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Book Review

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Book Review

Junction City to Denmark A Boyhood Journey

Reviewed by GERALD RASMUSSEN

Much has been written about immigrants coming to The United States. Much less has been written about immigrants who returned to their native countries.

Visti Favrholt's book *From Junction City to Denmark: A Boyhood Story* fits the later description, but it is much, much more.

To be sure Visti was only a thirteen year old boy when, in the depths of the depression, his father, a Pastor in the Danish Lutheran Church in Junction City, decided to return to his native Denmark, and greater economic security, in 1933.

Visti was born in Denmark. His father had immigrated to North America when Visti was three years old. Pastor Favrholt accepted a call to serve the Lutheran Church in Junction City in 1930. Before that Visti had lived in Manistee, Michigan, and Vancouver, Canada. That, plus the additional fact that his mother was English, had the

consequence that he grew up speaking only English.

Visti enjoyed his boyhood days in Junction City and in every respect regarded himself as an American. He was an extremely reluctant immigrant to Denmark. He adjusted slowly to the use of the Danish language. He did not like Denmark and wrote many letters to his closest friend back in Junction City, Harold Bruce.

Fortunately Harold saved those letters. When Visti finally achieved his goal of returning to North America, (Vancouver, Canada) in 1952, he contacted Harold Bruce and was given a shoe box containing those letters. They were written with all the vigor and passion of a thirteen year old angry adolescent and became the inspiration for the book which he decided to write, in order to share that unusual experience with others.

Junction City to Denmark: A Boyhood Story is an emotional experience. It is sad and it is funny. One thinks of Charlie Chaplin's definition of humor as playful pain. It is a captivating, delightful book to read, and presents an insightful glimpse of a boyhood life in the 1930s in Junction City as well as the subsequent years in Denmark. The author also provides additional insights of the years during the Second World War when Denmark was occupied by German armed forces. He concludes with a moving description of his long delayed return to his much romanticized Junction City and coming to terms with his disappointment that the Junction City of his youth had either changed, or had not ever quite existed as he remembered it.

Junction City to Denmark: A Boyhood Story is an excellent book, well written, easy to read. Both its perspective and its story line is unique. The boyhood letters, reprinted verbatim as they were written, reveal a boy of remarkable insights, who, since he felt isolated from the Danish society in which he lived, found solace in communicating to his old

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