

## THE JUBILEE OF THE DANISH ACTUARIAL SOCIETY

MEMBERS of the Institute have always had very friendly feelings towards their Scandinavian colleagues. The long-standing arrangements whereby young Scandinavian actuaries have been seconded, for experience, to life offices in this country are a sufficient indication of the friendship between the two bodies of actuaries. These have developed particularly since Sir William Elderton visited the Scandinavian Societies in 1931. It may also be recalled that later, in 1947, Sir Andrew Rowell addressed all the Scandinavian Societies. It was, therefore, very pleasant indeed for the Institute to be invited by the Danish Actuarial Society to send a delegation to take part in the celebration of the golden jubilee of that Society. This official delegation consisted of the Senior Honorary Secretary, Mr Usherwood, the Honorary Treasurer, Mr Recknell, and myself as President. In addition, a graceful invitation was also sent to those who had taken so prominent a part in the Centenary Assembly of the Institute in 1948, namely, Sir Andrew Rowell, who was President at that time, and Messrs Wood and Kirton, who were Joint Honorary Secretaries. Unfortunately, Sir Andrew was unable to accept the invitation but Messrs Wood and Kirton were able to make the journey to Denmark. I may add that our Scottish colleagues were represented by their President, Mr J. M. Ross, and a Past-President, Mr R. Gordon-Smith. Our Danish friends extended invitations also to our ladies and those who were able to attend were made most welcome.

As Mr B. Drachmann, the President of the Danish Society, had explained in a letter setting out the arrangements for the celebrations, 'no treatises or discussions of actuarial questions would be produced because of the International Actuarial Congress to be held in the Netherlands in June 1951'.

The opening ceremony was a reception on Thursday, 17 May 1951, when various delegations took the opportunity to tender gifts to the Danish Society. On behalf of the Institute of Actuaries, I had the great pleasure of handing to Mr Drachmann an antique silver salver, made by Richard Innes in London in 1780. In making the presentation I reminded our Danish friends what a great compliment it had been when, on the occasion of the Institute's Centenary, their then President, Mr Kousgaard Nielsen, made us custodians, on behalf of the Danish Society, of the medal struck in 1908 in honour of their founder, Prof. Thiele. After such a compliment we had had to think very hard in order to find something both suitable and adequate to the occasion, particularly in view of the traditional skill of Denmark in the metal crafts. We had, however, discovered that Danish diplomats in London were wont to purchase examples of old English silverware and so we chose the salver. This was inscribed:

DEN DANSKE AKTUARFORENINGEN

FROM

THE INSTITUTE OF ACTUARIES

23 APRIL 1951

The date is that of the actual anniversary of the foundation of the Danish Society. I suggested that it might be fitting at the Society's meetings to place on the salver the traditional jug of water and tumbler which are found by the side of every Chairman.

On Friday, 18 May, there was an interesting all-day excursion by coach to Trelleborg to visit a Viking encampment in the form of an earthwork, dating from the tenth century, which, it transpired, was the general headquarters for the invasions of Britain which characterized those days. However, the extremely pleasant English-speaking guide explained all about the Vikings in the gentlest manner with due regard to national susceptibilities, carefully avoiding the use of the word 'invasion' and indicating that the Vikings just sailed over the sea to 'establish a few small colonies'—a delightful softening of the asperities of history.

The celebrations ended on Saturday night with a Banquet at the Slots-pavillonens Restaurant, Hillerød. This was a most pleasant evening: the party went by special train to Hillerød—about an hour's journey from Copenhagen—in the heart of the country, where the Slotspavillon was situated in park-like surroundings, reminiscent of Glyndebourne. By a grouping of countries on linguistic lines, the number of national speakers was reduced to no more than ten, and it was my agreeable duty to speak on behalf of both the Institute and the Faculty. I explained that this was one of the rare occasions in history when sovereignty had been surrendered by the Scots, not merely freely and willingly, but also gladly! The ten speeches were fortunately spread over the dinner, between courses, and the dinner was followed by a dance. The return to Copenhagen was accomplished by train at 12.15 a.m., when some of the younger actuaries continued the celebrations well into the night.

No account of these pleasant events would be complete without reference to the charming hospitality extended to all of us, in their own homes, by our Danish friends. This hospitality, the friendliness of Mr Drachmann, whose linguistic capacities are formidable, and the organizing work of Mr Thorkild Hansen, the Secretary of the Danish Society, all contributed to the success of an occasion which will live long in the memory of those who had the privilege of taking part in it.

F. A. A. M.