



## Linka's Diary

### A Norwegian Immigrant Story in Word and Sketches

Marvin Slind & Gracia Grindal, editors

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*“What a comfort it is, knowing that the same God that guards sinful people in Norway, also lets his merciful arms reach out across the world!”*

**THE BOOK:** Caroline Dorothea Margrethe Keyser, known throughout most of her life as Linka, was born in Kristiansand, Norway, July 2, 1829. This book, combining a new translation of her diary and letters with her sketches, provides an important glimpse into the life of a prominent Norwegian immigrant in the mid-nineteenth century—an important set of historical documentation.

Most of the people in Norway whom Linka mentions in her diary are included in the *Norges Biografisk Leksikon*, which is essentially a “Who’s Who” of Norwegian society, including high-ranking leaders within the church. After her marriage to Hermann Preus in 1851, she emigrated to America where she had the general prestige of a pastor’s wife, which her husband’s rising position in the newly emerging Norwegian Synod quickly enhanced.

Linka’s diary is divided into four sections. The first reflects the observations of an adolescent, commenting on the events taking place around her. Some entries focus on significant developments affecting her family and friends, while others are little more than references to mundane daily occurrences. In the second section, she is a mature young woman, describing events related to her engagement, marriage, and emigration to America. The entries in the third section are sporadic. While she did not write in her diary often after she arrived in America, Linka increasingly documented her experiences and observations of events through her sketches (the fourth section).

Linka saved most of the letters she received from her friends among the pastors’ wives. Since these letters give an almost monthly record of what was happening in the lives of the women from 1854 to 1874, it is possible to read the sketches for a fuller sense of what was going on in each.

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