

Register of the

Olsen Family

Collection

Collection 66

Center for Adventist Research
James White Library
Andrews University
Berrien Springs, MI 49104-1440
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Processed by: Denis Kaiser

Olsen Family Collection

Collection 66

Scope and Content

The collection contains materials on several members of the Olsen family, a prominent Seventh-day Adventist family, plus some material on Adventist work in Wisconsin in the 19th century and early years of the 20th century.

The family in the United States began when Andrew Olsen (1816-1908) and Bertha Andrews Olsen (1823-1879) immigrated from Norway about 1850 and settled near Oakland (now Atkinson), Wisconsin. Andrew and Bertha grew up in the Lutheran Church but when they came to the United States, they attended the services of the Methodist Church. Having heard about the seventh-day Sabbath while still in Norway, after immigrating they studied the Bible and came to the conclusion that the seventh-day Sabbath was the correct day of rest. Thus they started to keep the Sabbath, and when more and more people started to keep the Sabbath word went around so that Seventh-day Adventist ministers came and an Adventist Church was established.

The oldest son, Ole Andres (1845-1915) eventually became the president of the General Conference from 1888 to 1897. M. E. Olsen was one of O. A. Olsen's two sons.

Martin Mathias, the fifth of nine children, was born about 1855 at Oakland, Wisconsin. It seems that Martin became a member of the Adventist Church at the age of eleven. Beginning in 1871, he worked for some time at the Battle Creek Sanitarium in Michigan. In 1876 he received his ministerial license, and five years later he married Karen Hansen. They had one child, Della, who later married Junias Hansen; and they also adopted a boy, Lio. Martin, in 1889, attended the Scandinavian course at Battle Creek College. The same year he was sent to Denmark where he was first in charge of the school in Copenhagen. Later he became principal at the school in Frederikshavn for two years, and afterwards he began to work among the churches in Denmark. For two years he served as conference president and at the same time as editor of the church periodical, *Trøstermanden*. In 1922 he worked for several months in Estonia. Later he worked several years in the West Danish Conference. The date of his death could not be verified but some sources mention the year 1950.

The Danish book *Minder og Erfaringer* by Martin M. Olsen (1936) was translated into English (*Memories and Experiences*) by Dyre Dyreson in 1978. The book contains information on the history and experiences in the lives of Olsen's parents and siblings.

Arrangement

Since the materials which comprise this collection were donated over a period of three years, there was no arrangement to the collection before processing began. Now, the collection is basically categorized by writings, personal belongings, and additional materials on the donation.

Provenance

Mrs. M. M. Karr (granddaughter on M. M. Olsen?) donated this collection to the Andrews University Center for Adventist Research between June 1976 and September 1979.

Use

All users of this collection are required to complete the "Application to Use Unpublished Records," and to observe the regulation specified in the "Patron Agreement" and "Researcher's Code of Conduct." All records in this collection are open and available for research. Citation for this collection:

Box ____, Folder ____, Olsen Family Collection (collection 66), Center for Adventist Research, James White Library, Andrews University, Berrien Springs, MI.

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Articles

- Bx 1 Fld 1 O. A. Olsen, "Another Faithful Laborer Fallen [J. G. Matteson]," *Review and Herald*, April 14, 1896, 234.

Correspondence

- Bx 1 Fld 2 O. A. Olsen to Andrew Olsen, January 2, 1907 [found in the Danish Bible].

Obituary Card

- Bx 1 Fld 3 Obituary Card of Andrew Olsen (1816-1908).

Publications

- Bx 1 Fld 4 Martin Mathias Olsen, *Minder og Erfaringer* (København: n.p., [1936]).
- Bx 1 Fld 5 *Bibelen eller Den hellige Skrift* (Kjøbenhavn: British and Foreign Bible Society, 1886) [gift from Mahlon Ellsworth Olsen (1873-1952), March 16, 1900, to Andrew Olsen]

Photos

Family Photos

- Bx 1 Fld 6 Photos of the Olsen Family
Andrew Olsen and Bertha Andrews Olsen, O. A. Olsen, Sarah Olsen, Esther Olsen, Andrew B. Olsen, Martin Mathias Olsen, Edward Gunder Olsen, Jane Elmer Cash, Anna Olsen, Albert J. Olsen, Elizabeth Hanson Olsen, and a few others.
- Photo of the old Olsen Home in Oakland, Wisc. (now Fort Atkinson) about 1886.
- Cemetery at the Church in Oakland, Wisc., where Andrew Olsen was buried.
- Photo of Edward Peterson (Esther Olsen Peterson's son?).

General Pictures

- Bx 1 Fld 7 Three stereoscopic photographs
Norwegian camp meeting (people include: Ellen G. White, W. C. White, and J. H. Waggoner).
Battle Creek Sanitarium.
People in front of a house.
Photo of a man and his daughter (?) [mistakenly identified on the photograph as John N. Andrews and Mary Andrews].
- Bx 1 Fld 8 Group Photo of the Wisconsin Workers (people include: Fred Olsen, N. A. Nilsen, P. M. Hansen, C. Reed).
- Bx 1 Fld 9 Photo of Annual Seventh-day Adventist State Convention at Wausau, Wisconsin, June 20-30, 1912.

Additional Documents

- Bx 1 Fld 10 Handwritten notes by Mrs. M. M. Karr (June 1976) on:
Martin Mathias Olsen's book *Minder og Erfaringer*.
O. A. Olsen's work in the Green Bay area (1870s).
Andrew Olsen in the Green Bay area and Oakland, Wisconsin, 1906-1908.
Birth and death dates of various family members.
Handwritten notes by Louise Dederen or Joseph G. Smoot regarding the donation process for this collection.

❖ ❖ ❖ ❖ **The End** ❖ ❖ ❖ ❖