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THE BRIDGE and the NEWSLETTER are semi-annual publications of the Danish American Heritage Society. The Newsletter contains items of current interest, including occasional essays, book notes, and news of Danish organizations and activities in the United States and Canada. The Bridge contains articles, book reviews, and review essays dealing with all aspects of the Danish experience in North America.

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THE BRIDGE

_The Bridge: Journal of the Danish American Heritage Society_ appears twice a year and contains scholarly articles and book reviews dealing with all aspects of the Danish experience in North America. Past issues of _The Bridge_ have also contained Danish-American memoirs, essays, short stories, collections of letters, and historical documents. Book reviews and review essays in _The Bridge_ deal with Danish life and history and the broader Scandinavian experience in North America as well as the Danish-American experience. _The Bridge_ occasionally reprints previously published material.

Manuscripts submitted to _The Bridge_ should conform to the _Chicago Manual of Style_. Manuscripts may be submitted in either English or Danish but will be published in English. Please submit electronic versions of the article, endnotes, and illustrations in separate files in MS Word or a comparable format, preferably on a disk or CD. Include a brief, 50-100-word author’s biography suitable for the journal’s “Contributors to This Issue” section.

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Editorial Statement

This issue of *The Bridge* takes us from Alberta on the prairies of Canada into the deep woods of northern Wisconsin, from the rural gardens of Denmark to an urban backyard in Minnesota, and from Wilhelm Dinesen’s memoirs of outdoor life to the musing and amusing poetry of his wife’s relative, Piet Hein. Book reviews add the spice of Danish cuisine, the bitter experience of Danish identity in Germany under Nazi rule, and the excitement of Scandinavian politics in Wisconsin.

Our lead article introduces readers to the scholarship of Kirstin Bouwsema, who carried out research in Denmark, supported in part by a grant from the The Edith and Arnold N. Bodtker Fund of DAHS. In the tradition of past Bodtker grant recipients, she shares the results of her research on the Danish contribution to dairying in the immense Canadian province of Alberta.

Inger M. Olsen’s lively article on the Danish poet, inventor, and iconoclast, Piet Hein, puts readers in contact with another activity of the Danish American Heritage Society. Her article was originally presented at the conference on “Innovation—The Danish Way” in Minneapolis on October 1-3, 2009.

Many readers will be familiar with the stories written under the name of Isak Dinesen by Denmark’s Karen Blixen. Some may know that her father, Captain Wilhelm Dinesen, was also a successful author. This issue brings you excerpts from his tales of life among the Pawnee of Nebraska and especially the Chippewa of Wisconsin in the 1870s. They present a perspective on life in America quite different from that of most Danish immigrants in that decade of mass migration.

Finally, the editor has drawn upon his interest in gardening and Danish gardening traditions to follow an example of their transplantation from Jutland to America and their transformation in the process.

This is my last issue as editor of *The Bridge*. Thank you, our readers, and thanks to the many authors, editors, reviewers, and translators for making this journal what it is. Editing a journal like *The Bridge* can be fun, and I have thoroughly enjoyed my two stints as editor from 1998-2003 and 2008-2010. You might enjoy it, too. To find out, consider volunteering to assist with future issues.

*The Bridge* is in good hands. Two editors with rich experience, Birgit Flemming Larsen and Peter L. Petersen, continue to serve on the editorial staff *The Bridge*, and the President of our Board of Directors, Egon Bodtker, is also a former editor. They will be looking for authors and editors with a love of the Danish-American heritage. If that description fits you, do tell them about it.
Contributors to This Issue

Kirstin Bouwsema is a third generation Albertan of Danish and Dutch parentage. She recently completed a Master’s Degree in History at the University of Calgary, writing her thesis on Danish immigration to Alberta in the early twentieth century. In 2008, she was awarded a Bodtker Grant, which enabled her to travel to Denmark to do research at the Danish Emigration Archives in Aalborg. Kirstin is interested in ethnic, agricultural, and Western-Canadian history and in preserving the stories of Danish-Canadian immigration.

David L. Brye lives in Pueblo, Mexico, where he arranges study abroad programs for U.S. colleges and universities. He is the author of *Wisconsin Voting Patterns in the Twentieth Century, 1900 to 1950* (New York: Garland, 1979), and editor of *European Immigration and Ethnicity in the United States and Canada: A Historical Bibliography* (Santa Barbara CA: ABC-Clio, 1983).

Rolf Buschardt Christensen is Press and International Relations Officer for the European Commission to Canada. He is a prominent figure in Danish-Canadian circles and a frequent contributor to *The Bridge*.

Birgitte Christianson is a native of Copenhagen who grew up in California. She was inspired by her Danish grandmother’s cooking to develop her own kitchen skills and now finds cooking inspiration through travel in many lands. She reviewed three books on Danish cuisine in the previous issue of *The Bridge*.

J. R. Christianson is Research Professor of History at Luther College in Decorah, Iowa, a member of the Board of Directors of the DAHS, and editor of *The Bridge*.

Wilhelm Dinesen (1849-95) was born and raised at Katholm, a sixteenth-century castle in northern Jutland. He served as an officer in the Schleswig-Holstein War of 1864 and the Franco-Prussian War of 1870. He emigrated to America in 1872 and spent the years 1873-74 as hunter and trapper among the Chippewa Indians of Wisconsin before returning to Denmark. His stories of war and outdoor life have become classics in Denmark.

Inger M. Olsen has taught Danish language, literature, and film at Portland State University since 1980. She has presented numerous papers on Danish literature and history at professional conferences, and has published articles on Denmark, Danish literature, and the Danish language in the *New York Review of Books* and other publications. She co-edited *Female Voices of the North* (Vienna: Edition Praesens, 2002-06), a two-volume anthology.
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Dairying, Creameries and Cooperatives
Danish Agricultural Contributions
to Early Twentieth Century Alberta

By
Kirstin Bouwsema

The early history of what became the province of Alberta in 1905 is characterized largely by the agricultural industry. A great majority of the early twentieth century immigrants came to Alberta expecting to participate in some way in the agricultural economy. However, the farming methods that were implemented in the province varied considerably. Partly, this variation was due to differences in naturally existing phenomena such as climate, soil conditions, and landscape. However, practices also varied due to the cultural backgrounds of the farmers. The First Nations people who had lived on the land for millennia used farming methods far different than did the Hutterites, both methods of which have been documented by historians. Immigrants who traveled up from the United States, either as one-step immigrants whose families had lived in the U.S. for generations or as second-step immigrants who had settled in the United States but chose to move on to another location, often arrived with experience of farming in dryland or similar conditions. Likewise, immigrants from Europe brought with them ideas about farming which they put into practice to greater or lesser extents upon their settlement in Canada.
Immigrants from Denmark made up but a small part of the population of immigrants to Alberta. One interpretation of census data argues that, between 1893 and 1914, approximately 7,000 Danes moved into the Prairie Provinces. However, in proportion to the number of actual immigrants who came, the Danish-Albertan settlers made a substantial contribution to agricultural practice in the province. Several particularly influential Danes became powerful figures in the creation of agricultural legislation and popular thought. Others contributed to agricultural organizations vital to Alberta’s history. Others yet played integral roles in the development of the dairy industry in the province. Finally, many Danish immigrant families throughout the province became agricultural producers. The Danish-Albertan transplants contributed to Alberta’s agricultural development through their acknowledgement and implementation of their cultural and agricultural heritage.

The Danish Background

Denmark underwent major economic, political, and industrial changes in the nineteenth century that significantly affected the people who emigrated in the early twentieth century. These changes had a great effect on the Danish settlers’ participation in agriculture in Alberta.

While universal suffrage was not legislated in Denmark until the constitutional changes of 1915, the average Danish citizen began to gain democratic concessions throughout the nineteenth century. Important among these concessions was the fact that the Danes who had previously been peasants working for the large landholders gained the right to own land in the late eighteenth century and formed a new class of smallholder farmers. This new “freehold ownership” gave the peasant class a sense of social equality. They gained the opportunity to take on the risks and the possibilities of prospering, something previously only undertaken by the large-holder landlords.

As this group of farmers grew in numbers and wealth, they gained political sway. Through a series of legislative changes in the first half of the nineteenth century, family farmers were given a larger voice in public affairs and municipal government. In addition, following the introduction of constitutional government in 1849, more of the citizens were able to vote, and by 1870 many farmers united their vote in favor of Venstre, a party that fought for the rights of the agriculture-based middle and lower classes.

The rural Danes’ outlook on life and participation in agriculture were greatly affected by educational reforms that took place in the nation. Widespread public education was implemented only slowly throughout the nineteenth century, although the Danish government began its expansion in 1814. This gradual development was aided
significantly by the Danish Folk School movement, beginning with the opening of the Redding school in 1844. N. F. S. Grundtvig, a clergyman, theologian, and poet among his many positions, developed an educational system known as the Danish Folk School (folkehøjskole). The Folk School was a response to the need for rural-based education as the number of governance opportunities for rural people grew. Rather than simply teaching practical skills, at folk schools, students were to gain an understanding of and appreciation for Danish culture and an awareness of their civic responsibilities. These schools taught subjects specifically pertinent to living in and contributing to Danish society, enabling the students to be literate and more knowledgeable about contemporary issues and ideas. In addition to the folk schools, which specifically emphasized cooperation and civic awareness, public schools and adult education programs created a more knowledgeable rural society.

The Danish Folk School system has often been given credit for providing the Danish farming population with the skills they needed to adapt to the changes that took place in the agricultural world. Throughout the nineteenth century, agricultural products became increasingly available and cheaper from international sources. In particular, grain, which had previously been a mainstay of Danish agricultural industry, could be purchased at a lower price from Russia and North America than the Danes could afford to sell their product. Danish farmers found an innovative way to continue farming in the face of this overseas competition. They began producing and marketing dairy products and swine in great numbers, and they put cooperative philosophies into practice in their new ventures to facilitate the change.

The cooperative farming organization for the purpose of producing and marketing was a relatively new idea that developed in Britain in the mid-nineteenth century in response to industrialization. The cooperative societies allowed farmers to work together to combat the economic and social problems facing them at that time. The Danes carried these ideas over to their country, where they were dealing with similar problems. Danish farmers formed producer cooperatives to produce and market their dairy products, specifically cheese and butter, and to slaughter their beef and pork. The first dairy cooperative was formed in 1882 in Jutland, and by the First World War, there were 1200 of them. The first cooperative slaughtering facility was founded in 1887, also in Jutland. These cooperatives became quite successful; the Danes became very well known in particular for their butter and their bacon and supplied a large percentage of the British pork, beef, and butter market.

However, while the farmers were able to adapt to a certain degree to the changes that came throughout the nineteenth century, agriculture nevertheless became more industrialized and less labor-
intensive in the late nineteenth century, and many people involved in farming found themselves unemployed. While many found industrial work in the urban centers of Denmark, others moved to Canada, taking with them their Folk School-instilled knowledge of farming and cooperatives and their entrepreneurial work ethic.

**Danes in Alberta**

While Danish immigration to the United States began earlier, Danish immigration to Canada first occurred in large numbers in the 1870s when, with substantial encouragement from the Canadian government, a Danish settlement was formed in New Brunswick. Several individual Danes also settled in Western Canada in the late nineteenth century. However, substantial movement of Danes to Alberta did not begin until the establishment of a second Danish-Canadian settlement at Dickson in 1903. There were two waves of Danish immigrants in the pre-Second World War formative years of agriculture in Alberta. The first began largely with the settlement of Dickson and ended with the onset of the First World War. The second wave occurred in the 1920s and into the depression and drought years of the early 1930s, when Canadian immigration policy changed, making it difficult for people who were not financially secure to enter the country. The Second World War and the occupation of Denmark completely cut off immigration, and when it started up again in the post-war period, the new immigrants were skilled tradesmen and professionals and were headed for Canada’s cities, not for the agricultural industry.

*Alberta in 1928*
Of all the ways they were involved in the agricultural industry, Danish-Albertans contributed the most significantly and ardently by far to the dairy industry. As previously mentioned, dairying was an important part of agriculture in Denmark. In rural Danish immigrant communities in the United States, dairying again occupied a prominent part of the agricultural industry—particularly cooperative dairying and creamery endeavors. Consequently, it is not surprising that the Danes in Alberta also took on leadership roles in the dairy industry.

Danish influence on the dairy industry Canada-wide was felt before the farmers arrived in any substantial numbers. Denmark was one of the earliest innovators of pasteurization and mechanized cream separation, a fact that was known internationally. In 1878, the government of Quebec sent a representative to Denmark to learn Danish methods and bring back a centrifugal cream separator. This Burmeister and Wain separator, which was installed in Quebec, was the first centrifugal separator in Canada. A second Danish-invented separator was installed at a dairy in Ontario in 1885, one of the first in that province.

Dr. C. P. Marker

In Alberta, Danish dairying knowledge came first in the person of Dr. C. P. Marker. Marker was the son of a farmer from the area around the city of Silkeborg on Jutland, Denmark. He immigrated to Canada in the 1890s and was appointed the Dairy Commissioner for the Northwest Territories at some point during that decade. When Alberta became a province in 1905, control of the dairy industry was turned over to provincial jurisdiction, and Marker continued his post as Dairy Commissioner of Alberta.

Glenbow Archives nc-4-8, used with permission

C. P. Marker (center) by the first boxcar of Alberta butter shipped to British Columbia
Marker was instrumental in the foundation of government-run creameries throughout Alberta, including the one established in 1899 at the Icelandic community of Tindastoll, which was later renamed Markerville in Marker’s honor. He was also involved when the government later decided to privatize the creameries. Marker oversaw dairy and creamery operations throughout Alberta. One area of dairy processing about which he was continually concerned was the quality of cream and butter that was produced. Under his direction, grading of cream and butter were standardized.  

Marker encouraged dairy farmers throughout Alberta to form a united organization. He attended the first Alberta dairy convention held in Innisfail in 1905 and spoke of the importance of cooperation among farmers in order for the industry to prosper. He also called for and attended the meeting that resulted in the formation of the Alberta Dairymen’s Association in 1918. 

In 1921, the University of Alberta created a Department of Dairying in the Faculty of Agriculture, and Marker was named its first professor. Prior to this appointment, Marker had been teaching short-term courses on dairying to First World War veterans at the University, beginning in 1917. In addition to teaching classes on the subject, Marker wrote a number of articles for the Alberta Ministry of Agriculture on the Danish dairy industry in Alberta and on the dairy industry in Denmark. He also gave public lectures on similar subjects.  

The Danish-Canadian newspaper, *Kirken og Hjemmet* (Church and Home), wrote about Marker when he retired in 1934, “Dr. Marker is one of the Danes in Western Canada that we can be proud of; he continues to have respect for his birth country and interest in his countrymen.” As this article states, Marker made valuable contributions both to the dairy industry and to the wellbeing of Danish immigrants in the province.

**Daniel Morkeberg**

When C. P. Marker set up a creamery at what was later named Markerville, he needed someone who was experienced in dairying and creamery operation to run it. The man he found for the job was his fellow countryman, Daniel Morkeberg. Morkeberg was born in 1870 in Køge on the island of Sjælland, and he apprenticed in the creamery business as a young adult. After serving two years as a soldier in the Royal Guard, Morkeberg emigrated in 1891.

Morkeberg gained additional practical knowledge of creamery operations during several years’ stay in the United States. He worked for a time for a company in the Midwest that manufactured butter-making equipment. His job was to install the machinery at a creamery, ensure that it worked, and train the employees in the principles of butter making. In 1898, Morkeberg traveled northward, ending up in Central Alberta. In 1899, he met C. P.
Marker, who was then the Dominion Dairy Commissioner for the Northwestern Territories. Marker hired Morkeberg to open the first creamery in Edmonton, which was named Edmonton City Dairy. After this, Morkeberg was sent to start a milk skimming station at Leduc, and finally, on a six-week assignment to start a creamery at Tindastoll, later called Markerville.

Morkeberg’s initial involvement at Markerville became a lifetime occupation in creamery operation in the area. Initially, Morkeberg was sent to organize and commence the operation of a government-owned creamery, buying out and amalgamating two small cheese factories operating in the area in the 1890s. This new creamery opened on July 12, 1899. In 1902, Morkeberg began working as the buttermaker at the creamery, and when the provincial government in 1910 wanted to sell off the operation, Morkeberg and several other shareholders bought it up, and Morkeberg became its manager. Shortly thereafter, Morkeberg also took on the management of the creamery in nearby Innisfail. He and two partners formed a company called Independent Creameries and ran operations in the town of Lacombe as well as Innisfail. This company implemented standardized cream grading and pasteurization of cream for butter making, possibly the first operations to do so in Alberta.

Morkeberg attended the first Alberta dairy convention at Innisfail in 1905. When the Alberta Dairymen’s Association was formed in 1919, Morkeberg served as its first president and continued to hold directorial positions in the organization until 1945. He ran the Markerville creamery until 1930 when his son, Carl, took it over. Morkeberg served as the Markerville area’s Member of the Legislative Assembly from 1917 until 1921. In 1924, he was awarded the Order of Dannebrog, the equivalent of being knighted in England, and in 1959, he was voted into the Alberta Agricultural Hall of Fame.

Niels Peter Pallesen

Niels Peter Pallesen was another innovative individual who prospered early on in the development of Alberta and became very well known in the dairy industry. Pallesen was born in 1873 on a farm near Silkeborg in Jutland. His father, Niels Pedersen Pallesen, owned a farm and managed a dairy cooperative there. Niels Peter Pallesen immigrated to Canada in 1899 and settled in the Wetaskiwin area. However, he moved again in 1901 to Calgary, where C. P. Marker offered him the position to manage the Dominion Cold Storage Warehouse, where a creamery was established in 1905. In 1901 Pallesen also became the first cream grader in the Northwest Territories. After managing the warehouse and creamery for several years, as well as running a milk route
through the city of Calgary, Pallesen bought his own dairy farm in 1910.

In 1912, Pallesen expanded into the creamery business. He established the Calgary Central Creamery, which manufactured cheese, produced butter, and distributed milk. Throughout the 1910s, the Central Creamery Company continued to expand, starting operations in Camrose, Olds, and Eckville and becoming the second largest creamery operation in Alberta by 1918. In 1918, Central Creameries amalgamated its creamery operation with three other manufacturers in the province to form the Union Dairies Limited. Central Creamery from then on focused on butter and cheese production, and in the 1920s, it exported its products internationally, including to the United Kingdom and Japan. After Pallesen’s death in 1933, his widow, Annie Pallesen, continued to operate a dairy and creamery until 1945.

In addition to his personal business success, Pallesen contributed to the development of the dairy industry in Alberta. In 1910, he adopted the practice of paying for the grade of cream that was brought in, rather than paying a standard price for all cream regardless of its quality, and he was among the first to do so in Alberta. Pallesen was involved in the creation of the Alberta Dairymen’s Association in 1919 and served as a director for the first two years and as president for 1922 and 1923.

Pallesen was incredibly successful as a businessman and creamery operator. This fact was well known among Danes both in Alberta and in Denmark, and Pallesen put his wealth and influence to use within the Danish-Albertan community. He employed numerous Danes in his creameries and dairy farms. In particular, it seems that Pallesen favored Danes as his farm foremen. His
financial and agricultural success was well known in Denmark, and
when Danish journalists came during the 1920s to report on life in
Alberta, they made sure to interview Pallesen and include
information about his accomplishments in their reports home. Pallesen served as the Danish Vice Consul in Western Canada for ten
years and in this position wrote letters of introduction for Danish
immigrants arriving in Alberta, assuring potential employers of their
skills and dependability. Finally, Pallesen donated a substantial
amount of money to the Danish Lutheran Church in Calgary when
they were collecting funds to build a church.

Niels Larsen

While the Danish practices of cooperative agriculture were
taught by C. P. Marker and used to a small degree by Morkeberg
and his peers in the shareholder ownership of the Markerville
creamery, they were truly exemplified by Niels Larsen’s efforts in
developing the Central Alberta Dairy Pool. Larsen was born in 1876
in Denmark and trained there in the dairy industry. He spent
several years managing small creameries in England before
imigrating to Canada in 1912. Once in Canada, he worked for
several years at a creamery in Calgary owned by Pat Burns and then
bought the Meadow Creamery at Alix Alberta in 1916, in
partnership with two other Danes. Larsen had very high standards
for the quality of cream he received, and he resented the
government’s compulsory grading system in place at that time. In
1924, he was fined for paying for a higher standard of cream than
what the government system had calculated.

While the initial Meadow Creamery, which Larsen bought out
from the other two partners, was privately run, Larsen was fully
versed in the principles of agricultural cooperatives from his youth
in Denmark. When seventy Alix-area farmers got together in 1924
to discuss the creation of a cooperative creamery, Larsen was
immediately encouraging. He attended the first meeting and
donated the funds for start-up costs. He further demonstrated his
commitment to the venture by volunteering his creamery facility for
the co-op’s use. The farmers could lease the creamery from Larsen
and he would manage the business.

This transition from private to cooperative ownership was in
fact what took place. The Central Alberta Dairy Pool (CACP) was
formed in 1924. It leased the Meadow Creamery for four years and
then bought it out in 1928, leaving Larsen as the general manager.
The Central Alberta Dairy Pool (which later changed its name to
Alpha) became very successful. It was instrumental in the formation
of the Northern and Southern Alberta Dairy Pools (Larsen was sent
to help organize, with the CACP paying his wage), though neither
was as successful as the Central Alberta effort. At various times
during the CACP’s operation, it included a poultry and egg pool, a
honey pool, produced skim milk and buttermilk powder, canned condensed milk, and cheese, as well as distributing cream.

As advisor and manager, Larsen was centrally involved in the workings of the dairy pool from 1924 until 1935. He further contributed to the agricultural community through his series of radio talks on cream handling and the value of cooperative efforts that were broadcast on the Calgary radio station CFCN. He was also instrumental in involving other Danish immigrants in the creamery business. Some of these Danes went on to take positions in creameries elsewhere, like Niels Hviid, who started out working as a cream grader at the CADP in Alix and went on to manage a cooperative creamery north of Grande Prairie and, later, a branch creamery for the Northern Alberta Dairy Pool in the town of Holden, Alberta.

John Glambeck

Within the dairy industry, there is clear historical evidence of the substantial involvement of Danish-Albertan immigrants in both private and cooperative endeavors, but Danes involved in other agricultural efforts are more difficult to research. That said, there were important contributions made to two of Alberta’s most well-known and historically significant agricultural institutions, the United Farmers of Alberta and the Alberta Wheat Pool.

At least one Dane was integrally involved in the foundation of the United Farmers of Alberta (UFA). John Glambeck was born in Denmark in 1863. Upon immigrating to North America, he worked in Chicago for a number of years before buying a homestead in Alberta in 1907. Glambeck was involved in the UFA right from its inception in 1909 and for a number of years held board positions in his local chapter.
Bradford Rennie, historian of the United Farmers of Alberta and United Farm Women of Alberta, argues that Glambeck was one of the more important UFA “radicals.”65 As Rennie points out, Glambeck spoke out passionately in favor of cooperative strategies to fight “eastern capitalists.”66 He argued continually and enthusiastically that farmers in Alberta should become more thoroughly organized in order to better fight against “the capitalist class,” in particular through his passionate letters and articles in the UFA’s paper, the Grain Growers’ Guide.67 His Socialist bent was particularly evident in his argument that Alberta farmers should fight for public ownership of utilities and for a government run by “the farmers and working people.”68 Glambeck believed that UFA should operate both as a venue to organize and unite the farmers as a political entity but also in order that they could be a united consumer group for cooperative buying and selling.69

In addition to his role in the UFA, Glambeck was a successful farmer and homesteader in southern Alberta. He was a “poster boy” for propagandists of the Canadian Pacific Railway, who published leaflets exemplifying him as a model farmer who built up a lush and thriving homestead with many varieties of trees, shrubs and perennials in a supposed dry area of southern Alberta.70 Glambeck wrote articles in the Calgary Daily Herald and the Grain Growers’ Guide explaining how homesteaders could cultivate fruit trees and strawberries and “change bald prairie into real parkland.”71

Anders Rafn

Anders Rafn is an example of a Danish-Albertan involved in multiple agricultural and cooperative endeavors. Rafn was born near Randers in Jutland, Denmark, in 1868. He was the son of a farmer. Rafn immigrated first to the United States to homestead but moved to Bon Accord, Alberta in 1920, where he established a mixed farm.72 Rafn’s efforts were not simply in the production end of the industry. Rafn was very interested in agricultural cooperative efforts and participated in a number of movements that brought the cooperative principles of Denmark into practice in Alberta.73

Rafn was involved in the foundation of the Northern Alberta Dairy Pool (NADP), which was founded with help from the Central Alberta Dairy Pool in 1928. He served as a director on its board from 1928-1931 and as president from 1932 until 1941.74

Rafn was also involved in the formation of the Bon Accord chapter of the “Canadian Society of Equity.” This Society sought to bring farmers together to share resources, combine buying power, and form a lobby group to promote farmer’s interests.75 It amalgamated with the Alberta Farmers’ Association to become the United Farmers of Alberta in 1909.76 Rafn later sat on the board of the United Farmers of Alberta for ten years.77
Finally, Rafn was a founding member of the Alberta Wheat Pool when it formed in 1923 and was a delegate to the annual meetings. He gave public lectures on the workings of the Wheat Pool and its importance to Alberta’s farming community, including one at the Danish school and boarding house in Calgary in 1929, in which he drew a connection between the Alberta Wheat Pool and the Folk Schools and cooperative movement back in Denmark.

Thus, through his involvement in three major agricultural cooperative organizations, the United Farmers of Alberta, the Alberta Wheat Pool and the Northern Alberta Dairy Pool, Anders Rafn is a clear example of a Danish-Albertan committed the cooperative ideals that had been developed and successfully put into practice back in Denmark.

C. W. Petersen

The final Danish-Albertan who is famous for his contributions to the agricultural community was C. W. Petersen (also often spelled Peterson). Whereas the other men mentioned were largely involved in the production, processing or management of agriculture in Alberta, Petersen’s achievements occurred largely in the theoretical realm, though he did farm in addition to his other pursuits. However, it was through his writing that Petersen had the greatest effect on farmers throughout the west.

Petersen was born in Copenhagen, Denmark in 1868. He was educated at a Danish agricultural college and immigrated first to England and then to western Canada in 1888. Petersen worked for several years for the Canadian government as assistant general immigration agent in the Deputy Land Office in Calgary, and then as deputy commissioner of agriculture for the North West Territories.
He also served as the general manager of the CPR Irrigation and Colonization Company and, later, as superintendent of irrigation for the CPR.

In 1907, Petersen and another man, M. D. Geddes, established the Farm and Ranch Review, an agricultural periodical that would become a very important resource to farmers throughout Western Canada. In addition to editing and writing for the Farm and Ranch Review, Pedersen wrote a number of articles and several books articulating his conservative attitude towards politics and economics and his belief of the great inherent value of the farming life. Unlike Glambeck, Rafn, and the others who advocated socialist means for advancing the farmers’ cause, Peterson was quite anti-socialist. Historian David C. Jones explains that Peterson “believed [socialism] was killing the farmers’ movement by dissipating its energy and ascribing to the state responsibilities which rightfully belonged to the individual.”

While Petersen’s writing influenced Alberta’s agricultural community, his viewpoints were thoroughly contrary to those of some of the other Danish-Albertan immigrants. On one hand, Petersen derived from his Danish agricultural heritage a sense of the importance of the agricultural industry, an ideal he emphasized in his articles. He believed that Canada could learn from the successes realized by the Danish model of agriculture. On the other hand, Petersen did not subscribe to the ideals of cooperation or socialism that operated within the Danish farming community and which many of the other Danish-Albertans expounded. He was against the continuation of foreign-born traditions and national loyalties within Canada, presumably including those of a Danish flavor. He argued that Canada should not be a “polyglot boarding-house” but rather should develop “a more distinct sense of Canadian nationality.” Nevertheless, Petersen did remain a contributing member of the Danish community in Alberta. He served as the Danish Vice Consul for several years. He also supported the Danish-Canadian weekly, The Viking, and the magazine reported on his successes throughout the years.

These are just a few of the Danish-Albertans who contributed invaluably to the agricultural community in Alberta. There were many more individuals who played less public but equally as important roles in the establishment of agriculture in the province in the early twentieth century. In the yearbook of the Alberta Dairymen’s Association, there are few years between the organization’s inception in 1919 and 1945 in which there was not a Dane on the board of directors. The Northern Alberta Dairy Pool was managed for a time by Christian Emil Christensen, who was born on a farm near Grenå in Jutland, Denmark. The Danish-
Canadian newspaper, *Kirken og Hjemmet*, recorded Danish participation in the Southern Alberta Dairy Pool. There was also Danish involvement at Olds Agricultural College. Lars Peder Ericksen joined the Olds College staff as plot foreman in 1929 and worked there for fifteen years, helping the College develop new strains of crops for Western Canada.

Alberta’s local history books are full of examples of Danish immigrants who succeeded at the mixed-farm concept. For instance, in the Holden area, the Christensen family owned a dairy farm with purebred Holstein cattle and sold their butter in a special wrapper with their name on it to those living in the area.

In addition, while the individuals mentioned in this article are male, women were equally important to the agricultural industry. As was briefly mentioned, Peter Pallesen’s wife was instrumental in purchasing and running one of several dairy farms owned by the Pallesens. Niels Larsen’s wife and son lived in the Alix creamery while Niels was its manager, and Mrs. Larsen helped in the creamery in the early years of the business. Unfortunately, as is the frequent complaint of historians, women left far fewer records of their involvement than did the men, and consequently, it is harder to research their contributions.

In this way, Danish-Albertan immigrants put their knowledge of agriculture and cooperative endeavors into practice upon their arrival in Alberta. They were involved in the establishment of agricultural institutions integral to the development of the province, including the Alberta Wheat Pool, the United Farmers of Alberta, and the three Dairy Pools. They became successful in agricultural businesses, and they influenced agricultural legislation and popular opinion. Though the Danish population in Alberta was small compared to some of the other ethnic immigrant groups, the influence of their Old World agricultural practices and cooperative ideals was widespread.

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Danish Gardening Traditions
From Jutland to America

By
J. R. Christianson

When I was a boy, my mother sometimes took me along to Neil Neilsen Florists when she needed flowers for a special occasion. Upon arriving, she always went into the greenhouse to look for Agnes Neilsen. I remember the humid, earthy atmosphere under those immense glass roofs. We walked between endless rows of plants until we spied Agnes at work by one of the flowerbeds. Mother always liked to visit with her. The Neilsens were Danish, and so were we.

Lots of Danish immigrants went into business as gardeners, landscape architects, and greenhouse operators in America. Among the most famous was Jens Jensen (1860-1951), who designed and built the West Parks of Chicago. He became the great landscape artist of the Prairie School and achieved worldwide renown for introducing the use of native plants to landscape design.¹

Of course, gardening is not only for professionals. Many ordinary Danish Americans had gardens on the farm or back yard or on a vacant yard in the neighborhood, like our Victory Garden during World War II. Danes seem to have a love of gardening, whether as amateurs or as professionals like Jens Jensen and the Neilsens. My grandparents were among the amateurs, but they truly put their hearts into their garden.²

Grandmother was an infant when her family migrated from Vejle Amt to Iowa in 1868.³ Her gardening traditions must have
been those she learned while growing up in a Danish-American community in central Iowa. Many of the Danes around Story City and Randall, including Grandmother’s family, had come from the vicinity of Hvejsel Parish, so local traditions from that part of eastern Jutland must have been strong.

Grandfather, on the other hand, grew up in Denmark and attended Askov Folk School before emigrating at the age of twenty-one in 1888. His gardening experience went back to his boyhood in Lindeballe Parish, where he was born, Give Parish, where he grew up, and Gesten Parish on the German border, where his grandfather came from.

The late nineteenth century was a time of cultural change in rural Jutland. Change emanated in part from places like Askov and affected many aspects of daily life. The cooperative movement was growing as well, and farmers were playing a larger part in public affairs. These changes, and the growing self-confidence of the farming population, affected gardening, as it did so many other aspects of daily life.

**Traditional Danish Farm Gardens**

Danish gardening traditions were very old, but they did change as time went by. Denmark became a Christian country at the end of the Viking Age. Soon, communities of monks and nuns were established throughout the country and flourished in the centuries from AD 1150-1550, until Denmark changed from a Roman Catholic to a Lutheran country. These rural and urban religious communities greatly enriched Danish gardening traditions. The monks and nuns introduced many new crops and methods for laying out and maintaining gardens. Because monks and nuns were vegetarians, they raised many plants for food, but they also cared for the sick and therefore grew plants with medicinal properties. Moreover, they needed crops to produce beverages like ale, cider, perry, and wine, which were also considered to be beneficial to health. Finally, the monks and nuns liked to use gardens as places for contemplation and relaxation. Consequently, the garden areas of a monastery included a pleasure garden as well as an herb garden, a kitchen garden, and an orchard. In addition to bringing many new plants and gardening plans to Denmark, the monks and nuns also introduced new systems for raising, fertilizing, and watering plants.

The impact of these medieval monastic gardening traditions was still felt in the gardens of Danish farms and cottages of the middle years of the nineteenth century, when my grandfather was growing up on the farm of Ramskovgaard in Give Parish, northwest of Vejle.

For many long centuries, gardening on Danish farms and cottages had been women’s work, as it still was in the late nineteenth century. However, boys as well as girls always got some experience in helping their mother plant, weed, hoe, and harvest the
family garden. Working in the garden was part of growing up in rural Denmark.

Eastern Jutland was a good place for gardening. True, it could not match the mild climate and rich soils of Fyn, Lolland-Falster, and southern Sjælland, but it was not far behind. Certainly, it was better than trying to garden in the sandy soils and biting wind of western and northern Jutland, where a cabbage patch, a stunted elderberry bush, and wild berries gathered on the moor might be the full extent of the family gardening.

In the more favored parts of Denmark, a housewife generally wanted to raise some herbs, flowers, vegetables, a row or two of berry bushes, a few fruit trees, and maybe even some hops. All of this took a certain amount of planning, but the layout generally followed traditional lines.

The typical vegetable garden was laid out in rectangular beds separated by footpaths, often with four beds around a circular bed at the center. This was a layout that went back to the monastic gardens of the Middle Ages. Its original inspiration was the Islamic tradition of a garden as a reminder of Paradise, with a well or fountain in the center circle and paths between the beds representing the four rivers of Eden.

Square and circular beds were easy to lay out with a length of cord and a couple of posts, and the paths gave easy access for cultivation. In England, a smaller garden laid out according to this plan was called a Vicarage Garden, which sounds like something out of Jane Austen. In Denmark, however, rectangular beds separated by sand or gravel paths and often arranged in groups of four still comprised the common layout for a farm or rural cottage garden of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. The beds were generally raised and surrounded by wooden borders or low boxwood hedges, or even by plantings of lavender or flowers. The garden was enclosed by a stone wall, an earthen dike, or a fence of willow fretwork (risgårde, pilehegn). It was planted with onions, carrots, leeks, curly kale, green cabbage, later also red cabbage and potatoes. Towards the end of the nineteenth century, new plants like cucumbers, green tomatoes, beans, radishes, and spinach started to find a place in Danish farm gardens, and the gardeners began to plant their vegetables in straight rows instead of scattering seed in the beds.

A separate herb garden was usually located near the kitchen door and frequently contained roses (used to make rose hip tea or tisane) and hollyhocks (used to make a tisane for coughs), as well as herbs for seasoning and medicinal use, such as caraway, mustard, parsley, thyme, wormwood, and horseradish.

Other parts of the garden had locations elsewhere. Gooseberry and currant bushes were planted in rows in a separate part of the garden, as was rhubarb. There would usually be an elder bush
nearby. An orchard of apple and pear trees would also be in an area apart from the garden. There was generally a beehive or two, made of coiled straw, near the garden and orchard, and a poultry pen. Chickens and geese helped to keep the garden free of insect pests.

Gardens of these types have been reconstructed around the old cottages and farmhouses at Frilandsmuseet, the open-air museum in Sorgenfri near Copenhagen.

Lawns and Pleasure Gardens

One thing lacking in the landscape of the Danish farm, however, was a lawn. In the days when lawns were mowed laboriously with a scythe or smoothed with heavy rollers, they were too labor intensive to be part of the grounds of an ordinary farmyard or cottage. If you wanted to find a lawn, you had to go up the lane to the local manor house or to the castles and rural palaces of the nobility and royalty, where the wide lawns or “parks” sometimes included fountains, moats, and other water features, gazebos and tea houses, and paths that led into the surrounding woodlands.

However, that also began to change as innovation swept through the Danish countryside. The first mechanical lawn mowers were invented in England in the early decades of the nineteenth century. These were large, horse-drawn machines intended for use on the broad lawns of large estates and playing fields for croquet, tennis, cricket, or rugby. The smaller, human-pushed lawn mower, suitable for home gardens, was invented in America in 1870. It finally created a practical opportunity for ordinary people to have a lawn. By the last decade of the century, Danish farmers and cottagers were acquiring lawn mowers and establishing lawns and pleasure gardens of their own.

The models presented by manorial gardens had also been affected by changing styles of garden design over the centuries. Many Danish manor houses and gardens went back to the sixteenth or seventeenth century. Most of the small, walled knot gardens of
manors built during the Renaissance had been replaced over time with Baroque gardens in the French style, featuring fountains, rectangular ponds, ornate parterres close to the house for viewing from upstairs windows, and long allées of hedges and trees to lead the eye to a distant prospect. During the eighteenth century, these formal baroque landscapes had often been replaced or supplemented by gardens in the Neoclassical English style, where the garden beyond the manor house was designed as an Arcadian meadow meandering through surrounding woodland to a small classical temple, grotto, or waterfall. Exotic specimen trees lent a picturesque quality to this style of landscape. Some manors even had a menagerie or deer park beyond the pleasure garden, and many had elaborate beds of tulips, roses, and other ornamental flowers close to the house. At smaller manors (proprietærgaarde), these garden designs might be reduced to an expansive lawn surrounded by woodland, possibly with a teahouse or a pond as a remnant of a former moat.

When ordinary Danish farmers began to establish lawns and pleasure gardens of their own towards the end of the nineteenth century, they picked up on these features from the large gardens of palaces and manor houses. The pleasure gardens of Danish farms and cottages became highly elaborate and ornamental, combining mown laws with pathways, rock gardens, flowerbeds, and water features.

The gardening ideal of the late nineteenth century was the Romantic garden, which featured meandering paths and an emphasis on the exotic, decorative, and picturesque. When a traditional Danish farm garden was changed into a pleasure garden in this new style, however, it was sometimes hard to transform the rigid geometrical layout of past centuries into the new look of the Romantic style.

Take the example of the farm of Munkholmgaard near Farre in Veje Amt. My grandfather’s sister, Christine (1874-1963), lived there with her husband, Jesper Munkholm (1876-1967), and their two sons. Munkholmgaard was an old family farm on meadowlands
along a stream called the Ommeaa. The farm still had its four wings of thatched buildings surrounding a cobblestone courtyard when I visited there for the first time in 1957. The main house was T-shaped, with a parlor wing projecting into the garden in back. The parlor was furnished with a piano, easy chairs, sofa, and tables in the style of the late nineteenth century. It was decorated with sculpture and landscape paintings of Denmark and Italy by Christine’s brother, Hans Gyde-Petersen (1862-1943). French doors at the far end of the room opened onto the garden.

The garden behind the house was no longer a vegetable garden laid out in quadrangles. A photograph of the family posing in the garden around 1917 shows a circle that may once have stood amidst rectangular vegetable beds but had become a rose garden with some sixteen to twenty rose bushes, surrounded by a low hedge of boxwood or possibly lavender, since this was an “aromatic” bed, and also enclosed by a ring of light-colored, sweet-smelling plants. This circular rose garden had become the central feature of a lawn and pleasure garden, enclosed within a circular sand path, with additional paths to the sides and back. The circle and paths no longer divided beds of onions, carrots, and kale but were surrounded by a neatly mown lawn.

Behind the rose circle stood a picturesque pedestal made of irregular slabs of stone, reminiscent of rune stones, bearing a basin that held a large sculpted eagle. The path undulated around the eagle and ran straight back to the orchard gate in a high wall of
shrubbery. On either side of the eagle, trees pruned into spiral shapes enhanced the picturesque effect of the garden.

Two parallel paths led straight off to the right, both of them lined by low boxwood hedges enclosing narrow rose beds. There may have been similar paths on the left to maintain the symmetry on the crossing axis, perhaps even incorporating paths between the former beds of the old geometrical garden. In the lawn between these side paths stood an ornamental urn surrounded by plantings of hosta. At the far edge of the lawn on the right were the vertical stones of a rock garden.

Finally, in the foreground of the picture, just outside the French doors of the parlor, was a large, symmetrical bed surrounded by lawn and shaped as a circle extended to the sides by smaller circles. Within a border of low flowering plants, this bed was densely planted with exotics featuring huge, ornamental foliage.

All in all, with its raked paths, trimmed hedges, pruned trees, carefully tended roses, and annuals as well as perennials, this was a high-maintenance Romantic pleasure garden, organized in the latest style of the early twentieth century but also reflecting the geometrical heritage of the traditional garden that had long occupied the same site.

Many years later, the author, Viggo Hedegaard Thomsen published a vivid description of his own visits to this rural farm home in Jutland:

My earliest historical knowledge of ancient Rome is associated with a large painting of the Coliseum, glistening in the bright Italian sun under a blue sky, which was probably one of Gyde Petersen’s first oil paintings. Together with several other paintings, including some that showed Danish rural scenes, it hangs in the attractive, cultivated home at Munkholmgaard in Sillesthoved near Farre, in the artist’s home area, west of Vejle. Here the artist’s jolly and hospitable sister, Christine or “Stinne,” her good natured husband, Jesper Munkholm, and two musical sons have created a home, surrounded by a park-like garden, which can only be described as “an Eden on the moor.” Here he came in search of peace and harmony when he grew tired of the hectic artistic life in the capital city.

Hedegaard Thomsen was especially taken with Stinne Munkholm’s colorful artist brother and the lively music that filled the parlor at Munkholmgaard:

The artist, Gyde Petersen, was also a fascinating personality. There was an air of festivity about him; lively good spirits shone in his strong, penetrating glance. There were many festive occasions when we gathered in Jesper and Stinne’s
home, where I spent my summer vacations as a boy. Pastor Carl Noring of Ringive, later provost of Viborg cathedral, who also had his share of good humor and wit, was a frequent guest, and so was the popular Frederik Iversen of Gadbjerg Inn, later of Trædballehus, who came to play “old time” music, accompanied by Jesper. Among ordinary people as among the most distinguished, Gyde Petersen stood out as a grand seigneur. A remarkable combination of dry Jutland humor and Gallic verve made him a man of the world who was equally at home in any circle. No wonder he was always surrounded by members of the fair sex.\textsuperscript{10}

Such was life on the farm of Munkholmgaard near Vejle in the early years of the twentieth century. Ornamental gardening helped to set the scene. Visitors were always taken for a walk around the garden, as I was in 1957, and in fair weather, the whole party would move outside the French doors to socialize in the garden.

\textit{Ramskovgaard in Give Parish, Vejle Amt, around 1890}

\textbf{Gardens and Orchards on a Typical Jutland Farm}

Stinne Munkholm and her brother, my grandfather, grew up on a farm named Ramskovgaard. Their father was known as Jens Christian Pedersen Ramschou (1838-1912) after the old spelling of the name of his farm. When Grandfather was a student at Askov, he signed his name as Kristen Peder Pedersen, but in America, he was known as Chris and signed his name as C. P. Peterson. In time, he earned the title of “Dr.” to put in front and the initials, “D. D. S.,” behind his name.

Ramskovgaard was a three-winged Danish farmstead, with a courtyard between the three wings, open on the north side. In the middle of the courtyard was a circular enclosure centered on a flagpole, which was surrounded by a fenced ornamental garden. The family home was the central or south wing of the three buildings, with a large barn on the right or west side and a thatched building on the left or east side, which contained living quarters for
farmhands and a retired couple, as well as workrooms and storage space.

The main garden and orchard could not be seen from the courtyard, and no other old photographs survive. However, an aerial view of Ramskovgaard, taken in the mid-twentieth century, shows the general layout of the farm and gardens at a later time and gives some indication of what might have been there when Stinne and Chris were growing up.

![Aerial view of Ramskovgaard, Give Parish, around 1950](image)

Ramskovgaard, Give Parish, around 1950

The round bed of ornamentals still marked the center of the courtyard, enclosed now by a wire fence instead of a picket fence. A circle of rose bushes and other ornamental plantings followed the fence all the way around this circular courtyard garden, with a path along its inside edge. A low hedge lined the path on both sides. Inside the circle of the path, ornamental trees marked the east and west sides. The center contained floral or other ornamental plantings in a lawn. Two more small trees stood on either side of the gate that entered the garden circle on the south edge, directly opposite the front door of the house. This garden maintained the site, shape, and general arrangement of the earlier, circular garden behind a picket fence, which stood there when Stinne and Chris were young.

The circular courtyard garden was the first of several garden spaces at Ramskovgaard. Similar arrangements were found on farms throughout eastern Jutland and, with modifications, throughout rural Denmark.
The aerial photograph shows a large vegetable garden behind the thatched east building on the right side of the courtyard, in a sunny site protected from the prevailing west wind. The traditional pattern of hedged geometrical beds separated by paths, which would have been found a generation or two earlier, had given way to a twentieth century vegetable garden planted in parallel rows.

Immediately behind the house was a long, narrow lawn that enclosed a small navette planted with ornamentals or herbs. A narrow strip of border plants appeared to line the outer edge of this narrow lawn on the lower side of a bank that rose to a long, rectangular garden enclosed by a low hedge. This looked like a former row of small, rectangular beds merged into one. It apparently continued to function as a place to raise potherbs and plants for home remedies, as well as flowers to beautify the vicinity of the large, square lawn that continued up the rising slope. Low hedges lined both sides of the sand path surrounding the quadrangular lawn.

Immediately to the east of the back lawn were two long rows of bushes, undoubtedly currant, gooseberry, and possibly also black currant. Beyond these bushes was the orchard, laid out in neat rows running north and south. There would have had several varieties of summer and fall apples and pears. Cherries and plums would have been less likely in this part of Denmark.

The aerial photograph from around 1950 showed that the gardens and orchard at Ramskovgaard were different than they had been fifty or seventy-five years earlier, but the photograph still gave some hint of what things had been like when Chris and Stinne were growing up on the farm in the last quarter of the nineteenth century. Both of them married around the turn of the century and began to lay out gardens of their own. Stinne’s was at Munkholmgaard in her home parish, as we have seen, and Chris’s was far away, in Mankato, Minnesota. How rural Danish gardening traditions fared in an American urban setting is what we need to look at next.

A Danish-American Garden in Minnesota

Christen Peder Pedersen was born at Rubjerggaard in Lindeballe Parish in 1867 but grew up from the age of eight on Ramskovgaard in Give Parish. After finishing Danish public schools, he attended Askov Folk School in 1886 and then worked for a year as a merchant’s apprentice in Ejstrup before emigrating to America in 1888. His destination was Randall, Iowa, where one of his maternal uncles was a farmer and where his older brother, John, had come in 1885. After several years in America, he enrolled as Chris Peterson in the buttermaking program at the Iowa Agricultural College in Ames, graduated in 1895, and was hired by the Danish farmers’ cooperative dairy in Randall, the first cooperative dairy in Iowa. In 1898, he was married to Jennie Christianson in the home of her
parents in Randall. He continued to work as a buttermaker until 1899, when he enrolled in Keokuk Dental College and graduated in 1902 as a Doctor of Dental Surgery. He was certified to practice in Minnesota and settled in Mankato, where he served as dentist for more than fifty years.

Jacobine Christiansen was born in 1867 on Havgaard in Hvejsel Parish near Jelling and came to America as an infant with her parents. She grew up as Jennie Christianson in Randall, Iowa, where she spoke Danish at home and in the local Danish-American community, which included immigrants from both Sjælland and her family's home area in Jutland. After tutoring at home by a Danish governess, she attended American public schools and went on to graduate from the teacher's certification course at Cornell Academy, Mount Vernon, Iowa, in 1890. She taught for a while before marrying Chris Peterson in 1898 (her sister, Anna, had married his brother, John, in 1893). Jennie's gardening traditions would have been those she learned from her mother, her governess, Sine Jensen, and other friends and family members in the Randall community. Her parents both had family memories from Danish manorial gardens as well as farm gardens.

Chris and Jennie moved to Mankato, Minnesota, in 1902, where he began to practice dentistry. In 1904, they bought a sixty-six foot lot at what became 214 Pleasant Street, near Pleasant Grove School, and engaged a local architect, Henry Christian Gerlach, to design their house. A substantial gift from Jennie's father helped them to build the house quickly during the fall and winter of 1905-06, at a time when master carpenters were paid $3.50 per day for ten hours of work and their helpers two dollars. Some years later, Chris recalled the construction process:

I would pay off the carpenters on Saturday nights—five or six of them—with my week's earnings in the office. When the carpenter work was far enough along, I started installing the heating plant by working nights and Sundays. Many times, it would be after midnight, and Jennie would come over and tell me to stop. How I managed to move and handle the heavy radiators alone, I do not know. All winter, I worked at this job. I could not do it now.

In the spring of the year, the carpenters had completed their work, so the painting could be done safely. We let the contract for finishing all the interior woodwork to Gronquist and Endicott for one hundred dollars, and they did a very splendid job... We moved in, as soon as the finish was dry, having lived three years in the little house on the corner. The dream of earlier times, of a lovely home, had at last come true... We now turned our attention to luxuries. We bought rugs and furniture and even a piano, and a year or two after
moving into our new home, we had electric lights and power in Mankato.

For the first time in his life, Chris had central heat provided by a large, coal-fired furnace, hot water, and iron radiators, while his sister, Stinne, was still stoking the stoves of Munkholmgaard with peat from a nearby bog. Gaslight fixtures were installed throughout the house on Pleasant Street but were wired for electricity, which became available within a couple of years. Then the gas was turned off and the electric lights switched on. Jennie also had a gas stove and oven in the kitchen, as well as the usual wood-fired cook stove, and she had a gas-powered mangle iron that she continued to hook up to a gas jet for the rest of her life, lighting it with a match and using it to mangle clothes. This was life in a modern American home in 1906.

Although the lot looked perfectly flat from the front, it fell off sharply in the back. The site was graded into a gently sloping lower yard, separated from the house and the front yard by a steep bank and held above the alley in the rear by a four-foot concrete retaining wall erected in 1907. On the alley side, Chris built an ornamental picket fence along the top of the retaining wall, with an ornamental gate that never opened because of the four-foot drop.

On the left or west side of the lower back yard, a two-story "barn" was built in 1907 with a heated workshop in the upper level, a potting room and garden storage below, and a low chicken coop at the far end. Raising fowl in town was a common practice in those days. An early photo taken from the upper level of the lot shows a rotary rack for drying clothes in the foreground and what looks like a berry patch in front of the chicken coop on the lower level.

Chris had many hobbies, including carpentry and woodworking. In the early years, he raised purebred Plymouth Rocks and other prize poultry. He entered them in state and local competitions and won several cups and blue ribbons. Among the surviving ribbons are a first premium cockerel from the Breeders and Fanciers Association of Minnesota in 1912, first premium
cockerel in 1913, first premium hen, pullet, cock and cockerel in 1914, two first prizes and a second of the Minnesota Fanciers’ Association in 1914, and two undated champion hen, two champion cockerel, and one champion pullet from the American Partridge Plymouth Rock Club. In time, however, Chris developed other hobbies, and the chicken coop grounds were put to other uses, including a large garden composting area.

Around 1908, Chris bought a big, red Jackson automobile with brass carbide lights and an open top. A garage was built in the barn on the upper level of the yard, with a driveway from Pleasant Street along the west side of the house. A privet hedge ran along both sides of the lot and was eventually pruned to shoulder height.

Inveterate hobbyist that he was, Chris built a high tower and birdhouse on the roof of the garage, for he was also a birdwatcher. He erected a pergola over the garage door and planted concord
grape vines. During the summer, we grandchildren used to admire the clusters of purple grapes hanging from this arbor, and in the fall, our grandmother, Jennie, used the grapes to make wine.

The home became a mixture of Danish and American elements. The two-story white frame house was definitely American in style and had many features that would not have been found in a Danish farmhouse: wooden frame construction in two stories over a high cellar, front and back stairs, a screened front porch, attic space for hanging the washing in the winter, even a driveway and garage. The garden layout, however, was definitely in the Danish tradition and drew on age-old patterns as well as the new fashion for pleasure gardens like the one of Chris’s sister at Munkholmgaard.

![The Peterson home at 214 Pleasant Street, ca. 1910](image)

**Danish Traditions in the Back Yard, American Look in Front**

By the kitchen door on the garage side in back, Jennie planted her kitchen herbs and a few hollyhocks, as at many a Danish farmhouse. Her main vegetable garden was on the lower level of the back yard. A concrete stairway along the side of the garage led down to the potting room, while steps from the middle of the yard led directly to the garden. Paths divided the garden into four rectangular beds in the traditional Danish way. In Jennie’s garden, the paths were of cinders that crunched underfoot, and they were lined with bricks. Chris had grown up with a similar garden at Ramskovgaard. Jennie’s parents had done so as well in Hvejsel Parish, and they may have laid out their Iowa garden in the same
Jennie probably knew this style of garden layout from her childhood.

Jennie liked to border her vegetables beds with flowers, as many Danish farming women did. She used marigolds and nasturtiums for their repellent properties but also planted ornamental perennials in the borders, including roses, peonies, and Siberian iris. In one of her four beds, she raised mint, dill, parsley, and other herbs, as well as perennial flowers. In the other three beds, she raised common cool weather vegetables like beets, cabbage, carrots, cauliflower, peas, radishes, spinach, and kohlrabi, as well as warm weather vegetables like beans, cucumbers, tomatoes, and ground cherries. Chris built a cold frame to give an earlier start to some long-season plants.

There was not room for an orchard on a city lot, but Chris did plant a two apple trees, a Greening on the upper level, close to the house and above the rock garden, and a Wealthy at the far end of the lower garden, where it would not shade the vegetable beds.

A good photo of Jennie’s vegetable garden was not available, but her daughter, Marian, helped to prepare this sketch of the layout in 1993.

On the north-facing slope between the two levels of the yard, red currant and gooseberry bushes were planted on the eastern side (bottom in the sketch). On the other side, between the two sidewalks going down this slope, Chris built an elaborate rock garden with a series of cascades between small cement basins on this shady patch of hillside, which was planted with ferns, moss, and wildflowers.

When grandchildren came to visit, Chris went first of all to the rhubarb bed at the top of the slope and pulled a stalk of rhubarb for each child. Then, as they stood on the middle stairs and chewed their rhubarb, he went to the faucet on the side of the garage, turned it on, and caused the waterfall to bubble down through the rock
garden from basin to basin, to the constant pleasure of the young ones.

Chris loved to read magazines like *Popular Science* and *Popular Mechanics* in search of new projects, including improvements in garden ornamentation. In the 1920s, he built an ornamental fence along the upper edge of the slope between the two levels of the yard. He was photographed seated on it around 1927, with the lower garden level barely visible behind him.

His shop behind the garage was well equipped with power tools, and he loved to spend time there when he came home from the office. Originally, it was heated with a small iron stove, but in time, he built an underground tunnel from the furnace room of the house to the workshop and installed a fan to blow warm air through the tunnel. Jennie could come down half the flight of basement stairs and call to him through the tunnel when supper was ready. His projects were endless: walnut furniture for the house, two duck boats, a motor launch for fishing at their Lake Madison cottage, and of course fences, structures, bird houses, and other ornaments for the yard.

If you were walking down Pleasant Street in the 1930s and looked at the Peterson house, you would probably not notice anything that looked especially Danish, either in the house or in the front yard. Immigrants generally preferred not to put their ethnicity on public display in those years between the two world wars. The architecture and landscaping of the Peterson house were typical of a two-story
Midwestern house of the early twentieth century. The front screen porch was enclosed by the 1930s, and a portico was added over the entrance, but some other houses in the neighborhood also had enclosed porches. The foundation plantings of perennials were typically American, and so were the trees and shrubs: spirea on either side of the entrance, an ornamental catalpa and a green spruce as specimen trees, and an elm for shade on the boulevard.

The Peterson house on Pleasant Street, ca. 1935

In short, the house and landscaping represented a form of what is sometimes called “hidden ethnicity”—a typical American white frame house and an open front yard without a fence or hedge, landscaped in an American style with foundation plantings, shade trees, and ornamentals. The Danish garden was hidden away in the back, and you did not see it unless the Petertons invited you to come in for a visit.

This Danish garden kept expanding over time. In a corner of the back yard, just above the currant and gooseberry bushes, Chris built a goldfish pond. He and Jennie filled the area around the pond with a rich array of perennials, including bleeding heart, peonies, iris, and some annuals. Grandchildren from the Christianson, Peterson, Sogard, and Mueller families loved stand by the pond and watch the goldfish dart through the water plants. Like the rock garden hidden on the slope, this area was reminiscent of the Romantic garden of Chris’s sister, Stinne, and her husband, Jesper, at Munkholmgard. In 1947, one of the Munkholm sons visited Mankato with his wife. By then, Chris had added a clear symbol of Danish ethnicity: a miniature windmill. He built it with a door that opened to a dark interior, providing one more garden adventure for visiting grandchildren.
All the parts of a traditional rural Danish garden and orchard were here, crowded together and hidden away in the back yard of what looked like an ordinary American family home: the four rectangular garden plots and paths in the Danish medieval tradition, a couple of apple trees representing the orchard, a berry patch, even a grape arbour, a poultry yard for a time, and Romantic features that included a goldfish pond, waterfall, rock garden, perennial garden packed with plants, ornamental fences and gates, a birdhouse on a tower, and a miniature windmill. Gardeners liked to go all out in Denmark as well as in Danish America in the era between the two world wars, and my grandparents were among them.

Gardens as Eden in Jutland, California, and an Artist's Vision

All except one of Chris's siblings visited the home on Pleasant Street in Mankato at one time or another. Several of them were enthusiastic gardeners in their own right, and they were scattered to many climate zones. They adapted to local conditions and traditions, kept up with the latest trends in gardening and landscape design, but never forgot their memories of childhood gardening at Ramskovgaard. They never lost the love of gardening they had learned from their mother.

Stinne and Jesper Munkholm visited her siblings in America early in the twentieth century. A generation later in 1947, their oldest son visited with his Austrian wife, Mela. Stinne corresponded with her siblings for decades and sent photographs of Munkholm, her family, and her garden.

Chris's brother, John, had a general store in Randall, Iowa. He was an avid conservationist who maintained a large vegetable garden and planted trees all over his little prairie community. He was married to Jennie's sister, and the two families kept in close contact.
Another brother, Hans, immigrated first to the Randall, Iowa, area and married a Danish American but then, they headed west and became fruit growers in Reedley near Fresno, California. They lived in a California-style ranch house surrounded by palm trees and broad acres of orchard crops, including apples, pears, peaches, plums, apricots, figs, lemons, and many varieties of table, raisin, and wine grapes. This California experience represented gardening expanded into a large-scale commercial enterprise, and Hans was very successful at it. He corresponded regularly with his siblings and sent them fruit from his ranches every year. Chris and Jennie visited Hans and his wife, Mary, around 1930 and were astonished by the great variety of fruit, flowers, and other perennials, that could be grown in the San Joaquin Valley in those days when water for irrigation was plentiful.

The youngest sister, Mathilde, came to America in 1904, married, and lived for a number of years in the Danish-American community of Ringsted, Iowa, later in Chicago. She also kept in contact with her siblings, but little is known about her gardening practices.

Finally, the eldest of the siblings, Hans Gyde-Petersen (1862-1943), was a landscape painter who saw nature not so much as something to cultivate by farming or gardening, but rather, as the object of an artist’s vision and creativity. He was briefly married, twice, but lived as a bachelor for most of his life, residing in a number of idyllic locations including Skagen and Munkebjerg in Jutland, Nyhavn and St. Jørgen’s Lake in Copenhagen, and the shores of Vejlesø in Holte, north of Copenhagen.

As time passed, he was drawn more and more to the classic Danish landscapes of the large Deer Park (Dyrehaven) in northern
Sjælland, where dozens of other landscape artists also painted. In 1913, he helped to organize them into an organization called Dyrehavens Malere (Deer Park Painters Guild) and served as its first president. Around 1923, he settled in Klampenborg on the edge of Dyrehaven and spent the remaining twenty years of his life painting *plein air* landscapes in the vast park in all kinds of weather. The day’s work at the easel was often broken by long, festive lunches at Peter Liep’s Hus, the picturesque inn on the edge of the park. Dozens of landscape artists congregated there, lunched together, enjoyed their beer and snaps, conducted the affairs of Dyrehavens Malere, and planned their annual exhibits.

![Hans Gyde-Petersen on the way to paint in Dyrehaven](image)

Early in his Klampenborg years, Gyde-Petersen took an extended trip to America in 1924-26. He visited his siblings and was especially taken with the Mankato and Reedley areas, painting a number of landscapes in and around both places.18

He also expressed his fascination with the fruits of the garden when a box arrived in Mankato, where he was staying with Chris and Jennie, from their brother, Hans, in California. Gyde-Petersen was so taken with the abundance of colors, tastes, and aromas pouring out of the box that he decided to postpone his painting in the *plein air* for a time and do a still life of the fruit, adding a banana or two from the pantry. The painting that resulted was hung in the dining room of Chris and Jennie’s house as an image of the abundance of nature. It never failed to draw my admiration when I visited my grandparents’ home as a child.
With Gyde-Petersen, we have come to the end of the story. The gardening traditions of eastern Jutland that Maren Gydesen (1837-1903), the wife of Jens Christian Pedersen Ramschou, taught to her children at Ramskovgaard were scattered far and wide in the generation of those children. At Munkholmgaard, they produced a Romantic pleasure garden that made a traditional farmhouse into an “Eden on the moor.” In Mankato, Minnesota, they produced a back yard of an American family home that contained all the elements of a traditional Danish garden, rearranged and adapted to a Midwestern urban setting. In California, they expanded into acre upon acre of orchards and vineyards. And in Klampenborg on the northern edge of Copenhagen, they produced landscapes in oil paints on canvas that created hundreds of visual variations on the theme of a Danish Eden.


2 Thanks to my brother, Paul Christianson of Kingston, Ontario, for helpful comments and additions to the manuscript of this article.

3 See the letter written to relatives in Denmark by her father on 26 December 1868 in The Bridge 2002, 25/2: 15-35.

4 See his autobiography in The Bridge 2002, 25/2: 36-49.
7 Peter Michelsen, *Frielandsmuseet ved Sorgenfri: Museets historie og gamle huse* (Copenhagen: Nationalmuseet, 1973). For a general introduction to the museum in English, see <http://www.nationalmuseet.dk/sw20384.asp> (accessed 4.03.2010). For more detailed information on individual gardens in Danish, see <http://www.natmus.dk/sw4700.asp> (4.03.2010).
13 Sine Jensen was born 1819 as Lausine Jensdatter on her family’s farm in Tofthøj, Gadbjerg Parish, and lived in the Christianson household for half a century.
14 Jennie’s paternal grandmother grew up on Skovgaard manor in Kollerup, and her father’s aunts lived on Hammergaard and Tammstrup manors. Mindstrup manor in Hvejsel had been in her mother’s family.
15 The Mankato neighborhood around Pleasant Grove School later served as the setting for the Betsy-Tacy stories by Maud Hart Lovelace, and H. C. Gerlach was her model for the father of Tib, the third girl in a circle of friends. See Sharla S. Whalen, *The Betsy-Tacy Companion* (Whitehall PA: Portalington Press, 1995).
16 The ribbons are in the possession of the author. None of the championship cups have survived.
17 Marianne T. Stecher, “Danish Settlement in Fresno County, California: An Example of Acculturation to a Foreign Environment, 1880-1920,” *The Bridge* 1981, 6: 8-21, sketches the agricultural practices of Fresno County and describes three paths of migration to the area from Denmark: directly from Denmark, from German-occupied Schleswig, or from the Midwest.
Piet Hein (1905-1996)
A Renaissance Man

By
Inger M. Olsen

A man who in the year 2000 had had his collections of poems and Grooks published in 1,700,000 copies, who had invented lamp shades, a sundial, and the super ellipse as well as games, who had received the Dansk Design Center’s annual prize in 1989 should be easy to locate among people whose biography have been written. Those were my thoughts when I started researching this paper, and great was my surprise when I found that was not at all the case.

The reason for this may be found in a remark that Piet Hein made to his friend Mogens Frohn Nielsen. Hein once admitted to his friend that the Grook, “Samtale” [Discussion], described himself completely:

Lillekat, Lillekat, lille Kat paa Vejen, hvis er du, hvis er du? –
Jeg er sgu min egen.

[Little Cat, Little Cat, little cat on the road, whose are you, whose are you? – Heck, I am my own]

When reading up on Piet Hein, one cannot but agree with his assessment of himself: He was his own, through and through.
Frohn Nielsen has written a small book, *Mennesket Piet Hein* [Piet Hein the Person], which gives some insight into the personality of Piet Hein, as does the remark mentioned above.

Nielsen was also known as "Skipper." He was skipper of the three-masted schooner, *Fulton*, which was used to instill values in young men and boys who had a hard time finding a straight path in the world. Piet Hein stated,


[When your puppies work on the ship – especially when sailing – and perhaps especially during extreme weather conditions, they are forced – in a natural way – to be liberated from time. They are forced by the circumstances – the close reality – to keep everything but survival – the reality out. He also meant that “Skipper” fought for reality . . . the positive reality.]

To return to our reality and Piet Hein, it also can be found when walking in Illums Bolighus in Copenhagen, but in the meaning of touching and feeling. During the summer of 2009, one could see a whole table with an exhibit of Piet Hein design, from the smallest elliptic egg used to cool off a drink to pretty pots, platters, and other useful items anyone could be proud to place on one’s table for a party or an everyday affair.

If one would go outside, turn the corner, and go up Købmagergade to the bookstore, one peek inside will reveal some small books bearing the word *Gruk* or *Grook* on the front page, depending on which language one would be looking for (*Gruk*: Danish, *Grook*: English).

Throughout his life, Piet Hein was restless. He studied successfully at the University of Copenhagen and the Niels Bohr Institute, to mention two of the institutions he frequented, but he never got a degree until he got an honorary degree at Yale University in 1972 and another one at Syddansk Universitet in 1991.

He has himself pointed out that there is a short distance between a genius and a mad person, and he illustrated it with an example from his own life. Once, he participated in a psychological test at the University of Copenhagen,
Her ville man undersøge de forskellige associationer, forsøgspersonerne fik ved at iagttage roterende farveskiver. Piet Hein kom ud som en klar nr. 1, hvad angik mængden af associationer. Og den eneste anden, der kom bare lidt i nærheden af Piet Heins præstation, blev efter eksperimentet kørt direkte tilbage til Sankt Hans Hospital.  

[Here they wanted to examine the various associations the subjects got when observing rotating color discs. Piet Hein was a clear number one in regard to the number of associations. And the only other person who came at all close to Piet Hein’s performance was driven directly back to Sankt Hans Mental Hospital after the experiment.]

It has been said about Piet Hein that, “A key factor in his work might be a search for unity: unity between the microcosm and macrocosm, between science and art and the humanities, or the world as a unity of nations.”  

This leads to another facet of Piet Hein’s work: He was politically engaged in society. He was active in the organizations “Een Verden” [One World], “Ligaen for Tolerance” [The League for Tolerance], and PEN. In 1935-39, he published poetry “in the anti-Nazi or, as he called it, the pro-democratic association’s publication, Kulturkampen [The Cultural Fight].”

His other poetic genre, the Grooks, “had roots in the moral epigrammatic poetry of the eighteenth century . . . lyrical poetry is an exercise of thought and language, not emotional art.” This genre was to become political occasional poetry, which was also promoted by his contemporary, Poul Henningsen (1894-1967). During the war, Piet Hein wanted to fight, and he said, “The primary thing is not what we fight against, but what has value for us, and what we fight for.” As he has phrased it in a Grook, “I’d like to know what this whole show is all about before it’s out,” the illustration of which is a figure sitting on a ball seemingly rushing through space. At times, he would be flirting with the censors, as can be seen in “Sports-Gruk” from 1941:

Jeg dyrker en Sport, som jeg træner i tit:  
jeg over mig i at gå ude af Trit.  

[I am cultivating a sport, which I often practice:  
I train myself in walking out of step.]

He was not only for the Danish way of life, but he was also very much a member of the world society. This he formulated in the epigram:
Hvis man ikke er sig selv er man ingen.
Hvis man er sig selv er man alle.\textsuperscript{11}

[If one is not oneself one is nobody.
If one is oneself one is everybody.]

Piet Hein was also active in promoting equality among the genders and especially for women’s equality, as can be seen in the fact that, “For more than twenty years, he was a member of the board for the Women’s Association Open Door International. The only item in its manifesto was equal opportunity in the trades, industry and business regardless of gender.”\textsuperscript{12} This was a notion he no doubt had from his mother, Estrid Hein, an ophthalmologist and an active member of the Danish Women’s Association, as well as a cousin of Isak Dinesen.\textsuperscript{13}

His father has to take the responsibility for the inventive side of Piet Hein. Hjalmar Hein was a civil engineer who invented, among other things, a central vacuum system for his house in the early part of the twentieth century.\textsuperscript{14}

Piet Hein met scientists in his home, and he visited with Albert Einstein (1879-1955) when he was studying epistemology. He was of the opinion

\begin{quote}
that humanity’s greatest and most considerable task was perhaps to build a bridge across the split into two half worlds which arose when empirical knowledge separated the natural sciences from the humanities . . . a process begun by Galileo Galilei in 1610, when he turned his telescope toward the sky . . . [and] radically changed the picture of the universe . . . one [can] not separate the formulation of the problem and the solution, question and answer from one another . . . Art is the solution to problems which can not be formulated until they are solved.]
\end{quote}

Piet Hein said that he wrote about the work and ideas of Niels Bohr (1885-1962) in order that ordinary people should be able to understand them.\textsuperscript{16}
It has been said Piet Hein was a cultural radical and open-minded a “spokesperson for human rights and democratic principles.” When Denmark was occupied by Nazi Germany on 9 April 1940, he was quick to react.

Five days after the German occupation, Piet Hein published his first Grook, Springtime Melancholy [Vaarlig Vemod], under the pen name of Kumbel Kumbell in Politiken’s “Think about it” column. . . . The Grooks [developed] into an underground literature . . . [which] could penetrate the German censorship to send encouraging and mobilizing messages to the hard-pressed Danes.18

Writing like this made it inevitable that he had to go underground during the war and eventually get out of Denmark as well. That was in spite of the fact he was related to the Danish foreign minister, Erik Scavenius.19

Piet Hein was consistent. Like his view of the world, his Grook has the shape of a ball,

...a closed, complete, ready cast ball. . . . Nothing is left to the reader. . . . Piet Hein’s sharp vision lacks nothing. The enthusiasm and madness that drives the inventor and the designer is tamed in the poetry. The elliptical shape, on the other hand, puts up resistance. There is poetry in the superegg.20
the French mathematician, Gabriel Lamé (1795-1870), who worked out the general equation to generate it. The Lamé curve can take a variety of symmetrical forms, depending on the values used. Piet Hein’s version used values that produced something between a rounded rectangle and an oval. He considered this to be the most pleasing and functional shape, and he used it to design toys, silver, lighting, furniture, and even a city square in Stockholm that allowed a free flow of traffic. Piet Hein developed a three-dimensional version of his super ellipse called the Superegg, which has been used as a sculptural work of art.

Hein has expressed this notion of the qualities of the super ellipse in a Grook called “Problems” in Grooks 1966:

Problems worthy of attack prove their worth by hitting back

Piet Hein’s search for unity and harmony was not a sign that he had no emotions. He was an heir to the witty, ironic, and epigrammatic mode of poetry expressed by Johan Herman Wessel (1742-85), Peter Andreas Heiberg (1758-1841), and his contemporary, Willy Breinholst (1918-2009). As an artist, he subscribed to the dialectical interaction of the Chinese yin-yang pattern in his poetry, which was represented in an original way in the two faces on the cover of his first Gruk collection.

[It is] characteristic that Piet Hein’s writing, in all essentials, is aphoristic, and that he invented a short form in which to express himself, which is congruous with his way of experiencing things. His distracted, rootless nature may be the reason why events like falling in love and world wars did not leave emotional traces in his writing but instead spurred the poet into grooking his positive and positivistic philosophy of life.

Piet Hein was concerned with the divide that was developing in our societies between the “knows” and the “know nots” and also between science and art. Hein stated: “Kunst er løsningen af problemer, som ikke kan formuleres, før de er løst” [Art is the solution to problems which can not be formulated until they have been solved].

For him there was no unbridgeable gap between the subjectivity of the fine arts and the objective world of science. Throughout his life he grew and expressed himself both as an artist and a scientist. He has been called a universalist. In that
way a spiritual affinity existed between him and the Renaissance.\textsuperscript{25}

Piet Hein hoped that his Grooks would become his legacy. He wrote them in Danish and learned English and other languages, which allowed him to translate them himself. Piet Hein also wrote full-length poems, but they did not capture people's imagination the way the Grooks have. Hence, in regard to his poetry and poetic writing, he will be remembered for his Grooks. Their pithy format, their double entendres and humor (albeit at times this last aspect is not totally at the forefront) appeal to the Danish sense of humor and the saying, I may be laughing but I am serious. What is more, they also appeal to people in other language areas.

The Grooks have a strong affinity to the super ellipse. They are poems, but not quite, just like the ellipse is a circle, but not quite. Just as Piet Hein said of himself that

\begin{quote}
Jeg er jo min egen, og det respekteres, så har jeg fået min egen – helt ny – galakse . . . Vorherre kalder den for Lille kat . . .
\end{quote}

[I am indeed my own, and that has to be respected, then I have got my own – all new – galaxy . . . the Lord calls it Little Cat . . .]

According to his friend, "Skipper," Hein had some eccentricities. For example, he did not like people saying the familiar Danish du to him, instead of the more formal De, without his permission. He said

\begin{quote}
Det er ikke demokrati at tvinge folk til at sige De, lige så lidt som det er demokrati, at tvinge dem til at sige du. Vi må hver især have retten til at anvende den tillægeform, som nu engang passer os bedst. Den tvungne dus-form er en uheldig diktatorisk form for maskeret demokrati, navnlig når dus-kravet bliver fanatisk . . . antiuniformister . . . er som regel de mest uniformerede, ligesom dus-folket oftest holder stejlere på deres form end Des-folket på deres.\textsuperscript{27}
\end{quote}

[It is not democracy to force people to say De just as little as it is democracy to force them to say du. We each have to have the right to use the manner of address which once and for all suits us best. The forced du form is an unfortunate dictatorial manner of masked democracy especially when the du demand becomes fanatical . . . non-conformists . . . are as a rule the most conformist, just as the du people generally hang on to their form [of address] more stubbornly than the De people to theirs.]
A contrasting point was made in “The Egocentrics,” in *Grooks 3:*

People are self-centered to a nauseous degree.  
They will keep on about themselves while I’m explaining me.

In real life, Piet Hein hardly needed to explain himself. The number of awards he received during his lifetime is enough to explain and tell a lot about him, although it does not explain the fact that no one has written his biography. However, as Hein wrote in “A Word to the Wise” in *Grooks:*

Let the world pass in its time-ridden race;  
ever get caught in its snare.  
Remember, the only acceptable case  
for being in any particular place  
is having no business there.

And that is perhaps the best explanation for why I have attempted to write a paper about Piet Hein, his life, work, and inventions without the support of a biography or much written material about him and his life. His Grooks have made me do it or, as he said in “The Paradox of Life” (philosophical grook):

A bit beyond perception’s reach I sometimes believe I see  
that life is two locked boxes, each containing the other’s key.

**Bibliography**


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1 Nielsen 1996, 111.
2 Translations of quotations in the text are by the author unless otherwise indicated in the notes.
4 Mai 2002, 452.
7 Mai 2002, 457.
9 Hein 1966, 49.
11 Feldbæk 1992, 72.
13 Editor’s note: Piet Hein and Karen Blixen (pen name: Isak Dinesen) were second cousins; Estrid Hein was a granddaughter and Karen Blixen a great-granddaughter of the prominent Copenhagen businessman, Andreas Nicolai Hansen (1798-1873). See also Mai 2002, 459.
15 Mai 2002, 454.
16 Mai 2002, 454. In 1932, Piet Hein wrote an article to explain the complementarity principle of the Nobel Prize-winning Danish nuclear physicist, Niels Bohr in laymen’s terms.
19 Editor’s note: Erik Scavenius (1877-1962) was married to Estrid Hein’s sister and was therefore Piet Hein’s uncle. As foreign minister, Scavenius served as the primary link between the Danish government and the German occupying authorities 1940-43. His wartime role remains controversial among historians; Scavenius considered himself a Danish patriot who protected his country from vicious Nazi atrocities, but he was reviled as a traitor by many members of the Resistance.


22. Piet Hein modified the formula to $(x/a)^n + (y/b)^n = 1$ and then generated his superellipse with $n = 2.5$ and $a/b = 6/5$. See ibid.

25. Ibid.
Sick at heart and world-weary at the age of twenty-seven, Captain Wilhelm Dinesen (1845-95) turned his back on Europe and set sail for America.

The year was 1872. Danish immigration was on the rise, and many immigrants dreamed of making their fortune in the land of opportunity. Dinesen had other reasons. His fortune was already secure, for he had been born to wealth and privilege. As a young man, however, he had gone to war, but war had led to defeat, and defeat to bloody civil war. How could he forget the horrors he had seen and experienced?

What he needed now, and what he hoped to find in the wide-open spaces and free air of the New World, was peace of mind.

Danes remember Wilhelm Dinesen as the father of Karen Blixen, who wrote remarkable stories under the name of Isak Dinesen and became one of the most celebrated literary figures of twentieth century Denmark. Her stories, such as Seven Gothic Tales, Out of Africa, and Babette’s Feast,
became best sellers around the world. However, she was not the only author in the Dinesen family. The men in the family ran to soldiers who wrote about battlefield experiences. Wilhelm Dinesen was one of these, like his father before him and his son later.

His father, Karen Blixen’s grandfather, was Major Adolph Wilhelm Dinesen (1807-76). He served in North Africa 1837-39 as a volunteer in the French army. After these campaigns, he wrote a book praising his foe, the Algerian freedom fighter, Abd-el-Kader. He later commanded a Danish artillery battery with skill in the Schleswig-Holstein war of 1848-50 and wrote about Danish defenses, too.

Wilhelm Dinesen’s son, Karen Blixen’s brother, Lieutenant Thomas Dinesen (1892-1979), volunteered during World War I for service in the 42nd Battalion, Quebec Regiment, Royal Highlanders of Canada. At Parvillers on the Western Front, he led a charge and dispatched twelve enemy soldiers in hand-to-hand combat with bayonet, rifle, and grenades. For this, King George V at Buckingham Palace on 26 October 1918 personally decorated him with Britain’s highest medal, the Victoria Cross. Thomas Dinesen wrote a rousing book about his wartime experiences and later wrote other books about his father and sister.

Captain Wilhelm Dinesen, Karen Blixen’s father, was the middle figure in this line of soldier-authors. As a teen-aged second lieutenant, he fought in the Schleswig-Holstein War of 1864 and, many years later, wrote a book about his experiences. That war was a bitter defeat for Denmark and resulted in the loss of Schleswig-Holstein. When the Franco-Prussian War broke out in 1870, many Danes hoped that Prussia would be defeated and the Danish portions of Schleswig—Sønderjylland—would be restored to Denmark. Dinesen joined the French army, found himself on the losing side once again, and, following the war, witnessed the bloody suppression of the Communards who had seized control of Paris.

It was in the aftermath of this bitterly disappointing second defeat, and after being an eyewitness to the harrowing slaughter of men and women in the streets of Paris, that the young soldier left for America in search of rest and peace. First of all, however, he took his disturbing memories, together with whole portfolios of leaflets, placards, pictures, and proclamations from the days of the Commune, and went home to Denmark. He sat down to sort through these papers, and he began to write about what he had seen and experienced. His first published book appeared in Copenhagen in 1873, when he was abroad in America. It was the only first-hand account of the Paris Commune ever written by a Danish author.

Wilhelm Dinesen continued to write throughout his sojourn of 1872-74 in America, but now, the mood of his writing changed. The horrors of Europe were no longer his subject, but rather, he began to write about the marvels of America. He kept a diary. He wrote as a traveler, sensitive to new experiences on every hand, writing with a keen eye to detail and a gentle sense of irony. He wrote as a naturalist who knew and loved the outdoors, was fascinated with the endless plains and deep forests of America, and was able to become friends with the native tribes who still
inhabited them. Gradually, in the healing realm of nature, he began to find his peace of mind. Among the Chippewa of Wisconsin, he was given the name, Boganis (little hazelnut), which became his pen name when he wrote in this new style.

In America, Wilhelm Dinesen found his voice as an environmental writer. He had always identified strongly with nature and wild animals, and this came through in his stories, but so did the camaraderie of life in the outdoors and even the need for action, legislative and otherwise, to achieve environmental protection. After he returned to Denmark, his stories were published in the Copenhagen newspaper, Politiken, and then appeared in book form under the title of Jagtbreve [Hunting Letters]. They became very popular in Denmark and went through numerous editions, right up to recent times.

Most of the later stories were set in Denmark, with an occasional foray into Sweden. They generally had to do with outdoor sports like hunting and fishing. In Dinesen’s day, of course, most environmentalists were sportsmen of a vigorous Teddy Roosevelt sort. Wilhelm Dinesen was that kind of a man.

His memoirs from America were not published until 1887, when they appeared in the form of two long articles in the Danish literary journal, Tilskueren. Shortly after their publication, the eminent Danish critic, Georg Brandes, wrote a long essay about Wilhelm Dinesen, which included this high praise: “Since Steen Blicher’s time, no author in Danish literature has known Danish fauna like Boganis.” Brandes went on to characterize Dinesen as “a soldier, a hunter, a dreamer, a lover, a poet . . . democratic rather than aristocratic minded, radical rather than authoritarian, but most of all a lover of nature free of all bias.”

Later Danish authors followed in this tradition of outdoors writing from Blicher and Dinesen, including Johannes V. Jensen, who wrote stories like “Potawatomi’s Datter,” and Kaj Munk, who wrote tales of hunting and outdoor life in Jutland.

An adventurer at heart, with an imagination fired since boyhood by Danish translations of the Leatherstocking Tales of James Fenimore Cooper and with a deep love of the outdoor life, Wilhelm Dinesen headed for Indian territory in 1872. He wrote about his adventures but was not specific about all the details. It later took the tireless digging and research of Richard Vowles to uncover the missing facts of Wilhelm Dinesen’s American adventures.

Here are some excerpts from Wilhelm Dinesen’s Erindringer fra en rejse i Amerika 1872.
It was in the late summer of 1872 when I traveled to America. I was sick of soul. I had participated in the Franco-Prussian War, had seen my hopes for redress of [the Danish defeat of] 1864 shattered, and had then been a witness to the civil war in Paris. I was nauseated by both sides, had then lived in both Denmark and France, but I felt uncomfortable, restless, tired, worn out, weak. I doubted my own ability to achieve anything whatever, and then came some personal problems—and I gave up everything and went to America. What I thought I needed was work, compulsory, daily labor, physical exertion. At that time, it was not so clear to me as it is now that what I really needed most of all was rest, otherwise I would have headed right straight out to the flat, endless prairies under a cloudless, blue sky, where everything was grass, grass, and only grass, as far as the eye could see, or I would have found refuge in the deep, heavy, dark forests, where one can roam for days without seeing a single creature, without hearing a sound, not even a puff of wind through the trees. Someone who has not tried it, who has not been alone—all alone—many, many miles from the nearest person, does not know how beneficial the peace of the forest primeval can be. It was up in the virgin forests of Wisconsin that I settled down for a couple of years, but I only got there after taking some detours, which I shall now allow myself to tell about.

From Liverpool by way of Queenstown [now Cobh, Eire] on the coast of Ireland, I sailed with one of the Allen Line ships to Quebec, a pleasant journey despite a certain monotony that was only broken when we met a ship once and another time a couple of icebergs. Four or five gulls followed us over the Atlantic Ocean and cast themselves greedily on whatever was thrown overboard, and now and then, a herd of dolphins came towards the ship in long lines, one after the other like a row of soldiers, and amused themselves by racing alongside and past us. It was evening when we reached the new world: we saw a lighthouse on the coast of Newfoundland and took a pilot on board. For a couple of days, we sailed up the gulf and into the proud Saint Lawrence River, whose high banks are covered with coniferous forests, though the axe has made many clearings. Along the coast, one house after another sticks out, the river narrows, you look for waterfalls that foam down into the river, fortifications on the steep, tangled cliffs. The ship holds close to
them when the tide is in, but when it is out, this area is dry land and ships need to hold to the bed of the river in the middle. Quebec, which is still half French, is built up the slope. On the riverfront, along a promenade, were a number of cannons, and I noticed some old Danish cannons among them, presumably mementoes from 1807.12

On the trip to Chicago, nothing unusual occurred except that the mail car caught fire. It was up ahead, and sparks rained around our ears as we raced towards the next station. The countryside is uniform and boring, mainly low, boggy, charred woodlands. We saw few animals or birds, and if you are not Americanized, you get tired of seeing advertisements painted in gigantic letters on poles, trees, houses, even cliffs in the middle of the river. Around the Great Lakes, the landscape becomes more lively, scenic, rolling, well cultivated, a mixture of forest and prairie.

The name, Chicago, is of Indian origin and means "skunk." The Pottawatomie, who still lived here at the beginning of this century, gave it the name, but only a pitiful remnant of them survive, very diluted and soon to vanish, on the far side of the Missouri. The name is descriptive: a bog, through which a muddy, black, stinking river slowly flowed into Lake Michigan. Even a few years ago, when the fort that stood here half a century ago had been transformed into an immense city and the Indian trading post into department stores the equal of any in the world, this sickening river still gave off such a stink in summer that it made you ill to pass it, but then, one fine day, they decided to reverse its direction by cutting a channel. Now, instead of flowing into Lake Michigan and on through the Great Lakes to the Atlantic Ocean, clear water flows out of the lake into the Illinois River and on to the Mississippi, which empties into the Gulf of Mexico at New Orleans.

Like all new American cities, Chicago is cut through by railroads, and the streets are straight as arrows, all of them the same width and the same distance from each other, and they run either north and south or east and west. From First Street to 100th Street, you know exactly how far you have to go, how many yards, but there is something boring about this uniformity. After the great fire [of 1871] had destroyed the whole central business district, it was rebuilt with exemplary energy and unrivaled splendor. During the two weeks I spent wandering around in Chicago, I could see that I was the only person in the whole city who had nothing to do—everybody else ran about at full speed.

I headed out west before long, though, and traveled by way of Omaha on the Union Pacific railroad to the small town of Columbus, Nebraska, one hundred miles west of the Missouri River, out on the treeless plains, which continue to have a different appearance, even when they are occupied by settlers, than the states east of the Missouri, where all cultivated land has to be fenced, though this is
not the case in Nebraska. I stayed for a month in the vicinity of Columbus with a well-educated countryman who had settled here on the edge of civilization, and I enjoyed a pleasant time going hunting with him. 13

As winter approached, the flat plains were almost entirely burnt off, and game was to be found only among the brush in the gullies or near waterholes: rabbits, jackrabbits, prairie chickens, turkeys, deer, and wolves, ducks and geese, but generally speaking, hunting is poor in America: wherever the white man settles, he soon wipes out all game.

At that time, though, you could still find good hunting grounds in Nebraska, and in addition to the game named above, antelope, elk, and huge herds of buffalo, but they will disappear soon. The Indian hunts buffalo on horseback with a bow and arrow but does not kill more than he has use for, and the plains provide ample room for him and his game. The Mexican, who has much Indian blood, also hunts buffalo from horseback but uses a rifle, but neither does he wipe out this noble game animal. It takes the Yankee, the Anglo-Saxon American, to do that, hiding in ambush and firing bullets by the hundreds into the herds, wounding many animals, skinning the hides off of the ones he kills, and leaving the carcasses to rot.

One time, I went on a winter buffalo hunt with five Americans but soon parted from them. One had the job of shooting the animals, two skinned them, one cooked meals, and the last one kept in touch with the surrounding world. Each of them had put in his share of money to buy a wagon, horses, and the needed equipment, and they hoped to make a good profit, but unluckily for them, the teamster froze to death and all the others also died, either from cold and lack of supplies or under the knives of the Indians.

From www.gutenberg.org/files/17748/17748-h/17748-h.htm (accessed 23.01.2010)

It still sometimes happens that trains are stopped on the plains by immense herds of buffalo on the move, but if you want to hunt

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them, you had better move fast, because before long, they will all be
gone.

One day, my Danish friend and I drove to the county seat to get
some paperwork taken care of at the office of [a Justice of the Peace],
an official who was the equivalent of a Danish herredsfoged. He was
at work, building a new stall and sat up on the tie beams, nailing on
lathes. We called up to him and told him what we wanted, and he
came down, took us into a shack where there was some writing
material, and while he gobbled down some food, he mumbled the
legal formulas and we swore the oath—you have to swear on every
occasion in America—signed it, and drove home as he crawled back
up on the roof again.

Another day, I was taking a little trip with my host when a
neighbor, a real American, Mr. Stull, called to us and said it was
lucky he had run into us, because there was a couple at his place
who wanted to be married (he had an official position), and now, we
could be witnesses, since the girl was of our nationality. We met a
young Swedish woman who did not understand a word of English
and an American who only understood English; they wanted to
marry. We translated some questions, the young woman answered
yes, oaths were sworn and papers signed, we witnessed that to the
best of our knowledge this was the right woman with the right
name, not married, highly respected—and then, they were married
and shuffled off.

I said to this Mr. Stull one day that I would like to live with an
American family, and I came to live with his parents in Columbus.
The father and his very young wife had migrated from the East to
Illinois in the days when it was still sparsely populated, and when
he grew old, he sold his farm and headed out west, where money
grew farther, and bought a farm in the vicinity of Columbus for each
of his sons. He built a house for himself in town and lived there
with his wife and daughter. We lived like typical Americans, ate
corn bread three times a day, pork, and pie washed down with tea,
and spoke as little as possible.

In the morning, when Mr. Stull had taken care of his horse and
cow and chopped a little firewood, he went to a shop where he sat at
a desk for most of the day. In all innocence, I thought he was a
loafer, but he was working. Many farmers came into his office and,
when they needed money, if their property was worth enough to
carry the debt, and if they had a couple of good co-signers, they
could borrow money from Mr. Stull at 33.3% interest. Later, I
learned that the business was both simple and profitable: he did not
speculate but loaned out money at 33.3% interest and purchased
securities such as government bonds. When the country, for
example, was building a school and issued a contract in the fall for
the following spring, Mr. Stull purchased the contract from the
builder at a fifty percent discount and eventually also earned the legal twelve percent interest.

Since I often went to the office with Mr. Stull when he sat in wait, I became well known there, made myself useful with my knowledge of languages, and was soon appointed postal clerk, a position I filled with satisfaction and was praised as "the right man in the right place." The proprietor of the general store held the office of postmaster, for which he earned one dollar a year and the right to add the initials, P. M., to his name.

His store was a large room in a wooden building that looked quite impressive from the street because of the false facade on top, but nobody could see that there was nothing behind it because it ran into similar false facades on the neighboring buildings. The middle side of the U-shaped counter was the post office with a large cabinet containing mailboxes that were open in back but displayed numbered windows to the public, to which each customer had a Yale key to his or her box.

Twice daily, when the mail arrived from New York and San Francisco, I ran down to the station, threw my mailbag into the mail car, got another in return, and sorted the mail into the proper boxes by name or box number. Customers could look through the window to see whether or not they had any mail. The post office brought in many people, so it was to the shopkeeper's advantage to serve as postmaster.

After a while, when I had worked there for some time and thought that there was not much more to learn, I went to a Mr. Becker and asked for a job.14 He was a grain merchant in the same town, a self-made man, who stuck to his business and did not say much. It all took place in a very small wooden building right next to the railroad tracks, which was divided in two by a counter. One side was for Mr. Becker and me, and the other for customers.

In the middle of the customer side was a stove that was fired with corncobs, and in the bitter cold weather, it would be stoked up many times a day until it was red-hot and then just as quickly grow cold again. An iron ring ran around it to place your feet on, and there were enough chairs to fill the space all the way around. On the entrance door was a sign that read, "Shut the door, and when you have spoken about business, do the same with your mouth." This applied to Mr. Becker and me, but among themselves, the customers could chat to their hearts' content, and they came in and went out without saying either hello or goodbye, kept their hats on, warmed themselves a bit, smoked a pipe, spit on the stove as much as they liked, and then drifted off.

Behind the counter was a desk with writing material, an indicator that was connected to a scale outside the window, and a basket into which a ticker-tape spilled constantly, listing prices of various wares in New York, recorded telegraphically in regular
Latin letters and numbers. The business consisted of trading in corn and wheat as follows: the farmers presented a sample, we looked up the latest price on the ticker-tape and made an offer, and if it was accepted, the wagon was driven onto the scale outside and the weight recorded, and then the wagon drove up a ramp under a roof, from which the grain was emptied into a railroad car, after which the empty wagon was weighed and the farmer got his money. Business was thriving.

When I had learned that business, I applied for work in an office run by two men in partnership, a land agent, and a lawyer. They took good care of each other: the one surveyed land and drew up maps, the other put the papers in proper order. Here, I had the opportunity to become familiar with the excellent, simple, and easily comprehensible laws regarding the division of land, which is the first requirement for settlement. Conditions are not the same everywhere: the older, eastern states were largely settled before the present laws had been developed, and in those states that had previously belonged to other nations, the earlier laws were still recognized, although their effects gradually diminished, and the farther inland you go from the Atlantic Ocean, the more pure are the states in following lines of division based on mathematical principles and derived from astronomy, as for example, Nevada, Utah, Colorado, or Wyoming.

Wild, uncultivated, and unsurveyed land is regarded by the United States as belonging to the original inhabitants, the Indians. Some in America have asserted that the Indians never owned land but simply resided on it, and a great deal has been written about that, but the government treats Indians as sovereign nations. The first whites who come in contact with the Indians are fur traders or Catholic missionaries, generally Frenchmen, which explains why many names that come from the time when the first whites arrived in a given area tend to be more or less French or French-Indian and later broken down according to the way they are spelled or pronounced in English. “Illinois,” for example, is mixture of French and Pottawatomie and was originally pronounced in French. I knew a little town called “Bee-oot-i-more,” spelled Buttes-des-morts, meaning “Indian burial place,” for example.

Wilhelm Dinesen spent some time with the family of Lester Ward Platt (died 1875) and his wife, Elvira Gaston Platt (1818-1914). The Platts came to Nebraska Territory, shortly after their marriage in 1841, when he was appointed schoolteacher, assistant agriculturalist, and farmer to the Pawnee Indians. They had lived among the Pawnee for thirty years when Dinesen came to stay with them. Mrs. Platt and her niece, Lizzie Ricketts (1843-1919), worked as teachers to the Pawnee, and her brother, Samuel Platt Ricketts (1851-1937), also lived there. Samuel was apparently the nephew
of Mr. Platt who went on a Pawnee hunt that Dinesen had also hoped to join.

From the home of my host, Mr. Platt, you could see two Pawnee villages, a smaller, and a larger one. Each of the four tribes in the Pawnee nation has its own chief, with a high chief over the whole nation, and three of the tribes lived in the one village, while the fourth lived apart. The reason is said to be that the fourth was originally a separate but related nation that warred with the Pawnee until they were conquered and taken into the nation.

Each house looked like an immense mole burrow or a small Danish burial mound; the roof is decorated with the white skulls of buffalo and is a favorite place to sit; smoke rises from a smoke hole in the center of the house. The doorway is covered with blankets and leads downwards; the house consists of one large, round room with the hearth at the center, surrounded by a circle of vertical beams that bear the roof, and along the walls are sleeping places, benches, and shelves. Each wigwam generally houses from five to eight families. In the summer, the children are stark naked and the men are naked when inside, whereas the women are always clothed, though sometimes scantily, but in the winter, they all wrap themselves in huge buffalo blankets that are worn up over the head.

When one speaks of Indians in general, one cannot say that their customs are such and such, because they vary tremendously depending upon their circumstances of life. Because these can be completely different in various places, customs and traditions are also different. I shall illustrate this by discussing the two nations I know best, the Pawnee and the Chippewa, inhabitants of the plains and of the forest.

The Pawnee inhabited the plains and lived almost entirely on the buffalo. They almost never walked but always rode, and they had permanent villages where they had their homes and to which they returned after the regular hunting trips, which took place twice a year and provided food for the rest of the year. Many families lived together, polygamy was common, sexual mores extremely relaxed, the status of women miserable—they were given away or sold by their parents, were treated like slaves by their husbands, and their children did not even exert themselves very much to prevent them from starving to death. Among the men, there was a caste system: renowned warriors and brave men had great power, formed a kind of tribal council, decided cases and meted out punishments for offenses. For example, I once saw some young men whipped because they had been too eager and had ignored the orders of more experienced men and ridden into a herd of buffalo before it was surrounded, which allowed it to escape. Chiefs and medicine men or spiritual leaders also have considerable influence.
The Chippewa, on the other hand, lived in the forest by hunting and fishing. They did not have horses, of course, and had to find what they need every single day in the year. They moved around, following their game; their homes consisted of a little wigwam made of birch bark for one single family, and so small that it could be rolled up and carried from one place to another on their backs or packed into a canoe. Polygamy was unknown, and women counted as much as men, were just as free as men, and both men and women had their separate work to do. Every man was free as well, one was not better than another, and chiefs only had any authority in times of conflict and warfare.

The immense difference between these two nations is not due to any original character but to their circumstances and to the different characters that evolved out of those circumstances. The Chippewa needs the help of his wife; she needs to help move the wigwam and set it up; while he was out finding food, she had to keep the wigwam in order, prepare food, and help him to make and maintain tools and implements. More than one wife would only create trials and tribulations for him, but one wife was an absolute necessity, and to her he was closely tied every single day. He was not in great need of his comrades; everybody hunted on his own and brought the game home to his own family. He needed his wife but could get along without his comrades, and therefore, women were the equals of men, and every man the equal of every other man.

The Pawnee, on the other hand, went off on long hunts together, killed the game cooperatively, and it was butchered by the accompanying women cooperatively. Life at home was not family life but with several families in the same wigwam and the whole nation in the same village. He could not survive without his comrades, because the whole basis of his existence, the buffalo hunt, needed to be carried out in cooperation with others, but he could get along very well without his wife and did so for long periods of time, and whether he had one or many wives did not make much difference. He needed his comrades but could get along without his wife, and as a result, women were thralls to the men and the men were divided into castes.

I intended, together with another white man, a nephew of Mr. Platt, to go on a hunting trip towards the southwest with the Pawnee, but unexpected circumstances prevented me from joining them. The Indians killed a lot of buffalo but were attacked on the journey home by the Sioux, who killed 120 out of five or six hundred, including many women. Mr. Platt had both of his horses killed but managed to escape unharmed.
Around this time, I gave up the plains, traveled to Chicago, and from there, headed up north to Wisconsin. In the town of Oshkosh, I met an elderly Danish man, Mr. Linde Friedenreich, who was practicing medicine. He had lived here more than thirty years, was an old hunter and trapper, and was one of the first settlers in this area in the days when the land still belonged to the Winnebago Indians. One of the chiefs in those days was named Oshkosh. With Dr. Linde, who was very courteous towards me, I first went hunting for ducks in the vicinity, and we shot a huge mess of them, mainly at night with a torch at the head of the boat, and then we traveled up to the Wolf River to a little town named New London to fish for sturgeon.

Dr. Christian Linde (1817-87), Wilhelm Dinesen’s host, was an avid hunter and trapper, a pioneer settler in the Oshkosh area, and the first physician to practice medicine in northern Wisconsin. Born Christen Lemvig Poul Laurenorn de Linde-Friedenreich, he belonged to a family that had been granted a Danish title of nobility in 1810. He graduated from the medical school of the University of Copenhagen in 1837 and emigrated from Denmark in 1842 with his brother, Carl. They came to the Oshkosh area, bought 280 acres of land, and built a log cabin to be their home.

Dr. Linde acquired a place near Mukwa village on the Wolf River, just southwest of New London, Outagamie County, Wisconsin, where he liked to hunt and fish. The area is still heavily wooded, with many oxbows and small lakes in the vicinity.

During the year 1856, Dr. Linde had entertained another gentleman outdoorsman named Walter James. He was the son of a popular English author named G. P. R. James (1799-1860), whose numerous novels emulated Sir Walter Scott in a manner described as “interest without violence, and entertainment at once animated and mild.” Young Walter James proved much less mild, however, than the bland heroes of his father’s chivalrous fiction.

One night in late June of 1856, when Dr. Linde was gone to Weyauwega and had not yet returned by steamboat, Walter James went out to jacklight deer on a small lake in the vicinity by attracting them to a torch suspended in front of his canoe. He carried the doctor’s huge steel bowie knife, which weighed two and a half pounds. As the doctor later testified, “He found plenty of deer, but they would not take the water on account of the carousals of three Indians, who, with their families, were encamped near the lake.” James knew the Indians, went over to their wigwams, and asked they to be quiet, but they, “who had drunk just about whisky enough to make them excitable and quarrelsome, then attacked him. One grabbed him by the throat, when James pulled out his big hunting-knife.” Dr. Linde described him as “a skillful swordsman.” Before long, two of the Indians were fatally wounded, while the third was crippled for life. James escaped from the fray when one of the wounded Indians seized his rifle and tried but failed to shoot him because the gun was only half-cocked.
Walter James fled the scene. Soon after, the steamboat with the doctor on board came into sight on the river. James paddled over, came on board, and told him what had happened. Dr. Linde went immediately to the Indian camp and tried but failed to save the lives of the two most severely wounded men, though he did operate on the wounded arm of the third man.

It turned out that Indians in the area already bore a grudge towards the doctor for having "caused the arrest and fine of some parties who had been selling whisky to the Indians;" Dr. Linde thought that they may have mistaken James for him in the dark. Indians now "congregated in large numbers in the vicinity of Linde’s place, assuming a most threatening attitude." Dr. Linde sent his son, Fred, to Oshkosh as a precaution but "resolved to brave out the excitement" himself. In December of that year, however, he decided it would be prudent to move to New London, only a few miles away but out of the woods.

After the fracas, a local Justice of the Peace issued a warrant for Walter James’s arrest, but when he was brought in, the justice was not home, so he was simply released. The affair was finally "settled—Indian fashion—one of the conditions of the settlement requiring James to consent to be adopted by the tribe as one of its members, taking the place of the one who was killed. He therefore became a Menominee by adoption."

Sixteen years later, Wilhelm Dinesen tells us that Mukwa village was the area where Dr. Linde brought him to fish for sturgeon.

The river winds steadily through dense forest, which is very beautiful but at length uniform and monotonous. When we stopped at a little station, our large, flat-bottomed steamboat, well-equipped and only drawing a couple of feet of water, docked at a wharf made of pine logs, which connected to corduroy roads made of logs laid side by side and extremely uncomfortable to ride on, because the wagon jolts and jerks along. The river was filled with pine logs some twelve to sixteen feet in length, often tremendously large. At this time of the year, in the spring, they were driven down the rivers from the great forests of the north to sawmills in the towns. Sometimes, you can sail for hours among these logs, and it also happens that they jam up and completely block the river, so the river boat has to stop and the crew—sometimes also the passengers pitch in—have to take peaveys and pike poles and help to break up the logjam. Just over from New London, there was a logjam that ran several miles, but we made it to our destination.

The next day, we drove a few miles along the river, put up our tent, and began to fish. The sturgeon go up the river to spawn, and you stand on the bank with a long spear that you strike into a fish that comes near enough. Or else you have a long pole with a couple of large iron hooks on the end, which you put on the bottom and, when you feel a sturgeon rub against it, you pull it up and hook the
fish. This last method is used especially at night. We caught a few fish that weighed over one hundred pounds each.

After fishing a couple of days, Dr. Linde returned to Oshkosh and I headed north for some adventure. I traveled by stagecoach to Shawano, a little place with five or six hundred inhabitants. The town was full of Menominee and Stockbridge Indians, who had their reservations just north of the town.

The history of the Stockbridge Indians can be very interesting and instructive, but at the time, there was nothing attractive about their society. The Menomines were in a state of decline that will soon lead to dissolution as a tiny remnant out on the Great Plains. It was my aim to head out farther, to the "real" Indians.

Wilhelm Dinesen's dire prediction for the Menominee did not come true. They still live on a reservation very near their original home area, where he found them, and the annual harvest of wild rice is still an important part of their life. The Menominee never allowed commercial logging to degrade their tribal forests, as was the case with so much of the forestland of northern Wisconsin. The result is that the ecosystems of Menominee tribal forests are uniquely intact, and the Menominee are well known for long-term, sustainable forestry management, which has continued to the present day.

Therefore, I went to the proprietor of the hotel where I was staying and asked him who could tell me how I could come up among the Chippewa. He told me that two men lived far up in the woods, Mr. Johnson and Mr. Stransy, and that one of them, Mr. Stransy, happened to be in town that very day, was staying at the hotel, and had just entered the barber shop next door. I went in and asked for Mr. Stransy. A man with lather on his face said that he was the one I was looking for. The next day, we drove from Shawano into the Menominee reservation, slept with the Menominee Indians in a kind of inn they maintained, and drove on the next day, constantly through forest on a road that was simply a way cleared to the width of a few yards through the trees . . . After traveling for four days, constantly through the forest, we reached Mr. Stransy's house in a scenic location along the Wolf River, surrounded by dense woods.

After staying a couple of days with Mr. Stransy, who had a couple of old half-breeds to take care of his house, I traveled with my host a score of miles farther north to Mr. Johnson, a man of French origin who had lived his whole life among the Indians and was married to a Chippewa woman. I bought his house, he moved
south, and I lived there without interruption for a couple of years (1872-74). I called the place “Frydenlund” (Pleasant Grove). It had been built by the government as a station between the mining districts up by Lake Superior and the settled regions to the south, back in the days when the mail was carried by running Indians, but when that came to an end, the government sold it. The house was erected of pine logs and consisted of two small rooms, each wide enough for two windows, a loft, and a kitchen wing in the back, which contained an excellent oven for baking bread (in America, you bake your own bread for every meal); in one of the rooms was an iron stove, and in the other, a stone fireplace where you could burn large logs. The furnishings were extremely sparse and consisted of a table, some square blocks to sit on, and a few shelves. In the loft, I made a bed out of peeled cedar posts, filled a mattress with ferns, and covered myself with a blanket in the summer, adding furs in the winter. My equipment consisted of nothing beyond the essentials.

The house, which was surrounded by a little yard, sat on a sandy bluff with a few scattered pines. Behind: dense forest; in front: a rushing river that flowed from the marshes high above, broke over a firm cliff, and formed a waterfall, foaming and gnawing at the softer stone while the harder stood up like knolls and peaks against which the water sprayed and foamed and roared as it fell—and then the river flowed on, twisting like a snake in strange bows through side meadows and still lakes overgrown with wild rice in the summer, green as fields of rye in May, but in the winter covered with ice and snow and shining white. The river wound through them like a blue band, both summer and winter, and disappeared between the forest-covered hills on either side. Here, outside my house, alone, many, many miles away from the nearest human being, I have sat for hours, half a day at a stretch, never tiring of watching the lusty, bubbling, sparkling, babbling stream, that flows constantly and always fits in, whether it on a cold, still, stiff, clear winter day, when everything except the splash of the water is still as a grave and not even the wind is moving, the trees stand dark and tall, the earth, covered with several feet of snow, is white, pure, and smooth—or on a jolly spring day, when countless small streams of water bubble through the grass and flowers, when ducks and water birds in large flocks come sweeping up along the river, are shocked by the appearance of a human being, stop short in the air, as if they would fall over backwards, then climb and fill the air with their cries—or on a hot summer day, when you have to build a bonfire to keep away the swarms of mosquitoes, when the bright colors of flowers and birds dot the green grass and the quiet is broken by the rapid staccato of a woodpecker on a worm-eaten tree, or the kingfisher’s cry from a branch over the stream, constantly on watch and then diving after a fish that carelessly came too close to the surface of the water—or on an autumn day, when a stormy wind
tears through the treetops and the brilliant colors of leaves range from deep red to light green with all the nuances of brown and green in between, which you have to see to have a grasp of it.

One who yearns for peace could not pick a better spot to pitch his home than in the forests of Wisconsin.

The wealth of this country was in white pine. Small crews of two or three men wandered through the forests, noted the sections that contained a fair amount of white pine, and sold their notes to a lumber merchant. He then sent a larger crew of some thirty men into the woods in the winter, when everything was snow and ice, to the place where they were to fell timber. Some chopped down the trees, others sawed them into lengths of twelve or sixteen feet and hauled them, with the help of oxen, down to the frozen river, while still others prepared food, and some traveled back and forth between the camp and the nearest town.

The Menominee reservation lay like a bulwark against the progress of settlement and was undisturbed by the lumbermen, but north of it, there were many camps, all winter long, and they constantly increased, year by year, and reached farther and farther into the north woods. In the spring, when the ice broke up, the lumberjacks floated their logs down with the stream, a merry but dangerous job. Armed with a very long pike poles and wearing spiked boots, these log drivers jumped from one log to another, and when they landed on a thin log, one end sank deep under the water as the driver ran along it, or he let the log spin rapidly by running sideways on it, or rode along as a log swept down a foaming waterfall, and one false step or jump and he became the river's sure victim. It is a complicated affair to float logs down rivers that have to be dammed at intervals to provide enough water and then opened at just the right time to move the logs along.

During the winter and into the spring, the woods were full of these busy camps, and they opened it up quite a bit, but the camps had still not reached the area where I lived, so the forest in summer was still silent, uninhabited and peaceful, all the way down to Shawano, the southern border of the Menominees. In fact, Shawano in the Menominee language means "south."

The land was part of Oconto county, which reached all the way to Green Bay, where the country is settled and cultivated (now it has been divided into several counties), but in all of this huge area to the west, there only lived four white men: Stransy, Johnson, a Mr. Gagen, who was also married to an Indian, and me—and we were all several days apart from each other.

It was early summer when I settled in the forest. At that time and all summer long, there were some Indian wigwams around my house, each of them inhabited by one family, but they were
constantly changing, and it was seldom that a family stayed for more than a week in the same place, so the wigwams also kept moving.

A wigwam like this is put up quickly. When the site has been selected, flexible branches such as hazel wands are stuck into the ground in a circle, and their tops are tied together. Then they weave their large slabs of birch bark or cedar bark into the branches to make a wigwam like a little round hut with a hole on top, right above the hearth. The door is closed with a hanging of cloth or hide, furnishings are placed along the walls, a hook is hung over the hearth, and the wigwam is ready. It is a simple dwelling to house young and old, but there is a certain order, cleanliness, and forethought that makes it livable.

Chippewa attire is partly their original dress and partly a mixture of their original and European clothing. Their own clothing is mainly made of deerskin, which they know how to tan very well.
When they can get European clothing, they put it on and do not really care what kind it is. All styles are equally good, but they prefer bright colors. Their women love gaudy fabrics and know how to sew clothing of them, and they are very proud when they show themselves in a new dress. It only takes a moment, a day or two, though, before they stain their clothing by work. They love dangles and ornaments of glass and metal.

On their feet, they always wear deerskin moccasins, which are very comfortable footwear. In winter, when they have to use snowshoes to keep from breaking through the snow, a pair of moccasins can last very long, but in summer they naturally wear out very quickly, though at that time of the year, they walk very little but move about mainly by canoe. The moccasins are made with ingenuity and great care: weight, width, and so on have to be perfect, or else they become as difficult to walk in as they are comfortable when they are done well by somebody who has had some practice.

The traditional Indian weapon is the bow and arrow, but it is losing its role and is now used mainly by children or to shoot small birds, while others use rifles. The Indians are excellent hunters, that is, they know how to find game and sneak up to it, but they are poor shots because gunpowder is expensive and they never use target practice. They limit themselves to shooting with bullets [and do not use shot]. It is striking to see the difference between American Indians and the native tribes of Asia and North Africa, who cling to their old-fashioned, long-barreled flintlocks, whereas the Indians want to have the very newest model and prefer breech loading rifles, though in reality most of them have very poor weapons, which they handle very carelessly.

One day, for example, an Indian came to me with a gun with a plugged barrel and asked me to fix it. Indians have great confidence in the ability of whites to fix things. I tried everything in vain and concluded that there must be a series of balls lodged in the barrel, though the Indian denied it. Finally, I tried putting the barrel in a very hot fire. That helped, and the Indian was overjoyed, but of course that is not a very good way to treat a rifle.

In summer, the Indians live from hand to mouth by hunting and fishing. The lakes and rivers are swarming with fish. In spring, a number of kinds of fish go upriver to spawn, including sturgeon and another large kind of fish that the Indians call *moskinoschi* [muskellunge], which they spear. They make traps for smaller kinds of fish and sometimes catch huge numbers of them, which they then dry. During the summer, they use angling gear for a little flat fish called *akutashe* (in English, sunfish) and bass. In the fall, they spear trout at night with a jacklight, and in winter, they spear pike by cutting a hole in the ice, covering themselves with a blanket in order
to see into the water, and attract the fish by moving a decoy up and down in the water.

The main game is the smaller American deer, the whitetail. Early on a summer morning, one waits for them along meadows, or you hunt them on dark summer nights from a boat with a flare: the deer go down to the rivers and lakes in the evening, and if they do not hear any sound, they are not frightened by an approaching flare. Hunting deer in the way is great fun, and one can develop a passion for it. It is not hard to hit, because you are only a few steps from the deer when you shoot, but you do have to be pretty ingenious to get so close. First of all, the night has to be dark: if the moon is up, you cannot hunt. Next, your equipment has to be in order.

The Indians use either a birch bark canoe or a log canoe. A birch bark canoe has very thin ribs and spars of cedar to which large pieces of birch bark are sewn with bast and sealed with resin. A canoe like that is so light that you can carry it over your head. A log canoe is a hollowed pine log, long, narrow, and riding very low in the water, but too heavy to be carried by one man. In both types of canoe, you sit on the bottom and paddle with a little oar that you stick down into the water on either side. The log canoe is easier to handle and can take a blow; the birch bark canoe is more roomy, but if you hit a branch or stone, it will poke a hole, and then, you have to take it up on dry land, turn it upside down, so you can see the hole or find it by sucking, and then patch it with hot pitch.

Before you go hunting, you have to test your canoe to see that it is watertight. Then, you have to see that your source of light is placed properly. This could be a lamp or a rolled piece of birch bark stood upright and lit on top. The shades behind and under the light must be placed in such a way that no light falls on the canoe or the paddle, but close enough to the side of the canoe to light the bead when the gun is sighted. Of course, there must be no wind. Then, you sail out silently, down the river or along the shore of the lake. The slightest sound will scare off the deer and you will only hear them call and bound off through the woods. The paddle must stay in the water; you turn it in the water and bring it forward by the narrow edge. When you see a deer standing in the water, you must be especially careful, and you hardly dare to breath or move your paddle to make waves but approach gently, soundlessly, until you are very close to the deer, and then, you let your paddle go in the water, grab the loaded gun, and shoot the deer as it stares in amazement at the light.

Occasionally, you run across a bear before the snow falls. I shot a bear one night when I was deer hunting. It was swimming across the river. I shot two from trees and two on the ground, and once, with an Indian, killed with axes one that our dogs had cornered.
After snow has fallen, you can easily find bear tracks and follow them until you find the bear in its lair, although sometimes you might have to track it for several days. I have never killed a bear in this way, but I did once follow bear tracks for a whole day without a compass, trusting to my sense of location. In the evening, I came to some lakes I did not know, realized that I was lost, and turned around. Meanwhile, it had begun to snow heavily, but I followed my own tracks as long as I could see and then stopped. Fortunately, the snow did not cover my tracks completely, and the next day, I was able to find my way home. I advise anybody not to walk alone in the woods without a compass, because when you cannot see the sun or stars and snow is falling, you lose your landmarks and can find yourself in a difficult situation.

Hunting is great fun, but in my opinion, trapping is even more enjoyable—and a lot more profitable. The steel spring traps in common use come in two sizes: muskrat traps, and beaver traps. The game one usually traps are muskrats, beavers, otter, martens, lynx, skunks, raccoons, and mink. Muskrats are common in water and are easily trapped on their paths. Beaver are seldom found in colonies, but I found a colony of seven, of which an Indian and I trapped six. Beaver signs are easy to find—they gnaw the bark off trees standing near the water—and they are not difficult to catch. Otter are trapped best in places where they climb out of the water. Mink, martens, raccoons, and lynx are trapped by using bait placed in such a way that the approaching animal will step on a well-hidden trap. However, it is a difficult art to place a trap in such a way that the animal will not notice it and step on it; you have to have a lot of practice before you succeed.

It is not an easy job to be a trapper. In biting cold, so cold that the mercury freezes in the thermometer and you need to wear earflaps on your ears and you cannot run because the air cuts, you take fifty or sixty traps, equip yourself with an axe, matches, tobacco, tea, a little bread, all wrapped in a blanket, and your rifle, and set off to wander around, in your snowshoes, of course. When you see tracks and find a good place, you set a trap. In the evening, you build a fire, find wood for the night, scrape away the snow, build a little nest of evergreen branches, cook your food, smoke your pipe, and sleep, wrapped in your blanket, feeding the fire often during the course of the night. After four or five days, you have set out your traps, and then you rest for a day and go back the same way you have come, to tend them and pick them up. Many will be empty, and many more will have a squirrel in them. I reckoned that my marten trap line was between sixty and seventy miles, and it took me a week to set the line and tend it.

Skunks can be caught in traps, but you can also follow their tracks to their holes, which are not deep and in which there can be four to six of them, and dig them out. However, only beginners
hunt skunks, partly because they were not worth very much (nowadays, their pelts are expensive), and partly because they emit a liquid with such a strong smell that it makes you throw up, and if you get it on you, your are forced to throw away your clothes.

Besides using traps, you can also catch fur-bearing animals, especially wolves, with poison. You put strychnine in a piece of meat and place it on sharpened twigs in places where wolves pass by.

Those who know anything about setting snares will understand the excitement of approaching one’s traps and poison baits.

The Indians are excellent trappers and earn a good income in this way. Even I, who was only an average trapper, earned several hundred dollars in one winter.

When I settled in the forest, as I have said, several Indian families lived around my house. Later, in August, a whole tribe consisting of around 400 people came here to gather rice in the little lake that lay close to the house, and that was where they held the big annual religious festival. Each day, they hunted and fished just enough to provide for the day, and in the evening, we met—me, too—in the long common wigwam. At that time, I did not understand the Chippewa language, so it was only on later journeys that I was able to follow the ceremonies and speeches.

All I can report about the Indian religion is what I have learned from living with them on a daily basis. You cannot really learn about a native religion by reading, in the way you can learn about Christianity or Islam, but rather, you need to become a participant, observe the religious ceremonies, and notice the influence their beliefs have in their daily life. For example, you cannot live for a day with a Muslim without seeing many things he does or refrains from doing according to religious precepts, whereas other religions have less effect. For example, a stranger could live for a whole year in a Lutheran country like Denmark without noticing anything, except that some stores are closed on Sunday, and that some people do not do the same things as on other days. The Indian religion does not intrude into daily life so little as ours does, but still, it does not seem to have a huge influence on what he does and does not do, and I do not think that Indians spend a tremendous amount of time in religious speculation. In this, as in all other ways, he is completely free and unbound, not limited in his actions by religious prejudices or precepts, and does what he feels like doing, leaves things alone, thinks that the problems of the day are enough, and when it does not pay to worry about tomorrow, then so much less is it worth worrying about a life after this one, except when the thought is forced upon them, for example, by a death.

As we know, Indians believe in “the Great Spirit,” or rather, they believe in two great spirits, a good one and a bad one, and in a life after this one in the “happy hunting grounds,” which is full of game.
Before the dead arrive there, however, they wander for some days here on earth, so the relatives of the deceased set out food, which the dogs faithfully eat. Thereafter, he or she is buried, and a little wooden house is erected over the grave. The Indians care very conscientiously for their burial places. Sometimes, the dead appear as ghosts. In general, the Indians have a rich imagination for what we would call superstitions, mainly rooted in fear, and they probably also have beliefs, but, as I have said, when they are not face to face with situations that call them forth, they generally leave them aside. As long as they are healthy, they do not think about medicine, but when they are sick, they head for the medicine men, who are both physicians and counselors, or else to wise women.

In the autumn, during the course of several weeks, all the Indians gathered in the large wigwam right across from my house, on the other side of the river, among all the gravesites. You came when you felt like it, went away when you grew tired of it, conversed, laughed, smoked tobacco (dried bark of young willow branches: *killikinik*), and had as much fun as possible. A blind man who was some kind of priest sat on the floor and beat a drum, and everybody who wanted to would dance to the music. The dance consisted of hopping around in a circle with your legs together, one after the other, and each one equipped with a stick on which is a hide with colored feathers in the mouth: this is a holy emblem. At a given signal from the man with the drum, everybody stands up along the wall, and now, in comes a parade of painted and costumed Indians, first some with holy emblems in the form of hides, then one who goes backwards and carries a tray on which there is a pile of burning birch bark, and after him, others who hold holy objects over the fire, as—to the best of my knowledge—an image of the Great Spirit. Everybody bows as it comes past. This parade goes around two or three times, and this is the most holy moment, or rather, the only religious ritual at these festivals, and it is certainly not every evening that this takes place.

Speeches follow. Indians are great speakers, and they devote much time to this and have gone far with their rhetorical skill. Their rich imagination gives them striking images, and their inborn wiliness allows them to make rapid, clever turns. When an orator is speaking and says something that pleases them very much, they shout: *ho!* At the religious festivals, the speeches are mainly ones of thanks and wishes. They thank the Great Spirit for the past year’s good hunting, fishing, maple sugar and wild rice harvests, assuming that it has been good, for otherwise, they come right out and say that it has not been good enough, and they ask for good luck in the future, many deer, many pelts, much tobacco, good guns, and brandy.
At the beginning of September, the celebration came to an end and the Indians left, heading east, to hunt deer. The last Indians departed on the fourth of October, and I was alone. I had two dogs and a cat, but not long after, the dogs killed the cat.

Now, autumn was setting in, the leaves fell, and the water was covered with ice in the morning. When I stood up on October 20, the earth was covered with a thick layer of snow, which was soon increased and lasted until April.

In February, the Indians returned to trap. In April, they began to make maple syrup. They gather the sap by cutting the bark, inserting a spout, and letting it run into a birch bark container, collecting it from many trees and cooking it down into sugar. A good housewife can make five or six hundred pounds, which is kept in large containers of birch bark.

Indians are reckless, unconcerned for the future, childish, unable to resist civilization or to adopt it, and therefore, lost. But I got to know the Indians as free, brave, good natured, willing to make sacrifices, loyal, helpful, proud, and happy and fortunate in their feelings of freedom. I enjoyed the two years I lived among them, I left them with a heavy heart, and I think of them often with gratitude.

One of the Chippewa whom Wilhelm Dinesen must have remembered, whenever his thoughts returned to the cabin by the river, was Nesuw-uge-zhicqo-quad. She was also called Catherine or Kate, and she was his cook and housekeeper. Four months after Wilhelm Dinesen left for Denmark, she gave birth to a daughter, who was named Emma Dinesen or "Denson." Today, Wilhelm and Emma's descendants are members of the Sokaogon Chippewa tribe and still live in the vicinity of Mole Lake, Wisconsin. See <http://www.karenblixen.com/chippewas.html> (accessed 29.01.2010) for photographs of some of them. They are well aware of their relationship to one of Denmark's most famous authors, Karen Blixen, also known as Isak Dinesen.

As for Nesuw-uge-zhicqo-quad, perhaps she was the model for the beautiful Indian woman orator and hunter, Miska, in Wilhelm Dinesen's story, "Miska, En fortælling fra urskovene" [Miska, A Tale for the Virgin Forests]. Here is his description of Miska, springing silently from her birch bark canoe at night:

The flames of the bonfire flared up and cast their light on her. The lightness and boldness of her movements spoke of youth and strength. Her figure was slender, very slim, but her breasts were full, her arms round and strong. Her
abundant, coal-black hair was parted in the middle, combed behind her small ears, and hung loose down her back to the knees. Her sound, light brown skin was fine, transparent, and her face was lovely, as only a young woman’s can be. She was tall, but her hands and feet were as small as a child’s. Her little nose turned up slightly, and when she looked down, her long, curved eyelashes almost hid her large, black, swimming eyes, which were usually half-covered by her eyelids, but when her thoughts gave life to them, they shone as only an Indian’s eyes can shine, and when she smiled, her thin lips revealed two rows of teeth as white as only an Indian’s can be. On one side of her chin, she had a little blue star tattoo, and on each cheek, she had stuck a long, golden flower leaf. She wore beaded moccasins with high legging tops, a yellow deerskin skirt that reached to her knees and was painted with stripes of various colors, a plaid shawl crossed over her chest and tied behind the back, around her neck a red silk neckerchief and a necklace of conch shells, over the shoulder a broad band of lynx skin with a powder horn, a little hollow piece of wood with percussion caps in the ends, and a knife in a deerhide sheath covered with a human figure in beadwork.

“Bonjour, nitché [friend],” she said.

1 Rockstroh, “A. W. Dinesen,” Dansk biografisk leksikon 1979, 3: 638-9. A. W. Dinesen was awarded the knight’s cross of the Légion d’honneur for bravery in the conquest of Constantine in Algiers. His book was recently republished as, Abd-el-Kader og forholdene mellem franskmænd og arabere i det nordlige Afrika [Abd-el-Kader and relations between the French and Arabs in North Africa] (Copenhagen: Forlaget Vandkunsten, 2006). The name of the Algerian freedom fighter is also known in Iowa, where Elkader, the county seat of Clayton County, is named for him.


3 Thomas Dinesen’s war memoir appeared in Danish in 1929 and in English as Merry Hell: A Dane with the Canadians (London: Jarrolds Publishers,


11 S/S Nestorian of the Allan Line departed Liverpool on 30 July 1872, docked in Queenstown and Halifax under way, and arrived in Quebec City on 13 August 1872, see <http://www.norwayheritage.com/> (25.01.2010).

12 During the wars of Napoleon, Denmark remained neutral until England launched an unprovoked attack, not only attacking the fleet but shelling the civilian population of Copenhagen with firebombs from September 2-6, 1807, causing tremendous loss of life and property. The English carried off what was left of the Danish fleet, including all cannons on board the men of war, and Denmark responded by forming an alliance with France.

13 His name was Søren Wendelboe, see Vowles 1976, 370.


15 Actually, Oshkosh (1795-1858) was Head Chief of the Menominee, not the Winnebagoes, from 1827 until his death.

Dr. Linde’s grandfather presented what later turned out to be false claims of relationship to an earlier family that had been ennobled in 1705 and thus obtained his patent of nobility fraudulently, though the doctor may not have been aware of that fact. See Esben Graugaard & Rigmor Lillelund, “Linde-Friedenreich: historien om et tvivlsomt adelskab,” <http://www.holstebro-museum.dk/artikler/lindefri/index.html> (accessed 26.01.2010).


J. Wakefield, History of Waupaca County, Wisconsin (Waupaca: D. L. Stinchfield, 1890), 18. Dr. Linde’s statement is on pages 18-21.

Ibid., 18.

Ibid., 18.

Ibid., 20.

Ibid., 20.

<http://files.usgwarchives.net/wi/outagamie/news/nl/II/2nl_1856.txt> (accessed 27.01.2010) cites an 1856 newspaper account to this effect.

Linde in Wakefield 1890, 21.

The Stockbridge Indians trace their origins to a Massachusetts tribe of the Mahican confederacy that relocated after the French and Indians Wars and lived among the Oneida, who were part of the Iroquois Confederacy, and the Munsee, a northern offshoot of the Delaware (Lenni Lenape). Stockbridges intermarried with these other tribes by the time they relocated to Wisconsin in 1833, but their primary identity remained Mahican. Wilhelm Dinesen, whose interest in Indians had been fired by reading James Fenimore Cooper, noted that many Stockbridges told him they were of pure Mohican ancestry, and he concluded that Uncas was actually not the “last of the Mohicans.”

The Menominee language is Algonquian. They were known as a peaceful tribe with a long history of contacts with the French and a woodland hunting, fishing, and gathering lifestyle in which harvesting wild rice played an important part.

On the basis of Wilhelm Dinesen’s diary, Vowles identified “Stransy” as Heinrich (Henry) Strauss, a native of Frankfurt-am-Main and an 1849 political refugee from Germany, see Vowles 1976, 372.


Vowles explained that Wilhelm Dinesen sold Frydenlund to another gentleman adventurer, a native of Norway named Ludvig Motzfeldt, who married Dinesen’s former housekeeper, Kate, and that her daughter, Emma “Motzfeldt,” was deaf and dumb. See Vowles 1976, 373-6, 381.


Jørn Brøndal has contributed a valuable analysis of the interrelationship of Scandinavian ethnic groups to the development of Wisconsin Progressivism.

A Danish scholar, he benefits from a solid grasp of both Scandinavian and American literature on ethnicity and politics in the United States from 1890 to 1914. He also makes intensive and extensive use of the Scandinavian press and the papers of Wisconsin political leaders of the period.

While he occasionally refers to voting behavior studies of the period and does roll call analysis of Scandinavian members of the Wisconsin State Assembly from 1890 to 1914, as well as content analysis of letters written to two Scandinavian-American newspapers (the Dano-Norwegian *Skandinaven* and the Swedish *Hemlandet*, both published in Chicago), this is primarily traditional political history.

Brøndal gives credence to the ethnopolitical argument, first advocated by Richard Jensen and Paul Kleppner, as affecting Scandinavian votes, but suggests a more secular version evolving for Norwegian, Swedish, and Danish political leaders, based more on nationality than religious-cultural value systems. In fact, his research suggests that perhaps it is time to re-evaluate the role of the pietistic/ritualistic split in determining voting behavior as well.

After a chapter outlining Scandinavian arrival in Wisconsin, entering the state’s “ethnic patchwork quilt,” Brøndal surveys the role of religion (especially Lutheran pastors), secular societies, and the Scandinavian language press in shaping the political orientation of Scandinavians in Wisconsin.

David L. Brye

*Trina sees no reason at all, why ‘rødgrød med fløde’ should not be as popular a dessert as ‘tiramisu’ all over the world.*

(Trine Hahnemann website)

Trina Hahnemann is a popular TV chef, food writer, and restaurateur in Denmark. She has had an extraordinary career, including a stint as caterer to artists such as Red Hot Chili Peppers, Soundgarden, Elton John, Pink Floyd, Tina Turner, Rolling Stones, and a lot of Danish bands. Together with a number of Scandinavian chefs and writers like Claus Meyer, Andres Vigestad, and Tina Nordström, she is part of the movement that has brought new Scandinavian cooking to the forefront of cuisine worldwide. Most of her cookbooks have been written for the Danish market, and she operates “Snapsetinget,” the famous lunch restaurant in the Danish Parliament, but she is not well known abroad. *The Scandinavian Cookbook* is her attempt to write “a cookbook for people who are probably not familiar with the culinary tradition, methods, and produce of my part of the world,” and she hopes her readers will “venture out into the Scandinavian kitchen and make it part of your everyday cooking.” She encourages people to learn from the Danish custom of taking the time to cook and enjoy meals together.

Hahnemann’s focus is on the best fresh, seasonal, and local ingredients, and she presents distinctly Scandinavian—especially Danish—food, providing modern and often lighter versions for today’s kitchen. It is an elegant book, divided into twelve chapters presenting the months of the year with appropriate recipes and comments about modern Scandinavia. There is a short introduction to each recipe, with cultural information about the food and/or ingredients, as well as personal comments about her family food traditions. The photographs in color and black and white are beautiful and atmospheric. There are scenes of the seasons in the Scandinavian countries and some glorious photographs of the food on Royal Copenhagen and other attractive serving pieces.

Many of the recipes can be made from ingredients available in North American grocery stores, using standard U. S. measurements. There are, however, a number of ingredients that would be difficult to find, at least in the Midwest: “Flounder” (actually *rødspætte*), several different kinds of roe, *rygøst* (she suggests smoked ricotta), and fresh herring, among others. The yeast recipes call for fresh yeast. Perhaps because the book was first published in Great Britain, she includes ingredients that may be more common there.
These are modern Danish recipes, not Danish-American versions. The recipes are excellent and easy to follow but not hugely innovative. She has some wonderful fish dishes, including two excellent versions of marinated salmon, one she calls “Marinated Salmon,” the other is listed as “Gravlax.” The reader will find all kinds of delicious and tempting recipes including “Bergen Fish Stew,” “Bif Lindstrøm,” “Apple Trifle,” “medaljer,” “meatballs,” and “Fruit Porridge with Cold Cream.” There are also some traditional smørrebrød recipes. The food is well suited for family dinners and celebrations, as well as for entertaining.

Those familiar with Marcus Samuelsson’s Restaurant Aquavit in New York and his cookbooks may find some similarities, but his recipes are, of course, mainly Swedish. Hahnemann also writes about the appropriate beverages, wine, and beer to complement the food, as well as how Scandinavians serve dinners and celebrate special events of the year.

It is, however, surprising that Hahnemann chose not to provide the Danish (or Norwegian or Swedish) names for the recipes in any consistent way, especially because her stated purpose is to introduce some of these excellent dishes into mainstream cooking in the English-speaking world. If Americans can learn tiramisu and bruschetta, maybe we should learn to say redgrød med fløde and frikadeller, just as the world has already learned to use the term gravlax. And why would she label æggekage as frittatta and give kammerjunker the name of biscotti?

It would also be nice to know where those spectacular photographs by Lars Ranek were taken. The beautiful landscapes and buildings don’t always seem to be associated with the recipes on the nearby pages. For example, the photo of Bryggen in Bergen is on the same page as the frikadeller—or are they kjøttkaker? There is no list of illustrations, but there is a useful glossary of food terms and a good index.

These inconsistencies aside, cooks will be inspired by The Scandinavian Cookbook, and Danish-Americans will enjoy trying Hahnemann’s new versions of traditional Scandinavian favorites.

You can also check out her website at <trinahahnemann.com>.

Birgitte Christianson

Wibke Bruhns, who lives in Berlin, is a well-known journalist and TV host in Germany. She has also been a foreign correspondent for *Stern* magazine in both the United States and Israel. Her recent book, *My Father’s Country*, is an intense and vivid account of her father’s life and fate. She lost her father in 1944, when she was six years old.

In August 1944, her father, Major Hans Georg Klamroth, had been tried for treason for his part in the July 20 plot to kill Adolf Hitler. Klamroth was convicted of high treason and condemned to death. Within two weeks of the verdict he was hanged, along with others, at the notorious Plötzensee prison in Berlin.

Like many German children after the Second World War, Wibke Bruhns grew up without a father. She hadn’t really known him. He had been away most of the time. He was a soldier, or rather, a secret service officer. He worked for German military intelligence, the *Abwehr*, as it was known.

Hans Georg Klamroth was therefore not a part of Wibke Bruhns’ life when she was growing up. She didn’t give him much thought. But she knew the story about his part in the July 20 conspiracy and therefore death. Much later in life, she came across a large collection of his letters and diaries. Reading these, she learned who her father really was. Indeed, she learned about the whole family and about the family business.

Wibke Bruhns was shocked when she learned the truth about her father. As a journalist, she knew the story of her father was intriguing, but on a personal level she nearly dropped her research and just wanted to forget about her father. Yet, she felt she had to tell the story and even did further research on her father in both Germany and Denmark.

Her paternal grandfather had inherited I. G. Klamroth, a large grain and seed company. The family lived in an enormous mansion with many servants in the town of Halberstadt, the town that is known as the gateway to the Harz Mountains. The Klamroth family certainly belonged to the upper crust of society in Halberstadt.

It was expected that Hans Georg Klamroth would follow in his father and grandfather’s footsteps and one day inherit the family firm. To get some additional training, Hans Georg was sent to Hamburg, where he was an apprentice in a transport company. In Hamburg he met Else Podeus, the daughter of a wealthy family in Wismar on the Baltic coast. Else’s father was German and her mother was Danish, from Bandholm on the island of Lolland.

While Else’s mother had fully integrated into German society, she did continue to speak German with a Danish accent. Moreover, she had lots of Royal Copenhagen porcelain. Two other things: she had taught her children Danish, and she had sent them to Denmark on holidays.
Already before Else and Hans Georg Klamroth got married, Hans Georg was learning Danish. He even wrote love letters to Else in Danish. As well, the two of them made trips to Denmark. Hans Georg fell in love with Denmark. At one dinner party in Denmark, he told his Danish hosts in Danish that if he weren’t a Prussian (*Prøjser*) he would want to be a Dane.

At the same time, Klamroth was also a good Prussian. He loved military life. He managed to serve on the Eastern Front at the tail end of the First World War. In the 1920s and 30s, he was part of the Reserve while working in the family grain and seed business. Hans Georg loved parades, manoeuvres and marching bands. In 1933, he became a member of the Nazi Party. Much later, he joined the SS.

In September 1939, he participated in the invasion of Poland and the start of the Second World War. The attack on Poland triggered the declarations of war on Germany by Britain and France. But the German troops in Poland were not aware of these declarations of war. They were kept in the dark. Hans Georg knew this and asked Else to send him copies of the Danish newspaper *Berlingske Tidende* so he could keep abreast of world events and the latest news, which was not necessarily reported in the German media.

In February 1940, Major Klamroth was recalled to Berlin for a special assignment. His next assignment for the Abwehr was in Denmark. He travelled to Denmark on March 21 as a grain salesman in civilian clothes. He actually succeeded in setting up a seed export company in Denmark. But he also had another assignment! He was still in Denmark when Germany invaded on April 9, 1940. He stayed on in Denmark after the German occupation, working for the Abwehr, and openly in uniform.

Wibke Bruhns was horrified to learn that her father could betray Denmark, a country he loved. But on her visit to Denmark to do research she learned that her father had actually taken up contact with Danish military intelligence and warned them about the looming invasion. Indeed, she learned that Danish military intelligence spoke highly of Major Klamroth, not least Colonel Hans Lunding, the head of Danish military intelligence during the war.

On her trip to Denmark, Wibke Bruhns also visited an elderly lady in a seniors’ residence in Copenhagen. This Danish lady had been an au pair girl for the Klamroth family in Halberstadt in the 1930s and therefore knew something about family life in the big mansion. At the time, the young girl was seventeen years old, and the charming Hans Georg infatuated her. One night, they ended up in bed.

Wibke Bruhns thought it might be a tall tale or wishful thinking, but on her return to Germany, she checked her father’s diary. Sure enough, he had recorded it in his diary. It was true.
In fact, Hans Georg Klamroth had several affairs. Just prior to his conviction, he and Else had a row because he had had another affair. Prior to his hanging, Else had not forgiven him.

*My Father’s Country* ends with the death of Wibke’s father. The book is very much the story of a German family set against the backdrop of the German Empire, the Weimar Republic, and the Third Reich. As well as against the phenomenal economic growth before the First World War, the war, the armistice, the revolution and coming of the republic, the Versailles Treaty, the Great Depression, the rise of Nazism, and the Second World War. The book is a story about a wealthy family, enjoying all the comforts of life, or trying to cope in difficult times.

At the end of the Second World War, the Klamroths lost their mansion, their business, and all their assets. Halberstadt was in the Soviet occupation zone—in East Germany.

The mansion survived the carpet-bombing of German cities during the war. Today, the old Klamroth mansion is a hotel, and reservations can be made on-line.

Wibke Bruhns writes well. The book is difficult to put down. She is not proud of her father’s country, whether it’s the Empire, Weimar Republic or Third Reich. She also has qualms about her father. But she tries to understand him.

*My Father’s Country* was a huge bestseller in Germany for over a year. The book is a biography, a gripping memoir, and certainly also a history of an extremely violent period. Many similar memoirs are published in Germany each year. This one is not sugar coated, nor does it try to apologize for what happened. Wibke Bruhns does not have an axe to grind; she does not embellish; she tells the story like it was.

The book is a real *tour de force*. It gives us a riveting insight into the lives of real people caught up in the whirlwind of the time. For taking us on this remarkable but ghastly tour, we must thank Wibke Bruhns.

Rolf Buschardt Christensen
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