




1987

Editorial Statement

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/thebridge>

 Part of the [European History Commons](#), [European Languages and Societies Commons](#), and the [Regional Sociology Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

(1987) "Editorial Statement," *The Bridge*: Vol. 10 : No. 2 , Article 5.

Available at: <https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/thebridge/vol10/iss2/5>

This Front Matter is brought to you for free and open access by BYU ScholarsArchive. It has been accepted for inclusion in The Bridge by an authorized editor of BYU ScholarsArchive. For more information, please contact scholarsarchive@byu.edu, ellen_amatangelo@byu.edu.

Editorial Statement

The Board of Directors of the Danish American Heritage Society deems it appropriate that we conclude publication of the tenth volume of **The Bridge** by paying tribute to Enok Mortensen. Thorvald Hansen recently wrote, "as long as there is an appreciation of the Danish heritage in America the name of Enok Mortensen will be in the forefront."

Following is an adaptation of a statement by Arnold N. Bodtger from the Danish American Heritage Society Newsletter #16 of June, 1985.

Enok Mortensen was clearly one of the most eminent Danish Americans of our time, though he was not as well known as he deserved. During most of his adult life he was a pastor in the Danish Lutheran Church in the United States. In addition, Enok Mortensen was a writer, teacher, historian and community leader.

The Danish American Heritage Society is deeply indebted to Enok Mortensen. He was one of the original sponsors of the Society, and consistently provided encouragement and counsel as its goals and objectives were being formulated. The Society was afforded the privilege of publishing two of his recent books, **Schools for Life — A Danish American Experiment in Adult Education**, and **A Danish Boyhood**, adding prestige to the fledgling organization. As the Society moved ahead it became apparent, and continues to be confirmed, that Kristian Hvidt, author of **Danes Go West** (1976), was right in referring to Enok Mortensen "as the greatest contemporary expert in Danish American history."

Researchers and students of Danish immigrant history and life will benefit immeasurably from the labors of Enok Mortensen. The Danish Immigrant Archives at Grand View College in Des Moines, Iowa, would not have existed were it not for the devotion and diligence of Enok Mortensen. Two of his works are landmarks, **Danish American Life and Letters** and **The Danish Lutheran Church in America**.

Enok Mortensen was also a creative writer. His novels and many short stories deal with the immigrant, and through them runs the thread of the immigrant's struggles with identity in a new land. Although mostly he wrote in Danish, he was truly an American in spirit and outlook.

Enok Mortensen was known in Denmark, where he spent several of his later years as a Fulbright lecturer, folk high school lecturer, and pastor.

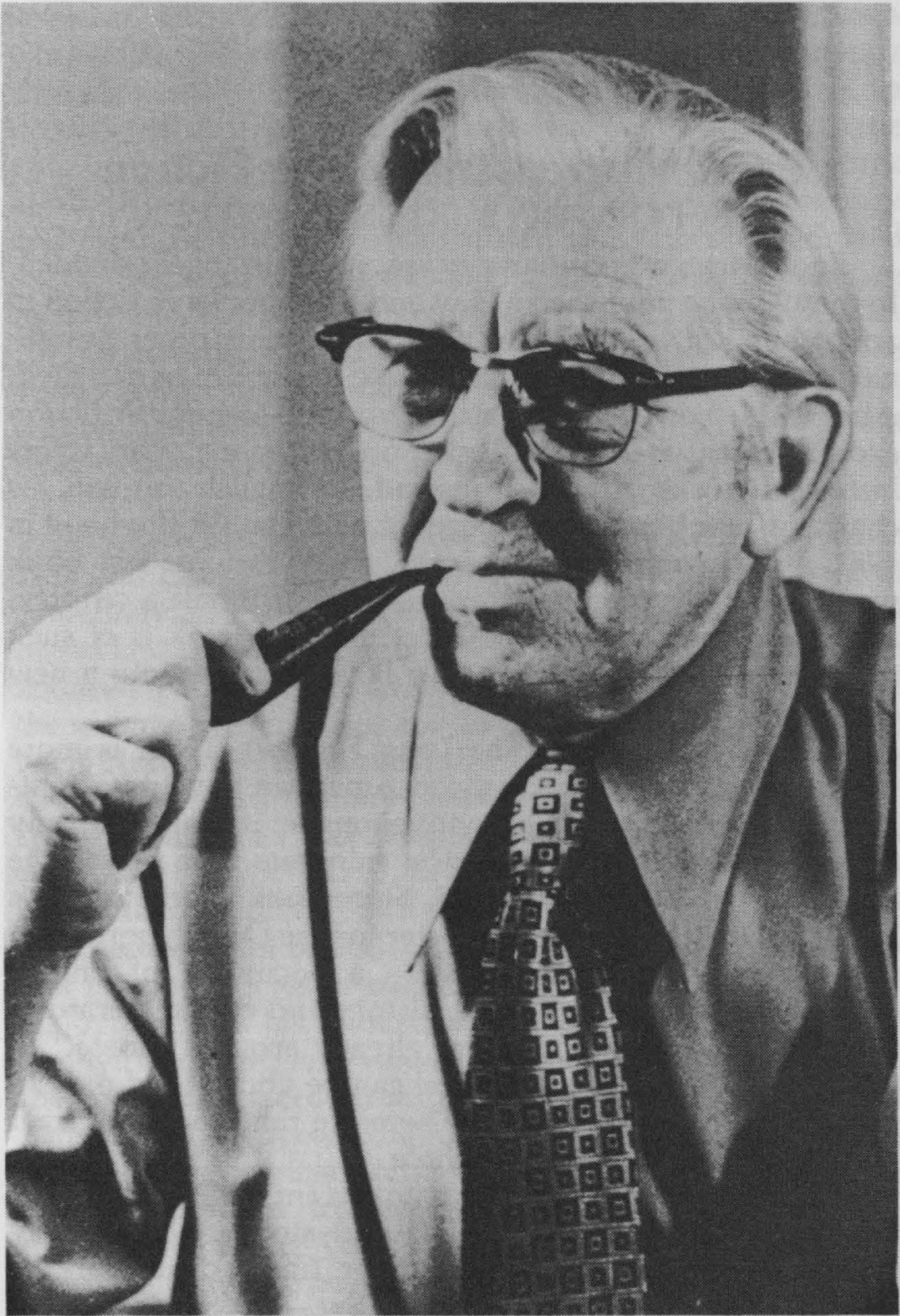
It would be a grave neglect to overlook a major strength of Enok Mortensen which found expression in his ability and success as a community leader. He was truly a community pastor, and his associations with his parishioners and others in the community were meaningful and stimulating. A glowing example of Enok Mortensen's contribution, which he shared with his wife Nanna, that has had a far reaching and long lasting effect, was the restoration and renewal of the Danebod Folk High School in Tyler, Minnesota. This is a story that will be told many times. The annual Recreation Camps and Fall Folk Meetings in the small town of Tyler, Minnesota, have been the source of rich experience for many, and will be noted as memories of Enok Mortensen are recalled.

Let me conclude by sharing a few observations about Enok Mortensen with those who knew him, and which others might appreciate. Enok Mortensen was a many faceted person, so his associations and friendships had a broad range. He was energetic, perceptive and understanding. He was aware of mankind's foibles and displayed a healthy skepticism as to the perfectibility of mankind. This, coupled with a sly and warm sense of humor, made him effective and made association with him most pleasant.

Enok Mortensen was artistic in temperament and deft with his hands. His beautiful carvings are valued possessions. He enjoyed baseball games. He liked to sing, and fortunate were those who have been aroused with Enok's cheery morning song.

The articles and material presented provide insights into various aspects of Enok Mortensen's life and work. We extend our appreciation to the contributors.

Executive Board



Enok Mortensen
Writer — Preacher — Teacher