

The Norwegian-American
Historical Association

Northfield, Minnesota

NEWS



LETTER

From the Secretary's Office to the Association Members

SPECIAL LIBRARY ISSUE

Number 25

DECEMBER, 1963

Editor, L. HUSTVEDT

THE NORWEGIAN-AMERICAN
HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION

announces

THE PUBLICATION

of

HJALMAR HJORTH BOYESEN

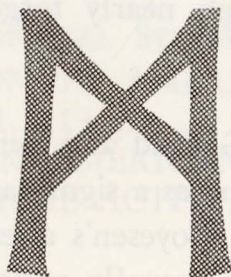
*The First Volume of the Association's
New Authors Series*

by

CLARENCE A. GLASRUD

1963

\$5.50



HJALMAR HJORTH BOYESEN

Authors Series, *Volume I*, by Clarence A. Glasrud, chairman of the departments of languages and literature, Moorhead State College, Moorhead, Minnesota; published by the Norwegian-American Historical Association, Northfield, Minnesota, 1963. Illustrated. Index. 245 pages. Price \$5.50.

* * *

Hjalmar Hjorth Boyesen is the first volume in the Association's *Authors Series*. In this series the Association hopes to publish works about such other creative writers as O. E. Rølvaag, Marcus Thrane, Waldemar Ager, Simon Johnson, Julius Baumann, Johannes B. Wist, and Jon Norstog. Of equal interest to this series will be journalists such as Svein Nilsson, Rasmus B. Anderson, and Kristian Prestgard. Also to be included are the American writings of Norwegian authors like Bjørnstjerne Bjørnson, Kristofer Janson, and Knut Hamsun.

Hjalmar Hjorth Boyesen came to America from Norway in 1869. Two years later he read chapters from his first novel, *Gunnar*, before the Boston Brahmins. So impressed was William Dean Howells with what he heard that he had this novel published in the *Atlantic Monthly*. It was followed by twenty-three more volumes: novels, collections of short stories, essays in literary criticism, poetry and history. Like his first work, all of these were written in the English language. So popular was Boyesen in his day that the doors to all the important editorial offices were open to him, and all the literary journals were glad to print whatever came from his pen.

In this work Dr. Glasrud steers a balanced course between biography and critical evaluation of Boyesen's literary production. The author pushes aside some earlier misconceptions about Boyesen; namely, that he was essentially an interpreter of Norwegian immigration. As the book makes clear, Boyesen was outside the main stream of Norwegian-American life. He is rightly seen as a central figure in nineteenth-century literary history. He exerted a profound though nearly forgotten influence in American cultural life.

Boyesen is seen by Dr. Glasrud as a persistent force in two areas: as a stern champion of realism and as a significant liaison man between European and American literature. Boyesen's attempt at realistic fiction was a forerunner of the kind that eventually replaced the "idealistic, romantic,

and genteel." A few years after his death in 1895, the battle for realism was won.

The figure appearing on the cover and title page of the book and on this announcement is a letter from the runic alphabet used in Scandinavia from about 200 to 800 A.D. Besides representing the sound "m," it also had a name meaning "man" or "mankind." It thus serves here as a symbol for the humanities, and will be used throughout the *Authors Series*.

* * *

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