

Across Oceans, Across Time® ...

Stories from the Family History & Genealogy Center ...



Although many families immigrated as a group or sequentially, typically with a wife and children following the household head, numerous other families were torn apart when family members decided to emigrate, never to see each other again. Such was the case with the family of **Anton Christensen** and **Sørine Madsen**, of Lading near Harlev in Århus County, pictured here. Of the couple's six children, the three sons decided to try their luck in North America. The two eldest, **Karl** and **Mads Christian**, sailed separately from Liverpool and Kristiania (Oslo) in 1911, followed by **Anders** a few years later. Mads settled down in Fairmount, North Dakota, eventually marrying a Danish girl, but also spent time in Minnesota and East Bay, Manitoba. Carl too worked in both the US and Canada before making a home near East Bay, marrying a non-Danish-speaking wife. Due to World War I, the vagaries of agricultural economics in North America, and the Great Depression they were never able to make the longed-for journey back to Denmark to reconnect with the family they left behind. Their infrequent letters and cards to parents and siblings over the following two decades (Mads and Anders both died in the early 1930s, Carl in 1965), preserved by later generations in Denmark, were often filled with longing and requests for news. They were the only means for family members in Denmark to follow what happened in their lives and fortunes, and vice versa. Such collections of letters provide unique and important documentation for family, immigration and cultural history. Donation to archives, libraries, and museums of originals or copies of immigrant correspondence, known collectively as "America letters," ensures that the information they contain will be preserved for future generations to

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