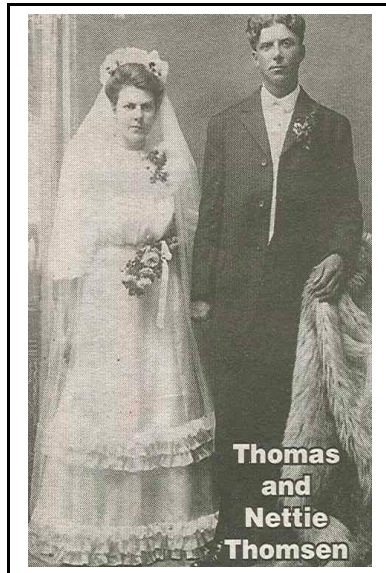


Across Oceans, Across Time[®] ...

Stories from the Family History & Genealogy Center ...



Family heirlooms can take many different guises. Jewelry, recipes, flowers and special knowledge or skills are often passed from one generation to the next; occasionally a piece of wearing apparel is spared the ravages of time and finds use in future generations. Such is the case with Nettie's wedding dress. Seventy-five years separates these two wedding photographs; the brides, their bouquets and hairpieces are different, but the wedding dress is the same. The Thomsen wedding dress began its journey on June 28, 1906, when Danish immigrant Thomas B. Thomsen married Iowa native Agnete "Nettie" Johnson in the newly-constructed Lutheran church in Kimballton. The 3pm ceremony, reportedly one of the most elaborate weddings ever seen in western Audubon County, was followed by a reception and wedding feast for three hundred guests at the home of the bride's parents, Mr. and Mrs. Hans Johnson. As evening fell on that mid-summer day, the young people danced to the Kjar Brothers' orchestra on a special pavilion platform set up on the lawn at the bride's former home. Thomas and Nettie then settled down on a farm in Sharon Township and raised a large family. In 1930 their daughter Edna wore her mother's gown for her wedding. In 1981 the treasured dress was once again brought out for the wedding of Nettie's granddaughter, Dawn Thomsen, when she married David Schueman, in Avoca, Iowa. The Museum would like to learn of other family treasures passed down through Danish-American families.