

The Norwegian-American
Historical Association

Northfield, Minnesota

NEWS



LETTER

From the Secretary's Office to the Association Members

NUMBER 39

APRIL 1969

Editor L. HUSTVEDT

The NAHA in 1968

Continued progress was the characteristic feature for the NAHA in 1968. The preparation of the late Dr. Agnes Larson's biography of John A. Johnson for publication has moved according to schedule. This book, *John A. Johnson: Uncommon American*, coming out in an edition of 2100 copies, will be available for distribution this month. Work has also been started on Volume 24 of *Studies*.

Archives

More materials than can be mentioned here have entered the Archives. Simon Johnson recently added to the collection his letters from O. E. Rølvaag. Since both men were noted immigrant authors, their correspondence is of great importance to Norwegian-American letters. Thomas A. Benson sent us a copy of his master's thesis, "The Norwegians in California, 1850-1900: A Preliminary Survey." Frank C. Nelson also provided us with a copy of his doctoral dissertation, "The American School Controversy among the Norwegian-Americans, 1845-1881." Both Mr. Benson and Mr. Nelson did research work in the Archives.

Book Sales

Book sales have remained steady, showing a total sale of \$1975.69. This is \$600 less than the record year of 1963. Since no new book came out during the calendar year of 1968, this figure represents the sale of formerly published books. The two most recent publications, *Rasmus Bjørn Anderson* and Volume 23 of *Studies* led the sales. Six out of our total of 48 publications are now out of print. Eleven publications have an inventory of less than 100.

Membership

A less heartening picture is the membership scene. A total of 96 new members were added, which is no small figure for it marks a membership growth of nearly ten per cent. An organization can hardly ask for more. The problem, however, is found in the large cancellation figure which, for unexplainable reasons, reached a total of 100. Thirty of those cancelled had been members for only one year. The importance of membership longevity should perhaps be stressed when new members are recruited. The membership figures as of December 31, 1968, are as follows: Associate 733, Sustaining 175, Patron 10, Life 133, Deceased Life 57. Total 1108.

The executive committee of the NAHA met in Chicago March 22, in order to plan the Fifteenth Triennial Meeting of the NAHA. It was decided to hold the meeting in Chicago on June 7. Mr. Truman Eddy, president of the Chicago National League, was appointed chairman of the planning committee. Details concerning this meeting will be treated fully in the next issue of the NEWSLETTER.

TREASURER'S REPORT, 1968

Receipts and Disbursements

BEGINNING CASH BALANCE, January 1, 1968\$11,364.45

RECEIPTS:

Life Membership Fees (Schedule 5)	\$ 550.00
Dues, associate and sustaining members	5,295.00
Book sales	2,501.76
Unrestricted gifts and bequests for current use (Schedule 6) ..	881.00
Interest on investments	1,352.71
Miscellaneous income	16.36
Gifts and bequests for document cases (Schedule 5)	15.00

Total receipts 10,611.83

TOTAL CASH AVAILABLE\$21,976.28

DISBURSEMENTS:

Publication expenses—

Printing and binding	\$4,322.16
Editorial, typing, etc.	2,416.09
Author, research, etc.	4.00
Newsletter expenses	125.74
Archives expense	34.00
Packaging, mailing, etc.	145.43
	<u>\$7,047.53</u>

General membership expenses including stenographic,
membership records, postage, office supplies, and
new members campaign 2,216.69

General expenses\$ 67.24

Advertising 457.35

524.59

TOTAL DISBURSEMENTS 9,788.81

\$12,187.47

NET DECREASE to cash resulting from transactions

in the investment account 4,848.67

ENDING CASH BALANCE, December 31, 1968\$ 7,338.80

ASSETS:

Cash in banks\$ 7,338.80

Investments, at cost 32,696.84

\$40,035.64

NET WORTH:

O. E. Rølvaag Permanent Fund\$18,467.37

Institutional Life Membership Fund 1,440.00

Current Fund 20,128.27

\$40,035.64

The above is an abbreviated version of the official report prepared by the treasurer,
Norman O. Olson.

A. A. Rowberg: Distinguished Service

Andrew A. Rowberg received the Association's Distinguished Service Award on February 9. Mrs. Roy Peterson, a member of the NAHA, arranged the presentation ceremonies which took place at the Friends House, Sandy Springs, Maryland, where the Rowbergs now live. Mr. George Hagen, also a member, read the citation and made the presentation. Miss Brynhild Rowberg (daughter) and close friends of the family were present. In a letter to the Secretary, Mrs. Peterson commented: "We all felt that it was a big day for a great man and his family."

One paragraph from the citation will make clear how deserving was this award:

The Rowberg Biographical File, a collection of 130,000 mounted newspaper clippings, containing biographical data on Norwegian Americans, now fills a cabinet of one hundred and four drawers. In addition, there are seventy - four volumes of scrapbooks, containing articles too long for mounting. Through Mr. Rowberg's sustained effort over the years, the NAHA has a biographical record the likes of which cannot be found elsewhere in this country. Its durable value is attested to through its daily use by both casual and serious researchers, and its significance will increase with time.

NAHA Collections Listed by Library of Congress

Descriptions of the NAHA Collections are now entered in the *Union Catalogue of Manuscripts* prepared by the Library of Congress. The descriptions found in this catalogue (see sample below) are abbreviated forms of the ones the Archives have prepared for their own use. Collections having fifty items or less have been consolidated under comprehensive titles, such as physicians,

businessmen, poets, etc. Collections having more than fifty items generally receive independent listing.

Sample of *Union Catalogue* Entry

Peerson, Cleng, 1783-1865.

Papers, 1806-1964. 70 items.

In Norwegian-American Historical Association Archives (St. Olaf College, Northfield, Minn.)

In part, transcripts and photocopies.

Norwegian-American explorer in Illinois, Iowa, Missouri, New York, and Texas. Letters and legal papers of Peerson, clippings, including articles about Peerson by Rasmus B. Anderson and T. C. Blegen, pamphlets on the colony at Bishop Hill, Ill., where Peerson lived for a time, and photos.

Information on literary rights available in the repository.

Gifts from various sources.

Library of Congress MS 68-1932

Norwegian Sailors in World War II

We are happy to announce the publication of Nora O. Solum's translation of Lise Lindbæk's *Tusen Norske Skip*, a fascinating popular record of the part played in World War II by Norway's merchant marine.

The translation, published by the Exposition Press of New York, is appropriately titled *Norway's New Saga of the Sea*. It is the product of considerable reorganization on the part of the translator, but remains a faithful English version of the original Norwegian volume somewhat revised by the author. All in all, Miss Solum has produced a brilliant and readable account of the heroic story of Norwegian seamen in the Allied struggle against the Axis powers.

Norway's New Saga of the Sea, attractively printed, is 251 pages in length and is priced at \$6.00. Copies may be obtained from the Association's Secretary or from the St. Olaf College Bookstore, Northfield, Minnesota.

Volume 23 Draws Favorable Comment

Alice E. Smith of the State Historical Society of Wisconsin reviewed *Studies* Volume XXIII in the *Pacific Northwest Quarterly* (October, 1968). Some of her observations must be shared with the members:

"In response to the question often propounded by ethnic groups in America, 'What holds the Norwegians together so effectively,' one need only point to the literary output noted above. For nearly fifty years, the saga of the migrant has been told and retold in the publications of the Norwegian-American Historical Association, and yet there is always something new. Probing the emotional responses, the misgivings, the diversity of beliefs, and the sharp rivalries revealed in the studies, the modern scholar finds

many of the same doubts and fears that trouble the world today. . . . With Faulkner, the Norwegians in America might well conclude, 'The past is never dead; it is not even past.'"

Immigration Newsletter Launched

The first issue of *The Immigration History Newsletter* came out in November, 1968, compiled and edited by Victor R. Greene, department of History, Cleveland State University, Ohio, 44115.

The Newsletter rose out of the Immigration History Group where a need was felt for exchange of information concerning meetings, developments among ethnic historical societies, research being done, and publications which have appeared.

Details concerning subscriptions can be acquired through the editor.

NORWEGIAN-AMERICAN HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION
St. Olaf College
Northfield, Minnesota

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