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## Book Review

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# Book Review

## Danish Emigration to Australia

*Hvidt, Kristian and Helle Otte, Eds., Karen Veien, Trans.*  
*EMIGRANTEN, Arskrift for Dansk Udvandrerhistorisk*  
*Selskab, Nr. 4, 1988*

Reviewed by RUDOLF JENSEN

In her preface, Helle Otte provides an overview of the nine articles in the collection, an explanation of its reason for publication — the Australian bicentenary, — and finally, the qualification that . . . "of course such a broad topic cannot be covered exhaustively in so few pages." This qualification is important because, compared to the three succeeding publications in this series, **Danish Emigration to Australia**, is the least scholarly and the most variable in the quality of its articles. The authors in this work range from a journalist and a consul general to doctors of philosophy. Yet, the most significant indication of its inconsistent quality is the fact that only three articles provide citations, and only two provide endnotes.

The first article is a collection of letters describing the voyage from Bremerhaven to Sydney written by Ingeborg Stuckenberg, wife of the Danish author, Viggo Stuckenberg. Interestingly, she deserted her husband in 1903, and departed to Australia with a neighboring gardener, Hans Dines Hansen. Her letters describe life among the different classes on board ship, the boredom of all passengers, and the

increasing resentment felt by all classes toward the captain and crew. Following these letters is an excellent explanation of Stuckenberg's life, as well as a thorough history of Danish emigration in general and of Danish emigration to Australia in particular. John Kousgaard focuses on pull factors drawing Danes to Australia, e.g., the gold rush of 1851, free or assisted passage, and the dream of economic opportunity. Copenhagen police records indicated that ca. 6,000 Danes emigrated between 1868 and 1890. The second peak of Danish emigration followed the end of World War II, when Australia experienced a severe labor shortage. Surprisingly, ca. 70% of Danish immigrants in Australia had returned to Denmark during the 1920s.

Birgit Larsen's brief, yet fascinating article consists of three letters written by Niels Peter Schourup, a photographer from Mors. These letters primarily describe his 101 day voyage on a British sailing ship in 1862. Six photos of Australian bush people are also included; Schourup had wanted to return to the old country, but died in poverty at the age of 49 in New Zealand.

Erik Helmer Pedersen and Kirsten Lotze's, "Denmark's Picture of Australia: 1800-1870", is an excellent and well-documented history of information and misinformation on Australia provided to three classes of Danes: the youth of middle and lower upper class, social reformers, and school textbook authors.

Overall, this collection of nine articles will presumably fulfill Felle Otte's, "...hope that this initial endeavor will inspire others to continue to explore the history of Danish-Australian migration." One can anticipate that Australian immigrant researchers will follow up the pioneering work of Danish emigration historians, which is the theme of the Australian, Mark Garner's preliminary report, contained in this collection, "An Ethnic History of Danes in Victoria."