

NEWS LETTER



The Norwegian-American Historical Association
Northfield, Minnesota

Edited by J. JÖRGEN THOMPSON, Secretary

Number Twenty-Three

May, 1949

OUR NEXT PUBLICATION

From the Managing Editor comes word that the work in the print shop has practically been completed and that Studies and Records volume 15 will be ready for the bindery by the time this News Letter reaches our members. Dr. Blegen reports that the book will contain the following articles.

- A Norwegian-American Pioneer Ballad
By Einar Haugen
- Our Vanguard: A Pioneer Play in Three Acts, with Prologue and Epilogue
By Aileen Berger Buetow
- An Immigrant's Advice on America: Letters of Søren Bache
By C. A. Clausen
- Lincoln and the Union: A Study of the Editorials of Emigranten and Faedrelandet
By A. W. Andersen
- Thorstein Veblen and St. Olaf College
By Kenneth Bjork
- Kristian Prestgard: An Appreciation
By Henriette C. K. Naeseth
- Julius B. Baumann: A Biographical Sketch
By John Heitmann
- Erik L. Petersen
By Jacob Hodnefield
- Recollections of Scandinavia, Wisconsin
By Alfred O. Erickson
- Some Recent Publications relating to Norwegian-American History, XI
By Jacob Hodnefield
- Notes and Documents: Norway, Maine
By Walter W. Wright

IN MEMORIAM

Berthinus L. Wick, an attorney of Cedar Rapids, Iowa, died on October 8, 1947, having served the Norwegian-American Historical Association as its local vice-president for the State of Iowa since the year 1928. Mr. Wick left a bequest of \$4,000 in his will to the Association.

Mr. Wick was born on a farm on the small island of Rennesøy near Stavanger, and came to the United States as a boy of twelve. He never lost touch with his native island and when the Germans invaded Norway he was particularly agitated "because they had built a lookout tower on top of a mountain which was owned by my ancestors for a thousand years past."

Mr. Wick took his Master's degree at the University of Iowa in 1893 and, for a short period, taught history at that institution. He also attended Universities in Den-

mark and Germany. Since 1894, he was a practising attorney in Cedar Rapids.

He died a bachelor and left most of his considerable estate in a trust to establish a Home for Aged Men in Cedar Rapids. The Norwegian Museum at Decorah, Iowa, and the Leif Erikson Association of Madison, Wisconsin, were also remembered with smaller sums.

The Norwegian American Historical Association is deeply indebted to Mr. Wick for his sustained interest and for his substantial gift.

FROM THE SECRETARY'S DESK

A large number of our members have sent in their membership dues without waiting for a reminder from the Secretary. This courtesy has saved our office a large amount of work—yes, and postage too. We hope many more will cooperate with us in this manner. Kindly remember that at the last tri-ennial meeting of our Association the dues for associate members was advanced from \$2.00 to \$3.00 per year.

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Mrs. Kristine Haugen, Local Vice President in Seattle, issued a call to the members living in and about Seattle to meet at the University of Washington on the evening of April 22nd. Dr. Sverre Arestad delivered the main address. Dr. Olaf Halvorson, the President of our Association, journeyed from Huntington Park, California, to be with the group.

In her report printed in *Washington Posten*, April 29th, Mrs. Haugen states that President Halvorson in a spirited short talk pointed out that the commission assigned to Dr. Kenneth Bjork to write the saga of the Norwegian-Americans on the West Coast, when completed, would possibly comprise a work of three volumes and that the cost to the Association would be 25-30,000 dollars. He urged that the West Coast members rally to the fullest support of the Association for this cause. A lively discussion on ways and means of furthering interest in the "Activity of the Association" followed. A committee of five members was named to spread the enthusiasm generated at this meeting. The members of the committee are Dr. Sverre Arestad, Rev. H. O. Hendrickson, Mrs. Thora Grønvold Potter, Mrs. Marion Duff and Lt. Commander Carl Moe. We anticipate telling results from the efforts of this Committee.

Meetings of this type would tend to satisfy a want sensed by many of our members who live too far away to be able to attend the tri-ennial membership meetings. We would suggest to our other Local Vice Presidents that they give

serious thought to the possibility of similar meetings being held in their respective areas.

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Books of interest to our members.

A History of Norway by Dr. Karen Larsen has received an exceptionally commendatory press. We wish to express our sincere appreciation to Dr. Larsen for the excellent work she has done and also congratulate her on the large sale her book has had to date. This history was published for the *American-Scandinavian Foundation* by Princeton University Press.

PETER NORBECK: PRAIRIE STATESMAN has been published by the University of Missouri, Columbia, Mo., as Vol. XXII No. 2 of the University of Missouri Studies. This study has been done by Gilbert C. Fite. The author has purposed in this book to trace Norbeck's career as it reflected significant trends in recent American history. The book is priced at \$2.50.

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SONG OF THE PINES, A story of Norwegian Lumbering in Wisconsin, by Walter and Marion Havighurst. Published by The John C. Winston Company in Philadelphia. Price \$2.50.

This is the fourth book to be published in the *Land of the Free* series, junior historical novels, edited by Erick Berry.

By extensive travel in Norway and by careful and intensive study of the Norwegian-American group saga in the United States the Havighursts are exceptionally well equipped to interpret and portray the spirit of the Norwegians who came to this Land of Promise and straightway took part in the building of America. This book is a task well done.

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FROM THE ARCHIVES

One of the most interesting settlements in the Far West was Bella Coola, far up the coast of British Columbia. There in 1894, after negotiating with the Provincial government, a group of Norwegian farmers from near Crookston, Minnesota, pioneered in a novel fashion under the leadership of the Reverend C. Saugstad. Bella Coola was a planned settlement organized in a manner suggestive of the Plymouth colony in New England.

In the Provincial Archives at Victoria, British Columbia, is the original of a diary kept by Ivar Fougner, secretary and schoolmaster of Bella Coola. Begun before the departure from Minnesota, the diary is an informal and interesting record of the settlement. It has been microfilmed and a copy is being sent to the Archives of the Association...

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Few Americans are aware of the great role played by Scandinavians in the making of Utah, of the relatively

large migration of Mormons resulting from the activities of the Scandinavian Mission headquartered in Copenhagen, or of the vigorous Scandinavian life that flourished in the Zion of the Latter-day Saints. In the Mormon story as a whole the Norwegians, though fewer in numbers than the Danes and Swedes, were a significant group that produced a number of outstanding leaders.

Fortunately the records of the Scandinavian Mission have been preserved in the library of the Latter-day Saints in Salt Lake City. There, too, are files of newspapers printed in the Dano-Norwegian language which contain invaluable information about the Scandinavians. Much of the most pertinent material is being microfilmed for the Association and will be incorporated in Dr. Kenneth Bjork's book on the Norwegians of the Far West.

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Norwegians have long known of the heroic performances of "Snowshoe" Thompson in carrying mail on his back over the Sierra Nevadas. The California State Library at Sacramento has collected a considerable body of records dealing with Thompson, who is now regarded as one of California's most colorful pioneers. Copies of some of this material are now the property of the Association's Archives.

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The large collection of "America letters" used by Dr. Theodore C. Blegen in preparing his monumental *Norwegian Migration to America* is now housed in the Archives.

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NEW MEMBERS SINCE JANUARY, 1, 1949

ASSOCIATE

Gunder O. Jellum, Osage, Iowa
 Wayne J. Havey, Decorah, Iowa
 Andrew Nesheim, Detroit, Michigan
 Miss Laila O. Nilsen, Washington, D. C.
 Clifford J. Holme, San Pedro, Calif.
 LeRoy M. Paulson, Jr., Webster, S. Dak.
 Mr. and Mrs. John Lundemo, Bay Shore, Oconto, Wis.
 Mrs. Judith Sater, Los Angeles, Calif.
 Rev. R. T. Wanberg, Towner, N. Dak.
 Miss Bergitte Askø, Seattle, 1, Washington
 Mrs. Dina B. Kolderup, Seattle, Wash.
 Mr. Harold Anderson, Edmonds, Wash.
 Mr. Sigbjörn Laegreid, Seattle, Wash.

SUSTAINING

H. P. G. Norstrand, Washington, D. C.

The strength of an organization lies in its members. Send us names of prospective members, or better still, send us a new member.