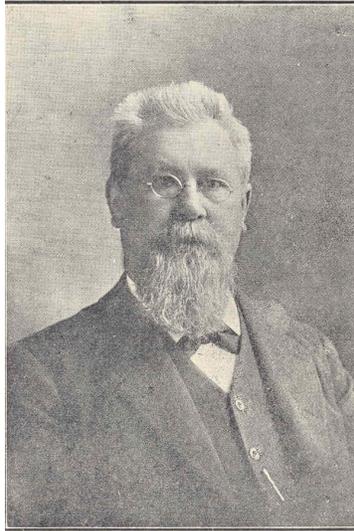


**Across Oceans, Across Time ® ...**  
**Stories from the Family History & Genealogy Center ...**



*Konsul H. H. Birkholm*

One of the early residents of San Francisco was a native of Ærøskøbing, Captain **Hans Hansen Birkholm**. Born into a seafaring family in 1847, it was only natural that young Hans would go to sea as well. After acquiring his first mate's credentials in Denmark Hans traveled to San Francisco for the first time in 1869, where he was introduced to and became good friends with John Simpson (Johannes Siemsen), a former sea captain who had settled in the city shortly after the Civil War as a businessman and who was active in Danish organizations in the city. Based in San Francisco, Birkholm sailed for several years along the West Coast, and then returned to Denmark, where he married his childhood sweetheart, Marie Caroline Brandt. The couple returned to the San Francisco Bay area in 1879, where their three sons, Peter, Harry and Charles were born. In 1887, Birkholm gave up the sea and opened a hotel on Market Street in San Francisco, the Yosemite House, which was one of the many Danish businesses that fell prey to the Great Fire that followed the 1906 earthquake.

The Danish government assigned its first Consul to San Francisco in 1848 to provide representation for the crews of the large number of Danish ships which made port there and the increasing number of Danish-born individuals who became residents in the aftermath of the gold rush. Birkholm joined the ranks of this prestigious group on May 1, 1898, when he succeeded his old friend, John Simpson, in the office. After the destruction of his hotel he devoted himself solely to consular affairs until 1910, when he asked to step down due to ill-health. He died on January 3, 1912.

Marie Caroline Brandt Birkholm had several siblings who were also early emigrants to California. Her brothers Charles and Martin Brandt were sea captains based in Eureka, and two sisters, Mrs. Andrea Nissen and Mrs. Laura S. Eschen, also settled in the state.