

Danish Immigrant Homes: Glimpses from Southwestern Minnesota

Et Glimt Af Danske Immigrant Hjem I Det Sydvestlige Minnesota



March 9 – April 25, 1986

**Goldstein Gallery
Department of Design, Housing, and Apparel
University of Minnesota
St. Paul, Minnesota**

July 6, 11-13, 1986

**Danebod Folk School Gym Hall
Tyler, Minnesota**

ERRATA:

Page 56 FGG Board of Directors

Areen Carlson --- should read, Arleen Carlson

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Margot Siegel, Past President, Founder GG --- should read,
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**Danebod Folk School Gym Hall
Tyler, Minnesota**

**Guest Curator and Exhibition Designer:
Signe T. Nielsen Betsinger**

**Consultant:
Timothy Trent Blade**

Lenders to the Exhibition

Walentyna Andersen
Ansgar and Julia Bollesen
Rigmor Christensen
Niels and Ethel Dam
Larry and Katherine De Boer
Elisa Duus
Hjarne and Margaret Duus
Herluf and Laura Faaborg
Carl T. and Edna Hansen
Lenore S. Hansen
Orval and Hilda Hansen
Genevieve Jorgensen Hicks
Karl M. Holm
Martha Holm
Sigurd Holm (deceased)
Sigrid Jacobsen
Dagny Jensen
Hazel Jensen
Signe Jensen (deceased)
Volmer and Anna Jensen
Eilif and Marion Johansen
Ove and Elizabeth Johansen
Oliver R. Johnsen
Jens Jorgensen
L. W. Klein
Glenn Krog
Selma Krog
Audrey Kuhn
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Robert and Marjorie Linnett
Merlin Lustfield
Harald and Margaret Madsen
John and Olga Opfell
Harald Petersen
Medora Petersen
Herluf and Marian Ries
Harold Simonsen
Carl and Dorothy Sorensen
Clara Sorensen
Ellen Sorensen
Elmer and Anita Sorensen
Helge and Muriel Thomsen
Darrell and Janice Thomsen
Deborah Utoft
Mildred Utoft
Rudolph and Lucille Utoft

Gallery Hours:

Monday through Friday
8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Sunday
1:00 p.m. to 4:30 p.m.

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Poster and catalogue cover photo: Kronborg, the Laurits and Anna Petersen house; built 1898.

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Joanne B. Eicher
Margaret P. Grindereng
Signe T. Nielsen Betsinger
Timothy Trent Blade
Patrick Redmond*
Michele Barker*
Irena Minciel-Waligóra*
Pam Nierengarten, Volunteer
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Elsie Hansen

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Foreword

“Danish Immigrant Homes: Glimpses from Southwestern Minnesota” is a sequel to Signe T. Nielsen Betsinger’s doctoral study of the late 1960s, in which she studied a Danish community in southwestern Iowa. By interviewing elderly residents, analyzing old photographs, poring over newspapers from the late 1800s and early 1900s, and photographing existing furnishings, she studied the homes of the early immigrants and noted the transfer of material culture that had continued well beyond the mid-twentieth century.

Although much has been written about the social, political, and religious aspects of Danish communities in the United States, Signe Betsinger has been the first to focus on the homes. (To her delight, Thomas Carter of the Utah State Historical Society has recently initiated a study of the homes of Danish Mormons in the Utah area. The two researchers are finding similar characteristics in the structure of the houses.)

During the last six years Signe Betsinger resumed her interest in immigrant homes and focused her study on the area in and around Tyler, Minnesota. She points out that she was fifteen years too late to have personal interviews with the early pioneers or to capture the kind of visual record that still existed in 1970. With the exception of talking to a few nonagenarians, recording first-hand accounts from the late 1880s and early 1890s was impossible. When asked why she has pursued this study, she said: "I am not sure why I have felt driven to continue the study of Danish immigrant homes. It is perhaps not for a single reason, but rather for several. I believe strongly that homes reflect the culture and nature of those who live in them and reveal what is important and what is insignificant in their lives. I have thought it better to capture what history I could than to let it slip away unrecorded. Also, my work with the building of The Danish Immigrant Museum in Iowa has spurred me on to encourage others to recognize the importance of documenting everyday life. And finally, perhaps because I have no extended family in the United States, I vicariously become part of the families I study. My cultural background is the same as theirs, and, through them, I have a sense of being part of the stream of history."

The purpose of this exhibit, planned to coincide with the Danebod Folk School Centennial in Tyler, is to let us appreciate how the first Danish immigrants to this area lived and how they handled the challenges of providing shelter for themselves and their families. The objects for the exhibit document what the Danish immigrants had in their homes, either by choice or out of necessity, and illustrate their ingenuity in building and furnishing homes in a desolate area. This catalogue is intended to serve both as a research document after the exhibit closes and as an explanatory document during the exhibition tour.

We thank the Tyler residents and their relatives and friends in other states, near and far, who contributed information, shared photographs, and lent artifacts, and the officials who helped locate public records. Without their cooperation it would not have been possible to mount this exhibit. We also thank the Minnesota Agricultural Experiment Station for its support of this project and Dr. Betsinger for her contribution to our students and the community in expanding our knowledge of Danish heritage through a study of Danish homes, interiors, and household objects.

Joanne B. Eicher
Director
Goldstein Gallery

Introduction

During the nineteenth century, many of the Danish immigrants who had settled in America dreamed of living in a new Danish colony. In the 1880s, Lincoln County, Minnesota, was a place where this dream became reality. To learn how the immigrants lived and fared in the almost untouched land of southwestern Minnesota, I have, during the past six years, visited with the elderly in and around Lake Benton and Tyler who remember their youth and the stories their parents told them, and I have read poignant accounts of personal and family histories that individuals had the foresight to write. Because pioneer life in any area is reflected in the homes, I have sought to capture the material culture of family dwellings.

I have selected twenty-eight houses that illustrate the kinds of dwellings in which the early immigrants lived. From interviewing mainly elderly residents, studying old photographs, and reading personal histories and newspapers from the late 1800s, I have identified twenty-two houses that clearly were built for the Danes themselves. The other six were probably built for others before they were rented or purchased by the immigrants. I have divided the houses into two eras, 1885 to 1896 and 1897 to 1930 because there was a shift to larger and more elaborate structures at the turn of the century. For each house, I sought objects that had been used in it and tried to identify the carpenter who built it. In most cases, through descendants of the immigrants, I was able to match up household furnishings or decorative objects with the houses.

What I present here are only glimpses, however, because so much of the story of the Danish pioneer home has been lost — lost partly because the pioneers took with them to their graves irretrievable stories of how they lived and worked and played, partly because the generations that followed had to get rid of the old things to make way for the new, and partly because some of us who should have recognized that significant history was slipping away unrecorded didn't act quickly enough.

Fortunately, in this centennial year of the Danebod settlement in Tyler, we can still find vestiges of those early days. This catalogue, which serves as a guide to the exhibition "Danish Immigrant Homes: Glimpses from Southwestern Minnesota," focuses on a tri-township area and pays particular attention to design characteristics that the settlers brought from their homeland.

The exhibition is a series of vignettes integrating photographs of the houses and the artifacts that were used in them. The groupings are by families, shown in chronological order. The viewers will see that the formal balance of the windows and front door on the exteriors, which carries with it a touch of the nineteenth century Danish house, rapidly gives way to the asymmetrically balanced Victorian design characteristics seen all over the Midwest. Little of the furniture is distinctly Danish, but the arrangement of household furnishings, the emphasis on needlework, and the use of many pictures and decorative objects on the walls reflect a Danish design heritage that continues even today.

The narrative includes excerpts from personal accounts written by people who have lived or visited the houses. By noting what they described in prose or poetry, the reader senses what was important to the immigrant and particu-

larly what role women played in establishing homes and preserving material culture.

The catalogue of the exhibition lists brief descriptions keyed to the houses discussed in the narrative.

The Beginnings

The development of Danebod, a Danish colony, was precipitated when the Danish Evangelical Lutheran Church of America purchased land from the Winona and St. Peter Railroad Company.¹ The church appointed a committee, called the Land Selection Committee for the Danish Church, to locate an appropriate setting for a new colony. Pastor F. L. Grundtvig, who headed the committee, negotiated the transaction which opened opportunities for land purchase in an area reminiscent of Denmark. The agreement with the railroad, which was made in 1884 with the land agent A. Bojsen, carried with it the provision that for three years the land that lay in Diamond Lake, Hope, and Marshfield townships could be sold only to Danish people. Furthermore, if 12,000 acres were sold, 240 acres would be donated for churches and schools.²

News of this opportunity to buy land spread by word of mouth and by the limited Danish-American press. *Dannevirke*, a Danish newspaper published in Cedar Falls, Iowa, served as an important source of news about settlers as widely scattered Danish colonies sprang up in the United States. In an early September issue in 1886, Grundtvig wrote that approximately 270 Danes had purchased land in Lincoln County; of these, about 50 had settled on the prairie, whereas others had chosen the towns of Tyler and Lake Benton. Some had had difficulty in locating water, he noted, but it seemed to be ample at a depth of twenty to twenty-five feet.³

Grundtvig, who was enamored of what he called “the high hills and big lake” at Lake Benton, came to love the prairie. In his article about the new colony in Minnesota he further wrote: “Og jeg kom til at holde af den bølgeformede egn med den vide Udsigt. Det er mærkeligt, hvor meget den minder om Danmark.” (And I came to love the gently rolling landscape with the wide open view. It is strange how much it reminds me of Denmark.) Torn between wanting the prairie to remain untouched and wanting to see new farms established, he deplored that the plowing of fields disturbed wildflowers and birds. He continued: “Prærien er endnu rig paa Præriehøns, og Præriesneppen, der minder om Hjejlen hjemme, gjennemkrydser Luften med sin bævrende Fløjtetone for at drage Opmærksomheden bort fra Rede og Æg. Og der findes en rigtig Lærke. Den er lidt mindre en Lærken i Danmark, men den har slet ikke saa lidt af dens jublende Sang. Ved Husene ser man Svalen ‘med Saksen i Halen,’ som bygger paa Loft og i Lade. Rigest er dog Fuglelivet i Moser og Sø’r.” (The prairie is still rich with prairie chickens, and the prairie snipe, which is similar to the golden plover at home, fills the air with the trill of its flute-like song. Near houses the swallows, with their “scissor tails,” build nests in attics and barns. Richest though is the birdlife in swamps and lakes.)⁴

L. P. Lange, who had arrived in Lincoln County in April of 1886, also reported to *Dannevirke* in September. He noted

that several homes had been built. Sod had been broken and flax had been planted up until mid-June. It grew well despite the dry weather. And, though the length of the straw on other small grain was short, wheat yielded eighteen to twenty bushels per acre, oats thirty, and barley thirty-six. Danes were continuing to move into the area, and Lange predicted that if the rate continued to be what it had been that summer eventually they would have a little Denmark.⁵

Establishing a little Denmark was not without religious and sectarian difficulties. Grundtvig, cognizant of his responsibility as a member of the Land Selection Committee, publicly alerted the settlers to potential problems in connection with land purchases. In a September 1886 article in *Dannevirke* entitled "Advarsel til dem, der vil købe Land i den danske Nybygd i Lincoln Co., Minn." (Warning to those wanting to buy land in the Danish pioneer community in Lincoln Co., Minn.), he said that land agent Bojsen had prepared a new map delineating what he referred to as "the expanded Danish Colony."⁶ Grundtvig admonished those who wished to settle in the area designated by the original agreement to be sure the land they purchased was in Hope, Marshfield, or Lake townships. Grundtvig thought the land Bojsen had for sale in Lyon County just north of Lincoln was so spread out that it precluded a large settlement of Danes there. In this expanded area, Bojsen made no promises of setting land aside for churches, although he indicated that he might support the establishment of a secret lodge. It was Grundtvig's hope that the church would not veer from its decision to exclude members of secret lodges. He recommended that potential buyers weigh the consequences of living separated from the Lincoln County Danes and far away from the churches that he surmised would be built in Tyler and north of Lake Benton.

By this time, Bojsen had little land from the original 35,000-acre tract left for sale, but Grundtvig optimistically suggested that there was no reason not to buy from other agents who offered farmland at a relatively low price. Grundtvig further stated that on Bojsen's map there were no prices indicated for the original land offer, but that he, as a member of the Land Selection Committee, could provide information on the price Bojsen had a right to charge. According to Grundtvig, the town of Lake Benton, contrary to what many believed, was not included in the Danish colony. Several settlers had purchased land nearby without having been shown land in the colony. Apparently Bojsen's new map for the expanded Danish colony carried an endorsement by the Land Selection Committee that the committee had not officially approved. Grundtvig further warned those who purchased land to ascertain whether the land they were shown was indeed the land they actually purchased.

The arrival of new settlers and the building of houses stirred the interest of the local newspaper. The *Lincoln County Journal*, published in Tyler, featured a running commentary on the arrival of immigrants to the area. In February 1886 it reported:

Just as soon as spring weather makes it possible we are informed by those in position to know that the

immigration of the Dane element to this village and vicinity will commence. Some will build in the village and some on their farms. There seems to be little doubt now that the boom expected here will materialize as soon as spring opens.⁷

Apparently there was concern that the new settlers should feel welcome. In March the newspaper gently reminded the local citizens in the Tyler area of their responsibilities:

All due courtesy should be shown to the new comers, and all acts of kindness and assistance in any way will be appreciated. Little things of this nature may seem frivolous but they will bring their reward in after days.⁸

Despite such admonitions, the immigrants apparently were not treated kindly by everyone. A week later the *Journal* ran the following news item chastising Bojsen, the land agent:

We understand Bojsen [*sic*] unloads all his immigrants at Benton, even though their land is within a half mile of this village. We doubt very much if this will be of benefit, as such little acts of injustice are often retroactive. A wise ox knoweth his own stall.⁹

If Bojsen did indeed try to manipulate his land sales in this way, it is no wonder that Grundtvig saw fit to warn the Danish settlers publicly. Unfortunately, we have no record of whether Bojsen suffered any consequences for his actions!

The influx of Danes into the area meant an increase in trade for the merchants of Lincoln County. The *Journal* continued to comment on the newcomers and their home building:

April 2, 1886

Immigrant cars are arriving with nearly every freight.¹⁰

Four families with their household goods arrived Tuesday night. Their goods and stock filled four cars.¹¹

New houses are bobbing up on the prairies in every direction, which reminds us that the Dane immigration is not a mythical visionary one, but that bona-fide settlers are coming to our fertile fields with their own stock and goods to open up farms with a view to permanent residence. To all such we bid a cordial welcome. With persistent effort the innuistrrious [*sic*] are certain of success. It has been fully demonstrated by years of experience that for diversified agricultural pursuits, few spots on the continent surpass South-west Minnesota.¹²

April 9, 1886

Several Danes direct from their fatherland arrived here Wednesday morning.¹³

The Winona Republican says five hundred carloads of immigrants' movables went over the Winona and St. Peter railroad during the month of March.¹⁴

September 17, 1886

The lumber trade is now increasing and we hope to see many improvements throughout the country.¹⁵

November 15, 1886

Our Lumber Merchants have been kept busy for the last few weeks.¹⁶

Concern about the open prairie manifested itself in two particular ways — in the encouragement of planting trees and in warnings about prairie fires, which could be devastating. In 1884, numerous shade trees were planted in Tyler. Stock owners were reminded that cattle and horses should not be allowed to damage the young trees.

Tree planting was pushed with vigor in 1886. In May of that year, the *Journal* had this to say about the status of the plantings:

Young trees planted a year ago were somewhat damaged by the frost Saturday and Sunday nights. Cuttings and trees set out this season were not injured and are doing nicely.¹⁷

In October the *Journal* made this suggestion:

We should like to see every farmer in Lincoln County plant a few rods of tree seeds this fall for nursery stock. By so doing you can without any perceptible [*sic*] expense prepare a small nursery from which threes [*sic*] can be transplanted year after year. It will pay you to do it and costs nothing, Ash, Box Elder, and other seeds can be found in profusion around any of our lakes. Prepare a small patch of ground at once as it is almost time to plant.¹⁸

Fall was the time for prairie fires. On September 9, 1887, the *Journal* warned that although there had been no sign of prairie fires yet, it was best to prepare for them.¹⁹ By September 23, daily fires were reported.²⁰ On September 30, new settlers were reminded thus:

We will say for the benefit of new settlers that the greatest precaution should be taken against prairie fires. Prairie fire generally spreads during a high wind and none but the best of fire breaks will stop it. It has been known to jump the railroad tracks during a high wind.²¹

And on October 14, one short item said simply: "Prairie fire."²²

With the immigrants came the need for houses, furniture, and supplies of various kinds. When the *Journal* reported in January 1886 that: "We believe that there will be a big building boom here in the spring, such as Lincoln County has never before seen," local business people must have geared up for potential sales.²³ In March the *Journal* noted that Charlie Rein had received three drays of furniture and that J. W. Kendall had "some very fine samples of wall paper."²⁴ In fact, Rein's increasing sales "compelled him to erect a large addition to his store."²⁵ The paper noted that he had "probably one of the largest and best stocks in Lincoln County."²⁶ In April an item said "Our wives begin to 'beller' for fly screens."²⁷ And in September, cool weather must have inspired this comment: "People have begun to inquire the price of coal, and by the way,

dear readers, if you don't call and deposit the little amount due us, we will have to commence to stack hay."²⁸ Another bit of humor crept into the reporting in October: "House cleaning has opened up, in the last few days, to such an extent that no one knows where to sit or stand."²⁹ And in November the *Journal* commented that every man should "inspect his chimneys and see that they are safe."³⁰

Business continued to prosper in Tyler. In September 1887, S. A. Kimball was reported to have received "three large hogsheads of glassware and a wagon load of crockery."³¹ As the price of coal continued to advance, it was predicted that before spring soft coal would be worth \$9.00 a ton in Chicago; by November 1887 hard coal in Tyler was selling at \$11.25 per ton.³² Although, on May 11, 1888, the *Journal* noted that "Eggs have dropped to 8 cents and hens are retiring from business," it also reported that Charlie Rein had sold more than fifty dollars worth of furniture in one day!³³

A few years ago I was fortunate to have the opportunity to visit with Caroline Markussen from Kolding, Denmark, about the early days in Tyler. Then in her late nineties and one of the oldest residents in Tyler, she described the typical daily life of an immigrant at the turn of the century. Mrs. Markussen was ten years old when she came to Tyler with her mother on December 22, 1892 to join her father, who had arrived six months before.³⁴ Recalling the wooden sidewalks in the town, she said: "Det saa forfærdelig ud. Der var ikke ret mange butikker. Vi handlede altid ved Henricksen. Naar det regnede blev det mudret." (It looked terrible. There were not many shops. We always traded at Henricksen's. When it rained it became muddy.)

Mrs. Markussen's parents bought a farm north of Tyler. Since there already was a house on the property, they did not have to build one. She told me that when they first arrived they used "hø viske" (hay swatches) for fuel. These swatches were made of slough grass, which was "bundet ligesom en kringle" (tied just like a kringle). One evening she and her brother tied a hundred! Later they used corn cobs for fuel. She said: "Der var ingen cistern, vi fik vand af en barrel til vasken." (There was no cistern, we took water from a barrel for washing.)

Mrs. Markussen said her father, who had been a weaver in Denmark, did no weaving in Tyler. He began farming instead. They "kørte med stude til kirke" (used oxen when they rode to church), using an ordinary wagon with a spring seat. She recalled that they had a homemade trunk that "blev stopped ud og brugt som en puff" (was padded and used as a bench). Her father made furniture and "flere smaating" (a number of little things). They wore "sivsko af flettede siv og laved med hæl i" (slippers made from braided prairie grass and shaped with a heel).

The family had a well for drinking water into which they dropped a bucket and hoisted it. Her father "malede grov mel selv" (ground coarse flour himself). Her mother made a cornstarch substitute out of potatoes. The potatoes were grated and water was poured on. After they stood awhile, the water was drained off, fresh water was poured over them, and again they were set aside. Later that water was drained off, and what remained in the pan was dried starch. Mrs. Markussen also remembered that rabbits would come up to the window outside one of their rooms.

They shot them and ate them, putting “flæsk ved hareste-gen” (bacon on the rabbit roast). They churned butter and made cheese: “knabost og rigtig ost. Rigtig ost blev pres-set ned og knabost skulde staa en tid” (soft cheese and real cheese. Real cheese was pressed and soft cheese had to be aged).³⁵

Hans Christian Hansen, farmer and teacher at Danebod Folk School and one of the particularly well-known early settlers in the community, was often referred to as Eventyr-manden (the fairytale man) because of his extraordinary talent for storytelling. After he died, a tribute to him in the Danish-American publication *Ungdom* described him as a “teller of whimsical tales in which benevolent hobgoblins battled and triumphed over forces of evil; or in which quaint folksy wisdom found answer to earth-bound prob-lems, simple in nature, yet deep enough to baffle the philosophy of the ages.”³⁶

I have found that the Danes who now live in immigrant communities also are fond of hearing and recalling stories — fairy tales, fiction, and tales of pioneer days. I visited with Eventyrmanden’s son, Folmer Hansen, who repeated for me some of his father’s memories. Among them was a description of the blizzard of 1888. At the farm near Balaton where Hans Christian worked there was so much snow that the people in the household could not get fuel, so they burned everything they had to keep warm, even the furni-ture. The blizzard lasted three days. When the weather finally cleared, they were able to get out and chop off the tops of fenceposts for fuel.³⁷

It is against a background of the wide open midwestern prairie with its harsh elements — burning heat, bitter cold — and the ravages of nature — drought, hail, flooding rains, snowstorms — and its destructive prairie fires that the houses I describe in the following pages should be visualized. By keeping in mind the hardships that the immigrants faced, their accomplishments take on impres-sive dimensions.

Houses: 1885-1896

The Hans Henrik and Nilsine Ries/ Henrik and Kjerstine (and Elise) Ries House

Herluf Ries, a Tyler resident who has made family geneal-ogy an avocation, researched his family history and wrote a booklet that includes a story of the life of his grandparents, Hans Henrik Ries, who came from Jægerup, and Nilsine Marie Nielsen, who was born in Serretslev, Nørre Jylland. Both of them worked on a large estate named Bygholm and were married in 1869. After several years there they moved to Randers, where Hans Henrik worked in a match factory. Because illness prevented him from continuing this work and because two of their small sons had died, they decided to journey to America in 1881. Early in the spring they arrived in Tedesgrove, Iowa, with their remaining four children, and Hans Henrik began working in a sawmill in Clinton.

Having heard about the new Danish settlement to be established in Minnesota, Hans Henrik decided to join the pioneers who were part of the now famous excursion of 1885 that Enok Mortensen described in his book, *Seventy-*

Five Years at Danebod. About seventy settlers from various localities assembled in Lake Benton and set out in lumber wagons to purchase land in the area.³⁸ Hans Henrik purchased 160 acres in Marshfield township and brought his family to Minnesota in 1886.

The house Ries built still stands near the center of the quarter section. This house, which like many others was built in stages, is illustrated in Figure 1. The original part,



Fig. 1. Hans Henrik and Nilsine Ries/Henrik and Kjerstine (and Elise) Ries house, exterior; lower section built in 1885.

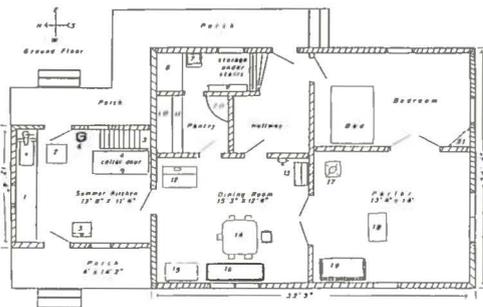


Fig. 2. Hans Henrik and Nilsine Ries/Henrik and Kjerstine (and Elise) Ries house. Floor plan, first floor. Drawn by Herluf Ries.

framed and enclosed by J. C. Evers in 1885, was located northeast of its present location. In 1892, in order to obtain a better supply of water, the house was moved to the center of the quarter section (hence the name Centerfield which was given to the farm by one of the sons, Henrik Ries). The Ries's son Henrik later lived there with his wife Kjerstine and their children. After Kjerstine died, Henrik and his second wife, Elise, lived there until 1938. In this new location, the house had a basement lined with field-stone that one entered through a trapdoor, and an addition was made to the north. The house was later enlarged by an addition to the south.³⁹

The present owners of the Ries house, Robert and Marjorie Linnett, also have made changes. Mrs. Linnett told me that when they started to remodel,⁴⁰ they found that the house was insulated with chunks of corn cobs and soil. The back lean-to was once the kitchen, and what is now the kitchen was the dining room. The floor plan in Figure 2, drawn by Herluf Ries, shows where double doors once separated the dining room from the parlor. In 1959, the pantry was converted into a bathroom, a common modernization.⁴¹

The Soren and Karen Holm House

Another of the early houses in the area belonged to Soren Holm, who came from Madrum near Ringkobing, and his wife, Karen Margrete Holm, from Holeby, Lolland. I visited with the Holms' daughter and two sons, who until recently lived on the home place. They told me the land was homesteaded by a man named Soren B. Skow and that he built the house in 1885.⁴² Public records show that the United States Patent (The United States of America By the

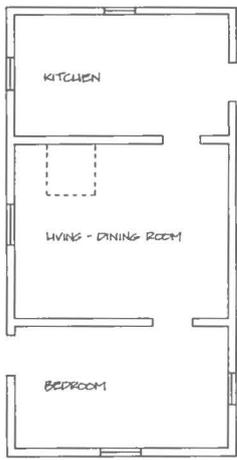


Fig. 4. Soren and Karen Holm house. Floor plan, original three rooms.

President to Soren B. Skow) was filed on March 12, 1894.⁴³ (Filing often was done long after a purchase was made.) Apparently Skow and his wife built the original part of the house, which had three rooms — a kitchen, a living-dining room, and a bedroom. There was a stairway to the attic that was entered from the kitchen. Figure 3 shows the



Fig. 3. Soren and Karen Holm house, exterior; right section built in 1888.

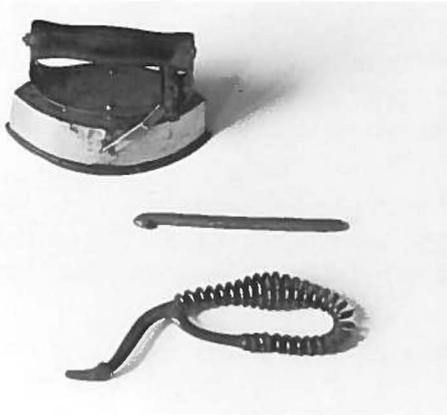


Fig. 5. Sadiron, wooden crochet hook, and stove tong from Soren and Karen Holm house.

house as it is today (with an addition). Figure 4 is a floor plan of the original three rooms. Figure 5 shows household items, a sadiron, wooden crochet hook, and stove tong, that Soren Holms used in this house.

The Jens and Thora Krog House

Thora Lund had been in America for two years before her husband-to-be, Jens Krog, left Stubbum, Denmark, to join her. He had come close to entering the military service several times but, because he did not want to be a Prussian soldier, he decided to emigrate. A selection from the book *Menigheden i Diamond Lake* (The Congregation in Diamond Lake) that appeared in an issue of *Dannevirke* in 1932 vividly presents a brief account of Jens and Thora Krog's life together on the Minnesota prairie. Thora Krog first lived in Plainfield, New Jersey, where she worked for the Danish Consul General Christensen. This undoubtedly was the reason that Jens Krog set out for New Jersey when he left Denmark.⁴⁴

In 1886 Jens Krog started a diary that he kept into the late 1920s. I found his colorful account an excellent overview of the daily life of the immigrant. He located work in Plainfield, where he did manual labor such as digging a cesspool for a hotel, digging drainage pipe, and hauling stones and dirt. Later he went to work on a farm. Early in March 1887 he bought an engagement ring for \$8.25, presented it to his sweetheart, and later that month set out for Minnesota, knowing that she would soon join him. He arrived in Lake Benton on March 17 and the next day drove out with a Mr. G. Koch, a Bojsen land agent, to look at land in Diamond Lake township. He bought eighty acres for ninety dollars plus a ten-dollar commission. The entry in his diary for March 24 reads:

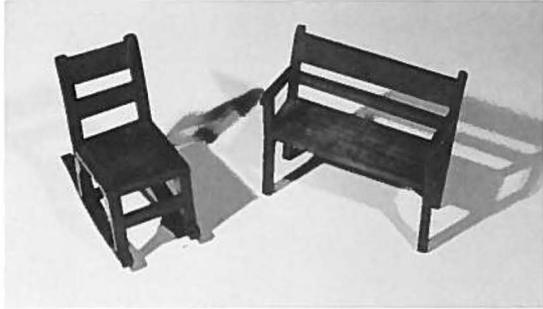


Fig. 6. Toys made by Jens Krog.

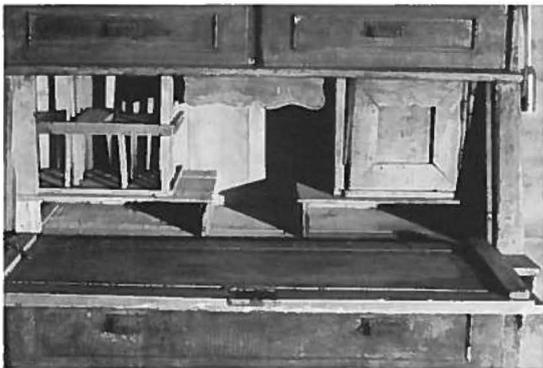


Fig. 7. Detail of secretary built by Jens Krog.

Helped Jensen dig a well. He brought curbing out from town for a well on my 80 acres. I went to town to buy a used breaking plow. Wrote to Smidt to send the balance of my money. Bought a used wagon with box, evener and neck yoke for \$15.50 at Lake Benton. Jens Jensen brought the first load of lumber out. Paid \$25.00 for the lumber. Bought a saw for \$2.25, a hammer for 75¢ and a screw driver for 75¢. Total \$3.75. Bought a keg of nails and 1/2 keg of spikes.

By April he had started building a barn, and on Monday, April 25, he went to town to buy some lumber and started to build a shanty for living quarters. On Tuesday he bought windows and by Saturday, with the help of a man named Louie, the job was complete!

Thora Lund arrived on June 6, 1887. The next three entries in Krog's diary read as follows:

6 — Monday and Thora came to surprise me in the evening. She had come with John Order from town. Her letter was still laying in the Post Office as I had not been to town to get my mail.

June 7, 1887 — Thora and I drove to town and before a Norwegian Pastor were pronounced man and wife. Store keeper Nielsen and Sofie Sorensen were the witnesses.

8 — Back to breaking prairie again. I was not feeling well. Had a good rain during the nite. Borrowed Peter Linnetts pulverizer . . . More rain.

On the twelfth he noted that a friend had dug a basement for the shanty. Then they moved the shanty over it! And Krog went on with breaking the prairie around the house.⁴⁵

The collection of stories about the Diamond Lake parishioners says that although the Jens Krogs started out with poor surroundings, they soon prospered. They broke the prairie, erected buildings, and planted trees. They became known for their productive orchard. In 1918 they moved to Tyler, where they again built a home and planted trees.⁴⁶ Jens Krog had a workshop in his basement where, using odds and ends of wood, he made toys such as those shown in Figure 6. Many of these toys were given to his grandchildren, to the Tyler Children's Home, and to the Ladies Aid for its bazaars. He also became known for his furniture. A detail from a secretary that he made is shown in Figure 7. It was made of several kinds of wood.⁴⁷

The Peter and Katrine Duus House



Fig. 8. Peter and Katrine Hansen Duus house, exterior; built c. 1892.

Another of the earliest houses in the Tyler area was the small rectangular structure (24'3" × 18'11") shown in Figure 8. Peter Duus built this house in about 1892 for his parents, who immigrated after he and his brother had arrived in the United States. The house, which was located on a farm south of Tyler, originally was on a hill with a fine view out over the prairie. Later it was moved a few rods away and converted to a granary.⁴⁸ Still standing, it is a reminder of the hardships and simplicity of the life of the pioneers.

The Mads and Karoline Hansen House

Mads Hansen, who came from near Rudkøbing, Langeland, was among the immigrants who made the historic excursion to Lake Benton in 1885. He and his wife, Karoline, who was from Hedensted, Sjælland, had settled first in Neenah, Wisconsin. In 1887 the whole family, which included two daughters and two sons, came to Tyler and settled on a farm eight miles south of town. When they sold that farm in 1892, they bought another, one-and-one-half miles south of Danebod, where they lived for seventeen years.⁴⁹ There the Hansens built a house (Figure 9) that one of their



Fig. 9. Mads and Karoline Hansen house, exterior; built in 1892.



Fig. 10. Mads and Karoline Hansen house, interior; built in 1910.

daughters, Clara Sorensen, who now lives in Tyler, described in a charming story entitled "Glimpses from My Eighty Years." She wrote:

Our house was not very big — there were 3 rooms upstairs and a big kitchen, front room and my dad and mother's bed room and a clothes closet. We had a heater in the front room and a cook stove in the kitchen. There was a pantry connected to the kitchen and there of course we kept our dishes and food, but most of the food was kept in the basement. The basement was dark and to get there you opened a door in the kitchen floor and from there, there were steps going down. The basement could be real interesting in the winter because there together with a lot of potatoes, was stored a lot of good things. Every year in the fall we bought a big barrel of good apples, a wooden pail full of jelly, one of salted herring. There was a big clay crock of salted pork, smaller crocks of

fried meat covered with lard and hams that my dad himself had smoked with good old hickory wood . . . Our drinking water was brought in from a well generally in the middle of the yard where you would pump the water by hand. A big pail with a dipper in it would serve the same purpose as the faucets over the sink does now. Water for washing dishes and clothes was caught outside in a big barrel in the summer time when it rained, and in the winter we melted snow. Then we graduated to a cistern.⁵⁰

Later the Hansens built a house in 1910 just south of the Danebod Lutheran Church. This house, now owned by Carl and Dorothy Sorensen, was quite typical of American houses built at that time. A photograph of the living room in the Hansen house (Figure 10) reveals, however, that the house was furnished and arranged in a fashion similar to houses of the same era in Denmark, such as the interior shown in Figure 11. Lace curtains were draped across the window, a square table was covered with an embroidered tablecloth placed at an angle, and plants were arranged as a background behind the wicker rocking chair.



Fig. 11. Danish house, interior; c. 1910.

The Niels Nielsen and Anne Sandager House

Lenore S. Hansen from Rochester, Minnesota, graciously provided me with much information, including two family histories about her grandparents, Niels Nielsen Sandager and Anne Nielsen. The Sandagers came from Jylland to America in 1886. Their first destination was Streator, Illinois, where they farmed. Their daughter, Bodil Marie Sandager Hansen, in a family history dated 1960, wrote:

Father wanted to come to America, the land where there was no military training, was freedom of speech, and was freedom of religion. He loved this land we call our America very much, but both he and Mother said, "We must give our children the best of the culture we brought with us over here until we learn the language." I shall never forget the deep reverence my folks showed when they entered the Danish church on the north side of Chicago — the first church they had been to in America! . . . I felt very close to those dear parents that evening! After that church service the folks decided to go to Tyler, Minnesota, instead of back to Denmark for there was a Danish church and a Grundtvigen Folk School (Danebod) which they both had belonged to in Denmark. They were both very lonely and homesick . . . Maybe you can understand how happy they were to come to Tyler to live among their own people!⁵¹

The Sandagers moved to Tyler in 1886. According to another family history written by their son Peter, they bought a 170-acre farm for \$1,800. The price included ten acres of wheat sowed, three cows, one sow, twenty-five chickens, three horses, a wagon, a walking plow, and a two-section drag. In describing the house, Peter Sandager said: "The house was small, 16' × 16', and in very bad condition. The best part of the house was the floor and Mother had to drill holes in it to let the water run out, for when it rained the roof and sides leaked all over. There

were no screens and the mosquitoes were very bad.” This house was replaced in 1892 by the one shown in Figure 12. The first part of the house was 16' × 24' with two stories. Two years later a two-story addition plus a porch and a storage room were built on the north end. The history



Fig. 12. Niels Nielsen and Anne Sandager house, exterior; built in 1892.

continues, “The well was in the north slough, and to reach it one had to wade through water. For fuel they burned slough hay which was twisted into knots. This was a regular chore each evening and often on winter evenings we children and Mother would twist hay knots while Father read aloud to us. Mother kept a large boiler inverted above the stove in wintertime which helped reflect the heat. Often we’d put apples on the back side of the stove to roast while Father read to us and that was our special treat before we went to bed.”⁵²

The Thomas and Andrea Hansen House

Thomas Hansen was another one of the group that made the 1885 excursion. At the age of twenty-three he emigrated from Vejle, Jylland, to Neenah, Wisconsin. He and Andrea Rasmine Rasmussen were married there in 1883. Two years later they moved to the Tyler area.⁵³ Their son, Carl Ted Hansen, in recalling memories about his childhood home for his niece, Marie Clawson Nielsen, described his parents’ decision to come to Minnesota:

In 1885 our government offered land for sale in Lincoln County of southwestern Minnesota. This was a parcel of land suited for farming. So in June of that year, dad and his friend, Jens Hansen, and several other interested men came to look over the land offered for sale. They traveled by train from Neenah to Lake Benton, which, I imagine, was quite a trip. Dad told of how they slept on the floor of the depot at Lake Benton. The next day they were taken by lumber wagon to look over the land that was to be sold. Dad chose the present farm site. Jens took the adjoining piece so they could remain neighbors in their new venture. They each bought eighty acres — the price paid was \$7.00 per acre — a total of \$560.00. Dad always said that it

was a big eighty acres. The corner rocks are there yet, and measurements show 84 acres. Back to Lake Benton they went, then by steamboat to the island of the lake where the purchases were finalized. These men who bought land spent much time talking and planning about settling their newly acquired possession. They departed again for their respective homes, Dad to his home in Neenah to work, save, and plan for their new home in Minnesota . . . In his free time he salvaged lumber for the buildings, some as far away as Chicago . . . After seven years, in 1892, Dad had his lumber and belongings shipped to the land he had bought. So, the folks, with their family of four, Johanna, Hans, Christine and Martin began their life right here . . . Having no dwelling of their own to move into, they lived with a family named Jens Bagge while their own was being built . . . Neighbors helped neighbors and really were like one big family . . . I wonder how, with no modern tools, the house was built to stand the blistering heat of summer and the dreadful frigid winds and blizzards of winter all these years. There were no trees to cut for fuel. Twisted straw and dried cow pods were burned in the stove.⁵⁴

The Hansens first built a one-room house that was part of the structure in Figure 13. It had a partition separating the



Fig. 14. Chest of drawers from Thomas and Andrea Hansen house.



Fig. 13. Thomas and Andrea Hansen house, exterior; built in 1892.



Fig. 15. Detail, chest of drawers from Thomas and Andrea Hansen house.

kitchen and the downstairs bedroom; there were two rooms upstairs. The cellar that was dug for the original house is still there today. Huge rocks — undoubtedly brought in from the field — line the walls. The Hansens later added more rooms, making the house look more like the typical white prairie house. I could not locate photographs of the interior, but one piece of furniture remains. The chest of drawers shown in Figure 14 was a gift to the Hansens from Thomas Hansen's brother Frederick. Although we know nothing about the craftsman who made it, this painted piece was obviously made by hand with simple tools. Figure 15 is a closeup of the dovetailing on a drawer.

The Hans and Anne Duus House



Fig. 17. Lamp from Hans and Anne Hansen Duus house.



Fig. 18. Sewing box from Hans and Anne Hansen Duus house.



Fig. 19. Cups, saucers, and plates from Hans and Anne Hansen Duus house.

The Mads and Karen Bollesen House

Most of the early immigrant houses in Lincoln County were gabled and rectangular. The Hans Hansen Duus home, which was square and topped with a mansard roof, was different from others in the area. Although long empty, this house, which is shown in Figure 16, was still standing in 1985.



Fig. 16. Hans and Anne Hansen Duus house, exterior; built in 1892.

Hans Hansen Duus was born near Vejle, Jylland. After spending some time in Neenah, Wisconsin, he came to Tyler in 1885. His wife, Anne Christine Hansen Duus, was from Taasinge. After coming to America, she worked for a number of years for a wealthy lumberman in Ludington, Michigan. She went from there to Council Bluffs, Iowa. While there, Pastor H. J. Pedersen from Danebod asked her to teach in the Danish parochial school in Tyler. She began her teaching duties in Tyler in 1892. There she met Hans Hansen Duus and they were married in 1895. I have visited with Elisa Duus, widow of the Duus's son, Peter, and the current owner of the property. She told me that a number of items from the Duus home were still in existence. Some of them, a lamp, a sewing box, and cups and plates, are shown in Figures 17, 18, and 19.

The house, built in 1892, was designed by K. H. Duus, Hans Hansen Duus's brother, a stonecutter who executed much of the stonework on buildings in the area.⁵⁵ According to public records, he was the original owner, having purchased the land from the Chicago, Milwaukee, and St. Paul Railway Company in 1894. He sold it to his brother in 1894. Apparently K. H. Duus continued to help his brother maintain the house. Some years later when he and his nephew, Hans Christian Duus, were repairing the roof, he said, "Ja, Hans Christian, jeg har tidt staaet her og sagt, Dette er en øde Egn." (Yes, Hans Christian, I have often stood here and said, this is a desolate area.)⁵⁶

Apparently Rock County, Minnesota, was a popular place to which Danes immigrated in the early years. One of the several who left there to settle in Tyler was Mads Bollesen.

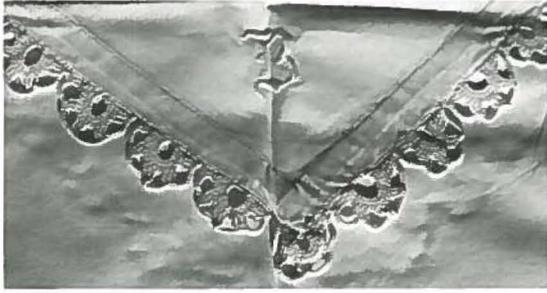


Fig. 21. Pillowcase from Mads and Karen Bollesen house.

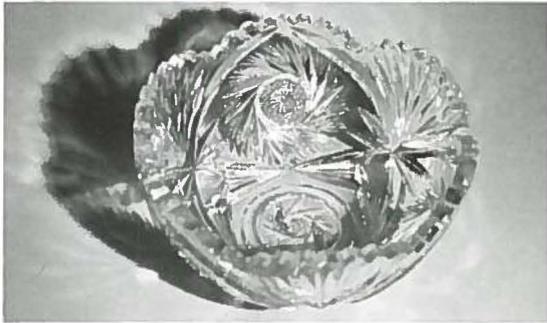


Fig. 22. Glass bowl from Mads and Karen Bollesen house.



Fig. 23. Front door of Mads and Karen Bollesen house.

The Jorgen and Kirstine Johansen House

In 1892, he and his wife, Karen, both immigrants from Jylland, settled on a farm south of Tyler, where their house (Figure 20), now owned by their grandson and his wife, Harald and Margaret Madsen, still stands. Margaret Madsen explained to me that the original part of the house ran east and west and had one large room and a loft. As often happened with the homes of early settlers, part of another house was used to enlarge the original. The north-south section that was added came from the J. M. Leach farm



Fig. 20. Mads and Karen Bollesen house, exterior; built c. 1892.

across the slough near the Bollesen farm. The ceilings in the added-on section were low, so Mrs. Bollesen had the house raised to add height to the rooms. Few photographs are available from the early years and few objects remain. A pillowcase and a glass bowl are shown in Figures 21 and 22. When I photographed the exterior of the house, I discovered some unusual carving on the front door (Figure 23). Margaret Madsen told me that at one time there had been a frosted pane in it.⁵⁷

The Four House Farm south of Tyler was the home of Jorgen and Kirstine Johansen. Jorgen Johansen, who was born in Hofmannslyst near Fitting, Jylland, came to America in 1862, when he was fifteen years old.⁵⁸ He and his family lived first in Dundee, Illinois, and later in Chicago.⁵⁹ After his father died, he and his brother, Hans, left Chicago by a team-drawn lumber wagon with a cow tied behind and settled in Fletcher, Iowa, in Sac County.⁶⁰ In 1884, he married Anne Kirstine Madsen-Krag from Bolling Mark, Egtved Sogn, who had arrived from Denmark that year.⁶¹

In 1892 the couple moved to Tyler and began farming six miles south of town. They built the large and elegant house shown in Figure 24. The family legend is that their farm was named Four House Farm after the place in Denmark where Kirstine had worked as a milkmaid.⁶²

The Johansens had ten children, several of whom stayed in the Tyler area. Some of their grandchildren have written family histories compiled by Genevieve Jorgensen Hicks, in



Fig. 24. Jorgen and Kirstine Johansen house, exterior; built c. 1892.

which they refer to the house itself. Johanne Sorensen Knudsen wrote:

All the cousins who were old enough to enjoy having a chance to “stay at Grandmother’s” were privileged to enjoy a variety of exciting adventures, such as going with grandfather to the musty-smelling attic storeroom where the seedcorn was kept over winter, the ears mounted on spikes driven through a large wooden frame, to insure proper drying, and to protect them from mice. Another favorite treat was going with Aunt Margaret to the storeroom to bring flour for the bread-baking. I am not sure this was in the attic, but we went up lots of steps, and our short legs considered it to be quite a trip. Best of all the family get-togethers were the ones when we were small, and the party was at grandfather’s . . . There was a large lawn on the east side of the house, between the house and the row of pines next to the road. It was bordered on the north and east by trees and flowering shrubs, with my favorite tree a horse-chestnut that stood beside the garden gate that led to the large apple orchard that was north of the house. The honey-suckle were on the east edge of the lawn, and in the spring their pink blooms were beautiful indeed, as were the lilacs and the double-flowering crab. The kitchen garden was south of the lawn, and by the southwest corner of the lawn near the house, was grandmother’s rose garden which we regarded with great awe — due, no doubt, to numerous admonitions that we could look, but not touch. On the south edge of the lawn, east of the rose garden, stood a large garden swing, with two wide seats hung by heavy chains from a frame that included a wooden floor, the boards placed with spaces between, to drain off the rain.⁶³

And Thora Sorensen remembered: “When I was quite young we went to Grandfather’s house for Christmas. The front parlor of the house was very elegant, and we had to be on our very best behavior when we were allowed in there. The walls were decorated with handpainted scenes.

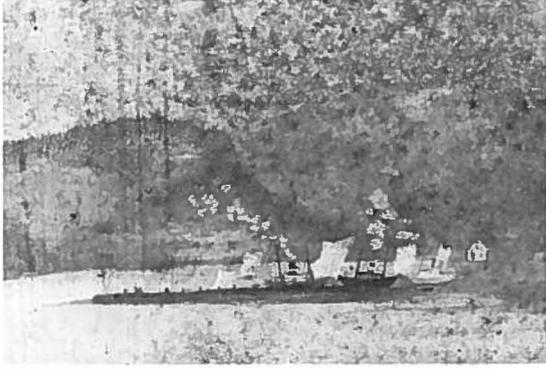


Fig. 25. Wall painting from Jorgen and Kirstine Johansen house.

The Laurids and Maren Marie Therkildsen House

One wall had a scene of graceful swans on a blue lake, and the other walls had a variety of scenes, farms and buildings and trees, a never-ending source of delight to the grandchildren . . . I remember a soft, beautiful scatter rug with a design of a big dog in its pattern.”⁶⁴ Demolition of the house began in 1981 and it is now gone. Luckily, although the surviving paintings were faded and worn, I could still capture them on film. Figure 25 shows one of the paintings Thora Sorensen described.

Other early settlers in the Tyler area were Laurids and Maren Marie Therkildsen. From their daughter, Sigrid Jacobsen, I learned that Maren Marie Samuelsen arrived in the United States in 1884 clad in a dress made out of linen thread that had been woven on her own spinning wheel from flax grown on her home farm near Horsens, Denmark. Leaving Denmark was difficult for her. Before she embarked on the long journey, she wrote these verses to express her sadness:

Farvel I kære gamle stræder
 Farvel Du gamle danske jord
 Farvel I mange kjendte Steder
 hvor alt saa yndigt og saa frodigt gror

Farvel i Danmarks Bøgeskove
 Farvel du danske grønne vange
 Tit har jeg vandret under Skovens lyse krone
 og hørt paa den liflige Fuglesang

da hæved sig mit bryst og vel jeg følte
 en trang til at synge mod Vorherres Pris
 og underlig blev hjertets strenge rørte
 Jeg sang da med alt paa min egen vis

Farvel i kære steder som mig mindes
 om min barndommen skønne tid
 de aldrig ud af mine Tanker rinder
 Jeg frede om dem vil med største flid

Farvel I mine Søstre to og Broder
 Farvel I alle kære venner tro
 hav tak for hver en gave og de goder
 som jeg har nydt i eders Hjem og Bo

Jeg rejser nu langt bort til fjerne Steder
 Maaske vi ikke ses mer paa denne Jord
 Men hver en Plet kan og have sine glæder
 lev alle glad og lykkelig i skønne Nord

nu jeg leve vil i haabet
 at jeg tilbage skal engang
 og se det Land hvor jeg er født og baarit
 Og vandre frisk og glad paa dansk Strand⁶⁵

(Farewell you dear old byways
 Farewell you Danish soil
 Farewell familiar places
 so green neath hands that toil

Farewell you Danish beechwoods
 Farewell you meadows green
 Oft have I wandered neath tree crown
 and list to birds on wing

then in my breast I longed for
 a praise to God on high
 and strange my heart felt kindled
 For there a song did lie

Farewell oh paths I treasure
 and days of childhood free
 ne'er from my thoughts they wander
 I'll guard them zealously

Farewell you sisters two and brother
 Farewell you friends so dear
 my thanks for gifts and moments
 you lovingly did share

To far off places now I journey
 We may never meet again
 But every place has pleasures
 live, enjoy North's beauteous land

in days to come I'll long for
 that return I shall someday
 to see the land where I was born
 And wander Denmark's beach and way)

Maren Marie came directly from Denmark to Minnesota, where she joined her fiancé, Laurids Therkildsen, who had been waiting for her impatiently. Laurids had come to America in 1883 and was farming in Rock County. In a letter to his cousin and friend Kristian Mikkelsen dated September 26, 1884, he told how in August he had expected Maren Marie to come and for a whole week had met the train daily, but to no avail. He wrote: “Da jeg Lørdag aften kjørte hjem, var jeg meget daarling i humor og ligefrem kjed af min stilling.” (On Saturday evening when I drove home, I was in very bad humor and actually tired of my job.)

Fortunately, Laurids received a letter from Maren the next day explaining that a friend who had agreed to lend her money for the transatlantic voyage had reneged on the promise and she had been unable to persuade relatives or other friends to help her. Hearing of Maren Marie’s plight, a Pastor Kirketerp, for whom she had worked in Verst, Denmark, traveled to Copenhagen, where she was staying, and lent her money for the journey. She had by that time missed the boat on which she had intended to leave, but she soon booked passage on another. She arrived in Rock County on the twelfth of September, and she and Laurids were married on the seventeenth in the Norwegian parsonage in Luverne. That same afternoon they moved into the new home that Laurids had built for them.⁶⁶ Maren Marie continued to write poetry. She probably wrote the the following verse while living in her first home:

I disse Dage er Vinteren meget bister
den stakkels sne maa fort og har slet ingen ro
og Solen knapt ser til os ind men lister
forbi saa stille og gaar sin vante gang saa tro
i vores lille Stue er saa stille og saa rolig
herinde er kulden mindre slem
vi ønsker tit I kund se ind i vores bolig
hvordan vi lever i vort lille hjem
en kærlig hilsen jeg til eder sende
med Tak for hver godt og kærligt ord
og tanke som I kærligt til os vende
til dette fjerne land hvor vi nu bor⁶⁷

(These winter days are cold and bitter
and restlessly the snow whirls by
the sun scarce shines but creeps so softly
and moves along its path on high
Our home is quiet and so peaceful
inside the cold is less severe
oft have we wished that you could see
this place which we hold dear
warm greetings I send to you today
with thanks for good and loving words
and thoughts you kindly send our way
to us in this far world)

When I visited with Rigmor Christensen, another of the Therkildsen daughters, she recalled that her parents had moved to Tyler in 1891 and there decided to build a fine house. She said that because they had both worked for ministers in Denmark, they had “big ideas how a house should be.” The house built by Niels Jensen, which is illustrated in Figure 26, faced south and had a porch on the front. As one entered the large front hall one saw a small dining room and kitchen that later were combined to make a larger dining room and two bedrooms, one of which then became the kitchen. In the wintertime the first floor bedroom, which was in the northwest part of the house, was



Fig. 26. Laurids and Maren Marie Therkildsen house, exterior; built c. 1892.

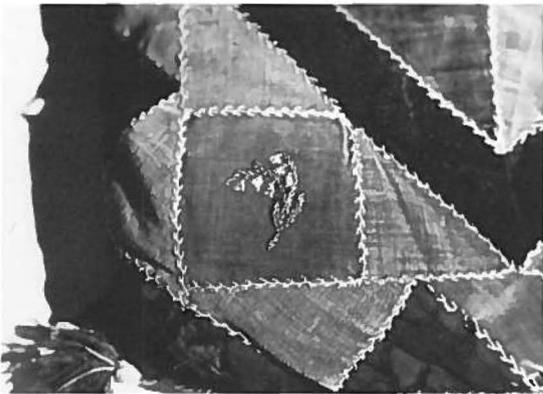


Fig. 27. Pillow from Laurids and Maren Marie Therkildsen house.

The Christian and Hansine Norgaard House

closed off because it was too cold to use, and the entryway was turned into a bedroom. The living room had a bay window for flowers. The dining room and the living room each had a heater. There was enough room upstairs for both family members and hired men. Mrs. Jacobsen said the house had painted decorations on the walls. There were stenciled borders in a scroll pattern and several rooms had a daisy and leaf motif. These borders were homemade in pieces about twelve inches long and in widths of six inches or more.⁶⁸

There are several items still in existence from the Therkildsen house. Among them is the pillow shown in Figure 27, on which Maren Marie Therkildsen embroidered the *mark blomst* (field flower) motifs, which are typically Danish. Here the motifs have been superimposed on an American crazy-quilt-inspired design.

Early immigrant houses typically underwent many changes. A house that went through a particularly interesting metamorphosis is the Christian Norgaard home, which stood on a farm on the north shore of Lake Benton. Norgaard, one of the early settlers, migrated from Slesvig to Chicago in 1884 and moved to Tyler in 1890.⁶⁹ His house has been of interest not only to me but also to Herluf Ries of Tyler. Mr. Ries shared with me the history of the house in which his grandfather, Christian Norgaard, once lived. He bought the farm from a man named George D. Cole. The house had a log cabin section running north and south and a clapboard section running east and west. The log cabin was removed in 1892. In its place the Norgaards added a kitchen, a dining room, and a shanty over a cellar that was dug at that time. Figure 28 shows the house shortly before it was destroyed. The evolution of this house was the reverse of what usually happened with pioneer houses. Instead of starting out as one structure to which additions were made, this house was originally a composite of two structures. The end result, however, was a house that looked very much like the other clapboard houses in the area.

The kitchen wing was built with the Danish characteristics that I have found repeated many times in the area. Danish houses on farms and in villages typically were set

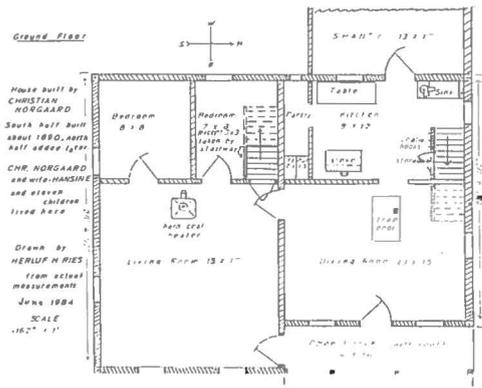


Fig. 29. Christian and Hansine Norgaard house. Floor plan, first floor. Drawn by Herluf Ries.



Fig. 28. Christian and Hansine Norgaard house, exterior; built in 1892.

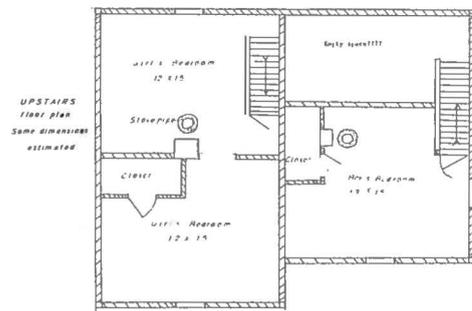


Fig. 30. Christian and Hansine Norgaard house. Floor plan, second floor. Drawn by Herluf Ries.

so that the long side of the house faced the road or the street. There was a central doorway, oftentimes with a dormer above it, and windows formally balanced on either side. The sides would be half-timbered with white stucco-like material between the dark timber. On farms, the house was often connected to three barns of similar size so that they formed a square, enclosing a courtyard. I have not found the courtyard concept anywhere in America, but I have discovered that the dwelling house model has often been adapted to American building materials. The exterior of the Norgaard house is an example of this adaptation. The doorway was centered, flanked by formally balanced windows, and topped with a dormer. Mr. Ries and I measured the house on the outside, and he reconstructed the floor plans shown in Figures 29 and 30 as he remembered them from earlier years. Christian Norgaard was married three times. Both of his first two wives died in Denmark. He married his third wife, Hansine Nielsen Meyer, in America. They lived in this house with eleven children.⁷⁰

The Niels and Marie Jensen House



Fig. 31. Niels and Marie Jensen house, exterior; built c. 1893.



Fig. 32. Danish home.



Fig. 33. Dagny Jensen house, interior; living room.

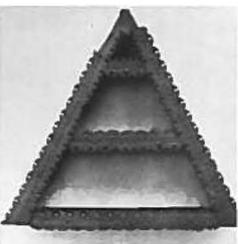


Fig. 35. Danish pyramid shelf; nineteenth century. Alfr. G. Hassings Forlag.

Niels and Marie Petersen Jensen were some of the earliest settlers in what came to be known as the Danebod Addition in Tyler. Although no records remain, local citizens think that in all likelihood Niels Jensen, an immigrant, built his own house (Figure 31). Public records indicate that he would have built it sometime between 1893, when the Jensens purchased the lot, and 1900, when they sold it. The lot on which the house stands had belonged to Pastor and Mrs. Hans J. Pedersen, who offered it for sale in 1892. The exterior of the house bears Danish design characteristics. The long side of the house is in the front, windows are symmetrically arranged, and the front gable is centered. The porch on the front, a relatively recent addition, obscures the original centered doorway. The Jensen house bears a strong resemblance to the house in Figure 32, which is a Danish home. Early photographs of the interior of the Jensen house are not available, but a recent one (Figure 33) shows that there are two rooms across the front of the house. Because Dagny Jensen, the present owner, found pieces of wood resembling colonnades in the house when she purchased it, it is likely that originally colonnades separated the rooms where today there is a squared-off archway.⁷¹

The home of Dagny Jensen, whose parents were immigrants, has touches of Danish design characteristics. Through the arrangement of decorative objects she carries on a tradition of pattern on the walls. Her *pyramidehylde* (pyramid shelf) or *Amagerhylde* (Amager shelf), shown in Figure 34, is a definite transfer of Danish design. Figure 35 shows a shelf from the nineteenth century in Denmark.

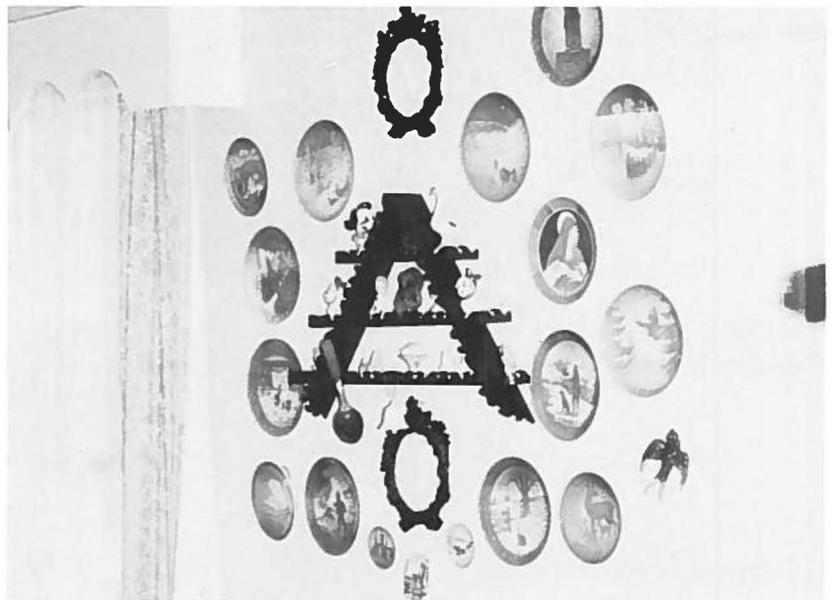


Fig. 34. Pyramid shelf.

Niels Jensen was a journeyman coachbuilder who, according to a recordbook he kept, completed his training in Sandby, Denmark, on June 20, 1878. He wrote careful instructions on how to build various kinds of wagons, including a butcher wagon and an undertaker wagon. He made detailed drawings of wheel construction. In addition,

he wrote instructions on how to build a house and made intricate drawings for a bannister and furniture. His “recipes” for making finishes and for what quantities of materials were needed for certain tasks were carefully written by hand in a charming mixture of Danish, English, and phonetic spelling. For example: “One tousand Shingels laid four inches to the Meatner will cover one hundred square feet and four pounds of 4-penny nails will fasten dem on. One thousan laths will cover Seventy Yards of Surface and eleven pounds of 3 penny will fasten dem on. Eight bushel of good Limme 16 Bushel of Sand and one Bushel of hair will make enough good mortar to plaster one hundred square yards.”⁷²

The Hans and Ane Christensen House



Fig. 37. Vase from Hans and Ane Christensen house.



Fig. 38. Mortar and pestle from Hans and Ane Christensen house.

Anna Jensen, a long-time resident of Tyler, told me about her grandparents, Hans Christensen and Ane Marie Fredericksen Christensen, who both came from Langeland. They were married in Superior, Wisconsin, in 1871, moved to Nashua, Iowa, and then came to Tyler in about 1894. Anna Jensen does not know if they built their farmhouse, which is shown in Figure 36, but she remembers that there were five rooms on the main floor. A number of objects that her grandparents used in that home still exist. Two of them, a vase and a mortar and pestle, are shown in Figures 37 and 38.⁷³



Fig. 36. Hans and Ane Christensen house, exterior; date unknown.

The Hans and Marie Simonsen House

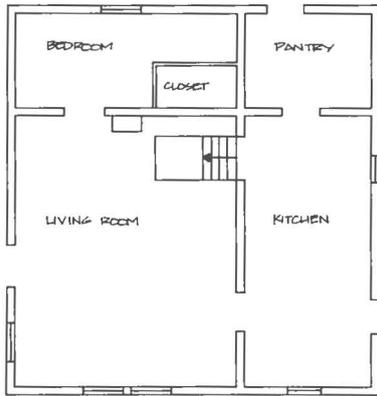


Fig. 40. Hans and Marie Simonsen house. Floor plan, first floor.

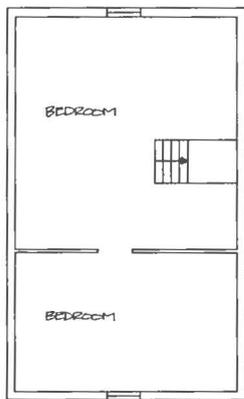


Fig. 41. Hans and Marie Simonsen house. Floor plan, second floor.



Fig. 42. Polyphonic music box from Hans and Marie Simonsen house.

Hans Simonsen and his wife, Marie Pedersen Simonsen, both from Stubbum, Slesvig, were married in Denmark.⁷⁴ They immigrated first to Clinton, Iowa, and then moved to a farm north of Lake Benton, where in 1895 they built the two-room house shown in Figure 39.⁷⁵ The Simonsens' house was later moved to their son's farm. Figures 40 and 41 show the floor plans of the now abandoned house. The pantry and bedroom were added after 1895.⁷⁶ I had the opportunity to meet Harold Simonsen, Hans Simonsen's grandson, who lives in Lake Benton. He remembered visits to his grandparents' home vividly and recalled details about the furnishings and their arrangement. He said they



Fig. 39. Hans and Marie Simonsen house, exterior; built in 1895.

had a cookstove in the east section of the house that was used only in the summer. During the rest of the year the family cooked on a kerosene stove in the living room. There was a round table, a cupboard that had glass doors, and an Aladdin lamp that always smoked. In the bedroom they had a wooden bed and an oak dresser that had an adjustable mirror with handkerchief drawers on either side. In the bedroom, Hans Simonsen kept a polyphonic music box on a small table. He won the music box, shown in Figure 42, on a sixty-six-cent raffle ticket. It is made of walnut veneer on the exterior and rosewood on the inside. It appears to be Russian in origin; the inscription reads: JUL. HEINR, ZIMMERMANN, LEIPZIG, ST. PETERSBURG, MOSKAU.⁷⁷

Marie Landgren, from Pipestone, Harold Simonsen's sister, also remembered her grandparents. She showed me a chair from their home (Figure 43) and her grandfather's tobacco box (Figure 44). They bear no Danish design characteristics but show good craftsmanship.



Fig. 44. Tobacco box from Hans and Marie Simonsen house.



Fig. 43. Chair from Hans and Marie Simonsen house.

Houses: 1897-1930

The Soren Kristian Peter and Kirstine Mikkelsen House

In 1980 I interviewed Signe Jensen, who was then in her late eighties. Both of her parents emigrated from Denmark, her father, Soren Kristian Peter Mikkelsen, from Egtved, Jylland, and her mother, Kirstine Christensen Mikkelsen, from Haderslev, Sønderjylland. I assume that they knew each other well because both worked for the same man in Sønderjylland. S. K. P. Mikkelsen came to America in 1880 and his wife-to-be followed in 1886. They were married in December of that year. S. K. P. Mikkelsen first bought land in Rock County and then in 1892 bought a farm in the Tyler area. In 1893 he and his wife moved to that farm, which they named *Solvang* (Sunny Field). For some years the family lived in a granary that had an apartment in one end. They then moved into the large farmhouse shown in Figure 45; Mrs. Jensen thought her father probably designed it. Charles Rein, a German carpenter, did the construction work. Some years later when the Mikkelsens moved into Tyler, they built the house, now owned by Elsie Hansen, that is shown in Figure 46.⁷⁸



Fig. 46. Soren Kristian Peter Mikkelsen and Kirstine Mikkelsen house, exterior; date unknown.



Fig. 45. Soren Kristian Peter Mikkelsen and Kirstine Mikkelsen house, exterior; built c. 1897.

The Hans and Marie Johansen House

The Johansen family history compiled by Genevieve Jorgensen Hicks also includes an account of the lives of Hans and Marie Johansen. They were married in Lake View, Iowa, in 1884. According to the history: "Marie Cecile Hougaard was born on Sandholm, the family farm . . . she probably migrated in 1883 or 1884 . . . Hans Johansen was born at Leirskov . . . In 1876 Hans Johansen migrated to the United States . . ." He came directly to Dundee, Illinois, and later worked in Lake View, Iowa, and in Chicago. As noted in the account of Jorgen Johansen related previously, he and a brother left Chicago in a lumber wagon with a cow tied behind. Hans Johansen was that brother. Their journey came to an end in the small community of Fletcher, Iowa, where Hans began farming. The family history continues:

Hans Johansen and Marie Hougaard lived in Iowa during the first nine years of their married life. Four of their five children were born during this time, one of which died in infancy . . . In 1892 the Johansen family made a trip to Tyler, Minnesota, to explore the possibility of moving to the new Danish colony which had been recently formed in the vicinity and it was soon decided that the move should be made. Property had been acquired and the family left Iowa to begin a new life in Minnesota in 1894 . . . The first farm at Tyler which Marie and Hans Johansen owned was located a few miles South of the village, but three years later property was acquired a half mile south of the church and it was here that the family lived for 20 years until Hans Johansen retired and his sons, Johan and Christian, took over the property . . . On the afternoon of September 2, 1921, Marie Hougaard Johansen died . . . An obituary in the Tyler Journal reports that she was buried on Sept. 4 in the presence of one of the largest gatherings of friends ever seen at a funeral . . . She



Fig. 48. Hans and Marie Johansen house, interior; living room.



Fig. 49. Hans and Marie Johansen house, interior; bedroom.

was renowned in the community for her “gaestfrihed”, a term which may be translated loosely as Hospitality.⁷⁹

The exterior of the house the Johansens built in about 1897 is shown in Figure 47. Figures 48 and 49, which show Hans Johansen’s mother in the living room and in the bedroom, are two of the few interior views I have from the area.

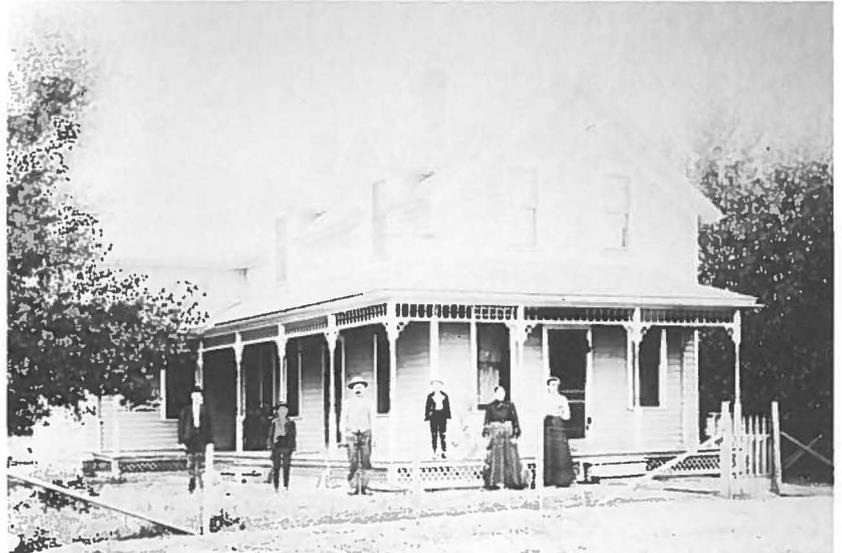


Fig. 47. Hans and Marie Johansen house, exterior; built c. 1897.

The Laurits and Anna Petersen House

During my visits with octogenarians and nonagenarians in the Tyler area a house named *Kronborg* (Crown Castle) was invariably mentioned. Although it is no longer standing, it lives vividly in the memories of many as one of the most cherished landmarks the town has ever had. Laurits and Anna Petersen, who built the house, left a beautiful and comfortable home in Eskilstrup, Fyn, in 1892 to come to America. After a year in Chicago, they went to Tyler to live on a farm. In the spring of 1898, when *Kronborg* (shown in Figure 50) was completed, they moved into town.⁸⁰



Fig. 50. Laurits and Anna Petersen house, exterior; built in 1898.

I have been unable to find information about who designed the house or anything about the construction other than that a man named Duus helped Laurits Petersen build it. According to Peter Grina, who has analyzed the structure, the house seems to be a development of the traditional Scandinavian manor house. The form is essentially a cube with symmetrical facades. The main level, which is above grade on a rusticated base, is in the classical tradition, as is the string course marking the main floor line.⁸¹

Anna Petersen started a boarding house in Kronborg shortly after the family moved into the house. Her obituary in a 1907 issue of the *Tyler Herald* reads in part: "And a model and unique boarding house it was. There was no room for idlers and good-for-nothings; boisterous talk, swearing or obscene language were not tolerated. But Mrs. Pedersen [sic] did far more than supply her boarders with meals and lodging; she was a mother for them, and her house was always regarded as a home to the best among our boys . . . As a born critic, with cultivated taste for art and literature, she covered her walls with the best of pictures, and good books were on the shelves."⁸²

With all the people living there — the Petersens; their daughter, Johanna; their five sons, Thorvald, Vagn Aage, Rasmus, Hjalmar, and Svend; and the boarders — Kronborg must have been a bustling place. I have been unable to find floor plans, but a Tyler resident, Audrey Christensen Kuhn, who lived there from 1937 to 1940 (after the house had been purchased by Alfred Hansen), drew floor plans and a garden sketch for the Petersens' granddaughter,

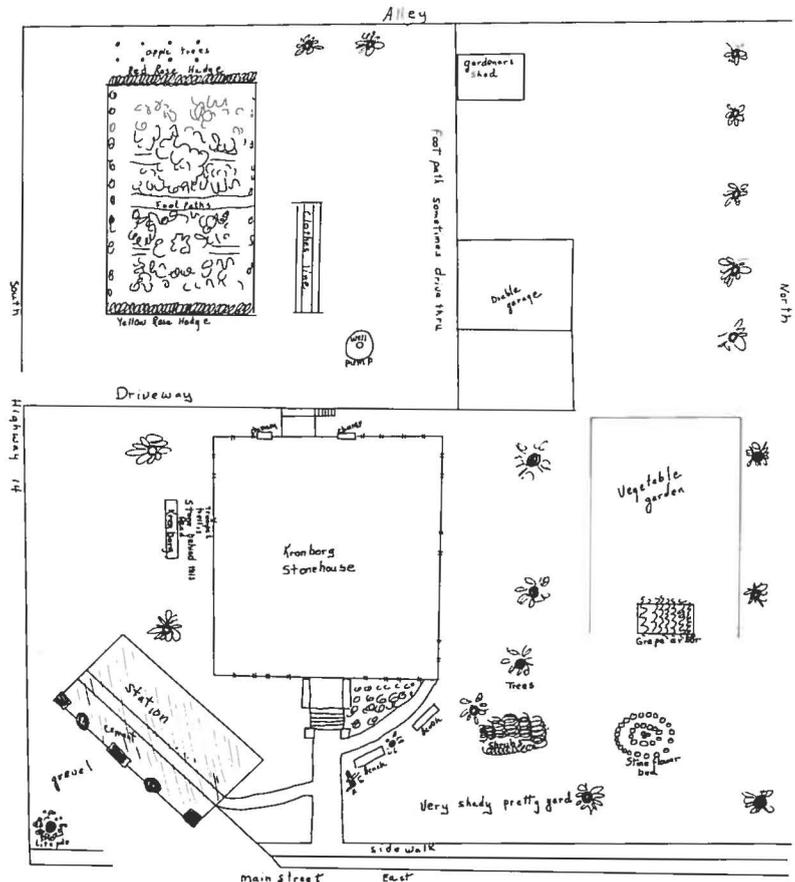


Fig. 51. Laurits and Anna Petersen house. Garden plan.



Fig. 53. Laurits and Anna Petersen house, interior; parlor.



Fig. 54. Chest of drawers from Kronborg.



Fig. 55. Chair from Kronborg.

Olga Strandvold Opfell. The layouts as she remembered them are shown in Figures 51 and 52; Figure 53 is a view of the parlor. According to Mrs. Opfell the rooms appear not

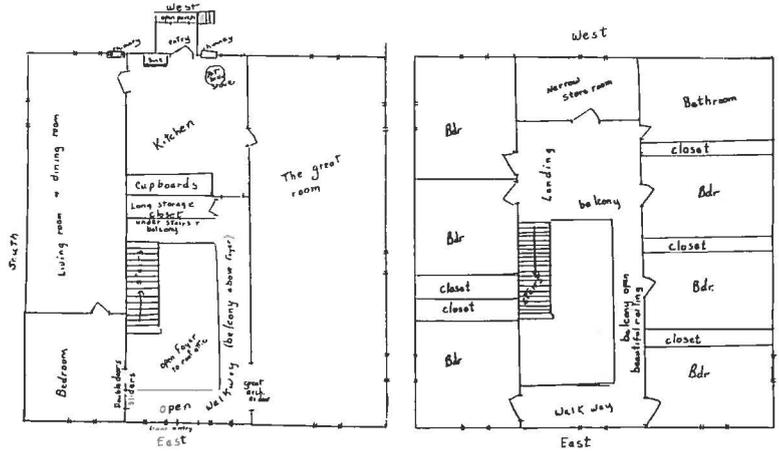


Fig. 52. Laurits and Anna Petersen house. Floor plans, first and second floors.

to have been altered from the time her grandparents lived there. The great room, where presumably the boarders sat, was still intact.⁸³ When the Petersens lived there, they had the downstairs bedroom and their daughter had one on the second floor. The rest of the rooms upstairs were used by the boarders, and the Petersen boys slept on the lowest level.⁸⁴ In a written description of the garden, Mrs. Kuhn wrote, “The gazebo was gone but the flower garden was lovely (lots of work.) The grape arbor was intact and grapevines flourished . . . The well was used by many in town — so many people came and went . . . The apples were also very good.⁸⁵

Considering that in 1898 Tyler was a new pioneer settlement, Kronborg was extraordinarily furnished. Some pieces of furniture still exist. The chest of drawers shown in Figure 54 was used for many years in the home of Governor Hjalmar Petersen in Askov, Minnesota. In visiting with Medora Petersen, his widow, I learned that it undoubtedly came from Kronborg. Handmade, the carving is highly reminiscent of Danish eighteenth- and nineteenth-century dragkister (chests of drawers). The drawers were put together with a unique dovetailing; instead of the common fan shape, the tail is round. The chair shown in Figure 55, also used in Governor Petersen’s home, was at one time owned by the author Carl Hansen, who lived in Tyler. The Petersens bought the chair when Hansen moved to the West Coast. Made of mahogany with delicate filigree and mother-of-pearl inlay on the six-layered laminated back, the chair originally was upholstered in black leather and had casters on the front legs. The present needlepoint upholstery was worked by Medora Petersen. According to Mrs. Petersen, her husband, Hjalmar Petersen, and his brother, Svend, lived in Milwaukee in the early 1900s. When their sister Johanna visited them on her way back home from a trip to Denmark, they persuaded her to go to Tyler, bring back furniture, and keep house for them. Hjalmar Petersen took the chest of drawers and the chair to Askov in August 1914.⁸⁶

The Rasmus J. and Karen Martensen House

One of the later houses in Tyler was owned by Rasmus J. Martensen, who was from Tønder-Byllerup in Sønderjylland. He came to America as a teenager in the 1870s. His wife, Karen Sofie Jensen Martensen, was born in Eskebjerg, Jylland.⁸⁷ According to one of the Martensen daughters, Christence M. Jespersen, her father, who was known as R. J. M., and Karen Sofie Jensen met in Chicago. They were married in the Danish colony of Nysted, Nebraska, in 1897. In 1902 they went to Tyler, where R. J. M. became a teacher in the *Børneskole* (Children's School). He also taught at Danebod Folk School.⁸⁸

Apparently an industrious man, R. J. M. at one time had a correspondence school in his home.⁸⁹ I visited with Ingeborg Duus, another Martensen daughter, who lives in Solvang, California. She told me that the Danebod Danish library was in the front entrance hall of the Martensen house. Her father took care of the books and collected the fines. All of the books were Danish and lined three walls.⁹⁰

I also visited with another Martensen daughter, Dagny Gribskov, who lives in Oregon. Her recollections made it apparent that this was a hospitable home. The teachers from the *Børneskole* were often invited, and many people came for birthday celebrations. Singing was always a part of such gatherings. Sometimes guests brought their own songbooks along and sat in the living room singing without piano accompaniment.⁹¹

The Martensen house, now owned by Hjarne and Margaret Duus, was built in 1902. Anders Peter Andersen was the carpenter.⁹² The house is shown as it was in the early years in Figure 56 and as it appears today in Figure 57. It originally had a dining room, living room, and kitchen.



Fig. 57. Rasmus J. and Karen Martensen house, exterior.



Fig. 56. Rasmus J. and Karen Martensen house, exterior; built in 1902.

Mrs. Gribskov remembers an unusual feature that I have not found in any other house — a cistern under the kitchen! Her mother placed milk and cream in pails (supported by sticks) down there to keep cool. Water was collected in the cistern by means of a pipe from the roof.



Fig. 58. Pyramid shelf.



Fig. 59. Danish pyramid shelf; nineteenth century. Alfr. G. Hassings Forlag.

The Soren Knudsen and Karen Petersen House



Fig. 61. Lamp from Soren Knudsen and Karen Petersen house.

Things went well until a heavy rain. The pails would overturn during a downpour, and the precious liquids would soon be mixed with the water. There also was a cellar separate from the cistern. Mrs. Gribskov said they never had running water while she lived there. There was a pump by the kitchen sink that drew water from the cistern; drinking water came from a well in the backyard.⁹³

After he stopped teaching, R. J. M. became a mail carrier and hauled mail in a buggy or sleigh. He had three little broncos named Daisy, Nelly, and Abe. The Martensens also had a barn, which is now the garage, where they kept a couple of cows and some pigs and chickens.⁹⁴

The Martensens' son, Sigvald, later moved into the house with his family. In the summer of 1923, he put a basement under the whole house. He also made some changes at the east end of the house, adding steps to the basement. Still later, he turned the pantry into a bathroom, placing the tub where the trap door to the cellar had been. Folmer Hansen, of whom I have written earlier, was a close friend of Sigvald and the whole family. On one occasion he said, "I just can't get used to going to the bathroom in Mrs. Martensen's pantry!"⁹⁵

Hjarne and Margaret Duus bought the house in 1973. They have added a deck and shutters and painted the house red. Both Mr. and Mrs. Duus are children of Danish immigrants, and they have Danish decorative objects in their dining room. The pyramidehylde (pyramid shelf) shown in Figure 58 undoubtedly was made in this country, but the design has its roots in pyramid shelves dating back to the early nineteenth century in Denmark; an example from Denmark is shown in Figure 59.⁹⁶

Soren Knudsen Petersen and his wife Karen came to Iowa in 1881. They settled in Tyler in the early 1900s. The Petersens lived in the house shown in Figure 60. Their granddaughter, Lucille Utoft, told me that the house had stencilled borders on the ceilings.⁹⁷ Although there are no interior photographs available, a number of items from the Petersen household, such as the lamp shown in Figure 61, are still in existence.⁹⁸



Fig. 60. Soren Knudsen and Karen Petersen house, exterior; date unknown.

The Mathias and Karen Andersen House

Some of the Danes who came to Lincoln County established a Danish Lutheran church in Diamond Lake, which was a short distance north of Lake Benton. Among those who were especially active in its formation was Mathias Andersen. When he arrived in America with his uncle, Peter Christensen, he lived in Lyons, Iowa, and then moved to Minnesota in 1886.⁹⁹ I learned from visiting with his grandson, Hans P. Andersen, that Mathias Andersen and his wife, Karen Dorteia Iversen, were both from near Kolding and that they were married in 1903. Their home, which was on a farm south of the Diamond Lake church, was built about that time.¹⁰⁰ The house as it appeared in the 1920s is shown in Figure 62. Figure 63 shows it after additions had been made.



Fig. 62. Mathias and Karen Andersen house, exterior; built c. 1903.



Fig. 63. Mathias and Karen Andersen house, exterior; 1980s.

According to the tribute to him written in *Menigheden i Diamond Lake*, Mathias Andersen was highly respected. A modest man, he spoke generously of the contributions of those who helped to establish the church, but said little about what he had done.¹⁰¹

Marianne Kjaer wrote a song for the Andersens' silver wedding anniversary, which was celebrated at the church. Songwriting is a tradition brought over by the Danish immigrants. Danes often write songs for their friends and family members for special events such as weddings, anniversaries, or birthdays. Often the verses give a brief overview of the honoree's life. The melody usually is a

familiar one so all the guests can join in the singing. So it was with Mrs. Kjær's verses, which were sung to the melody of "En Kokosnød paa Havet Flød" (A Coconut Floated in the Ocean). Among other things, she told about the Andersens' home in the fifth verse:

En Foraarsdag han førte hjem
med sig en Ven for Livet;
hun hyggede det lille Hjem,
som de af Gud var givet.

(A day in spring he traveled home
with bride, a friend forever;
she cared and tended hearth and home,
which God to them had given.)

In the eleventh verse she wrote about the Andersens leaving the farm to live in a house immediately west of the church:

Og skønt I maatte drage bort
fra Farmen af jer Virken,
saa blev det dog saa rart og godt,
i Hjemmet her ved Kirken.¹⁰²

(And though your days of toil were spent
and you left farm and labor,
you still were happy and content,
near church you found a haven.)

It is in the yard of this second home, now occupied by Walentyna Andersen, Mathias Andersen's daughter-in-law, that an unusual building has been preserved. To my knowledge, this structure (Figure 64), which is a house and barn all in one building, is the only existing one of its kind in the area. According to Hans P. Andersen, this combined house



Fig. 64. Christian Howe house, exterior; built c. 1900.

and barn was built by a Danish immigrant named Christian Howe, circa 1900, and originally was located north of its present site.¹⁰³ It was later moved to the corner opposite the church and is now used as a honey barn.¹⁰⁴ The living quarters are easily recognizable. There were two rooms in an area 15' × 24'4". The barn section still has the large door through which a wagon could be driven, and the hay door is intact. The idea of combining the house and the barn was often used in Denmark. This building style saved lumber and afforded the farmer efficiencies of time together with the convenience and safety of not having to

venture out in inclement weather. Unfortunately, I have been unable to locate any Howe relatives or any information about the Howe family, so the origins of the design remain unknown.

The Christian and Karen (and Marie) Sorensen Houses

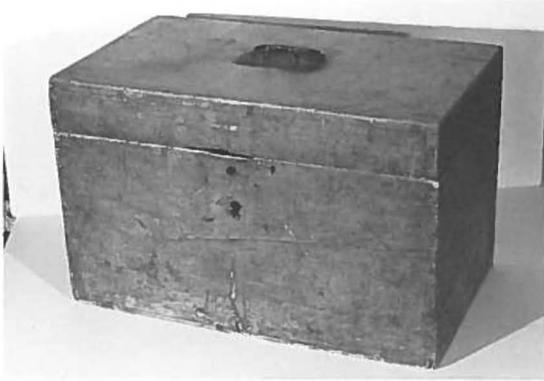


Fig. 65. Chest from Christian and Karen (and Marie) Sorensen houses.

Christian and Karen Marie Hansen Sorensen lived in Harlan, Iowa, after they were married in 1880. Figure 65 shows a chest that Christian Sorensen made for his journey to America. In visiting with Christian Sorensen's daughter Ellen, I learned that both the Sorensens were from Denmark and that Christian came from Vensyssel. I do not know where Karen was born. The couple moved to Lincoln County in 1887. They established their home in Marshfield township on virgin prairie, where they built a one-room house. Christian Sorensen bought about forty acres of land at thirty-five dollars per acre and started farming with two horses and a walking plow. As his money allowed, he bought more land until he had 200 acres. When Christian's parents came to live with the Sorensens, they added a room and a porch onto the one-room structure. Sorensen and a neighbor, Peter Christensen, built the addition. They hauled stones in from the farm to make the foundation and the cellar. This house eventually had two bedrooms upstairs and what had been the entire first house became the dining room. There also was a kitchen, a pantry, and a parlor. When the house was remodeled, the pantry became the bathroom.¹⁰⁵

After Karen Sorensen's death, Christian, in 1891, married Marie Burke from Marshalltown, Iowa, who also was a Danish immigrant. They moved to Arco, where they built a new house in about 1912. Ellen Sorensen thinks that it probably was constructed by A. B. Larsen. This house, shown in Figure 66, had a kitchen, dining room, pantry, one bedroom downstairs, and three bedrooms upstairs.¹⁰⁶ The house, which was built all at once, resembles the typical midwestern prairie house, but it also has some of the same formal balance that characterizes many houses in Danish settlements. At the focal point of the house is the centered doorway, flanked by a window on each side, and the centered dormer.



Fig. 66. Christian and Marie Sorensen house, exterior; built c. 1912.

The bay window that was a common feature of midwestern rural homes probably was English in origin. The Sorensens most likely were influenced in their decision to have one by what was popular in rural Minnesota at the time. Also, it was an architectural feature not uncommon in Denmark. In my study of houses in a Danish settlement in southwestern Iowa, I noted that the bay window appeared there during the period 1891 to 1907. It was, of course, an added expense and denoted a certain level of prosperity.

When Christian Sorensen died, his obituary noted the following: "A good farmer, and by diligent labor and thrift he provided well for his family and acquired considerable property holdings. He was a man of firm religious beliefs, affiliated with the Lutheran faith his entire life, and a loving father and husband. Friends and neighbors always received a most hospitable welcome at the Sorensen home, and in pioneer days it was the scene of many pleasant and jovial gatherings."¹⁰⁷

The Andrew and Anna Jensen House



Fig. 67. Writing desk from Andrew and Anna Jensen house.

Andrew Jensen, another craftsman who lived in the area, was a cabinetmaker from Aalborg, Jylland. His daughter, Selma Krog, who lives near Lake Benton, told me that he settled in Iowa in 1875. He and his wife, Anna Jorgensen Jensen, whom he had married in 1903, came to Lake Benton in 1912. When, during their preparations to move, they discovered that a bed they owned was not sturdy enough to transport by rail, Andrew made it into the writing desk shown in Figure 67.¹⁰⁸ The design of this desk bears a striking resemblance to a desk I found in Kimballton, Iowa, about fifteen years ago (Figure 68), which also was made by a Danish cabinetmaker, Carl Sorensen.



Fig. 68. Writing desk from home of Mr. and Mrs. Niels Bennedsen, Kimballton, Iowa.

The Hans Peter Christian and Sine Hansen House

Hans Peter Christian Hansen and his wife, Sine Sorensen Hansen, both came from Langeland and lived in St. Ansgar, Iowa, before coming to Tyler.¹⁰⁹ According to their grandson, Orval Hansen, H. P. C. Hansen, as he was called, attended a church conference at Danebod in 1894. At that time he made a verbal agreement to purchase a farm south of Tyler. When he returned a year later with his family and belongings, he found that the farm had been sold! The family lived temporarily with Mrs. Hansen's brother, Hein Rasmussen, until they purchased a farm east of Tyler. There already was a house on the farm (Figure 69). It probably was built by William and Mary A. Luby in about 1889 when they became the first owners of the farm.



Fig. 71. Trunk from Hans Peter Christian and Sine Hansen house.



Fig. 69. Hans Peter Christian and Sine Hansen house, exterior; built c. 1889.

The Hansens built another house on the property in 1914 (Figure 70). Christ Bollesen was the carpenter. Sand for this stucco house came from Twin Lakes. It was hauled on lumber wagons — four loads a day; two wagons, two loads each day. Some of the furniture from this house is still in existence. A particularly interesting piece is the trunk shown in Figure 71, which H. P. C. Hansen brought with him from Langeland. The lid is reversible so it can be converted into a baby's bed.¹¹⁰



Fig. 70. Hans Peter Christian and Sine Hansen house, exterior; built in 1914.

The Niels Peter Johannes and Kathrine Christensen House

People in close-knit communities often give nicknames to their friends. So it was with Niels Peter Johannes Christensen. His daughter, Mrs. Herluf Faaborg, told me he was called *Store Peter* (Big Peter) because he had a hired man who had the same name but was shorter than he was. Store Peter Christensen was born in Kviselmark, Sjælland, in 1865 and came to America with his parents in 1884. The family first settled at Makota, Iowa, and later moved to Clinton. They came to Tyler in 1890 and settled on a farm north of town. His parents, Johannes A. Christensen and Anne Kjerstine Christensen, lived on the home place until 1903, when they moved to Tyler. That year, Store Peter Christensen married Kathrine Christensen, who was from

Sebula, Iowa. They built a new house on the farm, which is shown in Figure 72 as it looked in 1918. A typical house of its time, it was large with a kitchen, pantry, dining room, living room, bedroom, and bath on the first floor and five bedrooms upstairs. A man named Boberg was the carpenter.



Fig. 72. Niels Peter Johannes and Kathrine Christensen house, exterior; built in 1915.

Store Peter kept careful records. His account book is a delight to read. The following is an excerpt:

To the new house

1915

Jan. 1	50 Load Sand	11.00	
" 16	84 ft. Sewer pipe	12.10	Paid
" 22	Brick	16.40	Paid
Febr. 23	for lumber	600.00	Paid
Marts 23	1/2 Gl Pint	1.00	Paid
April 10	for lumber	400.00	Paid
" 14	pipe	.65	Paid
"	Sewerpipe	2.05	
	for digging celler	20.00	Paid
May 29	Christ Bollesen	200.00	
June 13	Rasmus Jensen	5.00	Paid 12.68,20c
June 20, 1915	Lumber Cement	7.85	Paid 7,85
June 27, 1915	Ed Joins Lath	38.00	1276.05
Jul 15, 1915	Mason	185.00	1314.05
			185.00
			1499.05

He also recorded prices of machinery and other things he had purchased, noting that he paid \$135 for a new carriage in 1912 and \$775 for a new automobile in 1917.¹¹¹

The Rasmus and Clara Sorensen House

Rasmus Sorensen, from Fruering, Denmark, came to the United States in 1910. He was a bricklayer, plasterer, and all-round cement man. Having learned his trade from his brother, who was trained in Denmark, he began working as a tenderer in Tyler for twenty-five cents an hour. Sorensen married Clara Hansen, daughter of Mads and Karoline Hansen, whose home I have described earlier. Clara Sorensen told me about his work in the area.¹¹² He built many houses in Tyler, including one for his own family in 1918 (Figure 73). The foundation was poured cement formed in wooden molds, and the brick veneered walls were made



Fig. 74. Clara Sorensen apartment, interior living room.



Fig. 75. Clara Sorensen in her apartment.



Fig. 73. Rasmus and Clara Sorensen house, exterior; built in 1918.

from bricks that came from Springfield, Minnesota.

Most of the homes that Rasmus Sorensen built were plastered. He used a 3' x 5' sandbox for mixing sand, water, and plaster by hand. At first he used gravel just as it came from the gravel pits; later he used washed sand and a small electric mixer. Walls and ceilings got two coats of the mixture and then were smoothed.¹¹³

Some time after Rasmus Sorensen died, Mrs. Sorensen moved into an apartment, to which she has added many Danish touches. Figure 74 shows Danish pictures and embroidery hung on her apartment wall, Danish porcelain displayed on the shelves. And, just as in Mrs. Sorensen's parents' home (Figure 75), plants serve as a background behind the rocking chair.

The Frode Nordskov and Astrid Thomsen House

Dr. Frode Thomsen, the Tyler dentist, was born in Ristinge, Langeland, and his wife, Astrid Hendricksen, in Copenhagen. They were married in Chicago in 1907 and established their home in Tyler immediately after the wedding. Their son, Helge Thomsen, has told me about the house. This elegant structure, which was built in 1918, was designed by an architect from Mankato, Minnesota. There was a large open foyer with a stairwell going upstairs. Dark English woodwork and beamed ceilings were used throughout the living room and dining room.¹¹⁴ In writing about his memories of the house, Helge Thomsen said:

It was a gathering place for young people. It was a place of "refuge" when there were lengthy events at Danebod — a place for out of town people to find a quiet spot away from the hustle and bustle of activities up there. During the summertime the "rock garden" developed by F.N.T. in the 1930s (on site of his old tennis court) was an attraction unto itself with water lily ponds, gold fish, flowers of every variety and a "lyst hus" (gazebo).

Music was a major activity in the house. The Danebod choir, The Tyler Male Chorus, The Tyler String Ensem-

ble and make up groups all played and practiced there . . . Winter afternoons were commonly dedicated to listening to music, listening on the old Atwater Kent radio . . . It was a home for lonely souls. Mother and Dad would regularly invite lone persons who had no family in Tyler to share “*nyt aars gaas*” (New Year’s goose) or a Sunday nite supper . . . Celebration of events occurred on a regular basis. Christmas was perhaps the biggest celebration in the house. With many days of preparation by Mother, the event climaxed with Christmas eve dinner following the twilight church service. The dinner was the traditional Danish Christmas dinner — goose, red cabbage, rum pudding and *citron fromage* (lemon snow) followed by dancing and singing around the Christmas tree, closing with “*Nu har vi jul igen*” (Now it is Christmas again) and present opening.

Of course the other big celebrations were birthdays. The pattern in Tyler was not to issue formal invitations. The word went out by mouth, telephone and notices posted in the stores. The affair was at the celebrant’s house with neighbors and friends coming as early as 7:00 p.m.! A glass of wine was commonly served first with mixed conversations as to the events of the day or time. Very shortly the host would suggest that it was time for a little “game” (whist) where upon the men and women would separate and congregate in separate rooms never playing cards with each other. The men would then be served cigars. Later in the evening it would be time for “lunch” with coffee, open faced sandwiches, “*smaa kager*” (cookies) and possibly the hostess’ favorite dessert would be served.¹¹⁵

The view of the Thomsen house in Figure 76 shows the tennis courts in back. Figure 77 is a photograph of the living room at Christmas time. The tree is decorated with traditional Danish paper ornaments.



Fig. 77. Frode Nordskov and Astrid Thomsen house, interior; living room.



Fig. 76. Frode Nordskov and Astrid Thomsen house, exterior; built in 1918.

The Peter and Emma Thomsen House

Peter M. Thomsen and his wife, Emma Kleuver Thomsen, had experienced farm life in two other states before they came to Tyler in 1919. Following their marriage in 1905, they lived first in Brayton, Iowa, and then homesteaded in Esmond, South Dakota.¹¹⁶ Peter Thomsen, a self-taught carpenter, made use of both his farming and carpentry skills.¹¹⁷ Born in Als, Sønderjylland, he came to America in 1893. One of his daughters, Hilda Thomsen Emmerick, wrote the following in her memoirs:

My father was born in Denmark but was forced to go to German school. When thirteen years old his folks took him out of school and they came to America. They moved to Iowa and he “worked out” for the neighbors. He worked only for his board. Wages were allowed him after he had worked a certain period. He was very economizing. His employer promised him a quarter if he would work two hours later than usual for two weeks. He did so and that twenty-five cents he took with him to the Fair but when he came home he still had the quarter in his pocket. After my father had earned some money he bought books to study from. Bookkeeping he mastered; arithmetic; and he even tried geometry and shorthand. (Imagine shorthand!) He bought carpentry books and learned to be a carpenter. Later he made use of his trade.¹¹⁸

The Thomsens’ daughter-in-law, Ann Thomsen, also has recorded family history. According to her story, the Thomsens’ years in South Dakota were happy and busy, but the family also experienced hardship. In 1909 hail destroyed their crops, in 1911 there was a drought, and the crops were poor again in 1914. By 1919 they decided it was time for a change and so moved to Minnesota.¹¹⁹

When the Thomsens moved to Tyler, they lived in what Hilda Emmerick referred to as the “old house,” one in which her family was crowded. This house was soon



Fig. 78. Peter and Emma Thomsen house, exterior; built in 1925.

replaced by the large one shown in Figure 78. Mrs. Emmerick continued:

In 1925 Dad and Mom built the big new home on the farm — four bedrooms and bath upstairs, and one bedroom downstairs, with kitchen, dining room and parlor. We used the dining room for all occasions, but

once in a while we did spill over into the parlor — that's where the piano was . . . When we moved into our new home on the farm, we still had the old-fashioned cook stove in the kitchen. We had a coal furnace in the basement, and we had electric light from Delco battery also stored in the basement. We would do all our cooking and baking in the cookstove. Mom was always baking bread for her brood and my job was to keep the fire going, which required wood and cobs . . . That was another job for us — to pick up a wagon load of cobs from the hog pen. Lots of time you ran into other things besides cobs! When the wagon was filled, Dad would come by and put on extra high boards, so we still were not finished; besides all the work of picking up the cobs we had to climb the wagon to empty our baskets . . . Frances and I shared a bedroom in the new house. I can't remember where we all slept in the old house, but we were crowded. We still had an old spring and mattress that tilted to the middle. Dad had a great time going to farm sales and coming home with the best bargains! to our dismay. Frances and I surely fought over who was to sleep in the center . . . We had so many rooms, funny we didn't move in the bedroom downstairs, but that was for 'company only', and relatives were too far away to come often at that time . . . we could have had the bed at least!¹²⁰

**The Anders and Mette Utoft/
Chris and Mette
Utoft House**



Fig. 80. Chris and Mette Utoft house, interior; living room.

Anders Nielsen Utoft and his wife Mette lived in Lindeballe before setting out for America in 1889. They bought a farm south of Tyler. The first farmhouse built in about 1890 on that farm is no longer standing. (Figure 79)¹²¹ Their son Chris Utoft (who immigrated as a child with his parents) and his wife, also named Mette, replaced the house in 1929.¹²² Figure 80 is a view of the living room in the second house.



Fig. 79. Anders and Mette Utoft/Chris and Mette Utoft house; built c. 1890.

Summary of Houses: 1885-1930

The houses grouped in the period 1885-1896 tended to be more simple in structure than those that came later. Although they were wooden and resembled the typical white farmhouses that were so typical in the Midwest, several of them bore vestiges of the symmetrical Danish houses of rural Denmark. From 1897 to 1930 the houses tended to be larger, and some were asymmetrically balanced with Victorian characteristics such as gables and wings. During this time, stones and bricks were introduced as building materials.

With the exception of a few items (desks, a trunk, and some embroidered pieces) the furnishings in these homes bore little of Danish influence. I have found that in southwestern Minnesota, as in southwestern Iowa, the immigrants arranged objects in their home in a style similar to what they had been accustomed in Denmark. Although interior photographs are scarce, the few I have found show that pattern was prominent particularly on walls — in wallpaper and in the number of pictures displayed — and that curtains and doilies tended to be arranged in a Danish fashion.

Craftspersons



Fig. 81. Picture frame made by Valdemar Therkildsen in 1896.



Fig. 82. Harald Petersen sanding wood.

I have found it difficult to locate detailed information about local craftspersons. With the exception of an occasional reference to a carpenter or painter, few of the Tyler residents I have interviewed recalled anything about them beyond their names. I did discover that at one time there had been a sløjdscole (craftschool) run by a Waldemar Petersen.

In January 1896 the *Lincoln County Journal* had the following to say about this instructor:

They teach scroll sawing, wood carving, turning, book binding and many other things. Everything manufactured is of usefulness [sic] in the average home and it is surprising to see how far the boys can carry it after a few weeks instruction. Waldemar Petersen, the instructor at this place, is a thoroughly competent man and it is well worth a man's time to make a visit at his office near the Lutheran church. He gives two lessons a week in which quite a few young men take part but it has been the supposition that he confined himself to teaching the Danish people, which however is not the case, it is for everybody and he will be glad to see some Americans take up the work.¹²³

Sigrid Jacobsen remembered that the school was located where the oil station is now on Highway 14. While attending the school, her brother, Valdemar Therkildsen, made the picture frame shown in Figure 81.

Apparently Petersen was forced to close the school when his health began to fail. He left for Denver, Colorado, in April 1896. I have been unable to determine whether he returned to resume his teaching.¹²⁴

Woodworking and woodcarving continue to be popular crafts among the people who live in Tyler today. Harald Petersen, shown in Figure 82, has encouraged woodcarving and has taught numerous classes. Through his instructions, others such as Jens Jorgensen (Figure 83) and Niels Dam (Figure 84), both immigrants, have developed skills in



Fig. 83. Jens Jorgensen with carved items.



Fig. 86. Anna Jensen making bobbin lace.

this craft. Niels Dam is also a woodworker; a pyramid shelf he made is shown in Figure 85.

Anna Jensen (Figure 86) is skilled at making bobbin lace. This photograph shows her demonstrating the intricacies of her craft at a summer festival.



Fig. 84. Niels Dam with carved items.

Afterword

As the Danish immigrants created their own homes, they were no doubt influenced by what they saw and experienced in non-Danish homes. They were limited by the kinds of furnishings they could purchase locally and by what time and available materials would permit them to build. Few were in a position to special order items from non-local sources. Even so, their native culture manifested itself, albeit subtly at times, in both the exteriors and interiors of their homes.

I believe it is the women who must be credited most for guarding traditions in the immigrant homes. It was they who preserved the furniture and decorative objects that were moved from house to house. It was they who were primarily responsible for making each new dwelling place feel like home.

The design and contents of Danish immigrant homes have far more significance than has been recognized in history books. Homes were of the utmost importance to the early settlers. Otherwise they would not have written about them in poetry, songs, and family histories, and they would not have so carefully passed items on to their heirs.

I hope that these glimpses will encourage others to look around them now and to preserve the story of more recent immigrant homes. Danish immigration did not end in 1930. It continues today. The homes that were established from the mid-1900s on are also a significant part of immigrant history.

Notes

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24. *Lincoln County Journal*, 12 and 19 March 1886.
25. *Lincoln County Journal*, 19 March 1886.
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28. *Lincoln County Journal*, 3 September 1886.
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Catalogue of the Exhibition

The following catalogue is a comprehensive listing of the items exhibited, with the exception of a few which, due to circumstances beyond the control of the guest curator, could not be included. Photographs, drawings, and translations by Signe T. Nielsen Betsinger are noted by an asterisk. Courtesy credits refer to one or more entries preceding the names of the lenders.

Hans Henrik and Nilsine Ries/Henrik and Kjerstine (and Elise) Ries House

- * 1. House, exterior; lower section built for Hans Henrik and Nilsine Ries in 1885. The house was named Centerfield because it was placed in the middle of a quarter section. Courtesy Robert and Marjorie Linnett, Tyler, Minnesota
- 2. Floor plan, first floor. Drawn by Herluf Ries, grandson of Hans Henrik and Nilsine Ries, as he remembered the house.
- 3. Desk from the Henrik and Kjerstine Ries house.
- * 4. Dresser from the Ries house purchased from the Rev. and Mrs. Thorvald Knudsen. Courtesy Herluf and Marianne Ries, Tyler, Minnesota.

Soren and Karen Holm House

- * 5. House, exterior; right section built in 1888.
- * 6. Floor plan, first floor; original three rooms.
- * 7. Sadiron, wooden crochet hook, and stove tong used by the Holms. Courtesy Karl M. Holm, Martha Holm, and Sigurd Holm (deceased).

Jens and Thora Krog House

- 8. Doll furniture made by Jens Krog from

scraps of wood. He often used orange crates.

- 9. Jens Krog standing in front of his house with samples of the doll furniture he made.
- 10. Secretary made by Jens Krog.
- 11. Flower stand made by Jens Krog.
- 12. Tablecloth. Embroidered by Thora Krog just before she left Denmark. Courtesy Selma Krog, Lake Benton, Minnesota.

Peter and Katrine Duus House

- * 13. House, exterior; built c. 1892. Courtesy Elisa Duus, Solvang, California.

Mads and Karoline Hansen House

- 14. House, exterior; built in 1892. Courtesy Clara Sorensen, Tyler, Minnesota.
- 15. House, exterior; built in 1910. Courtesy Carl and Dorothy Sorensen.
- * 16. House, interior; living room. Courtesy Clara Sorensen, Tyler, Minnesota.
- 17. Danish house, interior; c. 1910. From the files of Signe T. Nielsen Betsinger.
- 18. Chair from the Hansen home.
- * 19. Lamp used by the Hansens.
- * 20. Chair from the Hansen house. Courtesy Elmer and Anita Sorensen, Marshall, Minnesota.

Niels Nielsen and Anne Sandager House

- 21. House, exterior; built in 1892. Courtesy Lenore S. Hansen, Rochester, Minnesota.

Thomas and Andrea Hansen House

- * 22. House, exterior; left side built first in 1892.
- 23. Chest of drawers from the Hansen house; c. 1883. A wedding gift from Thomas Hansen's brother, Frederick Hansen, from Neenah, Wisconsin. Courtesy Carl T. and Edna Hansen, Tyler, Minnesota.
- 24. Sausage stuffer. Courtesy Hazel Jensen, Tyler, Minnesota.

Hans and Anne Duus House

- * 25. House, exterior; built in 1892.
- 26. Metal lamp used by the Duus family.
- 27. Sewing box used by Anne Duus.
- 28. Cups, saucers, and plates marked 1895 from the Duus house.
- 29. Plate, Carlsbad china; child's cup, no mark, from the Duus house.
- 30. Silverware, left to right: knife and fork, Montana silver; spoons and gravy ladle, Oneida silver, Carnation pattern dated 1908; Danish sterling spoon dated 1907, used in the Duus house. Items 26 through 30 were photographed by Jakob Ravn, Solvang, California. Courtesy Elisa Duus, Solvang.

Mads and Karen Bollesen House

- * 31. House, exterior; built c. 1892.

- * 32. House, exterior; front door.
- 33. Pillowcase used in the Bollesen house. Courtesy Harald and Margaret Madsen, Tyler, Minnesota.
- * 34. Cut glass bowl used in the Bollesen house.
- * 35. Æbleskivepande (Monks pan) used in the Bollesen house. Courtesy Ansgar and Julia Bollesen, Tyler, Minnesota.

Jorgen and Kirstine Johansen House

- 36. House, exterior; built c. 1892. Courtesy Rigmor Christensen, Tyler, Minnesota.
- * 37. House, interior; wall panel detail painted by Christian Jensen, a Danish painter.
- * 38. House, interior; wall panel, detail painted by Christian Jensen, a Danish painter.
- * 39. House interior; wall panel, detail painted by Christian Jensen, a Danish painter. Courtesy Merlin Lustfield, Tyler, Minnesota.

Laurids and Maren Marie Therkildsen House

- 40. House, exterior; built c. 1892.
- 41. Linen dress worn by Maren Marie Samuelson on her journey to America in 1884.
- 42. Spinning wheel on which flax raised on Maren Marie Samuelson's home farm was spun into linen thread for the dress in 41.
- * 43. Poem written by Maren Marie Samuelson when she left Denmark in 1884.
- * 44. Poem written by Maren Marie Therkildsen shortly after she came to America.

- 45. Pillow made by Maren Marie Therkildsen. The mark blomst (field flower) motifs which are typically Danish have been integrated into an American crazy-quilt-inspired design.
- 46. Dollies. Embroidered by Maren Marie Therkildsen.
- 47. Handkerchief bag used in the Therkildsen house. It was hung by a bedstead as a sanitary measure.
- 48. Danish silver tablespoon from the Therkildsen house.
- 49. Danish silver teaspoons from the Therkildsen house.
- 50. Picture frame made by Valdemar Therkildsen.
- 51. Picture frame made by Valdemar Therkildsen. Courtesy Sigrid Jacobsen, Tyler, Minnesota.

Christian and Hansine Norgaard House

- * 52. House, exterior; built c. 1892. Courtesy L. W. Klein, Nicollet, Minnesota.
- 53. Floor plan, first floor. Drawn by Herluf Ries, grandson of Christian Norgaard, as he remembered the house.
- 54. Floor plan, second floor. Drawn by Herluf Ries, grandson of Christian Norgaard, as he remembered the house. Courtesy Herluf Ries, Tyler, Minnesota.

Niels and Marie Jensen House

- * 55. House, exterior, front; built c. 1893.
- * 56. House, exterior, back.
- * 57. House, interior; living room.

58. Book of building plans and notes owned by Niels Jensen.
59. Planes used by Niels Jensen. Courtesy Oliver R. Johnsen, Tyler, Minnesota.
- * 60. Pyramid shelf used by Dagny Jensen, present owner of the house. Courtesy Dagny Jensen, Tyler, Minnesota.
61. Pyramid shelf, nineteenth century. Alf. G. Hassings Forlag.
- Hans and Ane Christensen House**
- * 62. Vase from the Christensen house.
- * 63. Vase from the Christensen house.
- * 64. Goblet from the Christensen house.
- * 65. Gravy boat from the Christensen house.
- * 66. Danish candlestick used in the Christensen house.
- * 67. Danish mortar and pestle used in the Christensen house. Courtesy Volmer and Anna Jensen, Tyler, Minnesota.
- Hans and Marie Simonsen House**
- * 68. House, exterior; built in 1895.
- * 69. Floor plan, first floor; originally there were two rooms.
- * 70. Floor plan, second floor. Courtesy Glenn Krog, Lake Benton, Minnesota.
- * 71. Chair used by the Simonsens.
- * 72. Bed from the Simonsen house.
- * 73. Cups from the Simonsen house.
- * 74. Tobacco box that belonged to Hans Simonsen. Courtesy Marie Landgren, Pipestone, Minnesota.
- * 75. Polyphonic music box. Hans Simonsen won this on a sixty-six-cent raffle ticket. He kept it in the downstairs bedroom on a small table. Courtesy Harold Simonsen, Lake Benton, Minnesota.
- Soren Kristian Peter and Kirstine Mikkelsen House**
76. House, exterior; built c. 1897.
77. House, exterior; date unknown. Courtesy Signe Jensen, Tyler, Minnesota (deceased).
- Hans and Marie Johansen House**
78. House, exterior; built c. 1897. Courtesy Eilif and Marion Johansen, Tyler, Minnesota.
79. House, interior; living room. The curtains, wallpaper, pictures, doilies, and plants add pattern to the room and give an appearance of Danish houses from the same period. Courtesy Ove and Elizabeth Johansen, Winter Park, Florida.
80. House, interior; bedroom. Rarely were photographs taken in the bedroom because the living room was the "best" room and the one to show to others. This bedroom is reminiscent of a Danish interior. Courtesy Genevieve Jorgensen Hicks, Fort Collins, Colorado.
- Laurits and Anna Petersen House (Kronborg)**
81. House, exterior; built in 1898. The house was named Kronborg, which is also the name of a Danish castle.
82. Garden plan drawn by Audrey Kuhn, Tyler, Minnesota, as she remembered it from 1937 when she lived at Kronborg.
83. Floor plans, first and second floor; drawn by Audrey Kuhn, Tyler, Minnesota, as she remembered them from 1937 when she lived at Kronborg.
84. House, interior; parlor.
85. House, interior; parlor. Courtesy John and Olga Opfell, Torrance, California.
- * 86. Chest of drawers from Kronborg. The style is similar to early- and mid-nineteenth-century dragkister (chests of drawers). This chest eventually was moved to Askov, Minnesota, where it was used in the home of Hjalmar and Medora Petersen. Mr. Petersen was a former governor of Minnesota.
- * 87. Detail of chest in 86.
88. Chair; used in Kronborg and in Governor and Mrs. Hjalmar Petersen's home. The Laurits Petersens purchased the chair from Carl Hansen in Tyler when he moved to California. The back of this mahogany chair is made of six layers of laminated wood with a mother-of-pearl inlaid design. Courtesy Medora Petersen, Wilmar, Minnesota.
- Rasmus J. and Karen Martensen House**
89. House, exterior; built in 1902. Courtesy Dagny Gribbskov, Junction City, Oregon.
- * 90. House, exterior; now owned by Hjarne and Margaret Duus.
- * 91. Pyramidehylde (pyramid shelf) owned by Hjarne and Margaret Duus. It was a gift to Mrs. Duus's mother from Marie Sandager, daughter of Niels Nielsen and Anne Sandager. Courtesy Hjarne and Margaret Duus, Tyler, Minnesota.
92. Danish pyramid shelf; nineteenth century. Alf. G. Hassings, Forlag.
- Soren Knudsen and Karen Petersen House**
93. House, exterior; date unknown. Courtesy Rudolph and Lucille Utoft, Tyler, Minnesota.
- * 94. Lamp from the Petersen house.
- Mathias and Karen Andersen House**
95. House, exterior; built c. 1903.
- * 96. House, exterior; 1980s. Courtesy Walentyna Anderson, Lake Benton, Minnesota.
- Christian Howe House**
- * 97. House, exterior; built c. 1900. Courtesy Walentyna Andersen, Lake Benton, Minnesota.
- Christian and Marie Sorensen House**
98. House, exterior; built c. 1912.
99. Chest for important papers. Christian Sorensen made it for his journey to America in about 1880. Courtesy Ellen Sorensen, Tyler, Minnesota.
- Andrew and Anna Jensen House**
100. Writing desk from the Jensen house. It was made by Andrew Jensen when he and his wife moved from Rock County to Lincoln County.
- They had a bed that could not be transported by rail, so Andrew made it into a desk. Courtesy Selma Krog, Lake Benton, Minnesota.
- * 101. Writing desk with characteristics similar to the one in 100. This desk was in the home of Mr. and Mrs. Niels Bennedsen in Kimballton, Iowa in 1970. From Signe T. Nielsen Betsinger file.
102. Clock shelf made by Andrew Jensen for his daughter, Selma Krog.
103. Clock shelf made by Andrew Jensen.
104. Flower stand made by Andrew Jensen. He used part of a porch colonnade for the upright section.
105. Doll bed made by Andrew Jensen for his daughter, Selma Krog. Courtesy Selma Krog, Lake Benton, Minnesota.
- Hans Peter Christian and Sine Hansen House**
106. House, exterior; built c. 1889 for William and Mary Luby, the original owners.
107. House, exterior; built in 1914.
108. Trunk from the Hansen house. When the lid is turned so it is concave, it becomes a baby's bed.
109. Rocking chair from the Hansen house. Courtesy Orval and Hilda Hansen, Tyler, Minnesota.
- Niels Peter Johannes and Kathrine Christensen House**
110. House, exterior; built in 1915.
- * 111. Vase from the Christensen house. Courtesy Herluf and Laura Faaborg, Tyler, Minnesota.

Rasmus and Clara Sorensen House

- * 112. House, exterior; built in 1918.
- * 113. Detail of house in 112. Courtesy Larry and Katherine De Boer.
- * 114. Clara Sorensen apartment, interior. Mrs. Sorensen now lives in an apartment. It is evident that she has arranged decorative objects in the Danish tradition, much as her parents did. (Shown in 16).
- 115. Painting of *Himmelbjerget* (The Mountain of Heaven) from Denmark. Brought to United States by Clara Sorensen.
- * 116. Clara Sorensen in her apartment. Courtesy Clara Sorensen, Tyler, Minnesota.

Frode Nordskov and Astrid Thomsen House

- 117. House, exterior; built in 1918. There was a tennis court in the back of the house.
- 118. House, interior; living room. The tree was decorated with paper ornaments which are traditionally Danish.
- 119. Danish tablecloth from the Thomsen house.
- 120. Crocheted doilies made by Astrid Thomsen.
- 121. Table flagpole from the Thomsens house. Courtesy Helge and Muriel Thomsen, Edina, Minnesota.

Peter and Emma Thomsen House

- * 122. House, exterior; built in 1925. Courtesy Darrell and Janice Thomsen, Tyler, Minnesota.

Anders and Mette Utoft/Chris and Mette Utoft House

- 123. House, exterior; built c. 1890.

- 124. House, exterior; built 1929. Courtesy Rudolph and Lucille Utoft, Tyler, Minnesota.
- 125. Silver service from the Anders and Mette Utoft house. Courtesy Mildred Utoft, Tyler, Minnesota.
- 126. Chair from Chris and Mette Utoft house.
- 127. Waffle iron from Chris and Mette Utoft house. Iron is marked 1892.
- 128. Rocking chair from Chris and Mette Utoft house. Courtesy Rudolph and Lucille Utoft, Tyler, Minnesota.
- 129. Lamp from Chris and Mette Utoft house.
- 130. Chime clock from the Chris and Mette Utoft house. Clock was a wedding gift to the couple.
- 131. Flatiron from Chris and Mette Utoft house. Courtesy Deborah Utoft, St. Paul, Minnesota.

Craftspersons

- 132. Picture frame made by Valdemar Therkildsen in 1896. Courtesy Sigrud Jacobsen, Tyler, Minnesota.
- * 133. Harald Petersen, Tyler, Minnesota. Mr. Petersen teaches wood carving in the Tyler community.
- * 134. Jens Jorgensen, Minneapolis, Minnesota. A former participant in Harald Petersen's classes.
- * 135. Niels Dam, Tyler, Minnesota, shown with his carved items on Æbleskiver Day.
- 136. Pyramid shelf made by Niels Dam, Tyler, Minnesota. Courtesy Niels and Ethel Dam.
- 137. Pyramid shelf made by Victor Jensen, Tyler, Minnesota. Courtesy Niels and Ethel Dam.
- * 138. Anna Jensen, Tyler, Minnesota, making bobbin lace.



Fig. 85. Pyramid shelf made by Niels Dam.

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