The Norwegian-American Historical Association

Northfield, Minnesota

September, 1950



Number Twenty-Six

PROGRAM 25th Anniversary Observance THE NORWEGIAN-AMERICAN HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION

Friday, October 6, 1950

ST. OLAF COLLEGE, NORTHFIELD, MINN.

- 9:45 A.M.—Chapel Exercises (Broadcast—Radio Station WCAL)
 - Address—"The Norwegian-American Historical Association." Dr. Carlton C. Qualey, Professor of American History, Carleton College, Northfield
- 10:30 A.M.—Registration of Visitors in the Norwegian-American Historical Association Room, Rölvaag Memorial Library
- 11:45 A.M.—LUNCHEON—Ytterboe Dining Room Annex
 - Senator Edward J. Thye, Chairman, 25th Anniversary Sponsoring Committee, presiding
 - Greetings and Welcome Dr. Clemens M. Granskou, President, St. Olaf College
 - Address—"Controlled Scholarship and Productive Nationalism." Dr. Franklin D. Scott, Professor of History, Northwestern University, Evanston, Illinois
 - AFTERNOON SESSION

Dramatic Arts Studio, Ytterboe Hall

- 2:30 P.M.—Greetings—Olaf Halvorson, President, Norwegian-American Historical Association, Huntington Park, California
 - A Salute to the Founders-
 - Presentation of Members present at the organization meeting October 6, 1925
 - A Review of Our First Quarter Century-

In the Literary Field-

Dr. Theodore C. Blegen, Dean of the Graduate School, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis

Dr. Kenneth Bjork, Professor of History, St. Olaf College The Archives—

J. Jörgen Thompson, Secretary, Norwegian-American Historical Associa-

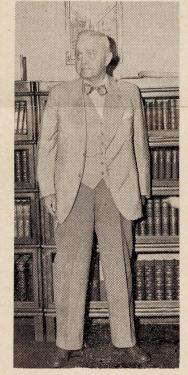
tion, Northfield

The Historical Museum-

Mrs. Inga B. Norstog, Curator, Decorah, Iowa

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FROM THE SPONSORING COMMITTEE 25th ANNIVERSARY OBSERVANCE Edited by Herman Roe, Secretary



Birger Osland of Chicago was elected Assistant Treasurer of the Norwegian-American Historical Association at the organization meeting October 6, 1925. O. M. Oleson, Fort Dodge, Iowa, was elected Treasurer but refused to serve unless Mr. Osland was elected Assistant Treasurer and he has served as the active treasurer from the beginning.

At the second triennial meeting Jan. 7, 1930, at the request of Mr. Oleson, Mr. Osland was elected Treasurer. He has served continuously for 25 years.

At the meeting of the Executive Board held at Decorah, Iowa, Sept. 22, 1930, Dr. Theodore Blegen reported that an anonymous friend had made a donation of \$2,000.00 to the Association, the money to be used for publication purposes.

The donor and Dr. Blegen had agreed to use this fine gift for bringing out Blegen's "Norwegian Migration to America—1825 to 1860." The anonymous donor was Mr. Osland. He has generously supported later publication projects.

The honorary degree of Doctor of Laws was conferred on Mr. Osland in 1935 by St. Olaf College in recognition of his outstanding work in the interest of the Norwegian-American Historical Association and also for his cultural leadership.

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ANNOUNCING THREE NEW PUBLICATIONS

The Norwegian-American Historical Association at present has three publications in press and is hoping to follow these shortly with a fourth.

The first of the three is Vol. 16 of Norwegian-American Studies and Records.

Virtually the entire volume will be devoted to studies and documents relating to the history of the Norwegian element on the Pacific Coast. They have been brought together by Dr. Kenneth Bjork, a member of the Editorial Board, who also supplies the volume with a foreword.

The contents of the volume, which will be priced at \$2.50, are as follows: "Hvistendahl's Mission to San Francisco, 1870-75," by Kenneth Bjork; "Oregon and Washington Territory in the 1870's, as Seen through Washington Territory in the 18/0's, as Seen through the Eyes of a Pioneer Pastor," by Nora O. Solum; "From the Prairie to Puget Sound," by O. B. Iverson, edited by Sverre Arestad; "The Klondike and Alaska: Letters from the Gold Fields," translated and edited by C. A. Clausen; "From the Klondike to the Koug-arok," by Carl L. Lokke; "Some Recent Publications relating to Norwegian-American History, XIII," compiled by Jacob Hodnefield.

A second publication scheduled to appear in the near future is Aagot Raaen's Grass of the Earth: Immi-grant Life in the Dakota Country.

This is a personal narrative of great interest, dealing with the second period in the pioneering saga of Da-kota. An introduction is supplied by the managing editor, Theodore C. Blegen.

The volume, priced at \$3.00, contains thirty-eight chapters: The Blizzard; A Pioneer Factory; Birgit, Far and Mor; The Hen with a Shell on Her Back; The Lamb That Wasn't Wanted; Ragnhild; Making Primost; Buck and Bright; Play; Shadows; The New Making House; The Stars; Haying in the Meadow; Haying on the Prairie; The Burden; School; Dreams; The Machine; Kjersti and Tosten; Christmas Mumming; Destruction; The Grandest Thing; Disaster; To Make Dreams Come True; A Wonderful Secret; Sun, Stand, Thou Still upon Gibeon; To Forget Trouble; The Revival; Moving Shadows; Have You Ever Seen Steam?; Where There's a Will; Kjersti's Discovery; Guideposts; Why? Why?; With Glory; Vic-tory; This Time I'll Never Return.

The third in the current publications is a Collection of Pioneer Immigrant Letters written by Gro Svendsen in the 1860's and 1870's.

The letters have been translated by Pauline Farseth, and the introductory essay is by Theodore C. Blegen. For the convenience of readers the letters have been brought together in six main sections: From Hallingdal to Estherville, 1861-1863; The New Home, 1863-1864; The Union Soldier, 1865; The Growing Family, 1865-1870; Crops and Locusts, 1870-1877; The Widower, 1880. The price of this volume is \$2.50.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS in N.A.H.A. Publication Program: Travel and Description Series-4 volumes. Studies and Records Series-15 volumes. Special Publications-11 volumes. News Letters-Nos. 1 to 24.

Organic Growth—Publication Program

[From "A Review and a Challenge," published in 1938 by the Norwegian-American Historical Association]

A topical analysis of the work of the Association, while it gives a fair estimate of the vigor of the organization, leaves out of account the element of organic growth.

From a youthful society without recognition in the world of scholarship, with only a theoretical conception of how to meet the challenge before it, the Association has fought its way up to a position of leadership, with a dynamic editorial policy, an enthusiastic membership, a sound financial status, and a broadly conceived program for the future.

The editorial policy of the Association has been professional from the start, if by "professional" one means a high standard of scholarship by men trained in the writing of history, careful selection of materials, and painstaking care in editing.

One would expect these qualities in a Board of Edi-tors composed of Marcus L. Hansen, Einar Haugen, B. J. Hovde, Paul Knaplund, Laurence M. Larson, Carlton C. Qualey, and Theodore C. Blegen.

But the broad outlook and the expanding program are the result of growth, experience, and discovery. In the truest sense of the word, the growth has been the outcome of co-operative effort, owing much to members and officers as well as to editors. Much of the growing strength of the Association, in other words, has come to a focus in the publication program. This program, therefore, derives its extraordinary vitality from the combined efforts of all those who have had the interests of the Association at heart.



Ole Edvart Rölvaag, with Dr. Knut Gjerset and Kristian Prestgard of Decorah, Iowa, was one of the moving spirits in organizing the Norwegian-American Historical Association. Quoting from "O. E. Rölvaag—A Biography" by Theodore Jorgenson and Nora A. Solum: "In all the negotiations and Decoration of the decoration of the total sector.

Jorgenson and Nora A. Solum: "In all the negotiations and plans . . . Rölvaag played a determining part. . . The task of carrying all these projects forward to an impressive issue called for practical wisdom, diplomatic shrewdness, personal enthusiasm, and tirelessly painstaking labor." Despite his illness, teaching schedule at St. Olaf College and preparing manuscript for books for his publishers, Harper and Brothers, "from the fall of 1925 to his death in 1931, the Norwegian-American Historical Association grew increasingly significant in all that he did and thought."

September, 1950

NEWS LETTER

Page Three



Prof. B. H. Narveson has consented to take care of the Housing problem for the October 6th celebration. The scarcity of rooms in Northfield makes it imperative for every guest to make reservations as early as possible. Write your Secretary, J. Jørgen Thompson, indicating the time of arrival and of departure.

We wish to call to your attention the fact that one of the main addresses of the celebration will be delivered at the Luncheon session. Dr. Franklin D. Scott, Chairman of the Department of History, Northwestern University, Evanston, Illinois, will be the speaker. You cannot afford to miss this event.

The time for the Luncheon session has been set at 11:45. The price per plate will be \$1.25. The Dinner session will begin at 5:45 p.m. and the price will be \$1.50. The early hour for this session has been set especially out of consideration for the guests who plan to return home that evening.

The Norwegian-American Historical Room, No. 301, located on the third floor of the Rølvaag Memorial Library will be Celebration headquarters. The registration desk will be found in this room.

Dr. Carlton C. Qualey will address the faculty and students of St. Olaf College at the regular convocation hour, 9:50, Friday morning. It is hoped that many of the visitors will come in time to hear Dr. Qualey. He is known to a large number of our members thru, his book, "Norwegian Settlement in the United States," published by the Association in 1938. Dr. Qualey is Professor of History, Carleton College, Northfield, Minnesota.

The first contribution to the Association was made by Mr. E. A. Cappelen-Smith of New York. While attending the Norse-American Centennial celebration in the Twin Cities in June, 1925, he met Dr. Knut Gjerset who outlined plans for an historical society. Mr. Cappelen-Smith was so convinced of the plausibility of such an undertaking that he wrote out a check for \$500.00 and gave it to Dr. Gjerset in support of the project. After the Norwegian-American Historical Association was a reality Dr. Gjerset turned the check over to the Financial Secretary and thus Mr. Cappelen-Smith became the first Life member.

The second large contribution came from Hon. O. M. Oleson of Fort Dodge, Iowa. As Treasurer of the newly formed Association he attended the first meeting of the Executive Board which was held in the Norske Club, Chicago, Illinois, Nov. 4, 1925. After the Board decided what the dues for the three classes of membership were to be, Mr. Oleson presented a check for \$1,000.00 to cover his Life membership fee. He thus became the second Life member of the Association.



Mr. Olaf Halvorson, Huntington Park, California, was elected President of the Norwegian-American Historical Association at the sixth triennial meeting held January 6, 1942. He has served for a longer period than any president of the Association.

The honorary degree of Doctor of Laws was conferred on Mr. Halvorson in 1946 by Luther College, Decorah, Iowa.

The undertaking of the Association in which President Halvorson has shown a special interest is the West Coast project. He has not only preached the cause but has freely provided funds for its promotion. His gifts to the Association for various purposes approach the seven thousand dollar mark.

PROGRAM---

Continued from page 1

Our Finances-Birger Osland, Treasurer, Norwegian-American Historical Association, Chicago

5:45 P.M.—BANQUET—Ytterboe Dining Room Annex GREETINGS-

- The Honorable Luther W. Youngdahl, Governor of Minnesota, St. Paul
- The Honorable Wilhelm Morgenstierne, Ambassador from Norway, Washington, D. C.
- Torgeir Siqveland, Consul General for Norway, Minneapolis
- E. B. Hauke, President, The Supreme Lodge, Sons of Norway, Minneapolis
- Dr. Einar I. Haugen, Professor of Scandinavian Languages, University of Wisconsin, Madison, Wisconsin Dr. Harold Dean Cater, Secretary, Minne-
- sota Historical Society, St. Paul Dr. Guy Stanton Ford, Executive Secretary, American Historical Association, Washington, D. C.

Do You Remember?

Brief greetings from speakers at the dinner held October 6, 1925

A Roster of Life Members Norwegian-American Historical Association Life Membership Dues=\$100

Arthur Andersen,* Chicago, Ill. Johan M. Andersen, Brookline, Mass. Anundsen Publishing Co., Decorah, Iowa Anundsen Publishing Co., Decorah, Iowa Dr. John G. Arneberg, Chicago, Ill. Axel Arnesen,* Fort Worth, Texas Col. S. J. Arnesen, Brooklyn, N. Y. Chr. U. Bagge,* Chicago, Ill. Carl F. Berg, Cary, Ill. Dr. G. Biornstad,* Minneapolis, Minn. Magnus Bjørndal, Jersey City, New Jersey Bygdelagenes Fællesraad, Minneapolis, Minn. Herman J. Ekern Chicago, Ill Herman L. Ekern, Chicago, Ill. Oscar Evenson, Stewartville, Minn. Isak H. Faleide, Oak Park, Ill. Ola Five,* Steinkjer, Norway A. C. Floan,* St. Paul, Minn. John Frohlin, Pluckemin, New Jersey Andrew Furuseth Memorial (by Olaf E. Ray) Capt. Gronner Gallis, San Francisco, Calif. Miss Lydia Haldorsen, Kohler, Wisc. Homer Halvorson, Baltimore, Maryland Olaf Halvorson, Huntington Park, Calif. Ludvig Hektoen, Chicago, Ill. Gustav Henriksen,* Oslo, Norway Mrs. O. I. Hertsgaard, Minneapolis, Minn. Consul E. H. Hobe,* St. Paul, Minn. J. A. Holmboe, Oklahoma City, Okla. Mrs. Olava Horjum-Kirkvold, Starbuck, Minn. Sir Carl Knudsen,* London, England O. O. Krabol,* Chicago, Illinois Captain Jos. M. Johnson, Chicago, Ill. John Litell, Queens Village, N. Y. Luther College Library, Decorah, Iowa Nels J. L. Ness, Chicago, Ill. Gerhard Brandt Næseth, Madison, Wisc. Jacob Nilsen, Chicago, Ill. Den Norske Amerika Linje, Oslo, Norway S. L. Odegard,* Long Beach, Calif. Hon. O. M. Oleson,* Fort Dodge, Iowa N. H. F. Olsen, Dearborn, Mich. Birger Osland, Chicago, Illinois J. A. Pasche, Chicago, Ill. J. A. Fasche, Chicago, In.
Dr. A. P. Ousdal, Santa Barbara, Calif.
Paula L. Paulsen, Chicago, Ill.
Olaf E. Ray,* Chicago, Ill.
Dr. N. E. Remmen,* Chicago, Ill.
Dr. P. Reque,* Brooklyn, N. Y.
H. O. Rotvold, Mabel, Minn. Bernhard Ruud,* Chicago, Ill. Frederic Schaefer, Pittsburgh, Penna. Johannes Schiott,* Southport, Conn. Rolf B. Schou, San Francisco, Calif. Ole Singstad, New York City, N. Y. Consul Th. Siqveland, Minneapolis, Minn. Peter M. Sivertsen, Greenwich, Conn. E. A. Cappelin-Smith, New York City, N. Y. S. E. Sonnichsen, Seattle, Wash. Dr. T. Stabo,* Decorah, Iowa Supreme Lodge, Sons of Norway, Minneapolis, Minn. Dr. Otto C. Svebakken,* Decorah, Iowa Magnus Swenson,* Madison, Wisc. Marcus Thrane, Memory of, By Olaf E. Ray

PROGRESS—and a CHALLENGE

[From "A Review and a Challenge," published in 1938, by the Norwegian-American Historical Association]

The truth is that the Norwegian element in America is becoming history-conscious now that the frontier and the Cleng Peersons are faded into a distant past. In an effort to know themselves and their antecedents and to measure their achievements and contributions as a group, they have given support to the Association.

By gifts and loans to forward the work of the Association in all its branches, by suggestion and by inquiry, and by active work, they have furthered and broadened the program of the leaders.

Through the offices of the church and the editorial rooms of the Norwegian-American press, and through the agencies of private businesses, they have made contributions from time to time the value of which is inestimable. And always through their membership dues they have aided in defraying the expenses involved in research and publication.

The Association has definitely come of age. It has developed an aggressive and mature editorial policy with a record of achievement. Starting with no resources, it has built up an Endowment Fund while defraying heavy expenses. It has gathered into its folds a membership that is enthusiastic and loyal. And its leadership has been recruited to inspire a confidence and sense of surety that are guarantees of steady production. Little wonder that it has adhered to the five objectives of the Constitution and earned for itself the title of the "most active historical society among the immigrant groups in the United States"!

Early challenges have been met. Substantial progress has been made. The visions of such pioneers in the movement as Dr. Gjerset and Professor Rølvaag have been in part realized.

There is no disposition among members and officers, however, to rest upon the achievements and laurels of the foundation period in the history of the Association. We now face the future. A new challenge confronts us, not less critical than the challenge that confronted the founders of the Association.

The challenge of today is to realize the immensity of the task of the Association, to block out genuinely longrange plans, to envisage the needs and the program of a permanent institution, and to rally to the support of the Association with funds, services, and the sustaining strength of an increased membership, all of which are vitally needed if the work is to go forward with vigor and success.

Mrs. Thos. E. Torrison,* Manitowoc, Wise. Trønderlaget, (Memory of Ole Rynning), Baltic, S. D. Prof. A. A. Veblen, Los Angeles, Calif. Georg Unger Vetlesen, New York City, N. Y. Attorney B. L. Wick,* Cedar Rapids, Iowa Alfred Vaksdal, Corning, N. Y. Women's Missionary Federation, Minneapolis, Minn.

*Deceased

SUPPLEMENT TO

The Norwegian-American Historical Association NEWS LETTER, No. 26, August, 1950

A ROSTER OF CHARTER MEMBERS Norwegian-American Historical Association

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L. Stavnheim, Minneapolis, Minn.
Rev. Oscar A. Strom, Cleveland, Ohio
Dr. H. G. Stub, St. Paul, Minn.
A. M. Sundheim, Minneapolis, Minn.
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Dr. Otto C. Svebakken, Decorah, Iowa
Lauritz S. Swenson, Los Angeles, Calif.
J. Jørgen Thompson, Northfield, Minn.
Rev. C. S. Thorpe, Minneapolis, Minn.
Rev. H. J. Thorpe, Patterson, Calif.
Andrew P. Thue, Lake Norden, S. Dak.
Dr. O. Tingelstad, Decorah, Iowa
Rev. T. O. Tolo, Decorah, Iowa
Dr. Torleif Torland, Seattle, Wash.
Norman Torrison, Manitowoc, Wisc.
George P. Tweed, Duluth, Minn.
H. A. Ustrud, Pierre, S. Dak.
O. L. Uthus, Chicago, Ill.
Rev. L. A. Vigness, Minneapolis, Minn.
Knud Wefald, Hawley, Minn.
B. Westergaard, Brooklyn, N. Y.
Dr. C. M. Weswig, River Falls, Wisc.
A. E. Williamson, Chicago, Ill.
Women's Missionary Fed. of N.L.C.A., Minneapolis
Rev. C. B. Ylvisaker, Moorhead, Minn.
Mrs. J. D. Ylvisaker, St. Paul, Minn.
Rev. N. M. Ylvisaker, St. Paul, Minn.
Rev. N. M. Ylvisaker, Minneapolis, Minn.

PURPOSE and PROGRAM

PURPOSE: To seek and gather information about the people in the United States of Norwegian birth and descent and to preserve the same in appropriate forms as historic records.

GENERAL PLAN OF OPERATION: To obtain by gift and from membership contributions the funds required for:

1. Helping to maintain and develop the Norwegian-American Historical Archives at St. Olaf College in Northfield, Minnesota;

 Helping to develop the Norwegian-American Historical Museum at Luther College, Decorah, Iowa;
 Encouraging and promoting Norwegian-Ameri-

can historical research and literary work;4. Publishing monographs and other works dealing

with Norwegian-American history, literature, art, and culture; and

5. Publishing a periodical devoted to Norwegian-American history, literature, and culture.

APPRAISAL

"The most active historical society among the immigrant groups in the United States."—American Historical Review.

"To imagine that a closer familiarity with Norwegian-American Studies and Records would be pertinent only to those interested in immigration is to deprive oneself of the use of an important historical source." —A Survey of Current Literature, The Hayes Foundation.