

THE NEWS LETTER

The Norwegian-American Historical Association

Editor,
LLOYD HUSTVEDT

St. Olaf College
Northfield, Minnesota

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Report of Managing Editor

Cited below are excerpts from Kenneth
O. Bjork's report to the executive board
which met in Chicago, November 4, 1961.

The Lady with the Pen

Our one publication in 1961 is the volume titled *The Lady with the Pen*, a compilation of the letters and articles written by Elise Wærenskjold in Texas. Work on this volume began, as you know, years ago and involved basic translations by the Verandi Club of Minneapolis, considerable planning and directing by Dr. Blegen, overall editing by Professor C. A. Clausen, and considerable revision by the editorial board during the past year. The book is, I believe, a fitting memorial to a remarkable lady and a valuable contribution to immigrant literature in its broad sense.

Studies and Records, Volume 21

We are currently working hard on a new volume in our series titled *Norwegian-American Studies and Records*. Inasmuch as this book will be numbered 21 in the series, it has seemed appropriate to consider seriously making changes in the appearance of the publication and, of course, of subsequent volumes. Much informal discussion of these changes has already taken place, and the editorial board will be formally asked for further suggestions. All materials for volume 21 are in hand, and I should think May 1, 1962, would be a likely publication date.

Sixteen Klondikers

Shortly before his death in 1960, Dr. Carl L. Lokke of the National Archives completed work — undertaken at my prompting—on a narrative of a company of Klondike gold seekers, most of them Norwegian immigrants. His study, based on diaries, letters, and other materials in his possession, is of absorbing interest and constitutes a unique documentary record of a movement involving a considerable number of Norwegian Americans during the closing years of the last and the early years of the present century. It seemed an uncommon stroke of good fortune that Mrs. Russell Berthel, former book editor in the Minnesota Historical Society, agreed to undertake the detailed editorial work on this volume. Unfortunately, however, ill health and an impending operation have forced her . . . to withdraw from the project. . . . I had hoped that this volume would be off the press late in 1962, but delay is now almost a certainty. The Lokke story, however, is well worth waiting for, if indeed this becomes necessary.

A Biography of H. H. Boyesen

Professor Clarence Glasrud's revised biography and interpretation of the literary career of H. H. Boyesen is in an advanced stage of preparation. A forced delay in issuing the Lokke volume will like-

ly give priority to the Glasrud manuscript. Boyesen, as you know, was the first prominent Norwegian - American writer of fiction, and while he was not positively identified with the immigrant community, either in the Middle West or the East where he resided, no long-range survey of literary contributions would be complete without a study of this significant person. A biography of Boyesen, in fact, should be first in a series that I hope ultimately will include such Norwegian figures as Bjørnson, Janson, and Hamsun, and such Norwegian-American writers as Ager, Baumann, Rølvaag, Simon Johnson, and others. Professor Glasrud is working hard on his revision . . . and expects to have it completed in 1962. I should like to publish this well-written and authoritative study late in 1962 or early in 1963, depending on the fate of the Løkke book.

Other Manuscripts

There are naturally other manuscripts on our desk, and I predict there will never be a shortage of them in the future. Constant screening of contributions is a routine feature of our work. We are faced with the necessity of returning competent studies because their focus of interest does not coincide with our own. I think it proper at this time, however, to state that we must take a large view of what constitutes Norwegian - American history. This is especially essential as we move in time toward the present and consider the final phases of transition to full identification with American life and society. It is precisely here that our work becomes most difficult, but it is also here that we can make a great contribution as an association. I shall have more to say at a later date about manuscripts under consideration. I should like now

to emphasize the prospect of an increasing volume of contributions, many of them growing out of graduate studies being conducted in the seminars of our universities. Even so, we must also launch a series of planned projects to cover such neglected fields as business, agriculture, music, literature, and medicine. It is quite possible, in this connection, that the association will find it necessary at times—preferably in the stage of writing rather than in that of research—to subsidize, in whole or in part, young scholars of great potential but limited financial means.

Peter A. Munch Editorial Board Member

An increasing number of manuscripts being submitted for consideration are, directly or indirectly, sociological in approach or emphasis. I should therefore like to add to our editorial board a mature sociologist with wide cultural interests. I recommend as a deserving and worthy addition Professor P. A. Munch of the University of Southern Illinois, whose studies of Norwegian communities in Wisconsin some of you may have read. [Professor Munch was elected a member of the editorial board.]

The Archives

I should like to conclude the purely editorial part of my report with a word of commendation for the work currently being performed, under the direction of our secretary, in the association's archives. In preparing our rich documentary collection for professional cataloguing, Miss Beulah Folkedahl has unearthed and continues to discover priceless records that will gradually find their way into our publications. I sincerely hope that this project, so well begun, will continue until the task is completed.

Publication Party In Texas

On October 15, 1961, a reception was given at the Bosque Memorial Museum, Clifton, Texas, to honor the publication of *The Lady with the Pen*. Women members of the museum acted as hostesses. Mrs. Ole J. Hoel, president of the Bosque County Historical Association, had charge of the celebration. She is a granddaughter of Carl E. Quæstad, through whose efforts a monument was placed on Cleng Peerson's grave in Norse, Texas; she still lives on the Quæstad property.

Invitations had been sent to persons outside the area who might be interested in the book, and an announcement was published in the Clifton *Record* for the benefit of local people. There was also good publicity in the Fort Worth *Star Telegram* and the Waco newspaper. It is estimated that from 250-300 people attended. The museum had a special exhibit of Wærenskjold items that included pictures, manuscripts, books, wearing apparel, and other souvenirs.

About fifteen descendants of Elise Wærenskjold were present. They wore identification cards that indicated their relationship to her. Mrs. Henry J. Gould of Fort Worth, who was very helpful in the research done on the book, is a great-granddaughter. Her sister, Mrs. F. M. Adams of Peaster, Texas, attended with her daughter and grandson. Otto M. Wærenskjold of Cleburne, a grandson of Mrs. Wærenskjold, was present. Mrs. Alice E. Murphy and Mrs. Hazel L. Norberg, great-granddaughters, traveled to Texas from Los Angeles for the event.

Guests who were not direct descendants included Mrs. C. E. Price and Mrs. Clara Callan of Clifton, granddaughters of Madam James Hendrick Staack, who contributed letters for the book; Mrs.

William Wærenskjold, who lent photographs and manuscript material; Mrs. Joel E. Nelson, who drew the sketch of the Wærenskjold house; Arne Orbeck, whose forebears were linked with the Reiersen family by marriage; and James Feagin of Fort Worth, father of Mrs. Gould and one of the few people now living who remember Elise Wærenskjold. R. W. Reiersen, who contributed the portrait of his great-grandfather Johan Reinert Reiersen, made a 400-mile round trip from Houston to be present.

Visitors from the Midwest were Lionel G. Thorsness, president of the Norwegian-American Historical Association, Dean Theodore C. Blegen, former managing editor of its publications, and Helen Katz, editorial assistant. Derwood Johnson of Waco, a member of the museum board and an indefatigable worker in finding materials for his book, introduced Mr. Thorsness and Dean Blegen for brief remarks. Dean Blegen pointed out the importance of finding and preserving such records as the Wærenskjold letters. Mr. Thorsness spoke about the program and accomplishments of the Norwegian-American Historical Association and suggested that it might be well to have a regional vice-president on the association board to represent Texas and the South.

—Helen Thane Katz

Professor Haugen Honored

On September 4, 1961, the degree of doctor of philosophy honoris causa was conferred on Professor Einar Haugen (University of Wisconsin) by the University of Oslo on the occasion of a three-day celebration of its 150th anniversary. He was one of four Americans so honored. Haugen is a member of our editorial board.

Dittman and Johnson New Board Members

Reidar Dittmann, teacher in the department of Norwegian at St. Olaf College and owner of the Dittmann Travel Agency in Northfield, Minnesota, was appointed to the executive board in September. Mr. Dittmann, a native of Norway, came to America in 1946. He graduated from St. Olaf College and has done graduate work at the universities of Minnesota and Washington.

Derwood Johnson, prominent Waco, Texas, attorney, was named a member of the board November 4. It is our good fortune that a man of Mr. Johnson's enthusiasm and ability will represent the NAHA in the Southwest, a region which has not earlier been represented.

Deaths

We regret to announce the death of 12 members: Pastor R. I. Meland, Timon M. Rasmussen, Andrew Svihus, Stanley L. Wilborn, Oscar B. Ytrehus, Ingvald Lillevik, Russell Johnson, J. L. Bolstad, Einar Bagge, and Trygve Maseng.

Karen Larsen, professor emeritus of history at St. Olaf College and a charter member of the NAHA, died August 24. The NAHA is much indebted to Miss Larsen for her contributions to **Studies and Records** and for her book, **Laur. Larsen, Pioneer College President**. She also wrote **A History of Norway**, published by the American Scandinavian Foundation.

Herman Roe, prominent Northfield, Minnesota, publisher for 51 years and a charter member of the NAHA, died of a heart attack November 18.

Miss Folkedahl Continues Work On Manuscripts

Miss Beulah Folkedahl, who began organizing the NAHA manuscript collection a year ago, will continue her work for another year. To date Miss Folkedahl has organized and written descriptions for some 100 collections, ranging in size from 10 to 6,000 items. When this work is complete, the manuscript descriptions and inventories will be published, distributed to NAHA members and made available to researchers.

Miss Folkedahl's salary is paid by St. Olaf College. This constitutes the largest gift the NAHA received in 1961.

The Sloopers

J. Hart Rosdail has recently completed an enormous task, **The Sloopers, Their Ancestry and Posterity**. This handsomely bound book is produced by a photostatic process, a suitable method because of its many maps, charts, and genealogical tables. Among its 668 pages are more than 400 pictures. Rosdail, a member of the NAHA, lives at 286 Elm Ave., Elmhurst, Illinois.

\$250 Gift!

In a letter (November 15, 1961) to President Thorsness, Magnus Bjørndal announced the good news that the directors of the Norway Foundation, Inc., had voted to give the NAHA \$250. The Norway Foundation is dedicated to the task of supporting cultural, scientific, and educational institutions in this country and in Norway. Bjørndal, its secretary-treasurer, is also a vice-president of the NAHA. The other members of the Norway Foundation board to whom we are much indebted are Dr. Ole Singstad, Anton M. Grønningsæter, Anders Jordal, S. S. Sandal and S. J. Stockfleth.

47 New Members Since June

1961 Record Year

We are pleased to announce that a total of 127 new members in 1961 (17 life, 25 sustaining, 85 associate) as of November 30, establishes a new record. To each new member who has helped make this possible, our gratitude and welcome.

Four Life

Roy A. Boe, 5036 Belmont Ave. S., Minneapolis 19, Minn.

Sons of Norway, Bjørnson Lodge No. 14, Bjørnson Hall, 2258 MacArthur Blvd., Oakland 2, Calif.

Western Washington College Library, Bellingham, Wash.

George Wells Beadle, president, University of Chicago, Chicago, Ill.

Seven Sustaining

Clark W. Finnerud, dermatologist, 55 E. Washington Blvd., Chicago, Ill.

Julien Collins, Julien Collins & Co., 105 S. LaSalle St., Chicago 3, Ill.

Leonard W. Larson, president, American Medical Association, 221 Fifth St., Bismarck, N. D.

G. F. Heltness, materialman, 8018 44th N.E., Seattle 15, Wash.

Andrew J. Haug, engineer, 3201 Hunts Point Road, Bellevue, Wash.

Andrew Elwick, retired, 2289 N.E. 61st, Seattle 15, Wash.

Mrs. Milton C. Brown, housewife, Route 2, Clifton, Texas.

36 Associate

Olav Wallo, E. Bush Lake Road, Minneapolis 20, Minn.

Hayward Lutheran Church, Women's Auxiliary, Hayward, Minn.

Mrs. Joe Hoven, Antelope, Mont.

George S. Bergh, doctor, 1324 W. Minnehaha Parkway, Minneapolis, Minn.

M. S. Gjesdahl, professor of mechanical engineering and head of department, Pennsylvania State U., 426 Ferguson Ave., State College, Penna.

Helge Refsum, judge, Tinghuset, Bergen, Norway.

Harald Werner, vice consul of Norway, 3206 General Taylor St., New Orleans, La.

Asbjørn Hagen, lektor, Løvenskioldsgate 4 IV, Oslo, Norway.

Axel F. Johnson, 948 W. 8th St., San Pedro, Calif.

Mrs. Alfred D. Killmer, 188 Kilmer Ave., Campbell, Calif.

Walter Muir Whitehill, director and librarian, Boston Athenaeum, 44 Andover St., North Andover, Mass.

Erling Christophersen, Royal Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Office of Cultural Relations, Kronprinsesse Marthas Plass 1, Oslo, Norway.

Mrs. Margarethe Buxton, 813 Seward, Evanston, Ill.

Hartley M. Holte, high school mathematics teacher, 1115 36th Ave., Seattle 22, Wash.

William N. Schjerven, Jr., executive engineering, 546 Eastern Ave., Bellwood, Ill.

Mrs. Isabelle N. Johnson, librarian, 412 Sherman St., Apt. 1, North Mankato, Minn.

Haakon Torjesen, 4214 Minnehaha Ave., Minneapolis, Minn.

Oddvar Ljone, writer, correspondent, **Bergens Tidende**, Oslo, Norway.

Mrs. Clare Linn Larson, Finley, N. D.
Mrs. Robert Laffin, 1225 Flower St., Anaheim, Calif.

Miss Solveig Steendal, secretary, St. Olaf College, Northfield, Minn.

Ansgar E. Sovik, professor of religion, St. Olaf College, Northfield, Minn.

Gordon Rasmussen, assistant professor of religion, St. Olaf College, Northfield, Minn.

Ralph Fretty, assistant professor of political science, St. Olaf College, Northfield, Minn.

C. S. Carlson, professor of mathematics, St. Olaf College, Northfield, Minn.

Donald Berglund, associate professor of music, St. Olaf College, Northfield, Minn.

Miss Beatrix Lien, associate professor of music, St. Olaf College, Northfield, Minn.

Joseph Shaw, associate professor of religion, St. Olaf College, Northfield, Minn.

Olaf Johnson, contractor, 2600 Skyline Dr., Waco, Texas.

Gunnar Olsborg, Puget Sound pilot, 916 N.W. 70th St., Seattle 7, Wash.

Ole J. Andreassen, manager, Norse Home, 5210 Russell Ave. N.W., Seattle 7, Wash.

Library of the Boston Athenaeum, 10½ Beacon St., Boston 8, Mass.

Mrs. Hans Hanson, 1401 S. Norton Ave., Sioux Falls, S. D.

Ralph B. Rothe, insurance salesman, 2500 N.E. 195th, Seattle 55, Wash.

Zemma Wattner, buyer and manager, clothing store, 1105 Jefferson, Apt. 15, Waco, Texas.

Jakob A. Krog, 801 6th Ave., Folsom, Penna.

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