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## The Cups of Blood Are Emptied Pietism and Cultural Heritage in Two Danish Immigrant Schools on the Great Plains

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# THE CUPS OF BLOOD ARE EMPTIED

## PIETISM AND CULTURAL HERITAGE IN TWO DANISH IMMIGRANT SCHOOLS ON THE GREAT PLAINS

JOHN MARK NIELSEN

“The Great Plains Drinks the Blood of Christian Men and Is Satisfied”  
—Ole Rølvaag, *Giants in the Earth*

Following the American Civil War, the vast sweep of the Great Plains exerted a powerful force on the imagination of Americans and Northern European immigrants, resulting in a period of rapid settlement. Immigrant communities in particular attempted to establish institutions through which their language,

beliefs and cultural heritage might be preserved. The history of these immigrant institutions mirrors the challenges immigrant communities faced in confronting not only the vicissitudes of climate and evolving economic conditions but also the pressures of assimilation.

KEY WORDS: alternative education, Danish American Lutheranism, Immigrant religious life, immigrant schools, Rølvaag

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Numerous works of both fiction and non-fiction explore the broader challenges of life in the Great Plains; none captures the experiences of immigrants as does Ole Rølvaag's trilogy, *Giants in the Earth*, *Peder Victorious*, and *Their Fathers' God*. Rølvaag depicts not only the environmental challenges immigrants faced but the religious conflicts that arise from denominational differences. Ever present, particularly in the first novel, is the Great Plains, which Rølvaag personifies as a she-monster, a primordial giantess, patiently biding her time as Norwegian immigrants coming to this vast, open grassland in 1873 struggle to gain a foothold and to transform the “American desert” into a land of “milk and honey.”

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Novels such as Rølvaag's focus on the experiential level of individuals and communities and help readers to enter vicariously into that experience. While historical and geographical studies have focused on the broader experience, few have addressed specific immigrant groups or explored the institutions they founded. Such an investigation can offer insight into how these institutions provided opportunities for both self-expression and identification. The history of individual institutions can also serve as a barometer, reflecting the pressures that the forces of environment and assimilation exerted on individual immigrant communities.

This is the story of two church-related immigrant institutions founded on the Great Plains by Danish Lutherans: Nysted Folk High School in Nysted, Nebraska, which existed from 1887 to 1934, and Brorson High School, in rural Kenmare, North Dakota, which operated from 1901 to 1917 and again from 1919 to 1920. Both schools were modeled on the concept of the Danish folk high school, a movement inspired by the thought and writings of the Danish poet, religious leader, and educator Nicolai Frederik Severin Grundtvig (1783-1872). The teaching at each school, however, reflected competing understandings of faith and life among the Danish Lutheran immigrants, leading to bitter divisions within the small Danish American population. Both schools depended on energetic, charismatic individuals under whose leadership the two schools flourished, but the efforts of these individuals were not enough in the face of changing weather patterns, population movement, and evolving economic, social, and political realities. Ultimately, both schools were closed. The struggles faced by supporters of these two schools are foreshadowed in the last chapter of *Giants in the Earth*, entitled "The Great Plains Drinks the Blood of Christian Men and Is Satisfied," which metaphorically captures the interplay between human effort and a sometimes harsh and unforgiving environment.

#### THEOLOGICAL DIFFERENCES

The theological differences that resulted in a division among Danish Lutheran immigrants have been treated extensively by John M. Jensen, Paul C. Nyholm and Enok Mortensen, among others, in their studies of the two Danish American Lutheran synods.<sup>1</sup> A brief summary of the two sides is useful since the theological understandings informed the curriculum of Nysted Folk High School and Brorson High School. Essentially, the division arose from differences in interpreting scripture and the role cultural heritage played in the life of a Christian.

On one side were those who had been influenced by Protestant pietistic traditions arising in Germany during the seventeenth century. This group had its roots in the informal conventicles, or "godly gatherings," that had formed in Denmark to reawaken the faith of members within the state church. (Prior to the passage of the Constitution of 1849, Danish law prohibited any formal organizations outside the state church.) Organized in 1853 as the Association for *Indre Mission* (Inner Mission) in Denmark, this group stressed the need for a personal relationship with Jesus Christ as one's savior, disciplined reading of scripture, and active participation in church life, and they saw this world as being fraught with sin and temptation.<sup>2</sup> In this tradition, the Bible was the revealed word of God and therefore inerrant. To reawaken individuals to the faith, the Inner Mission stressed missionary work both within and outside congregations and funded the travel of selected individuals for the express purpose of witnessing for the faith. Immigrants brought this understanding to the United States, although no formal association was formed here. Its influence, however, contributed much to the theology of the Danish Evangelical Lutheran Church Association, founded in 1884 and often known as the "Blair Church," and later to that of the United Danish Evangelical Lutheran Church (UDELC), or "United

Church," that was formed in 1896 in Minneapolis, Minnesota, although its headquarters continued to be in Blair, Nebraska.

On the other side were Danish American Lutherans who had established the "Danish Church" in 1874 and had been influenced by N. F. S. Grundtvig. Grundtvig's study of the Bible and Norse mythology, as well as his experiences as a parish pastor, had led him to two radical but interrelated positions concerning faith, biblical interpretation, and education.<sup>3</sup> A student of mythology, Grundtvig had worked with early medieval manuscripts in both Copenhagen and London and was sensitive to the problems of translating texts. While he encouraged lay people to read scripture, he became increasingly concerned that lay readers, lacking linguistic and historical knowledge, might easily be confused or misled. This led him to challenge the orthodox Lutheran position arising in the seventeenth century that the Bible was the source and primary evidence for the Christian faith. In what he called his "matchless discovery," Grundtvig maintained that the source of faith is the living church and its community of believers. Consequently, his first radical position was that the Apostles' Creed, as the most clearly articulated statement of the living church, was of equal if not greater importance than the Bible, which was the source and inspiration of truth but not the truth itself. "We shall not stand on the Bible and search for the faith," he said, "but stand on the faith and read the Bible."<sup>4</sup>

Grundtvig's second radical position, at least in the eyes of many pietistic Danish Lutherans, related to the everyday lives of Christians in this world. Since God had created man and woman in the divine image, humanity needed to be awakened not only spiritually but culturally. He believed that the language and culture of a people were essential to their identity, and that more importantly this diversity of cultures and languages reflected the diversity of God's creation. The cultural spirit of a people was expressed in their stories, songs,

and dance, and learning about and celebrating this cultural heritage awakened individuals to richer lives and a greater sense of community. Thus, culture and language were worthy of study, preservation, and celebration, and all should have opportunity to learn and experience their cultural heritage.<sup>5</sup>

Grundtvig proposed that the government provide this kind of education by funding a school, of equal status to that of the University of Copenhagen, which would provide a model for education growing out of folk culture. He called it a "high" school although it was to award no degrees, nor was it to prepare students for specific professions. The pedagogy was to differ from the university in that the focus was on instilling within students a lifelong love of learning by appealing to their intuitive and imaginative natures. This could best be achieved through a close, interactive relationship between student and teacher. Furthermore, there were to be no exams and grades, as students could be motivated by their own innate curiosity to learn. While the government did not immediately respond to Grundtvig's proposal, many Danes, particularly in rural areas, saw possibilities in such an approach. In 1844 the first Danish folk high school was established, and by 1867 there were more than forty such schools. (Today there are eighty-six folk high schools in Denmark continuing the tradition of alternative education.) One in particular, Askov Folk High School, provided numerous teachers who both founded and operated Danish folk high schools in America.

The competing theological understandings that informed the faith of Danish American Lutherans often inspired conflict in their communities. At the same time, many who had attended folk high schools in Denmark brought the folk high school concept to the United States. Between 1878, when the first Danish American folk high school was founded in Elk Horn, Iowa, until the late 1930s, a time that parallels the highest immigration from Denmark, seven folk high schools existed. Six were

founded by members of the Danish Church (later known as the American Evangelical Lutheran Church, or AELC) and reflected most closely Grundtvig's positions on both faith and cultural heritage. In addition to the school at Nysted, Nebraska, others operated in Elk Horn, Iowa, from 1878 to 1899; in Ashland, Michigan, from 1882 to 1888; in West Denmark, Wisconsin, for one term in 1884-85; in Tyler, Minnesota, from 1888 until the early 1930s; and in Solvang, California, from 1910 to 1931.<sup>6</sup> Only one, Brorson High School, was founded by members of the United Church (UDELC) and reflected a pietistic understanding.

#### NYSTED FOLK HIGH SCHOOL

Nysted Folk High School was organized in 1887 in the small town of Nysted, located in the center of the large Danish settlement in Howard County, Nebraska. In 1871 Danish immigrants from Waukesha County, Wisconsin, formed the Danish Land and Homestead Company and took out options to purchase 24,000 acres of Union Pacific Railroad land along the north side of the Loup River that flows through the southern part of the county.<sup>7</sup> That same year, members of the homestead company founded the towns of Dannebrog (the name of the Danish flag) and Dannevirke (named after the defensive wall that since Viking times protected Denmark from peoples to the south). Through letters and newspapers, settlers aggressively advertised the existence of this Danish colony, urging other Danes to join them on the plains of Nebraska. Growth led to the founding of Nysted ("new place" in Danish) in 1882. From 1880 through 1910, 10 percent of Howard County's population was born in Denmark, making it one of the most populated Danish counties per capita in the country.<sup>8</sup>

A letter in 1872 from P. C. Petersen (later Dannebrog's postmaster) to a newspaper in Denmark expressed the optimism community members had for the future and the natural urge to create institutions that reflected the

immigrant population. "Last year we founded here a Danish settlement, as they call it, or a Danish colony consisting of fifty families. . . . Schools and churches are going up with remarkable speed, one after another. We Danes intend to build a Danish school and gather a Danish Lutheran Church."<sup>9</sup> Already that year, Pastor Hans Hansen, who in 1884 would be a founding member and president of the Danish Evangelical Lutheran Church Association headquartered in Blair, organized the first church and established Dannebrog College. While the congregation flourished, the school lasted only two years. (Ironically, Hansen was later to play a major role in the settlement of Kenmare, North Dakota, and the founding Brorson High School.) By the turn of the century there were ten Danish Lutheran congregations in the county, reflecting both the pietistic and Grundtvigian theological positions. Given Howard County's significant Danish population and the businesses and churches they had established, the desire to establish a folk high school was natural.

Enok Mortensen, who attended Nysted Folk High School during the summer of 1921 and later taught there from 1922 to 1924, has written the most comprehensive history of the Danish folk high schools in the United States. In *Schools for Life: The Grundtvigian Schools in America*, he devoted a chapter to each of the institutions that reflected Grundtvigian spiritual and cultural understanding. A summary of his chapter on the school at Nysted, a review of selected printed materials published by the Nysted Folk High School, and accounts from letters written by members of the Nysted community underscore that the survival of these institutions depended on the devotion of individuals who were willing to sacrifice themselves for a cause in which they believed strongly.

The individual responsible for founding the Nysted Folk High School was Pastor Christian J. Skovgaard, who served as its first *forstander* or principal (for a list of Nysted Folk High School's principals, see Table 1). Newly arrived from Denmark, where he had attended

Askov Folk High School from 1884 to 1886, Skovgaard was anxious to carry on the work of the folk high schools in the new land. Called to serve St. Peder's Evangelical Lutheran Church in Nysted, he worked with other like-minded community members in 1887 to secure a place and to organize classes for a folk high school before winter descended on the plains. His plan for classes followed a schedule that had evolved at the other folk high schools in Elk Horn, Ashland, and West Denmark; a term for men began around mid-November, after the fall harvest, and lasted until early March, just before the spring planting. This made the schools attractive to young immigrant men, who were able to find work on farms throughout the rest of the year. During the winter months, when work was difficult to find, it offered them an opportunity for learning. Classes for young women were offered beginning in late May and lasting until early September. Later, in 1911, the school was to become coeducational, which contributed to increased enrollments.

Nysted Folk High School was officially established on 1 December 1887, although not without some controversy. At the opening ceremonies, one of the speakers, Niels Nielsen, or "King Niels" as he was known in the community, countered the folk school philosophy by suggesting that the school should become an American school as soon as possible, as "there was no practical advantage in learning Danish." However, a student who had come from Minnesota responded, "If this be an American school, I need not have come here all the way from Minnesota, for that kind of schools we have there, but no Danish folk schools which is what I need."<sup>10</sup> This exchange captured a tension that existed within most immigrant communities, and it continued to be a debated issue among those who were advocates for the Danish folk high school movement in America. There were students who wanted to study their Danish heritage, but many young immigrants were interested in the schools as opportunities to learn English within the context of a familiar environment. Their

TABLE 1  
PRINCIPALS  
AT NYSTED FOLK HIGH SCHOOL

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1887-90	Christian J. Skovgaard
1891-98	H. C. Strandskov
1898-1901	Thorvald Knudsen (St. Peder's, 1898-1903)
1901-6	A. Theodor Dorf (St. Peder's, 1903-6)
1906-7	No classes; school stood empty.
1907-12	Carl P. Højbjerg
1912-31	Aage Møller
1931-34	Carl P. Højbjerg

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Note: All also served as pastors of St. Peder's Evangelical Lutheran Church in Nysted, organized in 1883.

goal was to assimilate, to become Americans. Table 2 is the weekly class schedule at Nysted Folk High School in 1911. Classes in English assisted students in their efforts to assimilate.

Early enrollments were not encouraging. Only twelve students registered for the first term that ran from 1 December to 1 March, and Skovgaard continually struggled to attract students. In 1890 he gave up and accepted a call to a congregation in Iowa, leaving the congregation to retire the debts that had accrued and to identify a new leader. They called Pastor H. C. Strandskov, who had taught at the folk high school in Ashland, Michigan. Recognizing the needs of immigrant students, he initiated classes in English and American history and geography. To appeal to his Danish audience and to celebrate Grundtvig's birthday on 8 September, he established *Septemberfest*. Over a two- to three-day period, lectures, discussions, singing, and folk dancing were scheduled, much as in the American tradition of the Chautauqua movement. These innovations led to a small increase in enrollment. Between 1891 and 1894, fifty-nine men

TABLE 2

WEEKLY CLASS SCHEDULE AT NYSTED FOLK HIGH SCHOOL AFTER 1911<sup>11</sup>

	Mandag	Tirsdag	Onsdag	Torsdag	Fredag
7:45	Frokost [breakfast]	Frokost	Frokost	Frokost	Frokost
8:50	Morgensang [morning prayer]	Morgensang	Morgensang	Morgensang	Morgensang
9:00-9:40	Engelsk A Engelsk B Engelsk C	Engelsk A Engelsk B Engelsk C	Engelsk A Engelsk B Engelsk C	Engelsk A Engelsk B Engelsk C	Engelsk A Engelsk B Engelsk C
9:45-10:25	Arithm. A Arithm. B	Lecture & Discussion	Arithm. A Arithm. B	Lecture & Discussion	Arithm. A Arithm. B
10:30-11:10	Lecture & Discussion	Lecture & Discussion	Lecture & Discussion	Lecture & Discussion	Lecture & Discussion
11:15-12:00	Dansk Engelsk B Engelsk C	Dansk Engelsk B Engelsk C	Dansk Engelsk B Engelsk C	Dansk Engelsk B Engelsk C	Dansk Engelsk B Engelsk C
12:00	Middag [dinner]	Middag	Middag	Middag	Middag
1:30-2:15	Girls' Gym	Girls' Gym	Girls' Gym	Girls' Gym	Girls' Gym
2:15-3:00	Boys' Gym	Boys' Gym	Boys' Gym	Boys' Gym	Boys' Gym
3:10	Kaffe [coffee]	Kaffe	Kaffe	Kaffe	Kaffe
3:30-4:10	Lecture & Discussion	Lecture & Discussion	Lecture & Discussion	Lecture & Discussion	Lecture & Discussion
4:15-4:55	Astronomy	General Science	Astronomy	General Science	Astronomy
6:00	Aftensmad [supper]	Aftensmad	Aftensmad	Aftensmad	Aftensmad
7:15-8:15	Girls' Basketball		Boys' Basketball		Girls' Basketball
8:30-9:30	Oplæsning [group reading] Aftensang [evening song]	Oplæsning Aftensang	Oplæsning Aftensang	Torsdags- møde (meeting)	Boys' Basketball
Folkedans en Gang om Ugen [folk dancing one time a week]					

Source: *Nysted People's College* (Dannebrog, Nebr.: n.p., n.d. [1932], p. 2).

had attended the winter terms, and the participation in the September meetings was high, drawing crowds from surrounding communities and counties.

Strandskov left Nysted in 1898, largely due to his wife's illness, which was exacerbated by her many responsibilities as a pastor's wife, overseeing the household duties of both parsonage and folk high school. (The struggles of immigrant women echo Rølvaag's depiction of Beret in *Giants in the Earth* but are seldom if ever discussed in immigrant church histories.) The congregation then called Pastor Thorvald Knudsen, who had newly arrived in the United States. Like Skovgaard before him, Knudsen had studied at Askov Folk High School in Denmark, but unlike his predecessors he had also attended the University of Copenhagen, and so had broader academic preparation. Furthermore, he was a dynamic speaker with a wide range of interests, and under his leadership, according to Enok Mortensen, Nysted Folk High School experienced its "golden years."

In his book *Life in an American Denmark*, Alfred C. Nielsen, a Nysted native who later served as president of Grand View College, described Knudsen as "a handsome man . . . medium in height, with natural dignity. His personality commanded attention. He was an excellent speaker, one of the best I have ever heard. He was a leader of men and he usually got what he wanted. . . . Like Caesar, he came, he saw, he conquered."<sup>11</sup> In part Knudsen was successful because he was able to inspire and engage the young people in the community. He organized a Young People's Society and for activities gave public readings on Friday evenings (the first novel was *Ben Hur* in a Danish translation) and started a gymnastics team and a rifle club.<sup>12</sup>

During Knudsen's years at Nysted, the enrollment increased. In his first year, thirty-three students attended the winter term of 1898-99, and by 1904, a year after Knudsen's departure to lead Danebod Folk High School in Tyler, Minnesota, forty-five students were enrolled in the winter term. As a result of

increasing annual enrollments, the school buildings were remodeled and expanded, and hopes were high. In 1901 Knudsen stepped down as principal although he continued to serve St. Peder's congregation and to teach at the school until 1903. A. Theodor Dorf, a gifted scholar who was later to become a professor of Assyriology at the University of Chicago, replaced him as principal. In an effort to continue increasing enrollments, Dorf began publishing the quarterly *For Dansk-Amerikansk Højskole* (For Danish American High Schools).

In an early publication from his tenure, Dorf articulated the goals of the folk high school movement in the United States, goals that clearly echo Grundtvigian philosophy. His comments also, however, reflected an ongoing philosophical debate on the purpose of education. To the Grundtvigians, education was and should be more than preparation for an occupation.

Our school is neither a high school nor a college. To call it an academy would be more appropriate, for an academy is a name applied to any school where the higher branches of learning are taught, regardless of either curriculum or degree. Our school, then, is an academy of General Culture,—culture for culture's sake only and not for the sake of a livelihood. Its aim is to give to students, by way of lectures in history, geography, civics and literature and practice in the most necessary arts and sciences, a select acquaintance with what is best in life, and to send them back to their respective homes with a broader outlook upon life's privileges and duties. The kind of an education sought by most people to-day, and the only kind given by most schools, is the education that will give, or pretend to give, the students, when through, a good paying position. . . . We might call [our school] an Academy of Home Culture, for its aim is . . . to make [students], both morally and spiritually, better citizens and better members of the home and church circle.<sup>13</sup>





FIG. 1. *Nysted Folk High School after the 1910 remodeling.* Courtesy of the Danish Immigrant Archive, Grand View College, Des Moines, Iowa.

Despite his best efforts, Dorf was unable to imitate Knudsen's success in recruiting students. Two years after Knudsen's departure from Nysted, enrollment for the winter term of 1905-6 dropped to seventeen students. During the summer of 1906 Dorf gave up and returned to Denmark for several years. After his departure the school stood empty until the fall of 1907, when the community was able to secure the services of Carl P. Højbjerg, who had been serving as professor of theology at Grand View College and Seminary in Des Moines, Iowa.

During C. P. Højbjerg's first tenure at Nysted Folk High School (he was to return again in 1931), the school again flourished. A graduate of the University of Copenhagen, he had earned a reputation for academic excellence while teaching at Grand View College. Consequently, he was able to attract a cadre

of gifted teachers, and enrollments increased, averaging fifty men during the winter term and forty women during the summer term. To further take advantage of the facilities, Højbjerg initiated *Martsstævne* (March meeting), a weeklong session in mid-March. Modeled on the annual September meetings, the activities were church-related and appealed to members of surrounding congregations. Finally, in 1911, the school became coeducational. This resulted in sixty-eight students registering for the winter term, the highest enrollment the school had achieved. The increased activities inspired the support of the community; the buildings were renovated, a heating system was installed, and in 1910, a new wing and tower were added (see Fig. 1).

The efforts, however, of serving the congregation and operating the folk school exacted a toll, particularly on Højbjerg's wife,

Hilda, who, like so many wives, labored to support her husband's efforts. Furthermore, they had lost their oldest son, Leif, who died in the summer of 1909. In 1911 she became ill, and in an effort to regain her health, she and their remaining three children returned to Denmark in April. The following year, Højbjerg left Nysted and joined his family in Denmark. He remained there until 1915, when he returned with his family to become president of Grand View College, a position he occupied until 1925. He was, however, to return again to Nysted in 1931.

In a series of letters to his three children (among them Otto Hoiberg, emeritus professor of sociology at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln), written shortly before his death in 1953, C. P. Højbjerg remembered his first years at Nysted and the challenges they presented, particularly for his wife.

In a sense, it seems to me, the situation was somewhat akin to Paradise. . . . Whether or not we accomplished anything? I don't know. I hope so. We put forth tremendous efforts. And we sang, sang, sang—in unison, terrific! Kr. Andersen organized a chorus for part-singing. He handled Danish history, gymnastics, and singing. Ammentorp taught Danish literature. . . . Yes, we had many magnificent students. How I wish that we had photographs of them all and were familiar with their subsequent life histories. My brother Valdemar was a student one winter. . . . [He] helped the cook bake pancakes every Saturday morning. Niels Hermansen taught Mother-Hilda the art of dissecting a pig on the kitchen table (a whole pig at a time). It doesn't take long for fifty young men to consume a pig! . . . Mother-Hilda arranged for substantial and nutritious meals; and we always had competent kitchen help. She directed the whole operation with great skill; and in addition, had small children to care for. . . . Well, then Mother and [you] children departed for Denmark . . . and I followed in 1912. . . . Mother's illness was the reason; but within

two years she was much improved. . . . We could, of course, have returned to Nysted; but I simply didn't dare. Mother was unable to get the rest she needed at the Folk School; and that was the problem. If we could have had a private, quiet dwelling, I still believe we might have ventured to return to Nysted in the fall of 1912.<sup>14</sup>

After Højbjerg's departure in 1912, the congregation and local folk school committee secured the services of Rev. Aage Møller. Born in West Denmark, Wisconsin, and educated at Grand View College, he was the first American-born and -educated principal of a folk high school in this country, although he had spent some time in Denmark. Furthermore, he was to serve Nysted Folk High School for almost twenty years, longer than any other leader. This was in large measure because he was a compelling speaker and had a charming personality. According to Mortensen, who was both his student and a colleague in the early 1920s, Møller was able to engage audiences through a "mystic and almost prophetic dynamism" that made him more of a prophet than a teacher.<sup>15</sup> Additionally, Møller was interested in social justice issues and was not shy about speaking out on behalf of political forces that advocated for the poor and disenfranchised. He lectured on Upton Sinclair, supported the Socialist Eugene Debs, and was in contact with Jane Adams at Hull House in Chicago. This social activism often brought him into conflict with conservative members in the community.

With the advent of World War I, immigration from Denmark decreased dramatically. Since young Danish immigrants were a significant part of the student populations at the few folk high schools scattered across the country, all experienced declining enrollments. In addition, the war inspired a rise in American nativism and pressures for immigrant groups to assimilate, pressures that led many within the Danish American community to question the need for such schools. Møller, not surprisingly, felt differently. Writing in 1919, he argued:

[T]here are those who contend that it is useless to have a Danish school. Let me answer by saying that in as much as Nysted Folk School primarily is led by people born, and who will live and die in our country, people who feel themselves heartily at home in the great amalgamated and living society which is America, and who aim to help young people to see how fully they can realize their humanity by living in the USA, it seems to me that this school is as fully justified in calling itself an American school as any other.<sup>16</sup>

Despite nativist pressures, Møller forged ahead, believing that the folk school had a role to play in expanding the continuing educational opportunities for local community members. Lectures and reading circles were an important part of this effort. In a letter written in Danish in 1922, which has only recently come to light, Gudrun Nielsen, who with her husband had an eighty-acre dairy farm south of Nysted, described for her father, a dairy farmer in Tyler, Minnesota, a lecture she and her husband attended at the folk high school:

The other night he [Møller] spoke about a new book. . . . he then told us about an Italian woman, who has a school in Rome. Montessori. She is a doctor and has studied much. She has a school where the children hardly know they are learning . . . it's almost like a game. . . . Yes, he [Møller] has so many interesting things to tell us.<sup>17</sup>

Numerous other letters from this collection describe the school's activities and Møller's efforts to engage and improve the lives of community members. However, during the 1920s the community's population began to decline as economic and environmental conditions on the Plains deteriorated. Møller's responses to these changes were often radical and put him at odds with community members. Finally, he resigned his post both as pastor and principal in 1931. His legacy, however, is far-reaching.

Elsewhere I have discussed how he and Enok Mortensen influenced Myles Horton and the founding of Highlander Research and Education Center, an educational center modeled on the Danish folk high school movement that played a role in the civil rights movement of the 1950s and 1960s and inspired the founders of Elderhostel.<sup>18</sup>

Møller's resignation in 1931 at the height of the Great Depression left the local folk school committee in a difficult position during desperate times. They were, however, successful in persuading C. P. Højbjerg to return to Nysted. Since his departure from the school in 1912, Højbjerg had served a parish in Denmark until 1915, when he and his family returned to the United States to serve as president of Grand View College and Seminary in Des Moines. In 1925 he left this post to become pastor and principal at the congregation and folk school in Tyler, Minnesota. Perhaps Højbjerg's statement to his children referred to above, that the situation at Nysted "was akin to Paradise," explains his willingness to leave Minnesota in the midst of drought and depression. Despite his best efforts and the commitment and work of his sons Hans and Otto Hoiberg (who had anglicized the spelling of Højbjerg) and Arnold and Edith Bodtker, who were later to found the Danish American Heritage Society in 1977, Højbjerg's second tenure at Nysted was to mark the end of the Danish folk high school experience on the Great Plains.

Arriving in Nysted in 1931, Højbjerg threw himself into raising money and recruiting students for the school. His passionate advocacy for the folk high school approach reflected both his Lutheran and Grundtvigian heritage. Writing in Danish, Højbjerg addressed skeptics within the Danish American community.

Many complain that the folk high schools do not send forth from their lecture halls, doctors, lawyers, engineers, and others of similar position. For almost a hundred years now, those who advocate for the folk high schools answer: Could we but send

forth individuals fully awakened to their humanity. . . . These individuals have greater value than the professional. . . . It is well enough to be educated for a vocation . . . but there is a vocation that is common to all of us, the call to be fully alive as human beings. . . . It is nothing to be born into the world as a child with eyes, ears and all our limbs as Luther says. It is something infinitely greater. Life is God's gift to each and every one of us. . . . [W]e ask accordingly: has anyone ever noted among any people or within any land the phenomenon that a man has had courage and faith enough to call all the nation's young people to attend a "school for life"?<sup>19</sup>

Advertisements run in Danish American newspapers and the college catalogs of 1932-33 and 1933-34 reflect the social and economic challenges Højbjerg and the school faced. Not the least was assimilation. In an attempt to identify with a population that now included second- and third-generation Danish Americans, few who spoke Danish, the school was renamed the Nysted People's College, and English was the language of the classroom. Only Højbjerg continued to deliver the main lecture of the day in Danish. The curriculum, too, reflected the times. Social welfare and economic issues, topics that Aage Møller had championed, dominated the 1932-33 catalog. Among the issues scheduled for consideration were "Capitalism, Socialism and Communism," "The Causes of World War," "The Future of Farming," "Science and Religion," and "The Role of the Negro in American Civilization."<sup>20</sup> Tuition and room and board, which had steadily increased over the 1920s, were lowered to \$80 for the winter term that extended from 1 December 1932 through 1 March 1933. This was done, according to Hans Hoiberg, "not with the intention of 'underbidding' other educational institutions, but because it is a matter of life and death to us; a reduction in tuition is . . . a superior policy to a reduction in the size of the student body."<sup>21</sup> It was not enough, and when tuition for the

next year was increased to \$100, too few students enrolled. The 1933-34 term was canceled, and the school was officially closed in 1934.

C. P. Højbjerg and his wife left Nysted in 1936 for the last time, returning to Denmark, where he served a parish until his retirement in 1942 and where he died in 1953. At his request, his ashes were returned to Nebraska and interred in the Nysted Cemetery. For a time, members of St. Peder's Lutheran Church attempted to sponsor retreats, using the folk high school buildings that were rapidly falling into disrepair. Finally, the property was sold to the Western Conference of Evangelical Wesleyan, a breakaway Methodist group who continues to use the site several weeks each summer for church camps.

#### BRORSON HIGH SCHOOL

The history of Brorson High School and Danish settlement in North Dakota parallels the story of earlier settlement on the Nebraska prairies. While the Danish community in Howard County resulted from the efforts of the secular Danish Land and Homestead Company of Waukesha, Wisconsin, the North Dakota settlement represented the only formal attempt by the United Church to establish a colony. It was led by Pastor Hans Hansen, the same man who had organized congregations in Howard County and founded Dannebrog College, and who later served as president of the Blair Church until the formation of the United Church in 1896. During the annual convention of the Blair Church in 1895, delegates discussed the high cost of land in established communities and the difficulties faced by recent immigrants and second-generation members of the church in finding affordable farms. Establishing a colony would provide economic possibilities for church members while creating new mission opportunities, and so official action was taken to establish a "Colonization Committee."<sup>22</sup> Hansen, who was serving a well-established parish in Hutchinson, Minnesota, volunteered to lead an exploratory

trip to western North Dakota, where the Soo Railroad Company was constructing a line northwest to the Canadian prairie and where both homestead and railroad land were available.

In the summer of 1896, Hansen and twelve other church members traveled to Kenmare, North Dakota, a newly platted community along the railroad line, sixty miles northwest of Minot and twenty miles south of the Canadian border. There they homesteaded on land northwest of Kenmare, and on 14 October 1896, organized the first Danish Lutheran congregation in North Dakota, Trinity Lutheran Church.<sup>23</sup> Shortly thereafter, congregations were established in the nearby communities of Bowbells and Flaxton. Census records indicate rapid growth. In 1890 there were six Danish-born inhabitants in Ward County in which Kenmare was located. By 1900 this number had swelled to 485, and there were more than 1,000 inhabitants of Danish heritage. In 1910, Burke County, which lay adjacent to Ward County and included the towns of Bowbells and Flaxton, was organized. The 1910 census indicated that Burke County had 303 Danish-born inhabitants and Ward County 441.<sup>24</sup> Rapid growth in settlement created the need for additional congregations and a school. A church building for Trinity Lutheran Church was dedicated in 1900, and by the following year five additional congregations had been organized in the area extending north to Flaxton.

In 1901 Pastor Hansen organized the school that was to become Brorson High School. During the first winters, classes were held in the parsonage and then in an addition to the church. As in the folk high school at Nysted, Hansen's purpose was initially to provide education to the many young men who had come to the area to work on the farms. However, both young men and women from the area also attended. Henry N. Hansen, who was later ordained and served parishes in the United Church, described attending the school. His narrative provides insight into the conditions under which teachers and students labored and the school's religious tone.

During the winter months of 1903-04, I attended a school conducted by our pastor. It was in a room built to the east end of Trinity church. This was used as classroom. Miss A. (Arildsen) from C.F. (Cedar Falls, Iowa) was our teacher. She taught the elementary subjects, while the pastor taught Danish grammar, reading and church history as well as religion. Here for the first time in my life, I heard the Catechism taught in the English language. . . . Miss A. did a blessed work among the young people in our church. Indeed it was "rough" material. Most of us had but very little schooling. I remember her fine christian spirit. Her heart burned for the salvation of our souls. She organized a choir. Many of the old danish hymns became familiar thru her efforts.<sup>25</sup>

By 1905 it was clear there was need for a building to house the school. In the spring of that year, members of what was now the North Dakota District of the United Church successfully raised \$7,000 in cash and subscriptions, and a three-story wood framed building was completed in time for the beginning of the winter term of 1905, when fifty students were enrolled.<sup>26</sup> In the basement was a kitchen, dining room, and furnace room with coal-fired steam heat. On the main floor were classrooms, a large hall, and an apartment for the principal. The second and third floors provided residential space for forty students.<sup>27</sup> Since the school terms lasted from mid-November through mid-March, the building was used for other meetings and courses the rest of the year. In 1906 and 1912 the United Church held its annual conventions at the school, suggesting the importance the school and the North Dakota District had already come to play in the larger church body (see Fig. 2).

The school was officially named Brorson High School at the time of its dedication in 1905. Pastor P. M. Petersen, Hansen's colleague who served the congregation in Flaxton, had suggested the school be named for Hans Adolph Brorson, a Danish bishop and hymn





FIG. 2. Delegates to the sixteenth annual convention of the United Danish Evangelical Lutheran Church in 1912 at Brorson High School. Courtesy of the Danish Immigrant Museum, Elk Horn, Iowa.

writer who lived in Denmark from 1694 to 1764.<sup>28</sup> Brorson, who had served as bishop of Ribe, a diocese on the west coast of the Jutland peninsula, had been influenced by seventeenth-century German pietism. As Grundtvig's thought and belief clearly influenced teaching at the folk high schools, Brorson's hymns and published sermons inspired the pietist tendencies of the United Church. The fact that the name of the school did not include the word "folk," though the curricular model was similar, suggests again the deep division between Grundtvigians and pietists. Members of the United Church believed that the folk high schools focused too much on contemporary issues and the "folk" aspects of Danish culture to the detriment of Bible study and developing a deep personal faith. Table 3

lists the enrollments and principals of Brorson High School during the years of its existence.

Among those who played a seminal role in teaching, attracting students to the school, and fund-raising was Jens Dixen, a tile layer, lay preacher, and missionary (see Fig. 3). Dixen, who had been born in 1858 in a part of southern Jutland that came under Prussian influence after the Dano-Prussian War of 1864 and was not returned to Denmark until 1920, had immigrated to Denmark in 1875 to avoid military service in the Prussian army. In 1880 he immigrated to the United States, finally settling near Coulter, Iowa, in 1881. On first arriving in the United States, Dixen had joined the Danish Church, which, as explained above, reflected Grundtvigian theology. However, in 1884, at a revival meeting at which a

TABLE 3

## ANNUAL ENROLLMENTS AND PRINCIPALS AT BRORSON HIGH SCHOOL

Year	Enrollment	Principal
1901-2	Unreported	Hans Hansen
1902-3	15	Hans Hansen
1903-4	Unreported	Hans Hansen
1904-5	Unreported	Hans Hansen
1905-6	50	Jens Dixen (manager/teacher)
1906-7	Unreported	Jens Dixen (manager/teacher)
1907-8	Unreported	J.P. Nielsen
1908-9	22	J.P. Nielsen
1909-10	47	J.J. Kildsig (Jens Dixen, manager/teacher)
1910-11	44	J.J. Kildsig (Jens Dixen, manager/teacher)
1911-12	Unreported	J.J. Kildsig (Jens Dixen, manager/teacher)
1912-13	49	J.J. Kildsig (Jens Dixen, manager/teacher)
1913-14	37	J.J. Kildsig (Jens Dixen, manager/teacher)
1914-15	44	C.E. Nielsen
1915-16	38	J.A. Larsen
1916-17	19	J.A. Larsen
1917-19	Closed due to the war and poor harvests.	
1919-20	27	J. Knudsen
1920-21	No classes for lack of principal.	
1921-22	No classes for lack of principal. (James Lund was to serve as principal.)	

Note: All the principals except for Jens Dixen also served as pastors of Trinitatis [Trinity] Lutheran Church in rural Kenmare. Organized in 1896, the congregation was the first Danish Lutheran church organized in North Dakota.

Source: *Beretninger om Den forenede danske evangelisk-lutherske Kirke's Aarsmød* (Annual reports of the United Danish Evangelical Lutheran Church) (Blair, Nebr.: Danish Lutheran Publishing House, 1901-22).

young Swedish minister preached on the text "Ye must be born again," Dixen experienced a reawakening. In a passage from his diary that is reminiscent of Martin Luther's decision to enter the priesthood, he described that on the way home from this meeting in the midst of

lightning and thunder, he heard his calling. Though he had received no formal education beyond the parish school in Roibøl, he began reading widely, particularly the writings of P. C. Trandberg, a Danish immigrant seminary professor who was a fervent advocate of the

pietist stance. Through Trandberg, Dixen was also exposed to the writings of Søren Kierkegaard, who influenced him and whom he was often later to quote both in his speaking and writing.<sup>29</sup> This reawakening also led Dixen to leave the Danish Church and join the United Church, largely due to its emphasis on mission work. Beginning in 1889 Dixen would spend the winters traveling to Danish American communities to preach. Ultimately this led to church-supported missionary trips in 1903 and from 1907 to 1909, when Dixen circled the globe, preaching to Danes who had settled in South Africa, India, Australia, and New Zealand. In 1929, after years of traveling, Dixen returned to Denmark, where he died on 12 January 1931.<sup>30</sup>

Between 1901 and 1914, however, Kenmare, North Dakota, was the center of Dixen's life and work. In 1901 he left Coulter, Iowa, to homestead in the community that Pastor Hans Hansen and other members of the United Church had founded. Here, during the winters, he assisted Hansen in teaching, and from 1905 to 1907 and again from 1909 to 1914, he taught and managed Brorson High School. That Dixen was a powerful presence in student lives is clear from Henry N. Hansen's description of him.

The influence of Dixen on us students was tremendous. He led us into the Word of God. He could tell Bible Stories as no one else. He also told of his travels. He had visited most of the Lutheran Mission fields. Missionary characters were made alive to us. He also taught us Danish composition. He was a many sided man. A hard worker indeed, a ditch digger from Iowa. He kept us spellbound, when he preached and lectured. We all loved him, yet we were a bit fearful at times, he might become too personal. His eyes could penetrate into the innermost parts of our being. And he could talk to us personally about Jesus and our relationship to Him. He had an austere personality, yet when we learned to know



FIG. 3. *Jens Dixen*. Courtesy of the Danish Immigrant Museum, Elk Horn, Iowa.

him better, he became a real pal full of fun. We young people took to him.<sup>31</sup>

Brorson High School flourished from 1905 to 1916, and especially during those years when Dixen was present. In 1908, while he was away on one of his missionary trips, enrollment slipped to twenty-two students, but on his return enrollment figures once again climbed. Between 1909 and 1914 the principal of Brorson High School was Pastor Jens Jensen Kildsig. In many ways, Kildsig and Dixen were kindred spirits. Kildsig, who immigrated to America in 1878, had studied at the seminary operated by the pietist P. C. Trandberg, whose writings had influenced Dixen.<sup>32</sup> Together, and with the assistance of a number of young teachers, these two men were to shape the lives of



many young men who were to become pastors within the United Church.

It is clear from the curriculum that the Bible and biblical authority were stressed at Brorson High School. Henrik Bredmose Simonsen, in his study *Kampen om Danskheden* (The Struggle over Danish Cultural Identity), rightly characterizes Brorson more as a Bible school than as a folk school in the Grundtvigian tradition, since greater emphasis was placed on evangelism and inspiring an active Christian life.<sup>33</sup> And yet student letters suggest that the curriculum also focused on traditional academic subjects as well. Ethan Mengers, who was to become a professor at Trinity Seminary in Blair (the only seminary of the United Church) and later, after the 1960 merger forming the American Lutheran Church, at Wartburg Theological Seminary in Dubuque, Iowa, was a student at Brorson during the 1913-14 winter term. Writing to his sister in February, he described his classes: "Yesterday and today there have been mission meetings here. Fridays I have Danish that includes reading, composition, grammar, as well as vocabulary and spelling. I also have church history before that. I also took gymnastics. Next week I have penmanship and music as well as all the lectures, devotions, etc."<sup>34</sup> Noteworthy is the fact that while gymnastics was a part of the curriculum, there was no folk dancing, which a student could expect to find at the Grundtvigian-inspired folk high schools. It is one of those details that suggests the reason Danish American Lutherans referred to the Grundtvigians as the "dancing" or "happy" Danes, while the members of the United Church were called the "praying" or "holy" Danes.

Despite the departure of both Kildsig and Dixon in 1914, the school continued to do well for two years. However, in 1916 conditions began to deteriorate in large measure due to weather in the Great Plains. Brief entries in the annual church reports tell the story. "Brorson High School student enrollment was not as large during the winter of 1916-1917 as it was accustomed to being and this was no doubt due to the poor harvest and the hail-

storms in the North Dakota District last year."<sup>35</sup>

"Brorson High School has been closed this year (1917-1918) because of the war and poor harvest. When it can open again is difficult to say."<sup>36</sup> As World War I drew to an end, plans were made to reopen, but they came to nothing until December 1919. Pastor Jens Knudsen wrote what was to become the school's final report.

After Brorson High School on account of the war had been closed for two years, the District decided to open the school and have it open for 13 weeks. The school opened on the 1st of December 1919, and held classes until the 1st of March 1920. Due to the poor harvest in this area last year, many students could not afford to attend. Counting the music students who all do not live at the school, there were 27 students. We had three teachers at the school. Mr. Oscar Petersen, Miss M. Gissel, and Miss Hedvig Knudsen. Oscar Petersen and Miss Knudsen taught the general English school subjects; Petersen also taught mission history and gymnastics. Miss M. Gissel taught singing and music. I have taught Bible history . . . and Bible study two hours daily; I also gave 35 lectures over church history, Bible history and mission history as well as ethics. . . . The school is without debt and despite the difficult times, financial expectations are good.<sup>37</sup>

Contrary to Knudsen's hopeful words, Brorson High School did not open the next year for lack of a principal, and though the North Dakota District appointed Pastor James Lund to serve in that position for the 1921-22 term, "due to pressing times too few students enrolled to open the school."<sup>38</sup> The inability to open the school resulted finally in the sale of the building to the Trinity congregation for parish use. As the economic depression that began in rural areas during the mid-1920s gripped the Northern Plains, the once-proud symbol of the North Dakota District stood vacant, and in 1941 it was torn down.<sup>39</sup> In its

nearly twenty years of existence, however, almost 500 students had attended Brorson High School. Twenty-five of these students went on to be ordained and served the United Church as ministers and three became missionaries, serving in Africa.<sup>40</sup> The spiritual ideals that had inspired the school were carried on in the work of these students.

Among former members of the two Danish Lutheran synods, the memories of Nysted Folk High School and Brorson High School loom large. At annual meetings held at Danebod Folk School in Tyler, Minnesota, and in Solvang, California, individuals still gather who had family who attended the Nysted Folk High School. During the summer of 2003 at the annual reunion of members of the United Church, held at Wartburg Theological Seminary in Dubuque, Iowa, the program focused on Jens Dixen and Brorson High School. But this group of individuals is rapidly dwindling.

These two schools were hopeful attempts by Danish immigrants to establish institutions in the Great Plains where their young people could grow in knowledge of their faith and cultural heritage. Despite the hard work of dedicated teachers, pastors, and community members, environmental forces and pressures on succeeding generations to assimilate were too great. With the close of Brorson High School in 1920 and Nysted Folk High School in 1934, the Great Plains, that she-monster of Ole Rølvaag's novel *Giants in the Earth*, had claimed the blood of two more victims.

## NOTES

1. At the time of their merger with other Lutheran synods in the early 1960s, three histories were written examining the experiences of Danish Lutheran immigrants in the United States. These are Paul C. Nyholm, *The Americanization of the Danish Lutheran Churches in America* (Copenhagen: Institute for Church History, 1963); John M. Jensen, *The United Evangelical Lutheran Church: An Interpretation* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, 1964); and Enok Mortensen, *The Danish Lutheran Church in America: The History and Heritage of the American Evangelical Lutheran Church* (Philadelphia: Lutheran Church of America Board

of Publications, 1967). The most recent Danish study is Henrik Bredmose Simonsen, *Kampen om Danskheden: Tro og nationalitet i de danske kirkesamfund i Amerika* (Aarhus, Denmark: Aarhus Universitetsforlag, 1990). For brief English summaries of Hanne Sanders's Swedish dissertation treating the socioeconomic status of Danish pietists, see John R. Christianson, "Danish Emigrants: Winners or Losers?" *The Bridge* 22, no. 1-2 (1999): 22-41, and Hanne Sanders, "Peasant Revivalism and Secularization: Protestant Popular Culture in Denmark and Sweden, 1820-1850" (a dissertation summary), *The Bridge* 22, no. 1-2 (1999): 42-50.

2. Jensen, *ibid.*, p. 9.

3. Comprehensive introductions to the life and work of N. F. S. Grundtvig are available in Hal Koch, *N. F. S. Grundtvig* (Copenhagen: Gyldendal, 1959), and P. H. Traustedt, *Dansk litteratur historie* (Copenhagen: Politiken, 1967). English studies, including a bibliography in English, can be found in N. F. S. Grundtvig: *Tradition and Renewal: Grundtvig's Vision of Man and People, Education and the Church in Relation to World Issues Today* (Copenhagen: Det danske Selskab, 1983), and *Grundtvig's Ideas in North America: Influences and Parallels* (Copenhagen: Det danske Selskab, 1983).

4. Holger Begtrup, *Det danske Folks Historie i det 19 Aarhundrede*, 2d ed. (Copenhagen: n.p., 1916), p. 314, quoted in Mortensen, *Danish Lutheran Church in America* (note 1 above), p. 12.

5. English translations of many of Grundtvig's writings on education and his proposal to the government for a revision in the curriculum at Sorø Academy can be found in Harold Judd Alford's "A History of Residential Adult Education" (Ph.D. diss., University of Chicago, 1966), pp. 321-417.

6. Enok Mortensen, who attended Nysted Folkehøjskole, taught at several folk high schools and was responsible for renovating Danebod Folk High School in Tyler, Minnesota, has written extensively on the Danish folk school movement in the United States. See Enok Mortensen, *Schools for Life: The Grundtvigian Schools in America* (Askov, Minn. Danish-American Heritage Society, 1977); *Danish Lutheran Church in America* (note 1 above), pp. 84-89; and "Grundtvig's Influence on American Education" in *Grundtvig's Ideas in North America* (note 3 above), pp. 122-31. For an early Danish summary of the folk high school experience in America, written to commemorate the twenty-fifth anniversary of the founding of the first school in Elk Horn, Iowa, and including description of the school at Nysted, see A. Bobjerg, *De danske Højskoler i Amerika: 1878-1903* (Kolding, Denmark: Konrad Jørgensens Bogtrykkeri, n.d.).

7. For the most recent and extensive treatment of this period in the establishment of Danish com-

munities in Howard County, see Torben Grøngaard Jeppesen, *Dannebrog på den amerikanske prærie*. Fynske Studier 19. (Odense, Denmark: Odense By Museer, 2000), pp. 111-35. A brief overview of settlement in Nebraska can be found in George R. Nielsen, *The Danish Americans* (Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1981), pp. 136-41.

8. Inter-university Consortium for Political and Social Research. *United States Historical Census Data Browser*. Database online. Updated 2 January 2003; retrieved 26 January 2003, <http://fisher.lib.virginia.edu/census/>.

9. Frederick Hale, *Danes in North America* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1984), pp. 37-38.

10. Mortensen, *Schools for Life* (note 6 above), p. 58.

11. Alfred C. Nielsen, *Life in an American Denmark* (Askov, Minn.: American Publishing Co., 1962), p. 85.

12. Nielsen, *ibid.*, pp. 86-87.

13. *Højskolen for den Dansk-Amerikanske Ungdom* (Nysted, Nebr.: n.p., n.d. [1902]), p. 5. Located in envelope "Nysted I" of the Danish Immigrant Archive, Grand View College, Des Moines, Iowa.

14. Extensive excerpts of these letters were translated by Otto Hoiberg, C. P.'s youngest son, who shared them with the Centennial Committee for publication in their centennial history of St. Peder's Lutheran Church in Nysted. Otto G. Hoiberg, "The Højbjerg Years at Nysted: 1907-1912," in *St. Peder's Evangelical Lutheran Church, 1883-1983* (Cairo, Nebr.: Record Printing Co., 1983), pp. 26-29.

15. Mortensen, *Schools for Life* (note 6 above), p. 69.

16. Quoted in Mortensen, *ibid.*, p. 71.

17. Gudrun Hansen Nielsen, letter to her father, 14 May 1922, Collection CHH-2002, Box 1, Packet 2, Letter 10, Danish Immigrant Archive, Dana College, Blair, Nebr.

18. For discussions on the relationship between the Danish folk high school movement, other folk schools, and Elderhostel, see John Mark Nielsen, "Tracing Threads: N. F. S. Grundtvig, the Danish Folk High School Movement, and the Elderhostel Experience," in *Nordics in America: The Future of Their Past*, ed. Odd S. Lovoll (Northfield, Minn.: Norwegian-American Historical Association, 1993.), pp. 37-46; and Myles Horton, "Influences on Highlander Research and Education Center, New Market Tennessee, USA," Mortensen, "Grundtvig's Influence on American Education," and K. Patricia Cross, "Threads of Grundtvig in the Fabric of Adult Education in the United States," all in *Grundtvig's Ideas in North America* (note 3 above), pp. 17-31, 122-32, and 157-61.

19. *Nysted People's College* (Dannebrog, Nebr.: n.p., n.d. [1932]), n.p. (3-4). Located in envelope "Nysted I" of the Danish Immigrant Archive, Grand View College, Des Moines, Iowa.

20. *Ibid.*, pp. (10-11).

21. *Ibid.*, pp. (8-9).

22. George R. Nielsen, *The Danish Americans* (Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1981), p. 147.

23. Kirsten and Knud Madsen, *Han Sled Bibler Som Sko: Bogen om Jens Diken og hans landsmænd i det fjerne* (Copenhagen: Forlaget Savanne, 1995), pp. 32-33, and Jensen, *United Evangelical Lutheran Church* (note 1 above), pp. 136-37.

24. Inter-university Consortium, *US Census Data Browser* (note 8 above).

25. Henry N. Hansen, *Memoir*, typewritten manuscript, Collection HNH-992, Box 1, chap. 3, p. 2), Danish Immigrant Archive, Dana College, Blair, Nebr.

26. Jens Diken, "Brev fra Jens Diken," *Luthersk Ugeblad* 10, no. 48 (25 November 1930): 6.

27. "Brorson Højskole," in *Danske i Amerika*, vol. 2 (Minneapolis: C. Rasmussen Co., 1907-16), pp. 143-44.

28. Diken, "Jens Diken" (note 26 above), p. 6.

29. Madsen, *Han Sled Bibler Som Sko* (note 23 above), pp. 11, 21-23.

30. Madsen, *ibid.*, pp. 178-79.

31. Hansen, *Memoir* (note 25 above), p. 3.

32. Jensen, *United Evangelical Lutheran Church* (note 1 above), pp. 286-87.

33. Henrik Bredmose Simonsen, *Kampen om Danskheden: Tro og nationalitet i det danske kirkesamfund i Amerika* (Aarhus, Denmark: Aarhus Universitetsforlag, 1990.), pp. 130-31.

34. Ethan Mengers, letter to his sister, 19 February 1914, Collection HAN-988, Box 28, Packet 2, Letter 34, Danish Immigrant Archive, Dana College, Blair, Nebr.

35. *Beretning om Den forenede danske evangelisk-lutherske Kirke's enogtyvende Aarsmøde*. 1917, p. 66. (Reports of the Annual Meetings of the Danish Evangelical Lutheran Church) (Blair, Nebr.: Danish Lutheran Publishing House).

36. *Beretning om Den forenede danske evangelisk-lutherske Kirke's toogtyvende Aarsmøde*, 1918, p. 17.

37. J. Knudsen, "Indberetning fra Brorson Højskole," in *Beretning om Den forenede danske evangelisk-lutherske Kirke's fireogtyvende Aarsmøde*, 1920, p. 84.

38. *Beretning om Den forenede danske evangelisk-lutherske Kirke's seksogtyvende Aarsmøde*, 1922, p. 29.

39. Madsen, *Han Sled Bibler Som Sko* (note 24 above), p. 54.

40. Diken, "Jens Diken" (note 26 above), p. 7, and Jensen, *United Evangelical Lutheran Church* (note 1 above), p. 136.