

The Norwegian-American Historical Association

Northfield, Minnesota



From the Secretary's Office to the Association Members

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Thor M. Andersen Bibliography

Thor M. Andersen (1897-1979) gave a life-time to compiling the *Thor M. Andersen Norway in America: Bibliographical Collection*. Andersen, first a librarian at the University of Oslo Library from 1920 until 1946, was appointed head librarian at the Royal Norwegian Society of Science and Letters in Trondheim, a position he held until his retirement. His father, Magnus Andersen (1851-1938), was a well known figure both in Norway and the States. He conceived the idea of building a replica of the Gokstad Viking Ship which he and his crew sailed across the Atlantic all the way to Chicago in 1893. Their arrival gave an ironic if not a humiliating twist to the "Columbian" Exposition.

The project began when Thor Andersen, then a young librarian, received a scholarship to go to America for two years to prepare a bibliography of everything that was published about the Norwegians in the United States and Canada. He never stopped working on it and continued to pursue this work more or less on a full time basis after he retired. At the time of his death he had prepared 55,000 handwritten library cards that carried references to published accounts that relate to the Norwegian immigrant experience in the United States and Canada from 1830 to 1930.

Professor Sigmund Skard, head of the American Institute at the University of Oslo, saw the significance of this work as early as the late 1940s. He urged its publication and sought financial support. Andersen, a perfectionist, hesitated to turn over his files. Professor Per Seyerstad, Skard's successor, spearheaded later action that brought the project to a successful conclusion. Faith Ann Sevilä, University of Oslo Library, has been in charge of the extensive editing and verification needed to make the collection suitable for publication.

A bibliography of this size defies a brief description. Fortunately, it explains itself when used. We might mention that the first entry informs that an Iver Aabak from Ashmoor, Montana, is the author of *Sigurd Solvatn*, a work published in Decorah, Iowa, and the date is unknown. The same person also wrote an article, *Nytaarstanker* (New Year's Thoughts) that appeared in *Decorah Posten*, May 8, 1923. Andersen notes that this article discusses "on being Norwegian."

If one turns to a noted author like Waldemar Ager, the Andersen references run into pages. For example, we not only learn that Ager wrote the novel *Kristus For Pilatus*, but there is also a listing of the reviews and commentaries that were written about the novel, with attending who, when, and where.

The University of Oslo Library will assist on specific requests, but one can also access the bibliography, free of charge, directly on the internet. The website address is: <http://www.nbo.uio.no/baser/tma.html>. The NAHA office has a supply of brochures that describe the collection. To obtain a copy, send your request to the secretary and please enclose a self-addressed stamped envelope.

The NAHA is exploring possibilities for acquiring a print-out of the bibliography as an on-site reference. As far we know there are no plans to publish this in book form.

Students of Norwegian-American history are and will forever be indebted to Thor M. Andersen.

Financial Statement

Year Ended December 31, 1996

New accounting methods were adopted in 1996. A few new terms require explanation. "Temporarily Restricted" shows the collective income accrued by our permanent funds. These funds are open for use as long as we comply with the "restricted" purposes of these funds. "Permanently Restricted" denotes income that must be added to one or another endowment, income such as life membership dues, gifts, bequests, etc. The market value of our securities at the close of the year exceeded cost by \$24,188. This paper income must be reported as "Unrealized Gains" and is reflected in total "Net Assets."

	<u>Unrestricted</u>	<u>Temporarily Restricted</u>	<u>Permanently Restricted</u>	<u>Total</u>
REVENUES, GAINS AND OTHER SUPPORT				
Associate, sustaining and patron dues	\$27,638			\$27,638
Book Sales	7,027			7,027
Life membership fees			\$5,250	5,250
Private gifts	500		34,178	34,678
Investment income from interest & dividends	2,105	52,099		54,204
Gains on investments	2,557	62,697		65,254
Other sources	4,931			4,931
Net assets released from restrictions	<u>25,691</u>	<u>(25,691)</u>	—	—
Total Revenues, Gains and Other Support	<u>70,449</u>	<u>89,105</u>	<u>39,428</u>	<u>198,982</u>
EXPENSES				
Salaries	13,410			13,410
Printing expenses	21,386			21,386
Postage	7,974			7,974
Supplies	1,421			1,421
Telephone	2,685			2,685
Equipment	298			298
Accounting fees	4,000			4,000
Miscellaneous expense	5,718			5,718
Grants	18,429			18,429
Archives	1,153			1,153
Travel	109			109
Other	<u>252</u>	—	—	<u>252</u>
TOTAL EXPENSES	<u>76,835</u>	—	—	<u>76,835</u>
Net Increase (Decrease)	(6,386)	89,105	39,428	122,147
Cumulative unrealized gains in prior years.				
Due to change in accounting principle.	<u>3,086</u>	<u>74,391</u>	—	<u>77,477</u>
INCREASE (DECREASE) IN NET ASSETS	(3,300)	163,496	39,428	199,624
NET ASSETS DECEMBER 31, 1995	<u>620,715</u>	<u>105,006</u>	<u>342,728</u>	<u>1,068,449</u>
NET ASSETS DECEMBER 31, 1996	<u>\$617,415</u>	<u>\$268,502</u>	<u>\$382,156</u>	<u>\$1,268,073</u>

Endowment Fund Balances Year Ended December 31, 1995 and 1996 and 1996 Revenues and Expenditures

	Bjork Chair Fund	Blegen Fund	Fosholt-Hydle Archives Fund	Sigvald Qvale Fund	Rølvaag Fund	Haugen Fund	Total
Dec. 31, 1995	\$428,138	\$96,145	\$179,926	\$5,329	\$277,809	\$39,381	\$1,026,728
Dec. 31, 1996	485,500	115,228	208,878	6,282	350,552	62,960	1,229,400

REVENUES:

Life membership dues	\$5,250
Private Gifts	34,178
Interest on Investments	52,099
Realized Gains	<u>38,509</u>
Total Real Income	\$130,036

*Unrealized Gains, 1996 24,188

*Cumulative Unrealized Gains
from prior years 74,391

Total Revenues \$228,515

EXPENDITURES:

Grants	\$24,429
Travel	109
Archives	1,153
Other	<u>252</u>
Total	25,943

*If we had sold all our securities on December 31, 1996, these amounts would have become realized gains.

A Curious Development

Ole Wilhelm Klüver is a great-grandson of Bernt Julius Muus. His grandmother, Bergitte Muus, married a Klüver, a Norwegian of Prussian ancestry. As fate would have it, Ole Wilhelm's father supported the Nazi cause — a member of the Hird — during World War II. After the war his properties were confiscated and he served a five-year prison term.

According to Klüver, the children of German sympathizers have been unjustly ostracized. They carry wounds that will not heal. He has crusaded for their cause by way of articles in Norwegian newspapers, but he has found no publisher for a longer manuscript he has prepared on the problem. He contacted the NAHA hoping we might help. Beyond offering to add his articles and manuscripts to our archival collection, there was little else the NAHA could do. Klüver himself, requested that we make his cause known in our *Newsletter*.

Random News

- The Gerhard A. Ellestad Trust declared a bequest to the NAHA that came to \$4,600. Gerhard A. Ellestad, a patent attorney, moved to Northfield, Minnesota, when he retired. He visited our archives frequently and took great interest in our work. He died in July 1986. His wife Mildred died in January of this year. The bequest was allocated to the O. E. Rølvaag Fund, an unrestricted endowment that supports the general operation of the NAHA.

- Received from Frederick H. Dahl *Diary of a Norwegian Fisherman: The Collected Diaries of Frederick A. Hansen, April 1913 through December 1938, Sand Island, Wisconsin*. Photos, maps, 183 pages, 1989. Although many entries are reduced to a single phrase or word the life of a Norwegian fisherman (lake trout, white fish and herring) on one of the Apostle Islands is nonetheless well documented. In 1925, his best year, he sold 24,997 pounds of fish, earning \$3,008. In his worst year, 1932, he sold 12,396 pounds for a total income of \$996.

- Received from Sharol Fortunak *100th Anniversary, Holden Lutheran Church, Isle, Minnesota*, 32 pages.

- Received from Breta Carol Espe Soldat

her *The Espe and Prestegaard Families of Norway*, two volumes, hardcover, 917 pages. This superb piece of work includes artistic sketches, illustrations, maps, charts, and a collection of photos that doubles as a family album. The Espe and Prestegaard farms are situated in Hardanger, near Odda.

- Received from Maxine J. Mess volume 3 of *Skånesviksoga*, given in memory of Ole William Duvick. Simultaneously, the Etne *kommune* gave us volumes 2 and 4, thus completing our holdings (we already had volume 1). The *kommune* also gave volumes 3 - 5 of the *Etnesoga* (we had volumes 1 & 2) and three yearbooks of the local historical society. Skånevik and Etne communities lie close together near the entrance of the Hardanger Fjord.

- Received from Neil Eckstein his *Norton's Folly*, basically a family history told in novel form. Eckstein blends factual history with fiction that draws heavily upon regional lore. The story is set around Neenah, Wisconsin, and begins with the settlement of that region in the late 1840s. Eckstein is a retired professor, University of Wisconsin, Oshkosh. Address: 5555 Grandview Road, Larsen WI 54947.

- Received *Valle Kommune*, 9 volumes, by Alfred Rynningen. Leonhard B. Jansen, co-author for volumes 7-9. The first six volumes treat farm histories, volumes 7-8, cultural history and provides an index, a new and valuable addition to a *bygdebok*. The volumes are handsomely bound and printed on high quality paper.

Valle kommune, upper Setesdal in Aust Agder, has a population of about 1,500. Yet it financed a multi-volume history of itself. Our county histories, if done at all, tend to be incomplete second rate affairs.

- Received from James Leslie Johnson his *The Johnson Family History*, typescript reproduction, loose-leaf binder, 97 pages. The family has its origins in Balestrand, Norway.

- Received from Per Øverland *Erindringer* by John T. Nystuen, 3rd edition by Per Øverland.

Iver Nystuen Family History is appended. Typescript reproduction, 62 pages. John Nystuen left Valdres, Norway, with his parents as a fourteen-year-old in 1854. They settled first in Spring Prairie, Wisconsin. John moved to Silver Lake, Iowa, in 1864, and to Little Sioux in 1893, and once again to Northfield, Minnesota, in 1907. John was an influential lay leader in the Norwegian Free Church.

- Received from Gordon Bacon his untitled, loose leaf, 72-page family history. The Wefald family from Telemarken, Norway, forms a main thread in the fabric, but names such as Skree, Homme, Stemmen, Monge, Refsdal, Aase, Løne and Hoiland enter the scene by way of marriage. Knut Størk Wefald, Minnesota congressman, publisher of *Nordmanden* and public servant, enters as a member of this Wefald family. The Brattbakken family (later took the name Bacon) gives us the compiler of this history. He married Verna Marguerite Wefald.

- The *Bygdelagenes Fællesråd* just announced that a *Norwegian-American Bygdelag Centennial 1899-1999* will be celebrated at Luther College, Decorah, Iowa, from Thursday through Saturday, July 29, 30, and 31, 1999. The first *bygdelag* in America was formed when a group of immigrants from Valdres, Norway, met at Minnehaha Park in Minneapolis for a picnic in 1899. This group took the name *Valdres Samband*. Later some 50 lags were organized which held annual spring *stevnes*. Christian Skjervold is the general chairman.

- Received from W. R. Anderson his *Norse America: Tenth Century Onward*, published by the Leif Ericson Society, P.O. Box 91, Evanston IL 60204, 1996, hardcover, 200 pages. Anderson, the founder of the Leif Ericson Society in 1962, compiles under one cover the evidence he believes points to extensive Viking presence in both North and South America. The work also includes vignettes and biographical sketches from Norwegian-American history. No mention was made as to cost.

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