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A Prophet Behind the Plough

Hans Nielsen Hauge and his Ministry.



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A Prophet Behind the Plough. Hans Nielsen Hauge and his Ministry.

At the end of the eighteenth century various factors provided the groundwork that led to Norwegian independence from Denmark in 1814. One such factor was the work of the itinerant preacher, Hans Nielsen Hauge (1771-1824). His speaking and writing influenced individuals, communities and businesses the length and breadth of the country while Norway was still a poor and under-developed country.

Hans Nielsen Hauge, a farmer's son from Tune in southern Norway initiated a religious revival in 1796. During the 8 years Hauge was able to travel and preach, it is reckoned he covered over 15,000 kilometers – mainly on foot – so that the revival reached almost every district in the country. Hauge's preaching inadvertently made him into the first great spokesman to arise from among the common people of Norway in modern times and he laid an important foundation for deep-seated spiritual, economic and social change that could be said to have benefited the whole land. This article describes the initiation and development of the Haugean revival and documents the movement's similarity practical New Testament Christianity mainly using the testimony of Hauge's own words.

An April Day in 1796

Hauge experienced what has been commonly described as his 'spiritual breakthrough' on 5th April 1796 while he was out ploughing a field on his father's farm. The 25 years old considered himself to be a Christian, as he had been baptized and confirmed, and he read the Bible and devotional books daily. So, as opposed to this experience being an act of repentance for an immoral life, it was more a deeper commitment to God and an experience of the divine that introduced a radical new perspective into his heart and mind. Later in his life, Hauge described the event in the following words:

Once, as I was working under the open sky, I was singing the hymn 'Jesus, O to taste sweet union with You'. When I had sung the second verse

*Myself and all that I have
I will freely surrender,
if You alone will dwell in my soul ...*

My mind was so uplifted to God that I was unaware of myself and could not say what was happening in my soul, because I was outside of myself. Now I thought that nothing in the world was worth paying heed to and I regretted that I hadn't served the God who is good above all things better than I had. My soul felt something supernatural, divine and blessed. There was a glory that no tongue can describe. No one can take this away from me, because I know that from that moment my spirit was full of all good things. I especially felt a passionate and burning love for God and my neighbor. My mind was renewed; I grieved over all sins and

feel a strong desire that people should get to share that same grace with me. I was filled with a passionate desire to read the Bible and Jesus' own teaching. I noticed a new light to understand it and to be able to bind together the teaching the teaching of God's men to the one aim, that is that Jesus has come as our Savior and we should be born anew by his Spirit, repent, and be sanctified (made holy) more and more after the characteristics of God to serve the triune God alone and prepare and perfect our souls for the eternal bliss. It was as if I saw the world sunk down in evil, something about which I was gripped with grief. I prayed to God that he would withhold the Last Punishment so people could repent. I would now willingly serve God. I prayed he would tell me what I should do. Then I heard in my inner being, 'You shall confess my name before the people, exhort them to repent and seek me while I can be found, call on me while I am near and am touching their hearts, so they can turn from the darkness into the Light'.

This revelatory experience became the foundational anchor for Hauge's calling and faith. He sensed that God's love had been released in his heart and that he had been given a divine commission to show other people the way to Jesus.



The above details the inscription on the wall of the Prayer House in Tune, the site of Hauge's birth place. The plaque was raised in commemoration of Hauge's baptism in the Holy Spirit on 5th April 1796 and reads: *Myself and what is mine, will I gladly surrender, if you alone will dwell in my soul.*

The First Step

When the young Hauge came home from the fields that April evening, his countenance was changed and he was eager to share his revelation of God's love with his family: *The first people I spoke to were my siblings. It had the effect that two of them received a change of mind the same day." His words had great effect and over the course of a few days his five other siblings experienced what Hauge often called 'a changed mind.*

During the first three weeks after his call, Hauge had no desire to eat or drink, and he barely slept only a few hours each day. He spent his time reading the Bible and if people came to the farm, he had to speak with them:

I tried at all opportunities to confess God's name and I spoke with people about God's grace and loving will to see their souls be blessed. This moved more and more people. Some of those who did not understand what was happening in them or perhaps stood against the truth,

said that they would go mad if I spoke any more to them. Others fell into sadness over the fact that they had not served God and sought Him in His Word as I had.

Rumors about Hauge spread through the local districts. Some people tried to convince him to put aside his new found religious zeal and return to normal life. What could an uneducated farmer's boy accomplish against an unbelieving world?

I began to doubt that there could ever be any acknowledgement of the Truth in people, because most of them scorned my words and mocked me. Some were indifferent and few were sincere. Then I called out to God and cried so heavily that the tears just flooded out. I prayed to God that He would take this heavy obligation away from me and send a bishop instead, or someone else of high rank. People would listen to someone like that, but they did not respect me even though I had prayed, as in Isaiah 6: 'Send me'.

Hauge found the resistance to his efforts stressful and he begged God that he could be released from the commission he felt he had been given. Hauge's feelings were so strong, that at one time he prayed to the Lord that he might die and so be released from his mission. The response he heard in his inner being was not what he had expected:

But then I heard very clearly in my inner being, 'Do you really want to die and so benefit sin in the future? No, instead you will bring me the fruit of blessedness. You have indeed promised to serve Me, and know this; that I have often used those considered insignificant in the world to spread my Kingdom. I have called shepherds, fishermen and tax collectors to follow my plough (1 Kings 19, Amos 1 & 7:14-15, Matt. 4:18-19 and 9:9). I shall give you power and wisdom that your enemies will not be able to stand against. Only be faithful to your call and continue in all patience'. I said, 'Yes. If You my God will strengthen me, then I am willing'. Since that time I have neither prayed to be released from my call nor die unless it pleases the Lord!



An old photograph of the Hauge family farm at Tune taken from Heggveit's *Den norske kirke i det nittende århundrede, Bind I*, Christiania 1905.

Out of the District

After this inner encouragement, Hauge did not allow himself to rest. He was compelled to bring all people to a living experience of Jesus Christ. He did consider the need a pulpit, taking instead his modus operandi from the book of Deuteronomy:

These commandments that I give you today are to be upon your hearts Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up.

In later years, Hauge wrote the following in a letter to 'The loving confessors of God's Word':

Whenever you speak with someone, you must preach them the gospel - the good news about the eternal possessions that God wants to give. Then ask if they want to receive this. If they answer 'Yes', then convince them that they must lay aside all unrighteousness, forsake the world and clothe themselves in God's holy and righteous clothing.. If they say that they can't do this because they are so full of sin, then ask if they want to. Point them to Jesus where there is power to receive for each person who will deny himself and all that is in the world. If they say that they must remain in the world and work, then answer that we must first of all work one our salvation with fear and trembling because our treasure is in heaven, and that our mission should be to work to the glory of God. Implore then that they do not deliberate with flesh and blood, but give the Spirit space. He teaches us and reminds us of all things that are beneficial for eternal life. God give us all power for this and stand by us with His Spirit of Truth. I pray this for each one that loves Jesus.

Hauge's challenge to people was personal, natural and effective. He met people where they were:

I found that a strange thing happened; such that when I spoke with someone and was overjoyed, then those that listened cried. They said that they wanted to be like me because I seemed to be so uncomplicated. I think that it must have been the power of God in the simple preached Word as Paul says in 1 Corinthians 1-31. But when people derided and despised God's Word and would not mend their ways, then I cried. It hurt my heart every time I heard swearing, the misuse of God's name, useless talk, quarrels and drunkenness, lying, deceitfulness and so forth.

In the course of two months since April 1796 a revival was thus under way in the rural districts of southern Norway. With considerable effort Hauge had fulfilled his work commitments on the family farm, preached to all who would listen, helped many seekers with the care of their souls, made an in-depth study of the Bible and written a short book.

The book that shone like a flaming torch

Hauge had felt compelled to put his message into print. In summer 1796 his wrote a short booklet called 'A Meditation on the Folly of the World', and due to the limited freedom of the press had been introduced in the autocracy of Denmark-Norway in 1770, he was able to have

it printed. Hauge had struggled with whether or not he should go to print as his book included strong criticism of the ungodly members of the clergy. Ultimately he felt he should obey his call from God as opposed to worry about human condemnation and distributed the book in its original form. Of the clergy he said:

You search the Scriptures and think that you have eternal life in them, and therefore you will get all the more strict judgment in the torment of hell because you are like the man who knows the Lord's will, but doesn't follow it. Whenever one goes to church to hear the Word of God such as it is expounded by the learned, the road to heaven becomes broad. It is said that Christ has redeemed us, but the consequences are not spoken about.

Hauge was of the opinion that irresponsible preaching from the clergy could never lead to anything other than religious indifference among the people.

At the end of his first book, Hauge wrote a short autobiography called, "My Career". It contained a passionate appeal and thus became well-loved reading among his followers for many years. Thousands of simple people recognized themselves in Hauge's depiction of his life's course and struggles.

In the four years that followed, Hauge produced several books one after another and soon became Hauge became Norway's most read author. One can reckon that at least 100,000 people read his books in the course of the years 1796-1801. This figure is more impressive when it is compared with the fact that at that time Norway had close to 900,000 inhabitants. All new editions of Hauge's books were snatched up quickly, and it therefore noteworthy that literary historians have not occupied themselves with Hauge's authorship to any great extent since that time. He also printed a conversion story about a "Master of the Scriptures" from the Middle Ages, which at Hauge's time was considered to be the German theologian Doctor Johannes Tauler (1300-1361).¹

To the whole land

Two hundred years ago Norway was a land regulated by strict laws. The Conventicle Act forbade gatherings among the farmers and the Vagrancy Act made it rather difficult for ordinary people to travel or move. Despite these restrictions Hauge was determined to bring his message to the whole of Norway:

Our Gospels close with the words of Jesus that the message of repentance and the forgiveness of sins should be preached to all people from Jerusalem to the ends of the earth. We therefore see that He wants His Name preached to all people. Indeed, they should begin from that place where they were called or have been baptized with the Holy Spirit's gifts and have received a testimony in their hearts. I who write this can, in God's Spirit, say that He motivates us to do this.

¹ Hauge published it in 1798. A modern Norwegian translation of the book is: *Mesterboken*. Klassiker i ny utgave: En bok som styrket både Luther og Hauge. Agape forlag, 1978.

The year after his vision in the April of 1796, Hauge set out on the first of many journeys. In the course of 8 years he traveled throughout most of Norway, reaching as far north as Tromsø. Everywhere he went he preached repentance and set up local fellowships of 'friends'. His longest journey lasted 15 months during which he covered 7000 km, mainly on foot. He says himself:

It is hard to describe what grief and gladness, work and wakefulness I had at that time. Many nights I didn't sleep for more than 2- 3 hours. Whenever I was travelling along the road many people came along with me to talk with me. If I was in a house, people streamed to that place.

Hauge often held four meetings a day. On Sundays he went to the local church, but on more than one occasion after the service he held an open-air meeting on the grassy bank outside. In addition to his preaching, Hauge shared practical advice about farming and business opportunities with those he spoke to.

Hauge went to Tromsø in 1803 via Finnsnes, Målselv and Balsfjord. He visited the church here and spoke after the services. He used an interpreter because some Sami people did not speak Norwegian. The result of his preaching was that many people "were enlightened to God's Word and some cried". The Sami people were the most welcoming of Hauge in Tromsø and he held meetings for them just outside the city limits of the time. It was later said there was only one awakened man in the whole of Tromsø prior to 1845 – a certain Ole Voss who lived in Grønnegata. The response to Hauge's teaching was better in other parts of the district.

There were already some Haugians in Målselv and Hauge took them with him to look at a waterfall to see if it could be used for one or another sort factory works. After this he joined in with the spring work on the farm until the evening. People began to doubt whether the man who had come to the area really was the well-known preacher, so when they were about to stop work for the evening, he asked people to gather in one of the houses. When Hauge began to speak in his powerful manner they became convinced they had the real Hans Nielsen Hauge among them. He also convinced them that it was acceptable to be a true Christian and to be actively involved in the practical things in life such as farming and business. Hauge encouraged several people to travel up to the new colonies in the inner parts of Troms where there were large areas of land that could be put under the plough.

A community of Haugian 'friends' led by Henrik Mathiesen was established in Balsfjord. In later years when Hauge published *On Religious Feelings and their Worth* (1817) he included recollections from some of the key men and women of the Haugian movement, Mathiesens biography being the first.

The Friends

Hauge formed strong bonds of friendship all over the country. One of the books he produced contains some of their testimonies from some of them. One woman described how she had met a man who said that he had been on a trip to the west and had met two men there who had spoken God's Word, saying that people should repent. This moved her and made such a strong

impression on her that she began to cry. She knew these men were sent by God to preach repentance so that God could forgive sin if the message of grace was received. Another person read one of Hauge's books and received 'an undeniable taste of the Truth in his heart', and another man came to a house meeting that Hauge held. This man wrote:

When he began to speak God's Word, my heart was moved. I had never heard anyone speak like he did and I marveled at his love and gentle spirit. This gave me sure faith and witness in my heart that he had the mind of Christ and lived according to the Bible as all we were taught during our religious instruction as children. I visited him later and talked with about the condition of my heart and my inner struggles. He said this was God's admonition and call to repentance and if I became obedient to God's Holy Spirit, I would receive peace with God. This I experienced later to be the truth.

This variety of response is some indication of the extent of the effect of Hauge's message among the peasant population of Norway at the time.

Hauge always had warmth in his voice when he spoke about the brotherly love that existed between the Haugian friends:

It is something that God's children have among them by the Spirit and according to the testimony of the Word such that they know each other from the first moment of meeting. It shows in their spiritual talk, their gentle and humble character and moral, simple and faithful words which are strewn with salt (2 Cor. 4:6) or the Word of God such that they follow them carefully. For one of Christ's shepherds surely recognizes his own and they recognize him.

Some young Haugians were entrusted with preaching tours, the sale of books and local leadership. These men had dissimilar backgrounds and equipping, but all of them were stamped with Hauge's burning decisiveness for Christ. They composed as near as can be described a country-wide Christian *birkebeinerflokk*.²

Hauge's preaching

Hauge noted the following Bible quotation from Ezekiel 1:4 in his journal: "I looked, and I saw a windstorm coming out of the north - an immense cloud with flashing lightning and surrounded by brilliant light". Hauge interpreted this to be a description of the effect of his preaching. When he traveled around Norway, he presented the message of Christianity as a total challenge to the individual. Body, soul and spirit should be under the control of God's Spirit. Repentance was the means to a totally transformed life. The demand of repentance challenged the whole person with emphasis on the conscience and the life of the will. From the first moment onwards one of Hauge's foundational thoughts was that "no power lies in feelings, God looks on the heart". Blessed thoughts and lip- service to the Christian life were

² *Birkebeiner*: lit. 'birch legs'. Men named after the strips of birch they wrapped around their leggings to keep them in place. Members of a party in 12th and 13th century civil wars in Norway that supported the claim of Sverre to the throne of Norway against the claims of his rival, Erling Skakke and his son Magnus who was supported by the 'Bagler' (clerical) party. Significant use of metaphor in this case, as Hauge and his 'common rabble' ranged themselves against the 'clergy' who were not fulfilling their divine calling.

not enough – Hauge was of the opinion that even people that were not ‘born again’ could live outwardly as Christians – change had to be real and come from the heart. Hauge called those who took on board this total challenge to be "of our mind". He looked upon laziness and an indolent lifestyle as sins on a level with adultery and drunkenness.

There was a fervor in Hauge's preaching that had strong effects. He says himself:

It was as if there was a fire in me such that I couldn't remain silent, especially when many people came to listen. Whenever I later on used to think if I had spoken correctly, I had to ask the most enlightened friends about my talk. Not only these, but also my adversaries admitted that I spoke meticulously and followed the teaching of Christ.

In his collection of sermons Hauge cries out:

Let us think about how we shall be so ready so God's Spirit can fall on our hearts. We read at on the Day of Pentecost the disciples were all gathered together. Therefore we must be a fellowship gathered in the Name of Jesus that prays to the Father for the gifts of the Holy Spirit and that prepares its hearts as the disciples did. They believed Jesus' words, loved Him sincerely and followed His call. Therefore they were cleansed and picked out to be His servants according to the Father's promise that they should receive power from on high and not leave Jerusalem until that happened. And God's promises do not fail. They heard a sound from heaven like a mighty wind that filled the whole house that they were gathered in. Tongues like fire settled on each one of them. Here we see the fire that Jesus promised to light on the earth. It fell then on Jesus' witnesses such that His promise that they should be baptized with the Holy Spirit became fulfilled. This happened so mightily that signs and miracles also happened, something that could perhaps happen still - yes, God's power could do that - but it is the unseen, inner miracles of the Spirit that are most clear to us. In what way this happens, can be told about by those who have welcomed them and been convinced by them. It is better to experience this than it is possible to express it with words. Those who are prepared by faith in the Word, called to be the Lord's servants and have received longing, desire and the fire of love for God; they become anointed by the Holy Spirit and overwhelmed by the mighty wind which pushes into the house of their hearts. They are filled with God's power and it lays itself like a fire on the tongue. They are made new by the flame of love that not only consumes and removes all sinful and useless words, but also lets the tongue be driven by the Spirit's gift that is given without limit. The tongue is given the ability to speak the Word with abundant outpouring and given all spiritual languages or different expressions. They can explain the Scriptures, convince others about God's righteous anger over sin and God's grace towards those would repent. The disciples were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other languages according to what the Spirit gave them. This gift is poured out in abundance by God's Spirit when the Lord sees that the people are capable of bearing it.

Hauge wanted Christians to live according to biblical teaching again. His sermon on Acts 8:14-17 goes right to the point:

In our fellowship we ought to do the same as these apostles who came down to pray for them, that they might receive the Holy Spirit, for it had still not fallen upon them although they were baptized in the Name of the Lord Jesus. Then the apostles laid their hands on them and they received the Holy Spirit. It therefore ought to be our first and highest work to unite ourselves with the Lord in prayer for the enlightenment, anointing and power of the Holy Spirit. For we can see from these words that one can both accept the word and be baptized without receiving the Holy Spirit. Yes, we here in our time are all baptized and receive the Name of Christ. But people chase the anointing Spirit away from themselves. Not only do they stand against His power in their hearts, but they also disrespect the truths of the Word in their outer nature such that nothing manages to enlighten and lead them. The Word is the means by which God's Spirit prepares a place in the person's heart so that it can take up residence there. The Word cleans out evil and is like the sharp sword that pushes between marrow and bone and judges the thoughts of the heart and divides good from evil. Each and every person can experience this as soon as he believes and welcomes the Word. Then evil becomes something he hates; he is saddened and grieves his impurity. Now he is baptized internally with the cleansing of his soul in the same way as water cleans externally...



Hans Nielsen Hauge. The only known original portrait of the preacher, thought to have been painted during a visit to Copenhagen in 1800.

Resistance

Not surprisingly, Hauge experienced strong resistance to his work. Theological journals and newspapers berated Hauge and his teachings. Despite this, Hauge used the New Testament and Martin Luther's writings, to show that there would always be resistance when the true gospel was preached and thus the preacher should possess an unshakeable peace and victorious love.

The people that opposed Hauge were often subject to fits of rage. In a book describing his travels and adventures, Hauge writes:

... the second time I was hit was by a school teacher who had a proud spirit and wrong convictions. With intense anger and profanity he attacked me with derision. I said to him that we should not swear and that the Commandment teaches us not to do such a thing. He hit out at me and would have taken me to the door himself even though it was not in his own house. However, I asked him to wait until I had paid the hostess for my bed and breakfast. I did this and allowed myself a little time to button my coat. I said that it was good to be well dressed when it was cold, in the same way as to be equipped the love of Christ in such a way that I could pray for those who assaulted and persecuted me. This touched his heart in such a way that he was compelled to wish me well on my journey, although it was with a moan.

Another time Hauge describes how he spoke with some priests:

They posed me various questions. Among other things one of them asked why God did not send His Spirit over our forefathers as well as over my fellow believers and I. I returned the question by asking who were God's advisors or to whom did He give anything such that he could demand it back again? When the priests remained silent, a precentor arrived and showed his anger and said I was tearing down everything that he had built up over the years. I asked how he had built seeing that it could fall so quickly. Their building surely couldn't be built on the rock.

Awhile after Hauge reached the town of Trondheim, a notice was read out in church saying that lay preachers should meet with the Dean and the Bishop. Hauge met with them and answered all their questions. The Dean was hard of hearing and assumed Hauge was proving to be unyielding. Towards the end of the hearing, the Dean was overcome by his feelings and complained that Hauge had drawn the hearts of the parish away from him. Hauge being handed over to the local administrative officer who arrested him.

Hauge was imprisoned on Christmas Eve 1799 despite the fact thirty six witnesses had sworn on oath that no collection had been taken and no intoxicating liquor had been served during Hauge's gatherings. In the evening the church bells rang in Christmas over the town and the Council House Jail in Kongensgate.

Before the evening was at an end Hauge had finished writing a hymn. The first verse translates as follows:

*I am by grace with God,
How can the world hurt me?
If it receives advice a while
Shuts me in and bars my way,
If it binds my body
In the prison's dark hiding place,
Even so the Spirit shall win
And I shall keep a happy Christmas time.*

In the days that followed Hauge set to work on a letter in reply to his hearing to the Dean.

The letter to the Dean

Hauge's letter to the Dean of Trondheim reads as follows:

As I didn't get to answer you during our conversation, due to your lack of hearing. I must therefore take the liberty to answer you in this way. You talked to me about the false prophets who were about go out and about a lying spirit in the prophet's mouth. We will recognize falsehood by its fruits and there are enough liars in these times. For they have rejected the Lord's Word such that it is seldom or never mentioned. What truth can these people possess? To test the spirits is not to imprison them. We were called up to see you and then imprisoned. It happens now as before. We read about the Christians' struggles and Jesus' words that He has not come to bring peace, even if He has the message of peace, but the enemy stands against it and will not welcome it and come to terms with God. May the Lord preserve me, and all who seek His will, from turning aside. It could have appeared that I was defiant in my answers to my Lord, the Bishop, but the Lord is over us all and has no regard for persons. We read about Jesus' conversations with His friends in John 8 and Matthew 23. He did not seek nor defend His own glory, because then it was nothing, but He advanced God's cause. I have never asked anyone to love me, because mutual love certainly follows whenever God is put first in one's life. You touched my heart with your meek and grief-filled speech, perhaps you in your old age hold tighter to God's Word than many young clergy who are self-assured and forsake it. Surely they understand some of faith's foundation and recognize that this sinful life here leads to eternal death if we don't repent? Yes, if only they could get a foretaste of that eternal good and be uplifted in the Spirit to love God.

Then Hauge recounts his own testimony of God's grace and finishes with the following words:

I wish that you would think on, try and weigh up these simple words without bitterness or misunderstanding. If anything is wrong, then correct it and affirm what is good.

I am your willing servant, H. N. Hauge.

The Dance Party

When Hauge was arrested in Hallingdal, the sheriff wanted to have some fun at the expense of the 'holy' lay preacher. They sent a notorious girl into the prison to tempt Hauge. He looked her in the eyes and spoke a few words to her, at which she burst into tears over her sins. Despite this the sheriff persisted. He sent a group of youths into the jail house with a fiddler so they all could dance. The sheriff's wife took Hauge by the hand and asked him to dance. Yes, he would dance if the fiddler would only play the right note. Then he began to lead the

singing of a hymn - "Now sin ought not rule in my flesh anymore with power and lordship, but be cast aside daily!" Hauge described the effect of the hymn as follows:

The sheriff's wife let go of my hand and the dance stopped. I, however, read and spoke to the people present such that the fiddler and the others began to feel sorry for me because I had been treated in such a way. Others cried and wished they were like me.

Imprisonments

From the day of his vision in 1796 through until 1814 Hauge spent more days as in prison than he did free and able to preach. He was arrested 11 times and his last imprisonment lasted ten years. Hauge's first arrest was in Frederikstad. The sheriff there hoped that the soldiers' crudity and swearing would bring Hauge to his senses, but the outcome was the contrary:

I got into conversation with some of the soldiers and my words caused some of them to think such that they cried over their sins. On the other hand, others became very angry and threatened to put a wooden stake in my mouth to shut me up, in addition to threatening to tie me up and strike me. I said that I had never seen anyone be treated in such a fashion and nothing therefore came of their threats. But they threw me in a hole called 'Buret'. I sang in there and the soldiers were moved as they listened to me.

After eight years' of traveling and preaching Hauge was imprisoned for the tenth and final time and his writings were confiscated and banned. Hauge was transported to Christiania where he was put in a cell in the Council House cellar reserved for drunks, a terrible room with an earth floor and such water seepage that prisoners had even drowned in there. Later he was transferred to another secure location that can now be seen at the Bygdoy Folk Museum outside Oslo. Here he was confined to a small room that became the limit of his world for many years. During a series of court hearings Hauge was enticed and threatened to relinquish the Word of God, but his response was:

If I had 100 lives, they would all be willing to welcome chains. I am threatened with long imprisonment and also death, but prison will not last forever and death comes to us all some day. After that comes the judgment.

The last letter Hauge wrote to his circle of friends was written just before he entered three years of total isolation. He exhorted them thus:

Therefore endure suffering, let them put you in prison if God permits it. The wish I sent to the people is thus: I wish you well on the road of salvation. It is my prayer, my longing, my burden of care and my joy to find you in life eternal.

The first two years of Hauge's time of imprisonment were the worst. In the first year he was let out into the fresh air only three times. He was not permitted to read books and possess

writing implements until two years had passed. The inactivity and confinement broke Hauge's health.

The court case against Hauge was one of the longest running cases in the history of Norway with over 600 testimonies. The case gradually became a scandal, even by the criteria of the time. The day before Christmas Eve 1814 Hauge was freed after being sentenced to pay 1000 riksdaler to the Christiania Poor Box. That day he wrote the following in a radiant letter to his friends:

May my soul praise the Lord and all that is in me praise His holy Name. All these years have given my life a happy, cheerful and blessed peace.

A life's manifest

In one of Hauge's last religious tracts called *A Testimony about the Excellence of the Christian Religion* he wrote the following manifest of his life:

I confess, therefore, that which is my utter conviction, my true experience and conviction in my inner being. I am 52 years old and have tasted Christianity's joy and strength, which had enabled me to leave my father's house and to offer up my body's peace and my worldly goods. I have put my life in danger of death many times, wandered alone through and over many wild woods and fells. Other times I have been among unfamiliar people and tested what it is to want and to have excess. I have seen many loathsome forms of sin. But in all this, nothing has been able to disturb the peace and the divine joy I have through the teaching of Christendom, that is at one with my consciousness, in that that I only want to live according to its command. My heart has held to this alone. I have confidently surrendered myself to God's leading and protection and He has been my secure refuge. Yes, I can assure you, my dear fellow men, that I in the darkest of prisons, where I have sat for my testimony's sake, right here have I had the spiritual joys that exceed all the world's glory and joy. I also testify to you, by the all-knowing God, at nothing, absolutely nothing has given people true happiness and peace, with the strength to live a pure life, than the faith Jesus preached. In a miraculous way, power is granted to all those who receive it in their inner being, such that their souls become sanctified by His reconciliation. From this flows that purity and that friendship that far exceeds all other morals and friendships in the worlds. Let us hasten after this grace and be united in true faith, only then are we truly happy. Let it happen!

Follow Jesus

Hauge spent his last years on a farm near Christiania. Here he wrote books, preached the Word, gave advice and cultivated the earth. In his *Testament to my Friends*, written at this time, Hauge bade the Haugians to remain within the Lutheran Church, and he stressed the importance of living by God's Word.

Many people came to speak with Hauge, including bishops and priests. When one of the bishops saw Hauge, bent in body, he later had to admit that Hauge had suffered for Christ's sake.

Some months before he died, Hauge experienced a further spiritual renewal. In a letter to his friends, he wrote:

This last Sunday I experienced a powerful effect in my heart that I have not known in such a living way for many years.

Towards the end of his life Hauge was bedridden. Nevertheless when he heard that people had come to visit him, he asked for his clothes. He was led to a sofa the visitors came in. Then he began to talk with a very quiet voice:

I am weak now, my friends. I think that I will soon be separated from you. I hope my time is passing. God has been good to me.

After a teacher had sung a spiritual song, Hauge picked up the Bible, read a chapter and preached powerfully such that his illness was unnoticeable. When he had finished, he sank down onto the sofa again and requested that he be helped back to his bed

Early in the morning, some weeks later, Hauge died, almost 53 years old. The last words that came from his lips were: *Follow Jesus! O, You are the eternal loving God!*

Community based projects.

The Haugian revival had a positive effect not only in the spiritual situation in Norway, but also in the economic, social and political arenas. The Haugians became the first people's movement in Norway that was organized independently the State. This network was undoubtedly one factors that contributed to Haugian's success in the community and in business. Officials, who had been among Hauge's most staunch opponents, later attested to the Haugians' good conduct. In many cases this was because everywhere that Hauge's movement advanced, drunkenness retreated.

There were three Haugians at the Assembly of the Notables at Eidsvoll in 1814 and in a letter to his friends written in October 1814, Hauge wrote proudly that "Four of our brothers are in the Storting and have helped form our Kingdom's Constitution." The influence of Haugians was great in the Parliaments of the nineteenth century.

The Haugian revival was first and foremost a farmers' revival and it is therefore reasonable to find traces of its effects in the livelihood they were involved in. All Norwegian historians are in agreement that there was an increase in productivity in Norwegian agriculture in the first half of the 1800's. A source of this is the Haugian farmers who overcame the apathy of traditionalism with new ideas and independent thinking. The country districts that were stationary in terms of development and lacking in any impulse to do so were set in action by the Haugian movement. Due to Hauge's background in farming, the farmers identified with

him and the suggestions he produced. In this way a slow modernization and re-organization took place in agricultural practices.

During his many journeys, Hauge got a very good insight into Norwegian geography and economic conditions. He knew how to convert this knowledge into practical action. His thought was that good Christian practice led to busy hands and economic enterprise. Hauge had a unified view of life in which faith and everyday life belonged together. He combined the seeds of faith with the seeds of enterprise. One should be, as he said, "God's child in all necessary tasks."

Hauge had good organizational abilities and started a series of business concerns including a corn shipping business in Bergen, a paper factory at Eiker and at Fenefoss, a brick works at Eeg in Kristiansand, a printer shop and newspaper in Kristiansand, a mill in Sunnfjord and in Strudshaven near Bergen. The Solberg spinning work in Drammen is still in operation today. In the famine year of 1809 Hauge was set free from prison to establish various salt works. Salt was important because it was the only preserving medium people had in those days. Later, despite his status as a prisoner, he was appointed as the public administrator of the 'poor fund' in Christiania. Such was Hauge's reputation as an honest and successful organizer.

The Haugian Revival also created a thirst for knowledge. The desire to read and to go to school was strengthened by people wanting to read Hauge's books and the Bible. Hauge produced 17 books, the combined number of copies issued being estimated as somewhere between 200,000 and 250,000. For a long period Hauge was the country's most well read author, Even though the books were imperfect in style and form, the openness and warmth in his writing appealed to his readers. Hauge's books inspired other people to write, there being seventy registered Haugian authors in the early eighteenth century. Grøndahl and Dreyer, Norway's country's oldest publishing firm and was founded by the Haugian Christopher Grøndahl in 1812. Hauge also showed he valued education by giving financial support to help found the university in Christiania.

The Haugian movement encompassed the whole of Norway, and this resulted in the perspective of the farming community being lifted from local to national level. This eventually led to the integration of the farming community and factory workers into the political life of the emerging nation and was reflected in the formation of various political parties that subsequently became represented in the Storting. The Haugians worked in a visionary and holistic way. Gradually they caused spiritual renewal in a large part of the inner life of the church in Norway and their example formed an important foundation for voluntary Christian work. The priests held the Haugians at a distance until the 1850's. Then the Haugian movement changed form and built up the new inner-mission and overseas missionary movements that had begun to spring up in Norway.

All these factors indicate that Hans Nielsen Hauge had a very great influence on Christian life of the Norwegian nation.

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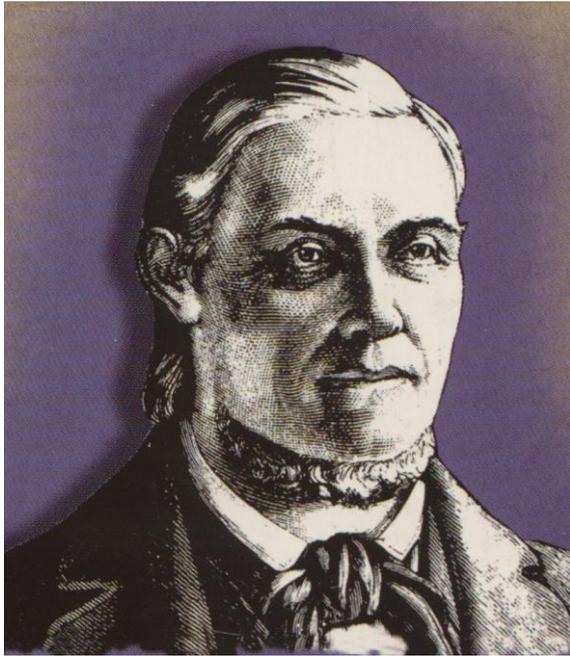
Appendix: Portraits of Hauge



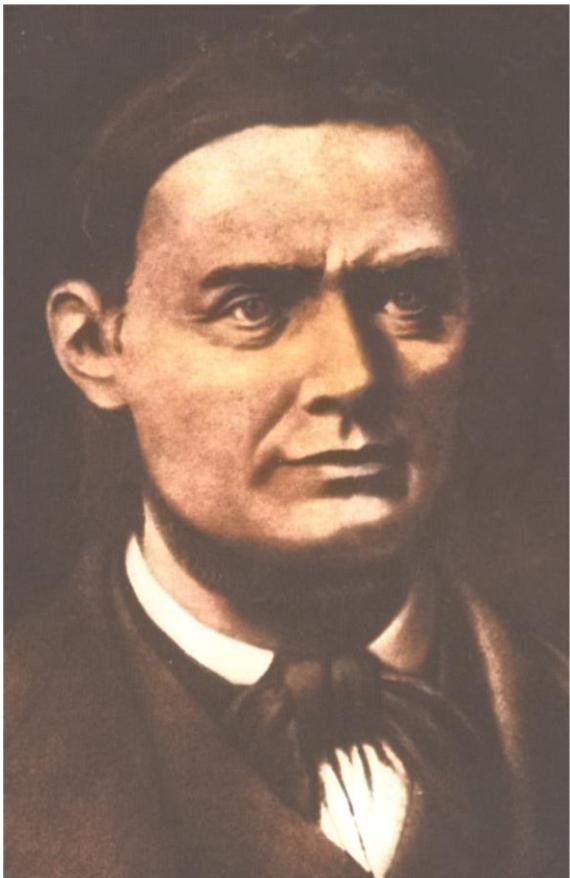
1. The only know original portrait of Hauge, thought to have been painted in Copenhagen in 1800.



2. A painting of Hauge from Elverhøy church in Tromsø. Hauge visited this church which was built in 1801-1803. The original church building stood on the site of the current cathedral and was later moved to Elverhøy.



3. A portrait of Hauge by Johan Nordhagen



4. A portrait of Hauge from America printed in "Mindebog om Hans Nielsen Hauge" edited by Rølvaag and Wee, Minneapolis (1929). Reproduced from S. Ravnåsen, "Ånd og hånd" (2002).