do that at the moment, as you yourself can see, I have worked hard from early morning to late at night to earn a little money, and now it all seems to have been in vain... It is hard to end in debt when you have done your best."

## Family Life in Kaikoura

Only a year passed before there again was a letter from Viggo, written from View Hill, Oxford and dated June 26, 1889. He wrote to his mother and sister and complained that he never heard from those back home. Fifteen years had passed since he had emigrated and time had healed his feeling of loss. Viggo was by now an assimilated immigrant, writing to say that he was still alive and well, but living a life that those at home had no basis for understanding. He had long since given up any hope of returning home or of convincing any member of the family to join him in New Zealand. But it disturbed him that he (and those at home) knew nothing of what had happened to brother Victor.

He had got over his failure as leaseholder of the sawmill, but the consequence of the bankruptcy was that he now had given up the hope of ever becoming a man of independent means. A steady job, a reasonably good home and Lilly's good cooking satisfied Viggo's requirements. And, as a first generation immigrant, it was probably just as well that he made few demands and had small expectations regarding life in the new land. Many big disappointments were thus avoided.

One could perhaps say that this was the whole story of Viggo's immigration. Both he and his family seem to have thought so. There are, in any case, no more letters from the 1800s. But 11 letters are preserved from 1902 until Viggo's death in 1929.

Viggo's life in the 20th century can be described in very few words. Around the turn of the century he and Lilly moved northward to the South Island's northernmost district, Marlborough, to the town of Kaikoura. Here he worked, as he had always done, at a sawmill. Stability is the keynote of his existence. The couple remained in Kaikoura for the rest of Viggo's life. As late as 1928, when he was 72, he continued to work at the sawmill as a kind of foreman. The couple had no children, but around 1907 they adopted 10-year-old Doris, the daughter of Lilly's deceased sister. The fate of their foster-daughter is the topic of several letters. Doris was married in 1921, she was constantly pregnant, but in 1926 her husband deserted her and their six children, two of whom died that same year in an epidemic which raged in Lyttelton. Doris then moved in with her foster parents.

From the early 1900s Viggo and Lilly lived on a modest, rented small-



holding near the wood, surrounded by their own apple trees, homegrown vegetables, a horse, a cow and an occasional pig – and this self-sufficiency provided just enough to make ends meet. As he grew older, Viggo became an ardent social democrat and increasingly more interested in politics and social conditions. He wrote to Gine of social democratic policies and opinions. Once he quoted the entire social democratic welfare programme. Gine seemed to become a bit nervous when in a letter written in 1926 he asked about developments in the Soviet Union. Viggo had to begin his next letter (1927) with assurances that he voted Labour, but was certainly not a Communist.

In every letter Viggo remarked on his good health and recorded his age, the number of years he had been in New Zealand, and how long he had been married. This finally takes on the appearance of one who is trying to set some kind of record in what is an otherwise very run-of-the-mill existence. As of 1920 all of Viggo's letters were written in English. It seems appropriate here to let a passage from his last letter, written July 24, 1928, (6 months prior to his death), provide a summary of his time: "Last May it was 54 years ago since we last saw each other, and there has been a wonderful lot of changes in this world since then, and great inventions made: Aeroplanes, motorcars, telephones, wireless gramophones and still more inventions are made every day."

Viggo died on January 9, 1929, at the age of 74, after having spent 55 years in New Zealand. He never returned to his homeland.

## Epilogue

Does one emigrate to become independent and, finally, prosperous, or does one emigrate just to put bread on the table? If the former is true, it must be concluded that Viggo was not only unsuccessful, he was, for all practical purposes, a failure as an immigrant. There is room for greater nuance in the latter view, and the "truth" about emigration is probably somewhere in between. The emigration myth has always emphasized the success story: the discovery of gold in California, Australia, and not least in New Zealand, in the 1850s and 1860s created a picture of the poor farmhand who set out and made his fortune in the new world. But Viggo did not come to New Zealand in 1874 to find gold. He probably didn't give it a thought. He came to "survive", to put that bread on the table which he didn't think he could put on it at home. One must inevitably ask whether Viggo's life would have been different had he stayed at the sawmill in Tarm. – Probably not, and this leaves us with the psychological aspects of emigration in explaining why Viggo chose years of loneliness in New Zealand, rather than the more secure existence among his family in his own hometown. The almost de-

monstrative piety of his youth suggests perhaps some past guilt. But that is just a guess.

The facts show that Viggo was the product of a general period of exodus from the Danish countryside in the second half of the 1800s. The rapidly growing population could no longer find work in agriculture. Some young people from the farms found work in nearby railway towns (the railway reached Tarm the year after Viggo's departure), others moved to the nearest market town, still more to the population magnet, the capital city of Copenhagen, and, finally, a good number let themselves be tempted by promises of free land and a good income abroad. Brother Victor and Viggo, too, tried all four possibilities. The schoolmaster's sons had no doubt heard about the excitement to be found in the world outside West Jutland from the colourful geography lessons given in the schoolroom in Tarm.

## Letters from Viggo Rasmussen

Oxford 3/6 1878

Dear Sister!

I will now take pen in hand and write you a few lines, You, My Dearly Beloved Sister, who has always shared my sorrows and joys. When I think of days gone by, my eyes always see your gentle, friendly face, and my ears hear your kind words. I shall never forget your goodness to me in this Life. How have you been these four long years since I left you on that lovely, mild spring evening. How often the memory of that has sustained me in the midst of my misfortune. I have struggled and suffered, but I have also won victories. I can now look to the future calmly, as I can do whatever work there might be and speak better English than most of my landsmen here. How are you, Sister? Are you still at home? Or have you married? I would so like to see you once more on this Earth, but Dear Sister, if we live as God's children, then we shall surely meet again, if not here, then in Paradise. Would you please let me know how all of our dear old friends and comrades are. Give my regards to Oxen and Petrea Hansen, and don't forget to give them to Andreas Beiter, too, and to Christian Gade and his brothers, as well as all the others who might like to hear from me, ask Father to send me Leth's Book of Sermons, he need not pay for it, as I want to pay myself, but I cannot send cash home, and I have no cheque just now,

and I would also like a hymn book and a Bible (a large one). If you will send these, then I shall pay as soon as they arrive. There is one thing I wish to ask of you, and that is: Please try to find out how Margrethe Høirup is and where she is. You need not mention anything about this to the others. I haven't much more to write about this time, and if you think it is too little, then I promise to tell you more next time. Give my warmest regards to Henriette and Jørgen as well as all my other small nephews and nieces. Write as soon as possible, I wait with the greatest longing to hear everything that has happened at home since I left.

Also to you the most loving regards  
from your devoted brother  
Viggo Rasmussen

You can see my address in Father's letter. Live well.

P.S. My address is:  
Mr. Viggo Rasmussen  
Care of L. Laugesen  
Oxford East  
Canterbury  
New Zealand

Oxford 3/6-78

Dear Parents!

Once again I take pen in hand to let you know that I am in good health and that all is well. I have written home several times, but have never received an answer, so I do not know whether you have received my letters, but as I have travelled around quite a lot here, I can perhaps have missed your letters, but enough of that. I have so longed to hear how you have been back home in all the time I have been away from my old, beloved home, and I hope that you will send me an answer as soon as possible. I will surely receive the letter this time, as I do not plan to leave this place anymore. I have, in fact, decided to settle here, as I have been all over this island, which is called the South Island, but have not found a better place than where I am now living. I have travelled through Southland and Otago, I have worked on railways and roads and with farmers, in sawmills and in the woods. I have experienced both good times and bad, yes! once I travelled 1,000 English miles before I found work. I have worked for many different wages, from 10 shillings a week and board to 10 shillings a day and no board. I have earned my daily bread in the sweat of my brow, but I thank

God in all His mercy that He has kept me and helped me through dangers and hardships, and I shall never regret that I came out here, as I have learned to know myself and to rely upon myself. I now work in a sawmill where I earn 17 shillings a day, and I have lodgings with a Gardener Laugesen from Sorø who works at the same mill as I, but with whom I have worked before and in whose house I have lived for a year. I pay 14 shillings a week for room, board and wash, which is very cheap. But enough about me. I must now tell you a little about how it looks here. I live at the foot of a large mountain range covered with forests which are green the year round. The house here is on a small mountain, so we can see far, far into the distance. The land is alternately mountains and plains which are covered with a kind of long, dry, yellowish grass which here they call "tussocks". There are a number of rivers here, but only a few of them are navigable. The climate is very changeable, sometimes it is burning hot for one hour and then the next is very cool. In winter there can be heavy frost at night, but during the day the sun thaws everything out again. In the woods there are two kinds of birch trees, three kinds of pine trees, as well as many other kinds of trees which are green both winter and summer. The people here are a mixture of English, Scottish and Irish as well as all other nationalities. The natives are large, well-built people, dark but not coal black; there are not many of them on this island, but on the North Island they are numerous. They are now all civilised. The daily wage here ranges from 5 to 8 shillings a day, and from 10 to 30 shillings a week, in addition to board. Tobacco and spirits are very expensive here. Tobacco costs 5-6 shillings per pound. 1 bottle of aquavit 7 shillings. Clothes and shoes are rather cheap. I like it here, but I wouldn't advise anyone one way or the other about leaving. It is not so easy as long as you cannot speak the language. I am now able to speak, write and read English rather fluently under the circumstances.

In my first letter I wrote about my trip out, and therefore I have not much more to write about now. I have spoken with Hans Axel's brother in Christchurch as well as with Knudsen Havbjerg from Skarrild. I hope that you are all well, perhaps you are no longer a teacher in Tarm, Dear Father. Do you still have Henriette? She is probably in school now. Jørgen must be a big boy. Is Sister Gine married? Are Jette and Jens Kristian still in Bundsgaard? I shall write a letter to all my sisters right away. Give my regards to Møller Hansen, the pharmacist's, Godmother and all my good friends back home who would like to hear from me, and thank Vicar Krarup and everyone for the great friendship they have shown me. Write soon.

My very best wishes to you, My Dearly Beloved Parents,

Viggo Rasmussen

Orford 3/6 78.

Kjære Forældre!

Jeg vil endnu en Gang tage  
dit Brev for at lade Jer vide at jeg er  
sund og rask og har det godt. Jeg har skre-  
vet hjem flere Gange, men har endnu  
aldrig modtaget noget Svar, saa jeg ved ikke  
om I have faaet mine Breve, men  
da jeg har veist en god Deel omkring  
her i Landet, saa kan jeg maaskee ha-  
ve mistet Jeres Breve, men nok her  
om. Jeg har langtsaa raegelig meget  
efters at hore lidt om hvorledes I har haent  
det derhjemme i al den Tid jeg har vorst  
borte fra mit gamle dyrebare Hjem, og  
jeg haaber, at I vil svare mig snarest muligt.  
Brevet vil jeg modtage sikkert denne

The first page of one of Viggo Rasmussen's letters to his parents.

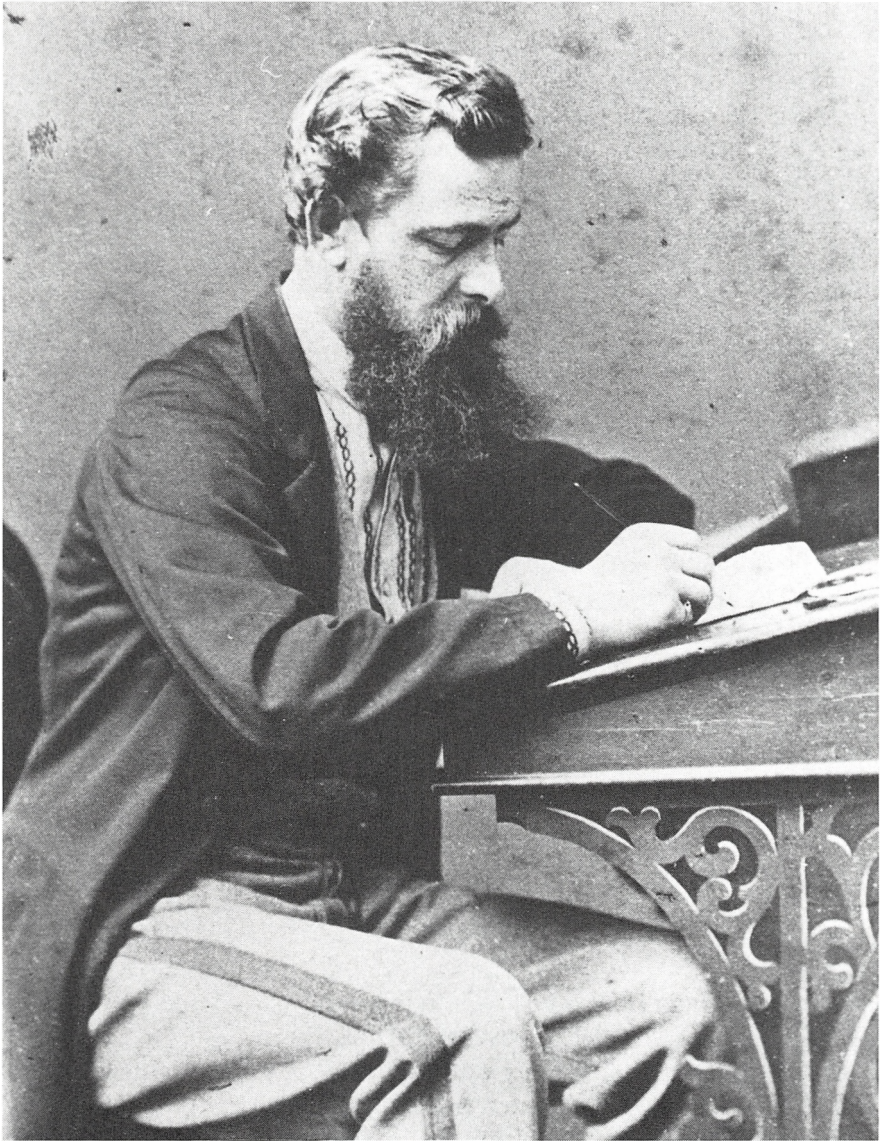
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# Niels Peter Schourup

## A Danish Photographer in New Zealand

by Birgit Larsen



Niels Peter Schourup (1837-1887).

This story began in 1962 when the Danes Worldwide Archives received a letter from the Danish/Swedish photographer Guno Karlberg of West Palm Beach, Florida, USA. Guno Karlberg asked if the Archives could provide him with information about a Danish photographer, Niels Peter Schourup, whom he thought had worked in Christchurch, New Zealand, in 1881.

## A Shipwreck in 1881

The reason for Guno Karlberg's request can be traced to a shipwreck which occurred in 1881 off the coast of New Zealand's South Island. The sail-carrying steamship *Tararua* sailed from Dunedin on 28 April with Melbourne, Australia, as her destination. Just 24 hours out of Dunedin, the ship ran aground on the Otara Reef off Waipapa Point. The crew's heroic efforts to save the ship were in vain; the *Tararua* sank, and 131 people lost their lives. Guno Karlberg's uncle, Carl Carlberg, was among those who went down with the ship. Carl Carlberg, a Swede by birth, had been on his way home to Sweden after having spent several years in Australia and New Zealand, where he had tried his luck as a goldminer. In 1881 he decided to return to his home in Småland, Sweden, but before he embarked on the long homeward voyage he had a picture of himself taken for his family by the Danish photographer Niels Peter Schourup in Christchurch.

Some time later Schourup read in the local newspaper of the sinking of the *Tararua* and saw Carl Carlberg's name among the names of those who had died. Schourup remembered having photographed the Swede and felt obliged to attempt to find Carlberg's family in Sweden to tell them of the tragedy. Since he didn't have the address of the family in Småland, he decided to ask the Danish Consulate in London for assistance. Together with his letter to the Consulate he enclosed a newspaper clipping about the shipwreck and the portrait he had taken of Carl Carlberg. He wrote as follows:

Christchurch, New Zealand  
8 June, 1881

My Dear Sir,

Would you kindly be good enough to forward the enclosed photograph and newspaper to the closest relative of Carl Carlberg.

He lost his life together with over 100 other passengers when the steamer *Tararua* sank while sailing from here to Melbourne.

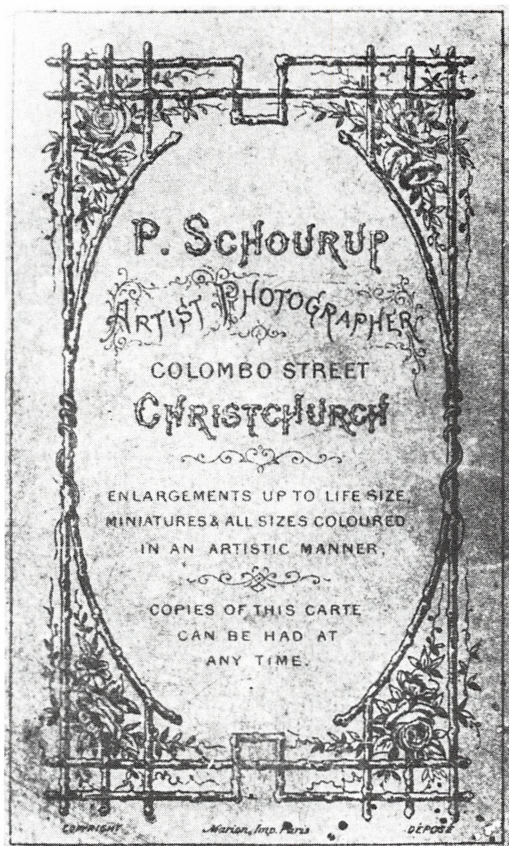
To the best of my knowledge it was the intention of the deceased to visit his homeland. As his relatives will possibly otherwise remain in ignorance



of his sad fate, I have taken the liberty of approaching you in the hope that you will contact the relevant parties and inform them of the regrettable incident.

Respectfully,  
P. Schourup

The Danish Consul in London did locate the Carlberg family and conveyed the sad message.



The photograph of Carl Carlberg found in an old desk by his nephew Guno Karlberg and the back of the picture, showing Schourup's advertisement. (All of the remaining photographs accompanying this article were taken by Niels Peter Schourup).

## The Old Desk

At some point in time, the photographer's letter, the newspaper clipping and the portrait were stashed away in the Swedish family's old desk.

Guno Karlberg inherited this desk in 1962. It had been sent from Sweden to the United States first by rail, then by sea and finally again by land! Upon careful inspection of the desk after its arrival in Florida, Karlberg discovered a copy of Schourup's letter, the old newspaper clipping and the portrait of his long-dead uncle in one of its many small drawers.

On the basis of his discovery, Guno Karlberg now wished to learn more about the Danish photographer in Christchurch who had gone to such trouble to insure that his uncle's relatives were properly informed of his death. He was also interested in details concerning the shipwreck off the coast of New Zealand that had cost his uncle's life. Karlberg sent his queries both to New Zealand and Denmark, and as mentioned above, one of his requests was received by the Danes Worldwide Archives in Aalborg, Denmark.

The Archives had no record of Niels Peter Schourup. But Chief Archivist Tyge Lassen was not one to give up on such an interesting problem. He carried out a search of his own and contacted other institutions in Denmark as well as archives in Sweden and New Zealand in an attempt to locate information about the Danish photographer. His efforts were in vain – no one seemed to know anything about Schourup.

## With a Bit of Luck

And then his luck began to change. On December 8, 1962, the Danes Worldwide Archives received a letter from a Miss Theodora Schourup of Viborg, Denmark, a town on the mainland peninsula of Jutland. Miss Schourup wrote that she had a collection of hand-written letters and some photographs which had belonged to a relative of hers who had emigrated to the United States. She wished to present the Archives with this material and wanted to hear if it was of any interest. Not surprisingly, Tyge Lassen wasted no time in asking Miss Schourup in Viborg if she was in any way related to the Danish-born photographer of the same name who had emigrated to New Zealand. And as Lady Luck in this case would have it, Niels Peter Schourup proved to be Miss Schourup's uncle!

Miss Schourup had a number of letters written by her uncle, and, what was more, she had a large collection of his photographs, including pictures of the New Zealand countryside.

This important material has provided the basis for this article about the artist-photographer, Niels Peter Schourup.

## A Brief Biography

Niels Peter Schourup was born 13 November 1837 in Nykøbing on the Danish island of Mors to Frederik Schourup and Bolette Sophie, née Petersen. Frederik Schourup was a master smith who sold his goods from a large workshop near Nykøbing's harbour. Niels Peter, the second-born son, was one of 5 children – 4 boys and a girl. He grew up in Nykøbing and was confirmed there in 1852.



Sophia Louisa Schourup, née Hustler.

In 1858 he was a student at the Academy of Fine Arts in Copenhagen, where he studied free-hand drawing until November 1861.

In the autumn of 1862, 24-year-old Schourup emigrated to Australia. He was the first of the Schourup children to leave his homeland, but we know that later his sister, Anna Cathrina, and his youngest brother, Hans Fredrik, emigrated to the United States.

Schourup settled initially in Adelaide, South Australia, where he found work with a photographer who could make use of his artistic ability. In 1874, at the age of 37, he married Sophia Louisa Hustler.

Shortly after their marriage the couple moved to New Zealand, where Schourup established himself as an independent artist-photographer with a studio in Christchurch at 15 Colombo Street.

Twelve years later, on 24 January 1887, Schourup died of a liver disease at the age of 49. Sophia Louisa and Niels Peter Schourup had no children.<sup>1</sup>

## The Letters

But what exactly do Niels Peter Schourup's letters to his family in Denmark reveal about his life as an immigrant in New Zealand? The Danes Worldwide Archives have 8 of his letters. The first, written in 1863, was sent to his parents and brothers and sister in Nykøbing. The other 7 letters are from the period from 1882 to 1886; all of these were written to his brother Christian, who had started a factory in Viborg.

The earliest letter is from January, 1863. It was begun on board the *William Jackson*, the ship which carried Niels Peter Schourup to Australia. In it he describes a voyage to the Antipodes before the age of the steamship and the Suez Canal. The voyage lasted 101 days and took the ship around the Cape of Good Hope at the southern tip of Africa. As the letter indicates, the ship was well-provisioned for such a trip:

“I can't thank God sufficiently for the good fortune that put me on board this British ship; a more honest and pleasant man than Captain Levin would be most difficult to find. He will simply do anything for us. The only thing for which I can blame him is that he so spoils us that we are not as fit to go ashore as we otherwise should be. Proof that he has given us much to eat can be seen in that up till now 100 chickens and ducks have been slaughtered, as well as 6 sheep and 1 pig – and that is only for the consumption of the saloon, where we are but 6 persons – the captain, 2 mates and 3 passengers. The steward and his boy most certainly get the same food, as they are here to serve the saloon only. The boy is a nice little chap, only 12 years old. You could say he has gone to sea before his time.”

Schourup continued this letter 3 weeks after his arrival in Adelaide, and wrote:

“As you can see, I have already been here for 3 weeks. We came ashore on the 7th, and the voyage lasted a total of 101 days. The reason I have not written before is that the mail does not leave until Wednesday morning; it is picked up only once a month.

The luck I had on the sea seems to follow me on land. After a few days I obtained a job with a photographer, Professor Hall, and, curiously enough, the first thing I did in Australia was to paint my own portrait – as a test. They do not ask for recommendations here, but rather, ‘what can you do?’”

There is nothing to indicate whether or not Niels Peter Schourup had worked with a photographer in Denmark before he emigrated. But the ability to paint portraits was, of course, an excellent background for becoming a photographer. A study of the earliest professional photographers in Denmark shows that 23% of them had earned a living as portrait painters before they became photographers.<sup>2</sup>

In the letter to his family from 1863 Schourup goes on:

“I do not know how much money I will earn, but I feel certain I shall be able to repay the money borrowed from the Savings Bank within the time stated .... and I feel sure that in time I shall be able to earn some money. I must admit that it is perhaps more luck than wisdom which has led to my success, as there are many emigrants here who are very badly off.”

The next letter in the Archives was written almost 20 years later and is dated 16 June 1882. Danish church records show that both Schourup’s parents had died in the meantime, and this and the later letters on deposit were written to his brother Christian.

## Photographer in New Zealand

By 1882 Schourup had set himself up in business in Christchurch, which at that time had a population of around 28,000. There were then seven photographers in Christchurch, including Niels Peter Schourup, who called himself an artist and photographer.<sup>3</sup>

In 1882 an International Exhibition was held in Christchurch in a building known as the Wellington Octagon. At the Exhibition there was a display of photographs from just about every part of New Zealand from Auckland to Invercargill. Two photographers from Christchurch displayed their



Coastal view near Christchurch.

work. One of these was Niels Peter Schourup, who was awarded a gold medal for his artistic photographs. Schourup himself gave the following report:

“Our most important news is the International Exhibition which has now been going on for two months and will close in mid-July. – Even though it can’t be compared to similar events in Europe’s big cities, it is a significant affair and has been both interesting and instructive. – You can see from the enclosed review that my work has been described in favourable words. The judges have also given me the highest prize – a Gold Medal. What is more important, however, is the extent to which one becomes known on such an occasion, but this also has its disadvantages, as I must work very hard; I have tried to withdraw from some of the work and let my assistants take my place, but have found this difficult as people always prefer to see me personally; that is one of the most disagreeable aspects of this business.”

Schourup had enclosed a review of the photographic exhibition from *The Star*, a Christchurch newspaper. Schourup’s exhibit is described as “the

most tastefully arranged display of its kind in the entire Exhibition". His carbon photographs, printed on opal, were found especially noteworthy and were said to have "a beautiful ivory-like effect". The reviewer went on to point out that "the painting of photographs, if not well done, is apt to spoil rather than to improve their appearance", but that the colouring of Schourup's photographs "is not only well but admirably done" and "has all the effect of a good water-colour drawing". Likewise, his portraits were praised for their "clearness, tone and artistic finish". The review left no doubt that Peter Schourup, as he called himself, was an outstanding artist and photographer.

## The North Island

In 1883, Schourup's health began to fail. He was forced to take time off from his work, and together with three friends he travelled to the North Island. The trip lasted about seven weeks. Schourup found the unusual beauty of this part of New Zealand particularly impressive. The many beautiful pictures of the New Zealand countryside now on deposit in the Danes Worldwide Archives were taken on this trip to the North Island.

Schourup wrote to his brother about the journey in a letter dated 5 February 1883:

"I should have answered your last letter before now, but I have been away from Christchurch for seven weeks. I was not well and decided to go on a long excursion where I walked all over the North Island and saw, among other things, the famous hot springs and geysers which you have probably heard about. They are some of the strangest things in the entire world, and even photographs can give only a faint idea of what they are really like.

The surrounding countryside stretches hundreds of miles and there is an active volcano which is the gathering place of the native Maoris. There are a great many of these seemingly very good-natured people, but about twenty years ago one would have been at some risk travelling in this region, as it is likely they had not yet quite lost their taste for human flesh. The trip was in every way interesting, and was made even more so because we four friends were together."

The journey was not only a holiday, however. Schourup took this opportunity to visit colleagues in both Auckland and Wellington, where, to his delight, he discovered that his name was not entirely unknown. In spite of the great expense of the trip, he was optimistic about the future because, as he put it, the outlook for the coming harvest was especially good, and this, he felt, would benefit everyone.



A Maori chief.

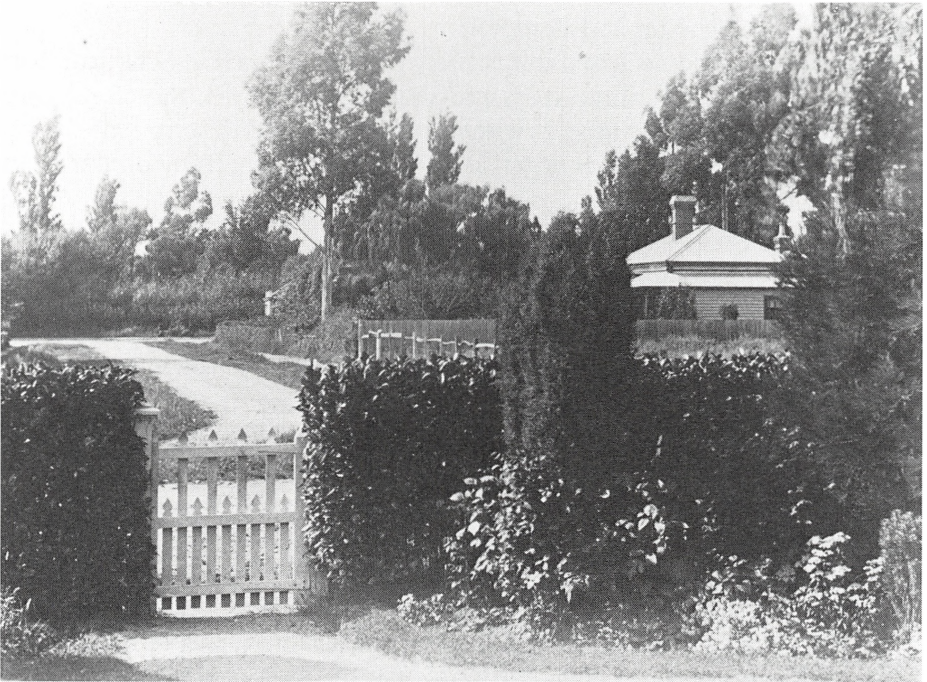


## A Period of Decline

But the good times did not last. As 1883 drew to a close, Schourup noted a worsening of trade conditions. His annual income had decreased by £300, and because of many expenses in connection with an extension to his house during this same period, his personal economy was not the best. Both large and small businesses closed down, and Schourup was forced to reduce the number of those in his employ. In spite of bad weather, everyone continued to hope for a good harvest, knowing this would put more money in circulation.

But a good harvest did not give the economy of New Zealand a sufficient boost. On 16 January 1885 Schourup wrote of the hard times:

“I’m afraid I have no good news to tell. The country has been in poor shape for the last year, and bankruptcies have become the order of the day; the working people are in great need, and the government of this province has had to find work for about 600 people so that they should not die of starvation; these changes from good to bad times come very quickly in the Colonies and are more frequent than is desirable. The low price of wheat and other export goods is probably



Niels Peter Schourup’s house in Christchurch.

the reason for the lack of money this year. It has been very hard for me, as the things I sell are among those people can do without, and competition is heavier than before,<sup>4</sup> but times will no doubt change for the better again; there are plans to construct a railway from here through the mountainous regions to the west coast of the island, and when that opens there will probably be more business for me again, but work is not likely to begin for another year; the government will not do the work, but it is to be built with private capital in return for certain land concessions. Things are not as desperate on the North Island as they are here.”

The bad times made Schourup consider for the first time the possibility of returning to his home in Denmark. In fact, he wanted very much to go but did not have the money to make the trip. It was especially tempting to think of going home now as the voyage from New Zealand to England could be made in less than 40 days by steamship. But as Schourup said: “My chances of doing that at the moment are just about as good as if I wanted to make a journey to the moon.”

In a letter dated 16 June 1886, Schourup described the violent volcanic eruption which had occurred that year on the North Island. He referred to it as one of the biggest natural disasters to occur in the world since the burial of Herculaneum and Pompeii.

The eruption had occurred in precisely the same area that Schourup had visited on his journey three years previously, and he was, therefore, very interested in the catastrophe as witnessed by his vivid description:

“This violent upheaval began at 2 o’clock in the morning on the night of the 10th, when a volcano erupted in what they call ‘the hot inland sea district’; three small towns where the natives live were buried before morning, and only a few escaped with their lives; there are now from ten to fifty feet of mud where they were, and the earlier character of the landscape is unrecognisable; the first eruptions were so violent that they could be heard over the entire North Island, which I think is several times bigger than Denmark.<sup>5</sup> At first there were violent earthquakes which have not yet stopped completely. Fortunately, the district was very thinly populated, and it is thought that only about 100 lives were lost; if the country had been densely populated, the loss of life would have been enormous. Due to the steam and fire it has not yet been possible for anyone to approach the place; but it is known that the beautiful terraces – one of the wonders of the world – have disappeared, and a number of new craters which have opened in the vicinity continue to belch forth fire, ash and steam. The first night the ash from the craters fell on a town 800 miles away, and the people for



The pink and white terraces near Rotorua which were later destroyed by a volcanic eruption.

miles around thought that the World's last day had come. Several steamships have been sent from the nearby coast to rescue horses and sheep which would otherwise die for lack of grass, as the earth for miles around is covered with ash."

Unfortunately, the economic situation in New Zealand had not improved by this time, but Schourup expressed his hope that the worst was now over and that a period of prosperity was on the way. An English company had agreed to build the long-awaited railway on the west coast "on the Colony's conditions", as Schourup expressed it. If nothing unforeseen occurred, construction was expected to begin soon.

The last letter we have from Niels Peter Schourup's hand is dated December, 1886. The great expectations for the planned west coast railway remained unfulfilled, as construction had not yet begun. The business world waited in vain for better times, which still seemed far off. Suffering and poverty prevailed throughout New Zealand.

Niels Peter Schourup died on 24 January 1887, 49 years old. He was buried in Christchurch where a marble monument bears the following inscription:

In Memory  
Niels Peter Schourup  
died 24 January 1887  
age 49 years

Schourup had made out his will in 1885. He had left the sum of £100 to each of his 3 brothers and to his sister; all his other possessions were to go to his wife Sophia Louisa.

The settlement of his estate showed that he had left the sum of £1200 in ready cash. The talents of this Danish-born artist and photographer had given him a measure of success in spite of the hard times he had experienced in his last years in New Zealand.

Notes:

1. The information included in this brief biography of Niels Peter Schourup about his life up to the time of his emigration was made available by the Provincial Archives in Viborg, Denmark, and the National Archives in Copenhagen. Schourup's own letters were a major source of information about his life in Australia and New Zealand. Information was also provided by "The New Zealand Family History Society" in Christchurch.
2. Bjørn Ochsner: *Fotografer i og fra Danmark til og med år 1920* [*Photographers in and from Denmark up to the year 1920*], Copenhagen: Bibliotekscentralens Forlag, 1986: Vol. 1, p. 17.
3. *The Southern Provinces Almanac* 1881-82, New Zealand.
4. According to the *The Southern Provinces Almanac* 1884-85 there were now 9 photographers in Christchurch in addition to Schourup.
5. The North Island covers 44,200 sq. miles as compared to Denmark's 17,029 sq. miles.

# Danish Agricultural Technology and New Zealand Butter

by Erik Helmer Pedersen



Kaponga Dairy. In the background Mt. Egmont.

## Introduction

In the course of the 19th century most of the bare spots on the map of the world were given colours symbolising their inclusion in the international Family of Nations. Initially, an area would be carefully mapped by explorers who, for better or worse, carried with them the message of civilisation's assortment of European customs and habits. In their wake followed the pioneers who, each in his or her own way, began to make use of local resources. If the interests of the native population happened to conflict with the interests of the Europeans, the latter usually had the necessary implements of power to insure that their will was done.

This signalled the start of the greatest human migration in historic times. From a modest beginning around 1820, when a few thousand people a year emigrated, the number of European emigrants grew from decade to decade. In just under one hundred years, approximately 50 million Englishmen, Irishmen, Germans, Scandinavians, etc. emigrated, and soon every nationality was well-represented in the world across the seas. Even though there were fewer Scandinavian emigrants than, for example, British and German, the Scandinavians were represented at every emigrant destination. In the first instance, many were motivated by the agricultural structure of their homeland to become farmers. The land available overseas was very cheap, in some cases even free, and it must have been a dream come true for the poor farmers who emigrated to see virgin land lying untouched at their feet. The situation was often in glaring contrast to the conditions in their homelands, where the high price of land kept many from fulfilling the hope of sitting at their very own table.

The climate and other natural conditions were given careful consideration before a choice of destination was made. The price of the trip itself was, of course, also of prime importance. A poor farmhand could not pay for an expensive journey and then expect to have enough money left over to buy land, equipment, etc. After careful deliberation, most Scandinavians chose to emigrate to the United States. A veritable net of competing steamship lines criss-crossed the Atlantic in the second half of the 1800s, and ticket prices fell accordingly. At the same time, wages increased, and the journey to America was suddenly a real possibility for those who truly wanted to emigrate.

This tremendous traffic across the Atlantic almost overshadowed emigration to more exotic latitudes. And what on earth could one hope to grow anyway under a burning tropical sun, and under the watchful eyes of black man-eaters? These were the questions that arose when leisure time was spent reading travelogues and boys' books of the time. Added to this was the fact that it cost many hundreds of kroner to travel to, for example,

Australia and New Zealand.

But an offer from these countries to pay a share of the travel expenses, or to advance some of the money required, was enough to make one choose a destination other than America. Australia and New Zealand were the two colonial areas which became the most attractive alternatives for emigration. Here there were enormous tracts of land just waiting to be put under the plow. While this was well advertised, no mention was made of the tremendous effort required to transform the land, which was overgrown with trees and bushes, to cultivated farm land.

And what kind of farming should one consider in such a place? In the second half of the 1800s, Danish farmers turned increasingly to animal husbandry. The crops they grew were used for feed rather than sold at market. It was here the future lay, since increased competition from cheap American corn had caused prices to stagnate. A better price could be obtained for improved agricultural products. There was great demand for butter, bacon and eggs in a rapidly industrialising England.

It was felt that the British colonies could eventually become the competitors of Danish agriculture on the British market. But, for the moment, the long transport time set rather confining limitations on the range of competing goods. Live animals and salt pork from Canada were the most significant exceptions to this.

The actual reorganisation of Danish agriculture to the concentration on animal husbandry began in the early 1880s. The first cooperative dairy was built in Hjedding near Varde in 1882, and five years later the first cooperative slaughterhouse for pigs was established in Horsens. In the beginning, the products produced were marketed in Great Britain by private dealers, but soon the cooperatives began to sell their products themselves.

Should Danish agriculture take upon itself to instruct its foreign competitors? This question is often asked, but most frequently by those outside the circle of leaders within the agricultural profession. Great leaders such as the cooperative pioneer Anders Nielsen and the politician Thomas Madsen-Mygdal had no doubts about the answer. Danish agriculture should at all times maintain its own reputation as the world's leader in the food industry.

But there is no denying that Danish farmers felt themselves challenged when they saw foreign competitors winning ground. And this was especially true when former landmen became an integral part of a newly emerging agricultural profession on the opposite side of the globe.

From the emigrant's point of view, it was tempting to think that knowledge gained at home could be transplanted to new conditions. To a greater or lesser degree, a Danish farmhand or servant girl had served an "apprenticeship" while learning the newest techniques in animal husbandry and dairying. Furthermore, the youth of the 1880s had seen the idea of the

cooperative put into practice; they had seen the idea of joint ownership implemented.

If one had been educated in the dairy industry, it was easy to obtain a similar job overseas. Many Danish dairymen have worked abroad for varying lengths of time and have transplanted Danish technology in far away places. The increasing manufacture of dairy machinery should be seen in this light. These machines were exported early on, in spite of the fact that the Danish machine industry had stiff competition from, for example, Sweden.

On this background, I wish in the following to describe that process by which Danish emigrants, toward the end of the last century, participated in the development of the island society of New Zealand. Once the dairy industry of New Zealand was a reality, refrigeration technology, together with the steamship, made it possible to introduce New Zealand dairy products on the British market. In this way former countrymen came face to face with each other as competitors, even though the Dane who remained at home did have some advantages.

## New Zealand as a Destination for Danish Emigration

To the Scandinavian emigrants, who, for the most part, were farmers, it was the most natural thing in the world to follow the example set by the majority. On the area they finally cleared, they planted corn and grass. It quickly became apparent that raising livestock was the key to a successful future. From the beginning, a large percentage of the livestock was sheep. From 1860 to 1880 the number of sheep increased from 2 to 13 million, and 10 million of them were on the South Island. By 1921 the number had grown to 24 million. This led to a great increase in the export of wool – from a little less than 50 million lbs. in 1871 to three times that amount in 1901.

The large number of sheep also created an abundance of mutton and lamb for the table and thus a pressing need to find a market. This problem was largely solved by the development of freezing and refrigeration techniques in the last decades of the 1800s. The first cargo of frozen meat was shipped from New Zealand in 1882, and around 1890 this export amounted to 1 million cwt.

Although there was some refrigerated butter in the cargo on the first refrigerator ship which sailed for England, it was not until the 1890s that the dairy industry joined the race to capture the British market for butter and cheese. By this time the refrigeration requirements could be met. Now it was a question of getting the farmers to expand their production of dairy products.





A sheep farm near Dannevirke.

One of the crucial conditions for starting a production of this dimension was, of course, that the laws governing the use of the land took into consideration the desire to establish dairy farms of the necessary size. This could either be done by parcelling out already existing large sheep farms, or by letting the government act as the mediating authority. A number of laws regarding use of the land, not least the law of 1892, laid the necessary framework for the parcelling out of family farms of a suitable size. The climate was influenced by the large amount of rain which fell. This made it logical to sow big fields of grass where the cows could graze. In this way, large areas were given over to cattle farming, especially on the North Island in Wauganui-Horowhenua, South Auckland and Taranaki. As the cattle could remain outdoors year round, there was no need to build expensive barns. Although in the beginning there were a number of farm dairies, joint dairies were built as early as the 1880s. In contrast to Denmark, farmers soon learned to skim the milk on the farms using hand separators before sending the cream to the dairy. There was no “return milk”, which in Denmark was used as a feed supplement on the pig farms. On the other hand, the raw cream did not have the same high quality as that from a typical Danish cooperative dairy.

The pattern followed in Denmark and in Wisconsin in the United States, where the farmers themselves got into the dairy business by establishing cooperative dairies, was soon taken up in New Zealand. The organisational form differed from the Danish in that the rule of one man, one vote, was not followed. Instead, voting rights were distributed according to the shares the individual shareholder was able to accumulate within certain limits. Around 1900 approximately 400, or half of the dairies in New Zealand were organised in this way, and in 1939, 9/10s of the dairies were owned by the milk producers.

It cost £1,200 to build a dairy when the first ones were built, and this corresponds very well to the 20 to 25,000 Danish kroner a similar project in Denmark cost in the early days of the cooperative dairy. According to certain stipulated conditions, from 1882 the government contributed £500 per dairy. Some dairies made butter and others cheese, and some made both at the same time. The necessary dairy machines could, as already suggested, be purchased in Scandinavia. Sweden far outdistanced Denmark when it came to centrifuges, whereas a Danish firm, *Silkeborg Maskinfabrik, Zeuthen og Larsen*, sold a large number of butter churns and similar equipment to New Zealand. In 1910 there was an annual export of about 200 butter churns to New Zealand, or about 5-6% of the total number exported.

There are, in other words, a number of features in the history of the New Zealand dairy industry which are characteristically Danish. The Danish-New Zealand author, George Conrad Petersen devotes an entire chapter in his 1956 book, *Forest Homes. The Story of the Scandinavian Settlements in the Forty Miles Bush, New Zealand* to the topic of "Dairy Farming". It is not without some pride that he names all of 7 Danish emigrants who in 1889 founded the *Mauriceville Dairy Company*, the area's first joint dairy. Two years later, the Danish vicar, H.M. Ries, was instrumental in the establishment of a joint dairy in Norsewood.

Even though there must obviously have been other examples of Danish dairy initiatives in New Zealand, as it will already have become apparent, little evidence of this has made its way into the literature. The pioneer among Danish-Australian historians, Jens Lyng, writes in his book from 1939, *The Scandinavians in Australia, New Zealand and the Western Pacific*, that in the field of dairying, Scandinavian emigrants performed a special service to their new homeland. "Modern dairying is Denmark's contribution to the progress of mankind", he says at one point and goes on to mention a number of examples of how Danish dairy technology has been exported.

Dairy-farming had come to New Zealand by the turn of the century and Danish know-how in this special area could take its share of the credit. One



The Mauriceville Dairy Company – founded in 1889.  
(From the book *Forest Homes*).

specific indication of this was a small notice about a young Dane in New Zealand published in the magazine *Vore udvandrede landsmænd* [*Our Emigrated Landsmen*]. His name was J. Pedersen and, according to the magazine, he was a dairy consultant for all of New Zealand. Having completed his education as a dairyman, he visited, among other places, The Netherlands and Denmark, but in 1903 he obtained a position in New Zealand in Palmerston North.

## New Zealand Competes on the British Market

It was immediately noted in Danish dairying circles when in the mid-1890s butter (and cheese) from New Zealand entered the British marketplace. In the beginning, imports from New Zealand accounted for no more than a few per cent of the market, so the problem had not yet become a serious one. In 1914 Denmark continued to be responsible for 42% of the British import of butter, whereas New Zealand had only 9%. And even though by 1911 there were over half a million milk cows in New Zealand, Denmark

was still far ahead with 1.3 million. The first Danish cow testing association had begun operations in 1895, and when the first cow testing association was started in New Zealand in 1909, over one-sixth of the Danish herds were regularly inspected by an association assistant.

Developments in New Zealand were carefully followed in Danish agricultural journals. Because the seasons in Denmark are opposite those in New Zealand, butter production in Denmark was at its highest in June and July and in New Zealand from October to March. The good refrigeration capacity in New Zealand, however, made it possible to distribute shipments over most of the year. This combination of circumstances eliminated some of the advantages Denmark had because of its proximity to the main market.

It was therefore with some relief that Danes heard in 1907 that New Zealand, whose butter production had grown over the years, would now concentrate more on the manufacture and export of cheese. The farmer was to receive the equivalent of 15-20 Danish øre per kilo butter fat.

The rumour held true. As late as 1920, cheddar cheese, in particular, represented New Zealand's dairy industry on the British market.



Jersey cows grazing near Dannevirke.

The First World War gave overseas exporters of agricultural products new opportunities in the old country. The fighting finally stopped supplies from the Continent altogether, and their supply lines to the Empire became of prime importance to the British. In 1918 the Ministry of Food offered to buy all the dairy products Australia and New Zealand could put on the market. In consequence, a 2-year contract at fixed prices was signed which required the British to pay freight costs and to take on the insurance risk. This arrangement was included in the so-called *Commandeer Agreement*. A country like Denmark was unwilling to be bound to a contract over a long period of time, and, in the short term, this meant that Danes were able to get higher prices than their overseas competitors. This put Australia and New Zealand in an uncomfortable position price-wise – a position they didn't get out of until December 1920. Then, even though it was possible to get higher prices in the first months of 1921, a liberalisation of the food trade took effect on 1 April 1921, resulting in a sharp drop in prices. Things were scarcely improved by the fact that the cold stores were bulging with butter.

These developments in the British marketplace were most unfortunate from a Danish point of view. In an official report it was admitted that Danish dairy farmers felt themselves hard pressed by New Zealand. Official comments on the situation made by New Zealanders and their organisations were studied carefully. Several times in the course of 1922, New Zealand dairymen attempted to force their government to establish central control of the supply of butter on the British market. The means suggested for accomplishing this was a union of all the dairies in New Zealand Dairies Ltd. together with the establishment of a new organisation, a New Zealand Dairy Produce Control Board, which would attempt to control the market, and thereby the pricing schedule by issuing export permits. Furthermore, it was felt that more emphasis should be placed on the production of cheese, since the Danes, with their low rate of exchange on the kroner, had a competitive advantage on the butter market.

The English trade world, "Tooley Street", as the New Zealand dairymen called it, thwarted all their hopes of a controlled supply, and everything remained as it was. Just as it had been prior to 1914, it was now simply a question of the most important suppliers of butter to Great Britain out-competing one another. But if this was to be the case, then it was high time to call a spade a spade. In 1923 the Danish agricultural attaché in London, Harald Faber, brought suit against a firm which had sold New Zealand butter under the designation: *Buttercup. Finest Danish Butter*.

In the mid-twenties, Harald Faber's colleague in Washington, S. Sørensen, wanted to carry out a study of the Danish dairy industry's competitive position on the international market. In 1925, therefore, the Danish Minis-

try of Agriculture asked him to conduct such a study by travelling to, among other places, Australia and New Zealand. He was, however, carefully instructed that under no circumstances should he discuss the possibility of a joint Danish-New Zealand coordination of butter exports to Great Britain.

S. Sørensen made a full report of his impressions from the trip to the South Sea Islands. It is remarkable, however, that although his report describes in detail the dairy farms of New Zealand and the dairy industry with which they are associated, it contains no mention of Danish dairymen or of their importance in local development.

According to S. Sørensen, the approximately 40,000 New Zealand dairy farmers had a great advantage over their Danish counterparts because their operating expenses were so much lower. Their cattle could be left outdoors year round on large, rich grazing lands. As Sørensen put it, he could scarcely bear to think what it might lead to if these meadows could be made to produce even more grass. In comparison with 1,400 Danish district dairies, there were 515 in New Zealand, and their larger average production gave lower production costs. Nutritionally speaking, there was nothing whatsoever wrong with the products from New Zealand and Australia.



A dairy farm near Lepperton.

On the other hand, Sørensen had to agree with his colleagues in New Zealand that their butter had no distinctive taste, at least not when compared with Danish butter. Neutralising the butyric acid and pasteurising the cream made the butter taste like margarine. To add insult to injury, boric acid was often added to the butter to make it keep better on the long journey to Great Britain.

If the consumers continued to prefer butter with a distinctive flavour, the Danish industry would continue to have something of an advantage. The high prices paid for Danish butter confirmed this theory. Not surprisingly, attempts were made to take advantage of this difference in quality. As of 15 November 1926, there was a law stating that Danish butter for the export market had to be stamped with the net weight and the production date. In this way, the British retailers could see with their own eyes exactly how old the Danish butter was on the day it was delivered.

Prior to this there had been a year of bitter argument among the organisations concerned. The Danish agricultural attaché in London, Harald Faber, had great misgivings about the agreement because, as he said with trepidation, now the buyers could not help but see that Danish butter was not as fresh as they had always thought it was.

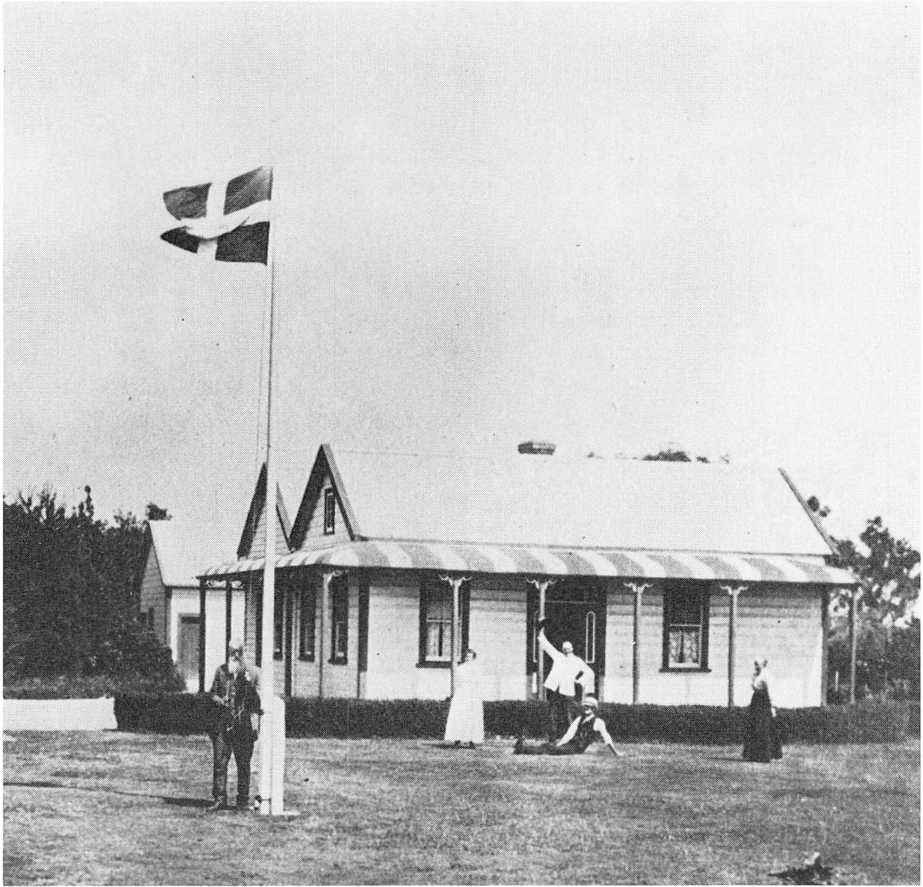
As a curiosity, it should be noted that in 1925 a company in Odense sent a consignment of Danish butter to a big butter exhibition in Auckland. On arrival, it tasted just about as old as butter from New Zealand did when it finally reached the British Isles! This incident caused quite a commotion and aroused a storm of indignation in Danish dairying circles.

It is only fair to mention that Harald Faber was a declared opponent of evaluating competing qualities of butter. Danish butter was clearly the best in his opinion, and he saw no reason to certify this. He felt it would create too much of a stir and would suggest that Danes hadn't enough faith in the excellence of their own product.

New Zealand's dairymen had, for their part, not quite forgotten their hope of controlling the supply of butter. As early as August 1923, they had prepared the ground for the new organisation, the "Dairy Produce Control Board", and after two years of planning and studies, the organisation, governed by a 12-member steering committee, began operations on 1 August 1926.

Initiatives of this kind were duly noted in Danish agricultural journals. As mentioned previously, there is little doubt that Danish dairy farmers looked askance at the faraway business their former landsmen had a part in. But, in truth, there is some question as to how many Danish farmers were actually affected. Brief notices and obituaries in the organisation Dansk Samvirke's magazine, *Danmarksposten*, more than suggested that any feeling of "Danishness" was fast dying out in New Zealand. Towards the end of

1926, for example, the magazine noted that one of the oldest Danes in New Zealand, Hans Callesen, had died at the age of 82. He had emigrated to New Zealand as a young man in 1867 to join D.G. Monrad's settlement in Karere on the North Island. Here he had lived a long and active life which was crowned with peaceful retirement in Palmerston North.



Hans Callesen photographed beside the flagpole at his home "Valhalla".

## Danish Dairying Loses Ground in Great Britain

As previously mentioned, as of 1 August 1926 New Zealand dairymen attempted to regulate the sale of butter on the British market. But, once again, they proved to be up against an adversary that was not to be easily subdued. Such a storm arose in "Tooley Street" that in March 1927 all attempts to gain direct influence on prices were given up. Danish newspa-



pers and magazines painted a depressing picture of New Zealand dairying's situation. As far as milk cows were concerned, the past several years had, in fact, been a catastrophe. The quantities of butter in the cold stores had led to a drastic fall in prices, and the Control Board's attempt to control the supply had, in fact, made conditions even worse. Marking Danish butter with the production date had clearly improved the Danes' market position. In comparison, New Zealand butter had an unpleasant taste of soda due to neutralisation of the sour cream used in production, and its texture was a little too thick and sticky. It was, therefore, very difficult to sell New Zealand butter in the Midlands and West England. Consumers in both these areas had become used to the aroma and flavour characteristic of Danish butter. In their own professional journal, *The New Zealand Dairyman*, New Zealand farmers could read that Danish butter was unquestionably the world leader.

In spite of this, there was still some optimism in New Zealand as the 1920s drew to a close. Almost half the butter for export could be sold at fixed prices f.o.b. via long-term contracts with English buyers. It presented more of a problem that there was scarcely enough butter available from May to November, during which months Danes and Irishmen led the market. One-third of the butter imported by England came from Denmark and one-fifth of it from New Zealand.

The situation remained stable well into 1930, but then the prices began to give way. In the beginning, *The New Zealand Dairyman* was of the opinion that this was due to an increase in the price of Danish butter caused by market speculation. This, in turn, created problems for the cold stores' butter from Australia and New Zealand. But it soon became clear that the market was simply flooded, and the result was a rapid decrease in prices towards the end of 1930.

The situation did not improve the following year, on the contrary, it worsened, and this led to increased pressure on the English authorities. The Commonwealth countries demanded preferential treatment on the food market of the mother country, and as of 29 February 1932, steps were taken to meet at least some of these demands. An ad valorem duty of 10% was introduced for butter and eggs. It was intended that this should give the colonies a competitive advantage, and this advantage became even more pronounced when on 16 November that same year, the terms were changed, and a volume duty of 15 s. per cwt. was introduced.

An already suffering Danish dairy industry viewed these developments fearfully. Th. Rosenstand, then principal of Korinth Agricultural School, and who in the 1920s had served as a control assistant in New Zealand, wrote a long article in *Andelsbladet* about "cattle raising and dairying among our competitors in New Zealand and Australia". Here he maintained that

throughout the past 15 years these two areas had made great efforts to improve their dairy industry. Denmark, on the other hand, had rested on its laurels and trusted that its technological lead would insure it against surprises. In New Zealand, school children were taught that Denmark was the competitor to keep a watchful eye on. But in Denmark there was little knowledge of the actual conditions on the world market for butter. In his opinion, Danish dairymen could learn a lot from their colleagues in New Zealand, in particular, when it came to standards of cleanliness and better methods of cooling the milk on the individual farm. Prior to milking in New Zealand, the cow's udder and teats were washed in warm water, and when the milking was done, the cement floor of the milk house was scoured and scrubbed.

The average New Zealand dairy was approximately 4 times the size of a typical district dairy in Denmark. In addition, New Zealanders made better use of modern technology. For example, they pasteurised milk at lower temperatures, and therefore more slowly, than was possible using the high pasteurisation method still used in most Danish dairies. Principal Rosenstand concluded his article by stating that it was high time Danish farmers retrenched.

As suggested earlier, the New Zealand producers and their organisations were not bound by ideological notions of the inviolability of the fundamentals of free trade to the same degree as their Danish colleagues. Again and again, sometimes in cooperation with the government, New Zealanders had attempted to control the sale of their own dairy products. It is in this connection that both New Zealand's and Australia's 20% reduction in butter shipments in December 1932 and January 1933 (and again in December 1933 and January 1934) should be viewed. This action took some of the pressure off the market, but, on the other hand, the supply in cold storage increased accordingly. The New Zealand Minister of Finance was for his part willing to support the regulation of butter exports with the help of special quota agreements. But the Dairy Council felt this was out of the question at this time. Instead, an advertising campaign initiated in the British newspapers, in which it was pointed out that New Zealand butter was a good, *British* product, had some success.

The aforementioned Minister of Finance was more fortunate when in January 1933 he conceived the idea of depreciating the New Zealand £ against the British £ by the order of magnitude 125:100. The government accepted this proposal on 19 January 1933, and thus products from New Zealand gained another competitive advantage on the British market. Although it was never said in so many words, the corresponding Danish depreciation of the kroner against the £ from approx. 1:19 to approx. 1:22.40, carried out in the so-called *Kanslergade Agreement* on 30 January

1933, can be seen as a kind of counteraction to the transactions in New Zealand.

New Zealand's dairy industry was undeniably successful on the British market in the early 1930s. In an article in *Andelsbladet* in 1934, agricultural instructor Harald Nielsen painted a somewhat disheartening picture of the situation. In just two years New Zealand had increased its export of butter to Great Britain by 16%. According to Harald Nielsen, the only bright spot, from the Danish point of view, was the extra 30-50 øre per kilo Danish butter still commanded on the British market.

But an England in a period of crisis could not afford to pay extra to put Danish butter on the table. In the course of 1934, New Zealand imports outdistanced Danish by a total of 10,000 tonnes. This happened at a time when the market was weak and prices little better than in the worst period of 1931-32. This created a painful situation for the New Zealand farmer, and the government had to step in with a generous aid programme.

Even though the Dairy Export Council was given greater authority to regulate both exports and production, export trade continued to be carried out on a private basis. Most New Zealand butter was sold on consignment by 28 export firms, and, if statements made at the time are to be believed, many purely speculative transactions took place.

The liberal government could not, however, reach agreement on a basic change in attitude in regard to the free versus the regulated sale of dairy products. In December 1935, Labour took over the government, thus paving the way for a dramatic change of course. A special *Primary Products Marketing Act* ensured the necessary legal framework for the market agreement instituted on 1 August 1936. The government hereby guaranteed the prices of dairy products based on the average price obtained over the past 8-10 years. When, in accordance with this agreement, the government took over a shipment of goods, it became government responsibility to sell at the best possible price. The national treasury was to cover any loss incurred, or collect any profit. The motivating factors behind this system of guarantees were the desire to maintain the stability and efficiency of the dairy industry and to insure the standard of living of those involved.

When it came time to renegotiate the prices for 1937-38, a debate on the principle of the system arose between the government and the dairy industry. Both parties could quickly agree that "under normal circumstances every competent producer should be ensured a return on his business which will enable him and his family to maintain a reasonable standard of living...". It was, however, virtually impossible to reach agreement when it came to a more precise statement of what was meant by this. Whereas the producers demanded a 25% increase in the price of butter, the government offered a little less than 6% – and that was the final result. This naturally led

to many bitter comments from the dairymen. They claimed that their increased expenses had eaten up the advantages the agreement would otherwise have given them. The farmers were made especially bitter by the fact that their assistants were tempted by the high wages paid for work in the public sector. In short, the stated salary level was too high. Finally, the dairymen felt that as prices in 1937-38 were on the increase, the profit earned under the terms of the government agreement should be paid back to the producers and not paid into a fund for equalising profitable and less profitable years.

The space devoted to New Zealand market controls in the Danish agricultural press was the converse of the Danish authorities' desire to follow-up on the idea. They sat back with clean hands and falling sales, but with prices that continued to be higher than average. The new Danish government consultant in England, S. Sørensen, probably did not agree with his superiors on this issue. In any case, he found it necessary to update his report from 1925 on "The Dairy Industry in the Southern Hemisphere". This update was sent to the Ministry of Agriculture in Copenhagen on 18 February 1939, and a few days later it was published in the weekly bulletin *Landbrugsraadets Meddelelser*.

He was primarily interested in the conditions in New Zealand. In 1925 that country had exported 63 million kilos of butter, by 1939 that amount had doubled. Together with Australia, New Zealand had a 40% share of the world's butter market. Even though the number of milk cows in New Zealand had increased from 1.31 million to 1.94 million, the increase in production was largely due to increased productivity. Even though 9/10s of the approximately 8 million hectares of agricultural land were still in grazing land, this land was better cared for and more generously fertilised than previously. The use of Jersey and Guernsey bulls continued to increase the yield of the cows, as well as the fat content of the milk. In 1924 the average cow produced 100 kg. butter per year, in 1939 it produced 110-115 kg. Approximately 3/4s of the cows were now milked by machine. According to the government consultant, the guaranteed prices were so advantageous that in the years to come New Zealand producers would no doubt increase their production and, likewise, their export of butter.

The Second World War broke out a little over 6 months later, and New Zealand dairymen soon received a message from London: Go right ahead and increase your production. We guarantee prices that will make it profitable to produce butter and cheese for the British market.

## Epilogue

In contrast to the conditions which prevailed during the First World War,

from 1940 to 1945 Danish agricultural exports were completely cut off from the British market. Although New Zealand and other overseas exporters now had a free hand, the market-itself and pricing mechanisms were far from free. The local economy was locked into a tight distribution network, and it was difficult to get labour. Military call-ups put a large hole in the reserve of young and younger men that New Zealand agriculture had always been able to count on.

German-occupied Denmark had little opportunity during the war to follow New Zealand agriculture in the strides it was making as the main supplier of animal agricultural products to the British market. Great interest was therefore aroused in dairying circles when, in the autumn of 1946, The Danish Agricultural Organisations and The Royal Danish Farm Household Society decided to send another reporter to New Zealand.

They chose to send agronomist Johan Rottensteen, who had worked in the Agricultural Organisations' secretariat for several years. It became his task to form an impression of the current position of Australian and New Zealand agriculture. In November and December 1946 he travelled throughout New Zealand so that he would later be able to report on the situation as he saw it. No revolutionary changes had taken place since the reports previously made by his colleague, S. Sørensen. But he put great emphasis on the fact that New Zealand dairying had much lower operating costs than Danish. This made it possible for New Zealanders to sell at a price of 200 s. per cwt. butter on the English market, whereas the Danes had to ask 340 s. Denmark's 1,700 dairies were far more expensive to operate than New Zealand's 400.

Johan Rottensteen's report did differ from S. Sørensen's on one point. Where Sørensen made no mention of Danish emigrants, Rottensteen did describe one in particular. This was the former gardener from the island of Funen, Peter Hansen, who for many years operated a dairy farm in Kauwhata near Palmerston North. His diligent work had resulted in the establishment of a cooperative dairy, *Te Awahui Cooperative Dairy*, and in the construction of a community centre and a school. He was still much interested in Denmark and Danish conditions as witnessed by a description of him given in Lotte Eskelund's good book from 1955, *Månen vender forkert* [*The Moon Faces the Wrong Way*]. In the book she describes the three years she and her husband, Consul-general Karl Eskelund, spent in New Zealand after he was appointed consul-general in Wellington in the autumn of 1945.

Although few managed to create a new life for themselves as farmers in New Zealand, there was a large influx of Danish immigrants in the 1950s, a decade which, in that respect, was reminiscent of the 1870s. Correspondingly, Danish dairymen had by no means lost interest in developments "out

there". Although the time would come when competition would take place on an open market, the sale of dairy products on the English market continued to be based on official long-term contracts, exactly as it had been during the war, well into the 1950s.

Danes were especially interested at this point in the New Zealanders' experience in the merging of several dairies into one. In the autumn of 1956, therefore, Dairy Consultant Sigurd Nielsen of the Dairy Office in Århus was sent to New Zealand and Australia to study this issue. He found that, of the original 400 dairies, there were only 130 functioning dairies left and that the *New Zealand Cooperative Dairy* controlled a third of these. A farmer could now care for 60-70 cows, something no Danish farmer would dream of. In Denmark a herd of that size required a permanent herdsman and a staff to match. Sigurd Nielsen's report played a significant role in the preparation of the structural changes which Danish dairying underwent in the 1960s and 1970s.

As pointed out previously, Danish farmers have always shown great interest in developments in New Zealand. The most important aspect of this has been the competitive relationship of the two countries on the English market, not least after Denmark joined the Common Market. Then it soon became apparent that New Zealand dairying had priority on the British market in the form of a guaranteed generous share of the market for butter and cheese.

Although the current article can give only a rough outline of the situation, one is left with the impression that Danish dairy technology, in the broadest sense, has played a very important role in the development of dairying in New Zealand. It is, therefore, my hope that in the near future research will be carried out which can show in greater detail exactly how this development took place. It will then be possible to write a most central chapter in the international history of the dairy industry.

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7. Johan Rottensteen: *Australien og New Zealand [Australia and New Zealand]*. Copenhagen, 1947.
8. S. Sørensen: *Mejeribruget på den sydlige halvkugle [The Dairy Industry in the Southern Hemisphere]*. Copenhagen, 1925.
9. Various articles in the periodical publications, *Andelsbladet* and *Landbrugsraadets Meddelelser*.

Acknowledgement:

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# The New Workers' Paradise.

## The Danish Picture of New Zealand Before the First World War

by Jørgen Würtz Sørensen



Danes participating in a May Day celebration in Wellington, probably 1911-13.



## Introduction

Emigration played a significant role in all European countries, including Denmark, in the period leading up to the First World War. Newspapers, magazines and books, with their more or less believable accounts of conditions in countries to which their citizens commonly emigrated, often promoted or hindered a decision to emigrate. Most of the tremendous amount of information to potential emigrants dealt with conditions in the United States and only to a lesser degree with conditions in Argentina, Canada and Australia. At least up to the turn of the century, the Danes' knowledge of New Zealand was extremely limited. In his article on Danish emigration to New Zealand, Peter Birkelund points out that what little emigration there was to New Zealand came about as a result of that country's government supported initiatives, most of which were taken in the 1870s.

The Danish picture of New Zealand long remained a rather blurred one. Some had, of course, heard that gold had been found there, and that there occasionally were rather violent confrontations with the native Maori population, but such descriptions were primarily thought of as exotic tales from a faraway land. And in the 1880s, when the New Zealand government stopped its economic support of Danish emigrants, emigration more or less ceased. The picture of New Zealand did not have sufficient allure to overshadow the high cost of travel and other difficulties, which kept most from even considering emigration to that distant place. This was especially true at a time when opportunities to travel to the United States, and much more cheaply at that, were so good.

### “Our Antipodes”

This lack of interest in emigration to New Zealand did not mean that there was no interest in that country among the Danes. On the contrary, from the turn of the century this interest began to grow. This can be seen from the fact that in Denmark (as in other countries in Scandinavia) books and brochures about New Zealand began to appear, and the country was also the subject of many lectures. Many of the authors and lecturers of the time shared a fascination in the fact that New Zealanders appeared to be the very “antipodes” of the Danes. Here was a country which, although diametrically opposite Denmark on the globe, seemed so surprisingly similar. In 1903 a university student, L.C. Schou, published a small pamphlet about “The Newest World. New Zealand” in which he sketched this strange phenomenon. He wrote among other things:

“There are perhaps not many Danes who know very much about this country which lies almost on the opposite side of the Earth, with the



A Maori woman (circa 1884).

feet of its inhabitants pointing towards us. And yet, perhaps of all the pioneer countries, it is in New Zealand soil that Danes will find the best conditions in which to be ‘transplanted’ and where their lives can be most like what they are at home.”<sup>1</sup>

This impression of New Zealand as a virtual “Denmark in the Pacific” was formed in these years, and, to a great extent, it was maintained. The lack of interest in New Zealand (but, as regards Europe, perhaps also in The Netherlands) stemmed undoubtedly from the feeling that although the country was far distant, it was similar to Denmark in many ways and, therefore, lacked the exotic and alien elements to claim our attention. Some authors were, however, not only fascinated by the similarities to be found in “our antipodes”. For, in the same year that L.C. Schou’s pamphlet appeared, Pastor J. Sass, who had served as a clergyman in New Zealand, made the following report:

“The inhabitants are our antipodes; their feet are turned towards ours, and in all things they are so strangely opposite. Their Christmas smells of roses and strawberries, while Midsummer Night’s Eve is as raw and rainy as a day in autumn with us”.<sup>2</sup> Sass went on to say that the Maories who “originally were an abundant and very wild race of people who practiced cannibalism” had become Christian and, on the whole, civilised. The men now dressed for the most part in European clothes, and in many respects they were just as clever and wily as the white colonists. Yes, in Sass’ view, New Zealand had become a most civilised society, even though he had to admit that it was often difficult for Maori women to cope with the new times. As he reported in 1903:

“The women, on the other hand, are still far behind, as is often the case with all newly converted Christians. Their figures are ungainly and shapeless, they are childlike and conceited and tend to prefer loud colours and ridiculous decoration. They present themselves with shells and feathers in their tousled hair, short skirts, bare legs, little clay pipes in their mouths, a pig in their arms instead of a lapdog, and they can spit as far as any sailor. A lovely picture, isn’t it?”<sup>3</sup>

## New Paradise for Workers

The most extensive description of conditions in New Zealand appeared in the same year as the reports from Sass and L.C. Schou, when the author and adventurer, Walter Christmas, published the widely read book *Fremtidslände. Australien og New Zealand [Lands of Promise. Australia and New Zealand]*. His book described the history, the fauna and flora, the native

population, business, etc. of New Zealand in great detail, but most important of all was the overall picture of New Zealand as a paradise, especially for the common man. Here the first seeds were sown, and the blurred picture of New Zealand as a far away place began to give way to what was to become a model for the small Scandinavian countries. This was especially apparent in the introduction to the chapter on New Zealand in which Walter Christmas printed a letter from a Danish emigrant, Georg M. Hassing, who had settled in Heddon Bush, Southland. Hassing made generous use of superlatives when in his letter he, among other things, concluded:

“I live in a country which is in full bloom thanks to a long, completely undisturbed period of development and thanks to the current government’s wise laws and liberal principles. Every person, man and woman alike, who is 21 years of age is eligible to vote. Here the women have equal rights with men when it comes to occupying many kinds of government positions. Among teachers, doctors and lawyers there are a number of women, and they acquit themselves well. Here on the island even some of the mayors are women. Our Courts of Conciliation and Arbitration deal with every disagreement between employees and employers, making strikes an unknown calamity here. The working hours are everywhere 8 hours a day with a half day of rest in mid-week in addition to Sunday off. Every limitation as to the manufacture and sale of spirits is determined by the citizens themselves. The voters are heard on this question via a special poll taken all over the country every third year.

I am convinced that there nowhere else on Earth is a freer, healthier, happier country than New Zealand. Even the way in which colonists are helped to obtain land – not only is it easy to find good soil, but they are also advanced sums of money to be paid back on the easiest possible terms over a long period of time – marks New Zealand’s government as the world’s most liberal and most humane. Neither the spiritual tyranny of the State Church nor the inherited power of the landed gentry exist here. It is such considerations as these, and not the many thousands of miles, which make us out here feel we are so far from the old country, where, in spite of the most energetic efforts, the working class continues to live under the tyranny of Capital and, not least, tradition. Permit me to express such feelings in this letter to you, Dear C., you can have no idea of how wonderful it is to be able to sing the praises of one’s new homeland, knowing that no praise is too great.”<sup>4</sup>

The political changes which had taken place in the country since 1891, when the Social-Liberal party had taken over power from the big conserva-

tive land owners, formed the basis for such praise from Hassing, Walter Christmas and others. Also in Europe there was growing interest in the "New Zealand experiment", and in the party's dominance under the leadership of Richard John Seddon (1893-1906). Europeans looked either with enthusiasm or loathing on the implementation of a number of social and political reforms, which, in retrospect, can be said to have laid the foundation for the modern welfare state in New Zealand, or, as it was called in the Scandinavian countries at the time, "The Workers' Paradise".<sup>5</sup>

It might be supposed that such praise of this "paradise for women and workers" would strengthen the desire to settle in this, the happiest country in the world, but as Peter Birkelund's study shows, this did not happen, at least not to any great extent. In spite of a growing and, for the most part, positive interest in New Zealand in the period from the turn of the century up to the start of the First World War, there was little change in the modest number of emigrants to New Zealand. This was partly because the cost of travel continued to limit emigration, but it was also due to the changing public image of New Zealand in Denmark and in Scandinavia in general. It was no longer primarily looked upon as a possible destination for emigration, but as the very first example of the realization of many of the ideas put forward by the Danish Social-Liberals (both before and after the party's actual formation in 1905) and fought for by members of the Social Democratic Labour movement. New Zealand now became the model for the Labour movement, one of the premises of which was that one should not emigrate, but stay and fight for the improvement of conditions in Denmark. New Zealand became both a model for these people and, at the same time, proof that it was possible to carry out the social and democratic reforms which the conservatives in Denmark had up to that time described as unrealistic fantasy.

Now the Danish and Swedish Social Democrats could maintain that the New Zealand Liberal Party, which had taken over in 1891, had demonstrated that "State Socialism", as it was called in the debate, worked. Walter Christmas himself concluded that "State Socialism, if in a somewhat modified, experimental form, had taken control of New Zealand, and even the most bitter opponents of socialistic theories cannot deny that when carried out in practice, as was done in New Zealand, they brought the colony the greatest progress and well-being".<sup>6</sup> From the turn of the century, the experience gained in New Zealand became a popular topic of talks given by Nordic Social Democrats in the Workers' Educational Association, the People's University, students' organisations, socialist youth organisations, etc. It was no longer necessary merely to refer to socialist theories, New Zealand could now be used to demonstrate them in practice.

It was undoubtedly of great psychological importance to be able to point

to a country in which the 8-hour day had been implemented, where women had the vote, where tax and land laws had limited the power of the upper class, etc. Added to this was the fact that New Zealand had established a labour market Conciliation Board which hindered major conflicts, and to a great extent also protected labourers. There was also extensive factory legislation which prohibited child labour, and provided for a minimum wage, the democratic organisation of the educational system and, not least, a pension for the elderly, etc. As Pastor Sass also concluded in his writings on the country: "New Zealand is in my opinion one of the happiest countries in the world...the government is very democratic, the system of education excellent, and nowhere else on Earth are life and property safer than here." It was reforms such as these that the Danish Labour movement was fighting for at the time.

This picture of the "Workers' Paradise" was often somewhat distorted, however, by the Labour movements in the Scandinavian countries. In truth, the New Zealand liberal government wanted not a socialist society in the European sense, but a non-socialist, democratic society with greater emphasis on equality. Speakers often forgot to mention that this ideal of equality had not yet been reached, and that although women did have the vote, they could not yet stand for election themselves, etc. By the same token, little emphasis was put on the fact that growing numbers of the working class in New Zealand were dissatisfied with the Conciliation Board which, in reality, had prohibited strikes. In 1908 this dissatisfaction led to the establishment of the militant union, the New Zealand Federation of Miners (one year later renamed the Federation of Labour), which consciously placed itself outside the legislative system, and in the years leading up to the First World War was involved in extensive labour conflicts.<sup>8</sup>

In spite of a certain distortion, from the turn of the century and up until the start of the First World War, the experience gained from New Zealand's social reforms, or "State Socialism", played an important role in the struggle of Danish and Swedish Social Democrats to develop the Scandinavian welfare state. Important because, from the beginning of the 1890s, New Zealand had shown that such reforms could apparently be put into practice, but also important because it was felt that these experiences could be directly transferred to the Scandinavian countries. It was possible to use New Zealand in this way simply because there was a more or less justified belief that the conditions in New Zealand were similar to conditions in the Nordic countries, perhaps most similar to those in Denmark. All this made New Zealand a good "model", and even Scandinavian opponents of "State Socialism" were forced to take the "New Zealand experiment" seriously. While the Social-Liberals and Social Democrats voiced their praise for the reforms, conservatives voiced scepticism and warned against such policy.

In Denmark, New Zealand became the “scare image” theme of a number of talks, and in Sweden two publications appeared in which the authors attempted to show that “State Socialism” had led to catastrophe. If it was possible to speak of a “Workers’ Paradise” it was certainly also, according to these authors, possible to speak of a “Hell for Initiative and Trade”.



Sheep-shearers.

Scandinavians in New Zealand were also frequently quoted in these scare image evaluations. In contrast to those who were so pleased, these people could report that the country had suffered inconceivable trade losses, that taxes had multiplied many times over and that bans, regulations, etc. had destroyed the freedom of the individual.<sup>9</sup>

### “A Denmark in the Pacific”

New Zealand never occupied a central position in the minds of Danes as a potential destination for emigration. In order to tempt the Danes, New Zealand authorities had to initiate special campaigns to promote emigration and to provide economic support, as illustrated by the number of those who emigrated in the 1870s and 1950s. As described above, this did not mean that Danes had no picture at all of New Zealand, or that this picture was negative. Especially after 1890, there was a growing interest in New Zealand in Denmark and in Scandinavia in general, not as a goal for emigration, but as a model for State Socialism, or, perhaps more accurately, the development of a “welfare state”. That New Zealand could serve as a model (for fewer a “bugbear”) can be taken as an indication that, in many respects, many Danes thought of New Zealand as a kind of “Denmark in the Pacific”. A country with surprising similarity to Denmark and whose status as our antipodes emphasised a mutual connection. When L.C. Schou in 1903 could write that New Zealand was one of the “pioneer countries where Danes find the best conditions in which to be ‘transplanted’ and where their lives can be most like what they are at home”,<sup>1</sup> one might expect that this would have strengthened the desire to emigrate. In fact, parallels like this contributed to the picture Danes had of a country which was very like their own, and it is more likely that this did nothing to strengthen their desire to emigrate. In emigrating one sought to find something different. Instead, the positive experiences from New Zealand could be used to argue that this was also the way things could be at home, as like New Zealand, Denmark was also a little country on the international stage.

After 1910, when the liberal reform experiment lost impetus in step with economic crisis and conflicts on the labour market, the picture of New Zealand as a “Workers’ Paradise” began to fade. Based on the implementation of similar social reforms in Denmark and Scandinavia, New Zealand came to represent a “welfare state” for better or worse. Although no longer thought of as a society without conflict, it was still a good, little society based on democratic freedom and about which, like Denmark, it was possible to say that “few have too much and fewer too little”.

In spite of the fact that Denmark and New Zealand were fierce competitors on the world butter market (see the article in this volume by Erik



Helmer Petersen), the mutual, cultural connection of the two countries continued to be a central element in the Danes' picture of New Zealand. It wasn't that Danes had a thorough knowledge of, for example, the economic and political development of New Zealand after the First World War – this was, after all, not necessary, as New Zealanders and Danes had so much in common. When later New Zealand was occasionally mentioned in the Danish media, attempts were often made to emphasise this similarity and mutuality. This was true as late as in the 1980s when sympathy was aroused by the attack on *Rainbow Warrior* in Auckland harbour and the New Zealand authorities' conflict with the "intolerable" nuclear-armed and experimenting Frenchmen. It was felt that Prime Minister Longe and the people of New Zealand reacted in just the way the Danes would have. New Zealand's conflict with the United States regarding nuclear-armed warships also reflected the feelings of many Danes. Here was a little, progressive, democratic country who stood up to the giants. Danish evaluations were rarely based on much concrete knowledge or nuances, but a special sympathy was felt for "our antipodes" nonetheless. At times like these, it was easy enough to forgive them their mixed-up calendar of seasons.

Notes:

1. L.C. Schou: *Den nyeste Verden. New-Zealand [The Newest World. New Zealand]*. (1903) p. 3.
2. J. Sass: "Fra den femte Verdensdel" [From the fifth part of the world] in: *Vore udvandrede Landsmænd [Our Emigrated Landsmen]*. (1903) p. 34.
3. *ibid.* p. 35.
4. Walter Christmas: *Fremtidslande. Australien og Ny Zealand [Lands of Promise. Australia and New Zealand]*. (1903) p. 233.
5. See Erland Kolding Nielsen: *Australien, Oceanien og Antarktis [Australia, Oceania and the Antarctic]*. (1980) p. 359 regarding Seddon's (or King Dick, as he was called) reform policies.
6. *ibid.* p. 292.
7. J. Sass, *op.cit.* p. 35.
8. Erland Kolding Nielsen, *op.cit.* p. 363.
9. See, for example, Carl Kastman, *Nya Seeland. Land och Folk. [New Zealand. Land and People]*, (1911), p. 68, as well as Julius Sellman, *Nya Zeeland. Arbetarnes paradis [New Zealand. The Workers' Paradise]*. (1908) p. 3.

# New Zealand and Scandinavia

by Ivo Holmqvist



The town of Dannevirke, founded by Scandinavian immigrants in the 1870s.

Although New Zealand-Scandinavian contacts reach far back in time, they remained sporadic for well over two centuries. Abel Tasman, the Dutch explorer believed to have been the first European captain to reach New Zealand, apparently numbered Scandinavian sailors in his crew in December 1642. But they are names only in the shipping records; nothing further is known of them.<sup>1</sup>

More than a hundred years later, the Swedish botanist, Daniel Solander, joined the first of James Cook's three antipodean explorations on board the *Endeavour*, which circumnavigated New Zealand from October 1769 to March 1770. His findings in Australia and New Zealand became well known in European botanical circles, and his exploits are kept in living memory, not least in Australia, as testified to by the Solander monument on the outskirts of Sydney.<sup>2</sup>

In the mid 1870s the noted botanist Sven Berggren of Lund University, a world authority on mosses and algae, visited the islands. In 1872 Samuel Butler's utopian novel *Erewhon* appeared, in part set on the South Island. In the following year, Berggren kept a diary and reported from Butler's plains: "I bought a horse to carry my tent and the necessary gear, and thanks to the benevolence of Dr. Haast I got hold of a guide to accompany me on my journey to the interior. Then I left Christchurch and cut across the Canterbury plains..."<sup>3</sup>

Apart from isolated occurrences like these, the earliest contacts were made by whalers and seal hunters. Many of them used the port of Bluff on the South Island as their base, and by the year 1800 they had formed a colony of sorts there. Portraits of these rough and stern looking men with full beards, colleagues and contemporaries of Herman Melville's Captain Ahab, can be seen in the Dunedin Early Settlers' Museum, where the walls are crammed with fascinating daguerreotypes.

Some decades later, several records of individual Scandinavian experiences in New Zealand begin to appear. In 1859, the Danish sailor G.M. Hassing jumped ship and ventured into the inland of the South Island. He was not the only one to do this, but he was one of the very few to describe his experiences at some length, in memoirs written late in life. Because of a rotten ship and a gale at Kerguelen Land, he almost did not make it at the outset: "Had it not been for the alertness and excellent seamanship of our genial skipper, I doubt if this humble article had ever been written."<sup>4</sup>

Hassing evidently played a minor role in enticing Danes to emigrate, at least indirectly. In 1901 a two-volume work about different "Lands of Promise" for those prone to leave their country was published in Denmark. It was written (and compiled) by Walter Christmas, a Dane in spite of his anglicized name, and a well-known and prolific writer of boys' stories. One of its chapters dealt with New Zealand, and in the preface its author duly

recognized his indebtedness to Hassing as one of his sources of information.

Hassing headed for the gold fields of Otago, and so did masses of other equally ambitious prospectors, some of them Scandinavian. Traces of them are scattered in the records of the activities in the mining fields, in ventures like *Scandinavian Mining Inc.* or the *Danish Gold Co.* Though they sound impressive enough, they were probably short-lived enterprises. Gold diggers were the most restless kind of migrants, and few of these Scandinavians are likely to have remained in New Zealand once their golden hopes disappeared into thin air. They moved on and left their barrack towns to be haunted by ghosts, and eventually invaded by tourists.<sup>5</sup>

The profile of one Danish settler in particular during these years is more marked than the rest, and his influence was felt both in Denmark and in New Zealand. After the disastrous outcome of the Danish-Prussian War of 1864, the Danish Prime Minister D.G. Monrad resigned from office. He chose to leave his homeland for a far-off country after his handling of foreign affairs had proved a failure, and headed for New Zealand.

As he had translated Manning's book, *Old New Zealand*, he was not unfamiliar with his destination. In some respects he was a fortunate and privileged settler, quite different from most of those who were to follow. He could rely on influential friends. "The advent of the Monrads caused something of a stir in Nelson social circles, and very soon what Ditlev called 'the honorabilia' started to call."<sup>6</sup> When Monrad and his family returned to Denmark in 1869, his eldest son stayed behind and became one of the pioneers of the New Zealand dairy industry, a field which was to attract many Danes in the following years.<sup>7</sup>

The first steps towards a mass emigration from Scandinavia to New Zealand were taken around the time of Monrad's return to Denmark (as outlined by Peter Birkelund elsewhere in this volume). In the years 1871 to 1876, around 3,200 Scandinavians arrived on board the fleet of emigrant ships, from the first one, the *Celaeno*, to the very last one, the *Terpsichore*. Passenger records kept by the captain were handed over to the port authorities upon arrival. They remain valuable source material for the emigrant researcher,<sup>8</sup> backed by the contemporary local press, where the progress of the newcomers was reported from their arrival to their taking up of new jobs and eventually land (with some unfortunate late stragglers left behind).

In the 1870s, the New Zealand government, for its own specific reasons, instigated campaigns to induce Scandinavian labourers to settle.<sup>9</sup> After 1850, previously heavy British unemployment had decreased rapidly, and the inflow of immigrants from the U.K. had diminished correspondingly. The opening up of Crown land in the interior of the North Island called for farmers who were also used to lumbering. The Scandinavians seemed a

good choice.

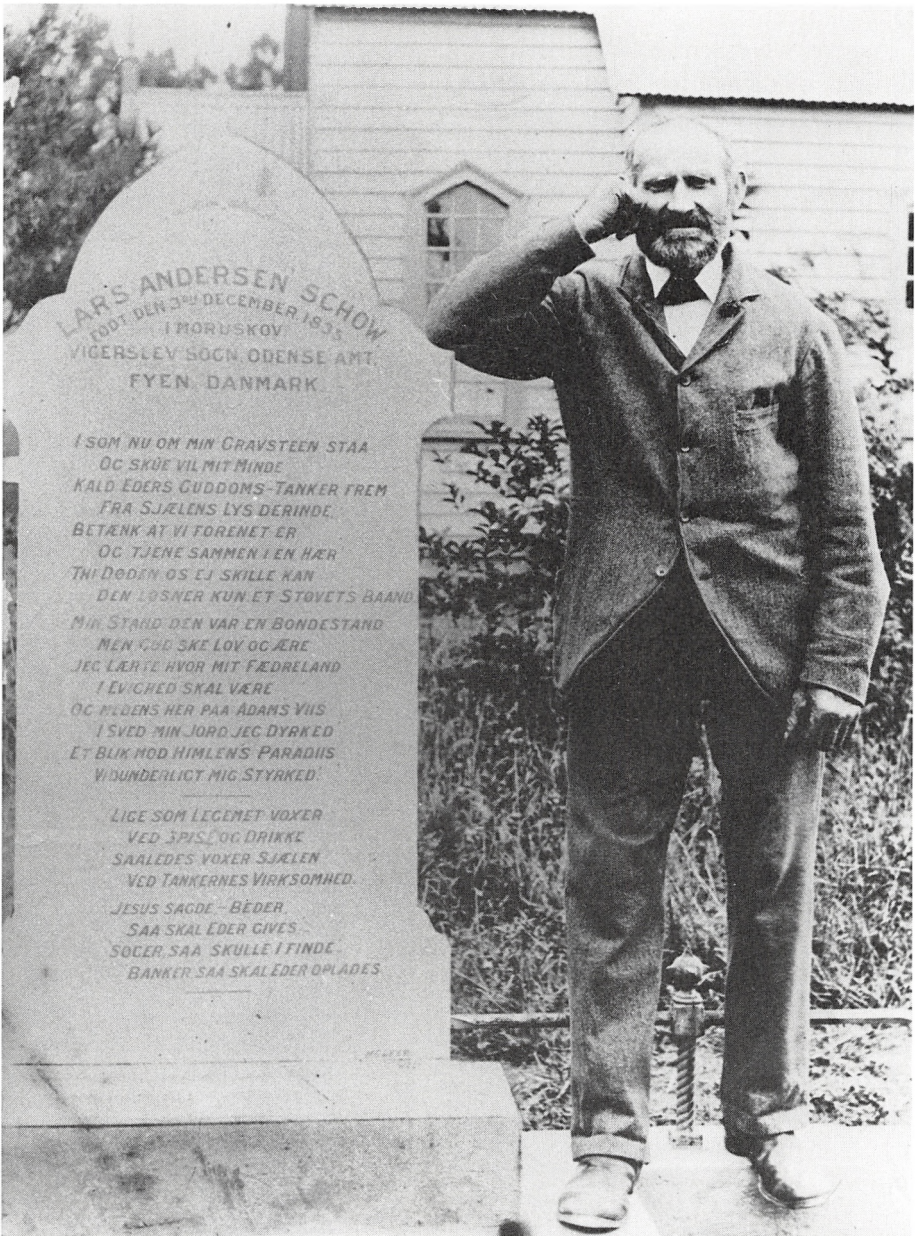
Agents were sent to Denmark, Sweden and Norway with the express purpose of recruiting immigrants. One of them, Bror Erik Friberg, acted the mediator as well, when the first groups of settlers arrived and were swallowed up by the public works scheme: "Nearly ever since the arrival of the immigrants at the Bush, a kind of low fever has been prevalent among them, in some cases ending fatally. The state of health has otherwise been good. No accidents of a serious nature have occurred, excepting a broken leg (-). At the time of writing, end of May, a schoolhouse at each settlement is completed. At Norsewood some 50, and at Dannevirke about 25 children will attend school."<sup>10</sup>

Indications of the Scandinavian immigration in these years can be found in the New Zealand censuses, held at five and ten year intervals, and in their columns the different stages of a gradual assimilation appear. According to the 1878 census, there were around 4,600 Scandinavians living in the country that year. It was a considerable body of immigrants, but only relatively so: this group formed only 1.25% of the entire population, as compared to the British settlers, who comprised 47%.

The Danes formed about 50% of the Scandinavian group, while Swedes and Norwegians made up the rest in almost equal numbers. According to the 1881 census, settlers of Scandinavian origin were living in six main regions. Around 1,000 people resided in the Hawkes Bay area, another 500 in the Wairarapa-Masterton area, including the townships of Mauriceville and Eketahuna/Mellemskov. 350 are recorded to have settled in the Manawatu-Palmerston North region, and another 300 in and around Wellington. On the South Island, a further 380 Scandinavians lived in or near Christchurch, and about 200 lived in the Westland region.

Some years before the turn of the century, L.A. Schow, very much a minor Danish poet who had emigrated to New Zealand from Vigerslev parish, Funen, gave voice to his feelings of double allegiance in a poem of many verses. In his unassuming pamphlet, privately printed at Masterton, his boy scout idealism probably gives a fair summing-up of the emotions prevalent among Danish emigrants at the time. If the Danes keep on swinging their pick axes, their toil will turn them into men and end in success:

“Vaagn op I danske Dreng  
Til Munterhed og Sang  
Vi nu New Zealand tjene  
Og blive nok til Mænd  
Men Først med Skovl og Spade  
En tid vi slæbe maa,  
Og dygtig svinge Hakken  
Om det os vel skal gaa”<sup>11</sup>



LARS ANDERSEN SCHOW  
FODT DEN 3<sup>DE</sup> DECEMBER 1835  
I MORUSKOV  
VIGERSLEV SOGN ODENSE AMT.  
FYEN, DANMARK.

I SOM NU OM MIN GRAVSTEEN STAA  
OC SKUE VIL MIT MINDE  
KALD ETERS GUDDOMS-TANKER FREM  
FRA SJAELENS LYS DERINDE.  
BETIENK AT VI FORENET ER  
OC T JENE SAMMEN I EN HÆR  
THI DØDEN OS EJ SKILLE KAN  
DEN LØSNER KUN ET STØVETS BAAND  
MIN STAND DEN VAR EN BONDESTAND  
MEN GUDS KE LOV OC ÆRE  
JEG LÆRTE HVOR MIT FÆDRELAND  
I EVIGHED SKAL VÆRE  
OC ELDENS HER PAA ADAMS VIIS  
I SVED MIN JORD JEG DYRKED  
ET BLIK MOD HIMLENS PARADIIS  
VINDUNDERLIGT MIG STYRKED.

LIGE SOM LEGEMET VOXER  
VED SPIS, OC DRIKKE  
SAALEDES VOXER SJALEN  
VED TANKERNES VIRKSOMHED.  
JESUS SAGDE - BÆDER,  
SAA SKAL EDER GIVES  
SØGER, SAA SKULLE I FINDE  
BANKER, SAA SKAL EDER OPLADES

The poet Lars Andersen Schow photographed beside his own tombstone.

A hut, little more than a cow shed, which is believed to have been his home, still stands in a paddock. Though the climate was a clement one, he needed the consolation of poetry:

“Her Vaaren altid lever  
Med idel Frugtbarhed.  
De varme Kilder byde  
Et herligt Sundhedsbad,  
Og snee vi kunne skue  
Paa Bjergets Høje Top”

One of his contemporaries and compatriots exemplifies success among the immigrants. Oscar Thorwald Johann Alpers was born in Copenhagen in 1867. When he was eight years old his family emigrated to New Zealand.

In his delightful memoirs Judge Alpers described his efficient way of learning English on board the ship. He came across a copy of *Robinson Crusoe*: “Knowing the narrative almost by heart, I found reading it in English wonderfully easy.” But pronunciation still posed some difficulties: “Dat lamb haf ver-r-i fine vool.’ I have not forgotten that sentence – I was not allowed to forget it, or the way I pronounced it.”<sup>12</sup>

A Scandinavian Society was founded in Auckland on the brink of the First World War. Its twelve pages of rules in small print give an idea of its intentions: “The objects of the Foreningen shall be to provide a reading-room, library, writing materials, chess, cards, billiards, draughts, dominoes, and such other amusements as the committee shall think fit, and to advance the interests of and promote genial and social intercourse among the members. No gambling to be allowed on the premises.”<sup>13</sup>

The sorry remains of two Danish lending libraries from this or a somewhat earlier time are kept in the Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington. The dust has settled for good on the volumes, on some Ibsen plays in the original editions as well as on his rival, Björnstjerne Björnson. Most of the books are either religious tracts or entertainment, like gothic horror stories such as: *Blodsugereren, eller Rædselshuset i Adelgade. Original romantisk Fortælling, grundet paa en virkelig Begivenhed [The Vampire, or the House of Horror in Adelgade. An Original Romantic Account, based on True Facts]*.

A copy of Holger Drachman’s report from “The Danish Thermopylae” of Dybbøl, inscribed by the author, was given to the Scandinavian Club in London, but found its way to New Zealand. The poet L.A. Schow could have read Hans Christian Andersen in the library, both of them came from the island of Funen. But he could also have consulted handbooks on diverse subjects, like *Aarsagen til Støvekleme og hvorledes den forebygges [On the Causes of Boot Discomfort, their Identification and Prevention]*. The two



Lars Andersen Schow's cabin.

libraries disclose some of the reading habits of 19th century Scandinavian emigrants.<sup>14</sup>

Dr. Dorothy Burton Skårdal, the Norwegian-American historian, has assessed the vast literature produced by Scandinavian immigrants to the United States in a book whose very title sums up the ever-lasting dilemma of emigrants: *The Divided Heart*. She pinpoints two differing forms of behaviour. Either you adopt the ways of the country to which you emigrate (summed up in the phrase, “the melting pot”), or you try to stay Scandinavian and pay the price of isolation, though upholding strong ties with members of the same ethnic group. Both forms are to be found in life as well as in literature.<sup>15</sup>

Generally speaking, the following generation tends to forget the Old World. In connection with the First World War, the phrase “one hundred percentism” was coined for this (sometimes forced) loyalty among immigrants and their descendants to their land of adoption. The third and fourth generations, on the other hand, often look back with interest and longing to the country which their forbears once left – they seek their roots. Thanks to



their curiosity, emigration history has become a subject of vital importance.

In the early 1960s, the Department of German at Auckland University wanted to extend its teaching programme by including either Dutch or Scandinavian languages. Support from the Swedish Institute in Stockholm tipped the scales, and a course of Scandinavian Studies was introduced in 1965. For a quarter of a century Danish, Norwegian and Swedish languages and literature have been taught to a host of students, a small portion of whom have been third and fourth generation Scandinavians. The department's "Bellman Society", intended as a counterpart to the "Goethe Society" or the "Dante Alighieri Society", has become a Nordic focal point in Auckland.<sup>16</sup>

Dr. Skårdal talks of "preservation" as opposed to "relinquishment", but there are many levels in between these opposites, and they might even merge. Suffice it to quote a recent volume of reminiscences: "As the lives of my parents had fused two cultures, it was fitting and typical of Father's sentimental attachment to his homeland that, at his request, soil from his ancestral home 'Christianslund' was scattered on their common grave, thus blending the earth of their native Denmark with that of their adopted country, New Zealand."<sup>17</sup>

As recently as some ten years ago, books on New Zealand in the Scandinavian languages were scarce. In the last few years, however, there has been a marked growth of interest in New Zealand among Scandinavians, triggered by factors other than the *Rainbow Warrior* incident and the anti-nuclear stance. Air fares have come down, and it is *de rigueur* for young Scandinavians to trek the bush of the North Island or the fjordland of the South Island.

But in 1799 the impressionable Swedish poet Bo Setterlind wrote his *Det andra Nya Zeeland, Aotearoa [The Other New Zealand. Aotearoa]*. His book is sketchy and somewhat lopsided in his sympathy for the Maoris and blackening of what he deems not to be genuine. But it is interesting as well as provocative: "Det var inte utan att jag kände den djupaste saknad över att behöva lämna ett land med ett sådant folk, som bara med sin poesi är ett av de bästa botemedlen mot den västerländska Djävulens sjuka andedräkt ..." [It was not without the deepest loss at having to go that I left a country with a people, who with their poetry alone, provide the best defense against the western devil's ill wind].<sup>18</sup>

The ambitious Scandinavian research programme *Emigration till Antipoden [Emigration to the Antipodes]* was launched at the beginning of the 1980s, thanks to financial support from the Nordic Council. Close and rewarding contacts between Scandinavian researchers and their New Zealand and Australian colleagues followed, and the programme and its field excursions resulted in a series of books, some of them published by The

Emigrant Institute in Växjö, Sweden, others by its sister institute in Turku, Finland. The archives are filled with letters, documents and taped interviews.<sup>19</sup>

In one of the 1981 interviews, a New Zealander in his mid-forties stated that “it has some advantages belonging to a mixture of people in a young country in the new world”. As his wife was Danish, his views might have been predictable. But he voiced an opinion held by many New Zealanders when he went on to say: “What do we think of the Danes? They are stable, industrious and friendly, they have a lot of common sense and are well regarded. Yes, we have learned a lot from the Danes.”<sup>20</sup>

#### Notes:

1. Early accounts of Scandinavians in New Zealand are to be found in the books by J.T. Lyng, and in Fredrik Larson: “Svenskarna på Nya Zeeland”, in *Prärieblomman* (1909). To date, the most exhaustive study of Swedish emigration to New Zealand is Sten Aminoff's *Svenskarna i Nya Zeeland. Den svenska utvandringen till Nya Zeeland fram till 1940* (1988). A recent, more comprehensive study of the parallel migration to Australia is Allan T. Nilson's *Australien studier. Om svenskar och andra nordbor i Australien* (1988) with an interesting discussion of methods in migration research. For brief general surveys of Danes in New Zealand, cf. K. Hvidt: *Flugten til Amerika* (1971) and E.H. Pedersen: *Pionererne* (1986).
2. Gisselquist & Tingbrand, eds: *Daniel Solander 1733-1782. Naturvetenskapsman och världsomseglare* (1983).
3. Sven Berggren: *Dagboksanteckningar från Nya Zeeland 1873-74* (in Uppsala University Library), and his report, dated Lund Feb. 22, 1876 (in Lund University Library). A.G. Bagnall has written two articles on *Sven Berggren in New Zealand*.
4. *Pages from the Memory Log of G.M. Hassing. Sailor – Pioneer – Schoolmaster* (Invercargill, n.d.). Similar early Scandinavian impressions may be found in C.L. Laugesen: *Early Days in New Zealand 1841-1915* (typescripts, n.d.) and J. Bremner: *Charles Suisted* (The Advance Guard, Series II, 1974).
5. For the corresponding Scandinavian gold rush to Australia, California and the Klondike, see Ulf Beijbom: *Australienfarama* (1983) and his *Guldfeber* (1979).
6. G.C. Peterson: *D.G. Monrad. Scholar, Statesman, Priest and New Zealand Pioneer* (1965, p. 77).
7. Monrad's letters are collected by S. Hauge in *D.G. Monrad: Breve* (1969); Karen Monrad Jones has traced his descendants in *Johannes Henrik Monrad 1849-1915* (1974).
8. In his study of Swedes in New Zealand, Sten Aminoff discusses the (un)reliability of such sources.
9. Cf. K.W. Thomson & A.D. Trlin, eds.: *Immigrants in New Zealand* (1970); *Immigration into New Zealand, Report of a Study Group* (1950); *Papers relating to Immigration: II – The Introduction of Scandinavian Immigrants* (Wellington, 1871); E.C. Martin: *New Zealand Immigration, 1870-1890* (M.A. Thesis, University of New Zealand, 1948); F.A. Charlton: *Contributions of Germans and Scandinavians to the History of New Zealand* (Honours Thesis in History, 1935). Henning Ladefoged Sørensen, Sønderborg, has analysed the pull-factors in depth.

10. B.E. Friberg in a report from 70 Mile Bush, May 1873. Much has been written on this subject: cf. J.W. Davidson: *Scandinavians in New Zealand* (Honours Thesis in History, Victoria University, Wellington, 1940), and his eleven articles in *Evening News* (Dannevirke), January and February, 1940; A.L. Andersen: *Norsewood, the Centennial Story* (1972); G.C. Petersen: *Forest Homes, The Story of the Scandinavian Settlements in the Forty Mile Bush, New Zealand* (1956) and his *Palmerston North, A Centennial History* (1973); V.L. McLennan: *From Stoney Creek to Whakarongo 1877-1977*; O. Mulinder: *A Pioneer Family* (1977).
11. *En ny Sang. Hilsen fra de nyankomne Indvandrere i New Zealand til de gamle Venner i Danmark*. Melodi: "Kong Christian stod ved højen Mast." (Masterton, n.d.).
12. O.T.J. Alpers: *Cheerful Yesterdays* (1925). Another equally successful Dane in New Zealand was Johannes Andersen, librarian and anthropologist, born in 1873 – his family emigrated in 1874.
13. *Rules of The Skandinavisk Forening, Auckland, N.Z. Founded February 7th, 1914*.
14. Cf. my two articles "Två emigrantbibliotek på Nya Zeeland", in *Bokvännen* (1986:6), and "Två danska lånebibliotek på Nya Zeeland", in *Profiler, Nordisk Institut 1966-86* (1986).
15. Cf. the emigrant series by Vilhelm Moberg, Ole Rølvaag's *Giants in the Earth*, some of the Scandinavian characters in Willa Cather's novels.
16. Sean D. Lovich: *German and Swedish at Auckland. A History of Germanic Languages and Literature at the University* (1983).
17. Poula Christie: *Candles and Canvas. A Danish Family in New Zealand* (1987, p. 169). Cf. also Yvonne de Frèsne's *Farvel* (1980), *The Book of Ester* (1982), *The Growing of Astrid Westergaard* (1985) and *Frederique* (1987), as well as Carin Svensson's *One Plain One Purl. Stories of a Girlhood* (1989) In one of his books, poet, novelist and critic Carl Stead, professor of English at Auckland University, has touched on his Swedish ancestry.
18. Cf. S. & L. Anér: *Resa i Nya Zeeland – en reseguide* (1987); Svantesson, ed.: *Nya Zeeland – & andra sidan* (1988); B. Krogh, M. Lindblad & W. Westby: *Nya Zeeland Resehand-bok* (1988); G. & S. Samelius: *Nya Zeeland, det långa vita molnet* (1989).
19. In the summer of 1981, I interviewed some fifty emigrants in New Zealand, the majority of them Danes, and around thirty Scandinavian emigrants in Australia. Copies of the tapes are kept with The Emigrant Institute, Växjö, Sweden, and the Danes Worldwide Archives in Aalborg, Denmark. Cf. Ulf Beijbom: *I antipodiska utvandrarspår* (1988).
20. Interview with Graham Wright, Avondale, Auckland, June 13, 1981.

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