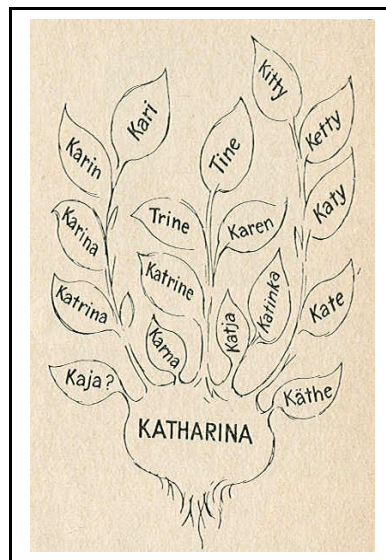
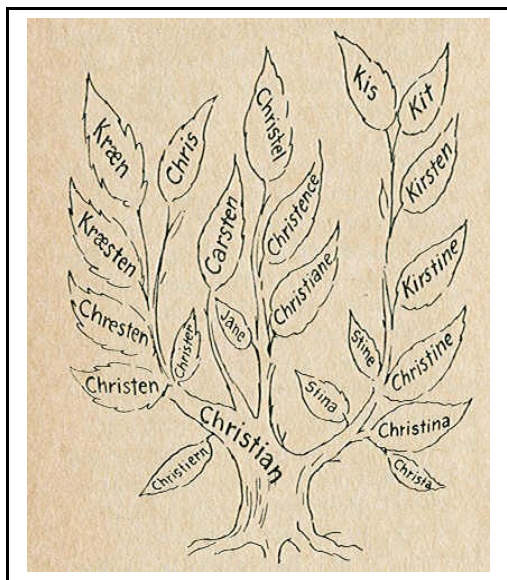


## Across Oceans, Across Time® ...

### Stories from the Family History & Genealogy Center ...



**Danish given names**, like their English counterparts, have come from a variety of sources. Formerly, a relatively small pool of names was used in Denmark, which accounts for what seems like every other immigrant ancestor answering to Hans Christian, Niels Peter or Ane Marie. Some Danish names (Mikkell, Jonas, Marie, Sara) were Hebrew in origin or came from Latin or Greek (Abelone, Bent, Laura, Martinus). Other names, such as Knud, Bodil, Halvor, and Dagmar were derived from Old Norse, while Valdemar and Monika entered the Danish language from the Slavic languages, usually via Germany. Names such as Magdalene, Johanne, Rasmus, and Anders are Danish variants of names found throughout Europe. Girls' names might be created from their male counterparts (Frederikke and Julia from Frederik and Julius), and over time many names spawned variants or diminutive versions, as can be seen from the two examples above.

Prior to the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century Danish children were rarely given overtly English names such as Henry, John or Mary, but today, especially with the popularity of the Danish Crown Princess, they are not unusual. While modern Danish names are much more varied than in the past, government guidelines still mandate what names are acceptable and which cannot be used. The Personal Name Law, originally passed to regulate surnames, is designed to protect children from being given silly or faddish names that might subject them to ridicule or abuse. One cannot, for example, arbitrarily name a child after a fruit or geographical location or use a surname as a given name. Names not on an approved list must be submitted to Copenhagen University's Names Investigation Department and at the Ministry of Ecclesiastical Affairs, which has the final say.

### The Danish Immigrant Museum

*Your Museum in the Heart of the Continent*

Box 470, Elk Horn, Iowa 51531

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