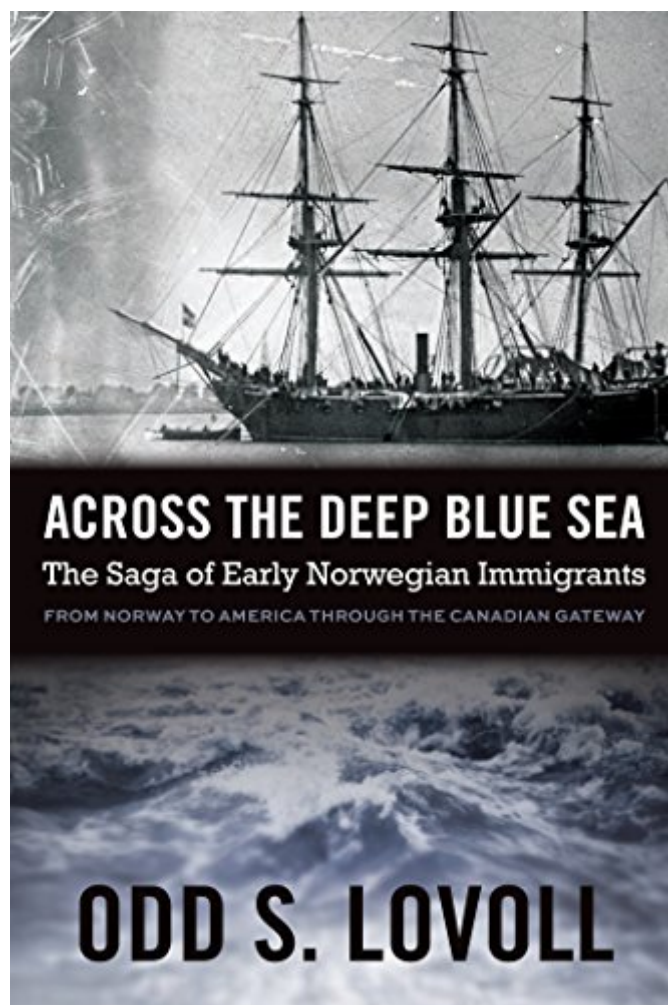


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Across The Deep Blue Sea: The Saga Of Early Norwegian Immigrants



Synopsis

Across the Deep Blue Sea investigates a chapter in Norwegian immigration history that has never been fully told before. Odd S. Lovoll relates how Quebec, Montreal, and other port cities in Canada became the gateway for Norwegian emigrants to North America, replacing New York as the main destination from 1850 until the late 1860s. During those years, 94 percent of Norwegian emigrants landed in Canada. After the introduction of free trade, Norwegian sailing ships engaged in the lucrative timber trade between Canada and the British Isles. Ships carried timber one way across the Atlantic and emigrants on the way west. For the vast majority landing in Canadian port cities, Canada became a corridor to their final destinations in the Upper Midwest, primarily Wisconsin and Minnesota. Lovoll explains the establishment and failure of Norwegian colonies in Quebec Province and pays due attention to the tragic fate of the Gaspé settlement. A personal story of the emigrant experience passed down as family lore is retold here, supported by extensive research. The journey south and settlement in the Upper Midwest completes a highly human narrative of the travails, endurance, failures, and successes of people who sought a better life in a new land.

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Customer Reviews

Across the Deep Blue Sea: The Saga of Early Norwegian Immigrants by Odd S. Lovoll is a very highly recommended scholarly work. "The idea to seek a better future in America might have been planted by an individual, an innovator, based on news from America. The innovators in general belonged to the Norwegian farming class." Anyone who enjoys well presented research on Norwegian immigrants or is of Norwegian ancestry, should welcome this academic look at immigration in the mid 1800's, specifically the passage through Canada in the 1850s-1860. Lovoll gives an overview of Norwegian settlements in Illinois and Wisconsin before 1850 because these communities "became important magnets for Norwegian immigrants in the following decades." Many early immigrants came based on religious considerations and a desire to seek refuge from religious intolerance. "They sought a place where they could freely and without restrictions worship God." They were either "The Sloopers" who were Quakers (named after the type of boat they used) or Haugeans, followers of the great lay Lutheran preacher and revivalist Hans Nielsen Hauge. Clearly Canada encouraged the immigrants to use the route through Canada, offering rebates and an easier time getting on with their journey in comparison to NYC. I hadn't realized that Canada had a quarantine station too, Grosse Île, located in the St. Lawrence River some twenty-nine miles from Quebec City, where a doctor would come onboard the ship to examine the passengers. A "walk down to the customs house on the new docks in Christiania [Oslo], one would most likely catch sight of well-dressed bonde families, men, women, and children, waiting to be put onboard a ship.

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