

The Norwegian-American Historical Association

Northfield, Minnesota



From the NAHA Office to the Association Members

NUMBER 114

EDITOR, KIM HOLLAND

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BOOK PARTIES CELEBRATE *America-America Letters*

As the newsletter went to print, the celebration of the publication of *America-America Letters* was slated to take place in Northfield on November 17th. We are delighted to report that Bjørn Gunnar Østgård arrived in Minnesota to join the American celebration of NAHA's most recent publication. Brynhild Rowberg, who wrote the introduction to *America-America Letters*, is also the Aaker family historian and I shared her knowledge of the Aaker family whose letters were featured in the *America-America Letters*. We realize not everyone can attend these gatherings, but if you ever have the opportunity you will find how enjoyable it can be to meet with other members who share a common interest in Norwegian American history.

The NAHA-Norway chapter hosted a party at the Nordmanns-Forbundet office in Oslo on September 8, 2001 to honor the Association's latest publication. The group introduced Bjørn Gunnar Østgård. Østgård is one of four local historians who are writing the farm and family histories of North Aurdal in Valdres. Dr. Odd Lovoll was also able to attend. Lovoll spoke about the publication's formative stages. NAHA-Norway members attended as did leaders of organizations with ties to Norwegian American fields. We thank the NAHA-Norway President, Dina Tolsby, for organizing this event in Norway!

ALMOST HOLIDAY SEASON

This year has been marked by the events of September 11th. We have seen both the unspeakable horrors and true heroism of brave individuals. We hope the positive aspects created from the new sense of unity and volunteerism in New York will be examples for the rest of us during trying times.

Please make a gift to NAHA when you are doing your end of the year charitable giving. Your gifts are tax-deductible and important to our mission of locating, collecting, preserving and interpreting the Norwegian-American part of America's proud history.

Since our diversity in unity is a part of America of which we can be most proud, all Norwegian Americans should give their support to this Association which has quietly been doing good work for the last 76 years.

NAHA BOOKS NOW AVAILABLE AT ST. OLAF BOOKSTORE

We are pleased to announce that the St. Olaf College Bookstore is now carrying NAHA books and has even dedicated an "endcap" to NAHA publications! The bookstore is pleased to partner with NAHA and we are happy to tell you they have a toll free number and await your order! The bookstore number is 1-888-232-6523. They can accept your credit card purchases as well. (Your member discount is only available through the NAHA office, but the convenience of the Bookstore is something you may want to consider.) You may also want to use their website for your inquiries at www.collegebookstore.org. Jerry Bilek is our contact person and can be reached directly at bilek@stolaf.edu.

CLEANING HOUSE? - Remember NAHA

Please remember the NAHA archives when you are going through your attic and closets! While our major collection period is past, we continue to receive valuable materials regularly. Most recently, Marian Voxland of Kenyon, Minnesota brought in several valuable items from her family. Most interesting is a 93-page account book for "A Norwegian religion school" in district 56, Goodhue County, recording payments from December 1874 until 1913. The school was established following a meeting called by Pastor B.J. Muus on August 8, 1875. Classes began in October 1875 with Ole J. Solberg as teacher. This is an invaluable record of such a school over an extended period. Second, Marian gave us a constitution (in Norwegian) of Holden Church of Goodhue County, printed in 1885. This of course was Muus's church, and the earliest constitution we have. Marian's third contribution was the January 1907 issue (year 2, no.5) of the "Chicago Lutheraneren," a

periodical published by the pastors of the United Lutheran Church in Chicago. Interestingly, pages 1-6 are in Norwegian while pages 7-12 are in English. While NAHA has an extensive file of this paper, it only begins with the December 1908 issue.

After the publication of *Colonel Heg and His Boys* several families contacted us and wanted to know if we would like copies of the Civil War letters they had in their family collections. The archives at NAHA make a great place for originals and copies of your Norwegian-American letters, diaries and documents. Records of important events, or of everyday life, help us to better understand our ancestors and are true treasures to scholars!

VISITORS to the ARCHIVES

Over the course of summer 2001, NAHA had visitors from the states of Oregon, Montana, California, Washington, Arizona, Alaska, North Dakota, North Carolina, Louisiana, Illinois, Alabama, Colorado, Ohio, Texas, Canada and, of course, many visitors from Norway. We were also pleased to have many guests from the states of Minnesota, Iowa, and Wisconsin.

AMBASSADOR of NORWAY VISITS NAHA

Late in September we heard rumors that the new Ambassador of Norway, Knut Vollæbeck, might be visiting Minnesota. Before long, the office of the St. Olaf College president contacted us. The Ambassador and Mrs. Vollæbeck requested a tour of NAHA during their November weekend visit to St. Olaf College. How pleased we are that the highest-ranking representative of the Norwegian government asked to visit us! Former Ambassador to Norway and his wife, Sidney and Lois Rand, tell us that Ambassador Vollæbeck grew up in Søndre Land in Hadeland. NAHA will have documents from Hadeland immigrants available for the Vollæbecks to read when they tour NAHA.

ADDITION TO NAHA WEBSITE

Another significant asset has been added to the website! Lloyd Hustvedt completed this labor of love and scholarship so you might have a better sense of what is contained within the NAHA archives. The *Guide to the Archives of the Norwegian-American Historical Association* updates the *Guide to Manuscript Collections* which was published in 1979. 560 descriptions have been added to the earlier 948. This second edition is available online in searchable PDF format at www.naha.stolaf.edu. Scholars will find this to be a time saver before they visit the

archives. Thank you, Lloyd, for all your effort in coordinating the updates, revisions, additions and mergers of collections.

REMINDER for APRIL 2002

The first newsletter of 2002 will contain all the information you need for the upcoming triennial meeting of NAHA. April 20, 2002 will be a day for gathering together with your fellow NAHA members at St. Olaf College in Northfield, Minnesota. NAHA will use this opportunity to show off our website and have you meet NAHA Editor, Dr. Todd W. Nichol. A general membership meeting will take place in the afternoon followed by a banquet that evening. We are pleased to announce that well-known immigration historian, Dr. Rudolph J. Vecoli, professor of history and director of the Immigration History Research Center at the University of Minnesota, will be our keynote speaker for this triennial gathering. In 1975 Dr. Vecoli, an historian of Italian-Americans, contributed an essay, "An Outsiders View of the Association," which was published in *Norwegian American Studies*, volume 25. It will be interesting to hear his views about the intervening years and about our future.

SELECTION from the ARCHIVES

One never knows where a "probe" into the NAHA archives will lead. We received an inquiry about where one might find manuscripts of Cleng Peerson, the "pathfinder" of Norwegian settlement in America in the 1820's and 1830's. The NAHA Cleng Peerson collection is relatively small and contains photostats, transcriptions and translations of a few letters. This led to Theodore C. Blegen's, *Norwegian Migration to America, 1825-1860* (NAHA, 1931) where Blegen concluded that it is uncertain if Peerson could write and probably had others write the letters which were published in newspapers. The answer to the inquiry was that there are likely no manuscripts of Peerson, or any writings beyond the few letters already published.

However, the Peerson collection also included a Danish Bible published in New York in 1848 by the American Bible Society. According to handwritten notes, Knudt Olson Hastvedt purchased the Bible from Peerson on February 10, 1851. A search for information revealed that NAHA had a transcript of Hastvedt's manuscript memoir in the Texas State Historical Association, and had published an English translation in *Norwegian-American Studies and Records*, v. 12 (1941), "Recollections of a Norwegian pioneer in Texas." On page 101 of the translation is this: "in 1848 Cleng Peerson came to Texas. He stayed with us two or three weeks...returned to

Illinois and came again to Texas in 1850. He brought along a whole bundle of Bibles and New Testaments. I bought one of each...He had got these in Illinois from the Bible Society; and much of the way, probably 175 miles from Shreveport, Louisiana, he had to carry them on his back since he usually rode "shanks mare" (in the original, Apostolernes Heste)."

Norge I Texas (1982) supplied more information about Hastvedt. In this book NAHA member Derwood Johnson provides information about the Norwegians who settled in Texas from 1835 to about 1900. Hastvedt came to Texas in 1846 as a 14 year old boy with his family from Aamli, Aust-Agder. In 1853 he led a group (including his widowed mother and two sisters) from Texas to Wisconsin. Hastvedt recorded in the Bible the births of three children (1863, 1877 and 1881). He died in 1904 at Dawson, Minnesota. Hastvedt's son, Edward Olson, inherited the Bible, and Edward's daughter Irene L. Strasburg of Albert Lea donated it to NAHA in 1973. Handling a Bible with links across 150 years to Cleng Peerson (and knowing its connection with an important pioneer family in Texas, Wisconsin and Minnesota) excites the imagination! We are grateful that this Norwegian teenage boy in Texas made the purchase and recorded the details.

Loss of NAHA BOARD of PUBLICATIONS Member - Dr. CARL CHRISLOCK.

Many of you will remember the name of author Carl Chrislock who died this fall. For numerous years Chrislock served on the NAHA Board of Publications. He contributed several essays to *Norwegian American Studies*, and in 1981 NAHA published his *Ethnicity Challenged: the Upper Midwest Norwegian -American Experience in World War I*. The centennial history of Augsburg College, *From Fjord to Freeway* (1969) was authored by Chrislock. In 1986 Dr. Chrislock retired as a professor of history at Augsburg College in Minneapolis. In retirement, Dr. Chrislock was an active scholar with the Minnesota Historical Society. Chrislock moderated one of the sessions at the 2000 Vandringer Conference held in St. Paul.

ADDITIONS TO THE ARCHIVES

Received from Olav Sjømæling, *Utvandringa fra Orkdal til Amerika.*, 280 pages, hard cover. The Orkdal local history group decided to trace the Orkdal residents who left during the time of "American Fever," and to print the information both in Norwegian and English. Photos illustrate the life of the new settlers in America and trace the lives they created. The last portion of the book combines lists from the parish, police emigration protocols and other

sources to provide almost 3,500 names of those Orkdal residents who left for America. The list includes birth dates, date of emigration and intended destinations.

Received from University of North Dakota Library: *Lunds Historie I Gårdens og slektens liv*, 702 pages, hard cover. 1987.

Skog I Sol og Skygge by Jarle Bye. 231 pages, hard cover, 1978.

Gausdals-minner volumes 1-4, by Gausdal Historielag, 1985-1991, hard cover, approximately 100 pages each.

Gausdal Bygdehistorie, Bind 5, 1914-1980. By Gudmund Moren. 291 pages, hardcover, 1991.

Bygd og Brannkasse, Gausdal Brannkasse 150 år. 295 pages, hard cover, 1997.

Selbu I Fortid og Nåtid, Bind 3 by Kjell Haarstad and Per O. Rød. 798 pages, hard cover, 1984

Received from Åse Elin Langeland, *Adjusting to America - A Study in Kvinden og Hjemmet: A Monthly Journal for the Scandinavian Women in America, 1888-1947*.

The thesis was submitted to the Department of English, University of Bergen. Includes information about Ida Hansen, the publisher of the magazine. Langeland observes it was the immigrant women who introduced many American foods, clothes and household items to the family. The study of the women's magazine seems to view the women subscribers as promoters of Americanization more than defenders of ethnic retention.

Received from John Monson, "My Life: Growing Up In A Norwegian American Community, The Collected Writings of Clara Brenum Monson (1888-1971)" Soft Cover, 175 pages. Clara wrote various bits and pieces of her memories and history over the years. Growing up in Wiota, Wisconsin in the late 1800's and early 1900's is one topic followed by a section devoted to her Norwegian ancestors and those of her husband. Translated family letters make up an interesting chapter (originals are in the NAHA archives.) The editor added a chart of ancestors and descendents at the end of the book.

Received from Larry Thompson, *Frå Det Gamle Arbeidslivet, Ord og Nemningar Truer og Tradisjon, frå Arbeidslivet I Suldal, Røldal og Sauda*, by Lars Hellemo. Soft cover, 158 pages, 1957.

Received from Gene Estensen, Spring/Summer 2001 copy of "Alpine Review" featuring the local hero of Alpine County, California, Snowshoe Thompson. (Alpine County "shares" Snowshoe with Genoa, Nevada.) In June the Alpine County Museum hosted descendents of Thompson at the dedication of a statue of Thompson, and learned more about the Norwegian components of Snowshoe Thompson's life.

Received from James P. Leary, *So Ole Says To Lena - Folk Humor of the Upper Midwest*. 2nd edi-

tion. University of Wisconsin Press. Soft cover, 257 pages. This is a scholarly look at a topic many ethnic groups and regions have in common. The author has studied folklore for years and shares the threads and themes that make us chuckle. Included are ethnic groups who call the midwest their home, such as the Germans, Finns, and Norwegians, but also farmers, loggers and miners. More information available at: www.wisc.edu/wisconsinpress/ The book is carried at the St. Olaf Bookstore.

Received from Larry W. Miller, "The Hans P. Miller Family History" 13 pages loose leaf, and "Family Tree," 13 pages loose leaf. The family history starts with Søren Hansen Lemmich in 1670 and brings the family to Binford, North Dakota.

Received from Eunice Hawn Holz, *Some Ancestors and Descendants of Olaf Thorbjorn Bang and Oline Emelie Lohre*. Spiral bound, 320 pages. Includes background about Norway through the ages, maps, information about Valdres, photos, copies of hand written letters, translations of letters, family trees and an index. Covers family both in the United States and in Norway.

Received from Cynthia Rubin, *Dakota Dateline 1881-1981, The Story of Mount Vernon, South Dakota*. Soft cover, 88 pages. Centennial publication for this small community with many

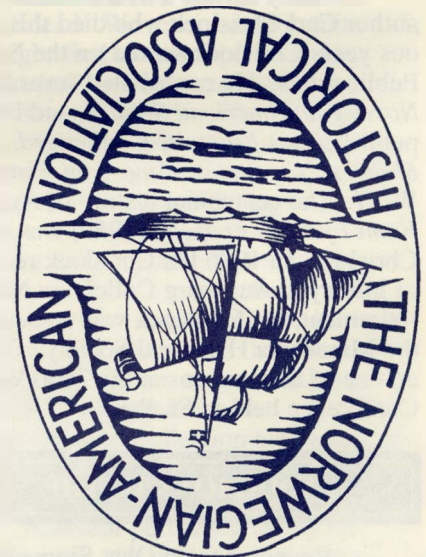
Norwegian settlers and Lutheran churches. Included is a photo of the 1912 Decoration Day Civil War veterans from the area, as well as other important people and events from Mount Vernon.

Received from Alton Harold Quanbeck, *Some Ancestors of Sveinung Halvorson Kvambekk*. Soft cover, 126 pages. Kvambekk left Norway for the United States at the age of eighty-six! The author has compiled information about many ancestors and their legendary stories.

Received, *Leiv Eriksson, Helge Ingstad Og Vinland, Kjelder og Tradisjonar*. Soft cover, 133 pages.

Received from Patricia Lindgren, *From Norway to Norway Lake Volume 1, The Descendants of Mons Lasseson Tornes and Unni Nilsdatter Huke*. Soft cover, approximately 300 pages. A family history including Norwegian naming practices, translation of Norwegian letters, copies of letters, death certificates, other county records, as well as photos and maps. Also includes insight to the difficulties of settling and living in the "west."

Received from Ella Rolvaag Tweet, too many wonderful things to list! Many items from NAHA's earliest days as well as an almost complete set of NAHA publications. Thank you Ella!



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St. Olaf College

Norwegian-American Historical Association

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