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A BIOGRAPHY OF

EINAR VIG

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It is often true that brilliant men who spend their lives on some mission are not recognized and the value of their works are not acknowledged until after they have passed on. One example of this is Lars Einar Vig, a complex man with simple tastes and pleasures who dedicated his life towards the recording and preservation of Danish heritage and history, locally, in Washington County, Nebraska and nationally, in America.

Einar, only official documents contained Lars, was of pure Danish lineage. His father, Peder Sørensen Vig, known as P. S., was the first child of Søren Pedersen Vig and Ellen Marie Christensen and was born on November 7, 1854 in Egtved, Denmark. P. S. Vig entered the Askov high school in preparation for the seminary. In September 1879 he left Denmark and went to America in order to earn money to further his goals of ^{entering} the ministry. After he had worked for two and a half years in Chicago, he returned to Denmark in May, 1882, where he studied for two more years. P. S. Vig returned to Chicago in the spring of 1884.¹

On his return to Chicago Reverend Vig married his first wife, Karen Marie Christensen, on June 10, 1884. They then left for Elk Horn, Iowa, where Vig was to teach in the Danish high school and preach at churches nearby. In the fall of 1888 they moved to Luck, Wisconsin, where Reverend Vig was to serve.

as the Professor of Theology in the Danish Lutheran Seminary at West Denmark, Wisconsin. After the separation of the Danish churches in America in 1894, Vig was called to be the Professor of Theology at the Elk Horn School of the Danish Evangelical Lutheran Church. In 1897 the Vig family moved to Blair, Nebraska, so that he could assume the position of Theological Professor and President of Trinity Seminary of the United Danish Evangelical Lutheran Church, at Blair. In 1899 P. S. Vig again returned to Elk Horn, Iowa, only to return to Blair in the fall of 1902. During the family's residence in Elk Horn, his first wife had died and he had married his second and last wife, Karen Oline Olsen of Cedar Falls, Iowa. In July 1905, Vig resigned again to accept a call to Luck, Wisconsin, where he remained until 1909. Reverend Vig then returned to his former position at Trinity Seminary where he remained until his death in 1929.²

From his first marriage, P. S. Vig had six sons and one daughter.
From his first marriage P. S. Vig had six sons and one daughter, although the daughter, Ellen, had died from cerebritis in 1891 and two of his younger sons, John and Eli, died of diphtheria within two weeks of each other in 1897.

The first Mrs. Vig died on April 11, 1900.³

In the summer of 1901 Reverend Vig made a trip to Denmark. On his return he married Karen Oline Olsen from Cedar Falls, Iowa, a teacher at the Elk Horn High School, who had been a great help to him during his first wife's illness. They were married on August 6, 1901 at Cedar Falls by Pastor N. Hansen. At the time of their marriage Oline was twenty years younger

than P. S. Vig. She became the mother of seven sons, Eli, Clemens, Einar, Clarence, Steen, Arndt, and Victor, and one daughter, Ruth.⁴

Einar, whose legal name was Lars Einar Vig, was born on January 27, 1905 in Blair, Nebraska. The attendant at his birth was Mrs. J. P. Johnson from Blair. He was baptised one month later on February 26, 1905 by his father at Blair.⁵ At that time the Vig family lived on College Hill at the present home of Mr. Ray Lund, 2884 College Dr., which is just north of Old Main on the Dana College campus. It is this house where Einar was born.⁶

When Einar was six months old the family moved up to Luck, Wisconsin. There they resided in the parsonage of St. Peter's Church. One antique photograph taken about 1907 shows the two-story white house, surrounded by trees and a barbed wire fence. Karen Oline and P. S. Vig are shown in front of the parsonage with Einar and Clemens.⁷

On September 26, 1909 the family returned to Blair. Reverend P. S. Vig purchased a six acre tract of land, directly south of the college campus, from Reverend Kr. Anker. It was originally part of a twelve acre lot of which the east half was purchased by P. S. Vig. They assumed temporary residence in the home of Reverend S. C. Eriksen, which was on Reverend Anker's west tract of land.⁸

The Vig home was unique in the area. It was built on the land purchased from Reverend Anker. In my interview with Clemens Vig he related the story:

That house has history. All of the lumber came from Wisconsin. It came from the woods we used to play in. There were about forty acres of virgin timber at the North Luck Church outside of Luck, Wisconsin. When he was called to go back to the college, he owned that forty acres and he just had that cut up and made into lumber to build his house. There was so much hardwood in it that the carpenters here in Blair couldn't drive a nail in it. They imported some carpenters from Luck so they could build the house. That hard maple, if you could get a chance to go inside that house and see some of the support lumber inside. You couldn't buy a house like that nowadays.⁹

Dr. C. C. Madsen recalled when the house was moved to its present location on Park Street, "When they tried to prepare it for moving, the hard maple, like the basement steps, was so hard that they had to use a hacksaw to saw it. It was just like iron almost. Excellent house."¹⁰

Perhaps the best one to relate life at the Vig home is Einar himself. These words are from his biography of his father:

Once the Vig family was firmly established in its brand-new home on College Hill, the home life followed quite a definite pattern. He reared his family in much the same manner as he had been reared.

One after the other, his sons graduated to the position of chore-boy, that is, he was put in charge of the milk cows. The younger boys could help around the house or in the garden, feed the chickens and the hogs, if any; but the cow stable was restricted territory, to be entered only with the chore-boy's consent. Of course, it was never long before the chore-boy wearied of his exalted position and initiated the next-in-line to his duties. But even so, each had to stay on the job, like it or not, until he was officially relieved of that duty by his father.

Graduation from chore-boy meant being sent out to work for farmers. Vig had little difficulty in finding a suitable place for his sons. Lars Pedersen at Hill Creek and Niels Christiansen at Lyons took charge of the farm education of the

first three boys. They were succeeded by Jacob Andreasen of Blair, who was well stocked with farmer sons and sons-in-law in need of help. He took four of the Vig boys under his wing, at one time or another. Then the spirit of independence, natural to American youth, asserted itself,¹¹ and the Vig boys sought their own jobs henceforth.

My grandfather, Marcus Beck, knew Einar all of his life. The Beck and Vig families were always close. Marcus Beck reminisced, "Then they used to come down and visit at our place and then we would go up and visit at their place," Marcus also recalled the strictness with which Reverend Vig disciplined his children, "I can remember so distinctly the kids crying up there when they would do something bad and Professor Vig would lay it to them."¹² Einar would say later concerning his father, "I believe I would have had a better, fuller life if father hadn't been so strict."¹³

My grandmother, Mrs. Marcus Beck, formerly Agnes Lund, attended Dana in the early twenties where she met and married my grandfather:

At the time that your grandfather and I got married why his mother, Grandma Beck was living with us, down there at the old Beck house just two or three blocks from Vigs. I remember Grandma telling how much work Mrs. Vig had to do with that great big family because she had all those boys to feed. I suppose that maybe some of the first marriage were still there. So Grandma Beck would go up there and help her days with her cooking and cleaning and all. Mrs. Vig was very, very nice to work for. She was very much younger than Einar's father was. She worked hard, Mrs. Vig did. She used to come down and visit with Grandma once in awhile. I can remember her sitting and chatting. Undoubtedly she was telling her a little of her troubles because we have all got troubles.¹⁴

Einar was a loner during his childhood and boyhood. He had only a few close friends. His best friend during his

boyhood was ~~Vernette~~ Johnson, the son of William Johnson, a press-
man at the ^{Danish} publishing house. The Johnsons lived on College Drive
at the bottom of the hill. ~~Nernste~~ and Einar had a common desire
to be writers and they were both attempting to get their articles
published by magazines. Together they collected "rejection slips
from everybody," although eventually ~~Vernette~~ had a few of his
articles published. ~~Vernette~~ Johnson now resides in Denver, Colorado.¹⁵

P. S. Vig hated dogs but loved cats and cows. Clemens Vig
remembered those occasions when the Vig children would bring home
stray dogs like all little boys: "My father didn't want any
dogs around. Everytime we would come home with a stray we
would have a little shooting match and a burial ceremony up on
the hill. But Dad said he had enough kids to feed, he didn't
need any dogs around." P. S. Vig liked cats beacuse they kept
down the mice and were practical.¹⁶ In his later life Einar
remained preferential towards cats and always had them around
when he lived on College Hill.¹⁷

Although the Vig children could not have dogs for pets,
they did have a turkey for a short time. Mrs. Marcus Beck
related the humorous incident:

I can recall that on Thanksgiving Mrs. Vig had
this one turkey she was feeding for Thanksgiving.
It had become a family pet just like a little kitty
or dog. They called it by name. They had a great
deal of pleasure with this turkey. It would come
up when they were sitting on the porch. It would
come up and visit with them and it was very friendly.
Come Thanksgiving Mrs. Vig had butchered the turkey
and prepared it. There was this lovely, lovely
turkey dinner waiting for them and no one would eat.
Because they wouldn't eat any turkey and take a
bite of Bill or whatever they named the turkey.
They weren't going to take a bite of that turkey
because he was their pet.¹⁸

Einar attended Blair's old West School, which was on the same location as the present school. However there was no available record of his attendance at the City Superintendent of School's office.¹⁹ Einar attended the ~~academic portion~~ ^{academy} of Dana College, which was high school level. He attended during the school year 1919-20 when he took classes in Plane Geometry, Danish II, Agriculture, Modern History, and Retic. The next record of him was one year later when he took Physical Geography, Danish Literature, Danish III, German I, Botany, and English History in the school year of 1921-1922. ~~There is a blank of two years during which time~~ ^{During the following} he took these courses at Blair High School; Algebra, Civics, English, Latin and Manual Training. During the summer of 1924 he took a course in American Literature at Dana. His final year was at Dana was 1924-1925 when he enrolled in English Literature, Advanced Arithmetic, U. S. History, Danish III & IV, and Bible Study.²⁰ According to Dr. Elmer Rasmussen, Registrar of Dana College, there is no record of Einar taking any courses at the regular or normal college.²¹

Einar graduated on May 29th, 1925, at eight p. m. in the Dana College Auditorium. The class motto was "Serve the Lord with Gladness." The other twelve students of his graduating class were Alvina E. Blondo, Arlo R. Clausen, Ruth I. Carter, Philip T. Hansen, Ester E. Jensen, Knud E. Larsen, Christian F. Christensen, Ester K. Marcussen, Arthur F. Nelson, Carl A. Nelson, Hedvig C. M. Nyholm and Gudmund Pedersen.²²

Einar and his brothers were avid basketball players while they were at Dana. The Washington County Review Herald issue for March 2, 1950 reports that between 1919 and 1934 a member of the Vig family played on the Dana basketball team every season with the exception of the 1928 and 1929 seasons.

member of the Mig family played on the Dana team every season with the exception of the 1928 and 1929 seasons. A total of six brothers played for the team. The first to play for Dana was Clemens who was a forward. He was followed by Eli, a center, Einar, a forward and long shot artist, and Clarence, Arndt, and Victor.²³ Another article ~~in~~ that paper revealed the basketball prowess of the Vig brothers. The Dana coach had an open date on the schedule in 1928 and decided to challenge the Vig brothers for some practice. When the Vig brothers were asked if they would be willing to play the Dana cagers they stated, "Sure, we will be ready any time you want to play us." The sharp shooting Vig quintet defeated the Dana varsity team 67 to 11.²⁴

On March 21, 1929 Peder Sørensen Vig died. He had continued teaching until less than a year before. ^{Before} When he died at the age of 74 he had been ill for some time.²⁵ Einar recounted his father's last few months:

Father was always a meticulous bookkeeper. The fact that the last entries he made in his record are dated October 5, 1928 is indicative of his physical decline. It was becoming increasingly difficult for him to write, yes, even to write his own name. He was no longer able to visit the grocer, the butcher and the baker the first of every month and pay his bills. That fell to my lot.²⁶

The death of his father deeply affected Einar. Although he had felt that his father was overly strict with him as a child and boy, Einar had a deep, abiding respect and love for his father. He devoted years to the writing of a biography of his father, A Biography of P. S. Vig, of which the Danish version was completed in September, 1932. Einar expressed

his feeling concerning his father in the foreward of the book:

It has been a rare privilege and very inspiring to work with Vig, be he pastor, teacher or historian, child, youth of man. Only as a father did he become difficult to write about, for then memories crowded through my thoughts, the tears flowed freely at times, but the words would not come forth. I hope the readers will understand, and bear with me, in that respect.²⁷

After the death of his father, Einar remained at home with his mother and the younger children. Einar never had a steady job, rather he was a "jack-of-all-trades."²⁸ He was in the chicken business for some time. In April, 1928 he completed a 34 lesson course on poultry farming conducted by the National Poultry Institute.²⁹ However he was not very successful one year and lost all his chickens to a disease for which at that time there was no method of control. He was also unsuccessful as a farmer, according to his brother Clemens Vig, ^{because} as the years he attempted farming were drought years. Einar was also an electrician and had a flair for anything mechanical.³⁰

Clemens described his brother Einar as a man with strong likes and dislikes and as a man who "found it awful hard to work with other people."³¹ Einar found it easiest to work for people who would leave him alone to his own methods. Ronald Vig, his nephew, described Einar in this manner, "He was stubborn, if he wanted to do it this way and somebody else wanted to do it their way, he would say, 'I am going to do it my way or forget it.' He had a mind of his own and when he set his mind to something I tell you it took a string of mules and everything else to get him to change his mind because he wasn't going to do it."³²

Clemens Vig felt the work that Einar "liked the best and probably did the best at was carpenter work."³³

One place where Einar found employment to his liking was with Charles Gaydou, owner and operator of the Gaydou and Brown Hatchery and Poultry Farm, at the foot of College Hill on 23rd Street. Einar developed a close friendship with "Charlie" Gaydou and often worked for him in construction work. He helped build many buildings at the hatchery; among them were range houses and turkey roosts. Much of the time he would work by himself because that was what he preferred. The neighborhood boys liked to be around when Charlie was working but "there was no foolishness around Einar and he didn't approve of having any youngsters monkeying around when he was working. It was all business with him."³⁴

Einar enjoyed games such as pinochle, bridge, and horseshoes, and was also a fine golfer.³⁵ For many years Einar was a member of a bridge club which met weekly. The members were Charlie Gaydou, Carl Christensen, known as "King Carl," who was a lumber man, and P. V. Hansen, the son of C. X. Hansen.³⁶ Einar's prowess as a golfer is reflected by his reaction at making a hole-in-one. The event was reported in the following news clipping:

HOLE-IN-ONE DOESN'T EXCITE BLAIR GOLFER;
EINAR VIG STAYS COOL

Blair, Neb., Oct. 15-Arthur Johnson and Einar Vig, playing golf on the local links, approached the second hole, a 98-yard pitch uphill. Vig used his nwblick and the ball had eyes only for the hole, dropping out of sight.

A former athlete, Vig is noted for his coolness. Friends asked Johnson of his reaction.

"Did he get excited?"

"No," replied Johnson. "He just said, 'Well, I'll be darned,' picked up the ball and walked to the number three tee."³⁷

Einar was also quite proficient in the sport of horseshoes. An article from the Pilot Tribune of September 5, 1932 reported that a team of horseshoe tossers from Blair, called the Blair Chamber of Commerce team, of which Einar was a member defeated an all star team from the Omaha horseshoe league in a tournament at Blair. The Blair team had a total of 1029 points against 1016 points for the Omahans. The Blair team won 14 out of the 25 fifty point matches that were played. The other members of the Blair team were Charlie Gaydou, Will Japp, Frank Colgan, and Kenneth West.³⁸

Einar was always an avid gardener. He kept the Vig home lawn and garden so that "it was just perfect, all the trees were trimmed up around, no grass was growing up the trees or anything."³⁹ In the Cappers Farmer from April 1939 there was an article regarding Einar's farming efforts:

WHAT KILLED BINDWEED

There was a dense patch of bindweed in Einar Vig's garden in Washington County, Nebraska. The vines entwined plants with erect tops and smothered them. Vig decided to learn whether cucumbers could cope with the Jenny. He planted them thick and had a heavy growth of vines and a good crop of cukes. The next year only one bindweed plant was found alive. Vig is unable to explain why.⁴⁰

In 1936 Einar, his mother, and Glemens took a trip to California. It was the first time that Einar had been away from the Nebraska area. They left in September and returned in January. The trip took them to Montana and then they

located Mrs. Vig's brother's grave near Spokane, Washington. After visiting Ruth, Einar's sister, now Mrs. Albert Olson of Caldwell, Washington, they traveled down through Portland and Eugene Oregon to California to visit Eli Vig, their brother and son, of Fresno, California. Clemens reminisced about the journey:

He [Einar] enjoyed the trip and then one day he said that he was going home. He just up and said, 'I am going home.' He wanted to get back and he got back here in one of the biggest snow storms they had all winter. We went to the Rose Bowl and saw Pittsburg and Washington play in the Rose Bowl, saw the Rose Parade and I think it was a couple of days after that he said he was ready to go.⁴¹

Einar made his livelihood from many sources. One important one was the sale of his father's library. With the death of Einar's father, Reverend P. S. Vig, the family was left with his extensive and valuable library, rich in the areas of theology and the role of the Danes in America. It was Reverend Vig's hope that he would be able to donate the library to the seminary but pressing financial conditions prevented him from doing so. However he did ~~pre~~ ^{make} that the school should have the first choice in the purchase of books from the library. The synod was only able to grant \$400 toward the purchase of books and the seminary acquired what it could. Arrangements were made so that two of the younger sons, paid their college tuition in books during the Depression.⁴² During January and February of 1931 Einar made arrangements for the sale of books about the Danish immigrants and emigration, to the Dan-America Archives Society, headquarters in Chicago, Illinois. This society was the

the American representative for the Danish-American Archives which was established in Aalborg, Denmark. Einar corresponded with J. Christian Bay, librarian at the John Crerar Library in Chicago regarding the purchase of the books. In February of 1931 Einar received a check for \$550 for the Vig manuscripts and books. These were then sent over to the library in Aalborg, Denmark.⁴³

With the coming of war in Europe Einar registered for the draft on October 16, 1940. He registered in Blair and was described as white with blue eyes, blonde hair, light complexion, being 6'0" in height, and weighing 155 pounds.⁴⁴ Einar was ~~sent~~ inducted April 28, 1942 at Fort Crook, Nebraska into the Army ~~and~~ with the entrance of the United States into World War II, and ~~the resulting need for manpower.~~ At the time Einar was 37 years old and his occupation was listed as ^{an} teamster. He was then sent to the Air Corps Technical School at Lowry Field in Denver, Colorado. Einar's speciality was "Armorer 911."⁴⁵ He attended the Air Forces Technical School and completed the course for aircraft armorers on December 5, 1952. His Certificate of Proficiency reports that he graduated with a "very satisfactory" rating and had a final rating of 86.1%⁴⁶

Clemens Vig recalled his visits to Einar at Lowry Field:

Well now he had a hard time in the Army, not about getting along, mostly he had a tough time in the army because he spent an awful lot of time in sick bay. I know he had alot of trouble with his teeth all of his life. He should of had those fixed. But I was out to see him out at Lowry Field. He was in the sick bay everytime I came out. He was⁴⁷ and instructor on the gunnery on these large planes.

Einar was promoted to sergeant on April 1, 1943. However, with the turn of the war for the United States the need for the older manpower lessened and inducted personnel over 38 years of age were discharged. Einar was honorably discharged from active duty status on June 10, 1943. However Einar remained in the Enlisted Reserve Corps until December 14, 1944 when he was given an honorable discharge at the Seventh Service Command Headquarters at Omaha, Nebraska.⁴⁸

On May 7, 1944 another significant event occurred in Einar's life with the death of his mother, Karen Oline Vig. At the time of her death she was 69 years old. The cause of death is listed on the death certificate as valvular heart disease.⁴⁹ Einar had been close to his mother and was devoted to her.⁵⁰

After his service in the army Einar returned to his former manner of life. A letter from Bennet, his half-brother who worked for the Ledger-Enquirer in Columbus, Georgia, dated February 19th, 1944, reveals some aspects of Einar's life:

It was a coincidence that my letter hoping that you would take up your old love - genealogy - and yours asking me for Evjen's book, should cross each other in the mail. I'm happy to see that your interest in this avocation has revived; but I am sorry that you asked me for that particular book.

As you will probably remember I spent my last winter at home in collaborating with Father on his Danske I Krig. In the course of this work we used this text quite frequently. Because of this it is the most vivid reminder of the time when I felt closest to Father. I am speaking comparatively here because under his front of geniality, Father was a person very hard to get next to.

However there is one book in his library for which I would trade and that is a copy of Holberg's Comedier, bound in red and gold. If you still have this book forward it to me and I shall send you the Evjen.⁵¹

This letter again reveals how Einar's father had been a difficult man to get close to and to have an intimate relationship with. It also mentions genealogy which was one of Einar's main interests and avocations throughout his life. Einar also maintained an active library of Danish books until he left the Vig home when it was sold in 1957.

After the war and the rapid increase in the size of Dana College, Einar was ~~to~~ ^{begin} taking on boarders from the college which included faculty and students. Dr. C. C. Madsen was one of the faculty members who stayed with Einar for awhile with his family. Dr. Madsen had first met Einar when he came to Dana in the fall of 1927. Later when he returned to Dana when he got out of the Navy in 1946, ^{he and} his family resided with Einar for a few months. At that time Dana was building ^{house 507} Dr. Madsen, ^{and it} ~~a house which~~ was not finished until Christmas of 1946. When the Madsen family arrived in June they roomed with Einar, who had partitioned off the study and part of the house for his own use. Dr. Madsen and his wife, Ester, lived in the rest of the house. They had their own housekeeping privileges. Dr. Madsen described Einar's living quarters: ⁵²

He was a neat housekeeper in spite of the fact that he lived by himself and just lived on peanut butter. He kept his house neat and clean. His father's study, which was the sacred part of the house, was in the south wing. When we lived there he would hole up in that room, he had a cot in there and slept in there. There was a kitchen on the west and sort of a passageway between the house and the shed which I guess was kind of a leanto, and there was a small kitchen besides the regular kitchen which we used. ⁵³

Dr. Madsen expressed his view of Einar and of the potentials which Einar had. - 15 -

He was a very interesting person. It was one of those tragedies that a person who was tremendously brilliant and gifted and could

which Einar had:

He was a very interesting person. It was one of those tragedies that a person who was tremendously brilliant and gifted and could have been a great scholar and historian but he just kind of sat there by himself and never got out and never went to school . . . I have always felt that he was a man with a keen mind and brilliant and especially historical bent of mind. I think he could have been a great scholar, a great historian if he had just followed the pattern and gotten out. He just lived. ⁵⁴

During the time that the Madsens resided with Einar they spent quite a bit of time with him and got well acquainted with him.
with him:

That's when I heard of some of his projects and controversies of the church. And it was interesting then, you know he was very much a recluse all his life and he didn't mix socially with anybody, but he would sit at that house with a pair of field glasses and watch the students go on across the campus up and down the hill. He could spot just dozens and dozens of students. He got to know them and of course he knew their families and knew their parents when they were students here and family history, maybe the church they belonged to and if the pastor had studied here. It was just fantastic how much he kept abreast of the life on the campus even though he never came to any activities and never went out socially. He spent quite a bit of his time even then digging up old church records, and writing histories and working on this genealogy and so on. ⁵⁵

Einar worked at a variety of jobs during the time that the Madsens resided with him. Dr. Madsen confirmed the earlier opinions of Clemens and Ron Vig regarding Einar's attitude toward work:

He was the kind of person that didn't like to be disciplined and he didn't like to be regimented. He didn't want anybody to tell him what to do and how to do it. He had his own way of doing it. He set his own discipline. In some ways he disciplined himself rather

strictly and in other ways he didn't. I think that's the main reason he never lasted long in a job; he wasn't lazy but he liked to set his own hours and do it his own way.

Einar would pick up odd jobs whenever he felt like it. He ^{wro} worked as a butcher and would often help a farmer butcher his hogs. He also worked as a carpenter among other occupations. But regardless of what he did Einar did it his own way and on his own time schedule.⁵⁶

Einar had a very simple life style. Dr. Madsen recalled seeing Einar in a suit only four^{or} five times the entire time that he knew him. Einar just wore simple overalls and lived on peanut butter and white bread. On rare occasions he would make up a meat dish.⁵⁷

Einar took on other boarders over the years. Pastor F. W. Thomsen, of Dana College, ~~and~~ his wife and his wife's mother resided with Einar for ^{some} Atime before and after the death of Einar's mother. Einar also had several students stay with him after World War II when the rapid increase in enrollment resulted in a shortage in dorm rooms. Among the students that stayed with Einar was my father, John Thomas Beck. He stayed with Einar for several years and was to develop a deep and close friendship with Einar.⁵⁸

Dr. Madsen perhaps best described the bond between Einar and my father: "Your dad was the kind of person that Einar would appreciate alot. He would accept him with his own idiosyncrasies and I am positive that Einar had alot of respect for your dad."⁵⁹ My father wrote later concerning Einar:

Einar was to me a good friend and one of the most striking people I have ever known, perhaps because he was a born nonconformist who cared, or seemed to care, little for what people thought of him. His personal idiosyncrasies are legion, but others either accepted him on his own terms or he would have as little as possible to do with them. In short - Einar 'did his own thing' - and this may well be the reason I personally liked him so very much. He was honest, direct and rarely 'played games' with others. You knew where you stood and often why.⁶⁰

My father continued his friendship with Einar throughout the many years after he left Dana. As a young girl I can remember my father going off to town to visit some old man (Einar) each year when we visited Blair.

Einar was also extremely interested in the Old West. Einar had read all of Zane Grey's books and had a fairly complete collection of them which included a few first editions of Zane Grey's works.⁶¹ ^{As} ~~He was also~~ a great admirer of Zane Grey⁶² ~~and as an indication of this~~ Einar had traced the ^{author's} ~~Gene~~ Grey family back many generations. Among ^{Einar's} ~~his~~ papers at the Nebraska Historical Society, ^{is} ~~he had~~ a letter from Mrs. Zane Grey dated April 7, 1939 regarding his genealogical research into the ancestry of the Zane Grey family.⁶³

Einar also had a great interest in lost gold mines and hidden treasure. Ron Vig recalled Einar's interest: "Everything about the Old West intrigued him 100% and he was always looking into it. He was trying to know as much as he possibly could about it. That was our dream. We were always going to go out and find the Lost Dutchman Mine. He knew where it was at."⁶⁴ Among the personal papers and scrapbooks that Einar left were

many newspaper clippings and articles regarding lost treasure and gold mines, such as the Cocos Island in the Pacific Ocean off the coast of Costa Rica, which is the supposed location of pirate treasure. Another example of the articles is one regarding a suitcase which John Dillinger is reputed to have buried near Little Bohemia, Wisconsin with \$200,000 in it. Einar ^{collected and} left many other clippings and articles regarding the Old West. They included articles such as "End of the Indian Menace" from the Magazine of the Midlands which recounts the forgotten Battle of Arickee. Another article was "Sculptures of Stone," about the home of the Navajos in Monument Valley.⁶⁵

Einar also appears to have had some interest in prominent kidnappings. Many articles in his scrapbook concern eminent kidnapping cases of his time. One of his scrapbooks contains the front page of "The Omaha Sunday Bee" for June 1, 1924, which relates the story of the Franks ^{case} ~~killing and kidnap~~ in which two college boys, sons of millionarie families, carried off and killed a fourteen year old boy for ransom. There is also a story concerning the Mattson child kidnapping which also relates the tales of other child kidnappings.⁶⁶

Einar remained at the Vig home on College Hill during most of the fifties. During 1950 he undertook a new project-- writing a monthly family newsletter under the heading of Vig Memorial Archives. Excerpts in Einar's own words indicate his activities that year:

June 20, 1950 - By this time next month the raspberries will be filling my time, I hope. The reds were hurt badly by the winter so the crop may

be a bit short but the blacks are loaded to the hilt.
July 17, 1950 - The berry crop isn't too heavy, the reds ripening very unevenly, but they keep me on the go just the same. I have several girls picking now, but have to pitch and break my back once in a while to get the job done by noon.

August 17, 1950 - The berry business wasn't too good this year but now I'm working at carpentry, painting, etc. and may have five students staying with me this winter.

November 20, 1950 - Here all is usual, except perhaps that Clem is showing some improvement now that he has store teeth to get acquainted with. I finished the Mayor's garage last Saturday without getting my fingers frozen, thank you, and am now at home, hoping to get my corn harvested, if the blanket of snow we got yesterday will kindly disappear. Incidentally, I'll be getting new store teeth tomorrow, if all goes well, after raising hob with VA and other with the help of a Senator. I got more action from VA and Service Officers in a recent month than I've had in 5 years.⁶⁷

Einar used to ship his raspberries to Sioux City and had a variety of customers in Blair. Einar had his share of labor troubles as he found it difficult to get someone to pick the berries and not just pick the easy ones. "And then his customers sometimes would say that they didn't want the berries just at that time. Of course the berries don't wait for the customers so then he would be sitting there with a bunch of berries. I [Clemens Vig] can remember him getting up in the middle of the night to sort them out to keep them from spoiling. He had more grief with those berries." As a last resort a man named Gustenson who was also in the berry business owned a flat truck and would haul the berries down to Omaha and peddle them. At this time there was no available method of preserving the berries.⁶⁸

Clemens recalled the years in the fifties after he returned to Blair: "In all the years that I was back here, in the

1950's and on I couldn't get him to go out with me at all. I tried to get him to go out. He wouldn't even go out to Sunday dinner. But, he would go to Mary's house (his sister-in-law) and he would go to Vi's house [Vi Anderson, a long time friend and neighbor] and other places like that. He used to go hunting with Jim [Anderson], he used to go pheasant hunting with other parties out in the state. He liked that but he was just painfully shy in the public. You couldn't get him to go to social functions." 69

Ron Vig's earliest recollections of Einar are when Einar would come down for Sunday dinner to the home of his brother, Clarence Vig, Ron's father. Einar used to have an old Model A which he would drive down from the college. Ron recalled, "Einar used to take me out and show me his car. I used to play behind the wheel and he would say 'Watch out for cars, Ron.'" 70 Einar and Ron were quite close especially after the death of Ron's father, Clarence, who at the time of his death in September 1956 was the County School Superintendent of Schools and who at one time had been the mayor of Blair. 71

Ron described the Vig home on College Hill:

I remember I would be going straight south going into the lane, off to my right would be a cornfield, that cut back west and then south again. Then there was a horseshoe pitching deal, a big, old mound of hay and then there was a barn and a couple of small terraces and stuff. Then off to the left there was a row of trees, with a big sycamore tree right before you get to the house. There was an old creamery that Einar used to use for a workshop tacked on the house on the west with a sidewalk running from east to west going out to the barn. There were two small terraces going up. There were sweet peas, Einar had all kinds of sweet peas up there just growing everywhere. Then you would go on up to the orchard.

There were all kinds of apples and berries and raspberries. I remember the library and all those books, thousands of books in there. It was my grandpa's library and a good portion were still there when I was there, because I used to go in there and just sit and look up.⁷²

Einar worked on the Buildings and Grounds Staff of Dana College for a few years after 1956, under the direction of Mr. Snowbeck.⁷³ Einar worked there for awhile until 1957 when he moved to the Blair airport after the sale of the Vig home. Einar had difficulties when he worked for the college because of his individuality and his insistence on working his own hours and using his own methods of doing things.⁷⁴

In 1957, under President C. C. Madsen, Dana College undertook a massive expansion program which included the purchase of the Vig property.⁷⁵ Einar had expressed a desire for the college to purchase the Vig property earlier in the family newsletter:

April 18, 1950 - Last Saturday evening, Dad's present successor as Dean of Trinity Seminary, Rev. Theo Jensen, who incidentally, is a son of the man who was Dad's successor as Pres. of Dana and TS in 1905, paid me a visit. He comes around two or three times a year and I enjoy his visits. This time he said, among other things, that his family is a bit crowded in their present home (the first floor of a two-story house that Dad owned briefly in 1905), I then told him that I had long harbored the notion that our old home should one day be the official home of Dad's successors at TS but to date the powers that be at the school haven't seen fit to make an offer or even talk sense about acquiring this property, even though they freely admit they'd like to have it. Dean Jensen was interested but he has no authority as far as acquiring property is concerned, so only time will tell.⁷⁶

However the college acquired the property only to sell the house and have it moved off the property. Ervin Larson was the

purchaser of the Vig home and he had it moved down to Park Street in Blair and converted it into an apartment house. Einar was overheard to comment as he gazed at his old home, "I have no regrets."⁷⁷

In November, 1957 Einar moved out to the Blair airport, which is located north of the town. He had an apartment out at the airport and golf course complex and worked as a handyman and took care of the greens. It was while he was out at the airport that he burned an old Danish pump organ which had been in the family for years:

He was out at the airport when he burned the organ. It was a fantastic work of art. It was an organ with foot pedals and all the knobs you pull out. It had little racks for nick-nacks all the way up and down the sides. It was all hand-carved. You were supposed to have a pump to turn the crank on it but he ran it with his vacuum cleaner. It was all in Danish. He came into town one day and said "I burned the organ today." I (Ron Vig) said "What?" "I burned the organ today," he said, "nobody to give it to and I didn't have any room for it, all the memories and everything should just go up in smoke."⁷⁸

Einar cared little for monetary gain and had so much sentiment and memories in that organ that he felt that destroying the old Danish organ would be better than selling it as a mere piece of furniture. Einar remained ~~out~~ at the airport until 1960 when he moved out because of the poor insulation of his apartment during the cold winter. At that time he moved to the Good Shepherd Home in Blair.⁷⁹

At the Good Shepherd Home Einar lived in the old white

house on the corner of Wright and 22nd Street that the Home was originally started in. For awhile he had a room in the basement but then he moved upstairs. Mrs. Johansen, who worked at the Home recalled the Einar never wanted them to dust his room or clean it in any way, and that he kept his room up and was "such a nice housekeeper." Mrs. Johansen said that Einar was a willing worker and described his job:

He was the handyman there. We had quite a garden at that time. He took care of that and the flowers. But if we asked him to do something and he didn't think it should be done that way he didn't do it. He had good ideas of his own, so that didn't bother us too much. We just let him go ahead, well like putting out flowers and things like that.⁸⁰

Einar spent most of his free time in studying, reading and working on his genealogical projects. Einar didn't care for television and thought it was a waste of time. Einar got along well with everyone at the Home as long as they left him alone and let him do what he wanted to do. Ron Vig used to visit Einar frequently. Einar left the Home after a few years as there were too many people around for him.⁸⁰ Ron recalled that it was in the summer of 1963 that Einar ~~decided to move having moved as he had~~ ^{decided to move having} been discontented for awhile, ~~and then all of a sudden he was moving.~~ ^{was determined} Einar ~~had just decided~~ that he was going to concentrate on things that he wanted to do for himself.⁸²

Einar moved to a small white house at 272 North 21st Street. He lived there alone until his death. ~~Einar continued~~ ^{In the meantime, Einar} his simple life style. He just wore bib overalls with a blue shirt. Einar would always eat Skippy peanut butter, cheese sandwiches and sugar cookies, and he liked his coffee to be

1/4 coffee and 3/4 milk. His cottage was located right next to the railroad tracks and whenever a train would pass by the noise would drown out all attempts at conversation. Einar rather enjoyed the sound of the train and would often wake up in the middle of the night and listen to the train go by and think awhile and then go back to sleep. Einar maintained the railroad right-of-way so that it looked like a garden. He also had a set of horseshoe pits located on the right-of-way and used to play quite frequently. He always kept his yard immaculately clean and well groomed. ⁸³

After Einar moved over to North 21st Street he ^{devoted} spent the majority of his efforts toward his genealogical work. At this time he owned a 1936 Plymouth ^{which he} and Einar used to take Ron Vig out to the country roads and teach him to drive. Einar used to have Ron drive out to all of the old cemeteries in the county. "That's why I can tell you where the cemeteries are at because that's where I learned to drive to. At the cemeteries I was keeping notes for him, writing down all those names and stuff. He would look back in a book he had there and say, 'well we have to go to this next cemetery and you can drive to the next one.' I bet we logged 500 miles just driving out of Blair. We got real brave there for awhile, we would take off and go adventuring into another county. But it was real interesting for me too." Later after Ron got his license he used to go driving with Einar on Sundays. Einar would want to go to a certain cemetery so Ron would drive him out there and then they would go fishing on the way back. ⁸⁴

Einar maintained his independence. Clemens Vig remembered trying to convince Einar to file for Social Security:

He was so independent that he didn't even want to apply for his Social Security. Well, I said, 'Einar, they have taken money out of your check right along.' 'Well,' he said, 'I don't want the government nosing in my business.' I said, 'Why be foolish about it? Why don't you go and get it?' And that was after he was sixty-two. That was when he was sixty-five and I told him, 'Why don't you take it at sixty-two and you can go back for two years, and get that back pay.' I had an awful time convincing him to do that.⁸⁵

Einar had a strong Christian faith. John Beck described Einar's faith in these words, "He was a deeply Christian man, whose faith was so personal that he could not even abide public worship in his later years."⁸⁶ Dr. C. C. Madsen agreed with this opinion and also described an incident which indicated Einar's love for the hymns of the church:

He was a great lover of the hymns of the church. She Ester Madsen used to play the organ quite a bit down here at First Lutheran. She played for the service for Clown, Clarence, that's Mary's husband, and later Einar wrote her a note and asked her if he could have the names of the hymns that she played at the service. And there he was again indicating his love for the hymns especially of the Danish church. I think he was also the type of man who had his own unique brand of devotional life. You very seldom saw him in church except very occasionally for a funeral. Well just his biblical studies would indicate that he had his own devotional life, and I am sure that it was a deep, solid one.⁸⁷

Einar also had found what he felt was the location of Mt. Sinai through correspondence with the Middle East and intense study of the Bible.⁸⁸

In 1954 Einar published a pamphlet entitled Personal Bible

Studies. He had it printed at the Lutheran Publishing House, 200 South Fifth Street, Blair. The work order is dated June 24, 1954 and is for the printing of 2,000 copies.⁸⁹ Einar also had his work copyrighted that same month.⁹⁰ ^{It is} Einar's ~~work~~ is the summation of his many years of personal study of the Bible and related the chronology of time from the creation to the birth and death of Christ. Einar first explained the calendar as he understood it should be. From his study of the Bible he felt that God meant for a calendar year ^{to begin} beginning with April 1 followed with 13 months of 28 days each. Any surplus days would be Holy Days dedicated to the Lord.⁹¹

The second section of Personal Bible Studies is involved with Old Testament Chronology. The introductory paragraph appears as follows:

The following chronology has been compiled by one, who, in all sincerity, humility and faith, sought to solve the riddles of chronology by using only Bible data, all in the belief that the Bible is its own best commentary, wherefore contemporary data must be tested by Bible data, not vice versa. The work first appeared to be a giant jig-saw puzzle impossible of solution, but when, at long last, the pieces began to fall into their proper places, progress was so automatic as to make one feel that he really had very, very little to do with it. Ego was the chief obstacle during the studies, and is even now, the principal opponent to its continuation of publication.⁹²

^{The book} ~~He first~~ establishes a direct line from Adam to Christ as a basic chronology and explains ~~his~~ references in each case in great detail. ^{It} ~~He~~ then presents what ^{Einar} he felt were the six major riddles of the Old Testament, and treatments of the era of the judges, from Mizpeh to the birth of Christ, and a

chronology of Genesis to the Judges. The final section is a chronology of the life of Christ.⁹³

Einar hoped to have his paper serve as a testimony of his Christian faith and as a light to help others realize the grace and peace he felt in his strong faith in God and Christ:

Man's knowledge has truly made the chronology of Genesis the 'strait gate' and that from Genesis to Christ the 'narrow way' to both world chronology and history. God willing, this little booklet may serve as a guide through that strait gate and narrow way leading to the true chronology, and, enroute, increase man's knowledge OF and FROM the Bible, thereby strengthening his faltering faith in the Triune God and the Bible.⁹⁴

In his conclusion Einar expressed his need to reveal what was the basis of his faith:

At long last, the task of presenting the very essence of Bible- and world-chronology, as I have been given or learned, to see and understand it, has been completed. Ego still insists that it is all in vain but Faith tells me otherwise. Well do I know that many Scripture passages bid me be silent, only a very few bid me reveal what I have learned, or think I have learned; passages such as the words of Paul, in Romans 7,19: 'For the good that I would I do not; but the evil which I would not, that I do,' strike hard, both for and against Ego and Faith, but faith bids me borrow the words of Luther: 'Here I stand, I cannot do otherwise. God help me! Amen!' to which I can only add my own Amen.⁹⁵

This passage indicated much about Einar. It showed his strong faith and belief in that he must do what he felt was best.

Einar felt that he should express his faith and as the quotation from Luther said, Einar could not do otherwise.

Einar also theorized about the course of modern history.
~~Einar had a deep respect and admiration for General~~
He was especially interested in
Douglas MacArthur. Einar's scrapbooks contained many clippings that involved the general, ^{from} for the "Japs Quit; War Ends; MacArthur

Rules Nips" from the August 15, 1945 World Herald⁹⁶ to "Last Earthly Journey for MacArthur" from the World Herald issue of April 9, 1964.⁹⁷ Einar felt that MacArthur was the man that our nation needed to deliver it from the threat of communism. Einar felt that God determined the course of history and that the present time was that of a major crisis:

God also specified other times for man, such as the bondage in Egypt, the wilderness trek in Exodus, and the captivity in Babylon, then gave him renewed and everlasting access to the Tree of Life via true faith in His Son, Jesus Christ. However, man's mustard seed of Forbidden Knowledge has grown into a veritable forest, bringing him ever nearer to the omniscience of God Almighty, on one hand, but leading him ever further away from obedience to Him, on the other, until now, here in U. S. A., a world leader in both Christianity and science (man's knowledge), man has sought and still seeks to legislate Christ out of the national picture and substitute the dollar sign for the Cross of Christ. Early man's route: from Eden to Sodom-Gomorrah via Babel, is synonymous with our national route: from Freedom to Communism via Socialism.⁹⁸

In the Ansgar Lutheran of February 18, 1952 Einar wrote an article entitled "Bible History and U. S. History" under the column "Thoughts of a Layman". It expressed his feelings that the history of the United States is merely a repetition of biblical history. Einar compared Washington and the great patriots of that time to Jacob and the 70 patriarchs of Israel who went into Egypt, as both groups founded a great nation. He continued by comparing Moses and Lincoln as both brought their nations out of slavery. Our presidents after Lincoln are compared to Joshua and the judges of old. Einar continued, "Then as in Israel, so also here did dissatisfaction with the established order give rise to the reign of Saul, so did Truman that of Roosevelt; and finally,

as Israel turned to David, so we now seek a David to set our national house in order." The second parallel which Einar makes is between biblical history and the corruption in the society:

As Jacob et al placed their trust in God Almighty, so did Washington et al; so also with Moses and Lincoln; as Saul was obedient to God in the beginning, so also here, but where Saul later sought to kill his God-anointed successor, here the supposed Almighty Dollar was enthroned in our national temple and efforts made to legislate poverty out of existence, -such legislation, being contrary to the teachings of Christ, is really an effort to legislate Christ and His teachings out of our national life; and lastly, the Ishbosheth of old was of little consequence whereas his modern counterpart vetoed the simplest of mathematical formulae: one plus one equal two, and substituted his own: one equals untold billions of dollars, aye, and untold moral corruption, the true fruit of dollar-idolatry.

We are now threatened with a captivity much worse than that of Israel in Babylon, a captivity which only a David can forestall. As a nation, we are no longer in midstream, we are quite definitely on the very brink of disaster, where changing horses, mules or elephants is futile, for a David is our only hope. There has yet to be a David in the White House and since we, as a nation, are all too apparently not yet ready for Christ, we must as did Israel of old, have a David as a stepping-stone toward Christ.⁹⁹

It is apparent from the articles which Einar saved about General MacArthur that Einar believed that MacArthur was to have been the David to place the U. S. A. on the correct path towards God and Christ. These are some quotations from General MacArthur which demonstrate his similarities in belief with Einar:

Our need for patriotic fervor and religious devotion was never more impelling. There can be no compromise with atheistic communism-- no half-way in the preservation of freedom and religion. It must be all or nothing.

We must unite in the high purpose that the liberties etched upon the design of our life by our forefathers be unimpaired and that we main-

tain the moral courage and spiritual leadership to preserve inviolate that mighty bulwark of all freedom, our Christian faith.

We stand at a critical moment of history - at a vital crossroad. In one direction is the path of courageous patriots seeking in humility but the opportunity to serve their country; the other for a Socialist state and slavery.

The one boldly speaks the truth; the other spreads propaganda, fear and deception.

The one demounces excessive taxation, bureaucratic government and corruption; the other seeks more taxes, more bureaucratic power, and shields corruption.

The people, as the ultimate rulers, must choose the course our nation shall follow. On their decision rest the future of our free civilization and the survival of our Christian faith.¹⁰⁰

Throughout the writings of Einar and MacArthur there are many common chords such as the need for a strong Christian basis for the United States and a policy of limited interference with individual freedoms and limited taxation. There is also expressed in both authors an abhorrence for communism and socialism and any programs which might bring the United States closer to a socialist society in any manner. It is evident that Einar would have agreed with General MacArthur's plan to end the war in Korea by the use of atomic bombs and a belt of radioactive cobalt because it would have dealt a severe blow to the advance of communism.

Einar wrote many articles and columns for the Danish lutheran publications. He prepared numerous articles in Danish for the Nordlyset, and the Luthersk Ugeblad. He also wrote a regular column in Danish for the Nordlyset which was entitled "Vig Memorial Archives" for many years. Einar wrote a history of the Nebraska district of the Danish lutheran church which he

delivered at the Nebraska W. M. S. Convention August 25, 1944 at
Davey, Nebraska. ¹⁰¹ ~~Kuster~~ wrote an article entitled "The
Garden of Eden" which was published in The Ansgar Lutheran on
January 21, 1952. It once again stated his convictions that the
path to world peace is through Christianity and the world
acceptance of Christ:

All mankind is now seeking the peace it has
had but once in all history, in the Garden of Eden.
BUT, and it is a big BUT, how many are seeking that
God-given peace according to God's directives? Far
too few! Far too many of the present peace efforts
are man-directed toward a man-made peace. Man's best
peace efforts will surely fail unless and until he
first makes peace with God and with God's terms.
Man's 'free choice', a God-given gift in the Garden
of Eden, is with respect to true world peace,
strictly limited to but one choice: he must first
make that vitally necessary peace with God. Once
man truly WILLS to make that peace, and the choice
is his, world peace, the peace of the Garden of
Eden, will again be man's and for all eternity.

Aye, search the Scriptures and you will find
that the search for the Garden of Eden, where man's
agonies truly ended, and finds the Tree of Life in
the Tree of Calvary, the Cross of Jesus Christ!¹⁰²

Einar's major literary work was the biography of his
father, A Biography of P. S. Vig which was completed in September
1932. The original version was in Danish and an English trans-
lation was completed in September 1944.¹⁰³ This manuscript and
Einar's attempts to have it published were to cause a great deal
of grief in Einar's life. Einar submitted the manuscript to the
synod in the fall of 1932 for publication. The synod kept the
manuscript for quite some time and returned it because they felt
that Einar had written too much about the controversial matters
in Reverend Vig's life which involved the Danish synods. After
his return from the military, Einar was to translate his Danish

manuscript into English. In a letter to my great-grandmother, Mrs. Anna N. Beck, dated December 23, 1944 Einar wrote about the second manuscript:

Then, too, I am awaiting a report from the Publishing House Board on my manuscript, a biography of my father. That report should be forthcoming presently, for they have had over a month now to consider the matter. They probably won't like parts of it too well, but they can't very well deny the truth of the authenticity of those parts, or any others for that matter, yet it remains to be seen what they will do about it. It is written in English this time. I've had the Danish manuscript lying around for 12 long years. ¹⁰⁴

In 1946 the Lutheran Publishing House in Blair published a biography on P. S. Vig which was titled The Professor written by Theo. P. Beck. This book was to be the first of a series on the pioneers of the Danish church. Clemens Vig, Einar's brother recalled Einar's feelings on the subject:

That was a big disappointment, one of the real big disappointments in Einar's life that he didn't get that biography of Father. You see the synod came out with a book on Dad, The Professor written by a Beck. Einar claims they stole half of that stuff out of his manuscript. That's just what he told me. I haven't verified it but he said that they didn't want to publish it the way he had written it because they said that there were controversial matters that they didn't want aired. He had a terrible time with N. C. Carlson who was the president of the synod. P. C. Jensen was supposed to be the archivist. He copied some stuff out of there I am positive of that. Phil Magnussen, he was the manager of the publishing house at the time that Einar submitted his manuscript to have it printed. They were going to write some books all about their pioneers. And I tell you that really hurt Einar. It was in the thirties when he submitted the manuscript. ¹⁰⁵

It appears as though there may be a basis for Einar's belief that a portion of his manuscript had been copied.

Theo. Beck began work on his book in 1944. This would have meant that he might possibly have had access to the English version if he started in the later part of the year or he could have had access to a copy of the Danish manuscript. A comparison of the two biographies reveals some interesting similarities. The first selection is from Theo. Beck's work:

For three and a half years Vig worked on the farm at Ravnholt in Gjesten parish. It was a pious, God-fearing home. Especially the mistress exerted a strong Christian influence on the boy. Often she had him read to her the evening prayer from Boisen's book of devotions, and conversed with him about things pertaining to the kingdom of God. All her four sons had attended the folk high school at Uldum. One of them played the violin. By his help Vig learned to sing many good songs from Morten Eskesen's book of songs. He made use of every opportunity to hear lectures by teachers from Askov high school and Bible studies by Pastor Schousboe at the parish church. But every night, in the seclusion of his dark chamber in the cow barn, he came back to his mother's prayers. He was afraid in the dark, but he found that prayer can quiet a troubled heart and drive fear away.¹⁰⁰

This next quotation covers the same period of P. S. Vig's life and is from Einar's biography:

The next three and one half years were spent in the employ of Jens Mortensen at Ravnholdt, Gjesten Parish. The Mortensens, especially the housewife, were God-fearing folk. She often required Peter to read an Evening Prayer from Bishop Boisen's 'Book of Devotion' for her and talked with him about many spiritual matters.

There were four grown sons in this home. They had all attended Uldum High School and had many good books which Peter read quite eagerly. He also learned many of the songs in Morten Eskesen's 'Songbook', aided by one of the sons who played the violin.

A number of meetings were held in that vicinity during the winter. Instructors from Askove High School and Curate Schousboe from

Gamst, among others gave lectures and scripture readings. This was an entirely new world for Peter, a new world in which he was an eager participant.

His was a dark, lonesome little room at one end of the cow stable, and he was afraid of darkness. Each and every evening found him saying the prayers his mother had taught him. There he discovered, through prayer to the God who hears prayers, that God can give courage to the most terror-stricken heart.¹⁰⁷

These two accounts are extremely similar in their content.

It is noteworthy that everything which Beck has in his account is also in Einar's although Einar's goes into more detail. There are many examples of similar phraseology such as Einar's words, "It was a Baptist stronghold, and they regarded him as a wolf come to disturb their flock of sheep,"¹⁰⁸ and Theo. Beck's choice of words, "There the Danish Baptists had a church and mission field. They considered Vig as wolf among their flock."¹⁰⁹

It appears as though Theo. Beck had access to a copy of Einar's manuscript and used much of the information regarding P. S. Vig's early life. However the two books differ regarding the details of the early Danish church and the controversies which Vig was involved in. Einar goes into great detail regarding the schism of the Danish church and the many arguments which involved his father, whereas Beck merely skims over the controversies. Theo. Beck did acknowledge the help he received from Einar in the front of his book with these words, "I hereby gratefully acknowledge my indebtedness to Mr. Einar Vig and to Pastors P. C. Jensen, N. P. Lang and Chr. Falck for most of the material used in this work."¹¹⁰ Regardless, Einar was hurt by the affair and felt that he had not received due recognition for the writing of his father's

biography. Throughout his life Einar felt that he had been taken advantage of and resented it.

Einar's main preoccupation was with the recording and writing of local Danish and Washington County history. Throughout Einar's life he was involved with compiling a complete genealogy of the early residents of all the families of the early pioneers which resided in Washington County before 1869. He also had a file on the Washington County residents which came later. Each genealogy on a family was as complete as far back as possible and was referenced to newspaper articles which contained information regarding that family. Einar used many sources for his family trees. He would go out to the many small country cemeteries and dust off long forgotten grave stones for facts. He also made extensive use of newspapers through the use of microfilm. Einar had a microfilm reader and numerous microfilms such as census reports and small, defunct, local town newspapers of Washington County. Einar gained much of his information from obituaries and other newspaper articles along with personal interviews and written correspondence.

Einar's work with genealogies meant a great deal to him and ^{he} devoted much time to them. Ron Vig recalled Einar's detail and precision:

That is the way he was, 'everything has a place for itself and that is where it should be and if it is out of place well that's not me.' That is the way he was in all his bookwork too, a place for everything and he knew where it was. He would be talking about somebody and say 'well her great-grandfather was such and such' and pull out the file and show me all this stuff. It didn't mean too much to me but it meant alot to him. But he had it all right where it was. There were so few that he

didn't know too much about too, I can remember him telling me about someone and telling me 'Well I don't know too much about them, because their parents were Russian.' Anybody that was from Denmark or Sweden or Norway, he had them. Well just anybody that came from a Scandinavian country he had them.¹¹¹

Einar used to correspond with a great many people who were tracing their family tree and had had relatives in Washington County. H. Lyle Guyer was the Chairman of the Nebraska Centennial Committee in 1967 and he recalled the assistance Einar gave him: "Lots of people would write me for information regarding relatives. I could go over there, to Einar's, and he had enough cross references in his books that we could get the information that they wanted. Einar was always interested in helping to get the information." Lyle Guyer also commented that Einar "would gladly furnish any information I wanted but if people took advantage of him he never forgot it." Einar never charged in any manner for his information and paid all of the expenses incurred.¹¹²

Einar was also involved with research into the early history of the county. He wrote a major section for the Blair centennial booklet, which was published in 1969, on the early churches in Blair titled "On Lips Of An Ambling Boy A Favorite Hymn." In this article he covers the history of the churches of Blair from the early "railroad" services to the "courthouse" services and the subsequent building of churches in the town. In back of the publication under "Acknowledgements" is a short section regarding Einar:

--Einar Vig, son of the late P. S. Vig, a pioneer leader and historian of the Danish Lutheran faith in America. The Rev. Harbld C. Jorgensen, asked to suggest a writer about Blair's

early churches, chose Einar who summed up his concise effort this way: "Max Coffey provided the candle, Reverend Jorgensen furnished the match, and I simply lit the candle." 113

Einar did extensive research into many areas of the history of the county and he was interested in all facets of life. He had a file on the Bertrand,^{Steamboats} on old school censuses, and on the many and varied old organizations in the county such as the Old Timer Picnics, the Veterans of Foreign Wars, and the Danish Brotherhood among other varied interests.¹¹⁴

Einar always had a special feeling for Dana College in his heart. He spent the vast majority of his life living adjacent to the campus and received almost all of his high school education at Dana's Academy. The Vig family had been intimately connected with Dana College and Trinity Seminary almost since its conception. Einar expressed his feelings concerning Dana in an essay for the W. M. S. Program in February 1946:

DANA

DANA and HOME are synonymous to me. Born and reared in the very shadow, nay, not shadow, LIGHT of DANA, I have seen her shine brightly through the years and reach a climax during one World War period; I have seen the drab shadows of human frailty dim her light; and now, during another world War period, I am witnessing the revival of the true DANA SPIRIT and see DANA's LIGHT piercing the shades of gloom to reassume her rightful place in the hearts of her constituents.¹¹⁵

In 1956 Einar removed his papers and his father's manuscripts which he had placed on loan to the Dana library and placed them in the Nebraska State Historical Society Archives. Einar resented the problems that he had had with his manuscript and that in his opinion his work had been copied. At that time

P. C. Jensen was the archivist and Einar believed that P. C. Jensen had copied his manuscript.¹¹⁶ He however continued to have fond feeling for Dana and continued to keep a private record of the history of Dana.¹¹⁷ He also helped William Christensen in his research for Christensen's Saga of the Tower, the story of Dana College and Trinity Seminary, which which was published in 1959.¹¹⁸

During his last years Einar became more and more of a recluse. He spent the majority of his time sitting in his small house working on his genealogical studies. At the most he would adventure uptown to get groceries and to get a haircut and to get groceries. Ron recalled his attempts in those last few years to get Einar to grow a beard:

That was Einar Vig, just bib overalls and a blue shirt. Hair was always short. I tried to get him to grow a beard for the Blair centennial. He always called me Vig and I always called him Vig too. I told him, 'Vig, why don't you grow a beard for the Blair centennial, you can get one in two days.' He said, 'Your grandpa had the best beard there ever was in the Vig family and I am not even going to try and out do him.' He had a good mustache there for awhile, that silver mustache. I said, 'Come on, save it, we can go down to Main Street and walk around.' When it came to doing that he shaved it all off. It was looking pretty good too, he had had it about three weeks. He didn't look very good in a mustache but it was a good mustache. Einar was strange. He would get one idea. If he thought it was a good idea he would stick to it. I could never get him to stick to a beard, and he would have looked good in it too.¹¹⁹

Einar Vig died on June 29th, 1972 in his small home at 272 North 21st Street. He died peacefully and his death was not discovered until several days later. The postmaster, H. J. Madsen notified the police after several days in which there

was an accumulation of mail. Patrolmen investigated and upon finding the house locked forced the door and found Einar lying on his bed. The county attorney, Roy Anderson was called in and death was declared natural. Einar's body was taken to the Bendorf Funeral Home and funeral services were held Wednesday, July 6th with Reverend H. C. Jorgensen officiating. He was buried in the Blair Cemetery. Einar was survived by his brothers, Eli of Fresno, California, Arndt of Albert Lea, Minnesota, Victor of Fairlawn, New Jersey, and Clemens of Blair, and his one sister, Mrs. A. H. Olson (Ruth) of Colville, Washington.¹²⁰

Einar remained an individualist even to his death. In May of 1967 he wrote up directions which were to be followed in the event of his death which included planning his funeral service, which in the style of Einar was quite simple:

FINALE!

1. Bendorf Service; simplest casket available; use the best of the army clothing I have, let my old much used, and much abused, Bible be buried with me.

2. Cemetery lot not arranged yet, but prefer Grave 1, Lot 11, Block 8. No vault, tent or chairs, only the naked grave flanked by two ridges of earth, also flanking the lowering device.

3. Services: Graveside only; casket to stand open nearby for awhile prior to services; then placed on device by volunteer pallbearers as available at cemetery. Services to be conducted by my old and respected friend, Rev. J. D. Johnson, if willing and available; otherwise John Beck, or 'Jorgies.'

4. Services to begin with; 'In the name of the Father, and the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; Amen!' followed by the Creed; then 'My text is a Scripture passage which stands alone even as we must stand alone before the Judgement Throne; it is at once my text, my mediation and my prayer; seven words: 'Lord, I believe, help thou my unbelief!'

5. Then: Lars Einar Vig, born January 27, 1905, Blair, Nebraska. Died ____ (date and place): As God the Father Almighty, has recalled your spirit your Godgiven 'Breath of Life' it falls to our lot to return your mortal body to it's source, the dust, even as it is written: 'From dust you were taken;

to dust you shall return, and from dust you shall
rise again! So be it! (use dust, please) God rest
your spirit! Your dust rest in peace! Amen!

6. Close with The Lord's Prayer.

7. Any added service to follow, if need be.

Thank you! L. E. V. May 4, 1967. 121

Lars Einar Vig, a complex man with simple tastes and pleasures, was a man who stood hard and unbending for his rights as a free individual. Einar cared little for modern pleasures, earning a fat living, or accumulating material possessions, but rather he was more interested in his research into the Bible and genealogy - into his father's areas of Danish American history and genealogy - and into the history of the Danish Church in America. He worked only precisely enough to earn his own rent for humble quarters and pay for the simple food he ate. Einar was perhaps one of the few true individualists, a strongly religious man with great potential as a historian and a scholar, who instead of seeking man's glory pursued what interested him most, the study of genealogy and history and perhaps the greatest factor in his life, his strong, unyielding, private faith in God.

FOOTNOTES

- ¹Theo. P. Beck, The Professor (Blair, Nebraska: Lutheran Publishing House, 1946), pp. 19, 30, 37-42.
- ²Beck, pp. 43, 62, 64-67, 90, 91.
- ³Beck, pp. 89-91.
- ⁴Beck, p. 91.
- ⁵Certificate of Delayed Birth Registration, for Lars Einar Vig, issued January 14, 1954, *Ron Vig personal files.*
- ⁶Interview, Barbara Beck with Clemens Vig, February 4, 1974, Blair, Nebraska.
- ⁷Vig ~~collection~~ ^{collection} photography, Luck, Wisconsin, ^{ca.} circa 1907. Nebraska State Historical Society. (NSHS)
- ⁸Einar Vig, "A Biography of P. S. Vig," ~~an~~ unpublished MS, ~~manuscript~~, ^{MSS} Vig ^{NSHS} Collection, Nebraska State Historical Society, p. 148.
- ⁹Interview with Clemens Vig.
- ¹⁰Interview, Barbara Beck with Dr. C. C. Madsen, January 25, 1974, Blair, Nebraska.
- ¹¹Vig, p. 172.
- ¹²Interview, Barbara Beck with Marcus Beck, January 20, 1974, Fremont, Nebraska.
- ¹³Interview, Barbara Beck with Mrs. Johansen, January 30, 1974, Blair, Nebraska.
- ¹⁴Interview, Barbara Beck with Mrs. Marcus Beck, January 20, 1974, Fremont Nebraska.
- ¹⁵Interview with Clemens Vig, ~~1972~~
- ¹⁶Interview with Clemens Vig.
- ¹⁷Interview, Barbara Beck with Ronald Vig, March 12, 1974, Blair, Nebraska.
- ¹⁸Interview with Mrs. Marcus Beck.
- ¹⁹Interview, Barbara Beck with Claris Andersen, Secretary, City Superintendent of Schools, March 15, 1974, Blair, Nebraska.
- ²⁰Dana College Permanent Records, ^{(student grade reports), Einar Vig, 1924-25.} 1924 to 1925 N 3.
- ²¹Commencement Announcement, Class of 1925, Dana College, Nebraska ^{for} Nebraska State Historical Society, *date*.

- 21 Interview with Dr Elmer Rasmussen, Registrar of Dana College, February 1974, Blair, Neb.
- 22 Commencement Announcements, Class of 1925, Dana Academy, NSHS
- 23 "Six Vig Brothers Played at Dana" Review Herald March 2, 1950.
- 24 Vig Five Swaps Dana Varsity "67-11"
- 25 Saga of Town p 135
- 26 Biography of PS Vig - Ennis pg 178
- 27 " " " ~~pg~~
- 28 Interview with Clem Vig
- 29 Certificate from National Poultry Institute Vig Scrap Book
- 30 Clem
- 31 Clem
- 32 Ron Vig
- 33 Clem
- 34 Mrs. Charles Gaydon
- 35 Letter from John Beck
- 36 Clem
- 37 Scrapbook, World Herald Clipping
- 38 Article from Pilot Tribune 9/5-32
"Horseshoe Tossers of Blair Beat Omaha"
- 39 Ron Vig

- 40 "What killed Roosevelt" Capper's Farmer, April 1939
- 41 Clem
- 42 Saga pg 136
- 43 Letter between Linan Vig, Dean, Mr and G. Olmstead Bay, Dated Chicago Feb 3, 1931
- 44 Registration Certificate, Selective Service
- 45 Exchange paper
- 46 Certificate of Proficiency for Aircraft Announcements
- 47 Letters @ Clem
- 48 Exchange Paper
- 49 Death Record in Wash Co.
- 50 Mrs. Hayden
- 51 Letter Benet Vig to Linan Vig Feb 19, 1944
- 52 } Dr Madam
- 57 } ↓
- 58 Clemens
- 59 Madam
- 60 Letter from G Beck
- 61 Madam Rom Vig
- 62 Dr Madam
- 63 Letter from Mrs Lane Vig
- 64 Rom
- 65 Personal Papers
- 66 Personal Papers
- 67 Letter from Enam Vig, Vig Memorial Archiving
- 68 Clem
- 69 Clem
- 70 Rom
- 71 Vig Scrap Book

103. Forward-Bio of P. S. Vig
 102 "The Warden of Eden"
 101 Scripbook
 Thru July 26, 1951
 100 "MacArthur Soap" - Evening World Herald
 Feb 18, 1952, Bille Haley
 99 Anagar (Theran), Thoughts of a Soldierman
 98 Personal Bille Studios
 97 Great Easting
 96 Pop Out
 95

91 - Personal Bille Studios by P. S. Vig
 80 Collyer's of Rogerson - Copyright
 June 24, 1954
 89 Work Order from LPH
 88 - Ron
 87 Letter with Madam
 86 - Letter - John Beck
 85 Clem
 84 "
 83 "
 82 Ron
 81 "
 80 - Mrs Johanson
 79 Clem
 78 Ron
 77 World Herald Article - Dec 8, 1957
 76 Letter, Vig from Anders Munkelund April 18, 1950
 75 Enterprise Article Nov 7, 1957
 74 Clem
 73 Madam
 72 Ron

- 104 Letter from Einar to Mrs. Anna Beck
- 105 Clem
- 106 The Professor - pg 21-20
- 107 Biography -
- 108 Biography p 26
- 109 Professor pg 44
- 110 - " " Acknowledgement
- 111 - Ron
- 112 - Lyle Guyer
- 113 1869 Blain 1969
- 114 Vig Archives
- 115 WMS Program Febr 1946
- 116 Ron
- 117 Archives
- 118 Saga
- 119 - Ron
- 120 Enterprise "Einar Vig Died at his home
June 29" July 6, 1972
- 121 - ~~Arthur~~ Letter from Marcus Beck