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Across the Deep Blue Sea: The Saga of Early Norwegian Immigrants

Odd S. Lovoll

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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.

Odd S. Lovoll, professor emeritus of history at St. Olaf College and recipient of the Fritt Ords Honnør for his work on Norwegian immigration, is the author of numerous books, including *Norwegians on the Prairie* and *Norwegian Newspapers in America*.

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