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**NEW DENMARK, NEW BRUNSWICK: NEW APPROACHES IN THE
STUDY OF DANISH MIGRATION TO CANADA, 1872-1901**

by

Erik John Nielsen Lang, B.A. Hons., B.Ed., AIT

**A thesis submitted to
the Faculty of Graduate Studies
in partial fulfilment of
the requirements for the degree of**

Master of Arts

**Department of History
Carleton University
Ottawa, Ontario
25 April 2005**

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19 May 2005

Abstract

From 1870 to 1914, some 20,000 Danish migrants arrived in Canada directly from Denmark or through the United States. The Danes were highly sought after by Canadian governments as they were seen as agricultural, easily assimilated, and of northern stock. Danes spread themselves thinly across Canada, eroding a strong sense of identity and resulting in a historiography whose evolution, compared with that of other European ethnic groups, has been slower to accept new approaches and perspectives. This study will focus upon the 1872 to 1901 period of Danish migration and settlement in New Denmark, New Brunswick. Its first purpose is to explore political and policy aspects of New Denmark's settlement history that had previously been neglected. Secondly, it will apply more modern techniques of analysis, such as the use of quantitative methods, to help bring the historiography of New Denmark and Danish migration more into line with work on other European migrant groups. Four main points will be argued: firstly that only with the help of a Dominion subsidy was New Brunswick willing to mount a serious recruitment, immigration, and settlement scheme, secondly that there exists no hard evidence proving New Denmark's location was chosen as a buffer against Francophone encroachment, thirdly that New Denmark represents a distinct subset of Danish emigration, and finally that in part due to poor economic conditions, immigration to New Denmark was counterbalanced by an outflow of population of similar magnitude.

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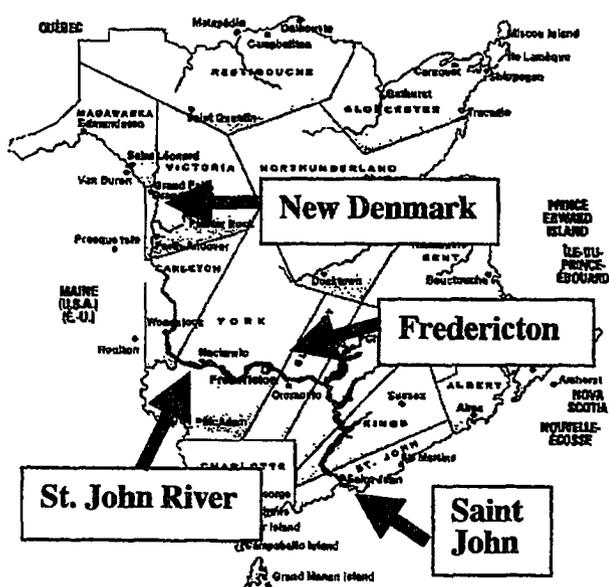
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Introduction

The Danish presence in Canada overall has been small. If we look to the Encyclopedia of Canada's Peoples as an indication of the Danish impact on Canada, of the 1334 pages, only 8 are reserved for the Danes. In the 2001 Canadian Census, 170,780 Canadians claimed Danish ancestry of a population of 29,639,035, placing the Danes near the bottom of the list, between the Jamaicans and the Vietnamese.¹

The oldest Danish settlement in Canada is New Denmark, New Brunswick. Just a few kilometers from the upper reaches of the St. John River, it was first settled in 1872. Figure 0.1 below shows the settlement's location.

Figure 0.1 Location of New Denmark Settlement



Map from "www.new-brunswick.net."

This thesis will examine New Denmark and Danish migration to Canada in the last three decades of the 19th century. Its chapters will focus upon varied and important aspects of its settlement history.

¹ 2001 Census of Canada, Statistics Canada, "<http://www12.statcan.ca/english/census01/home/index.cfm>."

Chapter One will consider Danish migration's historiography, compare it with that of other migrant groups in Canada, and assess New Denmark's position.

Chapter Two will contemplate the relationship that existed between Dominion and Provincial immigration and settlement policy, look into New Brunswick's position in relation to the national government, and assess the province's attempts to create and maintain its own migrant recruitment and settlement program.

Chapter Three will scrutinize the Danish context for the New Denmark migration, and will identify the factors, social, economic, and political, that helped push from Denmark those migrants searching for a better life overseas.

Chapter Four's purpose is to present the early history of New Denmark's settlement and explore lingering and unanswered questions surrounding the settlement's main organizer, how the Danish migrants were perceived by New Brunswickers, and accusations that a fear of Francophone encroachment played a hand in the settlement's location.

Chapter Five will apply quantitative methods to the study of New Denmark and investigate the Danish origins of its settlers, the growth and development of its population, and the high level of outmigration in the last three decades of the 19th century.

Following the last chapter, the Conclusion will review this study's outcomes.

Chapter One: The Maturation of Migration Historiography

“Men and women alike prepared to overcome seemingly insurmountable hardships. They were like children abandoned in the merciless woods.”¹

Description of early life in New Denmark from A History of New Denmark.

Recent Trends within Migration Historiography

Migration historians ask why people decide to cross an ocean, endure weeks and sometimes months of travel, to arrive in a nation of which they may know little, but on which they have placed their hopes and have wagered their futures. In recent years, migration historians have dramatically altered their understanding of the concept of migration by moving away from simple dichotomies such as push and pull factors and immigration versus emigration to more complex arguments. Their understanding of the factors influencing migration has been broadened to include the entirety of the migrant's journey and to recognize the migrants' sense of agency.

Although each emigrant's motivations are perhaps distinct, there remains one constant: for most, the reasons were many. Yet even the most distressing economic and social conditions in the sending society are often not enough to stimulate emigration. Migration historians have long tried to understand the complex reasoning behind migrations and focused their efforts on the economic “push” and “pull” factors they felt exerted the most power over potential migrants. Push factors were described as those conditions inside the sending nation that pushed migrants out, for example, poor agricultural conditions or a weak industrial sector. Pull factors are conditions in a nation that act as a magnet, pulling in migrants from other nations or areas. Inhabitants of a nation whose economy is weak will sometimes look to other nations where opportunity is more prevalent. Historians had placed their focus almost entirely upon these push and pull factors, without recognizing other facilitating

¹ The New Denmark Women's Institute, *A History of New Denmark*, (Compiled in 1959 by the New Denmark Women's Institute, and edited as a Centennial Project, June 19, 1967), p. 10.

factors which, in many ways, can play an even more important role in a migrant's decision to emigrate.

As Peter N. Moogk noted in his study of French migrants to Canada in the 17th and 18th centuries, push and pull factors alone were not sufficient to produce mass migration. Certain preconditions were also necessary. Shipping connections, literacy, recruitment, or some impetus to kick-start the process—all these are examples of such preconditions. According to Moogk, the absence of these facilitating factors made mass migration less likely.²

Depending on location in a receiving or sending country, historians also tended to discuss either emigration from the old country, or arrival in the new. This gave the misleading impression that the migrants' journey was unidirectional. We now recognize four types of migration—temporary, return, repeat, and stage migration. The older dichotomization placed emphasis on the sending or receiving stages, but did not attempt to link the two. Historians now visualize the migrant's journey in its totality.

The term “migration” rather than “immigration” or “emigration” is coming to be understood as more descriptive of the migrants' reality, as it is less specific and recognizes the multi-trajectory nature of population movement. Historian Dirk Hoerder explains that migration “can be seasonal, temporary for months or years, unintentionally or involuntarily permanent, or permanent. Migrations occur in stages or in circular movements; it may be mono- or multidirectional. Men and women may migrate in stages from a village to a mid-sized town, earn money and acquire urban skills, then decide on a further move into a different culture.”³

Hoerder conceptualized a nested series of systems. A system links two or more societies and emigrants move between these societies in groups or clusters. This movement between the sending and receiving society is characterized by its longevity, lasting for years. The systems are maintained

² Peter N. Moogk, “Reluctant Exiles: Emigrants from France in Canada before 1760,” *William and Mary Quarterly*, 46.3 (1989): p. 464.

³ Dirk Hoerder, Dirk. “From Immigration to Migration Systems: New Concepts in Migration History.” *OAH Magazine of History*, 14.1 (Fall 1999): p. 5.

through continued contact with family and friends who have migrated or stayed behind. Further migrants are much more likely to go to areas about which they have information. Letters from family members and information from returned migrants provide the links necessary to create a continuing movement back and forth between the two societies.⁴

While migration systems connect two or more societies, inside each migration system are geographically smaller, more specific subsystems. For instance, while the major migration system that populated North America was the Euro-Atlantic system, by which Europeans followed economic currents and family ties to North American locations, there existed subsystems within it. Scandinavian emigration was a subsystem within this greater system, its situation amid the major migration system differing from those of other European nations. The process then becomes more specific, as subsystems are further broken down to include regions and even villages. This refinement is necessary to fully explain the migration process since each subsystem contributed to population movements based on criteria specific to the village or family.

Included in this new way of thinking is the recognition of a migrant's sense of agency. In the past migrants have been portrayed as helpless masses at the mercy of economic and social conditions. It is now recognized that migrants set their own migration criteria.⁵ They made pro-active decisions in an attempt either to improve the quality of their family's life, or to maintain a lifestyle that at home was in jeopardy. Historiographically, the power has been given back to the people.

The new sense of agency and individual choice that characterizes contemporary immigration history has shaken immigration historiography to its core. The discipline has continued to evolve in the past decade, with the challenging of old notions and the birth of new concepts. Hoerder has used newer methods of analysis to challenge older thoughts on immigration issues such as assimilation and push-pull factors. Assimilation of an immigrant group into the receiving society used to be an accepted fact, but Hoerder has challenged it, noting not just effects upon arriving migrants, but effects

⁴ Hoerder, "Immigration to Migration," p. 6.

⁵ Ibid., p. 7.

the arriving groups had upon the receiving culture.⁶ He defines the concept as “interactive acculturation” between both groups as opposed to the “assimilation” of the arriving immigrant group.

Interestingly, Hoerder has argued that a migrant’s sense of agency was shaped by factors outside of the migrant’s control. On a macro-level, an emigrant’s sense of agency was influenced by global economics. On a more specific micro-level, an emigrant’s agency operated within the context of his or her personal economic situation.⁷ In this new way of thinking, migrants are given back their agency and are empowered to make decisions that they feel will most benefit the individual or family, but these decisions are viewed as contingent upon a host of specific and contextual circumstances.

Canadian Immigration Historiography

Immigration history came into its own in Canada only in the 1970s as a result of the “new history” of the 1960s. An offshoot of social history, it borrowed from the new ethnic, labour, and gender histories.⁸ This allowed the discipline to grow as it accepted new methods, such as oral history and quantitative investigation, and the focus shifted from policy to people and from story to analysis.

How have immigrants been treated as the writing of Canadian history matured? The years 1930 to 1960 have been described as the time when “nation building” was seen as all-important, when writers sought to chronicle the creation of Canada and its evolution from colony to nation. Historians’ focus included a heavy emphasis on government, and so on immigration policy, and the settlement of immigrants. Historians wrote about those they believed were most important to Canada, a great “British” nation: the English, the Scots, and the Irish.⁹

Harold Innis’s “staples theory,” which explained the development of Canada through its exploitation of its natural resources, and Donald Creighton’s “Laurentian thesis,” which saw the development of Canada across east-west lines, both suggested that Canada needed a history which

⁶ Ibid., p. 8.

⁷ Ibid., p. 7.

⁸ Franca Iacovetta, The Writing of English Canadian Immigrant History, Canadian Historical Association Canada’s Ethnic Groups Series, Booklet number 22 (1997), p. 1.

⁹ Iacovetta, p. 2.

would unite the country. Issues seen as potentially divisive were downplayed. The large influx of non-British immigrants that occurred in the 20th century left many historians worried about the future of Canada's British heritage. A discussion of non-British immigration was not a priority.

Canada's historians later followed the lead of those revisionists in the United States who seized the spirit of the 1960s and critiqued earlier works, namely the 1950 immigrant writings of Oscar Handlin. Handlin had preached his view of the uprooted European immigrant and his eventual assimilation into the overwhelming force of United States culture. The immigrant was portrayed as helpless, without agency or choice, a victim of circumstance and the economy. Handlin's views came under heavy attack throughout the next two decades.¹⁰

This backlash soon attracted the attention of Canadian historians because of the new techniques of analysis the revisionists adopted. The new literature provided fresh insight into immigrant lives and experiences. Unlike Handlin, these new immigration historians gave the immigrant back the power they must have had in their daily lives. They were no longer pawns. The new historians recognized "agency, choice, adaptation, and resistance without ignoring racism and exploitation."¹¹

Another fundamental change came with the work of Frank Thistlethwaite. His article, "Migration from Europe Overseas in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries" recognized that there were two phases in any migrant's journey: emigration and immigration. Up to 1960, only one of these phases had been sufficiently investigated, that being immigration into North America. Emigration from Europe, even though this migration consisted of over 50 million people between the years 1821 and 1924, was understudied.¹² This realization would encourage the study of emigration from Europe and eventually lead to a study of the entire migration process, from origin to destination.

The 1970s therefore brought three major shifts in focus for Canadian historians. Firstly, the study of government policy and politicians was downgraded. Secondly, more attention was given to

¹⁰ Ibid., p. 1.

¹¹ Ibid., p. 2.

¹² Frank Thistlethwaite, "Migration from Overseas in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries," in H. Moller ed., Population Movements in Modern European History, (New York, 1966), p. 74.

the immigrants' lived experiences. Personal documents, newspapers, letters, and business documents became important, allowing a new insight into lives long unexamined. Thirdly, Canadian scholars became more informed in their search for new levels of analysis. They began to draw from international literature, other contexts, and from fields such as anthropology and ethnography.¹³ Historians started to write about topics that had been foreign, and the breadth of what could be written widened considerably.

Canadian immigration history has matured to a new level since the 1960s. Topics are now more varied. The subject of immigration history has become increasingly complex as new concepts and techniques are used. Ethnicity, race, gender, the workplace, and urbanization have all risen to the mainstream and new methods of analysis have allowed reexaminations of "older" topics. The new approaches are most notably demonstrated in works by Bruce S. Elliott, Adele Perry, and Franca Iacovetta.

Bruce S. Elliott incorporated genealogy and quantifiable data into his study of 19th century Tipperary Irish migrations. Elliott reconstructed the migration experience of 775 families from the Tipperary region of Ireland. He brought genealogical techniques to the study of immigration history as he mapped family trees and families' voyages and arrivals. He also analyzed the available records in search of patterns or anomalies in the migration. Elliott's book Irish Migrants in the Canadas: A New Approach¹⁴ brought to life the entirety of the migration experience, and shed light onto the immigrants' agency and motivation. The pull of family and friends proved most strong, as clusters of Irish set out over the years to join others who had previously immigrated. The study of immigrants' lives was more than ever beginning to include real people, not just figures or statistics.

Adele Perry explored the topics of gender and race in her study of British Columbia society in the mid to late 19th century. Perry studied how the white middle class who sought to create on the west coast a truly "British" society used immigration as a means for achieving this goal. In On the Edge of

¹³ Ibid., p. 2.

¹⁴ Bruce S. Elliott, Irish migrants in the Canadas : a new approach, (Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1988).

Empire: Gender, Race, and the Making of British Columbia, 1849-1871,¹⁵ Perry shows how attempts were made to import British women, believing their presence would refine society and reduce inter-cultural marriage between Native-Americans and uncultured white woodsmen.

Franca Iacovetta sought to come to a greater understanding of her own history and that of other Italian Canadians. She is like many Danish-North American historians in that respect. In Such Hardworking People: Italian Immigrants in Postwar Toronto,¹⁶ she followed Italian migrants from their homes in southern Italy to Toronto. Dealing with issues of ethnicity and prejudice, she postulated that the Canadian prejudice shown towards the southern Italian community mirrored the relationship between northern and southern Italians. She also discussed gender issues within the Italian urban community. She gave new life to Italian women, revealing them not as helpless victims who were destined to follow their husbands blindly, but as women with agency, who made decisions and influenced and contributed to their families' success.

Scandinavian-American Historiography

The immigration history that arose out of the 1960s was largely written by members of the more recently arrived eastern and southern European immigrant communities.¹⁷ While this was taking place, Scandinavian writers were content to maintain their traditional lines of discourse. The Danish historians continued for many years to stress the traditional image of the Scandinavian settler, the rural, agricultural pioneer.

Traditionally, Scandinavian historians have tended to study exclusively their own peoples. Because of this, it is perhaps difficult to claim the existence of a "Scandinavian-American" historiography. It could instead be argued that separate historiographies exist for each Scandinavian

¹⁵ Adele Perry, On the edge of empire : gender, race, and the making of British Columbia, 1849-1871, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2001).

¹⁶ Franca Iacovetta, Such hardworking people: Italian immigrants in postwar Toronto, (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1992).

¹⁷ H. Arnold Barton, "Where Have the Scandinavian-Americanists Been?" Journal of American Ethnic History, 15.1 (1995): p. 48.

nation. The Swedish Society of America was inaugurated in 1889 and in 1925 the Norwegian-American Historical Association was created. Both have since published journals and many books detailing their separate histories. The progress of the Danes has been slower. The Danish American Heritage Society only came into being in 1977. It has since published "The Bridge," which remains the only scholarly Danish-American journal in North America.

Within this closed and fragmented Scandinavian-American historical community, scholars have been slow to follow modern trends in history writing and each community has been content to "talk only to itself and to debate only within its own context."¹⁸ Lack of a wider context has affected the writing, as Scandinavian writers have attributed aspects of their own histories to factors they have deemed unique to their peoples, when in fact they are factors of more general application. Not only could the Scandinavian community benefit from the wider viewpoint, but the North American immigrant's history could very well be enriched through the perspectives and approaches of the Scandinavians.¹⁹ A movement towards greater dialogue and cross-cultural study between Scandinavian-American groups began in the late 1980s. Calls for the same movement in Canada among Scandinavian-Canadian historians have started to appear more recently.

The State of Danish Immigration Historiography

Compared with other groups, the writing of Danish immigration history has been slower to grasp recent trends. Why did this happen? Firstly, compared to other Scandinavian and European groups, few Danes migrated to North America. According to historian Kristian Hvidt, there are two reasons for this. The process of urbanization in Denmark occurred during the 1860s, a decade or two before other Scandinavian nations, and drew more Danes to live in the cities. Compared to Sweden, Denmark was a more urban country and its towns were better equipped to absorb rural migrants. Additionally while in Sweden many rural farmers were driven from rural areas in the early 19th

¹⁸ Ibid., p. 47.

¹⁹ Ibid., p. 47.

century because of a lack of farmland, the division of Danish land proved adequate as the urban areas absorbed some of the excess rural population, and the Danes took steps to reclaim unproductive lands for agricultural use.²⁰ Fewer Danes therefore chose to emigrate than in other Nordic countries.

Secondly, the Danes who did migrate to North America diffused themselves both geographically and culturally. This broad settlement pattern of the Danes eroded their ethnic identity and was a major factor in the stalled development of Danish-American studies.²¹ Geographical dispersement was also common among other Scandinavian groups. As Harald Runblom noted in his article "The Swedes in Canada: A Study of Low Ethnic Consciousness," Swedes were also apt to spread themselves thinly across the landscape.²² Because of this diffusion and the fact that most Danish migrants chose the United States, Danish immigration historiography has lagged behind its southern neighbour.

It could be argued Danish-Canadian historiography is 10 to 15 years behind its United States' counterpart in maturity. While professionalization occurred in the 1920s, the Danes clung longer to a narrative writing style, a filiopietistic, whiggish approach, and methods that continued to feature the "great men" of Danish settlement. Partly to distinguish themselves from some of the newer, urban immigrant groups, the Danes held onto the aspects of their history that they felt made them more "North American" and therefore legitimized their place in society. Even after the 1960s, their historians continued to stress agricultural settlement and Protestant traditions, while at the same time downplaying issues that came to the forefront of historical attention in the 1960s, such as urban settlement and issues relating to gender.

Any study of Danish-American historiography must begin with two of the earliest and perhaps most influential Danish-American historians. The first was Peter Sørensen Vig, who from 1899 to 1921 produced six books on Danish immigration to America, the most important being the 1909 work

²⁰ Kristian Hvidt, Flight to America: The Social Background of 300,000 Danish Emigrants, (New York: Academic Press, 1974), p. 198.

²¹ Frederick Hale, ed., Danes in North America, (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1984), p. viii.

²² Harald Runblom, "The Swedes in Canada: A Study of Low Ethnic Consciousness" Swedish-American Historical Quarterly 33 (1) 1982, pp. 4-20.

Danes in America.²³ He migrated to the United States in 1879 and is a good example of historians of the time, a “non-professional” who studied his own ethnicity exclusively. Vig made distinctions between those Danes who chose to emigrate and those who remained in Denmark. The emigrants chose the life of their wandering forefathers, while the Danes who remained continued “the history of the homeland.”²⁴ He saw a connection between the two Danish groups, though each had chosen to live their Danish lives in different ways.

Marcus Lee Hansen is remembered as more of an “immigration” than a “Danish” historian. His Ph.D. supervisor was the famous Frederick Jackson Turner. In his writings, which included The Atlantic Migration, 1607-1860, and The Immigrant in American History, both published in 1940, Hansen saw European immigration to the United States as not only an aspect of American history, but also of European history. The huge outpouring of people coming from Europe was an integral part of Europe’s expansion, and the American frontier was in many ways also a European frontier. He had not worked out the concepts of “push” and “pull” factors, but he recognized the importance of studying the forces governing the emigration of Europeans.²⁵

While Danish-North American historiography overall was slow to develop, it did contain notable examples of the “new” history and its methods, including topics such as gender, urbanization, and religion. Frederick Hale in 1972 published Danes in North America.²⁶ Despite its title, the book offers little Danish-Canadian content. The author does however use new approaches, including Danish emigrant letters to help explain the Danish experience. Also reflecting modern insights, each chapter focuses on a different topic, including “Danes in Urban America,” “Farmers and Farmhands,” “Religious Pluralism,” “Danish Women in America,” and “Danish Identity in America.” Hale’s book

²³ Peter L. Petersen and John Mark Nielsen, “Peter Sørensen Vig—Danish American Historian” Danish Emigration to the U.S.A., (Aalborg: Danish Emigration Archives, 1992), p. 124.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, P. 132.

²⁵ Erik Helmer Petersen, “Introduction” in Birgit Flemming Larsen, ed. On Distant Shores: Proceedings of the Marcus Lee Hansen Immigration Conference Aalborg, Denmark, June 29 - July 1, (Aalborg, Danish Emigration Archives, 1993), p. 14.

²⁶ Frederick Hale, ed. Danes in North America, (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1984).

marked a movement towards the study of a wider scope of Danish topics and issues, and he sought to go beyond the traditional government records and focus on those created by migrants.

The 1970s also marked the appearance of the first important quantitative study of North America's Danes. Kristian Hvidt's 1974 Flight to America involved a detailed study of the Copenhagen Police records²⁷ from 1868 to 1900. In an effort to protect its citizens, the Danish government decreed that all contracts signed between emigrant agents and Danish emigrants had to be registered with the Copenhagen Police. Hvidt used the data to re-construct the social background of the 300,000 Danish emigrants. His study was a response to the realization by Danish academics that emigration to North America had been studied actively in North America, but not in Denmark.

New Denmark and Danish-Canadian Historiography

While Danish-American historiography was slow to evolve, a more glacial evolution has occurred in Danish-Canadian circles. A good example of this older style is A History of New Denmark,²⁸ published in 1967 by The New Denmark Women's Institute. This book tells the story of New Denmark with narrative as its base but also with other non-textual references. The book does contain modern additions; maps, pictures, emigrant and government letters, and personal accounts were all used in an attempt to create a multi-faceted history of New Denmark. It covers the period from the first immigration and settlement up to the date of publication. It was a community effort, many non-professional historians writing sections. There is little analysis within the book, and material is presented simply as fact. Sources are diverse, however, including church records and newspaper articles from 1930 to the end of the 1950s.

The emphasis on ethnic groups and their communities does have its problems. These Danish-Canadian histories, like those of other ethnicities, displayed a distinctly whiggish tone, and placed

²⁷ 19th century Danish research is made more difficult because a large majority of families did not have fixed family names until approximately 1850. Until that time, most sons were given their father's Christian name with "sen" added to the end. "Datter" was added to create a daughter's surname.

²⁸ The New Denmark Women's Institute, A History of New Denmark.

heavy emphasis on the inevitability of their success.²⁹ While highlighting the heroic nature of the immigrants and the linear quality of the settlements' histories, some of the studies overlooked certain essential elements, namely anything which could have divided the immigrants rather than pulled them together: politics, class differences, and issues of gender.³⁰

In the case of New Denmark, the settlement's centennial in 1972 spurred a revival in interest and generated works that began to modernize the settlement's historiography. Helen Craig, a Danish descendant and librarian, compiled for the 100th anniversary of the New Denmark settlement in 1972 a collection of primary sources directly relating to its early years. New Denmark as seen by government officials at Fredericton, 1844-85³¹ contains Federal and Provincial documents, newspaper articles, and maps. Craig introduces each document with relevant contextual information. It places many vital documents within one book and proves an excellent resource, but its one major drawback is that only three copies were produced. One copy is in Craig's possession, another was given to the New Denmark museum, and the last is found at the University of New Brunswick archives.

Professional study of New Denmark in the early 1970s helped propel the body of work forward. Oral interviews proved a large part of Roseville Burgoyne's 1973 M.A. thesis "New Denmark: An Ethnic Community in Canada"³² that examined the extent of assimilation and made predictions as to the future of their ethnicity. His research involved oral interviews with second and third generation members of the community. While his findings demonstrated that the rate of assimilation was slower than anticipated, Burgoyne did make predictions of the accelerated disappearance of both Danish language and culture. Burgoyne's study is dated, however, and his methodology and analysis require an update.

Another example of the early 1970s maturation was a history written about Danish settlements across the Canadian Prairies. Frank Paulsen visited numerous Danish settlements in search of oral

²⁹ Iacovetta, p. 14.

³⁰ Ibid., p. 14.

³¹ Helen Craig, New Denmark as seen by government officials at Fredericton, 1844-85, (Fredericton, N.B.: Helen Craig, 1972).

³² Roseville Luther Paul Burgoyne, New Denmark: an ethnic community in Canada, (U.N.B. Thesis No. 1328, 1973).

traditions and expressions of Danish culture. His aim was to study “the degree to which traditionally transmitted materials play a genuine role in the lives of the people belonging to the Danish communities.”³³ In Danish Settlements on the Canadian Prairies, Paulsen blames the characteristics of Danish settlement for the cultural apathy he found amongst the Danes.³⁴ They had spread themselves thinly across the landscape, and were unable to create cohesive communities where a sense of pride in their ethnicity and a buffer to outside cultures could be maintained.

Danish-Canadian study received a boost in 1981 when the Federation of Danish Associations in Canada³⁵ was established, bringing together the existing Danish organizations. Created in large part by its current president Roy Christensen, its purpose is to strengthen personal and institutional contacts among Danes and those with Danish ancestry, to exchange ideas and experiences, and to cooperate on joint Danish heritage projects. Annual conferences are held each year and the Federation annually publishes a book containing articles, reports, stories, biographies, and histories relating to Danish people and ethnicity in Canada. Similarly, the Association for Scandinavian Studies in Canada, a learned society, dedicates itself to the advancement of Scandinavian-Canadian studies.

Most recently, Danish-Canadian historiography began to move forward with the help of the Danish Emigration Archives. Located in Aalborg, the Danish Emigration Archives has changed the methods which historians use in their research. Established in 1932, its purpose has been to “collect and provide information based on the records, manuscripts, and photographs of those people who, at one time or another, emigrated from Denmark.”³⁶ The Danish Emigration Archives provides a critical portal to information for two million descendants of the 500,000 Danish emigrants found in the Archive’s files. In the late 1980s the Archives began to publish a series of collaborative books in English, including Danish Emigration to Australia, Danish Emigration to New Zealand, Danish

³³ Frank Paulsen, Danish settlements on the Canadian prairies: folk traditions, immigrant experiences, and local history. (Ottawa: National Museums of Canada, 1974), p. iv.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, p. iv.

³⁵ The Canadian Danish Federation’s Website is found at “<http://home.ca.inter.net/~robuch/dan-fed.htm>” and provides useful information regarding the organization and its activities.

³⁶ Henning Bender, “The Danes Worldwide Archives, 1932-1992” Henning Bender and Birgit Flemming Larson, eds., Danish Emigration to the U.S.A., (Aalborg: Danish Emigrant Archives, 1992), p. 232.

Emigration to Canada, and Danish Emigration to the U.S.A., that were meant to cater to the large overseas English-speaking market. These books have been well received in their respective markets, and have spurred the publication of other books on the subject of Danish migration.

Covering many aspects of the Danish experience in Canada and reflecting the evolving state of Danish-Canadian historiography, Danish Emigration to Canada,³⁷ was published in 1991. The book broke new ground in terms of its topics. Some of the notable chapter titles, written by both Danish and Canadian authors, include: “The Early Life of the Danish Churches in Canada,” “Danish Folk Schools in Canada,” “The Influence of Danish on Canadian English,” and “Danish Farmers in Canada.” Even with the more modern issues, the book does reflect the older style of history writing, the articles containing much biography and narrative with limited quantitative analysis.

The state of Danish-Canadian historiography in the early 1990s is perhaps best illustrated by a comparison with its “sister” publication, also backed by the Danish Emigration Archives, Danish Emigration to the U.S.A. The Danish-American book covers a far wider array of topics and thus shows the advanced state of the discipline south of the 49th parallel. Its chapter titles include “The Books and Libraries of the Danish Immigrants,” “Letters from America,” “Three Farm Families on Either Side of the Atlantic: An Example of Family and ‘Chain’ Emigration from the island of Møn in the 19th Century,” and “An Outline of the Historiography of Danish Emigration to America.” The actual writing style of these chapters is similar to that found in Danish Emigration to Canada, in that it is at times filiopietistic, but the breadth of issues covered proves the more evolved state of Danish-American writing.

A collection of papers presented at The Marcus Lee Hansen Immigration Conference in 1992 was published as On Distant Shores.³⁸ As mentioned earlier, Hansen was a pioneering immigration historian in the United States. Conferences such as this one show the renewed commitment to Danish studies which the Danish Emigration Archive helps promote, and the book touches on many

³⁷ Henning Bender and Birgit Flemming Larson, eds., Danish Emigration to Canada, (Aalborg: Danes Worldwide Archives, 1991).

³⁸ Larsen, On Distant Shores.

immigrant-related issues, including steerage conditions, steamship lines, settlement structure, cultural assimilation, urban settlement, and emigrant letters.

A book that is similar to Hale's Danes in North America in that it explores Danish immigrant history through emigrant letters, is A New Life: Danish emigration to North America as described by the Emigrants Themselves in letters 1842-1946.³⁹ Written by historian Niels Peter Stilling and Anne Lisbeth Olsen, it was published in 1994. Like Hale's book, its Canadian content is limited. This limitation is significant, however, revealing an overlooked aspect of Danish-Canadian migrant history.

One of the most important tools that the Danish Emigration Archives provides is its searchable online database. The Archives' website⁴⁰ features a searchable database of emigration lists compiled by the Copenhagen Police. These lists give the name, last residence, age, year of emigration, and destination of emigrants from 1869 to 1908, and contain information on 394,000 emigrants. While most Danish-Canadian history is written in a narrative form, the Police records provide an accessible tool for researching and analyzing immigration patterns and trends. The Danish Emigration Archives thus has helped encourage the widening of topics studied and the inclusion of newer approaches within the study of the Danish experience in Canada with the publication of a number of books and the dissemination of historical data on the internet.

The year 2000 was monumental within Danish-Canadian historiography. It marked the long overdue Canadian maturation of the discipline with the publication of In Denmark Born—To Canada Sworn.⁴¹ The first chapter marks the catching-up of Danish-Canadian historiography with the rest of the Canadian immigration historiography. This chapter, by Harald Runblom, responds in many ways

³⁹ Niels Peter Stilling and Anne Lisbeth Olsen, A New Life: Danish emigration to North America as described by the Emigrants Themselves in letters 1842-1946. (Aalborg, Denmark: Danes Worldwide Archives in collaboration with the Danish Society for Emigration History, 1994).

⁴⁰ The Danish Emigration Archive's Website can be found at "www.emiarch.dk/home.php3."

⁴¹ Birgit Flemming Larsen, ed., In Denmark born -to Canada sworn: Danish-Canadian lives. (Aalborg, Denmark: Danish Emigration Archives in collaboration with The Danish Society for Emigration History, 2000).

to issues in an article by H. Arthur Barton, “Where have the Scandinavian-Americanists Been?,”⁴² that spoke of similar issues within the United States’ Scandinavian historiography almost 20 years earlier. Runblom recognizes that Scandinavian writers have in the past studied their own groups almost exclusively. For this reason, the experiences of Canada’s Scandinavian groups must first be contrasted and compared before Scandinavian historians investigate non-Scandinavian groups. It is Runblom’s belief that the missed opportunities of the past will give way to new revelations and areas of study, such as the study of the urban nature of the Danes in Canada.⁴³

In addition to the books above, historian Palle Bo Bojesen published his 1992 Aarhus University doctoral thesis as the book New Denmark, New Brunswick, Canada.⁴⁴ It is written in Danish, but does include an English summary. Bojesen visited New Brunswick and New Denmark on a number of occasions after his retirement in 1981 as he researched his dissertation. At time of publishing Bojesen was 76 years old and the summary at least reads in an older style. It could almost be described as a “mini” great-men history of the settlement, as biography appears to hold a prominent position within the book. Bojesen does draw comparisons with similar settlements in the area. While references and comparisons are made with New Sweden and New Kincardineshire, the extent of his comparative work is unclear, as the short English summary does not provide enough information.

Conclusion

As has been demonstrated, Danish-Canadian historiography was behind the times and in more recent years has made progress towards parity with other ethnic groups. Partly because of the small number of Danes who made Canada their home, and of the tendency to spread themselves across the nation, a sense of Danish-Canadian identity has been diluted. They have been reluctant to move

⁴² Arnold H. Barton, “Where Have the Scandinavian-Americanists Been?” Journal of American Ethnic History, 15.1 (1995), p. 46-55.

⁴³ Harald Runblom, “Movement under the Polar Star: Scandinavian Migration to Canada” In Denmark Born—to Canada Sworn: Danish-Canadian Lives (Aalborg: Danish Emigration Archives, 2000), p. 11-24.

⁴⁴ Palle Bo Bojesen, New Denmark, New Brunswick, Canada. (Aarhus: Aarhus University Press, 1992).

outside the study of their own ethnic group or to place their experiences within larger Canadian contexts, but with the help of the Danish Emigration Archives in Aalborg, progress has been made.

Recognizing the state and maturity level of Danish-Canadian historiography, this thesis will address those aspects of New Denmark's history that to this point have remained under-studied and bring the writing of the settlement's history more into line with modern migration history trends and approaches. Overall, the study of Danish immigration to Canada is not as developed as the study of Danish immigration to the United States. This thesis will further fill the Canadian pool of knowledge and help bring more balance to the continental divide.

In recognition of the realization that a migrant's journey in its entirety must be studied, this thesis will study the journey of New Denmark's migrants on both sides of the Atlantic. It will look at those factors which attracted migrants to Canada and which existed in Denmark to make some of its citizens eager to leave. Once complete, it will then trace New Denmark's migrants from their origins in Denmark to their destination in North America, providing a glimpse into the social background of the Danes and a more complete picture of the New Denmark migration. It will recognize that New Denmark's migrants had choices, exercised their sense of agency and were not helpless victims. They were aware of the North American, Danish, and their own economic situations, and with this knowledge planned their migration. The influx of hundreds of Danish migrants into rural New Brunswick had consequences not just for the new arrivals, but for the host society too. The thesis will take into account the reactions to and perceptions of the Danes by New Brunswickers.

Since the 1960s, migration historians have sought to bring more attention to the lived experiences of migrants at the expense of government, its officials, and biography. In the case of New Denmark, aspects of New Denmark's history were not fully explored before the focus change was made, leaving holes in the settlement's historiography. Care must be taken to both highlight new approaches and readdress the neglected issues, such as federal and provincial policy.

This thesis will use new approaches to study early New Denmark and further advance the current literature. Analysis and objectivity will attempt to replace filiopietism and whiggism. Issues such as ethnicity, labour, class, gender, race, prejudice, economics, societal refinement, and urbanization will be addressed, and genealogical approaches will be used to search for and to study quantitative patterns and anomalies within New Denmark's population, such as Danish area of origin, as well as chain and outmigration.

Chapter two will begin the study of New Denmark and its settlers by examining Canada's evolving immigration policy in the immediate pre- and post-Confederation periods, will compare New Brunswick, Canada, and the United States as late 19th century emigrant destinations, and will assess New Brunswick's colonization and settlement efforts.

Chapter Two: The Evolution of Dominion and Provincial Immigration Policy, With Emphasis on Danish Immigration and New Brunswick, 1867-1874

“If the immigrant is dissatisfied, it is easy to leave the country and proceed by rail or steamer to any part of America.”¹

Excerpt from 1872 New Brunswick Promotional Pamphlet

Introduction

This chapter will explore the relationship between the Dominion and Provincial governments in Canada in shaping the evolution of Canada’s immigration policy. Provincially, it will focus on New Brunswick, and more specifically on its handling of the New Denmark settlement. New Brunswick was forced to compete for immigrants with more financially stable and resource-rich areas like Ontario, the newly-formed western provinces, and the United States. With the help of a Dominion grant, New Brunswick began a short-lived spending spree when it experimented with group settlement in an attempt to attract and keep migrants within its borders.

Since the 1960s, there has been a move away from the study of policy and towards the study of lived experiences.² This has meant that some aspects of Canada’s immigration policies have not received proper treatment. The shift came too early for the study of New Brunswick, as important aspects of its history, such as policy matters, had not to that time received adequate attention. The situation is made more complex by the evolving post-Confederation Dominion-Provincial relationship, the sharing of responsibilities, the financial disparity between provinces, and competition from other nations. This chapter will explore the disadvantages of Canada and New Brunswick in competing for immigrants with the United States, and how attempts at reducing this disadvantage failed.

¹ Palle Bo Bojesen, New Denmark, New Brunswick, Canada. (Aarhus: Aarhus University Press, 1992), p. 258.

² Franca Iacovetta, The Writing of English Canadian Immigrant History, Canadian Historical Association Canada’s Ethnic Groups Series, Booklet number 22 (1997), p. 5.

Canada's Agricultural and Industrial Disadvantage

Canada in 1867 was a nation in development. It was made up of four former British colonies³ that had in one form or another each been founded for at least 100 years. The total population was 3.5 million, and great disparities existed in geographic size and population. Ontario was the most populous province, with 1.6 million people and 65 million acres of land. Québec was next with 1.2 million people and 120 million acres. The two Maritime provinces were tiny, with Nova Scotia possessing 390,000 people and 13 million acres, while New Brunswick had only 290,000 people and 17 million acres.⁴

While Canada had potential, it did not possess the economic power to be immediately attractive to migrants. It did not have a developed industrial sector or the available frontier farmland to absorb a large-scale migration. The slower Canadian evolution of the industrial and agricultural sectors in comparison with the United States greatly diminished Canada's ability to compete for migrants.

Canada in 1867 did not include any territory west of Lake Superior. The best farmland under cultivation had been occupied for at least 20 years. In Canada, agricultural settlement lands were available at a premium while the United States had millions of acres of good farmland to give away. The agricultural frontier in Ontario, for example, had essentially ended with the opening of Bruce County in 1854.⁵

In Canada, to keep family farms large enough to be productive and profitable they were rarely divided up amongst all children. Many young people consequently were forced to either purchase land

³ The colonies of Ontario and Québec underwent frequent official name changes in the 1800s. "Lower" and "Upper Canada" became "Canada East" and "West" after 1840. With Confederation the names changed once again to "Québec" and "Ontario."

⁴ 1871 Census of Canada, Volume 1, Introduction.

⁵ David Gagan, Hopeful Travellers: Families, Land, and Social Change in Mid-Victorian Peel County, Canada West, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1981), p. 42.

or leave. Remnants of Québec's seigneurial system⁶ of land division and its civil law code made some migrants wary of settling inside its borders. New Brunswick possessed more arable land than Nova Scotia, but most of New Brunswick's good farmland was in remote regions and inaccessible. One solution to the land squeeze was the creation of Manitoba in 1870, but the value of these lands was limited without a railway link. Canada was able to draw and keep settlers to its western territories in great numbers only after completion of the Canadian Pacific Railway in 1885, just before the last remaining farming land in the United States was occupied.

At the time of Confederation, Canada's agricultural landscape was changing. Farms were becoming larger and less numerous. As they gradually mechanized, they would in time require fewer workers. Like those in Europe who yearned for good farmlands, many Canadians migrated to other areas in North America. Between 1881 and 1901, over 200,000 Maritimers, 250,000 Quebeckers, and 230,000 Ontarians left their home province. Those in Ontario most often moved to western farms while those in Québec and the Maritimes relocated to the urban factory towns of New England.⁷

Despite the land crunch, Ontario's agricultural sector provided many opportunities. By 1870, the incomes generated by Ontario farms were 38 percent greater than those in Québec, 47 percent higher than in New Brunswick, and 55 percent larger than Nova Scotia's.⁸ Ontario's successes created a large demand for farm workers and for domestic servants to help in the fields and farmhouses.

Canada in 1867 was still a predominately rural, agricultural nation. Half of all employed citizens worked in the agricultural sector and another large number worked in lumber, fishing, or the mines. In 1871 only 1 person in 6 lived in an urban setting, rising to 1 in 3 by 1901.⁹ The industrial revolution in Canada progressed slowly over a number of decades after Confederation.

⁶ The Seigneurial System was a feudal-style system of land division and agriculture. Tenant farmers worked the Seigneur's land, built houses, paid taxes, and were also required to work for the Seigneur. The system remained officially in Canada until 1854, but vestiges of the system lasted until into the early 20th century.

⁷ J. L. Granatstein, Irving M. Abella, T. W. Acheson, David J. Bercuson, R. Craig Brown, H. Blair Neatby, Nation: Canada Since Confederation, (Toronto: McGraw-Hill Ryerson, 1990), p. 68.

⁸ Graham Taylor and Peter Baskerville, A Concise History of Business in Canada, (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1994), p. 140.

⁹ Granatstein and Abella, Nation, p. 63.

Ontario's agricultural successes allowed it to take the industrial lead. Demand for manufactured goods rose as did farm incomes; industries grew and became more efficient and competitive. Yet the percentage of Ontario's workforce involved in industry rose from 13 percent in 1850 to only 14 percent 20 years later. Ontario's manufacturing incomes in 1870 were 18 percent higher than in Québec, 16 percent more than in New Brunswick, and 47 percent greater than in Nova Scotia.¹⁰ Ontario's industrial sector had diversified from 1850 to 1870, and local production of goods such as machinery, shoes, paper, woollens, and foundry products could meet 80 percent of its needs. According to Taylor and Baskerville, "this local production, it should be noted, greatly exceeded Maritime industry's ability to satisfy local markets." Ontario in 1870 was responsible for 51.8 percent of the nation's industrial production.¹¹

Canada's industrial boom did not occur until after 1879 with the introduction of the National Policy. The policy raised tariffs on the importation of many manufactured and other goods. The result for Canadian producers was a period of great prosperity from 1879 to 1885. Producers of textiles, iron, steel, and coal as well as consumer goods such as wheat and butter were all major beneficiaries of the new tariffs. The Maritimes' economic transformation did not occur at the same pace. This had much to do with the orientation of industry before 1879.¹² The Maritime economies had been focused upon timber and fishing and not manufacturing. When the industrial boom driven by the National Policy occurred in the late 1870s, the Maritimes had much catching up to do. Manufacturing had first to begin on a smaller scale.

Ontario's stronger economy in the years before and after Confederation allowed it to offer extra perks to immigrants. As early as 1858 Ontario was preparing to send its own emigrant agents to Europe¹³ and in 1860 the province distributed pamphlets across northern Europe announcing that it

¹⁰ Ibid., p. 179.

¹¹ Ibid., p. 177.

¹² Taylor and Baskerville, p. 109.

¹³ Peter Hessel, *Destination Ottawa Valley*, (Ottawa: The Runge Press, 1984), p. 34.

was issuing free land grants.¹⁴ Much of the land offered, however, was on the margins of the Canadian Shield and of limited agricultural capacity. While New Brunswick possessed natural advantages over Ontario, such as its proximity to the sea, its underdevelopment proved a disadvantage, reducing its attractiveness.

The growth of railways was a partial indication of a colony's economic prowess. Ontario invested more than the other provinces, and per mile of track earned about twice as much as railways in the Maritimes. The proliferation of railways increased demand for goods necessary for railway construction--rails, locomotives, and other hardware items.¹⁵

Before Confederation, Canada's immigration competitiveness had been dulled because of financial restraints and the belief was that most migrants would eventually settle in the United States anyway. The result was that even some who intended to settle in Canada did not receive much help. Correspondence between the Chief Emigrant Agent for the province of Canada, A. C. Buchanan, and the Department of Agriculture show that even when successful promoters such as Rasmus Sørensen¹⁶ created their own promotional materials to encourage Danish migration to Canada, the government was not prepared to help distribute his materials.¹⁷ Such refusals were important because they allowed the United States to maintain its lead and draw in Scandinavians whose presence would attract later immigrants.

Paradoxically, the Dominion was willing to pay the onward transportation costs of the poorest United States-bound migrants. To ensure that the poorest did not become a further drain on its resources, the government paid to ship them through Canadian territory. Writing to his superiors from his Liverpool office in 1866, emigrant agent William Dixon mentioned numerous strategies he

¹⁴ Ibid., p. 36.

¹⁵ Taylor and Baskerville, p. 179-180.

¹⁶ Rasmus Sørensen was an important promoter of Danish emigration to North America in the 19th century. He believed that North America's ample lands and liberal society would allow many Danes to have better lives. From the 1840s to the 1860s, he personally led three groups of Danish migrants to settlements in Wisconsin. He also wrote emigration booklets, made informational speeches, and wrote letters to intending Danish migrants with the hope of convincing more of his countrymen to migrate.

¹⁷ National Archives of Canada (NAC), RG 17, A III 3, Volume 2398, Microfilm T-1437.

thought would stem the tide of migrants from Canada to the United States. Dixon believed that the government should refuse to pay the transportation costs of United States-bound migrants.

Nonetheless, the Dominion spent \$21,112 in 1871 to provide transportation for immigrants from Point Levis to western, mostly United States locations. The figure rose to \$61,269 by 1874.¹⁸

The Post-Confederation New Brunswick Economy

Except for the arrival of the United Empire Loyalists in 1783-84, and a growing tide of Irish in the second quarter of the 19th century, culminating in the Irish Famine years of the late 1840s, New Brunswick has attracted few migrants. The province did not possess farming lands superior to those in the west or Ontario and had an economy that was late to industrialize. During the period from 1867 to 1870, while Canada received approximately 65,000 immigrants a year, the total arriving in Saint John, New Brunswick did not surpass 500 people, or 0.77% of the Canadian total.¹ The passage of time has seen New Brunswick's population rise, but its proportion of the Canadian population has steadily declined. It rose from 154,000 in 1840 to 286,000 in 1871,¹⁹ or to about 8 percent of the national population, but today it hovers around 750,000 people, or 2.5 percent, and in recent censuses has started to decrease in absolute numbers. The population of other more economically diverse areas has risen dramatically and the opening up of Canada's West meant a large increase in the nation's population.

New Brunswick's economic situation mirrored Canada's within North America. As Canada lagged behind the United States, so New Brunswick fell behind other Canadian provinces. At Confederation, New Brunswick's economy was driven by shipbuilding, the timber industry, the construction of railways, and small-time agriculture, none of which helped to bring in many permanent migrants or provide sufficient employment opportunities.

¹⁸ Canada, "Annual Report of the Minister of Agriculture," Sessional Papers, 1875, Number 40, p. xix.

New Brunswick's economy did diversify, but slowly. Throughout the 1860s, artisans produced many products once imported, including soap, candles, iron castings, furniture, leather, footwear, saddlery, machinery, nails, and spikes. By the mid-1860s the province also produced almost 50 percent of its cloth and clothing.²⁰ The economy industrialized in the 1880s, mostly as a result of the National Policy. Local entrepreneurs shifted their shipbuilding and lumbering interests into the construction of factories or railways to cash in on Upper Canadian markets. Centres such as Saint John, Fredericton, St. Stephen, and Moncton all experienced significant industrial growth, including the construction of cotton mills, sugar refineries, foundries, rope-works, leatherworks, and nails and brass enterprises. Despite the promising start, most of the new ventures failed. By century's end, most of the province's failed industry had been swept up by Montreal capitalists.²¹

The most important factor in the province's 19th century economy has also been the least studied. Described by T. W. Acheson as the most important economic activity of the mid-19th century, agriculture has only in the last twenty years been looked upon as something more than a secondary activity. Lands capable of farming are strewn haphazardly all across the province and the quality of soil varies from lands capable of producing grains, potatoes, hay, and fruits, to land suitable for pasturing.²² Fertile areas are frequently so small that they are often not worth opening up to settlement. Because of the variations in soils, most farming in the 19th century was a local affair. Even in areas where good soils allowed for more than subsistence farming, farms became economically specialized and produced crops for local markets. In areas with poor soils, farmers practised subsistence farming supplemented by work in the timber industry.

Despite the slow pace of agricultural development, it was seen at the time as playing a pivotal role in the future development of the province. New Brunswick's farming capabilities were

²⁰ T. W. Acheson, Saint John: The Making of a Colonial Urban Community, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1985), p. 23.

²¹ Dan Soucoup, Historic New Brunswick, (Lawrencetown Beach, Nova Scotia: Pottersfield Press, 1997), pp. 167-8.

²² T. W. Acheson, "New Brunswick Agriculture at the End of the Colonial Era: A Reassessment," Kris Inwood, ed. Farm, Factory, and Fortune: New Studies in the Economic History of the Maritime Provinces, (Fredericton: Acadiensis Press, 1993), p. 43.

favourably compared with those of Ontario and the states of New York and Ohio.²³ The sense was that the province only required settlers to begin cultivation of the soil. The government believed lumbering had done little to attract immigrants and settlement, and had held back the agricultural development of the land.²⁴ It was decided at the end of the 1860s that preference must be given to agriculture.

Commercial agriculture was practised only where surpluses of hay, grain, and potatoes allowed the raising of cattle. These farms were usually close to the American border, such as in Carleton County, and exported large amounts of grain, meat, butter, hay, sheep, and oats to the Saint John market and to southern Maine and Boston. Farms were small, with approximately 60 percent of farmers at Confederation living on farms of at least 10 improved acres. A large proportion of the remaining lived on farms of 1-10 improved acres and possessed not cattle or sufficient grains to feed family and livestock.²⁵

Steam power and iron clad vessels began to replace sailing ships in the 1850s. This movement would spell doom for New Brunswick's shipbuilding industry. The province was shielded from the transition because the American merchant marine was largely destroyed during the Civil War and New Brunswick's ships delivered American goods. A post-war shipping boom prolonged the eventual decline, but Saint John fell from fourth largest ship-owning port in the entire British Empire to producing virtually nothing by century's end. Steel steamers were coming into vogue during the mid-1800s, and New Brunswick, with no steel-making facilities, lost out to other North American centres.²⁶

The expansion of New Brunswick's railways progressed slowly, with only 350 kilometres of track laid in New Brunswick by 1866. Only two lines in the province were completed, the first between Saint John and Shediac on the Northumberland Strait, and the second linked St. Andrews on

²³ "Agricultural Report" New Brunswick House of Assembly Journals, 1869, p. 75.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 75.

²⁵ Acheson, "New Brunswick Agriculture," p. 44.

²⁶ Soucoup, pp. 158-9.

the Fundy Coast with Woodstock.²⁷ Two major lines were completed through the province in the 1870s, the Intercolonial and New Brunswick Railways. The Intercolonial ran through New Brunswick between Rivière-du-Loup, Québec and Truro, Nova Scotia. Completed in 1876, the Intercolonial²⁸ was located away from the most populated area, the Saint John River valley. Construction of a line to link Saint John with Ontario began in 1870, when the government hired the New Brunswick Railway to begin construction, the company receiving 10,000 acres of land per mile of track. Finished as far north as Grand Falls and Edmundston by 1878, its effectiveness was reduced because it was not immediately extended to Québec and its track width differed from that of other railways. The New Brunswick Railway was taken over by Canadian Pacific in 1890.²⁹

Roads, not railways, were what the province required to open up its forested interior. New Brunswick's attempts at colonization and retention were hampered by the lack of an efficient road system. Settlement along the numerous rivers was limited to a few miles beyond the riverbanks, leaving some of the province's most fertile land vacant. Along the upper Saint John River valley, the problem was acute. The area had started to attract French settlers from Québec, who quickly left for the state of Maine because of the lack of roads and surveyed lands.

Deputy Surveyor General Charles Beckwith noted in 1868 that aspiring settlers from Victoria County³⁰ "pass on into the State of Maine where they find roads and lots ready to choose—located and survey paid for by the State." These were settlers who did not want to live in the United States but were forced to because of the circumstances. Beckwith added "they prefer our laws, but have not the means to pay for the survey."³¹ He suggested that roads and a survey would be required to stem the

²⁷ W. S. MacNutt, *New Brunswick: A History 1874-1867*, (Toronto: MacMillan of Canada, 1963), p. 327.

²⁸ This route was planned by British Army Engineer Major Robinson in 1848. His route followed the longer but more easily defended route farther from the American border and also was thought the most convenient because of its close proximity to New Brunswick's vast coastline and Britain's sea lanes. The line would eventually become part of the Canadian National Railway in 1917.

²⁹ Soucoup, pp. 182-3.

³⁰ Because of population growth, Carleton County was split in 1845, the northern half becoming Victoria County. The new Victoria County consisted of a northern half of French-speakers and an English southern half. Madawaska County (the northern half) was created when Victoria County was split in 1873.

³¹ Richard Wilbur, *The Rise of French New Brunswick*, (Halifax: Formac Publishing Company, 1989), p. 42.

outward flow.³² Another Deputy Surveyor General, F.A. Têtu of Edmundston, noted that no surveying had been performed in the area for years. He noted that

yesterday four French families inquired from me if I had from the Government any good lots to sell. My answer was, 'there are no surveyed lots, but you will get some if you apply first, and then wait till the spring to have your lots surveyed.' What had they to do until then? The ice on the river is very strong just now. They went across and will find plenty of lots in the back settlements of Madawaska Plantation.³³

Têtu said that by such "an injudicious system of administering the public lands, we have lost [...] during the last fifteen years no less than eight hundred French immigrants with their families, cattle, horses, and what generally accompanies the poor immigrant."³⁴ New Brunswick's government was either unable or unwilling to pay for the surveying of lots and building of roads to encourage settlement, nor was its economy able to provide all the jobs that would be essential for settlers in their first crucial years.

American Competition

On the American continents, neither the Canadian nor the New Brunswick governments were well placed to compete with American industry and agriculture. The economy of the United States was the most able to provide employment for industrial and agricultural workers in the second half of the 19th century, pulling in thousands of Europeans and even Canadians seeking employment. Westward expansion opened up large tracts of good farmland for Europeans wishing to continue a lifestyle that was becoming harder to maintain at home.

The growth of industry in the 19th century came in two major waves. In New England, industrial factories and textile mills had begun to adopt "machine methods and factory organization" at the dawn of the 19th century. Growth was driven by machine-tool factories and production became a series of tasks requiring many workers to oversee. The growth of industry in western Pennsylvania

³² "Report for Victoria County in Agricultural Report" New Brunswick House of Assembly Journals, 1868, p. 123.

³³ *Ibid.*, p. 124.

³⁴ Wilbur, p. 42.

and northeast Ohio took on a different character. A large catalyst of the growth was the railway that spread west and required thousands of workers, steel factories, and mines.³⁵

The most important occupation in the 19th century was farming. The United States was one of the first nations to offer Europeans the commodity that was so valuable in their homelands: land. In the Homestead Act of 1862, settlers over 21 years of age could receive 160 acres free of charge. The migrant had to swear not to use the land for speculation and to live on it for five years. Danish historian Kristian Hvidt cannot overstate the Act's importance, noting that

it is hardly an exaggeration to call the Homestead Act an event of worldwide importance. It started the avalanche of emigrating European masses, for a most effective propaganda machine saw to it that the provisions of the Act did not remain unknown across the Atlantic. The idea of being able to obtain free, fertile land became an unparalleled magnet to the European masses.³⁶

Agricultural production levels in the United States grew tremendously after 1840, and in comparison with European agriculture, which experienced a large exodus from rural areas, the rural exodus that occurred in New England was balanced by new agricultural opportunities in the west.³⁷ In this way, agricultural labour was not drained as industrialization spread and employment opportunities in agriculture remained strong. Pacification of native peoples allowed for the continual opening up of large areas of western lands for prospective farmers and settlers from America, Québec, Ireland, Britain, Scandinavia, and southern and east Europe. Until about 1890, when the last productive farmland in the United States was occupied, there was an abundance of land that attracted farmers the world over.³⁸

The pull of the United States would divert more than a million settlers from Canada. Of the 1.5 million migrants who entered Canada between 1867 and 1892, most continued to the United States. As early as 1869 the Royal Danish Consulate in Montreal reported to the Dominion Minister of

³⁵ Mikulas Teich and Roy Porter, *The Industrial Revolution in National Context: Europe and the U.S.A.*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), p. 356.

³⁶ Kristian Hvidt, *Flight to America: The Social Background of 300,000 Danish Emigrants*, (New York: Academic Press, 1974), p. 158.

³⁷ Hal S. Barron, *Those who stayed behind: rural society in nineteenth-century New England* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1984)

³⁸ Teich and Porter, p. 352.

Agriculture that many Danes were arriving in the country and asking for “information about the best route towards a [...] colony in the United States.” The Danish Consul General, Alfred Rimmer, hinted that if the government wanted Danish migrants to settle in Canada, it was going to have to offer land on the same terms as the Homestead Acts.³⁹

The United States had the financial resources to create a vast advertising and emigrant agent network across Europe, often drowning out the efforts of other nations in the process. For years, Canadian emigrant and steamship agents complained that their main obstacle was the level of opportunity in the United States. A. B. Davey, a Canadian immigrant agent working in London, expressed Canada’s dilemma by saying “America is everything, and appears to be everywhere [...] The prevailing idea seems to be that the United States is America, and Canada and other parts of America are small and out of the way places, destined soon to be absorbed by the States.”⁴⁰ It was hard for Canada to stand out.

Dominion/Provincial Shared Jurisdiction

Given the dominance of the 19th century United States economy within North America, it was extremely difficult for relatively underdeveloped nations, such as Canada, to divert migrants in their direction. In Canada, the situation was made more formidable because of the complex situation created through the evolving dominion-provincial relationship and the financial disparities that existed between provinces.

During the Confederation negotiations that began in the mid 1860s, advocates for a strong central government believed the Dominion would be best equipped to deal with the recruitment and retention of immigrants. The provinces, primarily Québec, did not want to relinquish total control, and a uniquely Canadian compromise was reached. Each level of government was to have the “power to make laws” in the field of immigration, but the provinces could not enact laws that ran counter to the

³⁹NAC, RG 17, Volume 34, File 3075, Alfred Rimmer to the Minister of Agriculture, 8 January 1870.

⁴⁰Ninette Kelley and Michael Trebilcock. The Making of the Mosaic: A history of Canadian Immigration Policy. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1998), p. 100.

Dominion's.⁴¹ Clause 95 of the British North America Act of 1867 covered the jurisdiction of Agriculture and Immigration,⁴² stating:

In each Province the Legislature may make laws in relation to Agriculture in the Province, and to Immigration into the Province; and it is hereby declared that the Parliament of Canada may, from time to time, make Laws in relation [...] to Immigration into all or any of the Provinces; and any law of the Legislature of a Province relative to...Immigration, shall have effect in and for the Province as long and as far as it is not repugnant to any Act of the Parliament of Canada.⁴³

Both levels of government could canvass the same European ground for emigrants and advertise in the same newspapers. Instead of cooperation, there was friction, conflict of interest, and wasted efforts.⁴⁴ Canadian provinces had to compete with North and South American nations, other Canadian provinces, and the Dominion government. The Provinces had power over settlement and colonization in their districts, a right they would guard.

It was obvious early on that the jurisdictions defined within the British North America Act required further clarification. As noted in the Dominion Minister of Agriculture's Annual Report of 1867, it was "absolutely necessary to come to some understanding between the general and the local governments on the concurrent subject of immigration."⁴⁵ In October 1868 a conference was held to achieve a greater consensus on immigration matters. Representatives from each Canadian government attended, except Nova Scotia that pleaded poverty. The delegates decided that the Dominion government should take more responsibility in the field of immigration, especially in financial

⁴¹ "Report of Resolutions adopted at a Conference of Delegates from the Provinces of Canada, Nova Scotia, and New Brunswick, and the Colonies of Newfoundland, and Prince Edward Island, held at the City of Quebec, 10th October, 1864, as the Basis of a proposed Confederation of those Provinces and Colonies," New Brunswick House of Assembly Journals, 1865, p. 18.

⁴² The decision to place the responsibilities for immigration within the portfolio of agriculture reflected the importance of agriculture in Canada at the time. Immigration was believed to be the responsibility of the department where immigrants were most needed. The federal Department of Agriculture was in fact a "super" Department, which controlled many different agencies thought to be under the domain of agriculture at the time. The Agriculture Department would over the years be divided into many individual departments, including a separate immigration department.

⁴³ "Clause 95, British North America Bill" New Brunswick House of Assembly Journals, 22 May, 1867, p. 87.

⁴⁴ Norman Macdonald, Canada: Immigration and Colonization, 1841-1903, (Toronto: Macmillan of Canada), 1966, p. 90.

⁴⁵ Canada, "Annual Report of the Minister of Agriculture," Sessional Papers, 1869, Number 76, p. 6.

matters, such as paying all costs involved in the maintenance of emigration offices and agents in Britain, Europe, and in the Provinces, as well as operating all quarantine stations.⁴⁶

Early on the financial disparities and the monetary limitations of the Maritimes began to show. The 1868 Conference set up a running dialogue of meetings every three months. While Nova Scotia could not afford to attend the 1868 conference, New Brunswick realized it did not have the money to attend so many meetings, noting “it may not be convenient for New Brunswick to be represented every three months at Ottawa, possibly not more than twice a year.”⁴⁷ Nova Scotia thought the conference decisions too expensive for its budget, stating that “while fully admitting the value of a well-directed effort on behalf of Immigration [...] have to express [...] regret that in the present financial condition of the Province, with the limited amount at the disposal of the Legislature, they are not in a condition to co-operate in the enlarged scheme of Immigration.”⁴⁸

An important step taken after the 1868 Conference was increasing the presence of emigration agents and advertising within Britain and continental Europe. Already in Britain was Dominion chief agent William Dixon, who was given an assistant, E. Simays to “...promote Emigration to Canada from the different European Countries...”⁴⁹ It would be the job of both to promote Canada and its provinces as settlement destinations. The provinces were expected to aid the Dominion’s immigration efforts by contributing “an efficient system of Emigrant Agency within their respective Territories, and [...] connect it [...] with a liberal policy for the settlement and colonization of the uncultivated lands.”⁵⁰ The Provinces still could send their own agents to Europe, re-establishing overlap. The conference called on the provinces to provide to the Department of Immigration and to emigration agents in Europe “full information as to its system of colonization and settlement, the lands assigned

⁴⁶ Ibid., p. 6.

⁴⁷ Canada, “Certain documents on the subject of Immigration,” “Minister of Agriculture Annual Report,” Sessional Papers, 1870, Number 80, p. 7.

⁴⁸ Ibid., p. 8.

⁴⁹ Ibid., p. 9.

⁵⁰ Canada, “Annual Report of the Minister of Agriculture,” Sessional Papers, 1869, Number 76, p. 6.

for free grants to settlers, if any, and the condition of such grants, together with all such information as may be deemed important for the promotion of Immigration.”⁵¹

It would take three additional conferences to iron out problems and settle squabbles. Each of these meetings pushed Canadian policy more closely towards the free land policy of the United States and refined the relationship between the Dominion and Provincial governments.

The first was convened in 1870 and attended by representatives of British Emigration Societies,⁵² the Dominion government, and delegates from Ontario and Québec.⁵³ It must be assumed that the Maritimes provinces did not send delegates because of cost, as it was in their interest to attend. The most important recommendations dealt with advertising. Ideas included sending Canadian news items to British papers, subsidizing British agricultural papers, and distributing flattering pictures and literature regarding Canada through steamship agents.⁵⁴ The focus of the 1870 conference was upon the development of the western prairie.

In 1869 the Dominion government had purchased Rupert’s Land⁵⁵ from the Hudson’s Bay Company. Until it was developed, the Dominion government would be solely responsible for its administration, and dominion attention turned west. Manitoba and British Columbia,⁵⁶ soon to become provinces, had to be informed of immigration policies. One theme dominated these discussions: the way must be made as easy as possible for settlers. Among the recommendations were the surrender of native lands in Manitoba and their immediate colonization. As well, settlers heading to the Canadian

⁵¹ Ibid., p. 7.

⁵² Emigration Societies were formed in the United Kingdom to assist emigrants to the colonies. Some were formed by trade guilds that helped their own, but others were formed by charities and religious organizations who assisted the poor, out of work, and children.

⁵³ Macdonald, p. 96.

⁵⁴ Ibid., p. 96.

⁵⁵ Rupert’s Land was a vast area, including parts of present-day Québec, Ontario, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, and Alberta, as well as the territories of Nunavut and the Northwest Territories.

⁵⁶ The provinces of Manitoba and British Columbia were created at opposite ends of western Canada in 1870 and 1871. While a revolt by Louis Riel and the Métis population (people of Native American and French-Canadian descent) in 1869 and its quelling by British and Canadian forces proved the impetus for the creation of Manitoba in 1870, the Dominion government’s dream of a Canada that stretched from the Atlantic to the Pacific Oceans, and the promise of a railway to link the province with the rest of the nation, brought the colony of British Columbia into Confederation in 1871. The provinces of Alberta and Saskatchewan, located between British Columbia and Manitoba in the west, were not created until 1905.

West must be kept from American land agents, who attempted to steer them south, so placement of Canadian agents in the Northwest became a priority.⁵⁷

Now that control of Canada's west was secure, all governments met again in 1871 and decided to nationally mimic the land granting policies of the United States. Free "homestead" grants were to be offered. Each province was free to develop its own settlement programs and would receive financial support from Ottawa and enjoy use of the Canadian Emigration office in London.⁵⁸ Offers of financial assistance greatly interested New Brunswick, and the delegation pressed hard for funding, stating "we are utterly unable to appropriate a sum at all sufficient for Immigration purposes from our very limited Revenues." Their reward was an annual grant of \$10,000 to help New Brunswick's settlement efforts.⁵⁹ Provincial officials believed that if the annual grant were "judiciously expended it will be continued to us until our population amounts to four hundred thousand."⁶⁰ In 1871 the population had only reached 286,000 so the grant was assumed to be a long-term Dominion commitment.

The second measure implemented in 1872 by the Dominion was the granting of passenger warrants. Passenger warrants subsidized the cost of migrating to Canada for the most sought after European immigrants. Canada's emigrant agents, believed to be best able to certify the emigrant's intentions, distributed the warrants. There were two kinds. The first reduced the cost of passage by one third and were issued in relatively unlimited numbers to suitable British or European emigrants who intended their destination as Canada.⁶¹ People with the crucial skills needed to "jump start" Canada's fledgling industrial sector were favoured in this category.

The second type of warrant was issued in far fewer numbers--one in ten of the first type--and reduced the cost of passage by half. This type of warrant was intended for members of the

⁵⁷ Macdonald, p. 96.

⁵⁸ Palle Bo Bojesen, "New Denmark--The Oldest Danish Colony in Canada" *Danish Emigration to Canada*, Henning Bender and Birgit Flemming Larson, eds., (Aalborg: Danes Worldwide Archives, 1991), p. 51.

⁵⁹ "Report on Immigration to New Brunswick in 1872," *New Brunswick House of Assembly Journals*, 1872, p. 47.

⁶⁰ "Report of Delegates appointed to attend an Immigration Conference at Ottawa in September 1871," *New Brunswick House of Assembly Journals*, 1872, p. 60.

⁶¹ Macdonald, p. 109.

occupations most needed in Canada: agricultural labourers and female domestic servants.⁶² These were to be issued to those who could not otherwise afford the passage fare. Because this type of warrant further lowered passage cost, the Dominion government was concerned about over-usage and fraud. They were costlier and riskier in an era when most migrants arriving in Canada left for the United States. In addition, Ontario and Québec sweetened the pot to ensure that they appeared more favourable. In these two provinces a “refund bonus” of \$6 was granted to each agriculturalist or domestic who settled in their territory. With the decision to issue passenger warrants and free land, Canada was catching up with the policies of other nations.

Immigration remained a shared responsibility and the next challenge would be to increase the effectiveness of the shared portfolio. Canada did not speak with a single voice. Provinces were still free to send agents to Europe⁶³ and were in competition with other levels of government. The years 1872 to 1874 saw drastic changes in both the content and structure of immigration policy.

The third major Dominion-Provincial immigration conference occurred in November 1874. This conference marked a change in attitude and direction. While Canada’s policies had become much more liberal since 1872 with the granting of free land, the overlapping of resources was too wasteful. While responsibility for colonization remained in the provincial sphere, total control over immigration policy and its implementation was transferred to the Dominion Minister of Agriculture. Canada’s immigration facilities were to be downsized, but continued provincial input was ensured, as “Each Province shall be authorized to appoint a Sub-Agent and obtain office accommodation for him in the Canadian Government Offices in London; and such Sub-Agent shall represent the special interests of the Province by which he is appointed in emigration matters and generally.”⁶⁴ The Dominion government promised to continue its policy of vigorous settler recruitment, reduce the cost of passage,

⁶² Ibid., p. 109.

⁶³ “Memorandum of Terms of Proposed Arrangement,” Report on Immigration to New Brunswick in 1872, New Brunswick House of Assembly Journals, 1872, p. 4.

⁶⁴ Canada, “Annual Report of the Minister of Agriculture,” Sessional Papers, 1875, Number 40, p. xi.

and maintain its liberal settlement scheme. While the agreement was initially scheduled to last only five years, it formed the basis of Canadian immigration policy until 1892.⁶⁵

The 1874 agreement made the Dominion government the sole voice for Canada in Europe. After 1874, immigration to New Brunswick would be coordinated out of a London office by a sub-agent. As a cost-saving measure, New Brunswick and Nova Scotia shared a sub-agent and split the £600 salary.⁶⁶ New Brunswick, therefore, did not have one person at the Canadian offices in London to independently represent its interests. Immigrants continued to forsake New Brunswick, and directed by the Dominion's immigration policies and priorities, continued on to more western areas.

Competing for Scandinavian Migrants

Canada's quest for migrants was difficult because not all European peoples were considered suitable. It was the predominant belief that if Canada was to be successful, it required "northern" settlers. The northern climate's temperature, soil, and seasonal extremes were believed by some to have created over the centuries a superior, dominant people.⁶⁷ One of the greatest proponents of these beliefs was Robert Haliburton. The Canada First movement, which became popular after Confederation, reflected his views. Canada First encouraged northern and western European immigration and the development of native Canadian industries.⁶⁸

While peoples throughout the British Isles, northern Europe, and Scandinavia were believed well suited to Canada, those from southern Europe, where Catholicism held more power, were seen as unfit.⁶⁹ In most cases, if British settlers could be found, there was no need to look further because they spoke English, had the same culture and traditions, and were more easily absorbed than those who

⁶⁵ Macdonald, p. 96.

⁶⁶ Helen Craig, "Report on Immigration to New Brunswick, 1874," New Denmark as seen by government officials at Fredericton, 1844-85, (Fredericton, N.B.: Helen Craig, 1972).

⁶⁷ Carl Berger, "The True North Strong and Free" in Peter Russell, ed. Nationalism in Canada, (Toronto: McGraw-Hill, 1966), p. 5.

⁶⁸ J. L. Finlay and D. N. Sprague, The Structure of Canadian History, (Scarborough, Ontario, Prentice Hall Allyn and Bacon, 2000), p. 210.

⁶⁹ Berger, p. 5.

could not speak English. Danish migrants were considered to be ideal, as they had strong agricultural traditions, came from a northern climate, were Protestant, and were seen as sober and hardworking. As an immigrant group, the Danes, after the British, were among the most sought after.

As part of the broader policy movement, the Dominion government in 1872 sent its first emigrant agent into the Scandinavian Kingdoms. Henry Hertz spent most of 1872 traveling across Sweden, Norway, and Denmark trying to increase the exposure of Canada. He spoke with average Scandinavians, hand delivered Danish- and Norwegian-language pamphlets from the provinces of Ontario and New Brunswick, kept in contact with agents from the Allan Steamship Line, and advertised in the most prominent of the Scandinavian newspapers.⁷⁰

Canada's push to increase the number of Scandinavian migrants lasted only 4 or 5 years because of disappointing results. This was in spite of the increased presence of Canada's emigrant officials. William McDougall was stationed in Copenhagen until 1874 and his successor Hans Mattson worked from Sweden until 1875. These two organized Canada's recruitment efforts, but because of meagre results were withdrawn.

McDougall resisted the hiring of emigration agents, and instead sought agreements with steamship agents.⁷¹ The Allan Line's agents were hired to promote migration because of their knowledge of Canada. In addition, McDougall was instructed by the Minister to negotiate a lower fare for those migrating to Canada from Scandinavia. The Dominion government subsidized the fares, lowering them by £ 1 per adult. McDougall offered these reduced fares to Scandinavians he believed would be less apt to leave Canada for the United States: families whose head was under 40 years of age, and single women under 30.⁷²

When Hans Mattson took over from McDougall in 1874, he reduced Canada's advantage. While extending the subsidized fare to a wider range of society, he also increased the commission to

⁷⁰ Canada, "Annual Report of the Minister of Agriculture," Sessional Papers, 1873, Number 26, p. 165.

⁷¹ Lars Ljungmark, "Canada's Campaign for Scandinavian Immigration, 1873-1876." The Swedish American Historical Quarterly. 33.1 (January 1982), p. 26.

⁷² *Ibid.*, p. 27.

the Allan Line's agents. Migrant numbers to Canada remained low, with Mattson's own figures confirming only 293 emigrants from Denmark, Sweden, and Norway from 1874 to 1875. The poor results and the money crunch caused by the ongoing economic recession made the Canadian government rethink its strategy, and in 1876 it closed the agency.⁷³ Canada would refocus its energies on the established emigrant sending nations of Great Britain and Germany.

The failure to secure Scandinavian settlers for Canada, as argued by historian Lars Ljungmark, had much to do with chain migration to the United States. Migration there had begun in the 1840s and was augmented by waves in the 1860s. By the 1870s, the Danish, Swedish, and Norwegian migration tradition to the United States was established.⁷⁴ Canada did not have any Scandinavian communities until the establishment of New Denmark, New Brunswick, in 1872. There existed no "lightning rods" for the attraction of other migrants.

Policy Evolution in New Brunswick

Before Confederation New Brunswick had tried a number of low-cost methods to attract migrants. Firstly, it tried advertising its available agricultural lands. What it deemed the "Record" was a listing of all farms for sale across New Brunswick. It was distributed in Great Britain, but no indications are given as to its success in attracting immigrants. Another innovation was the "Register," which acted as a provincial employment agency. New Brunswick's emigrant agent in Saint John, Robert Shives, noted the Register "affords to farmers, and others, in all parts of the Province, a means of making their wants known; and as persons qualified for the work arrive, they are forwarded to the applicants."⁷⁵

⁷³ Lars Ljungmark, "The Push- and Pull-Factors behind the Swedish emigration to America, Canada, and Australia" in P. C. Emmer and Magnus Mörner, eds. *European expansion and migration : essays on the intercontinental migration from Africa, Asia, and Europe*. (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1992), p. 98.

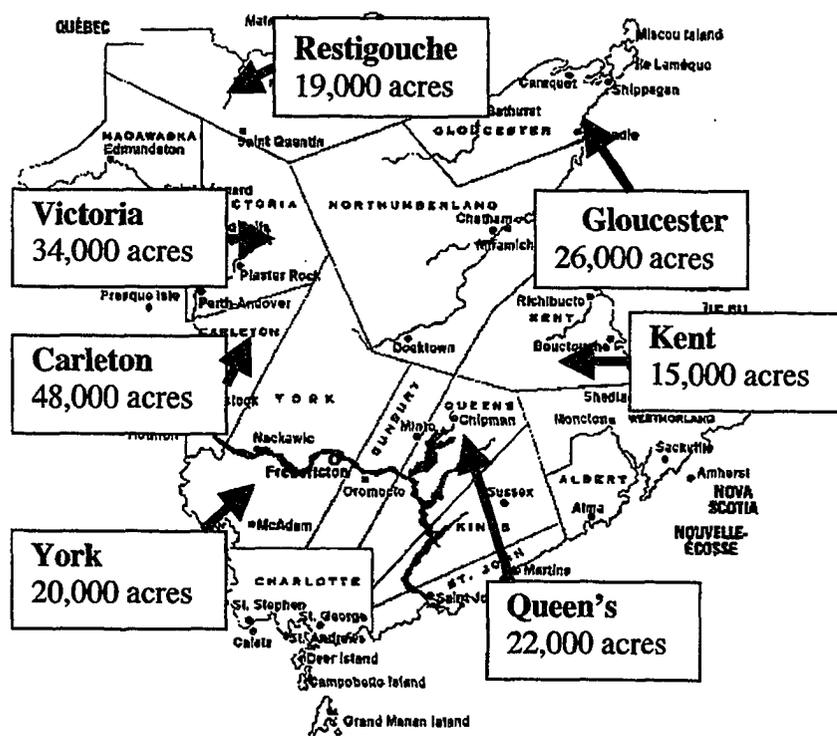
⁷⁴ Ljungmark, "Push and Pull," p. 40.

⁷⁵ Robert Shives, "Annual Report of the Emigration Officer for 1865", *New Brunswick House of Assembly Journals*, 1865, Appendix IX, p. 3.

Post-Confederation New Brunswick began to organize its available settlement lands in 1868.

“An Act to Facilitate the Settlement of Crown Lands” called for the selection of vacant lands for settlement. Lands were to be surveyed into 100 acre homesteads and made available to “actual settlers,” not “speculators or...(for) lumbering purposes.”⁷⁶ A \$20 payment was required “in advance” of an immigrant’s arrival, or the settler could choose to pay for his land by labouring part-time to help build bridges and roads around the settlement area for a three-year period. All that was further required was a three-year residence upon the land to receive the grant.⁷⁷ The government produced a list of the best unoccupied lands, entitled the “List of Reserved Vacant Crown Lands,” where areas set aside were listed by county.⁷⁸ See Figure 2.1 for a map of vacant lands across the province.

Figure 2.1 Reserved Vacant Crown Lands in New Brunswick, by County, 1868



Map from “www.new-brunswick.net.”

⁷⁶ “An Act to Facilitate the Settlement of Crown Lands.” Appendix II, Crown Lands Office, New Brunswick House of Assembly Journals, 1868, p. 49.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 49.

⁷⁸ “List of Reserved Vacant Crown Lands,” Appendix II, Crown Land Office, New Brunswick House of Assembly Journals, 1868, p. 47.

Despite all efforts, the number of migrants to the province continued to disappoint. The year 1870 was one of the lowest points, when only 219 migrants arrived.⁷⁹ As can be seen in Figure 2.2 below, at no point from 1867 to 1876 did New Brunswick's immigration totals reach more than 4 percent of the Canadian total, despite having almost 14 percent of the nation's total population. Because of its lacklustre economic state, New Brunswick was only a pit stop for most migrants en route to Ontario, New England, or the western prairies.

Figure 2.2 New Brunswick and Canadian Immigration Figures, 1867 to 1876

Year	N.B. Migrant Total	Canada Migrant Total	N.B.'s Percentage of Total
1867	409	10,666	3.8
1868	271	12,765	2.1
1869	477	18,630	2.6
1870	219	24,706	0.8
1871	696	27,773	2.5
1872	801	36,578	2.1
1873	1,129	50,050	2.3
1874	702	39,373	1.8
1875	522	27,382	1.9
1876	914	25,633	3.6

Figures from Canada, Sessional Papers, 1868 to 1877.

New Brunswick's settlement schemes seemed to gain energy with the arrival of the new Surveyor General, Benjamin Stevenson in 1870. He spent 1871 surveying new settlement areas across the province, giving him an intimate knowledge of the soil, climate, and farming potential of the land. He then produced a circular, "A New Brunswick Pamphlet on Immigration," that described each county, the province's river systems, the climate, the weather, the fishery, trade and industry, the education system, wages and taxation, and the social life of the residents. He also included emigrant testimonials. The intention was to give a favourable but honest picture. The pamphlet emphasized the British nature of the province and the close proximity of New Brunswick to "...the state of Maine (one

⁷⁹ Canada, "Annual Report of the Minister of Agriculture," Sessional Papers, 1871, Number 64, p. 57.

of the United States of America),⁸⁰ the assumption being that most emigrants already had some knowledge of the United States.

The province distributed Stevenson's pamphlet across Europe with the aid of the Allan Line. The province had to tailor its advertising to best fit local markets. In Denmark, knowledge of Canada and New Brunswick was more limited than in other areas. To compensate, the Danish version of Stevenson's pamphlet omitted mentioning "Canada," substituting instead "British North America." The closeness geographically to the United States was stressed to a greater degree within the Danish pamphlet, going as far as to state "If the immigrant is dissatisfied, it is easy to leave the country and proceed by rail or steamer to any part of America."⁸¹

In an effort to secure jobs for future immigrant arrivals, the province entered into agreements with private companies. In 1871 the province negotiated a deal with the New Brunswick Railway to secure jobs for the Rivière-du-Loup to Fredericton line and use provincial lands for settlement. The Railway agreed to provide jobs to 300 workers at the rate of at least \$1.00 a day and give 100 acres to each man who worked for the railway for a three-year period.⁸² The ink was still wet on the agreement when it was followed by the Free Grants Act of 1872.

With the help of the annual \$10,000 subsidy provided by the Dominion government, New Brunswick's government was willing to increase its own spending on migration initiatives and update its policies. In the Free Grants Act, the province brought its policies in line with those of Ontario and Québec. The Act offered 100 acres of free land to each male settler over 18 years of age who constructed a house and had 10 acres of land cleared and under cultivation after three years.⁸³ Settlers could use as much of the lumber on this land as was required to build their house, heat their home, and cultivate sufficient food to sustain the family, but they were not allowed to sell the wood.⁸⁴ The

⁸⁰ "Surveyor General's Report on Immigration to New Brunswick, 1872," New Brunswick House of Assembly Journals, Appendix XI, p. 9.

⁸¹ Bojesen, p. 258.

⁸² "March 12, 1872," New Brunswick House of Assembly Journals, 1872, No. 1, p. 50.

⁸³ "The Free Grants Act of 1872," Appendix, New Brunswick House of Assembly Journals, 1872, p. 49.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 48.

Act also contained a special regulation that was to encourage the emigration of large group settlements. It read that when a group of at least ten settlers declared

their intention of becoming actual Settlers under 'The Free Grants Act 1872,' each Associate shall have a lot located to him in any tract set apart under the provisions of the act. As soon as such Association shall have chopped down, piled and burned two acres on each Lot so assigned them, each Locatee shall be paid fifteen dollars: and the roads shall then be made to and through the Lots so located.⁸⁵

In addition, when a "log or other house" was built, a \$15 dollar payment would be made.⁸⁶

Before the influx of Dominion cash to help New Brunswick's immigration drive, the government refused to open its coffers to fund migration. In 1870, when the Provincial Secretary, John Beckwith, proposed to increase the province's immigration budget by \$1000 to a total of \$4000, his request was denied because the immigration budget for 1869 had not been spent! The frugal trends continued in 1871, when only \$751 (\$572 for circulars and reports and \$147 for settlement aid) out of a budget of \$3000 was spent.⁸⁷

Encouraged by the annual Dominion \$10,000 subsidy that began that year, the province began a short-lived spending spree in 1872. That year it spent \$20,000 on its immigration schemes, about seven times what it spent just two years earlier. The figure kept climbing and two years later \$61,000 was spent, almost \$50,000 more than was in its immigration budget. To increase immigration expenditures, the province borrowed from other departments; the 1874 infusion was borrowed most likely from Education, which had under spent by \$55,000.⁸⁸

Despite the problems that followed, 1872 was important for New Brunswick's immigration and settlement efforts. The government offered free land grants and tried to augment its immigration totals with peoples outside the traditional British and French cultures. Danish immigration to the province, inaugurated at this time, remained significant for the next two decades. Danish migrant numbers rivalled those of the British during the 1870s, but a protracted period of decline began in the

⁸⁵ Ibid., p. 49.

⁸⁶ "Report of the Surveyor General for 1873," New Brunswick House of Assembly Journals, 1873, p. iv.

⁸⁷ Wilbur, p. 44.

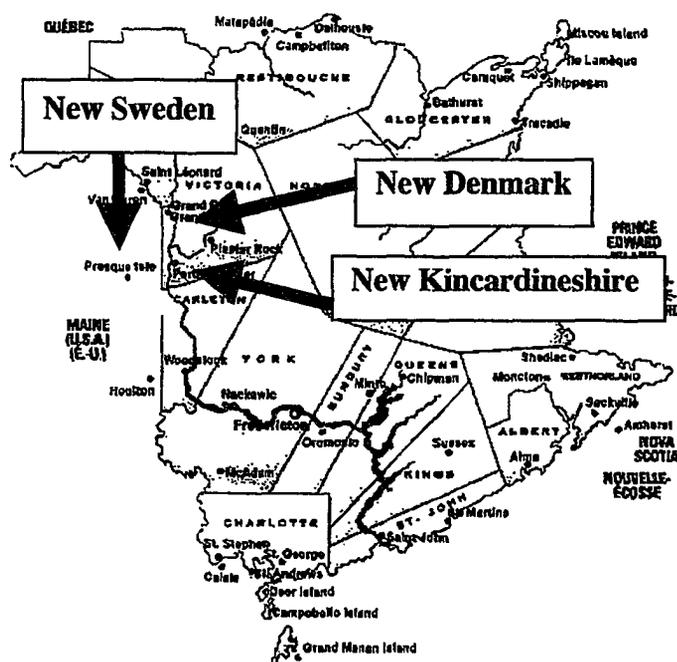
⁸⁸ Ibid., pp. 46-7.

1880s, when annual Danish migration levels fell from triple to double digits. Numbers continued to drop and for the first time in 1892, twenty years after the arrival of the first settlers, no Danish migrants arrived.

Group Settlement Begins in New Brunswick

Group settlement in the late 19th century was an accepted method of attracting migrants to Canada, especially in the western prairies, as it was believed to increase both migration and satisfaction. Migrants enjoyed settling among those of the same culture, language, and religion. The Dominion government used group settlement in the west to attract large numbers of immigrants from the same ethnic group or nation.⁸⁹ Such settlement areas were seen as win-win situations: the government received what it needed, that is large groups of agriculturalists to settle the west and to fill the labour holes in Canada's economy, while the immigrants could remain amongst people of their "own kind."

Figure 2.3 Location of New Denmark, New Kincardineshire, and New Sweden



Map from "www.new-brunswick.net."

⁸⁹ Kelly and Trebilcock, p. 72.

With the \$10,000 annual immigration subsidy, New Brunswick could better afford to initiate such schemes. Within a year of the passage of the Act, the province had negotiated block settlements of both Danish and Scottish settlers, and was exploring the idea of a Swiss settlement.⁹⁰ The Danish and Scottish settlements were located in Victoria County, in the northwest corner of the Province. The Provincial government entered into similar contracts for the two settlements though there were differences. Figure 2.3 above shows the location of the Danish and Scottish settlements.

The contract between Danish entrepreneur Captain Søren Severin Heller, his partner George Stymest and the New Brunswick government occurred before the passing of the Free Grants Act. The provisions must have affected the design of the latter, as it included some of the same stipulations. The contract bound Heller to bring 500 “Scandinavian” settlers. The origin of Heller’s migrants was vague as in 1871 he knew not from which nation they would come, but he eventually focused his efforts in his native Denmark. Heller’s migrants were promised two years of railway or roadway work at a rate of not less than \$1 a day. The province also agreed to pay, in addition to its obligations under the Free Grants Act mentioned above, “all charges and expenses” for the Danish migration. The province also agreed to pay Heller and Stymest \$10 for each migrant, meaning the government was prepared to spend \$5,000 just to cover Heller’s commission, on top of its promise to cover all transportation, settlement, and employment expenses.⁹¹

Captain William Brown organized the Scottish settlement. His contract did not include guarantees of employment, but each Scot over 12 years of age would receive 3 pounds sterling in assistance or towards the passage fare.⁹² The Scots could use the money towards the construction of a house after their arrival, or the government could use the money to start building as they departed Scotland. Whereas Heller was unsure from which lands he would find settlers, Brown’s migrants were from the same geographic area of Scotland and wished to settle as a group. The fact that Brown, unlike Heller, did not press for his migrants to have all their expenses paid, is an indication that they

⁹⁰ “Swiss Immigration” *New Brunswick House of Assembly Journals*, 1872, p. 44.

⁹¹ “Proposal of Stymest and Heller of 7th December 1871” *New Brunswick House of Assembly Journals*, 1872, p. 59-60.

⁹² Marjorie Harper, “A Family Affair: Colonizing New Kincardineshire,” *History Today* 37 (October 1987), p. 44.

were better off financially. In Scotland small farmers had little chance of ever owning their own farms.⁹³ The pull of free land across the ocean was for many Scots the last, best reason to make the journey.

The main difference between the agreements that created these two settlements is significant. Promises of employment and all expenses paid would surely have been an attractive offer for poor Danes who had no tradition of settlement within Canada.⁹⁴ If the Danish push factors were not enough, the guarantee of a job was extra incentive. There was no such employment expectation with the Scots. They were not promised jobs and perhaps therefore had in their minds a more realistic view of actual life in New Brunswick.

An influx of Swedish settlers to the state of Maine gives another area of comparison. Maine had many of the same problems as New Brunswick, including an outflow of settlers. The state did have more financial power to back settlement schemes and was interested in settling its sparsely populated northeastern territory.⁹⁵

The first Swedes arrived in 1870. The state's agreement with the Swedes was more generous than New Brunswick's. Each Swedish family was to receive 100 acres of forest-land, with five acres cleared and a cabin built for them. The New Brunswick agreement did not offer a generous clearing or dwelling. After five years of settlement the land would be deeded to the new arrivals. They were offered work on local roads for a credit of \$1 per day at the settlement's store. Impressed with the first year's successes and to help ensure the settlement's success, the state government in 1871 appropriated \$25,000 to aid with settlement and advertise for more emigrants in Sweden.⁹⁶

⁹³ Harper, pp. 43-44.

⁹⁴ Frederick Hale, ed. *Danes in North America*, (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1984), p. vx.

⁹⁵ *Maine's Historic 1870 Swedish Colony*, (New Sweden: Maine's Swedish Colony, Inc., 2001), p. 1.

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 2.

Conclusion

This chapter has sought to bring into focus the development of New Brunswick and Canadian immigration policy. The movement away from the study of politics and policy in the 1960s has meant that some aspects of Canada's history were neglected.

Canada had great potential to become a major destination for European migrants, but the success of the nation's immigration policies depended greatly upon factors outside the government's control. Before the building of the Canadian Pacific Railway, Canada lacked the agricultural lands necessary to attract large numbers of settlers, and until the introduction of the National Policy in 1879, its industrial base was underdeveloped. Most of the migrants that entered Canada's ports in the 19th century quickly left for the United States.

Canada focused its recruitment efforts on British migrants, but was also eager to attract other northern Europeans. Scandinavians were among the European groups preferred for settlement in Canada. Most notably, they were white, northern, and Protestant. Canada's first Scandinavian Emigrant Agent was assigned in 1872, and efforts were made to reduce passage fares to attract more Scandinavians. Despite the government's efforts, the number of migrants did not increase, and this combined with economic recession in North America caused the Canadian government to scale back its Nordic recruitment.

The development of Canadian immigration policies was complicated by the terms of Confederation that gave jurisdiction to both levels of government. This situation permitted each to recruit immigrants, leading to increased competition, confusion, and overlapping of resources. As negotiations continued and the responsibilities of each level of government were refined, the gap between rich and poor provinces was becoming more evident, with New Brunswick and Nova Scotia unable to attend some meetings. Finally, in 1874, the Dominion was given sole responsibility over immigration matters. By this time, however, the Dominion's acquisition of lands west of Lake Superior placed the settling of the western prairies high on the Dominion's agenda.

The success of New Brunswick's immigration policies was hampered by a lack of financial resources and by underdeveloped agricultural and industrial sectors. New Brunswick was forced to compete with the economic powerhouse that was the United States, against whose industrial and agricultural might there were no competitors, and Canadian provinces with larger wallets and more developed economies. The Homestead Act of 1862 allowed the United States to pull in land-hungry migrants from both Europe and Canada, and provinces such as Ontario were able to offer incentives that New Brunswick could not.

New Brunswick was forced to be innovative, but it was not until the arrival of a new, more aggressive Surveyor General and the introduction of the Dominion annual grant that the province was seriously able to coordinate an effective immigration and settlement scheme, passing the Free Grants Act in 1872.

While it planned a number of group settlements, New Brunswick did not hesitate to bring in migrants from outside the traditional British stock. The province began negotiations to bring 500 Danish settlers to an area in the northwestern part of the province. A contract was signed that included generous commissions to the organizers, covered all the expenses of the Danish migrants, and guaranteed employment for the new arrivals. The only question now was, would the Danes come?

Now that the New Brunswick and Canadian contexts have been dealt with, Chapter Three will focus upon late 19th century Denmark and Europe. While in North America there were conditions that attracted European migrants, these were supplemented by conditions in Europe and Denmark specifically that acted as motivators for those unsatisfied with their existence. Chapter Three will look into what was happening in all aspects of Danish life and uncover the factors encouraging emigration.

Chapter Three: Denmark as Emigrant-Sending Nation

“The Land of Denmark is Small and Poor”

Exert from poem “The Joy of Denmark” by Poul Martin Moller (1794-1838)

Introduction

This chapter will examine late 19th century Denmark as an emigrant-sending nation. The chapter will look into Denmark’s place within the larger context of European emigration, investigate trends within Scandinavian migration, then delve into the push and facilitating factors behind the Danish emigration. It will also look at where the Danish migrants decided to go and which segments of the population were most likely to leave.

The European Context of Migration

During the 100-year period between the end of the Napoleonic Wars and the First World War, between 50 and 60 million Europeans emigrated. For the vast majority, approximately 38-40 million, North America was the destination, with 33 to 35 million going to the United States and 4 to 5 million to Canada. The bulk of the rest went to South America, with Argentina and Brazil receiving 5 to 6 million and 3 to 4 million respectively.¹ While it is true that the overwhelming majority of European migrants went to the United States, the intensity of immigration was higher in other nations. Based on its population, Argentina received the highest intensity, relative to existing population, and Canada’s intensity also exceeded that of the United States.²

Historian Dudley Baines has noted that among European nations in the 19th century, the peaks and troughs in emigration numbers coincided with improvements or depressions in the economy. The economic conditions in the intended destination country had a large impact upon the migrant’s decision of when to emigrate. He pointed to the two components in the decision to migrate: whether

¹ Frank Thistlewaite, “Migration from Overseas in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries,” H. Moller ed., Population Movements in Modern European History, (New York, 1966), p. 75.

² Ibid., p. 75.

or not to go and then, if the decision was yes, when to go. When the decision was made to move to a particular country, some migrants watched the situation closely so that their migration coincided with an economic upturn.³

Geographically, 19th century European migration began where access to the ocean and sailing ships was easiest, and where seamanship was greatest—along the western coastal areas. As the 1800's wore on, however, more and more migrants left from more central areas of the continent.⁴ This general statement applies to the majority of European locations, but it does not apply to all in the same manner. Proximity to the ocean alone cannot increase migration, as facilitating factors also need to be present. In the case of Denmark, proximity to the ocean played less of a role, as no point in the nation is more than 75 kilometers from the ocean. One nation that went against the trend was France. A west European nation with a large coast and seafaring traditions, France's birthrate (4 per 1000) in the early 19th century was much lower than Denmark's (9 per 1000). France's urban areas were able to better absorb the movement from rural areas throughout the century and the pressure to emigrate caused by overpopulation did not occur to the same extent as in other European nations.⁵

The number of migrants leaving Europe in the 19th century began as a trickle but by century's end had become a flood. United States immigration figures show how the number of migrating Europeans seemed to increase almost exponentially. The average annual arrival of Europeans in the 1820's was 15,100, which jumped to 59,900 during the next decade. By the end of the 1840s, at the height of the Irish Famine, numbers topped a quarter million per year.⁶ Once the bulk of the Irish Famine migrations ended by 1853, migration levels experienced increases in waves, the first such wave beginning after the American Civil War in the mid-1860s and ending during the early 1870s. The migration reached its highest point in the 1880s, when the number of people leaving European ports doubled, reaching nearly 900,000 in 1887. The 19th century high-water marks for migration

³ Dudley Baines, *Emigration from Europe, 1815-1930*, (Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire: Macmillan), 1991, p. 21.

⁴ Hvidt, *Flight to America*, p. 8.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 10.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 5.

would soon be exceeded in the early years of the 20th century, when annual levels reached almost 1.5 million.⁷

A push factor in explaining the great European migration was the dramatic increase in the number of people living in Europe in the 19th century. A high rate of birth was not to blame, but the rate of infant death dropped due to improvements in health care, meaning that more Europeans survived to adulthood.⁸ The population boom was so great that, despite losing over 50 million migrants, Europe's population increased from 20.7% of the world population in 1802 to 25.2% by century's end.⁹

For many Europeans, another push factor was the destruction of the traditional, isolated, agricultural ways of living. Frank Thistlethwaite has argued that early 19th century village life involved small numbers of people who knew very little of the outside world. If one person decided to leave for the towns in search of a better life, others did not necessarily follow, but their concept of "the world" would be forever increased, as well as their own chances of migrating in the future.¹⁰ Other sources tell a different story, however.

In Richard Gough's The History of Myddle, written in 1700, the author describes a remote 18th century rural community that, although located in an interior and thinly populated part of England, had residents who were aware of their surroundings; many had visited London, for example, some 250 kilometers away.¹¹ As Gough's extended family gradually scattered throughout the countryside in search of work, news filtered back to Myddle from all areas of England and even around the world. If this was the case for a locale such as Myddle, one must expect the same diffusion of information occurred across European villages. Migration historians readily believe that an awareness of life outside the traditional village community was a necessary pre-condition for the European migration.

⁷ Ibid., p. 6.

⁸ Ibid., p. 7.

⁹ Thistlethwaite, p. 91.

¹⁰ Kristian Hvidt, Flight to America: The Social Background of 300,000 Danish Emigrants, (New York: Academic Press, 1974), p. 7.

¹¹ Richard Gough, The History of Myddle, (Bungay, Suffolk: Penguin Books, 1981), p. 18.

In relation to Denmark, historian Kristian Hvidt has noted that Denmark at first lagged behind other nations economically and legally. Peasants were only legally given the right to travel freely across the nation in the late 1700s. Hvidt discovered that Danes who lived in the villages far from urban areas had little information regarding the larger urban centres and because of this lack of knowledge were more apt to emigrate directly out of the nation than to seek employment in the cities in poor economic times. Those that lived closer to the towns were more informed about opportunities, and were more likely to migrate to these urban areas. We must conclude that Thistlethwaite's observations apply to rural Denmark. Remote rural areas had much less information regarding their surroundings than those in rural areas within the sphere of influence of a larger town.¹²

The two main push factors that increased the attractiveness of the migration option in Europe were upheaval in the agricultural sector and the pace of industrialization. If there had been sufficient employment to support the growing population, few might have found reason to migrate, but with a fixed amount of farmland, children in growing farm families had to move to the towns to make a living. In the age of industrialization there was the possibility that the new urban areas could provide for the influx, but this was most often not the case. The pace of industrialization could not keep up with the growing numbers coming into the towns. If farmers wanted lands on which to farm and tradesmen factories in which to work, migration became more and more an option.¹³

Migration from European nations varied depending upon factors unique to each. For example, while the Irish emigration of the 19th century was mostly the result of agricultural difficulties, in late 19th century England emigration found its roots in urban overcrowding. The largest group of European emigrants, 35 percent or almost 20 million people, came from the British Isles while the smallest numbers came from France. French emigration between 1851-1908 was approximately 490,000. While most nations in Europe experienced a negative balance of migration (more people leaving than

¹² Hvidt, Flight to America, p. 64.

¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 8.

arriving), because of a low birthrate and less overpopulation, France boasted a positive balance in a century that saw so many Europeans sail for America.¹⁴

The Scandinavian Context

Migration had been common within the Scandinavian world for hundreds of years before the 19th century. Across the border areas of Denmark, Norway, Sweden, and Finland, and within each nation's borders, the local populations, whether legally or not, had been highly mobile. Linguistic and religious similarities made it easier for people to work in another nation without having a great impact upon social or cultural life.¹⁵ When choosing a location outside of Scandinavia, geographical location helped determine the destination. The locations of Denmark and Norway facilitated the greatest exchanges with areas around the North Sea, creating a North Sea migration subsystem, while Sweden and Finland had greater contact with those nations along the perimeter of the Baltic Sea, in what can be called the Baltic migration subsystem.¹⁶

Emigration out of Europe was never as numerically important in the 19th century as the inter-Scandinavian labour exchanges. The internal migration factor in Scandinavia would have a large impact on which areas sent the most emigrants out of the country. Those who lived in rural areas close to an urban area tended to migrate to that centre and then had the option of further migration out of the country if the economic situation worsened, while those who lived in remote areas tended to leave directly for destinations overseas.¹⁷ Migration within Denmark was for most Danes a far more palatable option than emigration abroad. For many of them, migration to a larger town or to another region inside Denmark was the preferred alternative.¹⁸

¹⁴ Ibid., p. 10.

¹⁵ The Finnish language is an exception in this case, as linguistically it is akin to Magyar rather than to the other Nordic languages.

¹⁶ Dirk Hoerder, ed. Labor migration in the Atlantic economies: the European and North American working classes during the period of industrialization. (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1985), p. 63.

¹⁷ Dirk Hoerder, Dirk. "From Immigration to Migration Systems: New Concepts in Migration History." OAH Magazine of History, 14.1 (Fall 1999): p. 16.

¹⁸ Niels Peter Stilling and Anne Lisbeth Olsen, A New Life: Danish emigration to North America as described by the

Since the time of Erik the Red and the Norsemen, Scandinavians had been among the first European peoples to venture outside their traditional waters. The Norsemen lived on lands of limited fertility, and this combined with their proximity to the ocean impelled them to become good seaman and explorers. This knowledge of the sea allowed Scandinavian nations to be involved in early voyages of discovery and commerce. During the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, they were able to compete with England, France, The Netherlands, Spain, and Portugal. In the long run, however, they shrank from the scene. For example, in the 17th century, Sweden was among the European nations hoping to colonize North America. In 1638 it established the colony of New Sweden, which occupied parts of the present-day states of Delaware, Pennsylvania, and New Jersey. Their hold on the colony lasted less than two decades, after which it was captured by the Dutch. The Dutch colony lasted only a decade longer and was lost to an even more powerful nation, England.¹⁹

Dirk Hoerder has described the character of the 19th century Scandinavian migration as coming from “all social strata, and most of them were unmarried males and females, often under the age of 25. The majority were the sons and daughters of farmers, tenants, or other groups of the lower strata within agricultural society. Later the number of industrial workers increased.”²⁰ He notes that geographically “nearly 90% of all those who left came from the countryside.” Hoerder also describes the migration as one dominated by men, who made up two-thirds of the total. Family played an important role in the minds of the Scandinavian migrants. Hoerder stresses that

the continuing importance of family must not be underestimated, since many of these single emigrants traveled within the framework of the movement of a family. For a family such moves might have occurred at different times and from different places. Many young emigrants with departure certificates from cities traveled westward to North America, joining family members who had settled there. When this "gradual family emigration" is taken into consideration, the bonds of family and kin stand out as important throughout the entire emigration period.²¹

Emigrants Themselves in letters 1842-1946. (Aalborg, Denmark: Danes Worldwide Archives in collaboration with the Danish Society for Emigration History, 1994), p. 50.

¹⁹ Nordic Council of Ministers, Scandinavian Roots. American Lives: Scandinavian Emigration to North America. Trelleborg, Sweden: Berlings Skogs AB, 2000, p. 9.

²⁰ Hoerder, Labour Migration, p. 52.

²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 52.

Compared with Norway and Sweden, Denmark produced few emigrants. While Norway and Sweden produced 754,000 and 1,105,000 in the 19th century, Denmark sent only 309,000. In 1850 Norway's population was 1.5 million, Sweden's was 3.5 million, and Denmark's was approximately 1.5 million. By 1900, their populations had risen to 2, 5, and 2 million respectively. Norway produced more than double the emigrants Denmark did, and Sweden produced 300,000 more. In Figure 3.1, we see that Scandinavia's percentage of the total European migration was small, only reaching 10 percent of the total between 1866 and 1870.²²

Figure 3.1 Annual Average Emigration from Europe, 1851 to 1915 (in thousands)

Years	Total Emigration	Portion from Scandinavia	Percentage from Scandinavia
1851 to 1855	342.3	6.9	2
1856 to 1860	197.1	4.5	2.2
1861 to 1865	219.3	9.7	4.4
1866 to 1870	345.9	39.3	11.3
1871 to 1875	370.7	22.1	5.9
1876 to 1880	258.0	23.2	8.9
1881 to 1885	661.3	58.4	8.8
1886 to 1890	737.7	60.8	8.2
1891 to 1895	674.8	48.1	7.1
1896 to 1900	543.2	22.1	4.0
1901 to 1905	1038.9	53.9	5.1
1906 to 1910	1436.9	43.7	3.0
1911 to 1915	1365.3	28.6	2.0

United Nations Population Studies, Number 17, *The Determinants and Consequences of Population Trends*. New York: United Nations, 1953, p. 110.

Compared with its population, Figure 3.2 below demonstrates that the intensity of Danish emigration was small when compared to nations such as Ireland, England, Norway, and Sweden, but was greater than other nations, most notably Germany.

²² Hvidt, *Flight to America*, p. 9.

Figure 3.2 Annual Overseas Emigration per 100,000 of Population

	1861 to 1870	1870 to 1880	1881 to 1890	1891 to 1900
Denmark	108	205	391	224
Sweden	228	234	701	415
Norway	581	470	963	454
England	284	401	566	358
Ireland	1465	1024	1492	1010
Germany	167	154	289	101
Austria- Hungary	11	31	108	155
Italy		99	323	491
Russia	1	7	33	51

Sundberg, *Emigrationsutredningen*, Vol. IV, (Stockholm, 1910), p. 110.

Denmark

The following section will focus upon the push and facilitating factors present within Danish society in the late 19th century which encouraged emigration, including issues relating to the following: politics and territory, physical geography, agriculture and peasant life, industry and urbanization, steamship travel, emigrant letters, and return migrants. This section will also look into the phases and composition of the emigration, and finally, the destinations of Danish emigrants.

The Danes themselves have a long history of exploration and migration. Some of the first Europeans to set foot in the Americas after the arrival of Columbus were Danish. Many Danes were either explorers or made up significant numbers of foreign sailing crews. Some notable North American examples of such Danes include Jens Munk, whose arrival in Canada in 1619 made him the earliest Danish arrival in Canada since the time of Leif Ericson,²³ and Jones Bronck, who sailed with the Dutch to the New World in 1623 and whose name continues to live as the “Bronx” borough of New York City.²⁴

In the 17th century, when Europe was carving up the globe, small nations such as Denmark were able to acquire extensive overseas possessions. Danish colonies abroad, like other European

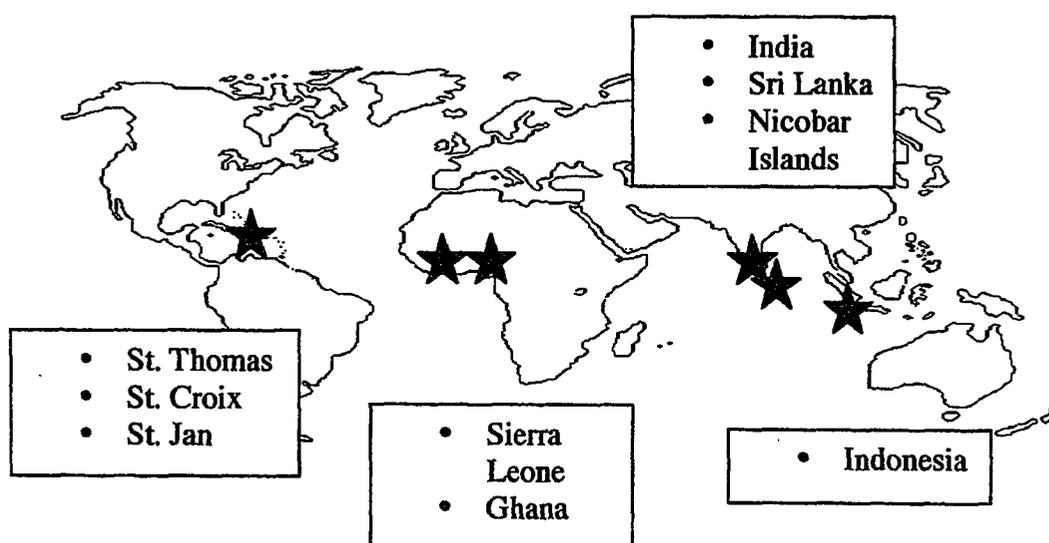
²³ Christopher Hale, “Danes,” Paul Robert Magocsi, ed., *Encyclopedia of Canada's Peoples*, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1999), p. 406.

²⁴ Harry Edward Neal, “Danish Legacy In America,” *Scandinavian Review*, 1976 64(1): p. 55.

possessions at the time, were involved the African slave trade and the manufacture of spices and sugars. Denmark's colonies overall did not prove to be highly financially successful and were sometimes viewed as a burden. Like Portugal and the Netherlands, Denmark's colonies were either sold, conquered, or deserted and were slowly absorbed into the English and French realms.

Denmark's 17th century holdings included locations across the world. Starting in 1620 it possessed settlements in India, Sri Lanka, Indonesia, Sierra Leone, Ghana, St. Thomas, St. Jan, and St. Croix. The last such Danish colonies were in the Caribbean, the earliest of which was occupied in 1672; they were sold to the United States in 1917.²⁵ Figure 3.3 provides a visual overview.

Figure 3.3 Map of Danish Colonial Possessions, 1600-1918



Map from D.P. Todd Secondary School Social Studies Department at "www.dpts.sd57.bc.ca/worldgeog.html."

Political and Territorial

A main facilitating factor that spurred Danish emigration was domestic politics, led by drawn-out crises, loss of Danish territory, and damage to the national psyche. Denmark had once been larger and more powerful. In the 1580s, Denmark's territorial possessions were vast, encompassing the southern parts of present-day Norway, Sweden, and Finland, as well as the island of Iceland. Time was not kind and from the 1580s on, its loss of status was slow and steady.

²⁵ Marco Ramerini, Danish Possessions: a chronology, "<http://www.geocities.com/Athens/Styx/6497/DanishP.html>."

Danish kings had become involved in a series of conflicts and with each paid a territorial price. First came war with the King of Sweden in the 1650s. The Danes were eager to repress the Swedes and increase their land holdings. Believing that the Swedes were bogged down in war with Poland, the Danish King attacked, only to find that the battle-hardened Swedes were much more powerful than he thought. Denmark lost the war, its Swedish territory, and one third of its population, taxation base, and landmass.

The Napoleonic Wars provided the next blow. Hoping to stay neutral, the Danes were forced to back the French after the British destroyed the Danish fleet to prevent it from falling into Napoleon's clutches. When Napoleon lost the war, Denmark was stripped of its territory in Norway. Denmark kept Greenland and the Faeroe Islands, but had been reduced to a shadow of its former self. The economy was hit hard by the many years of continual war, agriculture was in a state of ruin as thousands of one-time troops returned to the farms, trade had been disrupted, and inflation skyrocketed. The National Bank declared in 1813 that Denmark was bankrupt.²⁶

Denmark turned its attention to internal affairs. Politically Denmark became quite liberal after 1815. No political parties existed until the 1840s, when the National Liberals were formed. Their policies were both liberal in view and nationalistic in outlook. Throughout the 1840s the National Liberals made gains in the legislature, the Rigsdag, and by 1848 were strong enough to persuade the newly crowned King Frederik VII to grant Danes a liberal constitution.²⁷ Before this time, Denmark had no written constitution.

Previous monarchs had not wanted to address the constitutional question because of the southern Jutland provinces of Slesvig and Holstein. These provinces were geographically part of Denmark, but had become more German as German migrants poured into the area. The new arrivals began to resent the Danish government. In an attempt to appease, the provinces had been given more autonomy but even talk of attempting to bring the provinces officially into the Kingdom of Denmark

²⁶ George R. Nielsen, *The Danish Americans*, (Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1981), p. 24.

²⁷ W. Glyn Jones, *Denmark: a modern history*, (London; Dover, N.H.: Croom Helm, 1986), p. 51.

was met with fierce resistance.²⁸ While many Danes wanted a new constitution and the right to vote, uncertainty and the reaction of the large German population was enough to make Denmark's rulers wary of granting its people these rights.²⁹ The growing sense of German nationalism in the two provinces would soon boil over into war. King Frederik VII pushed forth with the National Liberal backed new constitution in 1848. The new constitution took away the absolute power of the monarch, but his signature was necessary to approve any new laws and he could choose his cabinet.³⁰ In an attempt to satisfy the Germans, a quasi-federal system was created. Slesvig and Holstein were given more power over their affairs and more autonomy from the national government. This meant that Denmark consisted of three governmental jurisdictions: Denmark proper, Slesvig, and Holstein. It was hoped that this new status would repress the growing separatist sentiments.

Believing that equality would exist on paper only, German nationalists in Slesvig and Holstein formed their own provisional governments in protest. The Danish military mobilized to secure the provinces, but the Prussians, lusting for a unified German state, invaded from the south. The Prussians were pushed back by a Danish force inferior in equipment and numbers.³¹ A ceasefire was called in 1850 and a settlement over the administration of the provinces was reached. The unworkable situation continued. It was decided that Slesvig and Holstein would remain part of Denmark but could at the same time also be members of the German Confederation. Under the agreement, nothing could be done by Denmark to tie the two provinces closer to the nation, and the Danish constitution was not valid in either area.³²

For the next 10 years a tense relationship evolved. The Danish government's growing sense of nationalism finally led to disaster, as they again created a new constitution in 1863 and boldly extended complete Danish sovereignty over Slesvig, the more Danish of the two provinces.³³ The

²⁸ Palle Lauring, *A History of the Kingdom of Denmark*, (Copenhagen: Høst, 1968), p. 212.

²⁹ Jones, p. 50.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 52.

³¹ *Ibid.*, p. 52.

³² *Ibid.*, p. 54.

³³ Nielsen, p. 26.

Danes had hoped that the Germans would find themselves unable to deal with the situation because of a Polish rebellion happening at the same time. The Germans invaded Slesvig and Holstein in early 1864, and entered Denmark proper by June. In losing the conflict, Denmark also lost the two provinces to the growing German Confederacy.³⁴ The annexation had a direct effect on the migration of Danes from Slesvig and Holstein. It has been estimated that between 1867 and 1910 close to 60,000 Danes chose migration rather than living under the newly formed German state. Most of the emigrants chose to leave Europe for North America.³⁵

Politically Denmark suffered many defeats in the 19th century. By 1865 it had lost 40 percent of its territory and had experienced humiliating military defeat. Pessimism pervaded the Danish peninsula. There were even murmurs about the eventual German absorption of the whole nation. Such a situation no doubt was not one that encouraged in its people a positive outlook for its future. It was a push factor for those already thinking of migrating.

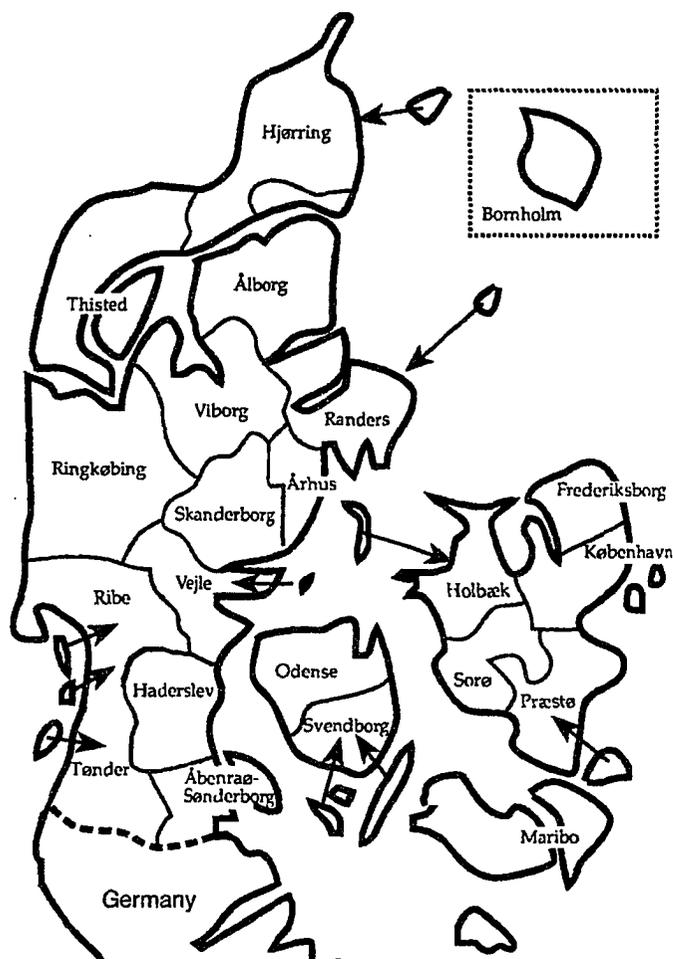
Geography

Denmark's geography also acted as a push factor in the emigration of its people. Denmark is the southernmost and smallest nation in Scandinavia, and today comprises the Jutland peninsula, the major islands of Zealand, Funen, Lolland, Falster, Langeland, Møn, and Bornholm, and about 450 other islands, of which about 100 are inhabited. The Faeroe Islands and Greenland are self-governing territories within the Danish Kingdom. With an area of just over 43,000 kilometres, Denmark's modern size is more than half the area of New Brunswick. Major urban centres include the capital and largest city of Copenhagen, as well as the smaller Aarhus, Aalborg, and Odense. See map in Figure 3.4.

³⁴ Ibid., p. 26.

³⁵ Frederick Hale, p. xiv.

Figure 3.4 Map of Denmark with Counties



Map from Denmark Research Outline, Family History Library, Salt Lake City, Utah.

Denmark's overall geography includes a variety of landscapes and soils. The land ranges from inhospitable granite on the island of Bornholm, to the dunes of West Jutland, to the more productive glacier-swept morainic lands found across the nation.³⁶ Its size does not lend itself to major differences in climate from south to north, and its average maximum temperature ranges from 15 to 16 degrees Celsius and the average minimum temperature -1 to 0.5 degrees Celsius. Annual precipitation ranges from 500 to 750 mm and winds are frequent and heaviest from the west.

Denmark is not a land blessed with natural resources. It has no staggering forests or rich mineral deposits. The only natural resource is its soil, which is not particularly fertile when compared with that of other Western European nations. Denmark's land is, however, better able to support

³⁶ A. H. Kampp, An Agricultural Geography of Denmark, (Budapest: Hungarian Academy of Sciences, 1975), p. 9.

people. The islands of Lolland and Falster (Maribo) had the largest numbers, with 138 out of every 1000 persons deciding to leave.³⁸

The second-best lands are found in West Limfjord, clayey and morainic. Its springs and summers are normally colder and windier than other areas in Denmark. The number of emigrants here was high, 89 of 1000.

North Zealand is more timbered than other regions, because for many centuries it was the hunting domain of Denmark's royalty. Its legacy as a wildlife refuge meant that few Danes lived in the area, and with a small population, emigration was not especially strong, with only 29 of 1000 emigrating.

Coastal dunes and a windy climate characterize the Vendsyssel region. The emigration numbers here continued to increase, with 114 out of 1000 deciding to leave.

Southwest Jutland's lands are often sandy, clayey, or marshy, but the area also contains many meadows. Its lands are considered only marginally more productive than West Jutland. Here the emigration numbers decrease dramatically, where approximately 63 out of every 1000 people migrated.

West Jutland contains the poorest soils in the nation. For many centuries this part of Denmark was covered with heather, the evergreen shrubbery that was a result of past clear cutting and slash-and-burn agriculture, which ruined the soil and prevented the re-growth of the natural landscape. According to Kristian Hvidt's figures, during the 1868 to 1900 period, emigration from West Jutland was among the lowest in the nation, with approximately only 32 out of every 1000 choosing to leave.

³⁸ Hvidt, *Flight to America*, p. 41.

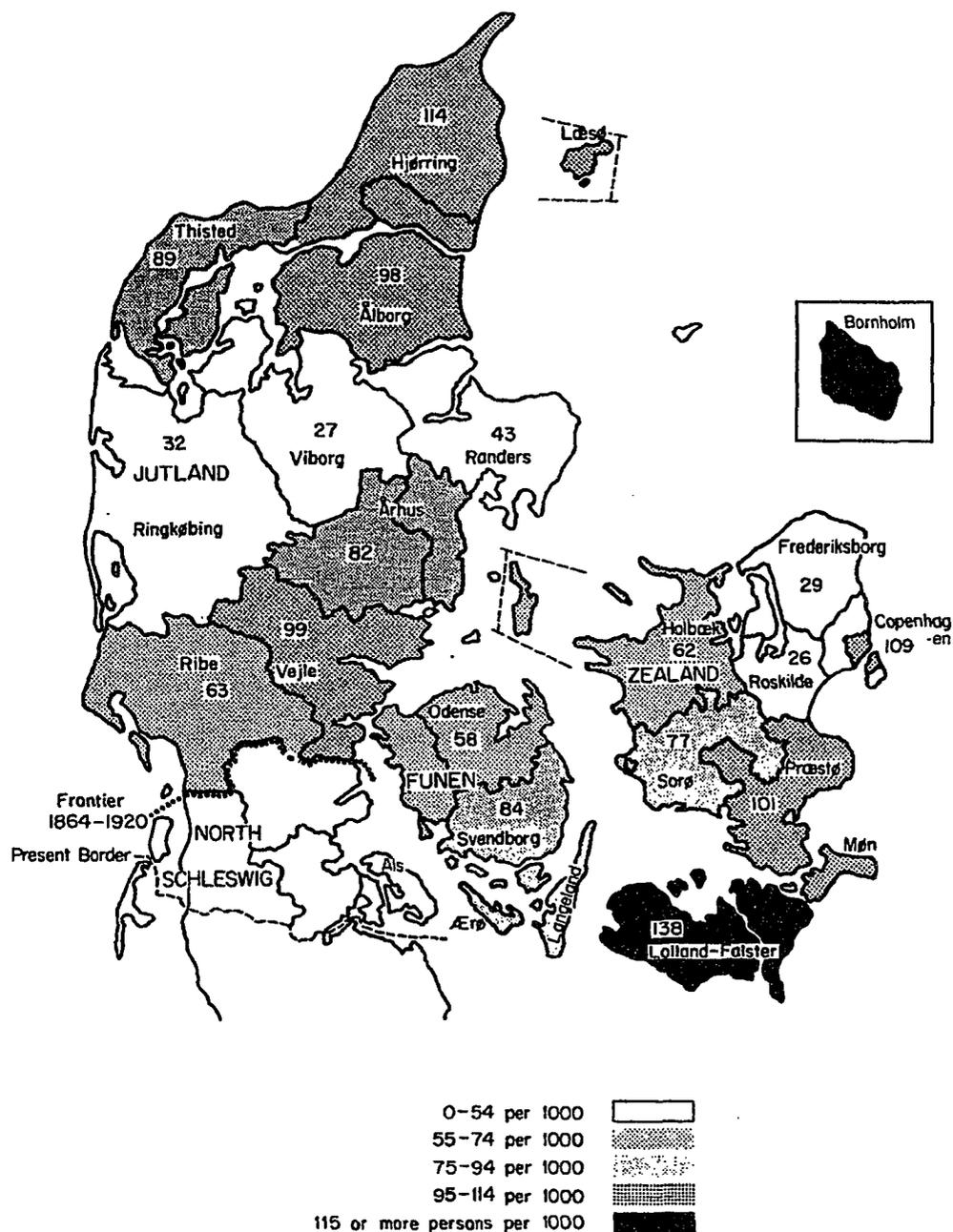
Figure 3.6 Distribution of Emigration by Main Regions, 1868 to 1900

	Regions	Counties
Copenhagen	31,799	
Northern Zealand		11,892
Southern Zealand		16,992
Lolland-Falster		13,550
Bornholm		5,055
Zealand & islands	47,489	
Funen	18,112	
Eastern Jutland		28,646
Northern Jutland		28,438
Southwestern Jutland		10,582
Total Jutland	67,666	
All Denmark	165,066	

Hvidt, *Flight to America*, p. 39.

Some of the best agricultural lands in Denmark were also areas with the greatest intensity of emigration. This fact is not surprising, as in most cases the best farming lands are also the first to implement new technologies and are usually the first to be affected by evolving trends. These areas would have had more agricultural employment and would have been the first areas to be affected by the changes in the agricultural sector. More people would have left these areas and sooner than other areas. Figures 3.6 and 3.7 provide a complete breakdown.

Figure 3.7 Danish Emigration per 1000 Population, by County, 1868 to 1900



Hvidt, *Flight to America*, p. 41. Numbers inside county boundaries represent emigration rate per 1000 people.

Agriculture and Peasants

A number of significant events took place in the 18th and 19th centuries to change the character of agricultural life across Europe. These changes occurred first in Great Britain and spread across the continent. The British revolution began around 1750 and evolved over the next hundred years.

Denmark's revolution occurred approximately 50 years after the British. An increasing population required higher farm yields, and farmers began experimenting with crop rotation, fertilizers, and mechanized equipment to boost output. These changes allowed farms to produce more, and their surpluses became a valuable export commodity. Farming became a business, and its management required the reorganization of the workforce to best ensure profits. This capitalist transformation involved the landowners, tenant farmers, and farm labourers, who together pushed the limits of production.³⁹

In Denmark, while the results of the agricultural revolutions would take decades to fully develop, the most important change has been described as "spiritual." There was a change in outlook, an awakening of social consciousness and a realization of the full possibilities of life.⁴⁰ These changes would contribute a large push factor for the migration. In the early 1700s aristocratic Danish landowners held much of the farmland and the peasant farming class lived in small agricultural villages. These peasants were required to remain on the land and work on the communal farm. A true feudal system was in place. The peasants made up over 80 percent of the population of Denmark, but owned less than 2 percent of the land.⁴¹ Emigration of peasants was not officially permitted for it amounted to a reduction of the King and landlords' fortunes. King Frederick V was so afraid of emigration that in 1753 he forbade American sea captains from spreading information regarding their New World holdings throughout the Danish countryside.⁴²

In 1781 the Enclosure Act was passed, reorganizing the communal lands. Each peasant was given a consolidated farm, replacing the older strip-farming.⁴³ Old agricultural villages disappeared and peasants dispersed across the land.⁴⁴ As in Britain, in the late 1700s Danish agriculture was transformed. Farming moved from subsistence to producing extra for sale or for export, as driven by

³⁹ Mark Overton, "Agricultural Revolution in England 1500-1850" from the website "bbc.co.uk" based on his book Agricultural Revolution in England, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), 1996.

⁴⁰ Hvidt, Flight to America, p. 124.

⁴¹ Nielsen, p. 22.

⁴² Kristian Hvidt, "America Fever Strikes Denmark." Danish Journal, Special Issue (1976), p 20.

⁴³ Kampp, p. 12.

⁴⁴ Nielsen, p. 23.

market forces. The old system proved inefficient and unable to meet the new capitalist production demands, so reorganization was a necessity and government priority.⁴⁵

In 1788 peasants were given the freedom to travel outside their parish of birth. They were also given the right to buy and own land, allowing the more ambitious to create larger farms and experiment with more progressive agriculture. The move away from the agricultural villages and onto their own land helped to give them a sense of independence, and families became isolated from the community and the church.⁴⁶ This new sense of independence would help the Danish migrants make the jump from European farmer to American pioneer.

The rural peasants' existence was further modernized with the School Board Act of 1814, which provided free schooling for rural peasants.⁴⁷ This Act introduced compulsory basic schooling to children all across Denmark, the first such system in the world. Denmark had a literate population much sooner than other European nations.⁴⁸

Added to the newfound sense of independence were new issues related to inheritance. Decreasing infant death rates combined with the already high birth rate caused a problem for Danish farmers. In earlier decades, when only a few children survived to adulthood, the question of inheritance was easy. But with numerous children surviving, the question of who would receive the farm posed a new problem. Even though Danish farms were relatively large by European standards, averaging approximately 90 acres, they were not often split between the children, because the smaller farms could not support the siblings and their families. The problem was compounded as large landowners used their growing political power after 1860 to create larger farms at the expense of the smallholders.⁴⁹ The situation created an entire group of young rural people who detached themselves

⁴⁵ Knud Jespersen, *A History of Denmark*, (Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), p. 53.

⁴⁶ Nielsen, p. 24.

⁴⁷ Ibid., p. 23.

⁴⁸ Jespersen, p. 94.

⁴⁹ Hvidt, *Flight to America*, p. 131.

from the land and sought to make a living as farmhands or servants for other farmers. It was this group of the new landless who would become prime candidates for migration.⁵⁰

The agricultural situation in Denmark did have some high points in the 19th century. During the middle of the century, a large amount of the moorland in central Jutland was reclaimed for agricultural use. The Danish Heath Society was formed in 1866 to spearhead the reclamation effort. Over a period of years, the society was able, with the addition of lime and careful attention, to turn once unproductive lands into ones that could be used for farming.⁵¹ This additional farmland was divided amongst the peasants and did help in a small way to alleviate some of the overcrowding caused by the rising population levels.

The period 1875 to 1900 also saw the transformation of Danish farming from wheat to meat. Grain had been a profitable crop throughout Europe during the first two-thirds of the century, but as the American railways reached westward and into the rich prairie lands, surplus American grain began to flood the European markets, driving down prices and cutting into profits. Realizing they had to adapt, Danish farmers began to purchase the cheaper American grain and focused on the production of dairy products, eggs, and bacon.⁵²

An important pull factor for the emigrating Danes was the lure of something most precious in Denmark: land. What was expensive and in such high demand on one side of the Atlantic was so plentiful that it was being given away on the other. The single greatest “pull” that spurred emigration from all of Europe was the Homestead Act in the United States. This 1862 legislation provided free land to settlers who agreed to live and improve the land over a five-year period. The total acreage of each plot was 160, almost double the average Danish farm’s size.⁵³

While it might be expected that Denmark’s emigrant farmers would have left those areas where the land and the people were the poorest, such was not the case. The two areas that produced

⁵⁰ Kristian Hvidt, Danes Go West: A Book about the Emigration to America, (Copenhagen: Krohns Bogtrykkeri, 1976), p. 30.

⁵¹ Jones, p. 48.

⁵² Nielsen, p. 28.

⁵³ Hvidt, Flight to America, p. 159.

some of the largest numbers of emigrants were the southeast areas encompassing southern Zealand, eastern Denmark, and the northwest corner of the Jutland peninsula. These areas contained some of the most expensive and the best farming lands.⁵⁴ These fertile areas were most affected by the capitalization of the agricultural sector, and here population growth, lack of available land, and consolidation of farms produced more agricultural emigrants.

Industrialization and Urbanization

The second push factor that increased migration out of Denmark originated in the factories of the growing industrial economy and on the streets of the urban centres. It was from the factory towns and cities that rates of emigration and numbers of emigrants were the highest.

Industrialization in Denmark lagged behind Germany, France, and Great Britain, but occurred before other parts of Scandinavia. The changes that had taken place in the agricultural sector should have moved the Danish economy towards industrialization even sooner. The freeing of the peasants and the gradual movement towards the cities should have corresponded with increases in factory production. This evolution was stifled, however, by decades of economic problems resulting from the Napoleonic Wars. Denmark's agricultural-based economy was locked in a holding pattern that retarded its development. It would be unreasonable to believe that without the post-Napoleonic economic conditions Denmark's move towards industrialization could have kept pace with that of Great Britain, but it should have at least have been more at par with its German neighbour.

It was not until the agricultural sector rebounded and began to thrive in the mid-1840s that industry had a chance to begin. The British removal of all grain import duties helped bring thirty years of prosperity for Danish farmers. Until 1870, agriculture was responsible for a full 50 per cent of

⁵⁴ Hvidt, "America Fever," p. 25.

commercial production. The growing industrial sector's presence began to be felt at this point, and by the 1890s, growth in the industrial sector pushed agriculture's share of the economy to one third.⁵⁵

The slow movement of Danish industry can be highlighted with a look into its early railways. The first line in Denmark, between Altona and Kiel in Holstein opened in 1844, some two decades after the first English railway and a decade behind the first German railway.⁵⁶

By the 1840s the old medieval economic rules dominated by trade guilds and controls were being replaced by the market-driven principles advocated by Adam Smith. A laissez-faire economy was spurred on by the first private banks, which provided the financial backing for Danish companies in the first crucial years in the movement towards a market economy.⁵⁷

The Danish industrial revolution did not begin to transform society and provide sufficient jobs until the 1890s. Industrialization began in the 1850s, but its evolution was slow. The percentage of Danish Gross Domestic Product⁵⁸ accounted for by industry rose during this period from 4 to only 7 percent.⁵⁹ It was not until the 1890s that industry had matured enough and had a significant enough base from which to make terrific gains. The number of factory workers in Denmark rose from 20,000 in 1860 to 28,000 a decade later. It then rose to 30,000 by 1880. The big rise came after 1890 when 40,000 found work in the industrial field, but by century's end that number almost doubled to 70,000.⁶⁰

The slow growth of industry impeded the towns' and cities' chances of absorbing the large influx of agricultural workers. While changes in the agricultural sector had been taking place since the late 1700s, industry remained an insignificant factor in the Danish economy until after the 1880s.⁶¹ This resulted in a marked increase in emigration from urban areas in the years 1872-1873 and during

⁵⁵ Jespersen, p. 147.

⁵⁶ Jones, p. 49.

⁵⁷ Ibid., p. 48.

⁵⁸ Gross Domestic Product (GDP) is the market value of all goods and services produced by labor and property in a nation.

⁵⁹ Svend Aage Hansen, Early Industrialization in Denmark, (Copenhagen: University of Copenhagen Press, 1970), p. 16.

⁶⁰ Ibid., p. 23.

⁶¹ Ibid., p. 13.

the 1880s, periods of economic depression. By the mid-1890s, emigration levels from the towns decreased as demand for labour rose.⁶²

The move to the cities in many cases created overcrowded conditions that increased the motivation to emigrate. The population of Denmark increased from less than one million in 1800 to 2.8 million by 1914.⁶³ The capital of Copenhagen doubled in population to 200,000 people between 1860 and 1900 and other major towns, such as Aarhus and Aalborg, tripled to approximately 15,000. Just 25 percent of Danish society lived in urban areas in 1870, but this increased to 40 percent by 1901.⁶⁴ In a hasty attempt to keep up with the influx of new arrivals, many cities and developers built large, cheap housing complexes with little thought to comfort. Many new workers and their families lived in one-room flats without a toilet. There were usually multiple rows of such buildings, and the rows were out of public view, and were usually in poor condition. This system of building in urban Denmark persisted for much of the 19th century and was only changed after the turn of the 20th century.⁶⁵

Facilitating Factors—The Rise of Steamship Travel

It was not until 1838 that steam engines became efficient enough to make the trip across the Atlantic entirely under steam power.⁶⁶ Steam power cut traveling times from 6-8 weeks to 10-14 days, thereby making the journey safer, more comfortable, and more healthy for the passengers, who were no longer forced to suffer in stagnant air in the ship's belly for more than a month. By the 1860s steamships were able to offer passage rates comparable to those of sailing ships. As wages rose in North America and passage rates decreased in Europe, the number of passengers increased quickly. To take advantage of the potential profits, a number of shipping lines were created on both sides of the Atlantic. The steamship companies established agencies in major European cities and paid a

⁶² Hvidt, *Flight to America*, p. 200.

⁶³ Frederick Hale, p. xii.

⁶⁴ Hvidt, *Flight to America*, p. 47.

⁶⁵ Jones, p. 90.

⁶⁶ Hvidt, *Danes Go West*, p. 93.

commission to emigrant agents, whose job it was to attract as many emigrants as possible to their shipping lines.⁶⁷

In Denmark, the steamship companies arrived in Copenhagen with their agents after 1865. The first agents actually were sub-agents for German shipping firms, and it was not until 1867 that Copenhagen welcomed emigrant agents that directly represented British and German shipping firms.⁶⁸ Occasionally North American railway and land speculation companies, as well as state and provincial governments, sent their own agents to advertise their regions as settlement areas, and help ensure that they attracted emigrants who best suited their requirements.⁶⁹

To advertise the numerous shipping lines to as many potential migrants as possible, the chief emigrant agents in Copenhagen hired sub-agents who spread themselves across the countryside. The number of these agents grew dramatically from 126 in 1868 to 571 a decade later. These sub-agents ensured that most everyone in Denmark knew of their travel options if and when they decided to emigrate.⁷⁰

In the rush to make larger commissions, agents at times abused their positions of relative power and either sent people overseas who were too poor to fend for themselves, or lied outright to emigrants about conditions or opportunities. To protect emigrants from these unscrupulous agents, the Danish government passed an emigration law in 1868. The law stipulated that all contracts signed between emigrant agents and emigrants had to be registered with the Copenhagen Police. In addition to the police monitoring of all contracts, agents had to provide a large security deposit which would be used to reimburse those emigrants who had been mistreated or given false information.⁷¹ The 1868 law demanded that agents, who worked overwhelmingly in Copenhagen, have five years of permanent residence in Denmark. Sub-agents, who were most often strewn across the land advertising their

⁶⁷ Kristian Hvidt, "Emigrant Agents: The development of a business and its methods," *Scandinavian Journal of History* 3 (1978), p. 180.

⁶⁸ Hvidt, "Emigrant Agents," p. 180.

⁶⁹ Frederick Hale, p. vx.

⁷⁰ Hvidt, "Emigrant Agents," p. 185.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, p. 180.

companies, were bound to the five-year residency clause after an 1872 amendment to the law. In addition, police were given the power to approve the hiring of sub-agents.⁷²

By 1870 the transition from sail to steam was almost complete and Danish migrants had many steamship companies to choose from. The main firms were British and German and operated out of Liverpool and Bremen respectively. The stiff competition tended to drive down prices as the years progressed. From 1866 to 1872 a significant drop occurred in the minimum price, when the trip's cost decreased by roughly one-half. In the 1880s prices dropped again to just over 60 kroner.⁷³ The decrease in passage fares coincided with a gradual increase in wages during the last decades of the century. For instance, in 1871 the passage cost just half of the 1866 price and it dropped again in the 1880s.⁷⁴ The rural labourer's wages in 1868 averaged 275 kroner, and this rose to 400 kroner by 1878 and to 450 by 1890.⁷⁵

There was much competition amongst the steamship companies for Scandinavian migrant traffic. Great Britain's steamships were the first to attempt to capture the potential market in the 1860s. Among the most important carriers were the Cunard, White Star, Inman, Anchor, National, and Allan Lines. Two major German companies, HAPAG and Norddeutscher-Lloyd also played important roles.⁷⁶ Rail transportation between Copenhagen and Bremen facilitated emigration via the German route. The destination of choice for most companies was New York City, which was the premier migrant destination and garnered the most traffic.

While the Canadian-owned Allan Line did offer voyages to New York City, it also sailed to Halifax, Saint John, and Québec City. These more northern Canadian locations, with their shorter sailing times from Glasgow and cheaper rates, made Allan one of the main movers of Scandinavian

⁷² Hvidt, *Danes Go West*, p. 213.

⁷³ Hvidt, "Emigrant Agents," p. 194.

⁷⁴ According to Kevin H. O'Rourke in his article "Late 19th Century Denmark in an Irish Mirror: Land Tenure, Homogeneity, and the Roots of Danish Success," forthcoming in John L. Campbell, John A. Hall, and Ove K. Pedersen, eds., *The State of Denmark: Small States, Corporatism, and the Varieties of Capitalism*, (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2006), during the 1871 to 1911 period, one British Pound was worth on average 18.16 Danish Kroner.

⁷⁵ Hvidt, "Emigrant Agents," p. 188.

⁷⁶ Odd S. Lovoll, "The Danish Thingvalla Line in the Nordic Competition for Emigration Traffic," *On Distant Shores*, (Aalborg: Danes Worldwide Archives, 1993), p. 83.

migrants.⁷⁷ In general, crossings to New York City were direct, whereas to Canada they were not. A ship bound for New York City would most often sail direct from Copenhagen, but a Québec-bound steamer would leave Copenhagen for Hull, where passengers would travel to Liverpool, board another ship and then make the Atlantic journey. Denmark did not have a purely Danish steamship line until 1879, when the Thingvalla Line was created and began regular direct crossings to New York.⁷⁸

The constant barrage of emigrant agents proved a strong facilitating factor in at least some migrants' decision to go. They sometimes provided information that was untrue to gain a commission, but most scholars agree that for the most part they operated with no malice and provided information that was accurate. If the lure of the agent was not enough, competition ensured that prices decreased, making the voyage that much more attractive.

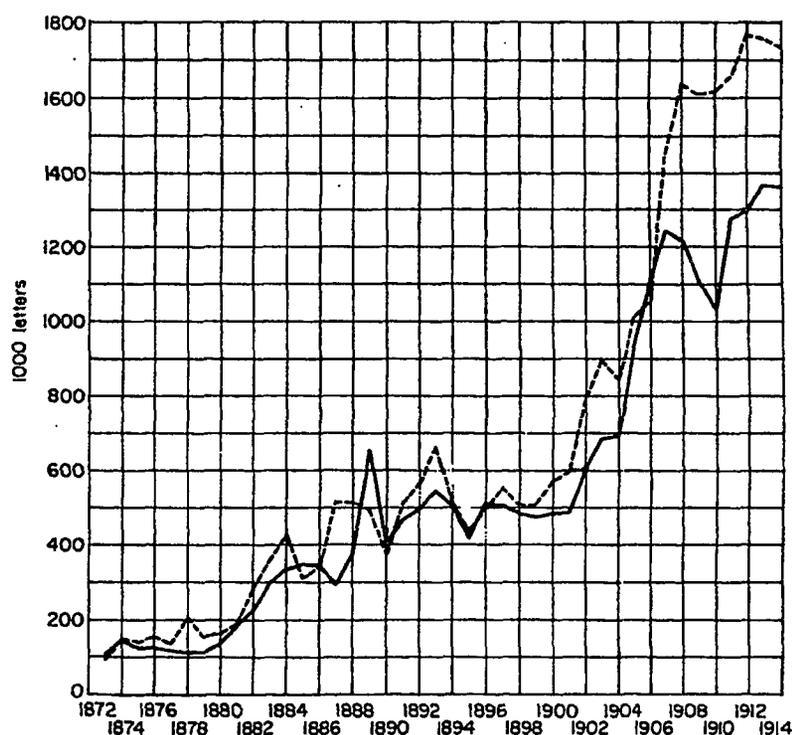
Emigrant Letters

A very important, much more personal facilitating factor was the spread of information regarding opportunities across the sea. While steamship companies, railways, and governments advertised for emigrants, no method proved more effective than personal letters and stories from those who had previously made the voyage. The Danish public school system had been in operation since 1814, creating a highly literate society that was able to compose and read such letters. While Danish postal records documenting the volume of international mail exist only after 1873, an upward trend is seen throughout the last decades of the century, and a dramatic spike in the early 20th. In Figure 3.8 below, the solid line represents letters from Denmark to the United States, while the dashed line those from the United States to Denmark.

⁷⁷ Ibid., p. 96.

⁷⁸ Hvidt, *Danes Go West*, p. 180.

Figure 3.8 Volume of Mail Between Denmark and the United States



Hvidt, *Flight to America*, p. 185.

A correlation can be found between intensity of emigration to America and the volume of transatlantic correspondence. After 1880, when Danish emigration began its most rapid rise, the volume of letters increased. In 1884 an economic recession began, and both the number of emigrants and volume of letters decreased. Levels of both groups peaked once again in 1887 and 1893. Depression in 1893 again drove down both figures, which recovered only after 1900. The large increases after 1900 have been attributed partly to increases in emigration, but mostly to augmented levels of commercial correspondence.⁷⁹

During the 1875 to 1885 period, there were over 64,000 Danes in the United States and 240,000 letters were sent from America, a figure that works out to about 3.6 letters per person. Danish letter writing kept pace with migration levels. Between 1885 and 1895 the total number of Danes rose to 132,000, and almost half a million letters were sent back to Denmark, pushing the average up to 3.7

⁷⁹ Hvidt, *Flight to America*, p. 186.

per person. By century's end, the number of Danes rose to 155,000, and the total number of letters to 590,000, increasing the average once again to 3.8 letters. The period 1905 to 1914 saw 181,600 Danes send 1,283,000 letters back to Denmark, nearly doubling the highest 19th century figure at 7.1 letters per person.⁸⁰

The Danish postal service did not have its own transatlantic service, and Danish citizens writing to North America used either English or German mail services. In 1857 a fixed connection was established between Hamburg and New York, and most mail from Denmark would have traveled this route.⁸¹ After 1872 mail between Denmark and the United States was regulated through Hamburg or Bremen and postal rates set at 7 cents per each 15 grams of a letters weight.⁸² Denmark did not have such an agreement with Canada, but the United States Postal Service acted as an intermediary, sending and delivering mail between Canada and Denmark.

The increases in shipping traffic meant increased competition for postal contracts and cheaper postal rates for the new migrants.⁸³ Great improvements were also being made within the global mail system to lower prices and increase efficiency. In 1874 the General Postal Union was created to help coordinate and standardize the delivery of mail between nations. The Union established a uniform flat rate for mailing letters and the stamps of one nation were deemed acceptable for international routes, replacing the older system where stamps from each nation along the route were often required.⁸⁴

Emigrants to North America very often sent letters back home as soon as they arrived. These letters served three purposes. Firstly, emigrants wrote to warn against or to encourage emigration. The positive type could be referred to as the "propaganda" letter, because they usually involved some sort of promoting or lobbying on the part of the writing migrant. Secondly, emigrants wrote for financial reasons. Like the propaganda letter, the financial letter had two motivations, positive and negative. In

⁸⁰ Stilling and Olsen, p. 38.

⁸¹ Kurt Hansen and Ole Maintz, *Skibspost til og fra Danmark I midten af 1800-tallet*, (Aarhus: 1996), p. 139.

⁸² Fritz Olsen, *Postvæsenet i Danmark 1848-1873*, (Copenhagen: 1924), p. 309.

⁸³ J. C. Arnell, *Atlantic Mails: A history of the mail service between Great Britain and Canada to 1889*, (Ottawa: National Postal Museum, 1980), p. 184.

⁸⁴ From NationMaster.com at "<http://www.nationmaster.com/encyclopedia/Universal-Postal-Union>."

these letters the emigrants either asked for money from their relatives or sent aid to their friends.

Lastly, "contact" letters were written to keep close the ties of personal contact across the Atlantic. The established emigrants who, because of feelings of homesickness, wished to keep in contact with the homeland wrote these types of letters.⁸⁵

Figure 3.9 Prepaid Tickets in Relation to the Annual Total Emigration, 1877 to 1895

Year	Emigration	Prepays	Percentage of prepays in total
1877	1,932	283	14.6
1878	3,151	449	14.2
1879	3,848	495	12.9
1880	No Figures		
1881	6,984	1,063	15.2
1882	6,486	1,188	18.3
1883	8,980	2,379	26.5
1884	5,570	1,535	27.6
1885	5,770	1,865	32.3
1886	8,022	2,017	25.1
1887	15,345	3,382	22.0
1888	12,302	2,751	22.4
1889	10,440	2,630	25.2
1890	11,634	3,108	26.4
1891	12,396	3,286	26.5
1892	12,479	3,332	26.7
1893	11,383	2,936	25.8
1894	5,874	1,191	20.3
1895	6,478	1,851	28.6

Hvidt, *Flight to America*, p. 191.

The purposes of the three letter types were distinctly different. The propaganda letters were intended to fan the flames of emigration within a family or village circle. The emigrants who found adjustment hard in the first important years wrote most of these letters. The same can be said for the negative financial letters, as demands for aid came most often in the first years of settlement. Established emigrants most often sent the positive financial letters.⁸⁶ The contact letter writer's motivation was simply to re-establish contact lost over time and because of their different nature, they did not seem to have the same effect of furthering emigration.⁸⁷

⁸⁵ Stilling and Olsen, p. 41.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 46.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 48.

New arrivals would also help their friends back home by “sponsoring” them, in effect helping them migrate by sending money or a pre-paid ticket. These allowed the migrant to travel directly to relatives by way of steamship and by rail. One-third of all Danish emigrants to the United States between 1868 and 1900 traveled on these pre-paid tickets.⁸⁸ Figure 3.9 above gives a year-by-year breakdown.

Return Migrants

If Danes did not have friends or relatives sending them letters from America, the next best thing was listening to the advice of someone who had made the trip, the return migrant. These one-time migrants had valuable knowledge regarding the entire process and were considered much more credible than someone who had not attempted the journey. Return migrants were often hired by governments and companies to work as emigrant agents. Such agents were referred to in Copenhagen as “Yankees” because of their migration experiences, which were most often in the United States.

Some Yankees chose to work by themselves, gathering emigrants and accompanying them to their new overseas homes, while others worked directly for a particular government or company.⁸⁹ Their prominence throughout the system can be seen in an 1871 report that showed that the Allan Line and its Chief Agent, Wilken Hornemann, employed mostly return migrants. Hornemann’s “Yankees” were mostly out of the country accompanying large emigrant groups to their destinations in America when the report was made.⁹⁰

Many emigrants to North America returned home. It was not a specifically Danish phenomenon. The generally accepted proportion for the return of European migrants is 30 percent. Scandinavian figures were lower than the European average, with 12 percent of Swedes returning and roughly 9 percent of Danes.⁹¹

⁸⁸ Hvidt, *Flight to America*, p. 201.

⁸⁹ Hvidt, “Emigrant Agents,” p. 181.

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 188.

⁹¹ Hvidt, *Flight to America*, p. 181.

Phases of 19th Century Danish Emigration

During the 19th century, there were essentially three phases to Danish overseas migration. The first phase, which lasted from approximately 1820 to 1850, was one dominated by men who had a social standing slightly above average. These men did not have family obligations and had enough financial clout to afford the voyage. This group could be described as a spearhead or vanguard group for the Danes in the New World, their occupations dominated by sailors, teachers, and preachers.⁹²

The second phase, which lasted from approximately 1850 to 1875, was a period characterized by the migration of entire families. Land in the richest agricultural areas proved to be too expensive for the average farming family and emigration became attractive. From these areas the first true waves of Danish overseas migrations began and resulted in the founding of the first North American colonies in Wisconsin, Nebraska, and Utah.⁹³

The third phase, 1875 to 1900, was the period of mass emigration. Encouraged by the information they received from the second-phase emigrants, emigration out of Denmark continued to increase for much of this period. A crisis in agriculture brought on by the arrival of American wheat in the 1870s acted as an extra incentive to leave. An exodus of single young persons from the lower rungs of the agricultural and industrial classes soon replaced family emigration. During these years people from all areas of Denmark began to migrate.⁹⁴

It does appear from American immigration records that before 1868, Danish emigration had been minimal. Between 1820 and 1868 some 14,000 Danes arrived on American shores. As a contrast to this earlier period, Danish records show that in the years 1868 to 1900, almost 300,000 Danes left Denmark.⁹⁵

During this third phase, the character of the Danish overseas migration became more of an urban phenomenon. Yearly emigration figures during the 1868-1900 period reveal that 312 per

⁹² Stilling and Olsen, p. 12.

⁹³ Ibid., p. 12.

⁹⁴ Ibid., p. 14.

⁹⁵ Kristian Hvidt, "Mass Emigration from Denmark to the United States, 1868-1914," *American Studies in Scandinavia* 1972 (9): p. 4.

100,000 Danes came from urban areas while 186 originated from rural districts.⁹⁶ It must be pointed out, however, that in the urban figures are many rural migrants whose first migration had been to the towns and cities. The migration's urban character is therefore deceiving. Rural agricultural workers pushed from the fields to the city streets became involved in a type of migration called stage migration. Lack of employment would push them further, this time across an ocean. The higher number from urban areas does shed light on the problem the towns were having in absorbing the influx of rural migrants.⁹⁷

A clue to the background and structure of the Danish migrations is also revealed by the ages of the emigrants. The Danish proportionally followed the European statistics, with 25 percent originating from the 20 to 24 age group and more than half being between 15 and 29 years of age. Figure 3.10 gives a detailed breakdown.

Figure 3.10 Age Distribution for All Emigrants, 1868 to 1900

Age	Emigrants	Percent
0 to 4	17,297	10.1
5 to 9	8,568	5.0
10 to 14	8,397	4.9
15 to 19	26,867	15.6
20 to 24	43,867	25.5
25 to 29	24,829	14.4
30 to 34	13,556	7.9
35 to 39	7,896	4.6
40 to 49	8,681	5.0
50 to 59	5,609	3.2
60 to 69	1,915	1.1
70 +	318	0.2
Not stated	4,299	2.5
Total	172,073	100.0

Hvidt, Flight to America, p. 73.

Rural and urban migrants did not migrate at the same ages. Those coming from the towns and cities were somewhat older. This tendency most likely reflects stage migration. They were older than rural emigrants who emigrated directly overseas instead of first trying their luck in the Danish

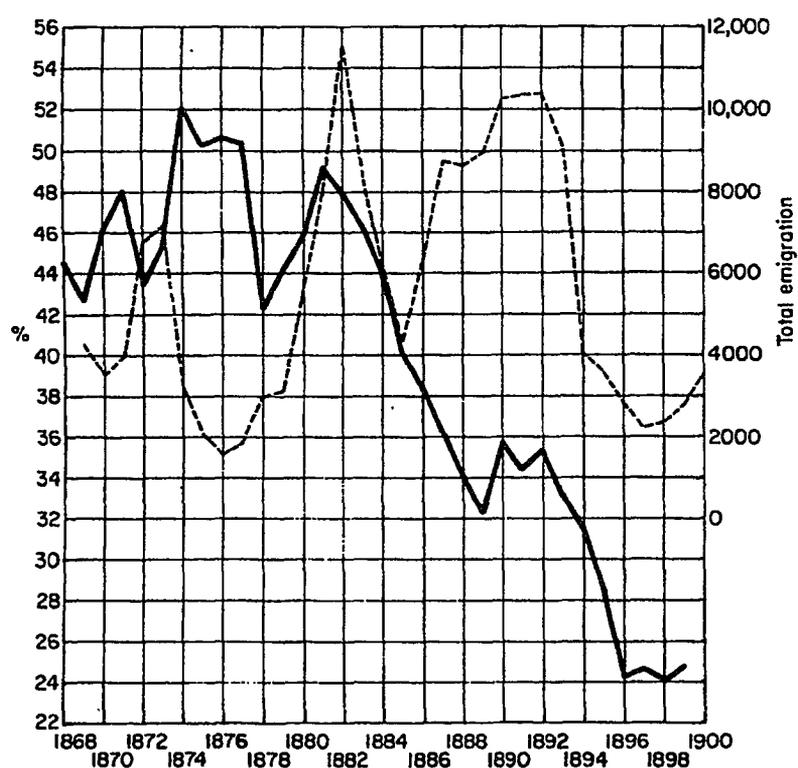
⁹⁶ Ibid., p. 4.

⁹⁷ Hvidt, "Mass Emigration," p. 4.

towns.⁹⁸ These conclusions are verified by the Copenhagen Police records, showing that 27 percent of the rural emigrants were between the ages of 25 and 44, while 35 percent of urban emigrants made up the same age group.⁹⁹

For a time after 1868, families predominated, and though in the 1860s and 1870s families sometimes made up more than half of all Danish passengers traveling to the Americas, by 1885, single men made up the majority of those emigrating.¹⁰⁰ In Figure 3.11 below, family migration as a percentage of the total migration is represented by a solid line, while total migration numbers are represented by a dashed line.

Figure 3.11 Family Emigration from Denmark



Hvidt, Flight to America, p. 98.

As the number of single men increased, the number of young children declined. More young adults began emigrating, the total number of 15 to 19 year olds doubling from 1866 to 1914. The 15 to

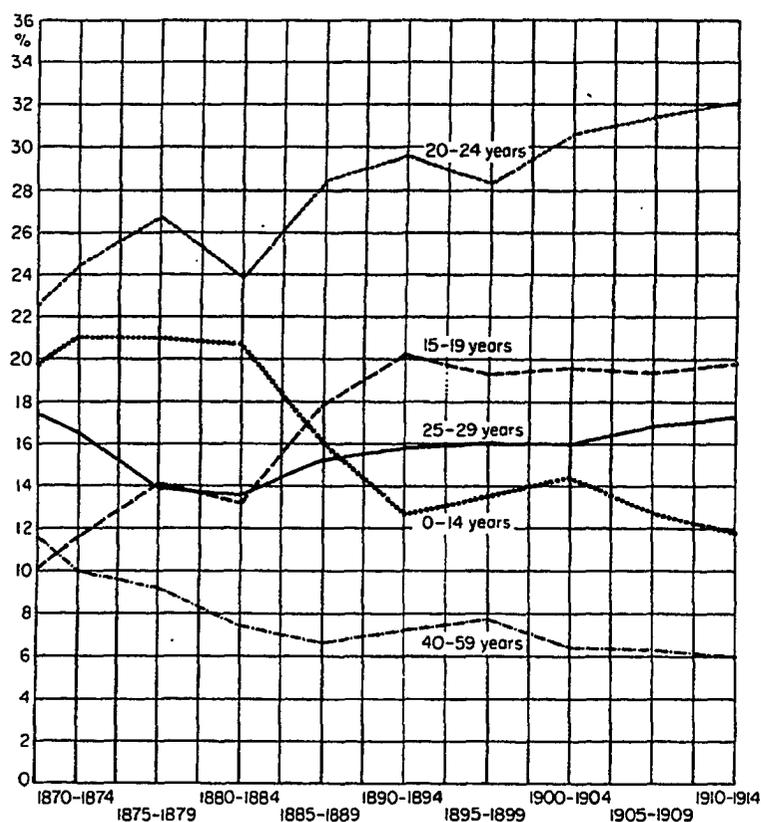
⁹⁸ Hvidt, "Mass Emigration," p. 6.

⁹⁹ Hvidt, Flight to America, p. 75.

¹⁰⁰ Hvidt, Danes Go West, p. 140.

19 age group grew at the expense of every group except the 20 to 24 over the last 30 years of the 19th century. See Figure 3.12 for a comparison.

Figure 3.12 Emigrating Age Groups



Hvidt, *Flight to America*, p. 78.

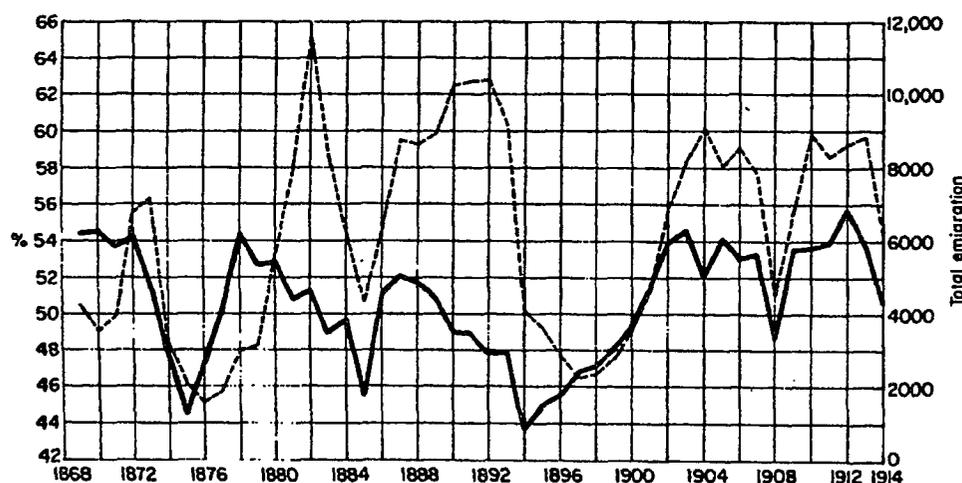
According to Kristian Hvidt, four conditions were responsible for the change in composition of the migration. While the second phase saw families replace single men of some means as the most dominant group, conditions after 1875 would foster the slowing of family migration and create the necessary conditions for the beginning of the third phase with an upswing in the migration of poorer single men. Firstly, Hvidt pointed to the gradual rise of wages after 1875 in both the Danish countryside and the cities. This rise made staying in Denmark a far more attractive option for families and older folk. Secondly, the third phase saw a decrease in trans-Atlantic transportation costs, especially after 1885.¹⁰¹ Thirdly, growths in industrial output in Denmark after 1885 meant that the

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*, p. 201.

towns were better able to employ the inflow of citizens from rural areas and families were therefore more apt to remain in Denmark. And lastly, after 1890 no more free land was available in the United States, where the last free areas were being cultivated.¹⁰² Families in search of farmland saw a significant source dry up. Single men did however continue to migrate to urban areas in the United States.

Men made up the overwhelming majority of Danish migrants. During the 1868-1900 period more than 60 percent were male. This did have an effect upon the domestic population balance. The proportion of men in Denmark, already low at 494 per 1000 in 1840, continued to decline to 491 in 1880, and lower still to 487 in 1901.¹⁰³ In Figure 3.13, total migration is represented by a dashed line, and percentage of males by a solid line.

Figure 3.13 Proportion of Men in Danish Migration



Hvidt, *Flight to America*, p. 90.

Farm labourers made up the largest male occupational group with 43.2 percent of the total. Most of the remaining migrants were unskilled labourers or skilled craftsmen. According to Frederick Hale, the emigration statistics show that those Danes who possessed their own land were far less likely to migrate, as only 3.5% of those emigrating were small landholders.¹⁰⁴

¹⁰² *Ibid.*, p. 94.

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*, p. 83.

¹⁰⁴ Frederick Hale, ed., *Danes in North America*, (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1984), p. xiii.

According to Hvidt, 3271 small holders chose to emigrate, a stark contrast to farm labourers and servants whose numbers swelled to 45,656, or 28 percent of the total emigration. Industrial and trade workers comprised a large number of the total emigration, 28,207 people or 16 percent.

The Danish emigration was definitely one of the poorest classes. Those in the higher echelons of society did not emigrate in large numbers, and almost 70 percent of the emigrants were previously employed as rural labourers or domestic and industrial workers. Figure 3.14 details the principal occupations for emigrants.

Figure 3.14 Emigration for Principal Occupations

Trade	Number	Percentage of total emigration
Independent farmers	3,806	3.4
Rural labourers	47,656	43.2
Shipping and fishing	1,699	1.5
Commerce and professions	8,590	7.8
Craftsmen including apprentices	20,487	18.5
Domestic and industrial workers (urban)	28,174	25.6
Total	110,412	100.0

Hvidt, *Flight to America*, p. 118.

European differences complicate any comparison. For instance, making a real comparison between Britain and Denmark is difficult because only 8 percent of the British population was employed in agriculture in 1900, whereas almost 50 percent of the Danish population was still working in the fields or for farmers.

Danish Emigrant Destinations

Danish migrants had many destination choices. In the 1869 to 1914 period 254,693 Danes (representing 89.1 percent of the total) went to the United States, while some 11,618 (4.7 percent) chose Canada. The bulk of the remainder chose South America and Australia, with 9,315 (3.3 percent) migrating to South America, and 6,973 (2.3 percent) going to Australia and New Zealand. The remaining 1,411 (0.4 percent) and 745 (0.2 percent) migrated to South Africa and Asia.

Danes did exercise their right to choose more often than other Scandinavian migrants. While over 99 percent of Norwegians and 98 percent of Swedes chose the United States, the Danes were a bit more adventurous, with only 89 percent choosing the United States. If we include the Danish numbers who went to Canada in that number, the total becomes 94 percent.¹⁰⁵ Figure 3.15 details how Denmark compared with Norway and Sweden.

Figure 3.15 Danish, Swedish, and Norwegian Emigration, 1871-1925, Showing the Percentage per Destination

	Denmark	Sweden	Norway
United States	87.9	97.6	95.6
Canada	5.4	1.2	3.8
Central and South America	3.8	0.6	0.0
Australia and New Zealand	2.3	0.0	0.4
Africa	0.4	0.6	0.2
Asia	0.2	0.0	0.0
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

Walter Wiscox, ed. *International Migration*, Vol. 18. (New York: National Bureau of Economic Research, 1931), p. 299.

Most Danes in the United States settled in agricultural communities across the mid-west. A “belt” of Danish settlement can be identified through eastern Wisconsin, Iowa, and Nebraska. Important settlements began here as early as the 1840s in Racine, Neenah, and New Denmark, Wisconsin. It was from this base that further emigrants continued the movement west and founded colonies in Iowa and Nebraska.¹⁰⁶ As the 19th century progressed, the Danes moved slowly west as more land was opened. While more than half settled on farms or in small communities, a large number chose to live in more urban areas. New York City, Chicago, and St. Paul-Minneapolis all had significant Danish populations by 1900.

Canada was the second most popular destination for Danes. The majority of Danish settlements were founded by Danes who arrived in Canada via the United States. The first Danish settlement in Canada was established at New Denmark, New Brunswick in 1872. This settlement was

¹⁰⁵ Hvidt, *Flight to America*, p. 162.

¹⁰⁶ Frederick Hale, p. xvi.

started with direct migration from Denmark, but the great majority of the Danish population was to be found west of Québec, in the urban centres, and numerous Danish settlements were founded on the Canadian prairie. These western settlements were most often settled in the early 20th century by second-generation Danish-Americans or Danish migrants who had arrived in the American West to find that the best lands had already been granted.¹⁰⁷ The most logical move for these people was north, to what was advertised as the “last, best west.”

In order to compete with North America for its emigrants, more distant emigrant-receiving countries such as Brazil, Argentina, Australia, and New Zealand had to offer more than free land to attract settlers. As the voyage times were much longer, these nations needed to sweeten the pot in order to detour the flood to North America. The only chance for the poorest Danes and the most distant migrant-hungry nations lay in the offer of free passage.¹⁰⁸

Desperate for settlers, the Brazilian and Argentinean governments on occasion offered free passage, and Danish settlers established concentrated settlements in the Argentinean provinces of Buenos Aires and Mendoza, but the majority of the Danish emigrants to these areas, because of their relative poverty, ended up utterly destitute in South America.¹⁰⁹

Argentina’s first Danish immigrants began arriving in 1860. Until the 1880s Tandil, in the province of Buenos Aires, was the only settlement, when a steady stream began into the area and other communities were established.¹¹⁰ Government services and schooling were not well funded and the Danish communities were forced to fend for themselves. Their subsequent retention of Danish culture and language was greater than almost any other Danish settlement area in the world. Numbers to Argentina were low, with only 3,872 residing there by 1914, of which 60 percent were farmers.

The Danish migration to Australia was small. While the first settlers arrived during the 1850-1860 gold rushes, a larger emigration occurred after 1870, and more than 3000 arrived by 1900. The

¹⁰⁷ Hoerder, *Labour Migration*, p. 58.

¹⁰⁸ Hvidt, “Emigrant Agents,” p. 192.

¹⁰⁹ Hoerder, *Labour Migration*, p. 58.

¹¹⁰ Maria Bjerg, “A Tale of Two Settlements: Danish Immigrants on the American Prairie and the Argentine Pampa, 1860-1930,” *The Annals of Iowa* 59 (Winter 2000), p. 4.

Australian migration was male-dominated and because of the remoteness most were former seamen.¹¹¹ The Australian government backed numerous schemes to attract Scandinavian farmers, including offers of assisted passage to Queensland and free land in Tasmania.¹¹² Assisted passages brought the bulk of the Danes to Australia during the 1870s and 1880s.

New Zealand received its first Danish migrants in 1865. To combat the high cost of passage to New Zealand, which in 1850 ranged from £ 20 to 40, compared with £ 5 to £ 7 to North America, New Zealand after 1870 pushed hard to divert some of the migrant traffic its way with offers of assisted passage.¹¹³ Economic depression in North America starting in 1873 caused British migrants to bypass North America for other destinations within the empire, and Australia and New Zealand began to receive larger numbers of British settlers, reducing the need for Scandinavian settlers.¹¹⁴ The offers of assisted passage for Scandinavians had ended by 1877, and by 1900 there were approximately 3,500 Danes in New Zealand.

Conclusion

Danish emigrants in the late 19th century followed the trend of European migration in general, in that the vast majority of Danes went to the United States. Other important destinations included Canada, Brazil, Argentina, Australia, and New Zealand.

Many factors influenced the Danish migration. There were the pushes, such as a rise in population caused by more children surviving to adulthood, the agricultural revolution and the consolidation, enlargement, and mechanization of farms, the movement of displaced agricultural workers to the cities, the slow growth of industry, the inability of Denmark's urban areas to provide sufficient employment for agricultural migrants, and the domestic political situation, the loss of

¹¹¹ Hoerder, *Labour Migration*, p. 58.

¹¹² Olavi Koivukanagas, *Scandinavian Immigration and Settlement in Australia Before World War II*, (Turku, Finland: Institute for Migration, 1984), p. v.

¹¹³ Olavi Koivukanagas, "The Longest Voyage of the Vikings. New Zealand: A Remote Alternative to America," in *On Distant Shores*, (Aalborg, Denmark: Danes Worldwide Archives, 1993), p. 128.

¹¹⁴ Koivukanagas, "The Longest Voyage," p. 132.

territory and prestige resulting from war defeats. Facilitating factors such as the impact of improved transportation, the work of emigrant agents, the growth of literacy and therefore the effect of emigrant letters, and stories of return emigrants, also played significant roles.

New Denmark's Danes did not follow the general Danish trends and must be viewed as a separate subset within the emigration. New Denmark's population consisted of many emigrating farmers and farm labourers from areas of high production and advanced commercial agricultural areas in Denmark. Farmers and labourers in these areas were among the first affected by the modernization and commercialization of agriculture, and thus some of the first to move to the cities in search of work or to emigrate more directly to maintain their agrarian lifestyle. The majority of New Denmark's migrating farmers came from one geographic location, as will be demonstrated.

The Danish emigration in the 19th century occurred in three phases. The first lasted from 1820 to 1850 and consisted of mostly male adventurers, missionaries, and sailors of some means. The second began in 1850 and lasted to 1875 and was characterized by the emigration of whole families. Mass emigration from Denmark did not begin until the start of the third phase in 1875. Continuing until the end of the century, emigration became a younger movement with many single males and females making the journey. New Denmark's citizens will be contrasted against these phases.

Trends within the emigration also become apparent. Changes in the economic situation in Denmark throughout the last three decades of the 19th century meant that as fewer families migrated, more single men and women crossed the Atlantic. The character of the migration was male and young, as over half of all the Danes who left were between 15 and 29 years old and 60 percent male. It was a movement of the poorer classes; those that emigrated were most often rural labourers, making up almost 45 percent of all migrants, and a full quarter were domestic or industrial workers.

With a Canadian and Danish reference for comparison established, Chapter Four will begin the in-depth study of New Denmark. Beginning with its early history, it will then explore important and underappreciated topics, including the background and motivations of the settlement's main

organizers, how the Danes were perceived in their new home, and whether there is any credence to the belief that the settlement location was chosen to slow a southward Francophone migration.

Chapter Four: New Insights into New Denmark's Early History

"I quite agree it was not wise to encourage this Danish immigration movement at present..."¹

Surveyor General Benjamin Stevenson

Introduction

This chapter will explore the early history of New Denmark, New Brunswick and cast light on important and neglected questions. It will first look into the motivations of the main settlement organizer, Captain Søren Severin Heller. The chapter will open with an exploration of New Denmark's beginnings and Heller's efforts to attract migrants. It will consider the origin and composition of those Heller recruited in 1872 and 1873. While it will look at Heller's background and his attempts at recruiting Danish emigrants for this venture, it will also explore suggestions that Heller may have misled some of the Danish migrants and assess his legacy within the Danish settlement. New Brunswickers' perception of the Danes, a non-traditional immigrant group, will be investigated using government documents, correspondence, and local newspaper reports. Finally, I will explore the controversy surrounding the settlement's location and the possibility that its purpose was to block Francophone encroachment. The viability of this "buffer thesis" will be examined.

New Denmark's First Years and the Background of Its Organizers

The main stimulus for a Danish settlement in New Brunswick resulted from a late 1871 proposal by Captain Heller and George Stymest to the provincial government. Relatively little is known of their backgrounds and motivations.

In Stymest's case, after the contract was signed with the government, he seems to have disappeared altogether. We could surmise that he was a citizen of New Brunswick, as Stymest remains a prominent name in the Miramichi area in eastern New Brunswick. No further mention is

¹ PANB, Stevenson to Ammand, 28 April 1876.

made of him and no indications are given as to his identity or motivations. Stymest's main role may have been to give some legitimacy to Heller's venture by submitting proposals in association with a local businessman. After signing the contract, Captain Heller took command of the migration scheme.

Heller also proves a mystery. Although he called himself "Captain," it is unclear whether he was an actual ship's captain or a former member of the military. According to Danish census records,² Heller was born in Copenhagen in 1839. His father was a cannonier in the Danish army and the family had resided in Copenhagen since at least the late 18th century. The origin of the family name Heller does not appear to be Danish but German. It could very well be that Heller's grandfather was a member of the German privileged class when he migrated to Copenhagen in the late 1700s. The records do not give us any information regarding Heller's marital status.

In his thesis "New Denmark: An Ethnic Community in Canada," Roseville Burgoyne stated that Heller was the "Captain of the trans-Atlantic ship bringing the immigrants."³ This seems unlikely. It appears he was a Danish return-migrant who became interested in immigration to Canada. In a search of the Copenhagen Police Records, which recorded every emigrant contract after 1868, only two migrants with the last name Heller are found. We can be fairly sure that both entries represent Captain Heller, as the first and second initials match his distinctive name, Søren Severin, and in both instances the occupation is listed as Captain. If we believe these two entries to represent Captain Heller's movements, they indicate that Heller traveled to North America in 1869 and again in 1874.⁴ The ages contain an error, as during a five-year period, he is recorded as having aged 11 years, but such inaccuracies are common and have not prevented the identification of other migrants.

In both 1869 and 1874, Heller's destination was New York City. We can hypothesize that Heller, upon arriving in New York City in 1869, began to see opportunities to make money through migration to North America. His travels might have brought him north to Maine, where he perhaps

² Danish census records are available online at "http://ddd.dda.dk/asp/soeg_uk_udvidet.asp."

³ Roseville Luther Paul Burgoyne, "New Denmark: An Ethnic Community in Canada" (University of New Brunswick M. A. Thesis # 1328, 1973), p. 28.

⁴ The Danish Emigration Archives website allows for online searching of the Copenhagen Police Records, "www.emiarch.dk/home.php3."

heard of the success of New Sweden. He then met up with George Stymest, and the two made their proposal to the Province in late 1871.

In their proposal, Heller and Stymest promised to deliver 500 Scandinavian settlers over a two-year period,⁵ two-fifths males 18 years old and above. The proposal also stipulated

1st. Each male Immigrant over 18 years to have 100 acres of land, with good accessible roads. A chopping of two acres to be made on each lot of 100 acres. A suitable temporary building or buildings to be provided for the reception of the Immigrants a short distance of their lots. The Immigrants shall be employed to do the aforesaid chopping. The temporary building to be reserved for school or other public purposes of the settlement. On three years actual residence a grant to issue to each male settling as above.

2nd. That the able-bodied males over eighteen years of age will receive employment on the Railways, or at other works, at the rate of, or not less than one dollar per day for a period not exceeding two years

3rd. Any grants of land which the New Brunswick Railway Company agrees to make to labourers in the employment of said Company, according to the terms of Communication from the said Company to the Government, dated the 7th December, A. D. 1871 will be guaranteed by the Government.⁶

Heller and Stymest were apparently well informed as to the intended location of the New Brunswick Railway Company's line along the St. John River valley, and expected the Danes to supply some of the labour required for its completion. It is not certain whether Heller and Stymest or the province chose the settlement location. "Scandinavian" was used to describe the potential immigrants most likely because in late 1871 Heller and Stymest were uncertain from which Scandinavian nation the migrants would come.

Just a few months after Heller and Stymest made their proposal, on 11 April 1872 the government passed the Free Grants Act, closely mirroring Heller's contract and the United States Homestead Act. The Free Grants Act guaranteed single male immigrants over 18 years of age 100 acres of land and married men with at least two children under 18 years 200 acres. Immigrants were responsible for improving their lands in the three-year period. They were required to begin chopping

⁵ "Proposal of Stymest and Heller of 7th December 1871," New Brunswick House of Assembly Journals 1872, p. 59.

⁶ "Report of the Surveyor General for 1872" New Brunswick House of Assembly Journals, 1872, p. 7.

trees, clearing the land, and improving their land within one month of arrival. Within the first year they were required to have a house of not less than “sixteen feet by twenty” built and three acres under cultivation. At the end of the three years it was required that they have at least ten acres under cultivation.⁷

As the ink was drying on the contract, Heller was off to Copenhagen to begin his recruitment efforts. He focused on the area he knew best, the Danish capital of Copenhagen, which because of its location at the opening of the Baltic was the main port of departure for Danes, Norwegians, Swedes, and Finns.

Attempting a migration as large as 500 people is a bold venture. Heller must have believed he would be able to deliver the contracted number of Danes. Attempting the advertising, recruitment, and coordination of such a large group alone would have been foolish, as, unlike Captain Brown of New Kincardineshire, who had a homogeneous Scottish group waiting to migrate, Heller had no such group, but instead would attempt to attract individual families and single men from across Denmark. He needed help, but where did he get it?

One possible contact might have been Henry Hertz, the Canadian government emigrant agent sent to Scandinavia in 1872. Hertz routinely spoke with average Scandinavians, remained in close contact with agents from the Allan Steamship Line, advertised in the most prominent of the Scandinavian newspapers, and distributed New Brunswick Surveyor General Stevenson’s pamphlets across Scandinavia.⁸ It is possible that Heller met with Hertz and that Hertz recommended a meeting with Wilken Horneman, the Allan Shipping Line’s Chief Agent in Copenhagen.

According to Palle Bo Bojesen, Heller contacted Horneman in 1872, presumably to inform him of his venture and to ask for his assistance in rounding up migrants.⁹ It is not known whether Heller and Horneman had met previously or what may have been the nature of their working

⁷ “An Act to Provide for Free Grants to Actual Settlers on Crown Lands,” New Brunswick House of Assembly Journals 1872, Appendix, pp. 48-51.

⁸ Canada, “Annual Report of the Minister of Agriculture,” Sessional Papers, 1873, Number 26, p. 165.

⁹ Palle Bo Bojesen, New Denmark, New Brunswick, Canada. (Aarhus: Aarhus University Press, 1992), p. 258.

relationship. Most likely Heller advocated the mutually beneficial nature of his contract, offering to the Allan Line the opportunity to transport the 500 Danish settlers in exchange for Horneman's help through his extensive connections in Denmark's emigration industry.

Heller's contact with Horneman could also lead to the assumption that Heller could have been, or was trying to become, one of Horneman's "Yankees," returned Danish migrants who worked as emigrant sub-agents across Denmark.¹⁰ The literature has shown that Horneman's sub-agents were predominantly of this character.

Heller had also been in contact with a person who, in today's terms, could be likened to a corporate "headhunter." Bojesen reported a man named George Hesse¹¹ as performing much of the preparatory work, including the advertising and logistics for Heller. Hesse could have worked under Horneman as an Allan Line agent, and he was also involved in helping Captain Brown to advertise and secure settlers.¹²

Bojesen's book indicates a further connection between Heller and Horneman. When Captain Heller's contract expired at the end of 1873, he claimed that Horneman owed him \$273 for his disbursement of railway tickets that were used to transport migrants from across Denmark to Copenhagen. Bojesen also notes that in response, Heller complained to the Police over his allegations, but did not file a formal complaint or proceed with legal action.¹³

Heller's advertisement and recruitment efforts in Copenhagen were made difficult because many Danish farm labourers, who would have been prime emigration candidates, had already entered into contracts for summer work and were unavailable.¹⁴ Despite this, his promises of land, work,

¹⁰ Kristian Hvidt, "Emigration Agents: The development of a business and its methods," *Scandinavian Journal of History*, 3 (1978), p. 181.

¹¹ Bojesen mentions George Hesse only in an appendix written in Danish and does not provide a reference.

¹² Bojesen, *New Denmark, New Brunswick, Canada*, p. 249.

¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 249.

¹⁴ "The Danes" in "Report of the Surveyor General for 1872," *New Brunswick House of Assembly Journals*, 1872, p. 27.

wages, and one of the cheapest passage rates to North America available drew in a number of families and single men.¹⁵

The first group of Heller's Danish migrants left Copenhagen on 31 May 1872. This group's exact size is in dispute, but sources place the total between 27 and 30 people, composed of approximately six families, and seven single men. According to A History of New Denmark, after leaving Copenhagen, the migrants touched at Hamburg, Hull, Liverpool, and Halifax before landing in Saint John. The migrants changed ships at different points along the journey. The ships prior to Liverpool are unknown, but from this city Heller and his Danes sailed aboard the steamer "Caspian" to Halifax, and on to Saint John aboard the "Empress."¹⁶ The group arrived in the capital city of Fredericton on 17 June.¹⁷

The numerous stops and ship changes were characteristic of migration voyages from northern Europe. Most of New Denmark's Danes would travel to North America via such indirect routes. According to historian Nick Evans, the location of Hull and Liverpool as a "gateway from northern Europe," the two ports' modern landing facilities, and the development of "highly competitive and efficient shipping services" by British steamship owners were key to their importance as the cornerstone of the indirect route.¹⁸

Heller, along with Benjamin Stevenson, Surveyor General of New Brunswick, and J. A. Beckwith, his Deputy in Victoria County, accompanied the group of Danes aboard the steamer "City of Fredericton" up the St. John River to their destination. According to Stevenson, when the Danes landed at the mouth of the Salmon River they gave a cheery "hurray" as the steamer put off.¹⁹ Next came a 3-kilometre trek up a steep path to the settlement. When he saw the unprepared state of the

¹⁵ Palle Bo Bojesen, "New Denmark—The Oldest Danish Colony in Canada" Danish Emigration to Canada, Henning Bender and Birgit Flemming Larson, eds., (Aalborg: Danes Worldwide Archives, 1991), p. 56.

¹⁶ Dane Lanken, "New Denmark: The Legacy of Canada's First Danish Settlement Lives on in Northwestern New Brunswick" in Canadian Geographic (September-October 1993), p. 27.

¹⁷ The New Denmark Women's Institute, A History of New Denmark, (Compiled in 1959 by the New Denmark Women's Institute, and edited as a Centennial Project, June 19, 1967), p. 12.

¹⁸ Nick Evans, "Indirect passage from Europe" Journal for Maritime Research, (June 2001), p. 2.

¹⁹ "The Danes" in "Report of the Surveyor General for 1872," New Brunswick House of Assembly Journals, 1872, p. 27.

temporary building to house the emigrants, Stevenson was worried that dissatisfaction would be expressed, writing, “It was not in the state of preparation I had contracted for, and I felt at first uneasy.” But his worries proved unfounded as “by eight o’clock all were comfortably cared for and went to bed contented, though tired, having had little sleep on board the steamer the night before.”²⁰

Prior to his arrival onsite, however, Stevenson had expressed little concern about the facilities awaiting the immigrant party. In a letter dated 31 May 1872, the same day that the first group of Danes left Copenhagen, he had written to those preparing the temporary buildings, informing them that they did not have to work too quickly, stating, “I am in a position to say that there is not occasion for great haste.”²¹ Stevenson also made apparent that finances were tight and that he did not wish to spend an exorbitant amount on the construction.

Heller, Stevenson, and Beckwith remained with the group for the first few days as the Danes began to clear the land and plant potatoes, but soon Stevenson and Beckwith returned to Fredericton, and Heller returned to Denmark to organize another group of migrants. According to A History of New Denmark, Heller did personally guide another group consisting of four or five migrant families that summer, and he returned again with another in spring 1873.²² His 1873 group of around 80 Danes²³ arrived too early and the St. John River was still frozen over with ice. Under Stevenson’s orders, the party was retained in the city “until the season should be more advanced, the snow gone, and the building [in New Denmark] completed.” Forced to remain in the city for almost a month, Heller’s Danes were housed in military barracks and the men received jobs at the St. John Water Works.²⁴

In 1873 the Danes relieved the government of its employment guarantees. Road-building and railway construction in Victoria County had not occurred at the pace that the government had

²⁰ Ibid., p. 28.

²¹ Provincial Archives of New Brunswick (PANB), Letter Book of Benjamin Stevenson, 31 May 1872.

²² The New Denmark Women’s Institute, p. 10.

²³ Bojesen, “New Denmark—The Oldest Danish Colony in Canada,” p. 67.

²⁴ Benjamin Stevenson, Report on Immigration to New Brunswick in 1873, Saint John: Daily Telegraph Printing and Publishing Office, 1874, pp. 4-5.

estimated and the Danes were suffering financially from of lack of work. The province decided to buy its way out of the problem. Stevenson met with Heller upon his arrival in 1873 and asked him to “bring the matter before his immigrants and urge it upon their favourable consideration and adoption.”²⁵ When the matter was concluded successfully, Stevenson noted his relief as the government had been

relieved of their guarantee for work for two years, they [the Danes] accepting each 100 acres under the Free Grants Act, 1872, with \$110 for house building and four acres chopping on lots located to married persons having two or more children; \$60 for house building and two acres chopping on lots located to married persons having less than two children, and \$40 for house building and two acres to single men. All parties assented to this arrangement.²⁶

The new agreement in place, Heller returned to Denmark to continue his recruitment efforts.

Heller fell out of grace with the Province over his failure to fulfill his contract. New Denmark’s population in 1873 was 111, not even close to the 500 migrants contracted for. From here, Heller essentially drops from the scene. As eluded to earlier, he traveled to New York City a second time in 1874, perhaps to make a new start, or perhaps to attempt another migration venture. The Copenhagen Police Records do not note his travels between 1869 and 1874 because as a main organizer of the New Denmark settlement, he would have been considered an emigrant agent and his journey was not seen as emigration but as part of his contracted duties.

The Origin and Composition of Heller’s Migrants

In 1868, the Copenhagen Police began to record all contracts between migrants and agents. Emigrants were required to provide personal information including their ages, occupations, county of last residence, and destinations. These records provide insight into the background of each migrant. In Kristian Hvidt’s book Flight to America, the general trends in 19th century Danish emigration were

²⁵ Stevenson, Report on Immigration to New Brunswick in 1873, p. 5.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 19-20.

uncovered using these records. Using the Copenhagen Police Records,²⁷ the histories of those Danish migrants who settled in New Denmark can be traced and compared with the more general Danish trends. The material presented in this section is the result of such an investigation.

The recruitment work of Heller in the first two years would be very important to the success of his venture. His contract with the province required him to secure farmers and farming families and at least 40 percent of his settlers were to be men 18 years of age or older. By the end of 1872, however, Surveyor General Stevenson requested that Heller recruit fewer single males, who were tending not to remain in New Denmark as settlers. Heller was told that in 1873, he was to concentrate his efforts on securing farming families.²⁸

How well did Heller do in his selections? Did he recruit the people the province wanted? The Copenhagen Police Records were searched to uncover information regarding Heller's migrants. It was possible to locate 45 people from Heller's 1872 campaign and an additional 30 from 1873.

Captain Heller's first party left 31 May 1872 and while secondary sources note that the group comprised between 27 and 30 people, only 24 were located in the Copenhagen Police Records. If a few migrants did not list the proper destination, they would not appear with the group and the discrepancy could easily be explained. Given the fact that it was Heller who as the emigrant agent reviewed each migration contract, however, this seems unlikely. The Copenhagen Police Record data noted that the first party consisted of 10 single men over 18 years old and of 4 families with 14 total members. In all, there were 14 men both married and single over 18 years, which translated to 60 percent of the total. As seen in Figure 4.1 below, all males with occupations were farmers.

²⁷ Access to the Copenhagen Police Records is found at the Danish Emigration Archives website at "www.emiarch.dk/home.php3?l=en."

²⁸ PANB, Letter Book of Benjamin Stevenson, 4 November 1872.

Figure 4.1 Composition of Heller's First Party

Family Name	Given Name	Occupation	Age	Last Resident County
Toft	Anders	Farmer	31	Slesvig
	Ellen	Wife	25	
Clausen	Lars	Farmer	45	Praestø
	Sisse Marie	Wife	41	
	Ane	Child	10	
	Ellen	Child	7	
Carlsen	Hansine	Child	9 months	
	Anders	Farmer	37	Praestø
	Marie	Wife	35	
	Peter	Child	6	
Andreasen	Unnamed	Child	4 months	
	Wilhelm	Farmer	26	Praestø
	Anna	Wife	21	
Winning	Unnamed	Child	11 months	
	S. H.	Farmer	19	Hjørring
Smidt	Peter	Farmer	29	Copenhagen
Larsen	Jens	Farmer	31	Copenhagen
Jensen	Frederik	Farmer	41	Frederiksborg
Ibsen	Jergen	Farmer	22	Sorø
Hummel	L.W.	Farmer	29	Copenhagen
Hess	M. Petersen	Farmer	32	Copenhagen
Frausing	Paul	Farmer	18	Viborg
Christensen	Jens	Farmer	30	Aalborg
Andersen	Mads	Farmer	44	Ringkøbing

Copenhagen Police Records, "www.emiarch.dk/home.php3."

Heller and his second party, according to the Police Records, left Copenhagen on 7 November 1872. This date must be an error. While the registration date is listed as the 7th day of the 11th month, this is not possible as it was too late in the season. If the St. John River was ice covered, which can occur in late November or early December, the immigrants could not have made the long journey to New Denmark. It is much more likely that the actual date is 11 July. After accompanying his first party, it would have been at least late June before he could have arrived back in Denmark. His second party was small, containing just 2 families with 11 total members and two single males, for a total of 13 people. Of this group, 4 were males over 18 years, accounting for just over 30 percent. More detailed information regarding this party's migrants is listed in Figure 4.2. Unlike the first party, where farmers dominated, they made up only 50 percent of the occupations.

Figure 4.2 Composition of Heller's Second Party

Family Name	Given Name	Occupation	Age	Last Resident County
Nilsson	Jens	Farmer	41	Sverig
	Ingri	Wife	36	
	Elsa	Child	6	
Lund	Jorgen	Farmer	43	Randers
	Mariane	Wife	44	
	Marie	Child	17	
	Mine	Child	15	
	Søren	Child	11	
	Carl	Child	9	
	Ellen	Child	8	
	Johanne	Child	2	
Jensen	Niels	Carpenter	41	Copenhagen
Christoffersen	Peter	Cigarmaker	28	Sorø

Copenhagen Police Records, "www.emiarch.dk/home.php3."

As earlier mentioned, by late 1872 the province had decided to focus its efforts on attracting Danish farming families instead of single males. In late 1873, Heller presented to the New Brunswick government a partial listing of the migrants he sent to the province that year. Did these immigrants reflect the government's new priorities? From this list of 35 names it was possible to locate 30 in the Copenhagen Police Records. Among the group were many single males. Of the 35 people, 16 were single males, 2 were single females, and the remaining 17 were found among 5 families, two headed by married women traveling without their husbands. Figure 4.3 below provides further details. Those married or single over 18 years old made up 55 percent of the total.

Figure 4.3 Composition of Heller's 1873 Migrants

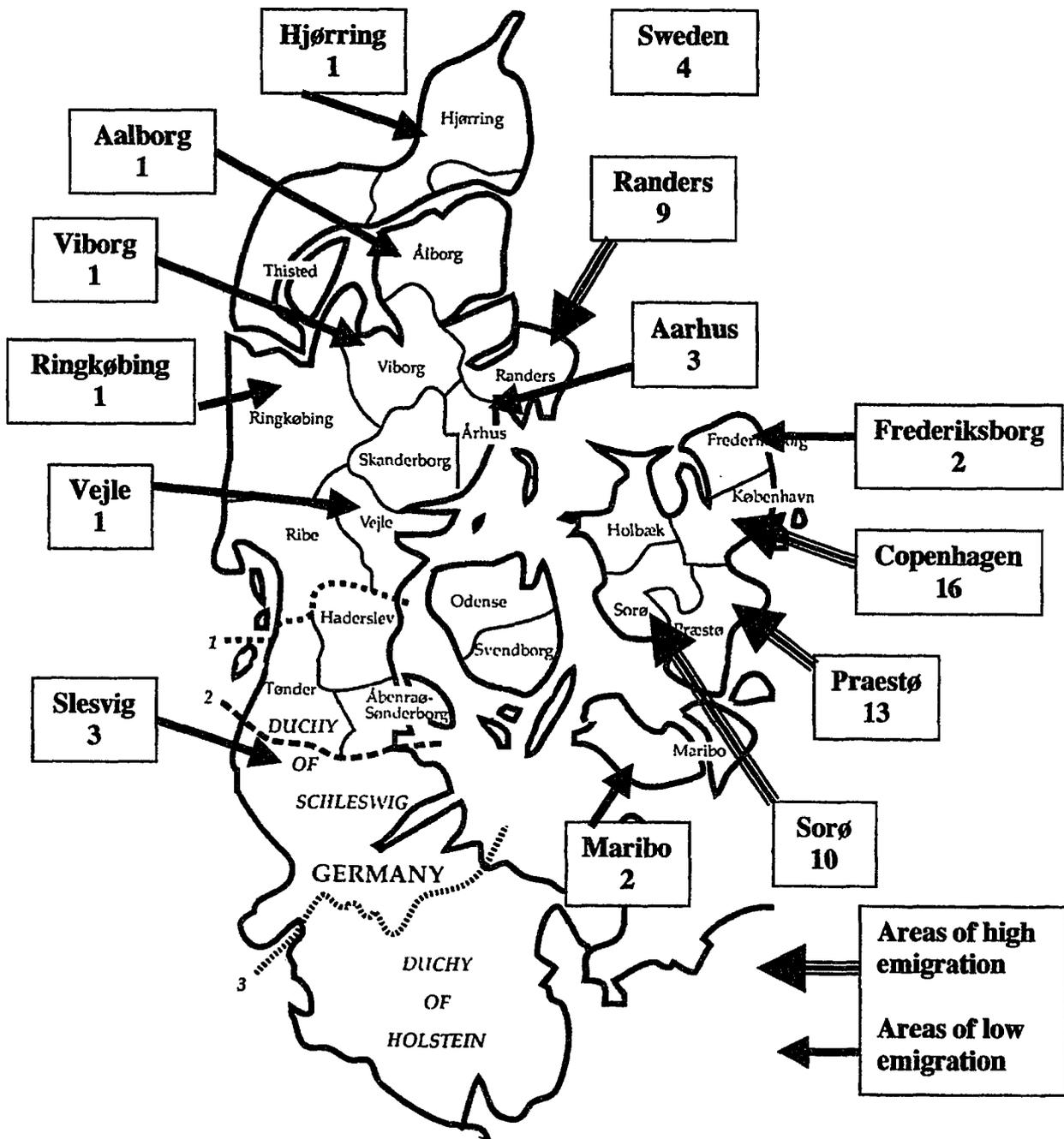
Family Name	Given Name	Occupation	Age	Last Resident County
Reinke	Frederik	Baker	37	Copenhagen
	Ida	Wife	34	
Jorgensen	Frederik	No data	No data	Sorø
	Karen	Wife	25	
	Hans	Child	3	
	Valdemar	Child	2	
	Marie	Child	6 months	
Christensen	Anders	Unskilled labourer	28	Aarhus
	Mette	Wife	27	
	Unnamed	Child	11 months	
Brinkman	Kathrine	Wife	37	Copenhagen
	Henrik	Child	18	
	Johannes	Child	11	
	Axel	Child	6	
	Amanda	Child	3	
Jensen	Elen	Wife	47	Maribo
	Christine	Child	14	
Andersen	Lars	Farmer	28	Frederiksborg
Petersen	Rasmus	Farmer	29	Sorø
Andersen	Johan	Farmer	22	Sverig
Hansen	Peter	Farmer	27	Sorø
Willman	Peter	Farmer	28	Sorø
Larsen	Anders	Shopkeeper	25	Copenhagen
Hansen	Ole	Farmer	32	Frederiksborg
Andreasen	Frederik	Farmer	22	Randers
Hansen	Søren	Farmer	50	Vejle
Christoffersen	Ludwig	Farmer	18	Praestø
Warner	Gilbert	Farmer	20	Slesvig
Larsen	Carl	Shopkeeper	19	Copenhagen
Olsen	Kristine	Servant	25	Copenhagen
Andersen	Flora	Seamstress	24	Copenhagen
Jacobsen	Jens	No data		
Rasted	Harald	No data		
Fullstrom	Herman	No data		
Jorgensen	Niels	No data		

Copenhagen Police Records, "www.emiarch.dk/home.php3."
 PANB, Letter Book of Benjamin Stevenson, 4 November 1872.

Figure 4.4 below highlights the counties of origin of the 72 migrants noted in the Figures above. We can see that the majority of Heller's migrants came from counties on the island of Zealand, producing 55 percent of the total. And as Heller's recruitment focused on Copenhagen, this is no

surprise. When those from nearby Randers are added to the total, two-thirds of Heller's migrants can be seen as coming from areas close to Copenhagen.

Figure 4.4 Origins of Heller's 1872 and 1873 Migrants



Map from Family and Church History Department, *Research Outline: Denmark*, (Salt Lake City: Family History Library, 2001)

It does seem that Heller was at least providing the province with the percentage of adult males initially requested. The other requirement, that the Danes be farmers, was also being satisfied. Heller

was failing, however, to provide the number of settlers contracted for. And providing the settlers was only half of the battle. It is important to gauge what happened to his migrants once they arrived in New Brunswick. How many of his migrants remained in New Denmark, how many left, how long did they stay, and how many used the passage as an opportunity to get to North America and did not attempt settlement in New Denmark? Because of inadequate records in New Brunswick and the highly mobile population, it is difficult to arrive at concrete figures for each of these questions. We know that some of the Danes remained in New Denmark, but also that many of them left after a few days or after years of settlement. There were core groups of families that remained, but when the 1881 census was taken, far less than half of Heller's migrants were still there. Outmigration was such an important issue that it will receive in-depth treatment in the next chapter. Given the fact that some of Heller's migrants did not appear in New Denmark's census, we have to assume that there were some who arrived in Saint John only to move directly to points in the United States. One such example is the Toft family (see Figure 4.1). From Slesvig, the Tofts were amongst Heller's first party, but they did not settle in New Denmark but in far away Shelby, Iowa.²⁹ Though the Tofts represent only one family, there is no evidence that the other Slesvig or Swedish immigrants ever reached New Denmark.

Did Heller Mislead his Danish Migrants?

The first few years of life in New Denmark saw a large outmigration from the settlement that will be investigated quantitatively in Chapter Five. In an attempt to explain this outmigration, many in government, especially the Surveyor General, blamed Heller. They questioned his tactics in Copenhagen and the information he gave to the prospective settlers.

Disappointment in Heller's recruitment was first stated privately in a letter from Stevenson in November 1872. In the letter, Stevenson stresses to Heller that he must clarify his strategy and ensure that he explain the actual conditions in New Brunswick, as the first settlers were not well equipped for.

²⁹ 1880 United States Census, available online at "www.familysearch.org."

the task because they were told conditions were more advanced. The most dangerous assumption of the previous settlers was that farming could begin soon after debarkation.

Stevenson wanted Heller to ensure that migrants knew that the chopping of trees was not the only step required before farming could commence.³⁰ He reminded Heller about the wording of the Free Grants Act, principally that the settlers were responsible for clearing their own land and were required to build their own homes during the summer after their arrival. These issues Stevenson wanted explained, as the government wanted self-sufficient settlers. He finished the letter with the request that Heller bring more families in 1873, noting that single men did not tend to stay. Most importantly, it appears from Stevenson's letter that Heller had intentions of becoming a resident of New Denmark, as Stevenson told him that as he had requested, a chopping of four acres had been made for him beside the emigrant house.³¹

According to Bojesen, the reason the first migrants were available to depart from Denmark so late in the season as 31 May 1872 was that they were on some type of "stand-by" list. Heller's offer of a cheap passage, free land, and guarantees of paid work were enough to convince this first group to follow Heller to New Brunswick, especially if we assume that the Danes were short on cash and desperate to leave.³² Questions continue to linger regarding Heller's description of living conditions in New Brunswick. Whether it was made evident or not that farming could not begin before thick forests were cut, piled, and burned is unclear. There are, however, indications that Heller did not fully inform the Danes, causing great discouragement to some upon arrival.

Surveyor General Stevenson chastised Heller in 1873 for the careless way he selected his migrants. Stevenson acknowledged the hard times experienced and the large numbers who chose to leave New Denmark. The source of these problems he blamed on the "non-selection of Immigrants" in Denmark. In a letter to Heller he stated, "I cannot however omit to state my conviction that the

³⁰ PANB, Letter Book of Benjamin Stevenson, 4 November 1872.

³¹ Ibid.

³² Bojesen, New Denmark, New Brunswick, Canada, p. 259.

settlers most likely to be successful are practical farmers with families and the selection made by you was not chiefly of their class.”³³

According to Stevenson, the settlers recruited by Heller had not been made fully aware of the agricultural opportunities and the pioneer conditions in the settlement, meaning that only farmers and farm labourers were required. With few exceptions, Stevenson noted, only those who were practising farmers in their homeland and those with families remained long enough to become settlers. Those who were single or did not possess the necessary agricultural skills did not stay. According to Stevenson, over 50 percent of Heller’s migrants had left for the United States.³⁴

As a comparison, Stevenson pegged the outmigration from New Kincardineshire at only 7 percent.³⁵ In official government documents Stevenson reported a much more muted outmigration from New Denmark, most likely so as to not embarrass the government or himself. In his 1873 report, for example, he stated, “some of these colonists had left for the United States, chiefly the unmarried men.”³⁶

What Legacy did Heller leave?

It is clear that most settlers who arrived in 1872 and remained in New Brunswick had a good opinion of Heller and his efforts. To help him in his recruitment efforts during the next season, and perhaps at the same time representing a show of admiration, the first Danes gave Heller a letter signed by the members of the community extolling his virtues and the quality of life in “Hellerup,” the first name given to the settlement.³⁷ Stevenson first suggested the new settlement’s name, in part as a reference to a town near Copenhagen but also in homage to Captain Heller. The settlers agreed.

At some point, however, opinion of Heller must have soured because while the settlement was referred to as Hellerup in government documents for the first few years after its creation, it was

³³ PANB, Crown Land Office Letterbook, Stevenson to Heller, 15 November 1873.

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ Stevenson, Report on Immigration to New Brunswick in 1873, pp. 23-24.

³⁷ Bojesen, New Denmark, New Brunswick, Canada, pp. 260-61.

referred to as “New Denmark” as early as January 1873.³⁸ The change of name could have resulted from a backlash against Heller. By the end of 1872 the settlers had time to assess the promises made to them and the realities of settlement life in New Brunswick.

Heller was to be involved in organizing a second Danish settlement, once New Denmark’s settlers had been secured. Stevenson’s report for 1873 indicates that The Free Grants Act settlement of Balmoral, close to Campbellton in northeastern New Brunswick, was to become the second Danish settlement in the province. In the report he noted that

as under his contract, part of the Danish immigration was intended for the North Shore, he was instructed that any immigrants brought by him to the country by the middle of September of this year must be for the settlement at Balmoral, in the county of Restigouche, at which place preparations similar to those at Hellerup had been fully made for their reception, and that after that date the contract with him would be at an end.³⁹

There seemed to be confusion regarding the second settlement. The New Brunswick Reporter wrote in June 1872 that a second group of Scandinavians were leaving for New Brunswick and noted “Should these last arrive they will be located on the Balmoral Block, Restigouche.”⁴⁰ Despite the Government’s original intentions, the second group of Danes migrated to New Denmark and Balmoral did not become a Danish settlement, most likely because levels of Danish immigration to New Brunswick were not considered high enough and New Denmark was not the early success the government had hoped it would be.

There are also indications that Heller’s popularity could have begun to wane as a result of a power struggle within the community. Stevenson’s report for 1873 contains references to a “bad feeling” that had arisen between the government appointed Commissioner for New Denmark, Hans Peter Petersen, and Heller. According to the report, some of New Denmark’s settlers were not

³⁸ Bojesen reported that “New Denmark” first appeared on a marriage certificate. A search of provincial records could not locate the document, and since the information was taken from the English summary, it is not referenced by Bojesen.

³⁹ Stevenson, Report on Immigration to New Brunswick in 1873, p. 22-23.

⁴⁰ The New Brunswick Reporter, 12 June 1872, p. 2, col. 5.

satisfied with Petersen's work and might have appealed to Heller for help, resulting in an unhappy relationship between the two most prominent men in the settlement.⁴¹

Heller accompanied his third group of Danes to New Denmark in early 1873. He assisted in the distribution of the lots and negotiated a road-building contract with a Danish settler. Heller then returned to Copenhagen to continue his duties as the settlement's emigrant agent. This point marked the end of the working relationship that had existed between him and the provincial government. At the end of that summer Heller sent a number of letters to the province asking for money owed him for his work. Despite his failure to secure anything close to the 500 settlers named in his contract, he reminded the government of their agreement and asked for \$350.00 as his commission for the 35 Danes he claimed to have sent out that summer.⁴² In another letter to Stevenson, Heller gave the names of those he had sent during the summer season and asked that payment be sent to him. In closing his letter, Heller stated that if he was appointed agent for 1874 he was "prepared to give satisfaction to the government," which must be a reference to his failure thus far to produce the contracted number of settlers.⁴³

Stevenson's response sounded the end of Heller's association with New Denmark. In a letter written on 15 November 1873, Heller was informed that the government did not "wish any further effort to be made by you in the winter next [towards increasing] Danish Immigration."⁴⁴ He was told that he would not receive payment for the Danish migrants who had arrived after his return to Copenhagen in 1873. By the end of 1873, by which time Heller was contracted to have brought 500 settlers, some 299 Danes⁴⁵ had entered New Brunswick's ports, and fewer than half can be directly attributed to Heller. It could be that the government was already seeing the effects of chain migration into New Denmark and felt the services of Heller were too expensive, considering that those who had

⁴¹ Stevenson, Report on Immigration to New Brunswick in 1873, p. 21.

⁴² PANB, Crown Land Office Letterbook, Heller to Provincial Secretary, 19 September 1873.

⁴³ Ibid.

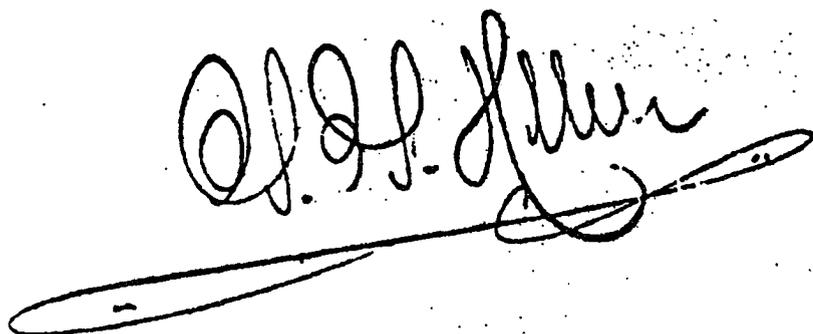
⁴⁴ PANB, Crown Land Office Letterbook, Stevenson to Heller, 15 November 1873.

⁴⁵ Figure taken from Saint John and Miramichi Emigrant Agent's Annual Reports for 1872 and 1873.

already settled could pull additional friends and family members to New Denmark with no commission paid to the agent.

In a curious turn of events, Heller's name reappears in provincial documents as late as 1876. In a breakdown of monies spent supporting New Denmark, \$330 was noted as paid to "H. H. Heller."⁴⁶ While the initials are incorrect, this is understandable when a careful examination is made of his signature in Figure 4.5 below.

Figure 4.5 Heller's Signature


 A handwritten signature in black ink on a light background. The signature consists of the initials "S. S." followed by the name "Heller" in a cursive script. The initials "S. S." are written with a large, looped "S" and a smaller "S". The name "Heller" is written in a fluid, cursive hand. A long, horizontal flourish extends from the bottom of the signature across the width of the text.

Heller's first two initials "S. S." can be mistaken for "H's." A government clerk unaware of the Danish migration scheme could easily have misread this. The money paid is noted merely as the balance of the account. If the government decided finally to pay Heller, it is still uncertain why they did so, especially when in real terms Heller had not completed his end of the contract.

The Surveyor General's Perceptions of the Danish Migrants

While it has been established that Danish migrants were preferred over southern and eastern European groups because of their northern roots and Protestant faith, they represented an infusion of people previously unknown in New Brunswick, at least in such numbers.

The prevailing feeling can be described as quiet acceptance. While they did not raise great fanfare, most observers were impressed by the migrants' intelligence and fitness. The only drawback,

⁴⁶ Helen Craig, ed., "Report on Account of Hon. B. R. Stevenson for Expenditure on Immigration and Settlement of Immigrants, 1876," New Denmark as seen by government officials at Fredericton, 1844-85, (Fredericton, N.B.: Helen Craig, 1972), p. 111.

it seemed, was that most of them could not speak English. Stevenson, who had worked hard to advertise and ready the province for settlers, was happy with the first party. In his Annual Report for 1872 he stated, "We were favourably impressed with the intelligence of these people" and he continued, "The whole party is in excellent health and spirits." He also noted that "The men have all had military drill, some of them in the national schools and some of them in actual service."⁴⁷

Though the Danes did experience problems in their new home, most obviously caused by a lack of experience in chopping, burning, and clearing their lands for settlement, Stevenson's public response to the Danes remained positive. He was less enthusiastic, however, in private correspondence, especially as it became obvious that Heller could not fulfil his contractual obligations, and that a large number of his hand-picked migrants were deciding to leave New Brunswick.

In his report for 1873, Stevenson noted the hard times experienced by the Danish settlers. Sickness and the rigours of pioneer life were taking their toll. With few exceptions, only those who were practising farmers in their homeland had the necessary skills to become settlers. There had been a great outflow during the first two years, with Stevenson officially recognizing that over 35 percent of Heller's migrants had decided to leave soon after arrival. The winter of 1872-3 and the summer of 1873 had been time of considerable sickness when smallpox entered the community, leading to a number of deaths.⁴⁸

Regardless of how Stevenson perceived the Danes, his ability to support the Free Grants Act settlements across the province was severely weakened in 1874. The Dominion government announced in April that its annual \$10,000 immigration subsidy to the province was being cut.⁴⁹ This Dominion decision was a financial one, as the economic depression that started in 1873 was placing tremendous demands upon government coffers. Stevenson hoped that with discussions it could be

⁴⁷ Benjamin Stevenson, Report on Immigration to New Brunswick in 1872, Saint John: Daily Telegraph Printing and Publishing Office, 1873, p. 27.

⁴⁸ Stevenson, Report on Immigration to New Brunswick in 1873, p. 27.

⁴⁹ Craig, "Report on Immigration to New Brunswick, 1874," p. 87.

reinstated. The problem for the New Brunswick government was that its budget for the year assumed the payment. Stevenson believed the Dominion would sympathize and at least make a one-time payment to cover 1874's expenses. That was not to be the case and the payments never recommenced.⁵⁰

The removal of the Dominion subsidy and the failure to greatly increase arrivals in the province seemed to take the wind out of the province's sails. Immigration and settlement expenditures by 1876 had declined to just \$7,763.93, as compared with over \$61,000 in 1874. The trend continued. In 1877 \$1,178.52 was spent, including \$736.79 towards the salary of New Brunswick's sub-agent in London; that one salary made up 63% of the province's immigration and settlement budget.⁵¹

Stevenson found his budget squeezed. The Province had spent a lot of money on the New Denmark settlers and had received little return for their investment. Because of the financial situation of the province and the large number of Danes who were leaving, after 1874 Stevenson wanted restrictions placed on Danes arriving. The inability of the Danes to clear their own land caused an extra burden and only those "acquainted with the difficulty of clearing up a new farm in a well wooded country" should be allowed to migrate to the settlement.⁵²

Stevenson did not want additional Danish immigration while there was a possibility of acquiring British settlers. He noted in his 1874 report that New Denmark's progress was slow and he "did not think it advisable to stimulate [Danish immigration] when English speaking immigrants can be secured."⁵³ In 1875 Stevenson wrote to London sub-agent Ammand that New Brunswick wished to slow and if possible stop further Danish migrations. He noted:

With reference to the immigration of the Danes, I am instructed to reply thereto to say that at present the Government have on hand as many immigrants as the funds at their

⁵⁰ Ibid., "Report on Immigration to New Brunswick, 1875," p. 99.

⁵¹ Ibid., "Report on Account of Hon. B. R. Stevenson for Expenditure on Immigration and Settlement of Immigrants, 1877," p. 121.

⁵² Ibid., Stevenson to Ammand, 13 May 1875, p. 92.

⁵³ Benjamin Stevenson, "Report on Immigration to New Brunswick," New Brunswick House of Assembly Journals, 1874, p. 17

disposal will enable them to take care of, and the most that could be done would be to give the Danish immigrants the benefit of the Free Grants Act of 1872...⁵⁴

He continued, "I quite agree it was not wise to encourage this Danish immigration movement at present" and then gives his reasoning, commenting on the present Danish settlers in the province:

I cannot say that I am satisfied with the success they seem to work for themselves. They labour under great disadvantage by reason of the difficulty in making themselves understood; and I fear that they would not succeed unless they are abundantly able to provide from the present means for all the wants of 18 months at least, of the first experience in New Brunswick when by dint of close attention to farm clearing they could have prepared ground enough to provide for their yearly wants thereafter.⁵⁵

The New Denmark settlement was only successful because of the liberal policies of the provincial government in securing road-making jobs for the local Danes, and the close proximity of railway construction jobs to the colony.

Though Stevenson suggested in 1876 that the Province did not have funds to aid migration, Ammand was to ensure that British migrants were made aware of the passenger warrants available. Stevenson gave special preference to Scottish relatives of the New Kincardineshire settlers, mentioning by name two family members he wished to receive such warrants and help guarantee their move. He then further pushed his point, stating "During the year I may ask your attention to cases such as these."⁵⁶ The message was clear: Danish immigration was to be discouraged, and while the Province had little money, every effort was to be made to attract British immigration.

Despite what he said privately, Stevenson continued to publicly support the immigration of Danes. He continued to stress that the Province was not obligated to provide more help to immigrants than was stipulated in the Free Grants Act. Upon hearing in 1877 that the Commissioner for New Denmark, Petersen, was attempting to use his personal connections to increase migration to New Denmark, Stevenson stated, "I trust that Mr. Peterson's efforts to bring this settlement prominently before intending Immigrants in Denmark and Danish people in the United States may result in

⁵⁴ PANB, Letter Book of Benjamin Stevenson, 13 May 1875.

⁵⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁶ PANB, Letter Book of Benjamin Stevenson, 28 April 1876.

numerous arrivals during the coming year. No other inducements are given than the facilities of the Free Grants Act 1872.”⁵⁷

Danish migrants were welcome, it seemed, as long as they were aware of settlement conditions and did not cause undue strain on government coffers. The province’s investment in New Denmark was such that Stevenson could not publicly admit that the Danish venture might have been a mistake.

Perceptions of Danish Migrants in New Brunswick Newspapers

The opinions stated within the pages of New Brunswick’s press gives some suggestion of how people across the province received and perceived the new Danish arrivals. In order to understand how the Danes were viewed in the years from their arrival to 1877, four newspapers were studied to determine the level and type of coverage given to immigration. Overall, British groups dominated newspaper coverage. Regarding the Danish migrants, the papers expressed confusion over their nationality, focused their reporting on the positive, but also articulated resentment by the local population. Coverage and interest increased the closer geographically a paper was located to New Denmark. The papers studied include The Carleton Sentinel, published in Woodstock from 1851 to 1943, The Colonial Farmer, published in Fredericton from 1863 to 1879, The New Brunswick Reporter and Fredericton Advertiser, also published in Fredericton from 1844 to 1888, and The Morning Freeman, published in Saint John from 1851 to 1878.

One problem inherited from the Government’s contract with Heller was early confusion surrounding the origin of his migrants. Of the four papers studied, The Colonial Farmer seemed to have the hardest time nailing down the migrants’ true nationality and even the settlement’s location. On 15 April 1872, the article’s headline read “The Proposed Scandinavian Settlement on the

⁵⁷ Craig, “Report on New Denmark, 1877,” pp. 113-114.

Tobique.”⁵⁸ Not only did the paper not know from which Scandinavian nation the migrants would come, its reporting of the settlement location was incorrect as well, being south of the intended area. From 3 June 1872, the Danes were incorrectly referred to as Swedish.⁵⁹ New Denmark’s settlers were not correctly identified until a 28 April 1873 article,⁶⁰ almost a year after their arrival. The New Brunswick Reporter also reported in 1872 that “Five thousand acres of land, at Salmon River, Victoria County, have been laid out by the Government for the expected Swedish emigrants.”⁶¹ It made the same mistake a month later.⁶² Most likely these early errors were the result of a lack of knowledge regarding the various Scandinavian countries, or were a result of a familiarity with Swedes that arose from the close proximity of the New Sweden settlement in Maine.

The Carleton Sentinel, published in Woodstock, which is located about 150 kilometres south of New Denmark, was the closest geographically to the settlement and provided by far the most informed and thorough reporting. Grand Falls, the closest town to New Denmark, did not have a local paper until the mid-1880s. From the first article on 6 July 1872, it published the correct ethnicity, writing, “We learn that the Danish immigrants are well pleased with their location in Victoria County. They have named their settlement Hellerup, after a town of that same name in their native country.”⁶³ The Morning Freeman also accurately reported the Danes’ ethnicity on 18 June 1872.⁶⁴

Newspaper reports painted an overwhelmingly positive picture of early New Denmark. The Colonial Farmer focused its efforts on reporting the successes of the Danish settlement and showed concern for its citizens. Most of the information was presented in short articles, dedicated to the arrival and successful settlement of Danish migrant groups,⁶⁵ reporting their agricultural successes,⁶⁶ and informing of accidental deaths.⁶⁷

⁵⁸ The Colonial Farmer, 15 April 1872, p. 2, col. 2.

⁵⁹ Ibid., 3 June 1872, p. 2, col. 2.

⁶⁰ Ibid., 28 April 1873, p. 2, col. 7.

⁶¹ The New Brunswick Reporter, 8 May 1872, p. 2, col. 4.

⁶² Ibid., 12 June 1872, p. 2, col. 5.

⁶³ The Carleton Sentinel, 6 July 1872, p. 2, col. 4.

⁶⁴ The Morning Freeman, 18 June 1872, p. 2, col. 2.

⁶⁵ The Colonial Farmer, 3 June 1873, p. 2, col. 4.

For its most extensive coverage, Fredericton's Colonial Farmer sent a reporter to New Denmark in June 1873. The article was published on 16 June and included a positive description of the land, settlers, roads, clearings, buildings, and population growth.⁶⁸ The reporter ignored any problems the settlers were experiencing, and the Danes were portrayed as good, hard-working settlers.

The reporting of The Carleton Sentinel was similar, but its closer proximity allowed for more frequent and varied coverage. For example, the 18 April 1877 edition⁶⁹ carried a lengthy article entitled "Laying of a Church Foundation at New Denmark" that marked the start of construction on the settlement's first Anglican Church, St. Ansgar's.

The perception that was expressed in newspapers was one heavily influenced by distaste for provincial immigration policies. Some New Brunswick residents were angry that the government seemed willing to spend money to obtain and equip settlers from afar, while people native to the province received little. One resident lamented, "If we belonged to some of the old countries, Norway, Sweden, or Denmark, we could have a free passage and a free grant of land, four or five acres cleared, a house built and two or three years provisions to begin with, and the natives would have to pay the expense."⁷⁰ While this writer exaggerated what was given to the Danes, he did represent an undercurrent in New Brunswick that pointed to the Danes as prime examples of wasted government monies. A similar letter added that "we have 30 left, and could not say one quarter are not bachelors at that, to represent the Danish enterprise. I have not seen the bill of costs for Danes, but judge one Dane's head must be worth one hundred and fifty of our natives, if we reckon expense as any proof of value."⁷¹

While The Carleton Sentinel correspondent used the Danes as an example of government waste, his main point was that the government should increase opportunities for native New

⁶⁶ The New Brunswick Reporter, 3 December 1877, p. 2, col. 5.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 7 August 1873, p. 2, col. 5.

⁶⁸ The Colonial Farmer, 16 June 1872, p. 2, col. 5.

⁶⁹ The Carleton Sentinel, 28 April 1877, p. 2, col. 1.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 20 March 1875, p. 1, col. 1.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 27 March 1875, p. 2, col. 2.

Brunswickers who could not afford to buy land. An 1877 article pleaded with the Government to change its land granting policy to provide more benefit to young New Brunswickers, noting, “We hope that the Surveyor General will, this session, introduce a change in the free grant land system, by which to include our own young men in the advantages offered to foreigners intending to settle here” and continued, “Now is the time, therefore, to try and induce a settlement of our own Wild Lands by the sons of our own people.”⁷²

The only resentment expressed by The Colonial Farmer was directed toward the Surveyor General, criticizing his treatment of the Danes: “Since the government has let them alone they have done admirably. As one of their numbers says—They have prospered in spite of the Surveyor General.”⁷³

While it mainly attacked the government for neglecting its own people at the benefit of immigrants, The Morning Freeman also stood up for the Danish migrants. On 20 May 1873, reporting that the first batch of migrants to arrive for the year had been forced to spend a month in Saint John waiting for the river’s ice to melt, the paper stated, “The Danish immigrants after being so long neglected by the Government, which apparently could not do enough for the Scotch colonists, are at least to be forwarded to their destination. It is said they will leave St. John to-morrow.”⁷⁴

Most of The Morning Freeman editor’s efforts also focused on the Province’s free granting policies, writing, “why offer such an arrangement only to Danes and Scotch; why not offer the same terms to Blue Noses and French and Irish and English and German?”⁷⁵ A week later the editor continued, “Why not build houses and clear the lands for our own young men and women as well as for the Kincardineshire Scotch and for the Danes? The Government should let the public know

⁷² Ibid., 10 February 1877, p. 2, col. 4.

⁷³ The Colonial Farmer, 12 March 1877, p. 2, col. 3.

⁷⁴ The Morning Freeman, 20 May 1873, p. 2, col. 5.

⁷⁵ Ibid., 5 November 1872, p. 2, col. 2.

officially [...] what inducements they are prepared to offer the young men of the Province and to all others disposed to settle our wilderness—that is if they know themselves.”⁷⁶

Overall the newspapers’ message was that while the Danes were accepted as settlers, their migration was the result of an unpopular program that led to criticism by those who believed they had been given special treatment.

Was New Denmark’s Location Chosen as a French Buffer?

The idea that Heller’s Danes were placed strategically and purposefully in an area just south of French-speaking peoples to slow or stop their southern movement into English-speaking areas began in the mid 20th century. Speculation seems to have begun in the 1950s with an article published in the Family Herald and Weekly Star by H. Gordon Green. In this article, Green first put forth the notion. Because of the desolate nature of the location, he guessed that the Danes were meant to ensure that French-speaking peoples in the northwest corner of the Province did not venture any further south and encroach on the English. He went further, stating:

Queen Victoria herself is said to have had a part in its founding. It was the opinion of her ministers that too many French speaking Canadians were coming down the Saint John valley from the north. And when a party of Danes applied for permission to settle in Canada, the Queen was told that if these Danes could be strategically placed just south of the oncoming French, it might help keep the French from making further inroads.⁷⁷

His assertion that Queen Victoria was concerned enough about French migration into New Brunswick to personally have had a hand in the settlement’s establishment seems misguided, and while Green was quite willing to hypothesize, he provided no documentation as proof.

Despite this, others have perpetuated Green’s argument, and today the belief lingers.

References to the buffer thesis were found in a number of more recent articles, including a 1979 article

⁷⁶ The Morning Freeman, 12 November 1872, p. 2, col. 2.

⁷⁷ H. Gordon Green, “Nobody Wants to Leave New Denmark” The Family Herald and Weekly Star, 25 October 1956, pp. 6-7.

by David Folster in the journal New Brunswick,⁷⁸ one by Green in a 1990 newspaper article,⁷⁹ and most recently in a 1993 Canadian Geographic article by Dane Lancken.⁸⁰ The motivation to examine the evidence and attempt to prove or disprove Green has been lacking. The intrigue, however, must end; the myth of the Danish buffer requires re-examination.

The crux of the buffer thesis is the perception of the French by the English majority. While there are documents that demonstrate that some officials had a negative view of French settlement, no specific documentation of the buffer thesis has been put forward. This section will investigate some of the available documents and attempt to present an objective viewpoint.

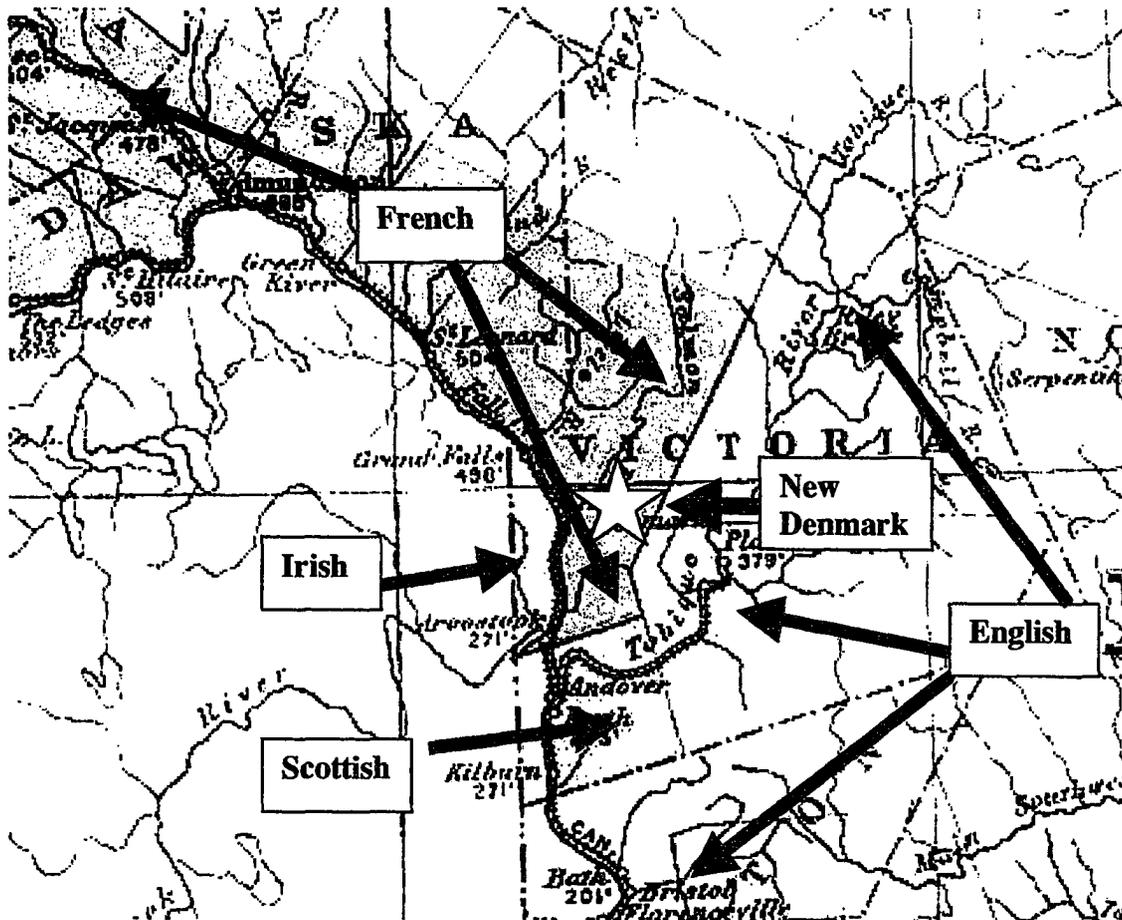
To provide a clearer perspective, it is first necessary to examine the geographical locations of ethnic groups in Victoria County. Figure 4.6 below presents a view of the situation in 1901, almost thirty years after the creation of New Denmark. As the map's arrows illustrate, New Denmark lies in a mostly French-speaking area whose southern boundary was flanked by Irish to the west, Scotch to the south, and English to the east. Areas were given ethnic designations based on majority population. While in the northern areas of French majority territory the percentage of French-speakers was over 90 percent, in the southern-most areas this majority was smaller. The map does not distinguish between these two zones.

⁷⁸ David Folster, "New Denmark: More than a slice of the Old World," New Brunswick, (Volume 4, Number 2, 1979), pp. 1-6.

⁷⁹ H. Gordon Green, "Danes planted deep roots in soil of New Brunswick," The Gazette, 21 January 1990.

⁸⁰ Lancken, pp. 21-31.

Figure 4.6 Ethnicity Map of Victoria County in 1901

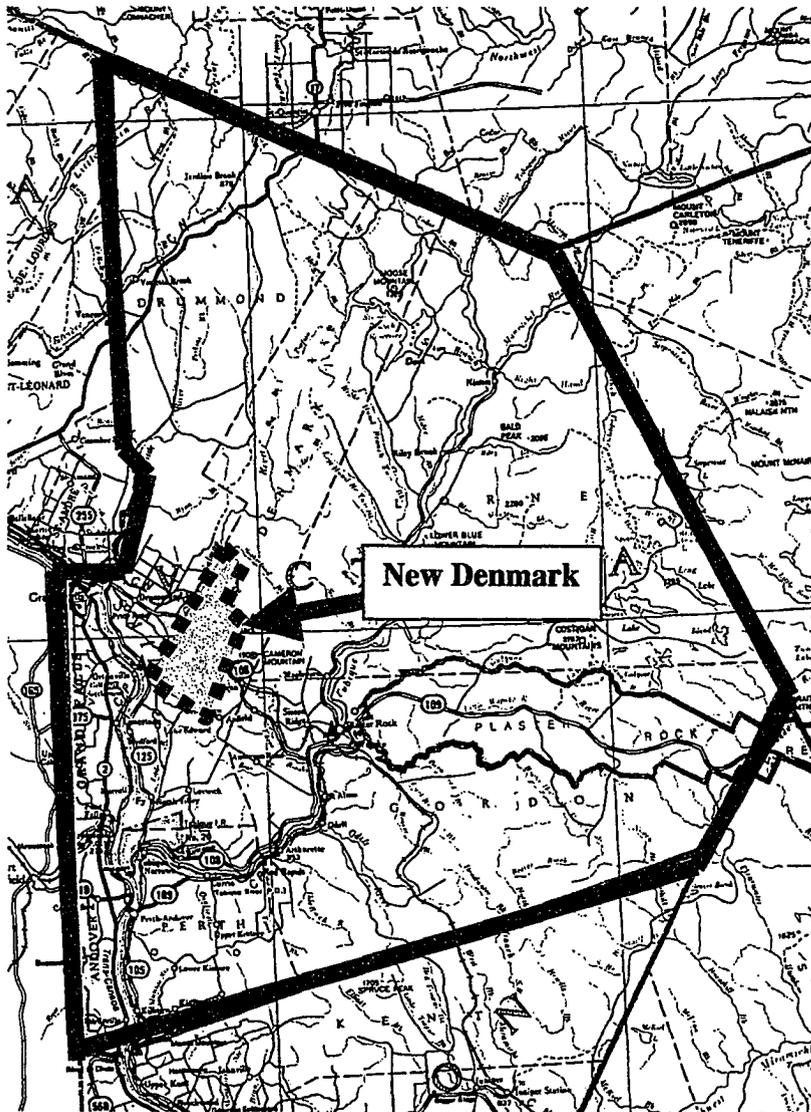


Map from Department of the Interior, *Atlas of Canada, Origins of the People, 1901, Maritime Provinces and Québec*, No. 29 a.

A look at New Brunswick's land grant maps can provide a better indication of the settlement's location and overall size. Danish settlers were identified from the provincial land grant maps⁸¹ and their positions transposed upon the Victoria County map in Figure 4.7.

⁸¹ PANB, New Brunswick Department of Natural Resources Land Grant Maps, No. 54 and 63.

Figure 4.7 Victoria County and New Denmark's Land Grants



Map from New Brunswick Department of Energy, Mines, and Resources Surveys and Mapping Branch, 1972.

While visually the location of New Denmark along the English-French boundary is intriguing, the close proximity to French-speaking peoples alone cannot prove the buffer thesis. If Queen Victoria and the New Brunswick government had been serious about placing Danes in the way of the oncoming French, moreover, why would they have made plans for a second Danish settlement over a hundred kilometres away at Balmoral? A second Danish settlement would only have weakened the New Denmark buffer. Could it be that the Victoria County location was chosen for colonization simply because it was uninhabited and ripe for settlement?

The one person who could definitively shed light onto the government's intentions regarding the site of New Denmark is silent on the question. The Surveyor General, Benjamin Stevenson, in his reports to the government and in his private correspondence, at no time made mention of any plan to use Free Grants Act settlements as roadblocks to French migration. Instead, he wrote of progress among the various Francophone settlements that had been created since the passage of the Free Grants Act in much the same language that he described the English-speaking settlements.⁸²

Stevenson's land granting policies had opened up thousands of acres to francophone settlers who, like their English counterparts, benefited from surveyed lots. Numerous French-speaking settlements across the Province had been created by 1874, including Paquetville in Gloucester County, Rhomboid and Acadieville in Kent County in eastern New Brunswick, and the settlements of St. Leonard, St. Basile, Baker Brook, Grand River, St. Francis, Riceville, and Rockway in Madawaska County.⁸³ Stevenson did not want the French to leave, and in fact he tried to stop their departure by providing surveyed lands. His lack of animosity towards New Brunswick's French population may well be the lynchpin in any argument against the buffer thesis.

While no record has been found of elected provincial officials making comments regarding the location of New Denmark as a French buffer, we can gauge how other officials, who may have had power to influence government policy, perceived the local French population. Most notable was Charles Lugin, who was secretary of the New Brunswick Board of Agriculture, editor and writer for The Colonial Farmer, and a man who had spent time in Victoria County. In both capacities, Lugin expressed opinions and printed articles that portrayed the Francophones as impoverished settlers who were poor farmers, and used a poor brand of French. He referred to them in the demeaning, paternalistic fashion that had been used for centuries to describe Native Americans.

As secretary for the Board of Agriculture, Lugin was responsible for reporting on the agricultural progress of each county. His 1872 report contained probably his most damning comments

⁸² "Immigration Report for 1874" New Brunswick House of Assembly Journals, 1874, pp. 20-21.

⁸³ *Ibid.*, pp. 62-3.

on the French settlers in Victoria County. He began by describing the organization of the county: “The county is divided into nine parishes, Andover, Perth, Gordon, Lorne, Grand Falls, which lie south of the point where the line of the American boundary meets the river St. John; St. Leonards, St. Basile, Madawaska and St. Francis, which lie above this point.” Lugin then moved on to his description of those residing in the northern parishes:

The four latter parishes are peopled mostly by the descendants of the old Acadian French and French immigrants from Quebec. They retain the French language, though from the want of a general education and literature among the people, it has become somewhat corrupted. They stick tenaciously to their old manners and customs; but even these have had to give way, as intercourse with the English population has increased. They are generally temperate, and though not very enterprising, are tolerably industrious and economical; and when the full effects of free, non-sectarian schools are felt, they will become a prosperous people. The lower Parishes are inhabited by a mixed population of English, Scotch, Irish, and “Bluenose.”⁸⁴

Lugin’s attitude toward the French was offset by his apparent affection for the Danes. It was his newspaper, The Colonial Farmer, as mentioned earlier, that published many articles extolling the virtues of the Danes as settlers.

Though the negativity expressed by Lugin is surprising, especially within the pages of a government document, and while his comments and personal opinions could also have represented those of some English New Brunswickers, they do not prove the buffer thesis. While he did not think highly of French agricultural techniques or French culture, his views do not seem have been the norm amongst other government officials, and he made no mention of using Free Grants Act settlements as buffers to stop the southward movement of French migrants.

Other officials more directly involved in settlement issues were concerned, like Stevenson, with keeping French settlers from migrating to the United States. Both Deputy Surveyor Generals Beckwith and Têtu in Victoria County pleaded with the Province not to encourage the outmigration

⁸⁴ “County of Victoria” in “Agricultural Report, 1872,” New Brunswick House of Assembly Journals, 1872, p. vii.

of French-speaking peoples, but to step up its road-building and land surveying efforts to ensure that the French population stayed in New Brunswick.⁸⁵

Conclusion

This chapter has outlined and inquired into important and unappreciated aspects of New Denmark's early history. By defining both what is known and identifying what is left to uncover, New Denmark's historiography has been broadened and matured.

The settlement began with a proposal by Heller and Stymest, two men whose motivations and personal histories are for the most part unknown. Most intriguing is Captain Heller, who bore the brunt of responsibility for the organization and recruitment of the Danish migrants. Questions linger regarding his motivations, his intention to reside in New Denmark, and where he ended up after 1873, but we do have a clearer idea of his early life, his advertisement and recruitment strategies in Copenhagen, how his migrants perceived him, and his soured relationship with the province. What were the Danish origins and composition of Heller's migrants? It was shown that in 1872 and 1873 Heller recruited a large number of single males, that his migrants were geographically from areas close to Copenhagen, that occupationally they were overwhelmingly farmers or farm labourers, and that the majority were over the age of 18. In late 1872, the province changed its strategy and requested that Heller concentrate his efforts for the next year on attracting more families and fewer single males because the single males tended to not make permanent settlers. Heller was unable, however, to change the demographic profile of his parties and the number of single men immigrating continued to surpass that of families. Many members of his parties left the settlement early on, or never proceeded there after arriving at Saint John. Of the 35 migrants from Heller's 1873 list, only 5 left some record of their presence in the settlement.

⁸⁵ "Report for Victoria County in Agricultural Report" New Brunswick House of Assembly Journals, 1868, p. 123.

As the Danes represented an unfamiliar group in New Brunswick, it is important to know how the Danes were perceived by the local population. Though he was quite satisfied with the migrants he saw arrive, Surveyor General Stevenson's only initial negative comment was that the Danes could not speak English. As a large number of the Danes left and as expenditures rose, he viewed New Denmark and Danish immigration increasingly as a liability. British settlers remained the most sought after and when the province was hit by economic recession, Stevenson stated that he wanted the Danish migrations slowed or stopped.

The province's newspapers were dominated by reports of British migrants throughout the period. When the Danes were mentioned there was often confusion regarding their true nationality. The press generally were welcoming of these northern Protestant Europeans, and the newspapers emphasized any successes the colonists had in their wilderness settlement. There was some resentment expressed toward the provincial government. Many locals believed that Fredericton was ignoring the wants and needs of its own citizens as it spent tax dollars to ship and equip migrants from afar.

The idea that New Denmark's location was chosen to stop the southward movement of Francophones has to this point been understudied. First expounded by Green in the mid-20th century, the buffer thesis has continued to be propagated without serious investigation of its merit. The location of New Denmark along the southernmost fringe of Francophone majority territory does raise eyebrows, but no concrete proof exists to prove the buffer thesis. There were officials such as Lugin who personally did not appreciate French-Canadian culture, but those most intimately involved with settlement and immigration, the Surveyor General and his subordinates in Victoria County, tried to ensure that French-Canadians remained in New Brunswick and lobbied the province to help by stepping up its surveying and road-building efforts in the region.

With a better understanding of New Denmark's establishment achieved, Chapter Five will take the next step and quantitatively study important aspects of New Denmark's early history, including

the Danish origins of its settlers, its growth and evolution from its beginnings in 1872 to the census of 1901, and the large number of Danes who left New Denmark for other North American locations.

Chapter Five: New Denmark after Heller, Immigration and Outmigration

“Without having an accurate statement, I feel warranted in saying that over one third of those who came to this country under Capt. Heller’s control, have left it.”¹

Surveyor General Benjamin Stevenson

Introduction

This chapter, through an analysis of the 1881, 1891, and 1901 census records, provincial records, St. Ansgar’s Anglican Church archives, and the Copenhagen Police Records, will trace the origins of New Denmark’s settlers and the growth and development of the settlement in its first 30 years. The composition of the New Denmark settlers will be compared with general Danish trends and the level and nature of the outmigration from New Denmark will be studied.

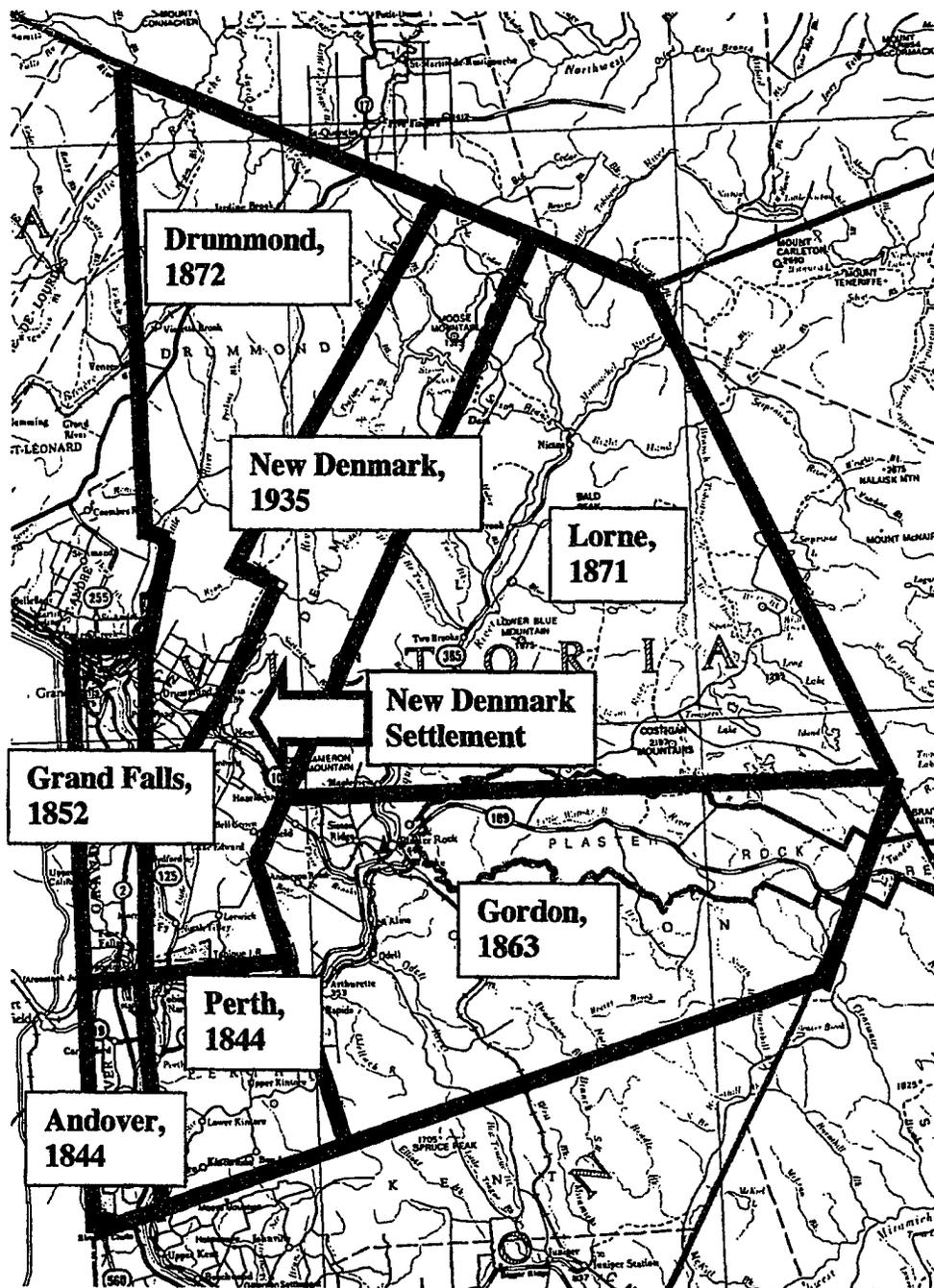
Victoria County (like other New Brunswick counties) was organized into parishes that closely resembled the township system in the United States or Ontario. Figure 5.1 outlines the location of Victoria County’s parishes in relation to New Denmark.

At the time of its creation in 1844, when it was split from Carleton County, Victoria County consisted of Andover, Perth, and Madawaska parishes. The parish of Grand Falls was created in 1852, Gordon in 1863, Lorne in 1871, and Drummond in 1872. Madawaska, Saint Leonard, and Saint Basile parishes were split from Victoria County in 1874 and became Madawaska County. The separate parish of New Denmark was not created until 1935.² Between 1872 and 1935 New Denmark’s Danish residents lived exclusively in what was then Drummond parish.

¹ Benjamin Stevenson, Report on Immigration to New Brunswick in 1873, Saint John: Daily Telegraph Printing and Publishing Office, 1874, p. 27.

² PANB, Victoria County Genealogical Guide: 1999, p. 1.

Figure 5.1 Victoria County Parishes and Year of Creation



Map from New Brunswick Department of Energy, Mines, and Resources Surveys and Mapping Branch, 1972.

For the census study of New Denmark's evolution, it was necessary to define New Denmark's population geographically. There were no "town limits" in the contemporary sense, as the settlement was unincorporated, but it is possible to specify the settlement's location. Because of the concentration of Danes within Drummond parish, only the census information for that parish was

used. The Danes shared the parish with other ethnicities, most notably the French, English, Scottish, and Irish. For this study, all families in Drummond parish that included any first generation Danish-born migrants, and/or their New Brunswick or North American born offspring, grandchildren, or other relatives with Danish ethnicity were counted as part of New Denmark. Danish settlers who chose to marry non-Danish citizens and remain within the geographical limits of Drummond parish were also included, along with their immediate family members.

Census results were found in a number of different sources. The 1881 census is available online at the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints' website, the FamilySearch Internet Genealogy Service,³ and the 1901 census is available at Automated Genealogy.⁴ Both provide users with extensive search capabilities. The 1891 census for Victoria County was compiled and published by Jean-Guy Poitras in 1996.⁵ While the book lacks the instantaneous online searching features, the material is presented by parish and includes a thorough index. Drummond parish was searched for each year and all people who fit the ethnicity criteria noted above were extracted.

Inaccuracies were sometimes found within personal data. Spelling Danish names understandably posed a problem to the Anglophone and Francophone census takers. The result, especially in the 1881 census, was that family and given names were often spelled phonetically. The census also does not account for those who left the community between one census and the next, nor the extended family members, family friends, or boarders who would appear with a family in one census only to have vacated in ten years time. Because of the nature of the census, it is difficult to trace these people once they left New Denmark or uncover the circumstances surrounding their movement in or out of the community. This was most true for the females. When a young male left the family home but remained in the community he was relatively easy to trace, as his last name remained the same. The young women who left their family homes were much harder to track. As

³ FamilySearch's website is found at "www.familysearch.org."

⁴ Automated Genealogy's website is found at "www.automatedgenealogy.com."

⁵ Jean-Guy Poitras, 1891 Census: Madawaska and Victoria Counties, Province of New Brunswick, (Edmundston: Jean-Guy Poitras, 1996).

they married they took the surnames of their new husbands, making them harder to find with precision.

New Denmark's Growth as Told by the 1881, 1891, and 1901 Censuses

The information collected included the number of households (single males, families with children, and families with no children), male and female breakdown, as well as their ages, places of birth, occupations (females with occupations and males listing more than one are included), and religious affiliation. Figure 5.2 below summarizes the New Denmark household and population totals for each census.

Figure 5.2 Census Returns for New Denmark

	1881	1891	1901
Single Male Households	28	2	3
Households with Children	60	72	82
Households with No Children	9	7	12
Total Households	97	81	97
Total Population	353	495	563

The population figures reveal a slow increase. In 1881, after almost ten years of immigration, the population of New Denmark was 353. By 1891 the population rose by almost 150 people, a 40 percent increase, but by 1901 it seems to have reached a levelling-off point. The number of households did remain generally steady throughout the period, but from 1881 to 1891 the number of families dropped but the size of each family grew larger. In 1881 the average household contained 3.6 people while by 1891 it grew to 6.1. After 1891 the number of households rose faster than the population, and the average household by 1901 contained 5.8 people. The increase in family size after 1881 could be an indication that economic conditions in New Denmark offered few opportunities, or that the arriving Danes were poor financially, and that new migrants had to seek shelter with others.

The decrease in the number of single males is most striking. More than half of the 28 single men in the 1881 census left New Denmark by 1891. For most of these single men, New Denmark's triple-threat of difficult pioneer conditions, a poor economy, and few single Danish women, meant that for most New Denmark had little to offer. Just over 43 percent of the single males stayed in New Denmark, got married and had young families. Of this group, 80 percent were still in New Denmark by 1901. One single man chose to remain but lived with his extended family.

The overwhelming majority of households in New Denmark were families with children. This group was not as likely to outmigrate. Of the 60 families with children present in 1881, only 35 percent left by 1891. Of the 65 percent that remained in the settlement, 85 percent were still living in New Denmark in 1901.

As seen in Figure 5.3 below, by 1901 the number of men and women had almost reached parity. The fact that men were more numerous than women in 1881 is not surprising, Danish men represented over 61 percent of Danish migrants in the late 19th century.⁶ The levelling-off over time occurred because more men left the community than women.

Figure 5.3 Sex Totals with Percentages

Sex	1881		1891		1901	
Males	192	54.3	254	51.2	287	50.9
Females	161	45.6	241	48.8	276	49.1

The number of single women among New Denmark's immigrants was low, partly because New Brunswick had originally placed its emphasis upon attracting single men. Only when it became obvious that many of the single men were leaving did the province change its strategy and attempt to attract entire families; there was no attempt to recruit single women to work as domestics in established areas. On the other hand, demand for female domestic servants in Denmark was great, and early Danish industrialism relied a great deal upon female labour.⁷ For many single Danish women,

⁶ Kristian Hvidt, Flight to America: The Social Background of 300,000 Danish Emigrants, (New York: Academic Press, 1974), p. 83.

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 84.

Denmark's economy in the late 19th century provided sufficient opportunity to keep them from emigrating.

Figure 5.4 New Denmark Population by Age Group, 1881 to 1901

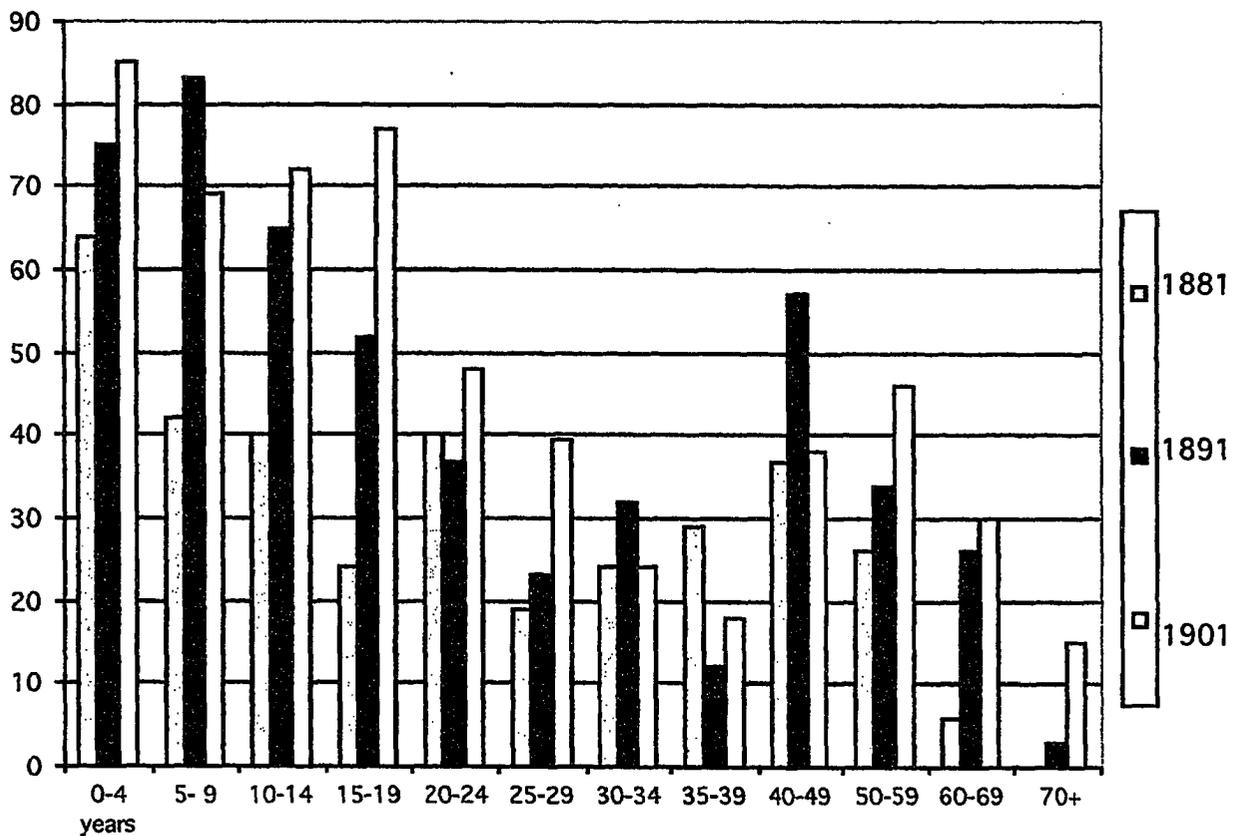


Figure 5.4 above displays the age groups of the colonists. The x-axis displays the age groupings, while the total for each group is contained along the y-axis. Most age groups generally showed increases from 1881 to 1901, especially the 19 years and under block. There were some groups that did not increase or decreased over the twenty-year period. People in these age groups (20-24, 30-34, 35-39, and 40-49) were most likely to be departing with young families. During the last decades of the 19th century, Danish emigration changed from a family movement to one dominated increasingly by single, young men and women.⁸ This could explain the stagnant growth in these

⁸ Frederick Hale, ed., *Danes in North America*, (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1984), p. xii.

groups, but it is more likely that members of these age groups left New Denmark because of a lack of opportunity.

Figure 5.5 Colonists' Places of Birth with Percentage of Total Population

1881			1891			1901		
Place of Birth	Number	Percent	Place of Birth	Number	Percent	Place of Birth	Number	Percent
Denmark	284	80.4	Denmark	288	58.1	Denmark	234	41.6
New Brunswick	64	18.1	New Brunswick	183	36.9	New Brunswick	301	53.5
United States	2	< 0	United States	19	3.8	United States	31	5.5
Sweden	2	< 0	Sweden	3	< 0	Sweden	5	< 0
Egypt	1	< 0	Norway	1	< 0			
			Germany	1	< 0			

The places of birth of New Denmark's citizens are listed in Figure 5.5. These figures show a population that from 1881 to 1901 evolved from one where the majority were born in Denmark to one dominated by those born in New Brunswick. Those born in Denmark peaked in 1891 when 288 people were counted, but then began to fall. This fall is a result of outmigration, a reduction in the intensity of immigration, and deaths.

The number of those born in Canada increased by over 350 percent from 1881 to 1901. The rise of those born in the United States and Sweden also demonstrate some cross-border mobility. New Denmark evidently generated little chain migration from among the Danish and Swedish populations in the United States. The number of United States born residents was small overall, but the steady growth in the number of households containing them does demonstrate some growing links between New Denmark and Danes in America. In 1881, two families housed only two United States born members. That number would grow to 11 households and 19 people in 1891 and 21 households and 31 people by 1901. It is evident by looking at the places of birth of the children that some of these families had lived in the United States many years before migrating to New Denmark, while other New Denmark residents seemed to move back and forth across the border, most likely following employment opportunities.

The census and church records together give an indication of the number of births. The census figures reveal that 64 children were born from 1872 to 1880, 148 between 1881 and 1890, and 145

from 1891 to 1900 for a total of 357 children. St. Ansgar's Anglican Church records include a listing of baptisms by year. These figures are an indication of the number born in New Denmark and are close to the census results. From 1875 when St. Ansgar's records begin to 1880, 48 children were baptised. During the next two decades, a total of 155 and 174 baptisms were recorded, for a total of 377.

During the period between 1881 and 1901, there were 308 people who disappeared from the censuses. Most of the 308 outmigrated from New Denmark because of a lack of economic opportunities present in the pioneer settlement. Not all of these outmigrated however; deaths in the community must be taken into account.

It was evident that some members of the community, mainly those over 60 years of age and those under 4 years of age, had died from one census to the next, as sometimes they disappeared while their families remained. Throughout the entire census study, it was evident that at least 40 individuals died. Relying on the census, however, does not provide a comprehensive picture because between censuses many arrivals, births, and deaths did occur. In this regard, St. Ansgar's Anglican Church records provide a valuable supplement to the census records. Figure 5.6 below details early deaths as recorded on the church registers.

Figure 5.6 St. Ansgar's Church Records, Deaths by Age and Year, 1876-1899

Age Ranges	Total Deaths from 1876 to 1899	Age Ranges	Total Deaths from 1876 to 1899
0 to 4	48	30 to 34	3
5 to 9	4	35 to 39	4
10 to 14	3	40 to 49	7
15 to 19	5	50 to 59	5
20 to 24	4	60 to 69	8
25 to 29	4	70 +	12
		Total	107

The number of deaths per year remained relatively stable until rising slightly in the mid 1890s. As demonstrated in Figure 5.6, almost half of all deaths recorded were those of children four years or younger and 23 percent were over 50 years. The majority of the children died of childhood illnesses,

the respiratory condition croup being the most common. Other less common causes of death among the youngest included scarlet fever, cholera, diarrhea, and accidents. Causes of death among those 5 years and older included colds, heart disease, lung conditions, liver problems, accidents, and for the oldest, "high age." The large number of those under 5 years who died, while high by 21st century standards, was not abnormal considering New Denmark was 20 kilometres from the nearest doctor, births were performed at home, and antibiotics had not been invented, leaving the weakest prone to early death. Indeed, the rate of infant death in New Denmark was lower than that in the homeland. Of the children baptised at St. Ansgar's, no more than 1 in 10 died before the age of 1 year. By contrast, during the 19th century the Danish rate of infant death under 1 year of age was 1 in 5 for those living in Copenhagen, 1 in 6 for those in the larger towns, and 1 in 7 for country dwellers.⁹

New Denmark's slow growth can be charted through the occupations of its settlers, as displayed in Figure 5.7.

Figure 5.7 Occupations of the Settlers

Occupations	1881	1891	1901	Occupations	1881	1891	1901
Farmer	105	98	117	School	46	0	1
Farmer's Son	13	0	58	Church Minister	0	1	1
Farm Labourer	1	14	5	Boarder	0	27	6
Carpenter	2	0	1	Saw/Pulp Mill Labour	0	0	6
Teacher	1	0	5	Gardener	0	0	1
Blacksmith	2	1	2	Cook	0	0	3
Shoemaker	2	0	0	Land Agent	0	0	1
Cabinet Maker	1	0	0	Spinster	0	0	1
Servant/Domestic	2	3	17	Retired	0	0	1
				None Given	1	0	0

While the main occupation in the settlement remained farming, the number of farmers did not increase a great deal in twenty years. The arrival of new occupations and the disappearance of others provides an indication of the services that the community could support. The increase in the number of domestic servants is evidence that some families had sufficient funds to hire outside help, and the appearance of saw and pulp mill labourers, as well as teachers, gardeners, and cooks, can be seen as

⁹ Anne Margrete Berg, Lis Frost, and Anne Olsen, eds., *Kvindfolk: En danmarkshistorie fra 1600 til 1980, Part 1: 1600-1900*, (Copenhagen: Gyldendal, 1984), p. 284.

proof that the settlement's economy was slowly diversifying and integrating with surrounding communities.

There are some anomalies that require explanation. Firstly, while school-age children are noted in the 1881 census, they are not in 1891 and by 1901 only one child is recorded as attending school. Perhaps this drop corresponds inversely with the dramatic rise in the number of farmer's sons. Children might have attended school only when not interfering with farm-work, or perhaps more likely, not believing school to be an occupation, the enumerators did not list it. Provincial education records show that New Denmark had between two and three schools each containing approximately 20 students in regular use during the period, meaning that on a yearly basis at least 40 students were attending classes at least sporadically. The disappearance of farmer's sons in the 1891 census corresponds with the students' and they most likely were not listed for the same reason.

The data in Figure 5.8 provides a dramatic picture of the decrease of Lutherans and the rise of Anglicanism. Also of note is the increasing religious variety among the Danish population by 1901, most likely a product of inter-marriage with native New Brunswickers. The 24 Danes who professed to be members of the Catholic faith in 1891, however, were Anglican by 1901.

Figure 5.8 Religious Affiliation in New Denmark

Religious Affiliation	1881	1891	1901
Lutheran	268	214	80
Anglican	76	248	468
Catholic	0	24	0
Methodist	0	0	3
Baptist	0	0	9
Presbyterian	9	2	1
Non-believer	0	0	2
None given	0	7	0

Religiously the Danish settlers, while overwhelmingly Lutheran, had to adjust their affiliation in New Brunswick because of a lack of Lutheran ministers. With no Lutheran minister among them and few Lutherans in the area, the Danes had to perform their own Lutheran ceremonies. Hans Peter Petersen officiated at first, but many soon longed for the spiritual guidance of a Lutheran minister.

These were in short supply, but the local Anglican Church was eager to provide spiritual guidance to the new arrivals.

Help came in the form of Anglican minister Leo Hoyt from nearby Andover. Upon his retirement in the late 1890s, Leo Hoyt wrote “Reminiscences,” a memoir of his ministry. In it he wrote of his first visit to New Denmark in 1872, where he was “received very cordially.” He returned numerous times to meet with the citizens, and performed religious ceremonies in the community for the next few years, including the first baptism in October of 1872 and the first marriage in May of 1873.¹⁰ Hoyt noted in his memoir that he began to scale back his work in New Denmark because of suspicions by some residents. A group of immigrants had been warned by a pastor in Denmark about the “strange religions” of North America. Because of these suspicions, Hoyt “withdrew his services” to avoid causing conflict and division within the community.¹¹

While some of the Danes were open to Anglicanism, a group of more fundamentalist Lutherans wanted their own Lutheran minister. This group applied to the Danish Inner Mission, a religious organization whose goal was to strengthen Lutheranism among Danes around the world. In 1875 they received their Lutheran minister when Hansen, his family, and some of his Danish parishioners arrived in New Brunswick.¹²

Niels Mikkelsen Hansen’s voyage to New Brunswick was largely the work of Hans Mattson, Canada’s Scandinavian emigration agent. Mattson had been attempting to organize a Scandinavian settlement and needed help. Hansen had in previous years organized Danish group-migrations to the state of Minnesota, and Mattson thought he could do the same for Canada. As early as 1873 Mattson had contacted Hansen and asked him to head a Danish colony, offering him free travel, a salary, cleared land, and a free house. Mattson considered New Brunswick to be the ideal location for such a settlement, as New Denmark was already located there. The project moved slowly, and by the time

¹⁰ Helen Craig, ed., “Trinity Church Records, Andover,” New Denmark as seen by government officials at Fredericton, 1844-85, (Fredericton, N.B.: Helen Craig, 1972), pp. 179-180.

¹¹ Craig, “Reminiscences,” pp. 177-78.

¹² Palle Bo Bojesen, “New Denmark—The Oldest Danish Colony in Canada,” Henning Bender and Birgit Flemming Larsen, eds., Danish Emigration to Canada, (Aalborg: Danes Worldwide Archives, 1991), p. 67.

Mattson's contract expired in 1875, the colonization project had virtually collapsed. Hansen left Denmark for New Denmark in 1875 not to lead a new settlement, but to become New Denmark's Lutheran minister. Mattson was unable to secure government funding for Hansen's trip, so the Inner Mission funded it.¹³

Rev. Hansen was disappointed on his arrival to find out that New Denmark's settlers were unable to support him financially. As Hoyt remarked in his memoirs, the Inner Mission "supplies men, not money." Hansen had decided to return to Denmark when Hoyt offered a novel idea. If Hansen were ordained as an Anglican priest, he and his family could receive financial support from the Church of England. The Anglican Bishop in Fredericton agreed, with a few conditions. Among them, Hansen had to study and pass his examinations before becoming ordained. The settlers' Lutheran hymns and hymnbooks would be allowed as long as they remained in Danish, but services were to follow the Anglican prayer book only.¹⁴

Hansen was ordained, oversaw construction of St. Ansgar's Anglican Church, the only Anglican Church in the world dedicated to the patron saint of Denmark, and was present for the laying of its corner stone in 1884. He remained as pastor until his retirement in 1895.¹⁵ In 1896, his replacement, an Anglican deacon from Nebraska, arrived. Charles Maimann was born in Denmark and was educated as a blacksmith before emigrating to the United States.¹⁶ He was ordained as an Anglican priest in March 1897¹⁷ and remained in the community until 1907. Because of the earliest visitations from Hoyt and the tenures of Hansen and Maimann, and the lack of local Lutheran clergy, the Church of England's presence took hold among New Denmark's citizens. Many settlers clung to their Lutheran faith despite the lack of a Minister, but New Denmark did not gain its own Lutheran

¹³ Lars Ljungmark, "Canada's Campaign for Scandinavian Immigration, 1873-1876," The Swedish American Historical Quarterly, 33.1 (January 1982), p. 34.

¹⁴ Craig, "Reminiscences," p. 177-178.

¹⁵ Bojesen, "New Denmark—The Oldest Danish Colony in Canada," p. 70.

¹⁶ Palle Bo Bojesen, New Denmark, New Brunswick, Canada, (Aarhus: Aarhus University Press, 1992), p. 267.

¹⁷ PANB, St. Ansgar's Anglican Church Records, "August 8, 1896 letter to the Bishop of Fredericton."

Church and Minister until 1906.¹⁸ The slow movement of the settlers in organizing a Lutheran Church and the quick establishment of Anglicanism resulted in the gradual evolution of religious affiliation away from Lutheranism. If a church had been established sooner, with financial assistance from the homeland, it is likely that most of New Denmark's settlers would have remained Lutheran.

Using the census and church records it is possible to determine that at least 56 marriage ceremonies were performed between 1876 and 1901. While marriages did take place before 1876, St. Ansgar's marriage records begin only with the arrival of Rev. Hansen in 1875. The New Brunswick Provincial Archives' listing of births, marriages, and deaths also does not include any record of New Denmark marriages before 1876.¹⁹ From 1876 to 1880 only 14 marriages were performed, as compared with 28 from 1881 to 1890, and 38 from 1891 to 1901. The pre-1881 figures are abnormally low because of the absence of records, and it can be assumed that the number of marriages was closer to the 1881 to 1890 figure.

In terms of intermarriage, no marriages between settlers of different ethnicities were found among the records until after 1891, when there were four. In two of the four, a Danish man and a Danish woman found English companions. The third marriage involved a Danish woman and a French man, and the fourth was between a Swedish man living in New Denmark and an English woman. According to these findings, Danish men and women were equally likely to marry non-Danes. Intermarriage was rare, and overall only 5 percent chose the option by the end of the 19th century. This demonstrates that the integration of Victoria County's Danish population into the broader host society was happening slowly and tentatively, perhaps a sign that the harsh settlement conditions of the 1870s and 1880s were improving, and that the Danes were beginning to participate more in the local economy, allowing New Denmark's citizens to come into more frequent contact with the local population.

¹⁸ The New Denmark Women's Institute, *A History of New Denmark*, (Compiled in 1959 by the New Denmark Women's Institute, and edited as a Centennial Project, June 19, 1967), p. 21.

¹⁹ PANB, RS 141, Vital Statistics.

Immigration to New Denmark, 1872-1901

Once Heller opened the door to Danish migration, how many Danes migrated to the province in the subsequent decades? How did the creation of New Denmark affect Danish immigration levels to New Brunswick? It is important to look further than the 1881, 1891, and 1901 censuses. While the censuses do note the population levels, more information is required to more accurately gauge the level of immigration. We must also take into account the reports of the Surveyor General and New Denmark's Commissioner, the Copenhagen Police Records, and records of Danish arrivals at the port of Saint John.

In Figure 5.9 below, information regarding New Denmark's population and the level of Danish immigration is displayed. The second column notes the population in each census. The number of Danish migrants listing Saint John as their destination per year and cumulatively, in the Copenhagen Police Records, are listed in columns three and four. Finally, columns five and six list the Danish arrivals per year and cumulatively at the port of Saint John. Taken together, the discrepancies between each set of figures highlights the problems faced in assessing the level of immigration because many immigrants departed before the next census.

Figure 5.9 New Denmark's Population, Danes Listing Saint John as Destination, and Danish Arrivals in Saint John, 1872 to 1901

Year	New Denmark Census Returns	Danes Listing Saint John as Destination	Cumulative Totals	Danish Arrivals at Saint John	Cumulative Totals
1872		44	44	59	59
1873		252	314	240	299
1874		8	296	8*	307
1875		7	311	35	342
1876		2	313	15*	357
1877		27	340	22*	379
1878		8	348	65*	444
1879		24	372	120	564
1880		0	372	54	618
1881	353	19	391	26	644
1882		32	423	116	760
1883		6	429	59	819
1884		30	459	43	862
1885		5	464	21	883
1886		7	471	11	894
1887		17	488	30	924
1888		16	504	12	936
1889		3	507	12	948
1890		5	512	1	949
1891	495	10	522	1	950
1892		0	522	0*	950
1893		0	522	4*	954
1894		0	522	0*	954
1895		0	522	1*	955
1896		2	524	4*	959
1897		0	524	0*	959
1898		5	529	0*	959
1899		0	529	0	959
1900		1	530	0	959
1901	563	0	530	0	959
Total	563		530		959

Copenhagen Police Records, "www.emiarch.dk/home.php3."

*Figures with an asterisk designate years when the generic term "Scandinavian" was used.

In the Copenhagen Police Records, migrants usually listed their intended port of arrival.

Interestingly enough, the number of Danes listing Saint John over the almost thirty year period was the closest of the two data sets to the actual census returns. The apparent similarity between the census figures and the numbers stating Saint John as a destination in Figure 5.9 is coincidental, however, because many Danes who ended up in New Denmark also listed Québec and Halifax as their destinations,

Saint John became a destination for Danish migrants only after the establishment of New Denmark. Bojesen infers that Danes intending to debark in Saint John were destined for New Denmark: "There is little doubt that when an emigrant listed St. John, New Brunswick, as his destination, he was on his way to what was to become New Denmark."²⁰

An online search of the Copenhagen Police Records seems to support Bojesen's claim. A search of the Police records was performed to determine when Danes began to list Saint John as their destination. During the years 1868 to 1870, no Danes listed Saint John. In 1871, only one migrant, a Swede, presumably on his way to the Swedish settlement of New Sweden in Maine, named the port city. Danes did not begin to mention Saint John as their destination until 1872, the year New Denmark was created. In that year, 44 migrants recorded their destination as Saint John, and in 1873 this number rose to 252.

From 1872, Danes continued to list Saint John until 1892, when the city declined as a Danish destination port. Interestingly, 52 percent of the almost thirty-year total arrived in the first two years. The numbers do not seem to fit any particular pattern, except for the years 1874 to 1876, where the rapid reduction could be attributed to the economic depression that struck North America, reducing the opportunities for immigrants.²¹

The totals recorded in the Copenhagen Police Records, however, were only a little more than half the number of Danish arrivals at Saint John. This can be explained by record inaccuracies or omissions at the time of registration in Denmark, changes in travel plans made while in transit, and the fact that many later Danish arrivals reached Saint John via other ports. It also likely reflects the probability that Bojesen was incorrect and that many of the Danish arrivals at Saint John settled elsewhere than in New Denmark. The 1881 census shows that Danish migrants had spread to all corners of the province. Victoria County held the largest number of Danes with 37 percent of the

²⁰ Bojesen, "New Denmark—The Oldest Danish Colony in Canada," p. 58.

²¹ Norman Macdonald, Canada: Immigration and Colonization, 1841-1903, (Toronto: Macmillan of Canada, 1966), p. 166.

provincial total, followed by Charlotte with 15 percent, and Saint John with 14 percent.²² Smaller numbers existed in each other county. Whatever the reasons, the census returns indicate that New Denmark's pull was not always strong enough to keep them or to attract them north once landed at Saint John.

While Saint John was a favoured port for New Denmark's settlers, it was not the only one. As railway links were completed across New Brunswick, New Denmark-bound Danes began to arrive via Halifax and Québec. The earliest Halifax-destined Danes arrived in 1876, and while Danes bound for the American West had been arriving in Québec for many years, they began to arrive in New Denmark via Québec in 1878. These alternative destinations help to explain why the number of Danish arrivals in the port of Saint John's records was much higher than in the Copenhagen Police Records. While the Danes arriving in Québec most likely traveled on to New Denmark by land, those who arrived via Halifax probably traveled to Saint John by ship or train, pushing up the number of Danish arrivals in the city. In addition, during the 1872 to 1901 period, migrants sometimes became much more specific in their intended destinations, as 17 migrants listed New Denmark, and an equal number listed Hellerup.

Origins of New Denmark's Early Immigrant Population

Using the 1881, 1891, and 1901 censuses as benchmarks, a study was conducted to pinpoint the Danish origins of New Denmark's residents who remained long enough to be recorded in a census so that comparisons could be made between New Denmark and more general trends within the Danish migration. The name of each Danish New Denmark resident from the 1881, 1891, and 1901 censuses was searched using the Danish Emigration Archives online database. Though many New Denmark migrants were found in the Police Records, there were also a large number of entire families and individuals that could not be located. At least one New Denmark family member proved traceable in

²² 1881 Census of Canada, Volume 1, Part 2, Table 3.

almost two-thirds of the households, translating to an overall total of 280 people. Using this data, we can pinpoint the number of males versus females, the migrants' ages, their counties of last residence, and their occupations.

Figure 5.10 Men and Women With Percentages, 1872-1900

Men		Women		Total
160	57 percent	120	43 percent	280

Figure 5.10 demonstrates that a large majority of those leaving Denmark were men, 57 percent overall. This number correlates well with the overall male trend of 60 percent cited by Hvidt.

Figure 5.11 Ages of Danish and New Denmark Emigrants at Time of Departure, 1868-1901

Age Groups	Age Distribution for All Danish Emigrants, 1868 to 1900	Percentage	Age Distribution for New Denmark Emigrants, 1872 to 1901	Percentage
0 to 4	17,297	10.1	55	19.6
5 to 9	8,568	5.0	39	13.9
10 to 14	8,397	4.9	24	8.5
15 to 19	26,867	15.6	27	9.6
20 to 24	43,841	25.5	23	8.2
25 to 29	24,829	14.4	19	6.7
30 to 34	13,556	7.9	19	6.7
35 to 39	7,896	4.6	26	9.2
40 to 49	8,681	5.0	37	13.2
50 to 59	5,609	3.2	11	3.9
60 to 69	1,915	1.1	0	0
70 +	318	0.2	0	0
Totals	172,073	100	280	100

Hvidt, *Flight to America*, p. 73.

Copenhagen Police Records, "www.emiarch.dk/home.php3."

As noted in Figure 5.11 above, most Danish emigrants, 55.5 percent in all, were between the ages of 15 and 29. In contrast, the Danish emigrants that settled in New Denmark were both younger and older. Only 24.5 percent were 15 to 29, whereas 42.0 percent were under 15, and 33.0 percent over 30. In the case of the general Danish emigrant population, only 20.0 percent were under 15 and 22.0 percent were over 30 years. New Denmark's situation suggests a greater predominance of family migration amongst its more sedentary population, but the demographic structure could also be attributed to the subsequent outmigration of New Denmark's 15 to 29 year olds, accounting for 35

percent of its overall outmigration. Young people were the most mobile and many young families, teenage children, and single males left, leaving a larger than average number of older adults and their young families.

Figure 5.12 Ports of Destination, 1872 to 1900

Port	Number
Saint John	115
Québec	52
Halifax	40
Unknown	73
Total	280

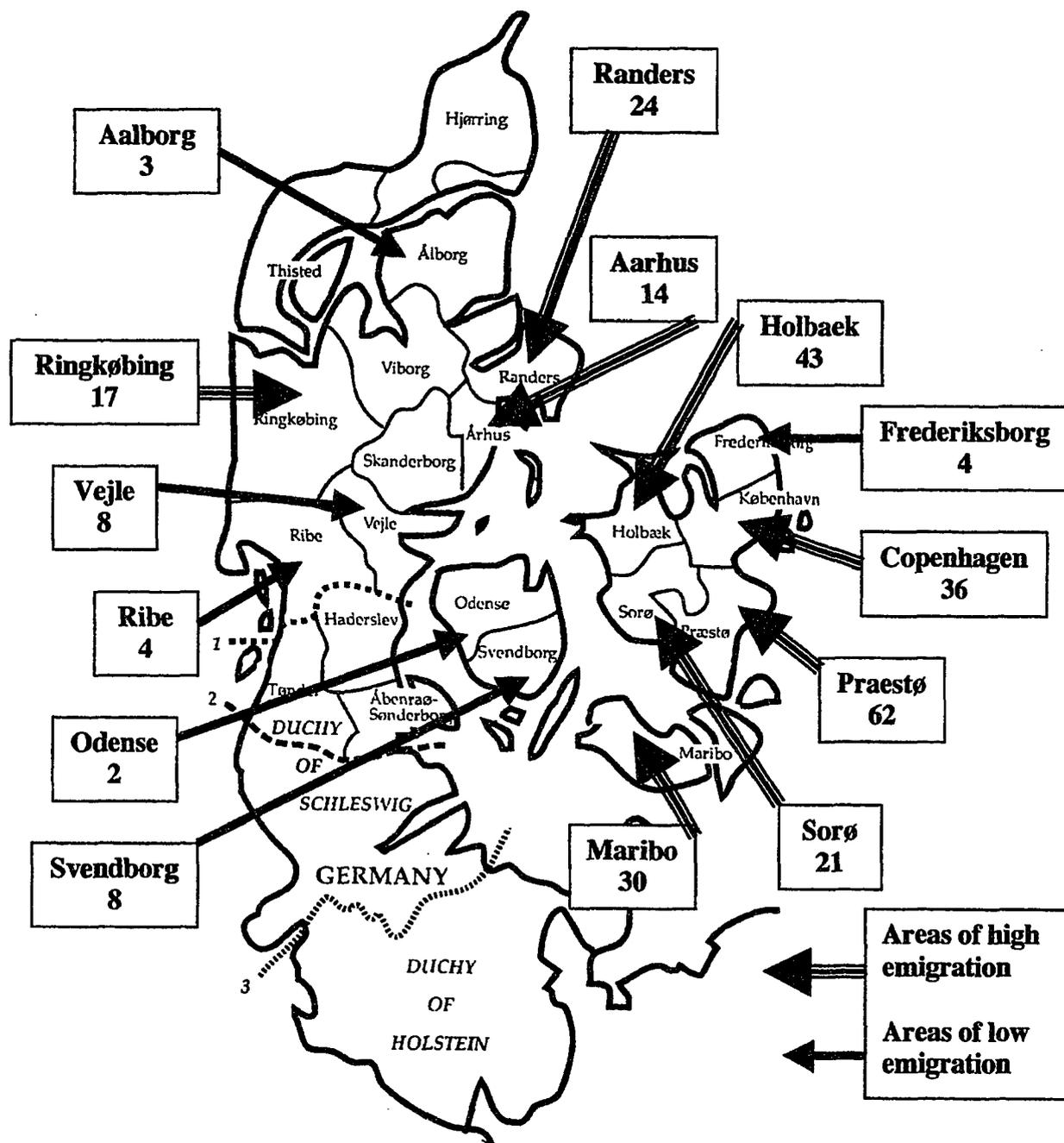
In Figure 5.12 above, the intended destination ports of the New Denmark settlers are aggregated from the Copenhagen Police Records. A substantial number of settlers did not list their destinations, perhaps because at the time of the contract signing, the emigrant agent was still arranging the details. Of those known Saint John proved the most popular, the destination for 55 percent. Québec received 25 percent, and Halifax was last at 19 percent. None of these destinations is a surprise. Saint John was geographically the closest, Québec had been traditionally the main port for immigrants into Canada, and in the late 19th century Halifax was growing into a major shipping and immigration port.²³

An investigation into the Police Records highlights some interesting geographical differences between the Danish trends and the New Denmark migrants. In terms of general Danish trends, emigration levels were highest, in order from most to least, from Bornholm, Maribo (the islands of Lolland and Falster), Hjørring, Copenhagen, Vejle, Aalborg, Thisted, Svendborg, Aarhus, and Sorø. According to the search of the Police Records, New Denmark's settlers originated, in the same order, from Praestø, Holbaek, Copenhagen, Maribo, Randers, Sorø, Ringkøbing, Aarhus, Vejle, and Svendborg, as shown in Figure 5.13 below. As was noted in Figure 3.7 on page 66, the three counties that statistically produced the highest concentrations of Danish migrants were Bornholm, Maribo, and Hjørring. Of these, only Maribo was represented within the New Denmark population. As well, no

²³ Bruce S. Elliott, "English" in *Encyclopedia of Canada's Peoples*, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1999), p. 473.

migrants from Slesvig or Holstein, the areas absorbed by Germany in 1864, were among those found in the New Denmark census.

Figure 5.13 Counties of Denmark With Number of New Denmark Migrants



Map from Family and Church History Department, *Research Outline: Denmark*, (Salt Lake City: Family History Library, 2001)

Set against the Danish averages, New Denmark's citizens displayed identifiable differences. Danish emigration in general saw most migrants leave from southern Zealand (the island that includes Copenhagen), the southern islands, and northern Jutland, while more than two-thirds of New Denmark's settlers, 70 percent, emigrated from the islands of Zealand and Maribo and very few migrated from northern Jutland. When the counties of Randers and Aarhus, close geographically and with generally higher emigration numbers, are added to this total, more than 84 percent of New Denmark's migrants originated from Zealand (including the counties of Holbaek, Frederiksborg, Copenhagen, Praestø, and Sorø), Maribo, Randers, and Aarhus. The remaining migrants came from Denmark's central islands and Jutland. The question that needs answering is why the New Brunswick emigrants came from this region.

From 1872 to 1885, the years when the overwhelming majority of the traceable New Denmark migrants left Denmark, trends become apparent with regard to occupation and county of last residence. Emigration in the years 1872 to 1875 originated almost exclusively from the islands of Zealand and Lolland-Falster (Maribo), and 86 percent of these adult males listed "farmer" as their occupation. The remaining occupations included a priest, a gardener, a bricklayer, and a servant. From 1875 to 1885, the migration spread to more northern and western areas of Denmark, including the counties of Randers, Aarhus, Ringkøbing, Svendborg, and Vejle. Two thirds, or 64 percent of the post-1875 migrants were unskilled labourers and servants, and the remaining included a more diverse selection that included a sailor, three shoemakers, two blacksmiths, three carpenters, and only two farmers. Based on Stevenson's account of the settlement's first years, only those who were farmers in Denmark were able to adapt to the settlement's conditions. The remainder, who left almost immediately, do not appear in our sample. Because Captain Heller concentrated his recruitment efforts in the Copenhagen area, it makes sense that most of the early migrants were farmers originating from these areas. Heller's core farming groups drew relatively few chain migrants from their own class and district. Most of the later arrivals, not subject to Heller's superintendence, were

from lower down the social ladder, and from more outlying areas, as the word spread about New Denmark.

A look at the occupations of the New Denmark settlers at the time of migration reveals that much adaptation would be necessary after their arrival. Those listing occupations other than farmer would find out quickly that in order to survive they would have to take up agriculture. Figure 5.14 includes all stated occupations at the time of departure, including women and children, who listed their occupations simply as “wife,” and “child.” Among the adult males, the two most listed occupations were farmer with 42 and unskilled labourer with 32. Following these were servants and carpenters with 12 and 5 respectively.

Figure 5.14 Migrant Occupations

Occupation	Number	Occupation	Number
Landmand (farmer)	36	Indskidder [sic] (sailor)	1
Arbejdsmand (unskilled labourer)	32	Murer (bricklayer)	1
Tyende (servant)	12	Priest	1
Husmand (tenant farmer)	6	Ugift (unmarried woman)	1
Tomrer (carpenter)	5	Hustru (wife)	50
Skomagersvend (journeyman shoemaker)	4	Barn (child)	125
Gaardejer (Farm Owner)	2	Unknown	2
Smed (blacksmith)	2	Total	280

While the large number of farmers is to be expected, the number of unskilled labourers, servants, and other non-farming occupations is surprising given the harsh pioneer and farming conditions. It could be that the large number of unskilled workers and servants, like many other 19th century Danes, were indeed part-time farmers or former farmers in search of farmland. Many of these labourers and servants could have had farming experience but did not consider farming their

occupation. These people would not have been prepared for the conditions. Perhaps these people were pulled to New Denmark by family or friends who had previously migrated and offered them work. They could have also been given false information as to New Denmark's progress, and arrived to find that the settlement's economic state could not support their profession.

An Introduction to Outmigration in Late 19th Century Canada

Perhaps what characterized New Denmark's early history most was not the arriving Danes, but the large numbers who left. Such an exodus was not particular to the Danes, as many people left New Brunswick, as they did Canada, in the late 19th century. In fact, many more people were leaving Canada in the late 19th century than were arriving. From 1860 to 1900, emigration from Canada exceeded immigration by over 650,000 people.²⁴

Outmigration was a phenomenon that affected each area of the country. In general, the migration south of the border was made easier for English Canadian than French Canadians or other groups because most of them belonged to the white, Anglo-Saxon, Protestant majority and they experienced little culture shock and, at the same time, were more easily accepted by the receiving population.²⁵

Outmigration has been linked to levels of economic prosperity. Regions with more highly developed industrial and agricultural sectors were also usually areas with more employment opportunities. In Canada, Ontario's economy was the strongest, most dynamic, and because of a series of late 19th century societal crises in the agricultural, industrial, and urban settings, its transformation from an agricultural to industrial and urban landscape had occurred earlier than in other regions.²⁶

²⁴ Randy William Widdis, "With scarcely a ripple: English Canadians in northern New York State at the beginning of the twentieth century," *Journal of Historical Geography* 13, 2 (1987), p. 169.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 189.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 173.

Areas such as Ontario and New England that experienced higher economic performance were “high growing regions,” and were most likely to have high levels of immigration and lower emigration.²⁷

In the Maritimes, the economy was less developed, offered fewer industrial and agricultural jobs, and therefore pushed the most ambitious citizens to look for work in the United States or Ontario. The steady outmigration that started in the 1870s picked up speed in the 1880s and 1890s. The rise in outmigration was occurring at a time when the Maritime economy, while not as large or as developed, was in some areas growing at the same rate or faster than Ontario’s.²⁸ This growth could not be maintained and by the 1890s an economic downturn in the Maritimes had set in.

Overall, the Maritimes has been characterized as a “stagnant region,” with little employment opportunity, low levels of immigration, and high rates of emigration.²⁹ From 1870 to 1900, it experienced a loss of approximately 250,000 residents, and New Brunswick alone lost almost 90,000 people. Historians have attempted to answer the question: was the region’s economic stagnation the impetus for the outmigration or did the economic difficulties arise because of the brain and back drain? According to Patricia Thornton, “the net loss of about 15 percent of the region’s population per decade may have seriously jeopardized the potential of the region to complete its industrial transformation.”³⁰

Other historians have sought to see the outmigration in other contexts rather than as a result or a symptom of economic decline. Betsy Beattie has likened the Maritime outmigration and its youthful character to more widely studied outmigrations from agricultural hinterland regions to industrialized, urban areas in both North America and Europe in the late 19th century.³¹ Margaret Conrad has also explored the idea of an “exodus myth,” that has served to help Maritimers over the years to explain their economic underdevelopment. Conrad explains that the exodus myth has been overused and

²⁷ Patricia A. Thornton, “The Problem of Out-Migration from Atlantic Canada, 1871-1921: A New Look” *Acadiensis*, Volume 15, Number 1 (Autumn 1985), p. 11.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 28.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 12.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 8.

³¹ Betsy Beattie, “‘Going Up to Lynn’: Single, Maritime-Born Women in Lynn, Massachusetts, 1879-1930” *Acadiensis*, Volume 22, Number 1 (Autumn 1991), pp. 65-86.

understudied, in some instances seen as both result and cause of the region's economic troubles, and that new studies are required to fully understand the outmigration, its complexities and causes.³²

To help broaden our knowledge of the outmigration from Canada, the Maritimes, and more specifically New Brunswick in the late 19th century, the study of New Denmark's outmigration can offer a unique and neglected perspective. New Denmark, an example of group settlement of a non-traditional migrant group, is a rare specimen in the Maritimes and the study of its outmigration could only augment the current national and regional literature.

Outmigration from New Denmark, 1872 to 1901

This section will investigate the outflow from New Denmark using newspapers, provincial officials' documents, church records, and census returns. Because of these inherent variations in the surviving documentation, we are compelled to examine the various classes of evidence individually. While it is difficult to place definitively a number value upon the level of outmigration from New Denmark, it is possible to demonstrate that a high level of outmigration existed and that because of this outward movement, New Denmark's population by 1901 was perhaps half of what it might have been.

Newspapers reported the outmigration from New Brunswick on a regular basis in the 1870s. The New Denmark settlers did constitute a portion of this coverage, but far more interest was given to those from New Kincardineshire who decided to leave. In The Carleton Sentinel, the lone reference found reporting Danish outmigration was in the 1 March 1873 edition. The vague passage states that "some of the Danes have left Hellerup for the Western States." From here the attention moves to the Scottish settlers who also had among them many who decided to migrate out of their settlement. The situation deteriorated to such an extent that the colony's founder, Captain Brown, packed up himself and a number of families from New Kincardineshire and left to found a colony in Kansas. On 3 March

³² Margaret Conrad, "Chronicles of the Exodus: Myths and Realities of Maritime Canadians in the United States, 1870-1930," Stephen J. Hornsby, ed., The Northeastern Borderlands: Four Centuries of Interaction (Fredericton: Acadiensis Press, 1989), pp. 97-119.

1877, Brown advertised his venture under the headline “New Brunswick Colony for Kansas” and warned that interested citizens “should lose no time in enrolling their names on the Colony list.”³³

Charles Lugin’s The Colonial Farmer did not contain reports of any Danish outmigration. It did contain numerous articles on outmigration in general, including “How to get to Manitoba”³⁴ and “Farming in Nebraska.”³⁵ The paper’s focus was New Kincardineshire and its retention problems. The dissatisfaction of the migrants is noted and an advertisement was placed extolling Kansas as a destination. The Morning Freeman mentioned outmigration very sparingly, the most notable example reporting that several New Kincardineshire residents were “going away to seek work in Montreal.”³⁶ The New Brunswick Reporter did not mention any outmigration.

From the newspapers’ perspective, outmigration was an important issue, but the sparse reporting on the Danes perhaps demonstrates indifference towards them, since much more extensive coverage was given to the outmigration of British migrants. The main point to be taken from the papers is that outmigration, Danish or not, was a common occurrence in late 19th century New Brunswick, and that it was not only some of the Danes who found opportunities in the province too few.

The outmigration from New Denmark occurred from the start of settlement and was quickly recognized by provincial officials. It was happening on such a scale that in 1873 the Surveyor General, who kept track of the population in 1872 and 1873 (see Figure 5.15 below) and was the official most able to report on New Denmark’s progress, could not keep up with the departures, stating:

I regret I am not able to give a tabulated statement of the Danish Immigration similar to that herein before given of the Scotch. It would not, however be of the same satisfactory character. With them I found, that, with few exceptions, only such as are married men with families, and who were in their own country practical farmers, became actual settlers. Without having an accurate statement, I feel warranted in

³³ The Carleton Sentinel, March 3 1877, p. 2, col. 4.

³⁴ The Colonial Farmer, 3 June 1873, p. 2, col. 3.

³⁵ The Colonial Farmer, 14 August 1876, p. 2, col. 4.

³⁶ The Morning Freeman, 22 September, 1874, p. 2, col. 2.

saying that over one third of those who came to this country under Capt. Heller's control, have left it. Those however, who are settled, are a fine hardy industrious and energetic people, most of whom will, I think, make good settlers.³⁷

Stevenson believed the large outmigration was occurring because a many of the Danes had not been farmers or farm labourers in Denmark, and were totally unsuited for the rigours of settler life. It would seem that Stevenson was giving the Danes too much credit; he thought that any decent farmer or farm labourer would be ready for the intense work of chopping, burning, clearing, stump-removing, and rock-picking that would be necessary before crops could be sowed. Stevenson acknowledged in private letters that more than 50 percent of the Danish arrivals had migrated out of New Brunswick.³⁸

As mentioned in Chapter Four, Captain Heller, in claiming payment for his work in 1873, claimed that he had sent a total of 35 migrants from June until September. Along with his request for payment,³⁹ Heller sent a list of the migrants in support of his claim. The occupations of Heller's 1873 group were varied, with 14 farmers, 2 merchants, 1 baker, 1 unskilled labourer, 1 maidservant, and 1 seamstress. There were also 5 wives and 9 children among the group. A search of the 1881 census supports complaints by Stevenson of the extent of the outmigration in the first two years. Of the 35 people Heller sent, only 5 remained in New Denmark in 1881. None of the 15 single males and no one with a non-farming occupation was among them. Those who left were generally young, with 21 of the 30 between the ages of 15 and 34.

As Commissioner, Hans Peter Petersen was responsible for writing annual progress reports. His reports listed population totals and new arrivals. Petersen was not an unbiased observer of the fluctuating population; as Commissioner⁴⁰ he had a stake in the settlement's progress and success. Following Heller's departure, he was involved in advertising New Denmark as a settlement location.

³⁷ Stevenson, *Report on Immigration to New Brunswick in 1873*, p. 27.

³⁸ PANB, Crown Land Office Letterbook, Letter from Stevenson to Heller, November 15, 1873.

³⁹ PANB, Crown Land Office Letterbook, Heller to Provincial Secretary, 19 September 1873.

⁴⁰ Petersen was also appointed Justice of the Peace for New Denmark. Among Petersen's other duties included overseeing the mail service and handing out road-building contracts.

in Denmark and through friends in the United States.⁴¹ His population figures are listed below in Figure 5.15.

For 1876 and 1877, Commissioner Petersen's reporting did not include the number of new arrivals, which he did for each other year. Was the outmigration so extensive that even the settlement's Commissioner could not keep an accurate count? More important are his later figures. According to Petersen, 129 Danes arrived in 1879, and this should have pushed the total population to 427, but this was not the case. The population for the year Petersen reported as 355, revealing an outmigration of 72 Danes during the year. More interesting is Petersen's account of the population in 1881, when he reported the population as being almost 500 people. In comparison, the 1881 census found only 351 settlers in New Denmark. The reason for the discrepancy is unknown, but brings to light important questions. How could Petersen have been so far off the actual population figure? Did he readjust his numbers in 1881 because he knew a census would be taken and the real population total would come to light, exposing the outmigration? Did reporting of the population discontinue after 1881 because of the high rates of transience? Unfortunately, these are questions we may never answer, as none of Petersen's records survive.

Figure 5.15 Surveyor General and Commissioner's Population Figures

Year	Stevenson & Petersen's Population Figures	Cumulative Population
1872	59	60 ⁴²
1873	No data	No data
1874	31	111
1875	43	154
1876	No data	183
1877	No data	220
1878	81	298
1879	129	355
1880	No data	No data
1881	15	490

Figures from the New Brunswick House of Assembly Journals, 1873 to 1882.

Under the terms of the Free Grants Act, New Denmark migrants were to receive a \$15 payment

⁴¹ Craig, "Report on New Denmark, 1877," p. 113-114.

⁴² The 1872 total includes the birth of a child.

once they had constructed a log cabin or house on their lot. Records of these transactions exist for the years 1877 to 1879, and when compared with the 1881 census also expose a significant outmigration. The settlers listed already must have lived in New Denmark long enough to clear lands and build a home. It is then surprising to see that so many of these migrants soon left. Of the nine settlers who received payment in 1877, four had left by 1881. In 1878, a much larger number received payments, 29 in all, and of these 10 left. Of the 12 settlers listed in 1879, seven outmigrated within two years. In total, 42 percent of those who received payments left New Denmark within two to four years.⁴³

The question of why now becomes apparent. Why would they have left after making such sacrifices? It could be that they were too poor to leave earlier, and that the government's payment provided the means to move to areas with better economic opportunities. Or perhaps the pull of chain migration was at work and these migrants finally left to be with their friends and families in the United States, like the overwhelming majority of Danes. We cannot be certain.

The records of St. Ansgar's Anglican Church provide unique insight into the outmigration from New Denmark as the clergy partially recorded population movements between censuses. The most revealing document is the "List of Communicants,"⁴⁴ essentially a running list of the church membership. There are two lists; the first contains data from 1878 to 1894, and the second from 1896 to 1900. The two lists reveal the transient nature of New Denmark's population from 1878 to 1900.

Information was recorded for each church member. The handwriting is at times almost illegible and the names of residents hard to decipher because members who either died or left New Denmark were crossed out. The most fascinating information is located in the "Remarks" column, for it is here that the record-taker noted when a church member left the community and when possible, listed the destination.

The first list gave for most years a concise summary of the year's activity, including listing those who left. While more legible, the second listing's information is not as comprehensive, is not

⁴³ PANB, Crown Land Office Letterbook, Free Grants Act of 1872 Documentation, New Denmark Commissioner.

⁴⁴ PANB, Parish of New Denmark Anglican Church.

organized chronologically and provides additional information sporadically. A summary of the details is included below in Figure 5.16.

Figure 5.16 Summary of St. Ansgar's Roll of Communicants

Year	Number of Church Members who Left	Year	Number of Church Members who Left
1878	30	1888	25
1879	4	1889	No data
1880	0	1890	No data
1881	20	1891	21
1882	5	1892	19
1883	27	1893	17
1884	7	1894	12
1885	12	1895	No data
1886	6	1896 to 1900	23
1887	No data	Total	228

The church records reveal a sustained outmigration that totalled at least 228 people over a 22-year period. This figure represents exclusively those who left and does not include those who died. In a community whose population reached only 563 by 1901, the loss of at least 228 people over more than two decades represents a major out-flow. St. Ansgar's records only recorded the movements of Anglicans in the community, and as noted earlier, a large part of New Denmark's population was Lutheran, and their movements would not have been included. It is therefore quite possible that the level of outmigration from New Denmark was much higher than what is noted in the Anglican records. Based on the number of Lutherans found in the censuses, there could have been an additional 200 Lutherans who decided also to leave New Denmark over the period.

The list also provides information regarding some of their destinations. The destinations of only one quarter of the 228 were noted and of these 57 people, the vast majority, over 90 percent, left for the United States. Five percent returned to Denmark and just over three percent left for other New Brunswick locations. Almost half of those going to the United States traveled to Portland, Maine, and that state was by far the favoured destination, accepting over three-fourths of the out migrants. It is likely that from Portland, most of the Danes traveled to other American locations. The pull of chain

migration from family members and friends in the United States was a strong factor and these numbers represent the overall preference of Danes for the United States. Portland was, of course, also the nearest large American centre.

The strategy which Stevenson had used to attract settlers, pointing out New Brunswick's nearness to the United States, became itself an option exercised by many Danes. The low number returning directly to Denmark is also interesting, as it demonstrates that for the New Denmark settlers return migration, at least in the short term, was not seen as a viable option.

St. Ansgar's marriage and baptismal records are an important resource in the study of New Denmark's outmigration between censuses. Both sets of records were searched for Danes who do not appear on any census. In this way, it is possible, at least partially, to better grasp the fluidity with which migrants moved in and out of the settlement. The intercensal outmigration totals are outlined in Figure 5.17 below.

Figure 5.17 Marriage and Baptismal Outmigration, 1876 to 1901

Year	Adults	Children
1872 to 1880	8	3
1881 to 1890	47	28
1891 to 1901	22	10
Total	77	41

As noted above, the movement was large, with 118 New Denmark Danes of Anglican faith arriving and leaving before being counted on any of the censuses. Many of these outmigrating newly married couples did not have children or had small families. Smaller families were the most mobile, and with fewer members a family's travel and lodging costs were much less. This could be a further indication that the Danes with the means to leave New Denmark did so.

Outmigration as Seen in the 1881, 1891, and 1901 Censuses

As previously mentioned, because New Denmark was founded one year after the 1871 census, there is no exact record of the population until the 1881 census. We are unable, therefore, to get an

accurate count of the outmigration that occurred from 1872 to 1880. Only after 1881 can the censuses be used to track outmigration. A downside of the census records is the inability to account for population movements and deaths in the intercensal periods. For clarity, citizens involved in the outmigration from New Denmark have been divided into two main groups, entire families and single individuals.

These categories are analyzed in Figures 5.18 and 5.19 below, and the total outmigration statistics are found in Figure 5.20.

Figure 5.18 Total Family Outmigration, 1881 to 1901

Males	Age Groups		Place of Birth		Occupations		Religion	
113	0-4	40	Denmark	159	Farmer	64	Lutheran	149
Females	5-9	22	New Brunswick	47	Farmer's son	3	Anglican	56
100	10-14	20	United States	3	Blacksmith	2	Presbyterian	8
	15-19	12	Sweden	2	Cabinetmaker	3		
	20-24	23	Egypt	1	Shoemaker	2		
	25-29	17	Norway	1	School	15		
	30-34	23			Minister	1		
	35-39	16			Servant	3		
	40-49	21			Labourer	2		
	50-59	12			Teacher	2		
	60-69	7						
	70+	1						
Totals								
213		213		213		97		213

Figure 5.19 Total Individual Outmigration, 1881 to 1901

Males	Age Groups		Place of Birth		Occupations		Religion	
51	0-4	12	Denmark	61	Farmer	5	Lutheran	46
Females	5-9	11	New Brunswick	35	Farmer's son	3	Anglican	45
47	10-14	22	United States	2	School	4	Catholic	7
	15-19	31			Servant	3		
	20-24	12			Labourer	6		
	25-29	5						
	30-34	1						
	35-39	0						
	40-49	1						
	50-59	0						
	60-69	3						
	70+	0						
Totals								
98		98		98		18		98

Figure 5.20 Total Outmigration, 1881 to 1901

Males	Age Groups		Place of Birth		Occupations		Religion	
164	0-4	52	Denmark	220	Farmer	69	Lutheran	195
Females	5-9	33	New Brunswick	82	Farmer's son	6	Anglican	101
147	10-14	42	United States	5	Blacksmith	2	Presbyterian	8
	15-19	43	Sweden	2	Cabinetmaker	3	Catholic	7
	20-24	35	Egypt	1	Shoemaker	2		
	25-29	22	Norway	1	School	19		
	30-34	24			Minister	1		
	35-39	16			Servant	6		
	40-49	21			Labourer	8		
	50-59	12			Teacher	2		
	60-69	10						
	70+	1						
Totals								
311		311		311		118		311

In all, the census study identified 311 New Denmark residents that disappeared from the settlement over the 20-year period.

New Denmark's outmigration involved slightly more men than women overall, but men dominated the first decade's totals. The equalization of the sexes had more to do with a reduction in the number of males leaving than any increase in the outmigration of women.

Most of the outmigrants were from the lower age ranges, especially under 25, demonstrating the movement's family and youth orientation. Many young families with children as well as single men and women of marrying ages bolstered these numbers, suggesting that they left to seek out new opportunities while still young.

More than 70 percent of the total outmigrants were born in Denmark, with 26 percent born in New Brunswick and a further 2 percent in the United States. Farmers, farmer's sons, and farm labourers made farming the main occupations, at 71 percent. Lutherans dominated the religious numbers, with 63 percent, compared with 32 percent Anglican.

It is significant that from 1881 to 1890, many more families outmigrated than did individuals, but that during the next decade, individuals made up the majority. The most likely explanation for this change involves the movement of New Denmark's settlers and the colony's economic situation.

During the 1881 to 1890 period a transitional state existed where much migration and weeding-out

occurred. This period was defined by the mobile nature of New Denmark's population. Families who were unable to handle the pioneer conditions left *en bloc*, and those better able to cope or too poor to outmigrate remained. At the end of New Denmark's second decade, the family situation stabilized, with a core group remaining and involved in the settlement's progress. This stabilization after 1890 slowed the outmigration of entire families, but created few local opportunities for young people as they came of age. They left New Denmark for employment reasons upon marriage.

Effects of Outmigration Upon New Denmark's Population

To illustrate the numerical effect of the outmigration upon New Denmark's population growth, Figure 5.21 projects New Denmark's population level without the outflow.

Although the outmigration before 1881 was significant, the only figures are found in Commissioner Petersen's population figures (see Figure 5.15), within Heller's 1873 migrant listing (see Figure 4.3), and among St. Ansgar's records. These 113 people will be used to represent the outmigration from 1872 to 1880 but the true level of outmigration during this period was probably much higher. The table also takes no account of births that might have occurred amongst the departing families had they remained.

Figure 5.21 New Denmark's Population, Outmigration, and Population Projection

	1881	1891	1901
New Denmark Population	351	495	563
Outmigration from Census	72*	114	151
Outmigration from Captain Heller's 1873 Letter	30		
Intercensal Outmigration from St. Ansgar's Records	11	75	32
Projected Population if no Outmigration	464	797	1016

*Figure taken from Commissioner Petersen's population figures.

The 1881 figure has been increased to include the 113 outmigrants mentioned above, increasing the 1881 total to 464. To attain the 1891 figure, the census increase, the 114 outmigrants

from the census, and 75 from St. Ansgar's were added to arrive at the projected figure, resulting in a new total of 797 in 1891. When the census increase of 68 is added to the outmigration totals of 151 and 32 people, the adjusted population of New Denmark in 1901 rises to 1016, an increase of 453 people. Deaths in the community, as earlier mentioned, numbered at least 100 people, and this would decrease this projection. The conclusion nonetheless is that the population would likely have been twice as large by 1901 had outmigration not occurred.

Conclusion

This chapter sought to answer questions regarding the Danish origins of New Denmark's settlers, chronicle the evolution and growth of the population, and address the issue of outmigration and its impact upon the community's growth.

Using the census and the Copenhagen Police Records, a total of 280 New Denmark residents were traced back to the time of their departure. Fifty-seven percent were male, close to the Danish average of 60 percent. New Denmark's migrants were both younger and older than the Danish trends that saw more than 50 percent of migrants between the ages of 15 and 29. In contrast, 46 percent of New Denmark's men and women were in the 0 to 4, 5 to 9 and 40 to 49 year categories. More than half traveled to New Denmark via the port of Saint John, while one quarter and one fifth entered through Québec and Halifax respectively.

Important trends were identified in geographical origins. Though most Danes left Zealand, the southern islands, and northern Jutland, almost 85 percent of New Denmark's settlers originated from Zealand, Maribo, Randers, and Aarhus; migrants from northern Jutland did not appear in large numbers. During the period 1872 to 1875, migrants arrived almost exclusively from Zealand and Maribo. Farming was the occupation of 86 percent of these migrants. After 1875 migration to New Denmark spread to western and northern areas of Denmark and a noted change in occupation occurred. Of the post-1875 migrants, two-thirds were unskilled labourers and servants. It appears that

those who arrived from 1872 to 1875, once established as farmers, were able to pull in other non-farming migrants from across the nation, though the latter were few in number.

The study of New Denmark's census returns showed a slow population growth. From 353 in 1881, the population grew to 563 by 1901. During this time, the number of families did not increase a great deal, but the number of people per household rose from 3.6 in 1881 to 5.8 in 1901. While births were a contributing factor to this rise, family members as well remained with their parents past the age of 18, an indication that economic opportunities were few.

In 1881, males made up nearly 55 percent of the population, but by 1901 the number of males and females reached close to parity. Over time the under-19 block grew at the quickest rate, while those most mobile and most likely to have young families, those 20 to 49 years, generally experienced muted growth or no growth at all. A majority of New Denmark's citizens were born in Denmark, until the 1901 census when those born in New Brunswick became more numerous. The number of those born in Canada rose over 350 percent from 1881 to 1901.

Occupationally, farmers vastly outnumbered other occupations, but more diversity exposed itself over time, an indication that the settlement's economy was indeed diversifying and becoming stronger, albeit at a slow pace. Inter-marriage within local population was infrequent, representing only 5 percent of the weddings, a sign that integration with the local population did not happen quickly.

The lack of a Lutheran Minister in the community meant that the population had to make do. Anglicanism took hold in the community and by 1901 a large majority of the population were practising Anglicans. In this, New Denmark's citizens were doing what governments across Canada had hoped they would do—adapt to the Canadian landscape and become more alike the native population.

Outmigration from New Brunswick during the late 19th century was large enough to attract the attention of the province's newspapers. Most coverage focused upon those of British stock who left to search out opportunities in western locations but the movement of some New Denmark settlers to the

western United States was large enough to warrant at least one mention. Surveyor General Stevenson also recognized the significant outmigration from New Denmark and offered suggestions to Heller so that he could refine his recruitment. Although he found it hard to quantify the migration, he did privately recognize that 50 percent of Heller's parties had left. Commissioner Petersen's annual population reports seem to have attempted to mask the retention issues, and his population totals reflect this. His 1881 population figure was almost 150 people higher than the actual total.

Meanwhile, at the port of Saint John's emigration office, the list of Danish arrivals shows that many Danes arrived each year after 1872, a total of almost 1000 by 1901. According to historian Bojesen, Danes traveling to Saint John were New Denmark migrants. Given that only 37 percent of New Brunswick's Danes in the 1881 census were in Victoria County, Bojesen's assumption appears to be incorrect. New Denmark was far from being a solitary magnet for incoming Danes.

Other documents provide clues to the extent of the outmigration before the 1881 census. That only 5 of 35 intended New Denmark migrants on Captain Heller's 1873 list remained by 1881 is an indicator of the high volume of outward movement. And by the end of the 1870s the situation did not improve, as a study of Free Grants Act payments from 1877 to 1879 showed that just over half of those receiving monies as a reward for completing their homes departed by 1881.

St. Ansgar's records again proved an important resource. A listing of the church membership for the years 1878 to 1900 noted that during that time a total of 288 Danish Anglicans left. Their destinations fit the overall Danish migration trends, with 90 percent leaving New Denmark for the United States, half of this number moving to Portland, Maine. The church records are also crucial for the study of intercensal outmigration. A study of marriage and baptismal records showed that between 1876 to 1901, at least 118 people, mainly young couples with one child or no children, had left. Certainly these figures demonstrate the power of the United States to attract the vast majority of Danish migrants.

Because New Denmark was created just after the 1871 census, the first accurate count of its population did not occur until 1881. The censuses therefore can only be used to study outmigration after 1881. Over the 20-year period to 1901, slightly more men than women left New Denmark, especially between 1881 and 1890 when a large number of single males departed. Age-wise, the outmigration was concentrated in the under 25 categories, demonstrating the youth and young family orientation of the movement. More than 70 percent were born in Denmark and occupationally most farmers, and just over 60 percent were Lutheran. The census study brought to light trends within the New Denmark outmigration. The 1881 to 1890 period was dominated by the migration of entire families. From 1891 to 1900, a reversal occurred with more individual outmigration. It appears that a weeding-out occurred during the first two decades, leaving a core population of established farm families, and that after 1890 few Danes either arrived or left, apart from children in core families who came of age and departed upon marriage or to seek employment in the United States.

The effects of the outmigration on New Denmark's population cannot be overstated. It is possible to surmise that had New Denmark been able to provide for all the migrants who intended or attempted settlement, the population could have reached over 1000 people by 1901. Given that only partial data measuring the intercensal outmigration is available, both the outmigration and the projected 1901 population totals could be higher.

Were the departures from New Denmark merely part of the general outward movement of population that characterized New Brunswick, and indeed Canada at large, during the early post-Confederation years? It has been demonstrated above that the levels of outmigration from New Denmark were high, especially during its first 20 years. In 1877, some 55 New Denmark families, or what would have amounted to about half of New Denmark's population, petitioned the New Zealand government for assistance to help them relocate to the South Pacific. Perhaps the name Zealand appealed. They were disappointed, however, for by the time of their petition the New Zealand

government, believing that its settlement requirements were close to being met, was beginning to place limits upon immigration.⁴⁵

Tough pioneer conditions, an underdeveloped economy, and real unhappiness in New Denmark in the years and decades after 1872 made the idea of outmigration an easy sell for many Danes. After Heller's departure, the Canadian government's Scandinavian emigration agent Hans Mattson attempted to find someone else to organize another Danish colony in the province, but succeeded only in finding a clergyman for New Denmark. Settler and local Commissioner Petersen attempted to recruit more Danes for the Victoria County settlement, but with limited success. The population grew slowly, partly at first because of the economic depression that marked the mid- to late-1870s, but also because of the severe conditions, that included the chopping and clearing of acres of land, hunger that at times was so strong that planted seed potatoes were reharvested for food,⁴⁶ sickness that included bouts of smallpox and was responsible for numerous deaths,⁴⁷ and lack of any opportunity for most occupations except farming. A core population of farming families established themselves on the land, but their numbers were augmented comparatively little.

⁴⁵ Olavi Koivukanagas, "The Longest Voyage of the Vikings. New Zealand: A Remote Alternative to America," Birgit Flemming Larsen, ed., *On Distant Shores*, (Aalborg: Denmark: Danes Worldwide Archives, 1993), p. 132.

⁴⁶ H. Gordon Green, "Danes Planted Deep Roots in Soil of New Brunswick" *The Gazette*, 21 January 1990.

⁴⁷ Bojesen, "New Denmark—The Oldest Danish Colony in Canada," p. 66.

Conclusion

This thesis has attempted to update the literature on numerous facets of New Denmark's early history. In assisting with the development of New Denmark's historiography, this work sought to incorporate the new lenses (economic, gender, and social) through which the history of immigration to Canada has been viewed, while addressing aspects that have remained under-studied, such as political and policy issues. Other features of New Denmark history have been exposed that will require further study in the future.

We recognize today that the Danish migrant's experience did not begin when a settler stepped off the ship at the port of Saint John. The migrant's journey was the result of a complex series of events, economic, political, and social in nature, in both the sending and receiving countries. This recognition of the entirety of the movement is essential as factors on both sides of the Atlantic worked in tandem and migrants, well aware of the opportunities, timed their migration based on the situation on both continents.

The switch to an emphasis upon migrants' lived experiences in the 1960s came too early for the study of New Denmark, as important aspects of its history, such as policy matters, had not to that time received adequate attention. Much the same can be said of New Brunswick as a whole. It was therefore necessary to revisit these topics before the application of newer approaches could successfully occur.

The evolving post-Confederation Dominion/Provincial relationship with respect to immigration policy required additional study. The financial disparity that existed between provinces became quite evident, and economic prowess was seen to correlate with a province's ability to attract and retain migrants. New Brunswick, as a poor province, did not have the economic strength to compete with provinces such as Ontario, or the migrant destination of choice, the United States. New Brunswick was only able to mount an innovative non-British immigration and group settlement drive

with the help of the Dominion, and when this money was removed, the province's motivation went with it.

It is also necessary to understand the Danish and European situation. We know what conditions existed in North America to attract European migrants, but what was happening in Denmark to make them want to leave? Among the issues pressing upon the Danish population were changes resulting from the agricultural revolution, urbanization, and the loss of territory brought on by war. The population also had to fight the pull of chain migration, that along with the rise of steamship travel and constant bombardment by emigrant agents, made thoughts of emigration commonplace. Though the great majority of Danes migrated to the United States, offers of free land and guaranteed employment in New Brunswick were hard offers to refuse.

There remained unanswered questions surrounding the settlement's main recruiter and organizer, Captain Søren Severin Heller. While his motivations and movements after 1874 are still unknown, much more has been uncovered about Heller, including his family's military history, his family's potentially German origins, his movements to New York City in 1869 and 1874, his negotiations with New Brunswick, his recruitment efforts, his falling out with Stevenson, his failure to attract the contracted numbers of Danes, and his final mention in 1876 when he received his last payment from the government. More work still is needed to complete our understanding of Heller and his important role in New Denmark's founding. Perhaps Danish government records or newspapers will provide further information.

An investigation into how the Danes, a non-traditional immigrant group to New Brunswick, were perceived by the local population in newspaper reports produced interesting results. The Danes were accepted as hearty settlers but given sparse coverage. From the beginning there was confusion surrounding their nationality, but overall the Danes were seen in a positive light. There were, on a number of occasions, times when the Danish colony and its migrants were cited as examples of

government waste by New Brunswickers who believed provincial money was better spent on the local citizenry.

The idea that the Danes were strategically placed to block Francophone settlement has been around for over 50 years, but was never tested. While there were officials who did not think highly of French culture and farming practices, those most intimately involved in New Brunswick's settlement schemes tried to keep Francophones in northwestern New Brunswick from moving to adjacent lands in the state of Maine. No convincing evidence was found to support the buffer thesis.

The use of quantifiable data in the study of New Denmark was perhaps most needed if a proper modernization of its historiography was to take place. Using data from the Copenhagen Police Records, the censuses, St. Ansgar's Anglican Church registers, and other sources, the entirety of the New Denmark migrants' journey was reconstructed. New Denmark's settlers were shown to stand somewhat outside the general Danish trends. For example their origins were heavily concentrated in the lands around Zealand, at the expense of other sources of generally high Danish emigration, such as northern Jutland, which provided few New Denmark migrants. While many migrants proved traceable in the Copenhagen Police Records, there were some who could not be found, meaning that a more detailed study is required to provide a more complete picture of New Denmark's Danish origins.

The growth and maturation of New Denmark during its first crucial decades is important to comprehend, as it was in these first thirty years that the success or failure of the settlement was determined. Using census returns and church records, slow population growth was documented as were changes within the population over the decades, most notably a shift in religious affiliation to Anglicanism. Farming remained dominant, but as years passed a few more varied occupations arrived in the settlement, a sign that New Denmark's economy was diversifying somewhat. Perhaps most importantly, the census study exposed a large outmigration from the settlement, suggesting that the community had reached the limits of agricultural expansion.

There remained the problem of quantifying those arriving and leaving before the first census records in 1881, and in the intercensal periods. The nature of the available records made any attempt to arrive at an accurate figure representing the outmigration from New Denmark arduous. What the records do tell us is that the outmigration was so great that over half those who migrated to New Denmark eventually left. Our first inclination is to blame faceless outside forces for this but some responsibility must be attached to key individuals.

Firstly, questions surrounding the advertising tactics of Captain Heller are too strong to ignore. Too many Danish migrants arrived in New Denmark only to leave almost immediately. Had they been properly informed regarding the settlement's rugged conditions? Had they expected their farmlands to be covered with forest? It does appear that for some migrants at least, the reality of New Denmark did not live up to the sales pitch.

Secondly, the administrator of New Brunswick's immigration and settlement program, Benjamin Stevenson, must shoulder some responsibility. Every aspect of New Denmark's establishment was under Stevenson's care. He knew about the rugged conditions the settlers would face and the lack of economic opportunities in the area, but blamed the early departures on Heller's choice of immigrants. New Brunswick's own citizens were leaving to seek their fortunes elsewhere and the province's finances could not have supported a greater expenditure on improving the situation of the settlers, given the cancellation of the Dominion subsidy in 1874 and the recession that began in 1873.

Lastly, the forces of chain migration were at play. The majority of Danes migrated to the United States. The most common destination was nearby Portland, Maine, but this may have been only an interim stop in a stage migration because migrants usually settle close to their families and friends. The Danes in the United States acted as a magnet for other migrating Danes throughout the world. Danish society was highly literate and the volume of mail leaving New Denmark demonstrates that they were in constant contact with friends and family. Aggravated by the poor conditions and

sluggish economy, and surrounded by foreign ethnicities, the residents able to leave New Denmark did so. It is possible that those who remained were too poor to leave New Denmark. The study of those with the means and the drive to leave, however, cannot end here. This study of New Denmark's outmigration has proved compelling but must be regarded as a first step and a preliminary guide to its full exploration.

Though New Denmark was a small migration player in late 19th century New Brunswick, its creation and growth affected the course of Danish migration to Canada. According to the 1901 Canadian census, there were 2075 Danish-born individuals living in the country. The majority of these, 1612, lived in locations west of Québec. Of the remaining 463, 65 percent were found in New Brunswick and as a testament to New Denmark's importance, almost 12 percent of all Danish-born settlers in Canada in 1901 lived within Victoria County.⁴⁸ While the attraction for most Danish immigrants lay in the west, New Denmark still stood out as the earliest and largest Danish settlement in Canada.

Can we consider New Denmark's establishment a success? When we look at the facts, it was a marginal success at best. Heller did not bring anything close to the number contracted for, and many of the Danes left the settlement soon after arrival or may have used the settlement scheme as a way of getting to North America. Even a large number of the Danish immigrants chose to settle in other New Brunswick locations than Victoria County. While outmigration was an issue right across Canada, in New Denmark the numbers leaving had a larger impact upon the population because immigration was declining. Departures from New Denmark appear to have been driven by tough conditions and genuine unhappiness, especially during its first two decades. As a core group of farm families took root and immigration effectively ceased, outmigration by the 1890s assumed the usual character in established settlements of children departing as they came of age.

⁴⁸ 1901 Census of Canada, Volume 1, Table 14.

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