

Finding Aid to the Iver Madson Papers

Madson, Iver 1839-1931

Iver Madson Papers, 1925-1955

.2 linear ft.

Collection number: Mss 507

[Biography](#)

[Scope and Content](#)

[Box and Folder List](#)

OVERVIEW

Access: The collection is open under the rules and regulations of the Institute.

Provenance: Donated by Madson and Mrs. William Cuthbertson, 1955 (Acc. 507)

Property rights: The Institute for Regional Studies owns the property rights to this collection.

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Citation: [Identification of item]. Iver Madson Papers, MS 507, Institute for Regional Studies, North Dakota State University, Fargo.

BIOGRAPHY

Iver Madson was born April 21, 1839 in Oens, Smedstrop, Denmark. Raised on a farm, at 16 he went to sea and for the next twelve years sailed all over the world. Then he went to New Zealand where he spent 4 years, driving ox teams, surveying, sailing, and mining for gold. In 1870 he finally returned to Denmark to a family that no longer recognized him. There he met an adventurous farm girl working as a tailor, named Christine Peterson, born June 4, 1848 in Denmark. On June 17, 1871 they were married, and immigrated to America.

At Fergus Falls, Minnesota, they started farming, but suffered from bad weather and grasshopper plagues, and finally learned their title to the farm wasn't valid. The Madsons rented a farm from G. S. Barnes in Glyndon for a year, then, in 1878 they established a homestead in Wheatland Township, Cass County,

Dakota Territory. There they raised ten children and became prosperous. Their farmhouse was known as the "lighthouse" because of a light kept burning in an upper window to guide travelers. Their home was frequently used by immigrants until they were established in their own homes.

Mr. Madson died February 23, 1931, and Mrs. Madson died February 21, 1934. Both are buried at Wheatland Cemetery. Mr. Madson was an elder in the Presbyterian Church and was treasurer of the school board for many years

SCOPE AND CONTENT

The collection contains a manuscript and subject files.

The [Manuscript Series](#), which is the Recollections of Mr. Iver Madson, was dictated to his daughter, Mrs. Marie McFall during the five years he was bedridden before his death. She made a handwritten copy of his words, which was given to the Institute. From this, a typewritten copy has been made, and both copies are in the collection. The manuscript covers Mr. Madson's life beginning with the time he went to sea at 16, for twelve years leading the rough, exciting life of a seaman all over the world. After that he spent four eventful years working in New Zealand, in 1870 returning to Denmark. The last part deals with his immigration to American with his bride, and their difficulties farming in Minnesota, until they went to Dakota Territory to homestead. In the subject files are obituaries and a couple of articles about Mr. and Mrs. Madson.

SEPARATIONS RECORD

The following non-manuscript items were removed from the Iver Madson Papers and sent to the section indicated.

Photographs (Institute Photograph Collection)

- 4 Mr. and Mrs. Madson, Russell and Marie McFall, Mrs. Madson in kitchen, Madson farmhouse
- 6 Various Wheatland residents

BOX AND FOLDER LIST

Box/Folder	Contents
1/1	Biographical material, and Finding aid
	Manuscript Series
	Recollections of Iver Madson (typed)
1/2	p. 1-45
1/3	p. 46-90
1/4	p. 91-135
1/5	p.136-181
	Recollections of Iver Madson (handwritten)
1/6	p. 2-52
1/7	p. 55-110

1/8 p. 111-160
1/9 p. 161-205
1/10 Newspaper clippings on the Madson family