

# Bertha (Josephsen) Anderson Autobiography, 1862-1955

## Overview of the Collection

<b>Creator</b>	Bertha (Josephsen) Anderson
<b>Title</b>	Bertha (Josephsen) Anderson Autobiography
<b>Dates</b>	1862-1955 (inclusive) 1862 1955
<b>Quantity</b>	1 file (1 folder), ()
<b>Collection Number</b>	OPVSIEmss_2 (collection)
<b>Summary</b>	Autobiography of Danish immigrant Bertha (Josephsen) Anderson
<b>Repository</b>	<a href="#">Pacific Lutheran University, Archives and Special Collections</a> Archives and Special Collections Pacific Lutheran University 12180 Park Avenue South Tacoma, Washington 98447 Telephone: 253-535-7586 Fax: 253-535-7315 <a href="mailto:archives@plu.edu">archives@plu.edu</a>
<b>Access Restrictions</b>	The autobiography is available for research.
<b>Languages</b>	English

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## Biographical Note

Bertha Josephsen was born on 6 December 1862 in Frederikssund, Sjælland, Denmark, to Niels Josephsen and Maren (Willums-datter) Josephsen. Bertha Josephsen was the third of seven children. The family owned a hotel and later moved to a farm near Fredericksvard. The children were educated in public schools and also helped out on the farm along with hired men. Bertha was sent to a large dairy farm on the island of Fyn when she was eighteen. Here she met her future husband, Peter Anderson, and they were engaged for nearly two years before marrying on 17 August 1883. After Bertha and Peter were married, they moved to a farm near Bertha's home. Their first child, Mary, was born in 1884, and following that they had a son, Niels, in 1885, and another daughter, Dagmar, in 1888. After three of Bertha's brothers moved to America, the family decided to emigrate as well, traveling across the Atlantic to New York in a large ship, and going by train and stagecoach to Sidney, Montana, where they homesteaded. The family faced many complications while settling in during the first few years, including food shortages during the winter, paying off debts, battling prairie fires, unexpected encounters with Native Americans, and a lack of close neighbors or facilities to go to for help. After 1898, Bertha's mother and thirteen other relatives joined them in Montana. Bertha and Peter had eight children in all. Bertha was active in helping new settlers in the area and she and her family played a great role in establishing a Danish Lutheran Church in the area, and were founding members of the town of Sidney, Montana. Bertha Anderson died in April of 1955 in Salt Lake City and was buried next to her husband in the cemetery in Sidney.

## Content Description

The collection consists of an autobiography written by Bertha (Josephsen) Anderson between 1936 and 1939. Two different copies of the autobiography are available; one is a shorter printed version, and the second is a longer typewritten version. It details her life history, including her birth and early years in Denmark, marriage, and emigration to America, pioneering experiences, family life, and descendants. It also contains information on the settlement and activities in the west, the role of religion during the time, the history of many organizations in and around Sidney, Montana, and general notes on life as a pioneer.

## Use of the Collection

### Restrictions on Use

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### Preferred Citation

Life History of Mrs. Bertha (Josephsen) Anderson, The Scandinavian Immigrant Experience, OPVSIEmss\_2, Archives and Special Collections, Pacific Lutheran University, 12180 Park Avenue South, Tacoma, WA 98447

## Administrative Information

### Location of Collection

Box 1 File 2

### Preservation Note

### Custodial History

### Acquisition Information

Donated by the Anderson Family

### Bibliography

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## Names and Subjects

**Subject Terms :**

Danish Americans  
Denmark -- Emigration and immigration

**Personal Names :**

Anderson, Bertha Josephsen--Archives  
Anderson, Peter  
Josephsen, Carl  
Josephsen, Louis

**Family Names :**

Anderson Family  
Josephsen Family

**Geographical Names :**

Salt Lake City (Utah)  
Fyn (Denmark)  
Glendive (Mont.)  
Kenmare (N.D.)  
Sidney (Mont.)  
Sjælland (Denmark)  
Yellowstone River

**Form or Genre Terms :**

Autobiography

**Occupations :**

Farmers

**Titles within the Collection :**

Life History of Mrs. Bertha (Josephsen) Anderson  
My Life History

Finding aid prepared by Kerstin Ringdahl and P. Dearing  
2011