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A COLLEGE FOR MEN

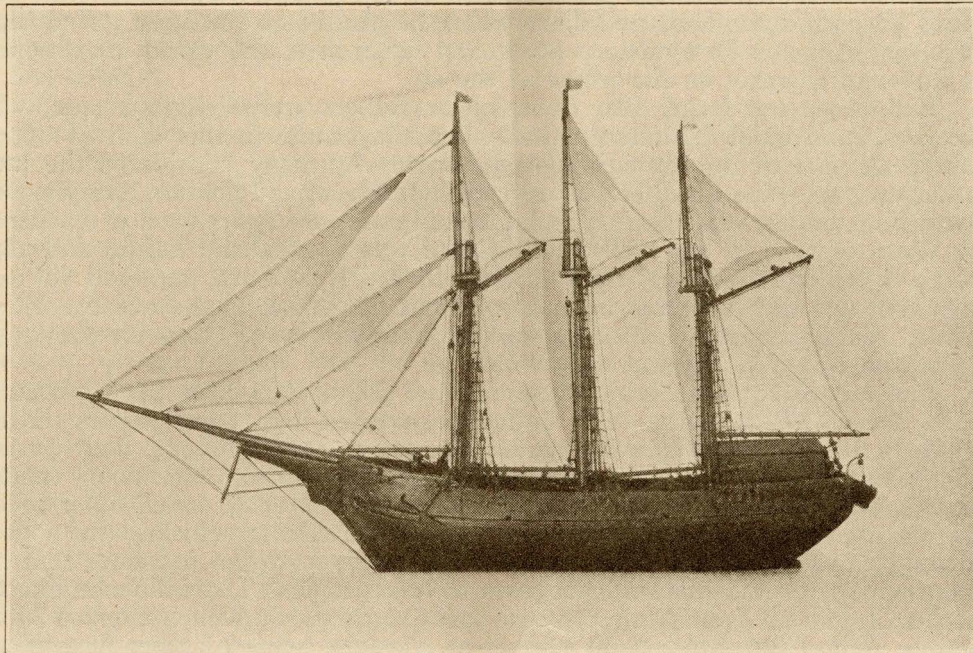
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Luther College and the Norse-American Centennial

SATURDAY, Sunday, Monday, and Tuesday, June 6-9, 1925, there will be held at the Minnesota State Fair Grounds a Norse-American centennial celebration. This celebration will commemorate the events that mark the beginning of Norwegian immigration to this continent, and will attempt to pay a fitting tribute to the Norwegian pioneers of America.



Miniature of Early Immigrant Vessel in the Luther College Museum

A hundred years ago, on July 4, 1825, a small vessel set out from Stavanger, Norway, with fifty-two people on board, headed for America, their land of promise. It took them over three months to cross the Atlantic, and they did not anchor in New York Harbor until Oct. 9th. Since that memorable day over 750,000 Norwegians have landed on American soil—15,000 times as many as came over on that first ship, the sloop "Restaurationen".

At the present time about 2,500,000 Norwegians live in America. Most of them are well-to-do, and are in every way as much a part of the American nation as their neighbors of other nationalities. In the rush of our present-day life, we forget that America was not always so thickly settled as at present, and we fail to honor as we should those plain, earnest, God-fearing, modest, but strong and courageous, men and women, who during the past century settled in the wilderness and made it habitable, such as it is today. For a whole century the Norwegians have been doing pioneer work on the frontiers.

Their services are of inestimable value and worthy of being carefully reviewed.

The proposed celebration aims to take stock of what the Norwegians have done during the past century, in order that we, as Norwegian-Americans, may better understand our heritage, that we may better appreciate our pioneer fathers, that we may get a more just recognition from our American neighbors, and that we may better face the future.

Many of our fathers were men of God, like Abraham, who walked by faith and not by sight. Like Abraham they cherished the Word of God and builded altars unto God. When they came here they were, indeed, strangers in a strange land, without friends, with little money, and with no knowledge of the language of the land. There were no railroads to take them to the wide, wild prairies of the far West, where they hoped to make their home. Often they had to foot it hundreds of miles, carrying their little children and other belongings with them. The ox-cart was fit for a king. They came; they saw; they conquered. They builded themselves sod cellars and log cabins. They felled the forest and tilled the soil. They defended themselves against the wild beasts and the Red Man. They suffered terribly from pestilence and prairie fires. They established churches and schools. They founded cities and markets. They learned the language of America and adopted its customs. They furnished more than their quota in the nation's wars, and gave the country a thrifty, law-abiding, happy citizenry in times of peace. Thanks to the industry and perseverance of the pioneers, each man can now afford his own automobile and drive where he pleases on the finest paved highways, or sit in his own modern home and listen-in to the world broadcasting its joys and sorrows on the wings of the air.

But let us not forget that our pioneer fathers were religious men, who, like Abraham, builded altars to God when they came to this land of opportunity. A part of the immigrant's equipment—by many considered the most important part—was his Bible, catechism, hymnbook, and postil. Every typical Norwegian father was a priest in his own house; every mother, a teacher of the Word of God to her household. Grace was always said before and after meat. Evening devotions were always held. Neighbors gathered in each other's homes to hear some layman expound the Word in the absence of the pastor. Congregations were organized for regular services and for the teaching of the young in the way they should go.

These congregations, which now number about 3000, have been served by more than 2000 pastors. The influence exerted by these pastors in the pulpit, in the instruction of the young, in private work among their parishioners, in raising funds for charitable, educational, and missionary undertakings, and the hundred and one things that a pastor is called upon to do, has been very great. They have been genuine leaders, pointing the way to spiritual and educational advancement and thus exerting an influence that has meant much for the material progress of the people. The influence exerted by the Church as such is closely associated with the influence exerted by its pastors. The Church has built houses of worship, some of them magnificent specimens of architecture; educational institutions; hospitals; orphanages; homes for the aged; besides doing a vast amount of charitable work of a miscellaneous nature and conducting home and foreign missions on an extensive scale. It has also founded printing establishments, in order that such periodicals and books as the Church wishes to disseminate might be made available to the people.

The founding of higher institutions of learning was one of the wisest and most illustrious of the deeds of our pioneer fathers; and Luther College is one of the most splendid monuments to their noble memory. The influence exerted by Luther College can not be easily estimated. It is a child of the Church and is maintained by the Church, and has amply repaid the Church all that has been expended upon it. It has given thousands of young men a Christian education and prepared them for a life of Christian conduct and influence as active members of the Church in a time when other thousands of Lutheran young people have drifted away from the Church through the influence exerted on them by non-religious education. It has furnished 569 pastors for the Church, or nearly one-fourth of all the pastors who have been in active

service in the Norwegian Lutheran Church in this country. Many of these pastors have occupied positions of more than ordinary influence, such as the president of the Norwegian Lutheran Church of America, the editor of "Lutheran Church Herald," the chairman of the Committee on Foreign Missions, and the executive secretary of the Young People's Luther League. It has furnished professors and teachers for many institutions, such as professors at all four of the colleges of our Church, instructors at most of our academies, teachers at hundreds of public and parochial schools, and professors at such universities as Princeton, Chicago, Illinois, Wisconsin, Iowa, Minnesota, North Dakota, Washington, and California. Among its sons have been the Governor of a state, members of Congress, United States Ministers to foreign countries, United States Consuls to important centers in foreign lands, and district and circuit court Judges. As editors, authors, and public speakers, sons of Luther have exerted a widespread influence. As leaders of vocal and and other musical organizations, particularly within the Church, many of them have striven to awaken a greater interest in the better class of both vocal and instrumental music and to develop a popular appreciation of what is good and beautiful in this refining art. In the legal profession the College has been well represented; and in this and the medical profession its sons, who include one of the leading medical authorities of the world, have added to the name and fame of their Alma Mater. Other professions have also claimed a share of the sons of Luther; and, all things considered, it must be said that Luther College has produced a distinguished body of alumni, who have been a credit, not only to their Alma Mater, but to all the people of Norwegian extraction in this country.

The religious influence exerted by men who have become pastors, or teachers in church schools, is obvious. But it must not be forgotten that the sons of Luther who have not entered directly into the service of the Church have greatly profited by the religious instruction and influence of the College, and have in turn exerted a very definite influence in the various professions and callings in which they have been engaged.

The College has also rendered valuable service by contributing to the preservation of our ancestral Norwegian heritage, and by disseminating, through her sons and professors, the culture embodied in this heritage. Among the sons of the College and the members of the College faculty, have been men who have been thoroughly conversant with this heritage, and have set it forth in historical and other works, and have expounded it, both within and without the College walls, to great numbers of our people. Positions outside immediate church circles, which are, or have been, held by Luther College graduates and which offer special opportunities for disseminating knowledge and appreciation of this culture are professorships in the Scandinavian languages and literatures at the universities of Wisconsin, Minnesota, and North Dakota. Besides class-room and other instruction that has provided the students systematic presentation of our cultural heritage, the College has also built up the largest pioneer Norwegian museum in this country—in fact, the only public museum of the kind in America. The museum contains a great number of articles illustrating Norwegian life from the year 1297 to the present time. These articles have been assembled through a period of about thirty years, and many of them cannot be duplicated. As a result, the museum constitutes a valuable adjunct to the field that it illustrates. That people take much interest in the museum is shown by the fact that, between June 8th and Sept. 8th during the recent summer vacation, its doors swung open to two thousand visitors, who came from ten different states and Canada.

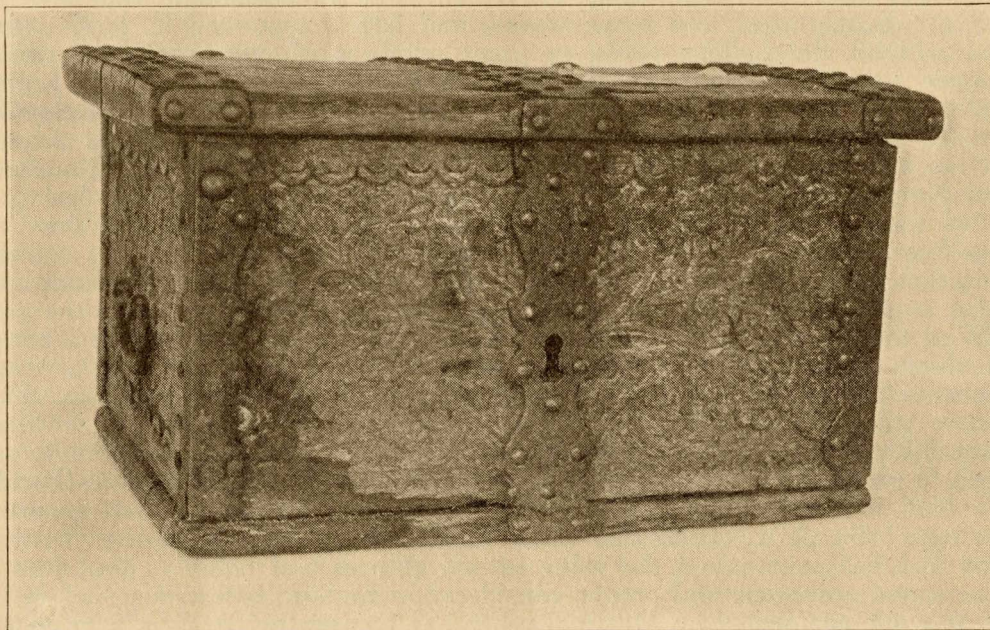
Nor is there anything anti-American in our cherishing our ancestral heritage. On the religious side it has increased our respect for the Word of God and has emphasized the value of uprightness and honesty, obedience to constituted authority, and proper consideration for our fellow-men; while the great work performed by Martin Luther has transmitted to us a firm regard for regulated liberty, a strong attachment to popular education, and the correct conception of the relations that should subsist between Church and State. On its secular side, it has given us a knowledge of the history of our ancestors; of their courage and spirit of adventure; of their love of liberty and

order; of their widespread explorations and settlements; of their valuable literary productions, both ancient and modern; of our racial and cultural relations to other people, such as the English and the Germans; and of the influence exerted by our ancestors on the language and thought of the people of England, whose descendants in this country were mainly instrumental in founding our republic. In fact, knowledge of our cultural inheritance has made us better citizens, because it has increased our love of liberty, of law and order, and of Christian conduct; and because American institutions embody so much of this cultural heritage that American citizenship becomes to us a priceless treasure.

It takes a great deal of imagination to follow the building of Luther College in the pioneer days. Here was to be a school equal in quality to the university of Norway, and some day in quantity also. It was to be not inferior in scholarship to the best in America. It was to be true to God's Word and Luther's expositions. It should have suitable buildings at a time when money was scarce and unstable in value. There were no railroads in these parts, and there were hardly any wagon roads. We were in the midst of the Civil War. And yet Luther College was built—the old Main Building costing \$75,000.00. Our people today could as easily raise millions. And there were 6000 people present at its dedication in 1864. Our pioneer fathers, like Abraham, builded an altar to God.

At the Centennial next year the work of the pioneers will be rehearsed, and men will thank the Lord with hearts and hands and voices. The work done at Luther College by the pioneer fathers who built it and supported it with men and means, and by the teachers who have kept up its high Christian and scholastic standards, will surely be an interesting and inspiring part of that historic survey. Meanwhile, we thank God that our fathers, like Abraham, builded altars to God. As for Luther College, we find our sentiments well expressed in the following lines from the cantata composed for the sixtieth anniversary of the College:

“For what thy past has given us, in gratitude we raise
Our voice and tell of victory, of thankfulness and praise.
To Him be all the glory, our mighty Lord and King,
Whose blessing rested on thy brow, to Him our song we sing.”



*Money Chest of Carved Oak from 1518, brought to America by Immigrants from Norway.
Now in the Luther College Museum*