

The Granly News

A Publication of the Danish Historical Foundation, Inc., Hurley, Mississippi



Granly History: Brinkman story describes daily life in colony

Editor's Note: The passage below is from Chapter XI of Drommen om Amerika: The Dream of America. A Chronicle of the Lives of Nielsine Margrethe Johansen and Jens Clausen Brinkman. The chapter describes daily life at Granly in those early years and features numerous letters from Sine Brinkman. Reprinted with permission of author Carol Stacy Brinkman.

Mississippi 1934-1938

Enough lumber was salvaged from the sawmill town [Piave, Greene Co, MS] to build a new house, barn, and garage for each of the two Brinkman families as well as the new grocery store. Others in the community used the remaining lumber. During the entire construction process, Jens Brinkman, and Sine, as well as Carl's family of six, boarded with Hans Nygaard.

[Else's note: Hans was renting the old David Galloway farm in Harleston, next to the new location of the general store and Brinkman homes being built. Herdis, Allen & Harvey came from Minneapolis, MN to visit her sister Astrid, and the Brinkman family in June 1935. Allen and Harvey Hedegaard in the summer of 1935 worked in Piave taking apart the many buildings, labeling the pieces and claiming they worked long, hard hours.]

Astrid and Sine stayed busy with the four children

cooking and cleaning. There is a story of the day that Sine washed all the white clothes and hung them on the line. The line broke, and she had to wash the clothes again, using a scrub board, no less, and then hang the laundry again. Hans repaired the clothesline, but sat holding up the line, so the clothes wouldn't drag the ground, until they dried. The finer points of this incident are surely exaggerated, but it serves to illustrate the special friendship between Hans and the Brinkmans. In just a few short years, that friend would become family.

In a book titled *Breaking Clean*, the author Judy Blunt describes life on the Montana prairie from her vantage-point of third-generation homesteader. She says, "Our families had homesteaded, broken ground and survived into the third generation, and we shared a set of beliefs so basic that they were seldom spoken aloud. I remember them as commonsense adages: Hard work is the measure

of a man. A barn will build a house, but a house won't build a barn ..." Jens and Sine's lives were guided by these same beliefs. Whether these principles derived from the Danish heritage or from their experience as Montana homesteaders is hard to say, but it was "a barn will

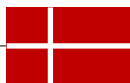
build a house, but a house won't build a barn" that dictated the families' first efforts in Mississippi.

Jeanne Brinkman put it this way, "The store was built first because it was essential in earning a living." Jens

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Brinkman Grocery, Established 1934, Harleston, Mississippi. Directly behind the grocery store is Carl and Astrid Brinkman's house. Rigmor and Al Schmitz lived just next door.



Granly Officials

PRESIDENT

Lee Sheperd
315 West Orange Ave.
Foley, Alabama, 36535
leeshepherd379@yahoo.com
Grandson of Ejner & Marie Mortensen
Son of Lee & Rita Mortensen Shepherd

TREASURER

Kevin Martin
1127 Del Norte Circle
Pascagoula, MS 39581
kscooterm@hotmail.com
228-623-1861
Grandson of Hans & Herdis Nygaard
Son of Else Nygaard Martin

VICE PRESIDENT

Keith Mitchell
4496 Sardis Church Rd
Buford, GA 30519-410
770-271-2680
Son-in-law of Davis Mortensen, the
Son of Ejner & Marie

SECRETARY

Lynda Roberts Wood
24139 Veranda Circle
Elberta, AL 36530
lyndarwood@yahoo.com
Granddaughter of Carl & Astrid Brinkman
Daughter of Bob and Margaret Brinkman Roberts

Future Events

2023 Annual Meeting
October 14, 2023 at 10am

2023 Annual Workday
October 13, 2023

Granly Christmas
December 26, 2023 at 6pm

Visit Our Facebook Page at:

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Share your Family Photos and Memories with us to be posted on our Granly Facebook Page and in the Newsletter.

Send to Else Martin,
elsejensinemartin@gmail.com



Larry Martin, Editor
1012 Breeden Place, Bay St. Louis, MS 39520
228-343-2941— eldm2x@gmail.com

We want to hear from you!

Please send your family photos, current news and your comments and suggestions to the editor.

We want to hear from all Granly descendants – trips to Denmark, Reunions, Holiday traditions, recipes, etc.

Newsletter Publishing Dates & Deadlines:

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Mississippi 1934-1938 cont.

and Sine's house was built next. On Thanksgiving Day, 29 November 1934, Sine did her laundry early that morning and then served her first Thanksgiving dinner in her new house.

Our house was built after Bedstafar and Bedstamor's house. I remember that Lloyd and I spent a lot of time with my grandparents and Elna. I can remember sharing a room with Elna. She was my Godmother, and was fun and interesting, and she read to me each night.

I can still picture Bestamor in her kitchen wearing a long dress and a long apron and always with her hair up. She seemed quite tall to me. She was a quiet, sweet, gentle lady. Just as in Montana, Bedstemor's kitchen always smelled of good things cooking. She baked and canned a large assortment of food. She did not have a refrigerator, so her pantry cooler was (as ours was at home) a cabinet with screen wire shelves top to bottom set over a hole in the floor. This allowed the cool air from beneath the house to flow up to somewhat cool the food. The ground beneath the house was actually visible under the cabinet. My grandparents also had a cellar with shelves carved out of the soil. The only wood used in the construction of it was the door and steps heading down to the cellar. I would not go down in the cellar alone because I thought surely there were snakes in there! The cellar was not very practical in Mississippi where there was so much more rain than in Montana. I thought Bedstamor's dining room was beautiful. Years later I rescued her round oak dining table where it had been discarded in a barn. I refinished it, and it has accompanied me where I have lived.

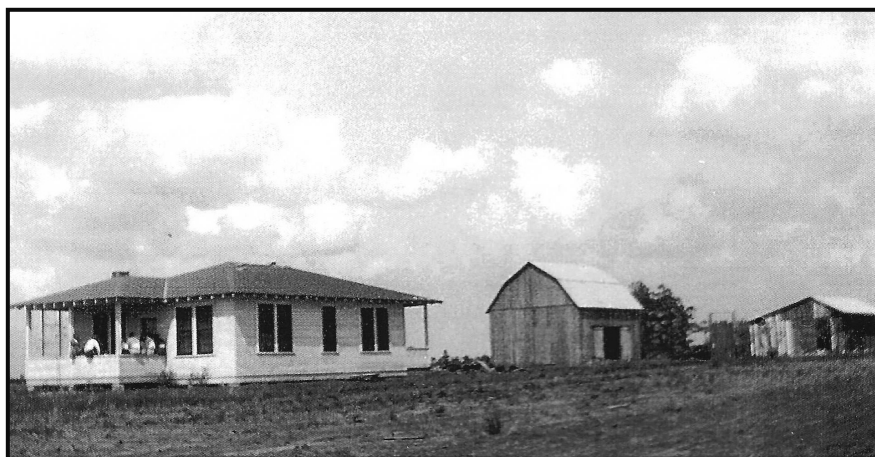
— Jeanne Brinkman

That first Thanksgiving for Jens and Sine in their new home was a special day. In California it was a special day for Rigmor also – on that day she married Aloysius Nicholas Schmitz.

Settled In

Carl soon had Brinkman Grocery open for business. With limited start-up capital for inventory, Carl's ingenuity served him well as when he purchased a disproportionate amount of toilet tissue because it was cheap and would fill a lot of space on the store shelves. Elna worked in the store with Carl and often handled it alone while Carl made the frequent and regular trips to Mobile, Alabama, to buy inventory. It was a make-do time for most people. Local families brought butter and eggs, and Carl would sell them in the store or peddle them along the way to Mobile. Many men of the community hunted to provide meat for their families. What they did not eat, they took to Carl to exchange for needed staples.

Jens and Sine found they had to adapt many of their farming practices to the southern climate and soil. [Else: This is where Aunt Astrid told me Hans Nygaard, a southern farmer, was a really big help. He had a few cows, pigs, and chickens and had a big garden.] Sine had white leghorn chickens and always had eggs to sell. Jens had a few cattle and a small field



Nielsine and Jens Brinkman's home in Granly Colony, Mississippi was built from reclaimed lumber and was completed late in 1934. While waiting for their house to be built, Jens and Sine lived with Hans Nygaard. Granly lies just two miles south of Harleston where the Brinkman and Schmitz families lived, and visits from børnebørn (grandchildren) were frequent and made for many good memories.

to farm. He learned from the long-time residents about which fertilizer, seeds, and methods should be used. It was a reciprocal arrangement, however. The locals learned from the Danes of Granly also as shown in this excerpt from a brief history of Granly, written for the Granly Danish American History Foundation by John Brian Martin, grandson of Hans and Herdis Nygaard:

The colonists, most of whom came from the Midwest, bought, and farmed cutover timber land with mixed success. The Granly colony quickly established the two hallmarks of a Danish community in America, a farming cooperative and a Lutheran congregation featuring an active Ladies Aid Society ... Granly farmers had dairy cows and laying hens and raised crops from peas to potatoes to

Continued on page 4 ...



Mississippi 1934-1938 cont.

soybeans. Axel Buck raised several acres of gladiolas that he shipped to Chicago for sale. They sold milk in Mobile, although they first had to convince Jackson County to provide for milk inspection. They also initiated the first enforcement of the stock laws in Jackson County to make local residents to keep their stock out of the Danes' fields. After a few years, the Danes were accepted fully into the community and became active in the schools and other local matters.

Strangely, there were no letters from 1935 among the many that Chris Brinkman had saved. However, Holger has one letter that his mother Margrethe had kept all her life. The letter was written in August of 1935 – almost one year since the move from Montana to Mississippi. It is addressed to Jens Pedersen, husband of Margrethe and Holger's father. After Christen Johansen's death, Jens Pedersen had handled matters of the estate. Each of Christen's five daughters was to receive a cash inheritance, and in Sine's case the arrangement for a cash transfer was a bit complicated. Sine's letter to Jens was to confirm receipt of the money. Fortunately, her letter provides much more information. This may be the only letter from 1935, but it is one that provides a vivid description of Sine's life. It also tells of a particularly troubling occurrence in her life.

Tisrdag, 13 August 1935, Harleston, Mississippi

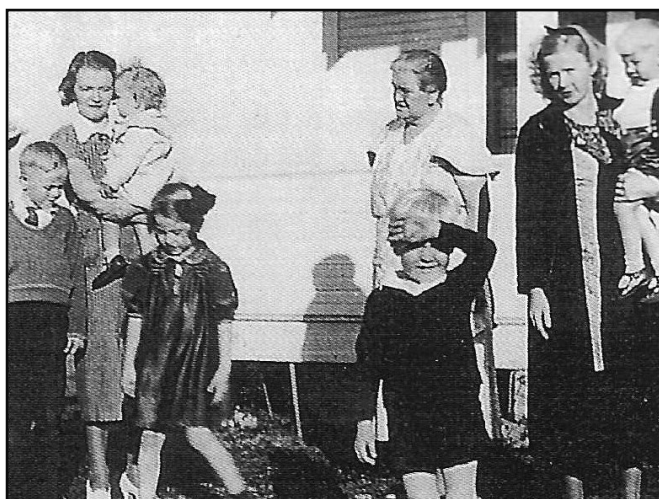
Dear Brother-in-law and all!

I think you will be surprised when you get a letter from me, but I have had a check from Varde Bank [in Denmark], and they asked me to tell Mr. Pedersen of Hundstoft that I received the letter. I took the check to the bank in Lucedale. It was not me but Jens who took it, but the money is there in my account. I forgot to tell you the amount was \$438.81 (2000 kroner.) What I am go-

ing to buy I am not sure. I just can't make a decision about what kind of furniture it's going to be. I am not going to spend all of it at once. I like to have some in the bank to use if there should be something later I would like to have.

More than four hundred dollars was a great deal of money to many people during the 1930s. To put this in perspective, the country was still in an economic depression, and in the worst years of the depression, Elna was paid \$65 a month as a teacher. Sine's inheritance would have been more than six months salary to Elna.

I have been alone all day. Jens is with Carl in Mobile. He went because he wants to buy some fencing for around the house and



Bedstemor is surrounded by her grandchildren, daughter Rigmor (left) holding Patty, and daughter-in-law Astrid holding Glenn. Lloyd, Jeanne, and Roy are in front.

garden. Elna works in the shop three or four days a week when Carl is away to buy goods or if there is anything else he wants to do. At the moment, Astrid's sister and two boys are visiting. [This is Herdis Laursen Hedegaard and her sons Allen and Harvey from Minneapolis.] They came with two families from here. They [the two families from Granly] had taken Carl's truck in order to go to Askov, Minnesota to visit their parents. They [Herdis and sons] will go back in September when school starts. They will go back by train. There is no other way to go.

[Note from Else Martin:

The two Granly families were the Mortensens (Mort Mortensen, Ejner, Marie and baby Davis) and Alhofs (Einar and Anna).]

We have rain every day and have had it for a long time – so I think. But if it stops for a week it is dry, and then they say we need rain. But it is time to start making hay and harvest the beans which we grow here and for that it has to be dry weather. We are also going to plant potatoes again soon. Those we planted this spring we dug up in May, but they don't keep well and bring only a penny a pound then. That is not good business, and it is that way with some other products. Hens have been the best until now. They think of buying cows, but it takes more to get started. It's expensive and money there is not. It is not wealthy people who start new colonies. We need better cows than those we have down here. They are small here. They look like big calves, and they don't give much milk.



It is very warm and you sweat terribly here, but I don't think it is depressing. It has been warm lately all over. That is not right because Christian wrote last that he has been freezing in California. Marie and Rigmor both write about the heat. Marie visited Rigmor a few days. Rigmor has a little girl. Clara and Dagny are both married now, but I'm sure you know that.

In California, Marie Johansen Jessen and her daughters lived close enough that they could see Chris and Rigmor occasionally. Sine also tells in this letter of the birth of Rigmor's first child, Sine's fifth grandchild. Patricia Louise Schmitz was born on 4 July 1935 in Los Angeles, California.

In Montana they have had rain this summer, but they have also had a dry spell. Some crops have been hurt in places where the rain came too late. Grasshoppers and rust are in the crops, so the harvest won't be very big this year. I think they have started with harvesters and combines. They wrote from Dagmar that it is very dry in places. Others drive by here with fat seed for the factory (if you can call it a factory – it is not nice in the landscape) at Hurley where they make tar, turpentine, and I don't know what else – six different things. When you drive to town, you can see how they get the turpentine from the big trees. The bark is cut and a tin can is placed where it can run down in it. I expect you have seen pictures of this.

I am sitting on the porch writing and listening to the neighbor's children and watching the cars go by. Elna went with Carl's yesterday. They went to Gulfport and took Astrid's sister and the boys to see the sea. They had dinner here when they came back. Said they would be here at 6:00 but were here at 4:30. I had just put the hen on the stove.

There was a little entertainment last night where all the Danes were gathered. They played out on the farm. They put benches on the ground in front of the porch and used the porch for a stage. That was a little fun. They danced afterwards inside.

What I traveled to Chicago for was because I had a tumor in the left breast. It had been there for more than three years. I was never hit there, at least not that I can remember, and it wasn't from the corset stays. But it was there, and it was growing. I saw three doctors there, and they said it had to be removed at once. I have had

a hole in my right leg for the past two winters. The first time I just scraped the skin, and it wouldn't heal. The next year it was the same, but that time it just appeared. I had to use elastic stockings most of the time. It is veins that cause it to take a long time to heal. The doctors there also asked about that (they do ask about everything, even when you were a child), and they found two brown spots on that foot. One on top and one on the side of the heel. I have had them for as long as I can remember, but the one on the heel was growing. They cut them out when they took the tumor, and the one from the heel they examined for a while to see if it was one of those that can cause tumors to grow somewhere else on your body. It was not and it had no connection to the one in my breast. It was not cancer. Elna doesn't know what they called it. It was black and was

the kind that grows. It doesn't seem that the breast concerned them – it was the sore on the heel that wouldn't get better. I was not ill afterwards, but I threw up a lot the first day, but I usually do.

We had a letter from Marie Saturday, and she was happy that Rigmor moved next door. So now she won't be so lonely. Harriet also lives nearby. It will soon be dark. We haven't got the long evenings where you can see for a long time after the sun is gone. Here it is dark at once.

There seems to be a lot of priests buried at Lunde Kirkegaard. A lot of people stay at the sea. All old people should do so, at least for a week. Remember me to Bedstemor [Jens Pedersen's mother]. I can understand that she wishes her two daughters would stay more at home and not at the sea. Why don't Alma and Sigrid go on a vacation to the US in the summer? Remember me to Tarp [Adamine and family] and Ovtrup [Henriette and family] and of course also a lot of love to the two of you and thanks for what you did [handling her inheritance]. Fra os alle, søster Sine

Remember me to Bedstemor [Jens Pedersen's mother]. I can understand that she wishes her two daughters would stay more at home and not at the sea. Why don't Alma and Sigrid go on a vacation to the US in the summer? Remember me to Tarp [Adamine and family] and Ovtrup [Henriette and family] and of course also a lot of love to the two of you and thanks for what you did [handling her inheritance]. Fra os alle, søster Sine

P.S. Today is Friday, and I haven't mailed this yet. The postman will not pass by here, but Elna is going to the shop, and he will pick it up there. Write again soon. I long to hear from you. I thought of Adamine on her birthday, and I thought perhaps you biked down there. I think you don't see one another much even though you live near to one another. I feel it. That's what happened to Marie and me in Montana and now we are far apart.

Continued on page 6 ...



Mississippi 1934-1938 cont.

Today's readers of this letter surely would be concerned about Sine's recounting of her medical problems, and Jens and Sine themselves believed the situation was serious enough to warrant a thousand-mile trip to Chicago to see a specialist. Back home again and writing to her sister Margrethe, Sine relates in a matter of fact way the visit to the Chicago hospital, and furthermore, she says that it is not cancer. It possibly might be that the doctors did not find cancer when the tumor in her breast was removed. The attention, however, that the doctors focused on her foot, and the fact that the injury to her foot had taken months to heal, could suggest a diagnosis of melanoma, a form of cancer that despite even the medical advances of today has one of the highest mortality rates. Or, perhaps, the breast cancer had spread. If, as Sine says, it wasn't cancer and that Elna didn't know the word for the diagnosis, it might be that none of Sine's immediate family could acknowledge, or reveal to Sine, the true diagnosis. Then again, there is a possibility that the doctors completely misdiagnosed the illness.

Sine mentions Astrid's sister and two sons who are visiting from Minneapolis, but she does not tell about Carl and Astrid's secret matchmaking efforts. They believed Hans Nygaard, the bachelor friend with whom the family had stayed when they first arrived, needed a wife, and Herdis needed a husband. Else Nygaard Martin tells how her parents met:

My mother Herdis is twelve years older than her baby sister Astrid. Her first husband died in 1924. She was a single mother with two sons, Allen and Harvey, and was working two jobs in Minneapolis. Astrid and Carl had been trying to get her, Allen, and Harvey to come down [to Mississippi] for a visit. I guess from what Allen and Harvey have told me, Astrid had made up her mind that Hans Nygaard needed Herdis to make him happy and keep him out of trouble. He was living in Harleston, struggling with a rented farm and trying to farm his sister's 40 acres. Many of the

new Granly families lived with him for a few weeks or months until they got their homes built. My dad had never married and was a fun-loving, dancing, fiddling, moonshine-making farmer – about as rough as they come, I gather.

Hans Nygaard and Herdis Laursen Hedegaard were married in September 1935. This is how Hans, fellow Dane and close friend of the Brinkmans, became a beloved member of the family.

It was 1936, and Elna was still in Mississippi, working for Carl and living with Jens and Sine. Harvey Andersen, the young man from Dagmar who had visited Granly in 1933, had gone on to California where he lived and worked near Chris and Rigmor. Elna and Harvey had known one another as children living on the plains of far northeast Montana. They had dated while in high school, and afterwards the romance continued across the miles that separated them. Harvey returned to Granly, and on 12 June 1936, Elna and Harvey were married in the home of Granly's Pastor Knudsen.

It was Elna and Harvey's plan to return to Montana to farm the Andersen home place. After all, Harvey had tried Mississippi and California and knew that hard times were everywhere. In Montana, there was land, and they knew how to work it. Besides, the drought and depression couldn't last forever. Not long after the wedding, Harvey left for Montana. He found work at Olsen's Garage in Plentywood, and Elna planned to join him as soon as possible. As it happened, the newlyweds' optimism was premature. 1937 was a particularly bad year for farmers in Montana. In the Andersen family biography for *Sheriden Daybreak*, Elna wrote, "Harvey seeded the grain early that year, 1937; however, nothing grew, not even a thistle. That fall we went to Clifford's [Harvey's brother] in Hayward [California] and later rented a house in Martinez."

In Mississippi, in the summer of 1936 and not long after Elna's wedding, Sine wrote both Chris and Rigmor in California asking them to come for a visit. It had been more than two years since she had seen either of them,



and moreover, there was a new son-in-law and granddaughter she was anxious to meet. Apparently, she was persuasive – as only a mother can be in such matters.

It proved to be a fortuitous visit in several ways. First, Carl convinced Al and Rigmor to stay on Mississippi. Al took Elna's place in the store so she could then join Harvey in Montana. Al Schmitz was an easy-going, genial man who promptly and enthusiastically became one of the family. The Schmitz family moved into a three-room house next door to the Carl Brinkman family, and Chris returned to California. In very short time, however, tragedy found the Schmitz family in their new home. On 18 October, Rigmor gave birth to twins Peter and Paul who died that same day. The Brinkman families were there to comfort Rigmor and Al in their grief.

Chris returned to California, and Sine's next letter to him is full of the every-day details of life.

*Sondag, 29 November 1936,
Harleston, Mississippi*

Kare Christian!

Thank you for your letter that we received the first of this week. I would have written but didn't get it done yesterday, and for what reason, I don't know. I guess it was laziness because there is no reason that I couldn't have written you Friday afternoon or evening. Heard from Elna last night, and I know she finally got around to writing you. Carl took Ida Larsen home and came with Elna's letter and a piece of meat from an animal they shot yesterday. This is the first time Carl has been in on that this fall. He hasn't had time on the previous occasions they asked him to join them for hunting. It was not he who shot it, but they all share the meat.

We were at Carl's for dinner Thanksgiving Day. Hans' [family], Al and Rigmor, and us – we all brought something. Rigmor helped Astrid that morning so Astrid shouldn't have too much extra work. Monday both Rigmor and Herdis were sick in bed. Herdis was there for three days. They had some flu, and Herdis was tormented with malaria ... I was up to help her [Astrid] wash on Wednesday ... Rigmor was very well and did her part. Jeanne was in bed that day. The three youngest played outside.

Patty came by herself to play with Roy and Glenn. When they are out playing and she gets sad, she goes home by herself. They drove her in the wagon for way too long that day.

That evening was the whole Harleston Club here for a party. It has to be where there's the most space when all the kids are here ... It looked like everyone had a good time. Next day came Mrs. Mathiasen to help me clean. I don't remember if I wrote this to you, but the forsamlingshuset (community meeting house) had the grand opening. We were not there so we all read what it said in the Pioneer [the Danish newspaper]. Mrs. Einar Mortensen had told Carl that Holger Nielsen said that Carl probably had put his store in the right place next to the forsamlingshus ...



"They drove her in the wagon for way too long," wrote Sine in November 1936. Glenn is pushing, Patty is riding, and Roy is grinning.

Today is cloudy so perhaps it will rain. It has been very dry this fall as well as the summer – much less rain than usual. Carl had to dig the well by the store a lot deeper so that more water will get in there, but the one by the house is dry. They can't really dig the whole thing up so they have to wait and hope that more rain will go in there. You are asking about potatoes. It was too dry for them but some are good, for example like Chris Sørensen's. Even if it is sweet potatoes, they suffer from this drought so we won't have that many. Papa thought he did good with his rows. He had picked his

velvet beans and is just about to fix up the chicken house, but we haven't got the young ones in there yet. It is a lot of work to find the eggs. We get about four a day from young ones. The old ones are still bad. The sweet potatoes are about 75 cents per 100 pounds. The others 3 cents per pound for number ones ... The sweet ones taste pretty good. Astrid, Rigmor and the kids like them very much anyway they are prepared. They can eat them cold. That is what they say the kids take to school for their lunch, one sweet potato, one piece of meat, and rolls. They [Southerners] bake some good cakes and pies. You can see that when there is a fair, but the bread doesn't look very good. It was a lot better this year though than last year ...

Carl came after us last night probably because he thought we had been lonely last Sunday and they had been here only a short time ... Last Sunday they came right in time to gather eggs. That is the children's greatest joy here.

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Mississippi 1934-1938 cont.

Thinking that it is cold in Montana. Elna didn't say about sandstorms, but I know it happened in North Dakota, Nebraska and several other places. They still haven't decided whether to stay there the winter or see if the work is going to end at Gilbert's. Two weeks ago the lady who owns the field between the store and Hans' was here. She had sold the plots, and they were going to build a big garage and more. They have not been here again. But perhaps they will be back some day and start building.

Kærlig Hilsen fra os alle ved din Moder

The forsamlingshus noted in Sine's letter is the community house that was traditionally as essential part of a Danish community. A retired Danish Lutheran pastor, Rev. Knud Knudsen, bought 20 acres in 1931 and donated five acres to the colony as a site for a *forsamlingshuset* to be used as both church and community center. Sine doesn't give a reason for not attending the opening celebration, but as Rigmor remembers it, her parents were in the minority who favored building a church first and a *forsamlingshus* later.

*Fredag aften, 18 December 1936,
Harleston, Mississippi*

Kære Christian!

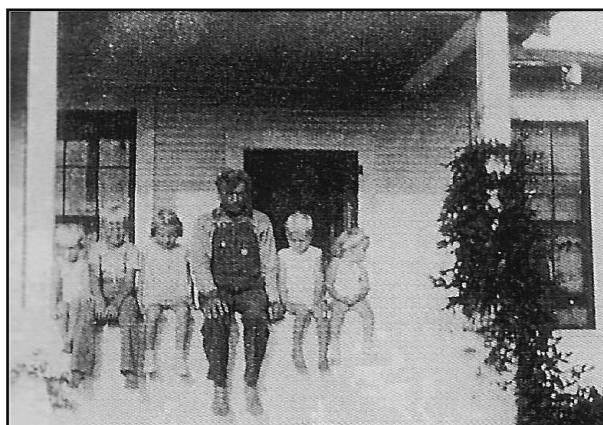
First I would like to wish you a happy, merry Christmas. I wish you, Elna, and Harvey had come home for Christmas, but since none of you do, I hope you are having a good one. I wonder if you are going to LA this Christmas Eve. I'm thinking you might since you have three days. There's just one Saturday between Christmas day and Sunday. We're going to Carl's Christmas Eve and they are coming here Christmas Day. Sunday we're going to the Harleston Club and to see the Christmas tree at Hans'. His house is soon fixed up inside. This year it's the living room. He has worked on it for a long time, but now it's done and there is none of the old stuff left ... We got the first interest payment when he got his bonus. It is a good income that Herdis is getting every month so they are doing better than most people ... Our neighbor Axel P is driving to Pascagoula every day to work at the P.O. We do not see our neighbors too much. We see them at a distance.

Outzens were here last Sunday and Lykkes in the evening ...

Last Thursday a week ago now, Al drove Papa and Mathiesen to Meridian to buy a mule and a cow. Papa thinks he got a good little mule for \$65. He worked with it for two days and it looks like it can handle a lot better than the big one. The big one gets warm right away. Last Sunday morning Papa went down to the stable and the best cow was dead. He couldn't see anything so he cut it open but couldn't see anything inside. It didn't give much milk, but it was so rich. Now he's milking the old one in the morning. You know the calf is still with it and there's not even enough for cream for the coffee. The two young heifers are expecting their first ones, but he thinks they are going to be hard to milk.

Papa went to Carl's. We ate at five so I could have a long evening to write Christmas cards. I've got letters sent off to Denmark and several others ... I should have been there [Carl's] as well because today is Jeanne's birthday. She is six years old. Lloyd

is a lot more interested in reading this year and is also getting better at it. Now I'm looking forward to seeing them this Christmas. We were at a sewing meeting a Herdis' yesterday, and we decorated the Christmas tree and did a lot of cutting out decorations. Astrid and Rigmor sent one package to you. I hope you get it in time for Christmas so you can taste our cookies. They will also send something to Elna and the Rasmussens. Kærlig Hilsen, Fader and Moder



Barefooted bedstefar sits with his barefooted grandsons. At left are Glenn and Lloyd. Roy is to the right of Jens. The dainty ladies with shoes are Jeanne and Patty.

For the Brinkman family and their extended families, Christmas was a special time.

When the grandchildren were young a "Danish Christmas" was celebrated. There was always "The Christmas Tree" for the community in someone's home, or in the community house after it was built. Then there was Christmas at home. Through the years, these grandchildren of Jens and Sine have taught bits of their Danish Christmas heritage to their own children. Finding the almond in the *ris a la mande* (rice pudding) to win the prize is just one of those traditions and having *æblekage* (literally apple cake, but actually a layered dessert of apples and whipped cream) at Christmas dinner is another.

Oh, how we did have fun at Christmas. Our family time always included Rigmor and Herdis and their families. We celebrated

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Glædelig Jul! Granly Christmas 2022



Granly community gathers for traditional Danish Christmas



Davis Mortensen and granddaughter Katherine Mitchell read story of Christmas



David and Ban Ban Shepherd singing Christmas carols



Descendants of Andrew and Johanna Outzen.
L to R: Don Outzen, Dan and Lisa Outzen Godwin,
Bob and Helen Outzen, Nick Outzen, son of Bob
and Helen, and Aaron Godwin, son of Dan and Lisa.



♪ Nu har vi Jul igen, ♪
og nu har vi Jul igen ...





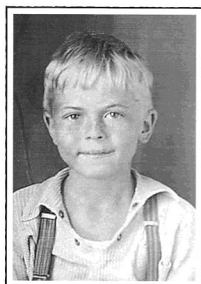
Mississippi 1934-1938 cont.

in typical Danish fashion, making all sorts of decorations, baking and stringing Pebernødder [small, rich butter pastry squares that resemble nuts] on our tree. Singing "Nu har vi Jul igen" (Now we have Christmas Again), we danced around the tree which was always in the center of the room. The real candles on the Christmas tree were lit, and the house smelled wonderful. Our big celebration was on Christmas Eve. Everything in the house had to be clean — top to bottom. The period between Christmas and the New Year was special as we enjoyed being together, visiting others, and eating the multitude of goodies.

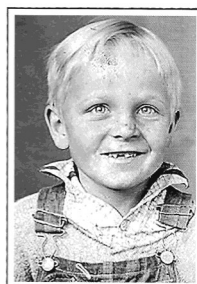
— Jeannne Brinkman

A Year in Letters — 1937

Ten letters written by Sine provide a full picture of life throughout the entire year of 1937. Moreover, these letters not only bear witness to everyday life, but they offer a vivid picture of this matriarch striving to keep the family close despite the divergent paths each had chosen. Her themes hardly vary — weather, harvest, and prices; cows and chicks; friends, children, and grandchildren. Many of her letters have a wistful tone as she questions Chris about his work, his plans, and his life. She has Rigmor and Carl close by; Elna is with Harvey, safe in the familiar surroundings of Montana; and so Chris is the focus of her concern. There is a wry humor lurking, subtle hints of motherly advice, and a tinge of nostalgia as well.



In 1937, Sine closed a letter with "Kærlig Hilsen, Fader and Moder og de to Dreng leger på Landet for Tiden." The two boys playing in the country in those days were Lloyd, left and Roy.



year.

Tuesday it was hot. We got 300 chickens Tuesday. It was difficult to keep the temperature ... Thursday it was too warm and then again too cool. Hope they are going to make it ... Lykke got 300 hens from Indiana and paid 20 cents a piece. That's probably the best, but they are always getting the most expensive ones. They also spend a lot of time on them. They were here last night. They like to play Whist, and he is a good player, but he has me for a partner, and I can't remember the cards. I've only played it three times. I want to play Rummy, but they don't want to. So they have to put up with me. Still they haven't moved yet. He was complaining yesterday that it was raining through their roof. They didn't talk about that last night. They only had chicken problems.

There are other stories to tell. Maybe you heard about O. Mortensen. That he suddenly died. He was an old man, but he was well. A man who did his job every day; a hard worker he was ... He was so lively and energetic the last days. He talked more than ever. Saturday night he was so happy and he wanted to play cards.

He talked and laughed and he danced a couple of times, but he was sitting there for awhile and then all of a sudden he fell and it was over ... They are going to miss him ... He was buried here Monday ... Everybody was there and now we have seen the forsamlingshuset from the inside. Al and Chris S. and Hans and Papa took shifts sitting there Sunday night two at a time.

We are going to an Easter party with Borgensens tomorrow. We are going to bring food and eat at noon under the trees. We are going to have nice weather. The sun is shining now. Dog River is up and Carl must drive ...

It is just paved, new roads and bridges. Papa has just about finished planting but is afraid there has been too much rain.

Kærlig Hilsen fra os alle ved din Moder

Lordag morgen, 27 March 1937, Harleston, Mississippi

Kære Christian!

Thank you very much for the letter we received before I got mine sent off. Papa says you might be in Montana. I don't think so, but Elna writes that she heard from you and that you are asking about the conditions out there. They don't seem very bright since Art and Hans' letters ... If they could just have rain like we had in the last 24 hours ... The potatoes looked good, but it was a cold rain. Perhaps it is going to freeze. I hope not this late in the

Fredag, 9 April 1937, Harleston, Mississippi

Kære Christian!

There is not much to write about but a little I want you to hear about after all. We haven't been able to complain about the heat so far but the rain we have plenty of — more than is good for the corn Papa says. This, and the cold weather is making it come up late. Potatoes look good and hope they're going to be good ... Papa has his corn planted ... Chickens and hens are doing well. Today



we lost eight chicks, and except for that, they are lively and growing well.

Carl and Al are busy driving to town. It is mostly fertilizer these days. They are driving the Hurley road because the river is up. It is not only here that we have a lot of rain — I heard of a lot in Alabama, but you are probably reading more newspapers than I do so you know better. Jeanne was sick again last week. They took her to the doctor on Monday, and she is fine again, but they want her checked ... She got a tonic so she can go to school again ... School is over the first of May, only eight months.

Tonight we are going to a club meeting at Borgensens. Next time we are going to have it. Sunday we are going to Rigmor's for supper. It is Al's birthday. She said that he wanted no people over. He had never celebrated his birthday and why start now. I heard from Aunt Margrethe. Among other things she wrote that R. Sørensen is going to America for two years, and that Jes Larsen is going to meet her in New York, and they are going to get married on the ship. I see in the Pioneer that it is true. She is a widow without children and the owner of 90,000 kroner. She has the money and Jes has the kids.

... I wonder if it is just as dry as when we heard from Art [in Montana]. He is sending a check for the last wheat. He says now that it has been cleaned there is 375 pounds. That is more than last year. Yesterday the air was funny here. It was like it was before when the dust storms came. We have neither newspaper or radio every day so we don't know what is going on ... I hope we get a refrigerator like Carl's. He paid \$45 for his at \$5 a month so his gets to stay fresh a long time ... Now I have to go feed and gather eggs. Somebody has to do it.

Saturday evening — I'm sitting here alone. Papa is in bed and has been there for a while, and it's about time that I follow. We heard from Elna yesterday, a day earlier than usual. Harvey had taken Hanna [Johanne Mortensen Rasmussen] home, and they had been into hear about allotments. Yes, it was there, and he got the piece of paper for Papa to put his name on ... They got snow, but not enough, and it is cold.

... I think it is a long time ago that you left. I'm wondering when we will get to see you down here again. You know that we're happy to have you here any time you can come. The same goes for Harvey and Elna, but they are probably going west if they are going any where. Now Clifford and Lilly [Harvey Andersen's brother and his wife] are out there. Cliff gets good pay — \$125 a month.

Lloyd was sick in bed, but is better today. The same thing as Jeanne, high fever. I think it's probably because he walked to school with bare feet in the rain. Astrid thinks it better to walk to school with bare feet than to sit with wet feet [in wet shoes] in school.

Maybe she is right, but it is too cold when you're not used to walking barefoot.

Sunday morning — Here is a little to laugh about from the other morning. Mrs. Axel Petersen was standing in our field. She had been to the Larsens. Mrs. Lykke was standing at the gate. Mrs. Lykke later laughed about how funny it was when Mrs. P. began hollering and screaming because their dog had come out on the road and was barking at her. There's no way we could talk her into being calm, and there we were standing and yelling like fishwives. She wanted the dog shot, but no one has done it yet.

... Carl had a confrontation with Chris Petersen. I think I told you. I'm just puzzled that it wasn't Papa who got mad and ended up in a fight. Except for this, everything is quiet and peaceful. Everyone is taking care of their own business, busy in the fields or taking care of chickens.

Kærlig Hilsen fra os alle ved din Moder

Editor's Note: The last eight of Sine's letters from 1937 will be reprinted in the next issue of Granly News.

Granly Photo Archives



Granly Sewing Club circa 1935-36. Pictured from left: Ida Larsen, Esther Larsen, Sonja Outzen, Anne Stine Larsen, Ellen Johansen, Edna Jensen, Alice Buck, Elly Mathiasen.



Granly History

Editor's Note: In the last issue of this publication we listed the Granly citizens that joined the American forces in World War II as recorded in the official Granly record book. Missing from the record book was Leo Mathiasen, who entered the U.S. Army late in 1945. To correct this omission we thought it was appropriate to publish the Mathiasen family history as written by Leo in 2007 where he describes his military service and other memories. His recollections are reprinted below followed by early family records from the Granly archive.

Mathiasen Family

By Leo Mathiasen

From June 2007

While our family lived in Council Bluffs, Iowa, my father worked for the Illinois Central Railroad as a switchman and I don't know exactly when but in 1933 or 1934 he was severely injured in a train switching accident. When he recovered and ready to go back to work the Great Depression had cut his job and he was put on the "extra board"



L to R: Elly Mathiasen, Clausen child, Ellen Larsen, Jeanne Brinkman, Dallas Mortensen, Raymond Outzen, Glenn Brinkman, Allen Hedegaard behind Glenn and Lloyd Brinkman. Photo taken at the Brinkman home on Glenn's first birthday.

which meant we will call when we need you.

Following months without work and prospects in Council Bluffs not bright, the decision to look around for other opportunity brought the family to Granly Mississippi in 1935, a small Danish Colony about 25 miles from the Gulf Coast, where we acquired 40 acres of

land. As an aside I don't think my mother ever quite forgave my father for bringing the family to this God Forsaken Land, which was certainly not a land of opportunity. We eked out a living with chickens which produced a meager

income and raised a large garden which basically sustained our food chain. My father also worked on the WPA for a period of time as I recall for about \$2.00 per day.

The native families in the area were not really happy with the influx of the Yankee Danes who disrupted some of their customs and practices such as obeying stock laws requiring they keep their animals penned, they continued to allow them to roam and especially their hogs which raised hell with the Danes crops. It was not unusual from time to time that some of their hogs failed to return home as they were "pushing up daisies".



Kneeling are Leo Mathiasen and Alice Buck, standing is, Janis Pedersen, Helen Knudsen, Rose Nielsen, Elly Mathiasen, Ruth Jacobsen and Ellen Johansen.

Our first building erected was a barn in which we lived in half with the rest devoted to garage/shop and cattle stalls. No running water or electricity although eventually electricity was added. This remained the family abode, a house was never built.

I began third grade at Hurley School about 5 miles from home and went to high school at Moss Point some 25 miles away and as we were bussed, never had the opportunity to participate in extra-curricular activities or events.

With the advent of World War II, Ingalls Shipbuilding Corp. at Pascagoula, today known as Litton Industries, (that's where the USS Cole was built and subsequently repaired after the Yemen bombing) began building warships and my Father began working there as a carpenter. I also worked there as an electrician's helper when I turned 16. The family slowly began to get on its feet with the shipyard paychecks.

I attempted to enlist in the Navy when I left High



School but was rejected as partially color-blind. However, it didn't take long for the draft to catch up with me and I entered the Army in late 1945 and was discharged in December 1946. I served in the Adjutant General's Department working in Discharge/Reception Center in Camp Shelby, Mississippi. Also, I spent some time at Camp Lee Virginia and Fort Oglethorpe, Georgia.

While I was in the service Elly had taken a job in Mobile, Alabama. My father and mother through friends had been provided the opportunity to be Caretakers at Lutherland, a Lutheran Church Camp located on Lake Killarny in Auburn, Washington. Elly followed in a few months and found employment in Tacoma and when I was discharged I also went to Tacoma and found employment until I enrolled in Grand View College in Des Moines, Iowa in the fall of 1947 and spent two years there.



Elly and Leo Mathiasen

In 1949-50 I lived at home and attended Pacific Lutheran working a full time job at night in a plywood mill and full time student. I finished my education at Greeley in 1951 following which Mary and I (who I met at Grand

View) were married on June 17, 1951. We stayed in Brush, Mary's home town, until we moved to Solvang, California where I spent 25 years as Secretary-Manager of the Solvang Municipal Improvement District, 4 years as first City Administrator following incorporation in 1985, and 12 years on the City Council filling the Mayor's chair twice.

While at Brush, I worked at many things, oilfield rough neck, retail sales, school teacher for grades 5 through 8 in a two-room rural school (where Mary went to school) building trades, Secretary-Manager of the Chamber of Commerce and as elected City Clerk, which I resigned to move to Solvang.

Shortly after I came home from the Army, Elly and Al Strohm were married and lived in Tacoma for a time, then moved to Troy, Idaho, to take over his family's farm (dry-land peas) which they eventually sold and moved to Moscow where Al worked in the lumber mills and Elly cooked in an upscale restaurant.

My father and mother stayed at Lutherland for several years, however, with my father getting orders from every preacher on the Board he finally was frustrated and re-

signed and went to work at Fort Lewis Army Base in Tacoma. In the meantime, they bought the land at Clover Creek near Parkland, and began to build their home. My mother worked for many years as a custodian for Tacoma City Light.

Our daughter, Janice, has a Masters in Linguistics and teaches at Reedley College in Reedley, California. She had two children with her first husband Al Reyes, Ayn and Erik. She is now remarried to Bill Zigler and they reside in Exeter, California.

Son Stanley has been a Santa Barbara County Deputy Sheriff since leaving high school and has served in many capacities. However, his greatest interest and accomplishment is Bomb Squad Commander of many years. He recently served as President of the National Bomb Squad Commanders Association. His wife Melissa hails from Parker, Colorado, is a retired Army Helicopter Pilot and currently still flies servicing off-shore oil drilling rigs.

Both Stanley and Janice were adopted at 6 weeks of age through Lutheran Service Society of Colorado, during the years we spent in Brush, Colorado.

In 1976 my father and mother sold their home in Tacoma, moving to Solvang, taking up residency in the Solvang Lutheran Home. My father passed in 1983 and my mother in 1991.

Mathiasen Family

*From Granly family records, researched and collected
by Ida Larsen and Else Nygaard Martin*

William A. Mathiasen was born on the 4th of September 1891 in Copenhagen, Denmark. On August 21, 1925 he married **Augusta Johanne Jochens** in Council Bluffs, Iowa. Augusta was born December 22, 1906 in Copenhagen, Denmark.

Elly Mathiasen was born, June 3, 1926 in Council Bluffs, Iowa. She graduated from Moss Point High School here in Mississippi. Elly married **Alva Strohm** December 9, 1946 in Seattle, Washington. Al Strohm was born May 2, 1917 in Troy Idaho and died October 29, 1971 in Moscow, Idaho. Al and Elly are parents of two children. **Margaret Elizabeth Strohm**, born February 19, 1948 in Tacoma, Washington. She was married August 25, 1968 in Grangeville, Idaho to Roland Cann. Margaret Elizabeth died July 3, 1977 in Grangeville, Idaho. **Julie Ann Strohm**, born May

Continued on page 14 ...



Mathiasen Family cont.

30, 1950 in Tacoma Washington, was married December 14, 1968 to Ralph Heath in Troy, Idaho.

Leo Mathiasen was born August 28, 1927 in Council Bluffs, Iowa. He died July 25, 2011 in Solvang, Santa Barbara, California.

Ellis Island Immigration Ship Manifest SS Campania, from Liverpool August 26, 1899 Arrival at Port of New York, September 1, 1899

Personal examination of each passenger at Liverpool, by Francis Perdon, Surgeon of the H.M.S. Campania.

Nels Mathiasen, 38, married, laborer, able to read & write, Danish Nationality; Last Residence, Copenhagen; seaport landing in U.S., New York; final destination, Council Bluffs, Iowa; family passage paid by self; possession of money, \$21; never been to U.S. before; going to join brother in Council Bluffs, Iowa; condition of health good.

Magthalena Mathiasen, 39, female, wife, can read/write, Danish.

Hennig Mathiasen, 15, male, can read/write, Danish.

Hans Mathiasen, 10, male, can read/write, Danish.

William Mathiasen, 8, male, can read/write, Danish.

Edmund Mathiasen, 3, male, can read/write, Danish.

1900 Census Kane, Pottawattamie County, Iowa

Nels Matheson, wm b Feb 1861, age 39, married 10 yrs. b Denmark, R. R. laborer, rents home

Martha L. Matheson, wife, b May 1860, age 40, married 10 yrs. b Denmark

Henry S. Hansen, step-son b May 1884, age 16, b Denmark (this must be Hennig on ship manifest)

Wm. Matheson, son, b Sept 1891, age 8, b Denmark, at school, 9 months

Hans Matheson, adopt-son, b Jun 1889, age 10, b Denmark

Edmund Matheson, son, b May 1896, age 4, b Denmark

1910 Census Harrison, Jefferson County, Iowa

Niels Mathiasen, wm, 49, married 1 time, 19 years, b

Denmark, farmer

Magdalena Mathiasen, wf, 49 married 1 time, 19 years, b Denmark, 4 children born

William Mathiasen, son, 18, b Denmark, farm laborer

Edwin Mathiasen, son, 13, b Denmark, attended school

All four listed as immigrated in 1899, naturalized in 1907

1920 Census Council Bluffs Ward 6, Pottawattamie County Iowa

Nels Mathiasen, wm, 58, married, b Denmark, laborer in Department Store

Magdaline Mathiasen, wife,, 59, married, b Denmark

William Mathiasen, 28, son mechanic, truck builder, b Denmark

Edmond Mathiasen, 23, son, foreman, motor company, b Denmark

1930 Census Council Bluffs, Pottawattamie County, Iowa

William A. Mathiasen, head, owns home, \$3500 value, age 38, married at age 33, born in Denmark. Employed as a switchman for Steam Railroad. Immigrated in 1899, naturalized; Veteran of World War I

Augusta Mathiasen, wife, 23, married at 18, born in Denmark. Immigrated in 1923.

Elly J. Mathiasen, daughter, 3 years 10 months, born in Iowa.

Leo W. Mathiasen, son, 2 years, 8 months, born in Iowa.

WW I Registration Card Information Pottawattamie County, Iowa

Anton William Mathiasen, 26, Route #2 C. Bluffs, Iowa Born Sept. 4, 1891, natural citizen of U.S.A.; born in Copenhagen Denmark

- Occupation, farming, employed by Mrs. G. W. Crossley, Garner, Iowa. Single, Caucasian, claim no exemptions. Tall, slender, lt blue eyes, light hair, bald.

Edmund Robert Mathiasen, 21, Route 2 Council Bluffs, Iowa. Born May 18, 1896, Copenhagen, Denmark Naturalized Citizen of the U.S.A.

- Occupation, farming, employed by Geo. Crossley, at Lewi. Single, Caucasian, claim no exemptions. Medium height, medium size, blue eyes, light hair.



Follow up to last Issue with Reader Comments



Sunday School class from 1939 or 1940.

From Edward Carl Jensen Abbott of Smithville, Texas “Concerning the 1939, 1940 picture of a Sunday School class, I believe that the girl in the back row 5th from left is my mother Edna Viola Jensen. She was born in 1923 in Sioux City, Iowa to Edward Karl & Petrea Jensen. This would have made her around 16 at time of photo.”

“She played basketball on girl’s team at Dana College and yes, she was in the WACs. I was born at Keesler Air Force base in 1945. Mom said that after we got out of base hospital, the MP took us to my grandparent’s 40 acre farm near Pascagoula where we stayed until I was 3 years when my grandfather died of throat cancer. My grandmother sold the farm and moved to Greeley, Colorado. My mom and I went to Houston, TX. I hope this sheds a little light on our collective history.”

Jensen Family Photos from Granly Archives



Ed, Petrea and Edna Jensen



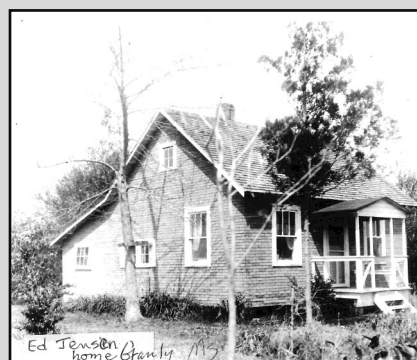
Edna Jensen, Moss Point
High School graduate.



Edna in WAC uniform.



Ed Jensen



Jensen family home, Granly, Miss.

THE GRANLY NEWS

The Danish Historical Foundation, Inc.

C/O Larry Martin

1012 Breeden Place

Bay St. Louis, MS 39520