

# Hans Schou and BC Ledebøer



Two leading figures in the ILAE during this period were Hans Jacob Schou (1886–1952) and Bernard Christian Ledebøer (1897–1955). Schou was administrative and medical head of the Philadelphia colony in Denmark and a highly respected physician. He published monographs on syphilis, the physiology of feelings and the physiology on manic depression (a condition from which he himself suffered). Schou was a deeply religious man and a pillar of the Danish Christian community. He was also a committed eugenicist, and his support for the compulsory sterilisation on the mentally handicapped in the 1930s carried great weight because of his authority much to the dismay of the increasingly outnumbered humanistic opponents of the scheme. He was officially the editor of *Epilepsia* during the war years, but because of the difficulties of communication at that time in fact almost all the editorial work was carried out by Lennox.



The Philadelphia epilepsy colony, Denmark

BC Ledebøer was a larger than life personality. He was appointed medical director of the Centre for Epilepsy Heemstede in Holland in 1930. It was he who imported the first Grass EEG machine into the Netherlands and he made various important contributions to the social aspects of epilepsy. He skillfully engineered the safety of his patients to Heemstede during the German occupation, by arranging their transfers home or to secure hiding places. He joined the ILAE in 1946 as vice-president and was appointed secretary-general from 1949–1957. He had a rather turbulent private life and a high-profile divorce suit resulted in his forced resignation from Heemstede and he left both this position and the ILAE in a disgruntled mood. It is said that the ILAE archives prior to 1960 disappeared with him.