

# Hans Rasmussen (1855-1856)

[Submitted by: Evan T. Peterson, Ph.D, [ETP96@aol.com](mailto:ETP96@aol.com)]

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Hans Rasmussen was born in the little city of Ammendrup, Proesto (Prosto Amt), on the island of Sjaelland (Shelland or Zealand), Denmark, on October 1, 1815, the son of Rasmus Hansen and Sidse Boesdatter (or Boisen), natives of Rekkende, a nearby town. Both of his parents were born in 1777. Sidse married her first husband on April 3, 1805, and then she married Rasmus on March 18, 1808.

It was a common custom at that time in Denmark for the son to be christened with his father's name in reverse, and thus it was that father Rasmus Hansen gave to his son the name, Hans Rasmussen. Rasmus Hansen was a typical thrifty Dane of the upper class. He had lands and property and was considered by his neighbors to have considerable wealth. He died at the age of fifty-four on June 20, 1831, leaving his only son, then sixteen years of age, with his widowed mother.

There had been an older son, Bent, who had died at the age of two. Hans had similar qualities of thrift and leadership as his father and, along with his mother, enjoyed the luxuries of their beautiful estate. However, his mother became ill and remained an invalid the rest of her life.

Hans accepted the responsibility of caring for his mother and keeping intact the estate which had been accumulated by his father. When he was twenty-nine he married Maren Stephensen, who was born on August 11, 1820. They were married June 7, 1844. Maren was five years younger than her husband. Hans and Maren or Mary began their lives in comfort on the large estate; there were many servants to carry out the work entailed in running such an enterprise. They also started their family.

Their first child, Rasmus, was born ten months after they were married. In the space of nine years, they had six children, including twin daughters. About this time missionaries from the Church came into Denmark and thousands of Scandinavian people became converts. Hans and his family joined the Church and were baptized in June, 1855(4) by Elder Gronbalk (Gronbaek).

One of the doctrines of their new found faith was that "Israel shall be gathered from among the nations." After praying about it, they made the decision to emigrate to Utah. It was not a decision easily reached. They were not leaving their home because of disunity, or because they were desirous of greater wealth, or because they were seeking more friendly neighbors, or because they desired greater social recognition. They had a very enjoyable life style in their homeland, even an enviable one. They left because of their religious convictions that filled their souls with a deep satisfaction. They had strong testimonies of the

truthfulness of the restored Gospel.

Almost immediately Hans began selling off his estate, and by the following spring, he was ready and anxious to emigrate to Utah to associate with the main body of Saints. Having sold out and converted his property into Danish coin, he first paid his tithing, 700 Danish Rigsdaler and gave 1400 Rigsdaler to the Church's Perpetual Emigrating Fund. One Rigsdaler was equivalent to twenty-five cents at this time. When all of this money was tied in a sack, it was so heavy and bulky it required two servants to carry it to the mission office. In addition to these contributions, he also paid all of the expenses for the emigration of some thirty converts who otherwise could not have come to Utah at this time. One account states that it was twenty-eight converts.

Emigrating to the United States on the Thornton: At midnight of the day of their departure, Hans, Maren, and his family of six children (Rasmus, age 11; Jens or James, age 8; Bent, age 6; Karen or Caroline, age 4; and Annie and Christina, twins, age 2) gathered at the bedside of his elderly and infirmed mother to say a last farewell. In *Emigration from the Scandinavian Mission*, the Rasmussens are the first eight people listed among those who left the spring of 1856. There listed are Hans, age 40, a farmer, and Maren, age 35, Rasmus, age 11, Jens, age 8, Bent, age 6, Karen, age 4, and Anne and Stine, age 1 -- a list very similar to the one above which came from family records. The Rasmussens were from the Copenhagen conference of the mission; it was recorded that they lived in Sealand. Rasmussen was not an uncommon name. In the same book there was another Rasmussen family with eight members from Jutland who left at the same time.

Hans and his family gathered with a company of emigrants numbering 161 in all, and on Wednesday, April 23, 1856, under the leadership of Elder Johan A. Ahmanson, they sailed from Copenhagen on the Rhoda bound for Kiel, Germany.

Their route was by steamship to Kiel, then by railway to Hamburg, then across the North Sea by steamer to Grimsby, England, and by railway across England to Liverpool where they arrived safe and in good health on April 29. Here they joined a group of six hundred members of the Church from Great Britain, and the entire company, with Elder James G. Willie in charge, sailed from Liverpool on Sunday, May 4, 1856, aboard the Thornton. Millen G. Atwood, Johan A. Ahmanson, and Moses Cluff or Clough were Elder Willie's assistants; however, in another list John Kelley, Hugh Findlay, and John Chislett are given as his assistants.

The Thornton was built in New York City by William H. Webb in 1854. It was a 1422-ton "ship" measuring 191 feet by 40 feet by 29 feet. The Thornton was a three-masted ship and had three decks, a square stern, and a billethead. She was owned by William & Guion of New York City, and in 1858, she was listed in the Warren & Thayer Line. This ship traded in the Atlantic until she was lost at sea in 1869.

A *Deseret News* article stated that there were 764 Saints who sailed on the Thornton. Perhaps the six above named people plus Elder Willie were in charge of the seven wards which were formed aboard the ship. Among the passengers on this ship were William McKay, his wife Ellen Oman McKay, and their

five children. William and Ellen were the grandparents of President David O. McKay. Elizabeth Tite, future wife of Jesse Tye, was also aboard this ship.

The Church had chartered the Thornton and the Horizon to carry emigrants to Zion. The first ship out of Europe in 1856 was the Caravan, the ship on which Jesse Tye sailed to the United States. It left Liverpool on February 14 with 457 emigrants. It was followed on March 22 by the Enoch Train, with 534 emigrants, 431 of whom were PE Fund passengers. Then on April 18 came the Samuel Curly, with 707 emigrants.

The voyage was uneventful, for the most part. The Saints thought that the ship's captain, a man named Charles Collins, who was also a part owner, was both friendly and considerate. He allowed the emigrants and missionaries every possible liberty and privilege, and praised them for their cleanliness and their good order and for their ready willingness to conform to all of his requests. He also permitted them to conduct religious meetings and to preach the Gospel on board ship. The Captain and the ship's doctor, with others of the ship's staff, were often interested listeners at their meetings and occasionally joined with the Saints in singing their hymns.

There was a law enacted, the British and American Passenger Acts, which established the weekly provisions for each adult or two children going to the United States. The legal provisions were:

3 1/2 lbs. bread	2 lbs. potatoes	2 oz. salt
1 lb. flour	1 1/4 lbs. beef	1/2 oz. mustard
1 1/2 lbs. oat meal	1 lb. pork	1/4 oz. pepper
1 1/2 lbs. rice	1 lb. sugar	1 gill vinegar
1 1/2 peas	2 oz. tea	

The new Acts also required each ship to be provided with "Medical Comforts," as follows for each two hundred adults:

14 lbs. arrowroot	2 gallons lime juice
25 lbs. sago	1/2 gallon brandy
20 lbs. pearl barley	2 doz. milk, in pints
30 lbs. sugar	1 doz. beef soup, in lbs.
12 lbs. marine soap	3 doz. preserved mutton, in 1/2 lbs.

There were some unpleasant experiences on the trip over, however. Included in the company were a number of elderly men and women, and there was considerable illness among them. Seven deaths occurred, of which two were Scandinavian children; one baby died shortly after birth. There were also three births and two weddings en route to the United States.

According to records made of the voyage, on May 1, Sister McNeil had a son who was blessed and named Charles Thornton McNeil. On May 4, Sister Jessie Ireland married Brother Allen Findlay, the

ceremony performed quietly in the cabin by Elder Atwood. On May 6, Sister Molton had a son, Charles Alma. On May 7, Rachel Curtis, age seventy-five, died. On May 8, Rasmine Rasmussen, age ten, died. On May 21, a child was born and died a few minutes after birth. On May 28, a boy, one year of age, died.

On May 29, Sister Sarah Harris married Brother Samuel Cook; the ceremony was performed by Elder Willie. All the Saints were invited to the upper deck, and the young couple was taken to the captain's deck where the ceremony was in plain sight of the passengers. "The American colors were hoisted."

Elder Willie delivered an address on marriage and read from the Doctrine and Covenants. Afterwards, three cheers were given for the captain, three cheers for the officers, three cheers for the crew, and three cheers for the young couple.

On June 2, Thomas Petersen died, age seven and one-half, from the effects of a fall from the upper to the lower deck. On June 5, a girl named Kay, age three and one-half, died. On June 7, Mary Lark, age ten, died of consumption.

A number of meetings were held aboard ship, both for preaching and amusement. The ship's captain was very adamant in not allowing the sailors to disturb the gatherings. Before the Saints disembarked from the ship, written testimonials were exchanged between the Saints, the captain, and the ship's physician "expressing the good feeling and pleasant and cordial understanding which had prevailed between all concerned during the entire voyage." The captain and the physician, trying to respond to the testimonials tendered them, were both overcome by their feelings and shed tears of emotion.

After a trip of about six weeks (41 days), on June 14, they pulled into New York City; a little steam tugboat carried the Church members to Castle Garden where they were welcomed heartily by Apostle John Taylor and Elder Nathaniel H. Felt. Castle Garden was the United States Immigration Depot, located on the southern tip of Manhattan Island. It was an unkempt, filthy, vermin infested place.

On June 17 they left New York by railway for the city of Dunkirk, Ohio; they arrived there on June 19. Here they boarded a small lake steamship by the name of Jersey City and sailed across Lake Erie arriving at Toledo on June 21. They reported that they encountered some very unfriendly treatment at the hands of railroad men and were subjected to some indignities in Toledo. The following day they arrived at Chicago and, on June 23, left by train in two divisions for the west, one division leaving a few hours after the other. At Pond Creek they learned the railway bridge at Rock Island had broken and tumbled down while a train was crossing it. Apostle Erastus Snow and a party of brethren were on the train when the accident occurred, but escaped unhurt. The company left Pond Creek on June 26 and arrived the same day at Iowa City, Iowa, which at that time had about 3,000 inhabitants, and was the western terminus of the railroad.

Iowa City, Iowa had been selected by the Church immigration agents that year as a place to assemble and outfit the immigrants who were to make the long journey across the plains. In order that as many of the

poorer Saints as possible should have the opportunity to emigrate at small expense, the First Presidency had directed that all Saints who in 1856 were assisted by the Perpetual Emigrating Fund, should cross the plains with handcarts. This was a more difficult method of travel but less expensive than wagons. The first handcart company left Iowa City on June 2, 1856, under the direction of Elder Edmund Ellsworth.

In Iowa City the immigrants rested from their long journey which had taken about three months. The time was spent in assembling outfits with which to make the trek to Utah. Hans carefully selected and purchased wagons and ox teams. He spent his money freely to provide for his family and friends. He purchased a large supply of farm tools and equipment and the wagons needed to haul all of it. He spent most of his money. He hoped that he would be repaid when he got to Great Salt Lake Valley and distributed the tools and equipment among those who needed them.

For his wife and children Hans purchased a strong carriage and a team of spirited horses. It was said that when they left Iowa City they had the best and most completely equipped outfit of that time. Bent was only seven when they started this last leg of their trip.

The handcart migration: Hundreds of Saints, especially those in England and Scandinavia, were anxious to gather to Utah and were continually pleading with the authorities of the Church to make it possible for them to do so. As a result of these requests, in September, 1851, President Brigham Young sent out the sixth epistle to the Saints, which included the following:

How long shall it be said in truth "the children of this world are wiser in their generation than the children of light?" Some of the children of the world have crossed the mountains and plains from Missouri to California, with a pack on their back, to worship their god -- GOLD! Some have performed the same journey with wheelbarrow; some have accomplished the same with pack on a cow. Some of the Saints now in our midst came here with wagons and carts made of wood, without a particle of iron . . . and had as good and safe a journey as any in the camps. Can you not do the same?

Since the Mormons who pioneered the route to Salt Lake Valley and those who trekked after them walked much of the way beside the ox-drawn trains, Brigham Young again, suggested to the president of the European Mission in 1855:

I have been thinking how we should operate another year. We cannot afford to purchase wagons and teams as in times past. I am consequently thrown back upon my old plan -- to make handcarts, and let the emigration foot it and draw upon the carts the necessary supplies, having a cow or two for every ten. They can come just as quick, if not quicker, and much cheaper -- can start earlier and escape the prevailing sickness which annually lays so many of our brethren in the dust. A great majority of them walk now, even with the teams which are provided, and have a great deal more care and perplexity than they would if they came without the teams.

When these plans were made known in the homes of the Saints through a Church publication, the Millennial Star, it caused many of the people who were unable to outfit themselves with ox teams and wagons to feel that this was the answer to their desire to join the body of the Church in the Great Basin.

According to President Haight of the Scandinavian mission:

The Scandinavian Saints are very anxious to emigrate and be gathered with the Saints in Zion, where they can be more fully instructed in the way of life and salvation. They rejoice in the newly adopted mode of emigration with handcarts, seeing that so many more can yearly be delivered from the land of oppression, and they are not at all afraid of the trip over the Plains.

Crossing the plains: The company was all assembled and, according to some family records, on July 15(16), 1856, the Rasmussen family left Iowa City under the direction of Elder James G. Willie, with Johan A. Ahmanson as leader of the Scandinavian section. The Willie Company was the Fourth Handcart Company, the fifth division of which was made up of one hundred Scandinavians. In this Fourth Handcart Company was Elizabeth Tite, the future wife of Jesse Tye. As stated in the first chapter, it is apparent that Jesse was not in this company. He arrived in the Valley two and one-half months before Elizabeth.

There was one other handcart company that left in 1856 after the one directed by Elder Willie, the Edward Martin company with 576 people, 146 handcarts, and seven wagons. They left on July 28 and got to Salt Lake Valley November 30. This is the Fifth Handcart Company which, along with the one captained by Elder Willie, had such an arduous trek.

Because the Rasmussen family were with a wagon company and not a handcart company, they left either July 30, 1856 in the William B. Hodgetts' Company, with 150 other people in 33 wagons, or on August 1, 1856 in the John A. Hunt Company, with 300 people in 56 wagons. In some reports "Hodgetts" is spelled "Hodgett." Both companies reached Salt Lake Valley December 10 to 15. The Hunt Company was the last wagon train of the season. It left Florence, Nebraska for the Great Salt Lake Valley on September 2. It should be mentioned that one other group made up the rear of the two handcart companies and the two wagon companies. William Walker, with ten wagons carrying PE Fund baggage was the very last to leave. An examination of the Journal History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints for December 15, 1856 located a "somewhat complete list of the migrants who crossed the plains in the Captain Hodgetts' wagon company." There are the following Rasmussens:

Hans, 45, Maren, 35, Rasmus, 11, Jens, 9, Bertha, 7, Karen, 4, and Anna, 2.

Bertha, of course, must be Bent. In the "Crossing the Plains Index" the same names and most of the same ages are given. Hans is listed as being 40 and Bertha is listed as a daughter. It states that they came in the W. B. Hodgetts' ox train which arrived in sections in GSLC from December 10 to December 15, 1856. This evidence further supports the point that the Rasmussens came with Captain Hodgetts.

Handcarts: To repeat some of the descriptions of the handcarts given in Chapter One, the handcarts were made of hickory or oak, and sometimes both kinds of wood went into their construction. It was necessary that the axle be made of strong hickory. The shafts were five to six feet long, with three or four binding crossbars from the back of the cart to the fore part of the body, leaving a space of three to four feet for the lead man, woman, girl or boy who was to pull the cart. The cart was made the width of

the usual wagon tracks so that it could follow in those tracks as the pioneers traveled along the route of the companies who had gone before. Across the bars of the handcarts was sewn a piece of bed ticking or canvas. On this improvised cart was loaded their food, flour, bedding, extra clothing, and cooking utensils.

The carts were built in Iowa and were pushed or pulled, and sometimes both; they could carry from 100 to 500 pounds of food and clothing. Some carts carried inscriptions such as "Merry Mormons," "Zion's Express," and "Truth Will Prevail."

The family cart was made similar in size, but usually had an iron axle and a box three or four feet long and eight inches high. Some of the carts had thin iron tires, but the rims of many were merely wrapped with rawhide.

Two persons were to draw this cart and only the babies or someone ill were given the privilege of riding. Sometimes the cart was covered with a canvas shade which also provided slight shelter in case of rain. Typically four or five people were assigned to a handcart, twenty persons to a large round tent, and one wagon and ox team to twenty carts.

The handcarts would cover about twelve to fifteen miles a day -- about the same distance usually covered by the ox teams. The handcarts, however, could not carry the same weight as the wagons. Brigham Young, as stated above, the originator of the plan to use handcarts, thought they could come as quick, if not quicker, and much cheaper than the wagon trains. A reflection of this optimism is seen in the following statement by President Young:

Fifteen miles a day will bring them through in 70 days, and after they get accustomed to it they will travel 20, 25, and even 30 with ease, and no danger of giving out, but will continue to get stronger and stronger; the little ones and sick, if there are any, can be carried on the carts, but there will be none sick in a little time after they get started. There will have to be some few tents.

The pioneers were in high spirits by the time they reached Florence, and many of them were singing the chorus of the Handcart Song:

Some must push and some must pull  
As we go marching up the hill,  
As merrily on the way we go  
Until we reach the Valley, oh!

Many of the handcarts were made with green wood. When they passed beyond the Loup Fork, the green carts began to disintegrate. They had greased the wooden-axled carts and, because any grease collected dust and sand that acted like emery paper on the spindles, the axles began to wear and the wheels wobbled. Later the pemmican hunters learned not to grease their carts and endure the shrieking and grating of wheels.

Two handcart companies and two wagon companies: Some historians lump both of the two handcart companies and the two wagon companies together.

Levi Edgar Young, in his book, *The Founding of Utah*, wrote:

Two companies were now on the plains trying hard to reach Salt Lake City before the winter weather set in. They were in charge of James G. Willie and Edward Martin. It was not until August that these companies crossed the Missouri River, when they hastened on to reach their destination before the late autumn. Unfortunately, an early winter set in, a winter similar to the one that had overtaken the Donner party in the Sierra Nevada Mountains just ten years before. Willie's company consisted of 500 souls, 120 carts, 5 wagons, 24 oxen, 45 beef cattle and cows. In Martin's company were 500 souls, 146 carts, 7 wagons, 30 oxen, and 50 beef cattle and cows.

Traveling with the Willie and Martin companies were, fortunately, the wagon companies of William Hodgetts and Hunt. Each of these companies had approximately 200 souls each, and 33 and 50 wagons, respectively. The four companies consisted of 1,500 souls.

The journey from Iowa City to the Missouri River was pleasurable in every particular. The roads were good, game was plentiful, and grass was high for the cattle. Arriving at Florence [Winter Quarters], several days were spent making new carts and mending old ones, and obtaining supplies. The companies did not leave together, owing to lack of preparation. Captain Willie started out on August 17, Captain Martin a few days later, and on September 2 the wagon-trains left.

On the plains they had many experiences. The Indians drove off the beef cattle of Captain Willie's company, an unfortunate occurrence, as we shall see. When Willie's company reached a point about 300 miles west of Florence, they barely escaped being trampled under foot by a herd of frightened buffalo. The roads were now somewhat rough and much rawhide had to be used on the rickety carts to keep them from falling to pieces. The axles wore through before the journey was half ended, causing much trouble and delay all along the road. The early frosty nights made it cold for the emigrants, but they pushed on, until reaching Fort Laramie they obtained some buffalo-ropes and a few more provisions.

On they traveled, and with the consuming of the food it was discovered that rations must be meted out to the men, women, and children. On October 12 it was decided to apportion ten ounces to each soul, and on the 14th another reduction was made. On the 19th the last ounce of flour was doled out. What made matters worse was that snow was now flying, and it was already eighteen inches deep on the level.

The Willie company pushed on, but were compelled to make camp in a lonely spot on the Sweet Water. The Martin company was one hundred miles behind, and had been struck with the same storm. The wagon companies [and the Rasmussens] were still as far behind the Martin company, and therefore could render little assistance.

Another historian writes:

The Edward Martin Company was the fifth handcart company to leave Iowa City, getting a late start August 25, 1856. They were accompanied by two wagon trains, one under the direction of William

Hodgetts and the other under the direction of John A. Hunt. The James G. Willie handcart company was just a few days ahead. Altogether there were 1,550 persons in the four companies, all facing great risk due to the lateness of the season.

Captain Hodgetts' Wagon Company: William B. Hodgetts, age 24, was an elder returning from a mission to Great Britain. It was he who led the company. The wagon train arrived in GSLC December 15, 1856, according to one account. They left Iowa City in the later part of August and were instructed to keep in the rear of the Willie's and Martin's Handcart Companies in case that the immigrants traveling by handcarts should become disabled and need what assistance teams could render them. The wagon trains, both Hodgetts' and Hunt's, suffered as much as did the handcart companies. According to one report, Hans "lost everything except his life and his family in the snowstorms."

Emily Hodgetts Lowder, a sister of Captain Hodgetts, came to the United States aboard the Enoch Train, leaving England on March 18, 1856. She was only 15 years of age at the time. William Ben, her brother, left two weeks after she and her sister Maria did and arrived in Boston two weeks before his sisters. He had a letter from their mother to her daughters. She wrote:

Maria, come home and take care of your mother in the hour of trial, my days are short. Emmie, my loved one, go to Utah with your brother and keep faithful, work in the house of the Lord. William Ben, be a guide and protection to your sister, tenderly watch her footsteps.

Maria went back to England. Emily went with her brother to Utah. She described the Hodgetts' Company as follows:

William Ben was put in charge of the immigrants . . . [at the] Iowa camp grounds.

There were forty-nine wagons, ours being the first. We camped in these camp grounds twenty-one weeks. I was very much upset over the separation in our family and my health was poor, so my brother put me in a boarding house for twelve weeks. During this time he was in Missouri for the Church. Miss Birchley, Squire Tennant and his mother bought two hundred heifers, which were afterwards used in helping to feed the handcart company.

While we were on the plains we came across John A. Hunt with eleven wagons. The Indians were very hostile and my brother told him it was not safe to travel alone and invited him to travel with our company, which he did. Then we came on, my brother being appointed captain of the last wagon company in 1856. Nathan T. Porter was his assistant. When we reached Devil's Gate, we were called upon to go and help the handcart company, which we gladly did. It was bitter cold. We were snowed in for ten days. They camped near us then and we gave them five wagons and twenty yoke of oxen and they moved on. We stayed in the old fort for ten days longer, then Jos. A Young and Brother Grant (I think his name was George) came back from Utah to meet us. Brother William Carter came also from Utah and helped us on. We reached Salt Lake City December 15th, 1856. We left our belongings at the old Fort. Mother had sent means to rent a home for us for two years in the Seventeenth Ward.

William Ben went back the next spring to bring our things from the old fort, also to bring freight for the Church. . . .

According to family records, the Rasmussens first went to Winter Quarters. This was a settlement where the emigrants camped during the long cold winters while waiting for better weather before continuing their journey westward. They reached Winter Quarters late in the season, and all of the Saints were counseled by President Young to remain there throughout the winter. However, the weather continued clear and warm and winter seemed to be a long way off. Some family records place the time as being the first of October; other records simply state that it was late in the season.

Encouraged by the late Indian Summer, they traveled on. Unfortunately, they drove into the face of one of the most severe winters ever to sweep down over the plains.

Things were going well for them after they left Winter Quarters. The first two hundred miles went well, for the scenery was beautiful, game was plentiful, and a spirit of joy was in the camps. Then they were attacked by a large band of Indians, who drove off many of their cattle. To add to their discomfort, their food supply ran low after a few weeks. Three hundred miles west of Florence, they were badly frightened by a herd of buffalo that stampeded. By this time many of the handcarts were in need of extensive repairs because of the difficult terrain over which they traveled. In a report by Franklin D. Richards and Daniel Spencer to Brigham Young appears the following:

We overtook our rear company of wagons, in charge of Captain L. [J.] A. Hunt, during the forenoon of the 6th [of September], and nooned with them about 10 miles east of the Loup Fork. He has in his company 240 persons, 50 wagons, 297 oxen and cows, 7 horses and mules, and some 4 church wagons. The majority of this company have light loads and good teams, and are generally well provisioned. They would probably ferry the Loup Fork on the 7th.

On the evening of the seventh of September, they overtook the Martin company. Then, after visiting with the members of this company, they drove about ten miles farther and found Hodgetts' camp -- with the Rasmussens.

They gave this description of the Hodgetts' company:

This company is composed of 150 persons, 33 wagons, 84 yoke of oxen, 19 cows and some 250 head of heifers and other loose cattle. This includes br. (sic) Thomas Tennant and family, with 4 wagons and 1 carriage. Br. Hodgetts' company, though generally pretty heavily laden, were in good traveling condition, making excellent progress.

However, when the companies reached North Bluff Creek, six hundred miles from Iowa City, their provisions were so low that they were compelled to ration their food. Elder Richards became concerned and hurried on to Salt Lake City to report to President Young.

Company organization on the plains: Typically plans for the immigrating

company were carefully thought out. The captain had been over the road before and was on a horse in order to ride ahead to select the best route and most convenient camping grounds. The large groups were divided into units of fifty, with a captain over the fifty, then sub-divided into units of ten with a captain over that division. One of the advantages of this arrangement was that if an accident happened to a wagon, the company of ten to which it belonged could remain behind and help with the repairs. In this way the entire company would not be delayed and the company of ten could join the main body at the next camping ground. But if this unit of ten had not reached the camp by morning, the advance company was to remain in camp until the late ones arrived. The leaders felt as if hardly any circumstance would justify the strong part of the company in leaving the weaker portion for more than one day's travel.

A Sergeant of the Guard was also appointed, whose duty was to superintend the herding and guarding of the cattle and to see that guards were appointed and relieved at the proper time. From the time of the unyoking of the oxen until sunset the oxen were turned out to feed in or near the corral.

Driving oxen was a new experience for most men of the companies. Many of the Europeans had never seen an ox before. The wide-spreading horns of the untamed steers provided a most uncomfortable nervousness, consequently the captains accompanying the units had to do most of the yoking of the oxen.

This delayed starting. The cattle in the hands of untried teamsters were nearly unmanageable. The captains went first to one team and then to another, showing them how to manage the yoked oxen.

The teamster should drive, with the team to his right; when he cried "Gee," the team should go from him; "Haw" meant the team should come towards him. It was usual with a lazy team to let them feel the whip over their necks when the teamster cried "Haw"; and when "Gee," over the backs. So whenever a difficult road was encountered, the shouts and cracking of whips were terrific. When a slight move to the right or left was required, the command to "Gee" or "Haw" was given in a very mild tone. The trained teamster walked at the back of his team.

Sometimes wood was scarce. The women, as they walked along, would pick up the dry buffalo chips to be used with the scanty bits of wood gathered to make the campfires. Along the streams were found bushes covered with berries -- wild currants, native black currants, bull berries, and wild gooseberries.

Members of the company would stop and gather as many as they could get. The women also gathered mustard and other greens; these added variety to their food.

A horn was blown at 5 a.m., when every man arose and attended to prayers before leaving his wagon, then breakfast was prepared and the cattle fed.

Breakfast was to be over and everything packed by seven, at which time the camp was expected to move at the sound of the bugle. Each extra man was required to travel at the side of the team with his loaded gun on his shoulder, and each driver carried a gun. The wagons would travel in double file, and half an hour was allowed for dinner. A chaplain was appointed whose duty it was to call the camp together,

morning and evening, for song, prayer, and instruction.

Camping time was always looked forward to. The place chosen was usually level, near running water, and shade if possible. Here the wagons were drawn up in a circle, the front wheels of the back wagon locking with the wheels of the one in front, the tongue of the wagon on the outside of the circle, thus making a good "corral" in which to pen the animals for the night. At the ends of the corral were gateways which were closely guarded.

Many of the travelers slept in their wagons, but some had tents; these were pitched near the wagons on the outside. The camp was patrolled by guards all night.

Each company had a few musical instruments. When supper was over they would gather around the campfire, tell of the day's experiences, and some of the people played and some sang, while often times others danced. There was one song that was particularly popular with the Saints. It was called "In Upper California, Oh That's the Land for Me." All the land west of the Rocky Mountains was known as California. At 8:00 p.m., at the blowing of the horn, everyone retired to his or her wagon or tent, prayers were said, and at nine, all except the guards were in bed.

There is no good description of the kind of clothes the pioneers wore. Presumably, they wore the style of clothing indigenous to their country of birth. One description of some of their clothing appears in the Salt Lake Daily Herald. A member of the Martin Company, which was passed by Almon W. Babbitt and two companions, all of whom were later killed on the trail by unknown assailants, said that Brother Babbitt was "dressed in corduroy pants, woolen overshirt, and felt hat."

Winter weather: The above would be a fairly accurate description of the first part of the Rasmussens' trek across the plains. But the Indian Summer left them. They had left the outposts of communities along the Missouri River and were well across the prairies of Nebraska when a blizzard caught them. By the last day of September the companies still had five hundred miles to go before they reached GSLC, all leading through mountainous country. Provisions were nearly gone, clothing almost worn out, and bedding had been discarded because of the weakened condition of the Saints and their consequent inability to haul it. To add to this, after the people of the Martin company had eaten fresh meat from a few oxen that could travel no farther, many of them experienced dysentery. Of course, all of these conditions took their toll among the pioneers. It was bitterly cold with winds which caused the drifting snow to block their way. They were often forced to remain in some crude cave for days at a time. Then, before moving on, they had to drive the cattle back and forth to break trail before they could bring the wagons along through the deep snow drifts. All the grass and feed for the livestock were now covered under the deep snow; at night the temperatures would drop into the twenties below zero. Presumably the wind chill factor would have been considerably lower.

It is difficult to know the extent to which the wagon companies were in contact with the handcart companies. One record states that the Hodgetts' company was merged at Florence with the Martin Handcart Company. In another account, it was reported that "about twelve miles above the last crossing

of the Platte, the company was snowed in and came to a standstill." John Bond, a twelve-year old boy was in the Hodgetts' wagon train stalled beside the Fifth Handcart Company, Martin's. He wrote the following account of his experiences:

Day after day passes and still no tidings of help coming from the westward. The bugle is sounded again by John Wadkins to call all the Saints together for prayers to ask the infinite Father to bring food, medicines, and other things necessary for the sick and needy. After prayers, [we] are ordered to bed. I had been to many of the meetings previously but this time I saw sister Scott cooking a nice pot of dumplings just before the bugle sounded. She hid the dumplings under the wagon, being a zealous woman, and went to prayer meeting, but I did not go this time, I stood back and looked for the dumplings, found them and being so hungry I could not resist the temptation, sat down and ate them all.

The weaker cattle, starved and worn, could not survive, and many of them died of hunger and cold. It became necessary to abandon all extra equipment such as farm implements. Provisions were rapidly reduced to the danger point so they had to ration them. Hans would go out in the early morning with his ax and chop chunks of meat from the carcass of an ox which had frozen to death during the night. With this meat they would make great kettles of soup for the company. Later he said that the stew would have been rather appetizing if only they could have had some salt and pepper with which to season it, but such supplies had been depleted.

There was a great deal of illness among the people. There were many deaths. The Rasmussens lost one of their twin daughters, Christina -- August 15, 1856. This was before they left Florence on September 2. But it is not known when they arrived at Florence. Consequently, where she died and was buried is uncertain. She, as well as the others who died, were buried in shallow graves by the roadside. The dead were quickly buried and left as the saddened company dragged westward. The pioneers never thought of turning back, in spite of all of their hardships. They were prepared to make whatever sacrifices were necessary to reach Utah.

It was with some hesitation that these companies left Florence at such a late date. Keep in mind that the fourth and fifth handcart companies had been delayed in Iowa City while waiting for their carts. They set out in late July and reached Winter Quarters in August. They debated but "impatience, enthusiasm, and faith prevailed over prudence." John Chislett, a member of the Willie Company, wrote:

The elders seemed to be divided in their judgment as to the practicability of our reaching Utah in safety at so late a season of the year, and the idea was entertained for a day or two of making our winter quarters on the Elkhorn, Wood River, or some eligible location in Nebraska; but it did not meet with general approval.

As the emigrants traveled along the banks of the Sweetwater, the nights became severely cold; their bed covering was now insufficient. Before them were the mountains, clad almost to the base with snow. The storms of winter were gathering. The old and infirm began to droop and soon deaths became frequent.

Generally whenever they left their camping ground they would have to bury one or more of their party. Then the able-bodied men began to succumb.

On the morning of October 19, the immigrants awakened to eighteen inches of snow on the level. It was the first snow of the season and the day that their last flour was used. Deaths from the extreme cold, exhaustion, dysentery, and lack of food were commonplace.

They pushed on, mile after mile over the wind swept plains of Wyoming, until they arrived at Green River. By this time, due to the depth of the snow as well as the loss of cattle and horses, going on became impossible.

They set about building huts and dugouts for shelter in hope that they receive some help before they all perished.

The rescue: Brigham Young organized and set out a scouting party under the direction of Ephraim Hanks to try to locate and rescue the companies. At the October conference, President Young had addressed the people, saying in part:

There are a number of our people on the Plains who have started to come to Zion with handcarts and they need our help. We want twenty teams by tomorrow to go to their relief. It will be necessary to send two experienced men with each wagon. I will furnish three teams loaded with provisions and send good men with them and Brother Heber C. Kimball will do the same. If there are any brethren present who have suitable outfits for such a journey, please make it known at once so we will know what to depend upon.

Women collected bedding and clothing and provisions were gathered. That evening twenty-seven young men met and received final instructions to prepare them for their errand of mercy. Nearly all of them were trained scouts.

They only knew the settlers were somewhere between Salt Lake City and Winter Quarters. When the relief party reached Fort Bridger and had not yet met the handcart company, they became alarmed, because they had expected to meet the advance company under the direction of Captain Willie. After deliberating, a decision was made to send Joseph Young and Cyrus H. Wheelock ahead to urge the companies on, if possible. Soon the snow became deep and with a cold north wind causing deep drifts, they had to camp. Men and animals were completely exhausted. It was here on the night of October 20 that Captain Willie and Joseph Elder, riding two worn-out animals, brought the news that unless immediate aid came, his company would perish.

Immediately the men prepared to start again, and after a hard journey they arrived at Willie's camp where they found people who had not eaten for forty-eight hours. Fires were lighted and food prepared, but for some of the pioneers, the rescue party was too late. That night nine more deaths occurred. Part of the rescue party stayed with the Willie Company but most of them pushed on to relieve the suffering of the Martin Company and the Hodgetts and Hunt wagon trains.

It wasn't until November when they found the other companies freezing and starving in their camp at Green River. They brought them buffalo meat to eat. The company was quickly reorganized to make the final leg of their trip but found it necessary to leave most of the wagons and the heavy equipment so they could travel with the scouting party.

George D. Grant, writing to Brigham Young from Devil's Gate on November 2, 1856, said that they met Willie's company on the 21st of October. They sent a group to Independence Rock to see where the other two companies were.

They traveled through snow from eight to twelve inches deep. Then they heard that the other companies were all on the Platte River, near the upper crossing where they had been waiting for nine days. They met Martin's company at Greasewood Creek on the last day of October. Hodgetts' company was a few miles behind Martin's. Describing the scene, he wrote:

But you can imagine between five and six hundred men, women and children, worn down by drawing hand carts through snow and mud; fainting by the wayside; falling, chilled by the cold; children crying, their limbs stiffened by cold, their feet bleeding and some of them bare to snow and frost. The sight is almost too much for the stoutest of us, but we go on doing all we can, not doubting nor despairing.

Hunt's company was two or three days still farther back. More specific concerning location is the report Joseph A. Young, son of Brigham Young, gave in the Tabernacle on November 16. He left with Captain George D. Grant's relief company on October 7. And then:

We traveled until the 28th, when we met Capt. Edward Martin's company of hand carts and Capt. Hodgetts' wagon company, at a place called Red Buttes, 16 miles below [above] the Platte bridge. We met Capt. J. A. Hunt's wagon company 26 miles below the bridge [10 miles below Martin's].

The brethren and sisters appeared to be in good health and spirits. Capt. Martin informed us that about 56 out of 600 had died upon the plains to that date. Those who had died were mostly old people [But this was still early. Final estimates were that 135 to 150 people out of the 576 people of the Martin Company died and 67 out of 500 people in the Willie Company died.].

On the 29th I returned from Capt. Hunt's to Capt. Martin's company. Capt. Martin had started early in the morning, and when I overtook them their cry was, "let us go to the Valley; let us go to Zion."

Levi Edgar Young describes the rescue as follows:

A company of men bound for Utah under Franklin D. Richards passed the emigrants on the road, and hastened on to Salt Lake City to report to Governor Young the plight of the emigrants. The October conference was in session, and on hearing of the condition of the famishing people, Governor Young called for volunteers to go with wagons and supplies to rescue the women and children, and all others who were suffering. Twenty teams, each with two experienced men with provisions, left immediately. The men had gathered up supplies, the voluntary contributions of the people. The women gave quilts, underwear, mittens, and socks and many took coats from their own backs and gave for the relief of their

"brethren and sisters."

The rescue party encountered stormy weather from the first, and did not make quick time as they expected. On reaching the Green River, and hearing nothing of the emigrants, Joseph A. Young and Angus Wheelock were sent ahead to meet them and to let them know that relief was near at hand.

Beyond the South Pass the wagons reached the Willie company. They had had nothing to eat for forty-eight hours, and were freezing and starving to death. Wood was drawn to the camp from the neighboring hills, and bonfires were lighted.

Food was doled out, and the emigrants took new courage. Yet nine died the night that the relief arrived.

The rescuers continued on to the Martin, Hodgetts, and Hunt companies, while William H. Kimball started for Salt Lake with the Willie company. It continued to snow, and the nights were bitter cold. The women and children huddled at night around the fires, while the men did all they could to gather wood and keep clothing dry. The company finally reached Green River, where they were met again by supply-wagons, and in November the men at Fort Bridger welcomed them. Here fifty wagons were awaiting them to carry them to the valley, and seven days later the party arrived in Salt Lake City, where they were greeted by hundreds of citizens. Within an hour, remarked Mr. Kimball, after the party arrived, every soul was being cared for in the home of some brother. This company lost one-sixth of its number on the plains by cold and hunger.

It appears that the Martin company reached Martin's Cove, which is a depression near the Sweetwater, about two and one-half miles west of Devil's Gate. Willie's company was trapped a few miles east of South Pass. Then, according to the Hafens' in *Handcarts to Zion*:

The fatigued Saints finally reached the wagons, encamped in the cove against the granite mountain, where they found some shelter through several freezing days. The thermometer reached eleven degrees below zero on November 6. It was decided to store the merchandise from the wagon trains at Devil's Gate fort; and then, in the emptied wagons, to haul the sick and incapacitated members of the handcart company on to Salt Lake. Most of the handcarts would be abandoned.

After the freight from the two rear wagon trains [including that belonging to the Rasmussens] was stored in the log cabins, a delegation was chosen to remain behind and guard the goods during the winter. Dan W. Jones, with two companions from the Valley and seventeen men from the emigrant trains, were assigned the grueling task.

Hodgetts' and Hunt's wagon trains, now relieved of their freight, moved on to Martin's Cove. Here the meager loads from the handcarts, and all the emigrants that the wagons could carry, were packed under the wagon covers.

The stronger persons still had to walk, but pulling of handcarts was at an end; all these two-wheeled burdens were left behind. The party moved forward on November 9 [This would be Hodgetts' company.

According to the journal of the first rescue party, the Hunt company had not yet completed caching their goods. The evening of the ninth, which was a Sunday, they had a meeting with the officers of the companies to appoint men to remain with the goods. Also, the record states, "During our stay here, we had meetings every evening to counsel together and ask the Lord to turn away the cold and storm, so that the people might live." On the tenth, the Hunt company moved out, the last wagon leaving by about two o'clock.]. Ahead of the company, there still stretched 325 miles of high, mountain desolation, mantled in snow. Another cold spell coated the Sweetwater with an ice sheet, thick enough to support wagons. As the train plowed slowly westward through the snow, the severe cold continued. Some persons had their fingers, toes, or feet frozen; others died.

In the History of Brigham Young, 1847-1867, it states:

Two companies of emigrants with wagons also started late in the season, the members of which, after considerable privation also were brought in within about a fortnight after the last handcart company arrived. Abandoned equipment: On arrival at Devil's Gate on the Sweetwater, twenty men, belonging to Martin's company, were left in charge of stock, merchandise, and baggage, with orders to follow in the spring. The snow was deep, many of the cattle were devoured by wolves, and others perished from the cold. Game was scarce.

Daniel W. Jones was one of those who stayed. It would appear that Brother Jones and his associates did not do a very good job guarding the possessions of Hans. Another possibility is that while the bulk of the two wagon trains stopped at Martin's cove, the Rasmussens and few others went as far as the Green River. Brother Jones had a difficult time. He wrote:

"There was not money enough on earth to have hired me to stay. . . . But I remembered my assertion that any of us would stay if called upon." The ordeal they endured during the long winter was terrible. Their cattle died; they ate the lean meat, and got hungry eating it. Finally they were reduced to eating rawhide. At first it made them sick. But Brother Jones, a professional cook, devised a plan and evolved this recipe:

Scorch and scrape the hair off; this had a tendency to kill and purify the bad taste that scalding gave it. After scraping, boil one hour in plenty of water, throwing the water away which had extracted all the glue, then wash and scrape the hide thoroughly, washing in cold water, then boil to a jelly and let it get cold, and then eat with a little sugar sprinkled on it. And he concluded: "We asked the Lord to bless our stomachs and adapt them to this food. . . . We enjoyed this sumptuous fare for about six weeks, and never got the gout." When the last hides had been eaten, nothing remained but their boot tops and the scraps of leather around their wagons, even the neck piece of a buffalo skin which had served as a door mat was used for food. Thus they kept themselves alive until spring, when they subsisted on thistle roots and wild garlic, until at length relief came from Salt Lake City.

Explanation of the timing of the handcart companies: Several factors contributed to this tragedy of the two handcart companies and the two ox trains. They started too late in the season from Iowa City. Part of the problem was due to the fact that some of the emigrants left Liverpool aboard the Thornton on May 3, while others on the Horizon did not leave until May 25. This in turn was due to the large numbers of

Saints who wanted to come to Zion as well as the difficulty in procuring ships. Another factor was the fact that upon their arrival at Iowa City, the handcarts were not yet constructed. Willie's company was detained nineteen days and the Martin's company was detained twenty days. Upon their arrival at Florence, further time was consumed in the repair of their flimsy vehicles. Then too, many of the emigrants had the belief that, being on a trek in compliance with the commandment to "gather," nothing would happen to them. "Every saint who does not come home," stated the sixth general epistle of the twelve, "will be afflicted by the devil." They felt as if those who were enduring so much for the Gospel's sake would merit special divine favor. There was not a sufficient number of able bodied men in proportion to the infirm, the women, and children. Also, except for a few missionaries in the company and some of the Mormon leaders at Florence, none of the pioneers had been over the route.

They did not fully appreciate what lay ahead of them. Finally, the winter was one of the earliest and most severe that has ever been known in this area of the country.

Arrival in the valley: The Rasmussens finished the journey over the mountains and arrived in Salt Lake City on December 16, 1856. They were the last of the wagon train emigrants to reach the Valley. Most of the people in the company had arrived between December 10 and 15. The Willie Handcart Company had reached the city on November 9, 1856. The Martin Company arrived in the Valley on November 30. Some family accounts state that the Rasmussens "should have made the trip with relative ease if it had not been for all the help they had to give the handcarts that traveled with them and the weather."

Upon their arrival the people were taken to the old Tithing Yard where they were supplied with some clothing and had their immediate needs taken care of; they were assigned to the homes of other members of the Church who took care of them. Many thrilling accounts are recorded of the kindness and brotherly love that existed among these ill-fated pioneers. One of the most heroic mass rescues the frontier ever witnessed was performed by the scouts and men who answered the call to bring more than a thousand persons, who were stalled in the snow three hundred miles from any settlement, safely to their destination.

In the Latter-day Saints Biographical Encyclopedia, it states that soon after their arrival in Salt Lake Valley, Hans came very near losing his life in a snowslide in the mountains. Undoubtedly life in early Utah was a hazardous adventure with something to try the soul or strengthen the character every day. It must have been difficult for the Rasmussens, walking the streets of Salt Lake City, listening to the "monkey jabbering" of the foreign English language. Undoubtedly they felt humble and grateful after having survived such an arduous trip coming across the plains. However, they must have also felt foreign, unwanted, and laughed at.

And so it was that Hans and his family, who only a few months earlier had a large and beautiful estate in Denmark and who was a family of wealth and influence, was now reduced to poverty. It should also be mentioned that the territory of Utah had a famine in 1856. What had been one of the finest outfits to start across the plains was scattered along the trail. When spring came, a party returned to Green River for what was left of the Rasmussen's equipment; Hans was informed that someone had already taken that last bit of his earthly possessions.

**Settling in Sanpete:** The Rasmussens learned that Scandinavians were being asked to settle in Sanpete to strengthen the colonies from Indian raids. In 1857 they moved to Sanpete Valley and located in Ephraim. After 118 miles of tiring travel, they reached the fort, which was like nothing in Denmark. The sight of the place must have been a crushing blow. A witch's caldron of impish collections could not have poured out a more forlorn, bleak, and dismal sight to the Rasmussens after living so well in Denmark.

They must have been appalled as they viewed the seventeen-acre fort with its walls from fourteen to seven feet high and four feet thick at the top, its mud and log houses placed side by side, lining three walls (See Appendix K for a plan of Fort Ephraim.). There was no privacy at all, and the houses were very dark inside with one door and a single window. Some of the Saints were living in tents and covered wagons.

The smaller fort in the center contained the business section, that is, the post office, tithing house, and so forth, with a church and schoolhouse in its center. A closer look showed that the walls of the meetinghouse consisted of cedar posts stuck in the ground, a few feet apart, the intervening spaces being filled with adobes. The roof was of logs and dirt.

The animals during the early years were housed within the large fort at night and herded carefully during the day. Dust must have been so prevalent it was taken for granted. A ditch of water flowed from one corner of the fort completely around the smaller fort and out the opposite corner. Four different languages were spoken by the inhabitants, besides broken English.

The women began their various duties of cooking by campfire or fireplace and caring for the household. The men herded livestock, hunted wild game, hauled wood, kept the fire banked at night, and took turns watching for Indians from Guard Knoll.

## **Chapter Notes**

It seems important to consider briefly the geography and history of Denmark, the homeland of the Rasmussens and the Christensens, in order for comparisons to be made between it and Sanpete County, where both families eventually settled.

**Denmark -- geography:** Denmark consists of a peninsula reaching out northward from northwestern Germany to divide the North Sea on the west from the Baltic Sea to the east (See Appendix I.). This is Jutland and is Denmark's mainland. Jutland is an extension jutting northward from the Great Plain of Europe. About three-fourths of the land area of the country is in Jutland; but the heaviest population is on the islands, foremost among which is Zealand, which lies eastward toward southern Sweden. In total there are 483 islands, 100 of which are inhabited.

Denmark has an area of 16,576 square miles. Denmark is the smallest of the Scandinavian countries. The distance from the southern border to the most northern tip is 224 miles. No point in Denmark rises above 600 feet.

The shoreline is, of course, very long: regular low coast on the North Sea, with sand dunes and vast beaches making navigation difficult; easy access on the Baltic side, with lines of cliffs and numerous little bays. The coastline is 4,620 miles in length.

The temperature, fairly uniform throughout the country, averages 32 degrees in winter and 62 degrees in summer. The rainfall varies considerably in different localities in different years. The climate of Denmark is mild for a country as far north as it is: 54-59 degrees North latitude. The weather can be hot and dry, or cool and moist.

Lying along its eastern shore are a number of islands which also belong to Denmark. These islands, large and small, along with Jutland, make up Denmark. The landscape of both the mainland and islands is identical. Rich in natural beauty, it is gently rolling and covered with small forests of beech and birch and intensely cultivated corn fields and meadows. The soil is fertile and produces rye, barley, potatoes, and vegetables as well as a variety of fruits. The lakes are numerous and beautiful. The entire country seems almost to be the exact opposite of Ephraim, where most of the people in this chapter and some subsequent chapters settled. The largest island is Seeland or Zealand. On it the capital city of Copenhagen is located. It is divided into three districts or countries and is the most densely populated part of Denmark. The southern district is called Proesto.

In a central position, between Zealand and the peninsula of Jutland, lies Fyn, the next island in size and importance. Other important islands in the group are Falster, Lolland, Langeland, and Bornholm.

All of the Rasmussens were born and lived and died in an area smaller than Salt Lake Valley. They were in or near the "Amt" (county or district) of Præstø on the big Danish island of Sjælland. Even early man could distinguish two distinct regions -- the extensive, open heathlands in the west of the peninsula of Jutland and the heavy forests of beech and oak that clothed the rest of the country. It was not until the advent of agriculture, however, that man became aware of the subtler distinction between these two regions -- the soil. The Heath of Jutland was composed of virtually sterile sands (the outwash materials from the last advance of the glacier), while the remainder of Denmark consisted of deep loamy soils rich in lime.

The agriculture was mixed farming, by means of which the Danish peasant produced as great a variety of crops and livestock products as he could to insure self-sufficiency. This meant the cultivation of wheat and rye for grains, oats and hay for his livestock, and barley for making his beer.

However, early in the second half of the nineteenth century, this age-old pattern of farming received a couple of rude jolts. One came from Denmark's defeat at the hands of Bismarck and the Germans in 1864, for the terms of the peace treaty that followed it forced Denmark to surrender about one-third of its area and crop land which included the old provinces of Schlesvig-Holstein, as well as the base of the peninsula of Jutland as far north as Kolding. Schlesvig was returned to Denmark in 1920 but it is slightly Germanized. Another jolt, which was to have wider repercussions in Danish agriculture, was the realization that the prairies of the American Great Plains and the steppes of the Ukraine could produce

grain more cheaply than the Danish farmers could market it themselves. This forced Danish agriculture to specialize in the production of livestock products -- milk, butter, cheese, eggs, and meat -- in the 1880s.

In 1967, Copenhagen celebrated the 800th anniversary of its founding. Starting as a small fishing harbor ("havn") on the shores of the Oresund, it attracted an increasing volume of commerce after a castle was built there in 1167, and gradually became known as "the merchants' harbor," from which title its present name, Kobenhavn, is derived. Nearly one-fourth of the entire population of the country lives in this city.

The country looks like a dike (with a few fissures) enclosing the Baltic, or like a shattered bridge linking the continental mainland to the Scandinavian peninsula. In any case, it is a place of transit, and therefore of trade.

Compulsory education, introduced in 1814, was reinforced thirty years later by Bishop Grundtvig's famous "Folk High Schools," which still exist. These aim to train students in the literature, history, geography, and culture of their own land.

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