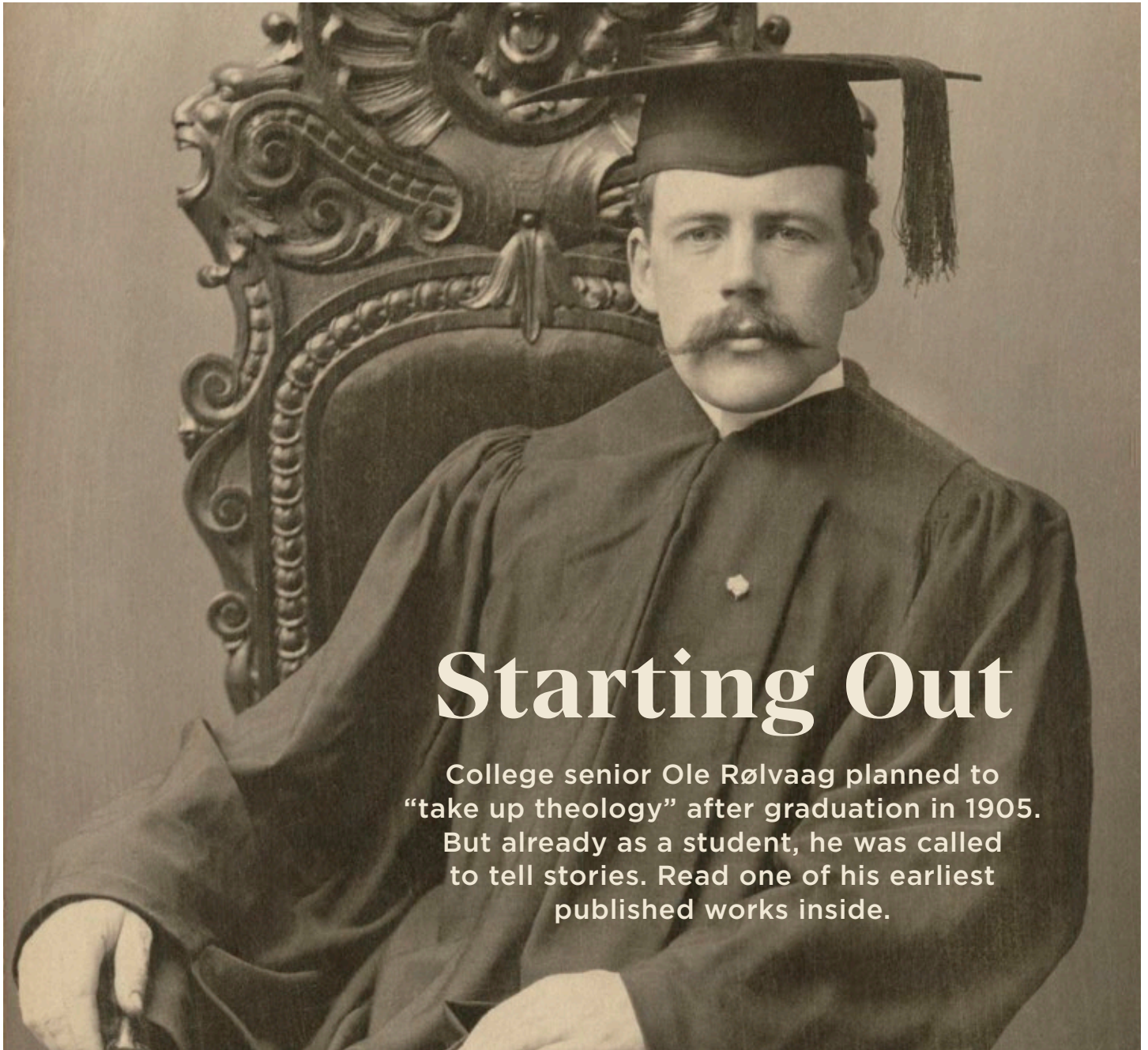


Exploring Sámi Identity **P. 3**

Al and Gretchen Quie in the Archives **P. 10**

Currents

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE NORWEGIAN AMERICAN HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION | SUMMER 2026 VOLUME 200



Starting Out

College senior Ole Rølvaag planned to “take up theology” after graduation in 1905. But already as a student, he was called to tell stories. Read one of his earliest published works inside.

A Pledge to Embrace a Complicated Past



settled on land where Indigenous peoples had long lived and were being removed, largely through fraudulent government processes. NAHA recognizes that immigrants and their heirs have benefitted from, and Indigenous peoples have paid heavily for, that displacement. Committed to understanding that immigrant experience, NAHA pledges to make Indigenous peoples more visible in our stories and more central to our understanding of Norwegian and North American history.

This pledge—along with NAHA’s research prospectus, which details our priorities in publishing research on new historical eras, new geographical areas, cross-cultural encounters, and innovative applications of theoretical models—guides my work as NAHA editor. These visionary guidelines for the NAHA publications program promise to bear generous fruit in the years to come. One such publication that I look forward to sharing with you soon is an anthology dedicated to a 21st century exploration of Ole Edvart Rølvaag’s work. The anthology will be published in 2027 in recognition of the 100th anniversary of the publication of the English edition of Rølvaag’s most well-known novel, *Giants in the Earth*. There’s lots to look forward to as NAHA continues to fulfill its mission to inspire connections to Norwegian American experiences through discovery, scholarship, and stewardship.

With Anticipation,
Anna M. Peterson, Editor

The Norwegian American Historical Association remembers that Norwegians—including many of our own members’ ancestors—joined the wave of immigrants entering North America from the mid-1800s. They

ON THE COVER

His brief 1905 graduating-class profile in the St. Olaf College *Manitou Messenger* highlighted Rølvaag’s religious interests—his membership in Luther League and his desire to study theology. Instead, he quickly earned a master of arts degree at the University of Oslo and in 1906, joined the St. Olaf faculty.

COVER IMAGE: NAHA

IN BRIEF

Join Our July 30 Event on Sámi Identity

As family historians hunt for their ancestral past in Norway, many find they have connections to the Sámi people. In the past, people often kept silent about their Sámi identity or obscured it due to stigma, pressure to conform to the dominant Nordic national identities, or policies that insisted on assimilation.

NAHA welcomes scholar Freia Serafina Titland as presenter for our July 30 online event on this topic. Titland will discuss the historical roots of the silence surrounding Sámi identity and the contemporary journeys of rediscovery taking place among Sámi descendants in the diaspora. She will draw on both her own family research and her academic scholarship to show how these hidden histories emerge and what they mean for individuals and communities today.

Join us for a blend of storytelling, historical insight, and cultural reflection. This program invites us to consider how family histories are shaped not only by what is remembered but also by what is forgotten.



Freia Serafina Titland is a PhD candidate in women’s spirituality at the California Institute of Integral Studies, an artist, and a Sámi-Norwegian American on a path of cultural rediscovery.



JULY 30, 2026 / 3PM CENTRAL DAYLIGHT TIME

Ancestral Silence: Rediscovering Sámi Identity in the Norwegian American Diaspora

➤ **REGISTER** at norwegianamericanhistory.org/events/

Students Bring History to Life

Through their creativity and careful archival work this spring, a NAHA intern and two student workers completed projects that bring the past closer to the present.

Alayna Beringer

University of Wisconsin–Madison

Project: Searchable transcripts of historian David C. Mauk’s oral history recordings

“I have long been interested in US immigrant history, especially in how archives preserve underrepresented voices and experiences,” Beringer says. “The combination of historical preservation and meaningful access is what drew me to archival work.”

By transcribing and organizing the interviews in the David C. Mauk oral history collection, Beringer has done what she is passionate about—made the interviews more



accessible. Mauk spoke with many dozens of people for the research that led to his book *The Heart of the Heartland*, a history of the Norwegian American community in Minneapolis–St. Paul. Beringer’s meticulous work has transformed the audio recordings of his interviews into searchable text, so that researchers, educators, and the public can more easily engage with these firsthand accounts. The transcripts will be added to the NAHA catalog gradually as part of the David C. Mauk papers.

“One of the most memorable interviews I worked with was Pete Bronlie’s,” Beringer recalls. “When he shared that he was 107 years old, I actually paused and replayed the recording to make sure I had heard correctly! Hearing his life story in his own words was incredible.”

Beringer’s project will help archive users, but the work also helped her to develop her archival

skills. From transcribing audio and organizing metadata to managing workflows, her experience at NAHA reflected the blend of preservation and accessibility that defines modern archival work.

Note: David Mauk should have been listed among the 2025 donors of archival materials published in the spring 2026 Currents. We apologize for our oversight.

Grace Peterson

University of Nebraska-Lincoln

Project: Digital exhibit on material culture



Peterson's academic interests focus on material culture, especially how everyday objects and textiles reflect the experiences of Norwegian immigrants. Her work at NAHA aligned with her graduate studies, she says. "It's been an incredible opportunity to connect that research to real archival materials."

The digital exhibit Peterson developed examines the ways individual immigrants balanced cultural preservation with adaptation, as revealed through their folk art traditions, frontier homes, clothing, and other objects.

"My favorite materials were Claire Selkurt's research on frontier architecture," Peterson recalls. "Looking at photographs of early settlement structures like Luther Valley, I could actually recognize the marks of Norwegian craftsmanship in both stone and wood."

Material culture is not only about objects themselves but about the people who used them and the choices they made. "Working in the NAHA archives has shown me that you don't always need the physical object to understand it," Peterson explains. "Documents, photographs, and diaries can reveal so much about how people engaged with the things around them."

To create her exhibit, Peterson analyzed primary sources, interpreted their historical context, and connected individual documents to broader narratives. Her project deepened her skills and in turn has added depth to the NAHA collections.

Jean Butler

St. Olaf College

Project: Digital exhibit on the 1939 Norwegian royal tour



Introduced to NAHA by a friend, Butler quickly realized that the organization dovetailed with her interest in supporting public engagement with history.

During her time at NAHA, she created a digital exhibit that follows the 1939 journey of Norway's Crown Prince Olav and

Crown Princess Märtha across the United States. The exhibit highlights enduring ties between Norway and Norwegian America. It also shows how the tour was used to strengthen relationships at a critical time: In less than a year, Germany would invade Norway.

Butler uncovered surprising facts: Crown Princess Märtha delivered her first public address in the United States, not Norway, at a women's luncheon with 1,200 attendees in Chicago. Using a historical photo, Butler calculated that a cake made for Crown Prince Olav might truly have weighed the 75 pounds that were claimed.

Some of her favorite materials were letters sent by Engelbrecht H. Hobe, Norway's consul for the Midwest, to others involved in planning the tour: "I grew very familiar with Hobe's writing style and found it fascinating to see how it changed depending on who he was communicating with."

Butler's project adds new perspective to photos and tour-planning documents in NAHA's collections, and it added to her skills as well, including creating infographic maps for the public.

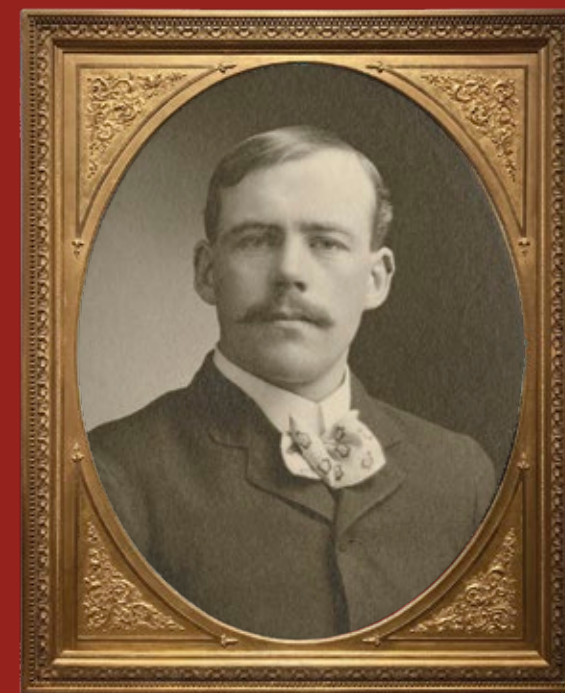
"Working at NAHA confirmed for me that I want to pursue a career in public history," she says. "I really enjoy bridging scholarly research with public understanding."

➤ VIEW BOTH OF THE NEW DIGITAL EXHIBITS

"Unpacking: Material Culture and Skills Among Norwegian Americans" and "Across America for Norway: The 1939 Royal Tour" on our website. Go to norwegianamericanhistory.org/archives/digital-exhibits/

Grandma and Her Story

BY OLE EDVART RØLVAAG



One of Ole Rølvaag's earliest published stories—and one that he wrote in English—appeared in the St. Olaf College *Manitou Messenger* in February 1905, during his final semester as a student there. In the leadup to the 2027 publication centennial of Rølvaag's *Giants in the Earth*, this early work offers a window into his developing skills and ideas as a writer. Learn more about "Grandma and Her Story" in Todd Nichol's 2011 article in *Norwegian American Studies*.



➤ ACCESS THE JOURNAL ARTICLE
ONLINE AT norwegianamericanhistory.org/norwegian-american-studies/

Above: Rølvaag as a St. Olaf College student in 1903. That year, too, he published a short story in the school paper, a humorous sketch titled "Per," written in Norwegian.

IT was one of those quiet, warm, pleasant, hazy autumn evenings. My friend Pete and I were sitting on the porch enjoying to our heart's content the blessed taste of "Old English." Twilight was coming on. It spread—silently. Deeper, yet deeper it grew, enveloping the earth, until at last the soft, endless, yet kind and soothing autumn night had clothed our planet in darkness.

It was about seven months since Pete and I had been together. He had spent the spring and summer up in the northern country teaching parochial school. Now he was back, and glad I was, for Pete was my friend. On such evenings it frequently happened that Pete thawed and became very amiable. Generally, and especially in a crowd of acquaintances, he was taciturn.

"Say," said he, suddenly breaking the silence, "did I ever write you about Grandma?"

"Guess you never did; no sir."

"Well, sir, there is a character for you!"

"So"—I drawled out rather lazily, not caring particularly just then to be muddled up in my own musings.

"You just ought to have met her!"

"Well, what about her then?" I asked, not

seriously interested, for I well knew that Pete took an interest, which I termed “abnormal,” in old folks and children. Never saw a youngster that could get along better with old folks. This he had made a specialty. For hours at the time he could sit talking with them, gradually drawing them out until he had their whole biography.

“What about her?” he ejaculated, “Well, you see that is just what I haven’t been able quite satisfactorily to explain to myself. Perhaps,” he added meditatively, “it was her strength of faith and wonderful optimism that took me most. Yes, I am quite sure that was it.”

In spite of myself I began to feel interested in “Grandma,” because optimism is certainly a rare quality in old folks. So as I was about to light the second dose of “Old English” I asked him to let me have the whole story. This he did, narrating slowly and with a pathos that I never had thought he possessed.

“Nearly everybody up in the country called her Grandma, and Grandma she certainly was. Her face, kind and sympathetic, was deeply furrowed—the work of nearly a century. The silver gray color of her hair was made still richer by the black satin cap she always wore. And then there were the spectacles so necessary to every genuine grandma. Sons and daughters she had many, some of whom had already passed life’s noonday. Numerous grandchildren were wont to play around her, but troubled and disappointed if she chanced to be too deeply absorbed in the bygone to notice them. Rarely did that happen. Grandma was different from most old folks in this, that she took an active interest in the present; yes, what is more, she believed in it and clung to it “for the promise that it closed.”

I first met her at a surprise party on the son with whom she stayed. Had heard much about her already, and, of course, I was anxious to meet her. The minister was there, and as he knew Grandma well, I asked him to introduce me. She had a small

flower garden, which, as she afterwards told me, she attended to all alone. There we found her, busily making bouquets of pansies, wood violets, and moss roses for a crowd of little folks who had come to see her. Neither she nor they noticed us before we were at the entrance to the garden. The minister advanced to greet her. I followed slowly, all the time watching her. My first impression was not entirely in her favor. Probably it was because I had expected too much. There was nothing imposing about her. She was less than medium height. She wore a simple black dress and black cap. These and a white apron and a white tie made up her dress, but everything was scrupulously neat.

“So? You are the new teacher? Very kind of you to call.” She shook hands with me, and, considering her age, very heartily. Her handshake counteracted my first impression and made me like her right there. We walked out of the garden, she and the minister doing most of the talking at first; but little by little she drew me into the conversation. Presently someone came to see the minister, so Grandma and I were left alone.

She offered to show me the place, an offer that I gladly accepted, as this was one of the largest and best equipped farms I had ever laid eyes on. As we walked along, and I listened to the quiet talk of that aged, stooping woman by my side, I became more and more interested in her. I felt it was my duty all the while to offer my arm, but didn’t. Was afraid she would feel offended.

“There,” she pointed out to me a small, very small shanty, “there you see our first house. It is small, but those days it sufficed, though we were many. You young folks,” she observed with a smile, “seem to need such an awful lot of space.”

“Modern improvements,” I suggested.

“I suppose, but there is a danger in having too much room, too. The members of the same family might become strangers to one another,” she

returned with a good-humored smile.

“How long have you been up here in this northern country now, Grandma?”

“Twenty-two years.”

“A very long time, isn’t it?”

“No, can’t say that. To the one who has labored and struggled, hoped and enjoyed, it seems but a brief space. No, twenty-two years is decidedly a short time.”

Our conversation drifted off on other things. “I well remember,” she said, “the time when we first came out here. Drove a yoke of oxen. That was the way poor folks traveled in those days. When we came across the country, fifty miles south of here, it seemed to me the homeliest country I ever saw. I asked Andrew, our oldest son now, who was driving, if it was very far yet to the claim. Andrew, I suppose, thought I was weary of the long journey, so he said: ‘No, mother; now it is not far.’ Then I am sure I cried, for I never saw such a homely country. Never thought anything could grow there, either. Can’t tell how glad I was for every mile our caravan moved on further to the north. Now and then we halted a little. Every time I anxiously asked Andrew, ‘Is it here?’ ‘No, mother, yet farther to the north.’ So I cheered up a little, and as we moved on again I thanked God that the claim was not where we had halted last. To pray to Him that the country where Andrew had taken the claim might be more to my liking, I dared not. That I thought would be sin. Yet I am not so sure that I didn’t do it; the human heart is frail. Northward we moved slowly, but steadily, and, somehow, I began to like the country better as we passed on, especially as I now noticed a white flower growing here and there on the prairie. Once something broke and Andrew stepped down to patch up. ‘Is it here, Andrew?’ I called out to him. ‘No, mother, it is farther yet.’ Then I became more cheerful, and—would you believe me?—when we came out here, it seemed to me the prettiest country that God ever made. Thanks be to Him. He hath done everything well,” she added quietly and reverently. Grandma’s eyes had become moist. Whether it was from the chilly evening breeze that swept over the prairies or from calling up memories of the past, I cannot say. “And here we have lived and labored ever since.”

“And suffered,” I put in.

“Why add that? Let the dead past bury its dead. Aren’t you teaching religion?”

The crowd was breaking up, and so we had to return to the house.



It was long before I again met Grandma. Had said good-bye one morning to the folks with whom I had been staying through the summer and had come to town, where I was to take the train east in the afternoon. But had yet two hours until train time, and these I was going to spend with the minister. Grandma happened to be visiting there, and thus it came about that I met her a second time.

I was in a bad mood that morning, gloomy and despondent. On my way to town I had been planning and figuring how I might scare up money enough to take me through the school year, but could see no possible way. It was not very cheerfully, and perhaps still less heartily, that I answered her kind “good morning.” I felt ashamed of myself right there. She looked at me a while in silence. I was quite sure my mood amused her, and this irritated me. She offered me a chair at her side, and I sat down.

“And now you are going off to school again?”

“Rather think not. No. Guess I had better pull off for the woods this winter,” I answered dryly.

“I wouldn’t do that. Finish your education first, and then take to the woods afterwards.”

Something was oozing up in me that I strove hard to keep down. “Yes, that advice is easy enough to give, but perhaps a trifle harder to follow for one in my circumstances,” I answered; this time coldly.

She turned right to me. “I don’t quite see what is the trouble with you young folks anyway. Seems to me you don’t have the least bit of either courage or faith. You just mind me now and go back to school, and you will see; somehow you will be able to stay. The Lord never forsakes those who believe in him.”

“Perhaps,” was my only answer. She seemed not to notice it. She was rocking a little faster and nodded her head deeply as all old folks do when meditating profoundly.

“It is peculiar,” she began, talking more to herself than to me, “when we are young we are so brimful of bright hopes. We dream of doing great things, of conquering the world. After only a few hard knocks we lie by the wayside, weary, disgusted, hopeless. We take a new start. Now the world is all wrong, and we—we are going to change it. We are destined to do the great thing. Ahead we dash. After a few rods we are again in the ditch, faint and cheerless. This time perhaps a little muddier. The world goes on just the same. But the years roll by. We grow older—hm, hm. As we pass along, we gather scraps of wisdom, sometimes from thistles and thorns; then again from the mustard, or from the roses and the lilies growing by the wayside. Wisdom must be gathered from both good and

bad—hm, hm. But as our stock of wisdom becomes larger, our sight grows clearer. Yes, clearer, (there she nodded her head as one who is absolutely certain) and we see that the purpose of our lives was not to conquer the world, but so to live, that we might put meaning into our lives—to get our lives into harmony with the will of the Lord. Yes. That’s it.” Here she nodded decisively again.

Listening to her soliloquy, my bad mood disappeared. I thought she was handing out the genuine article all right enough. No doubt about that. Then it occurred to me that this woman must have experienced something out of the ordinary. I ought to have seen that the first time I met her. But the trouble is that great souls always deceive us by appearing so very, very common.

“You have experienced a great deal in your day, Grandma, I am sure,” said I, this time very gently.

She smiled in her pleasant and quiet way. “A person with eighty years behind him naturally has. Yet I suppose what I have experienced a good many others have. The Lord has been very good to me, yes, very. Of course, there have been some dark and stormy days.”

“I am sure you have suffered much,” I put in.

“Why speak of suffering?” she continued. “I am afraid you have not gathered many scraps of wisdom yet. Life is not sorrow and suffering; life is joy.” The last words came very softly, yet with the conviction of many years.

Might as well own up I was ashamed. Here was I, a mere inexperienced youngster talking of suffering and sorrow to a woman of eighty.

I believe she felt my embarrassment, for, as if to put me at ease again, she went on: “The first real sorrow I ever had was when I was preparing for confirmation. You see I thought such a great deal of the minister; and kind and gentle he was to us children. It was my highest ambition not to get stuck in anything that he might ask me; and you may be sure I knew my books, too. But one day—I remember it as well as if it were yesterday—he asked me if I knew from Scripture when the day of judgment was to come? I had the answer ready, but it seemed to me that it couldn’t be the right one. So I did not dare to give it. He looked at me in a kind of surprised way as if he had expected me to know, and then answered it himself: ‘And the Gospel of the Kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all the nations; and then shall the end come.’ That night I slept little, but cried much.”

So our talk drifted on, I asking questions and she responding. I learned that she had married

quite young and that they had owned a farm in the northern part of Norway. But the soil was poor and the crops were failing from year to year. Under such circumstances it was difficult to support a family. Early in the sixties rumors began to spread in their “bygd” about the land of wonders and fabulous riches, far away across the great ocean.

“Our oldest son, Jens, caught the ‘America fever’ first. He was then in his sixteenth year; and a brave lad he was, bright and very strong for his age. He began assuring me that we ought to go. He just didn’t let me have peace. Can’t say but that there seemed to be much truth in what the lad was saying. So I began to talk to Andrew, my husband, about it. He was sickly then and has always been. He did not approve of our plan at first. But Jens never gave up; said he would provide a home for us and would never leave us as long as he lived. God bless him! I am sure he would have kept his promise if God had permitted him to live.

“Finally we determined to go. Everything was sold at public auction. Two weeks before we were ready to leave, something happened that made us waver. Our little three-and-one-half-year-old daughter was suddenly taken sick with scarlet fever. The doctor came, but could do nothing. She became worse from day to day.” Grandma’s voice became unsteady. “Two days before we left, we followed her to her grave.” She made a long pause. Though so many years had passed since that day, the wound was still there—fresh. Joy fades in time; with sorrow it is different. Sorrow is an evergreen. I did not attempt to say anything. There are moments when sympathy is best expressed by silence. Grandma’s eyes, dim with age, were now made dimmer still by tears. Slowly they came, one by one, following the deep, winding furrows down the faded cheeks until they trickled from her chin.

“Yes,” she continued after a while, “to bid good-bye to that little grave seemed more than my heart would bear. If I only could have taken that grave along. And Annie was such a wonderful girl. Perhaps that’s why the Lord wanted her. Only three and a half years old, she could repeat the Ten Commandments and the Apostle’s Creed without a break. She could sing many hymns from our hymn book. Probably we were too fond of her. If we hadn’t had the auction we would never have gone now. Didn’t seem right for me to leave that lonely little grave forever and go to a foreign country.

“One day we embarked, Andrew and I and six children, of whom Jens was the oldest. In those days the trip was not as easy as nowadays. We

were seven weeks on the ocean; yes, seven weeks. All went well until we came up under New Foundland. Then many of the passengers were taken sick all of a sudden. Among them was Jens. He had been so bright and cheerful all the time, always attending to our wants; for Andrew, you know, was not very strong. The doctor came down to see Jens. He said it was brain fever.

“Four long days and nights I watched at his bedside. I knew from the first hour that he never would arise from that bed. I was right. At five o’clock the fourth morning he said good-bye to us. He was very happy. Told us not to fear, but to trust to the Lord. Said he knew that the Lord would take better care of us than he could have done. So his eyelids closed for the last time. That morning I felt the presence of God as I have never felt it before or since. Surely he was with us then. It was hard to see ’em sink him into the Atlantic on that stormy spring day. It became harder still on the long, lonely days on the farm as I went about my work. Sad memories haunt. Within thirty-nine days the Lord had taken two of our children, perhaps the dearest to us then. The Lord be praised. He doeth all things well.”

The two last sentences came very softly. She had folded her hands and was now gazing through the window across the endless prairies to the north,

while the tears stole fast down the furrowed cheeks. But rays of sunlight sifted through the lace curtain; they seemed to seek her. In the bright sunlight the gray locks beneath the black cap became still more silvery. Gradually her face was illumined by that rare smile of bliss and contentment peculiar to her. “Yes, He doeth all things well,” she repeated, this time bright and cheerful.

“Of course, our troubles did not end here. After we had arrived at our destination in Minnesota my husband was taken sick. He stayed in bed for five years; yes, for five years. It was a sore trial. Seemed to me that I had more need of Jens than the Lord did. He is almighty and I a weak, frail woman in a strange country, with five small children and my husband sick abed. But those days also had an end. Now we are living here and have all that we can possibly wish for.”

She must have felt that I was not listening. “What are you thinking of now?” she demanded.

“The *why* of human suffering.”

She scrutinized me kind of curiously. “Do you ever punish your pupils?”

I nodded, not knowing that she would have me cornered by the next question.

“And *why* do you do that?”

—“I am very sorry, for just then my train whistled, and I had to go.” ●

TWO DAYS BEFORE WE LEFT, WE FOLLOWED HER TO HER GRAVE....
TO BID GOODBYE TO THAT LITTLE GRAVE SEEMED MORE THAN MY HEART
WOULD BEAR. IF I ONLY COULD HAVE TAKEN THAT GRAVE ALONG.

Al and Gretchen Quie's Lives of Service

BY KRISTINA WARNER, BORGEN FAMILY ARCHIVIST FOR NAHA

Al Quie (1923–2023) was born on a farm in rural Rice County, Minnesota, an area with strong connections to Norwegian America. During World War II, he served as a Navy pilot. After the war, he attended St. Olaf College, graduating in 1950 with a degree in political science.

Even before he graduated, Quie had entered civilian public service. From 1949 to 1952, he clerked for a local school board, and from 1950 to 1954, was a supervisor for the Rice County Soil Conservation District. Alongside those roles, he ran his family's dairy farm.

With him in all these endeavors was his wife, Gretchen Hansen Quie (1927–2015). They met while students at St. Olaf. Gretchen, an art major, left without completing her degree when they married in 1949, but she remained an artist all her life (and in 1971, she completed her college credits and earned her BA in art from St. Olaf). She painted, created pottery, and during the couple's time in Washington DC, designed works including mosaics and stained glass together with a women's arts guild that she organized at St. Stephen Lutheran Church in Silver Spring, Maryland. A large tapestry that she designed and handstitched for the church recently underwent restoration.

Al Quie's political career began in earnest when he won a seat in the Minnesota Senate in 1954. In 1958, he was elected to the US House of Representatives and during 20 years in Congress, Quie built a reputation as a thoughtful legislator. He was known for bipartisanship and was focused on issues including education, agriculture, labor policy, and programs to reduce poverty. Quie was considered, but not chosen, by President Gerald Ford as a vice-presidential candidate.

Back in Minnesota, Quie defeated Democratic incumbent Rudy Perpich in a 1978 run for governor. An economic downturn while Quie was in office led to a budget crisis for the state. Faced with significant deficits, Quie resisted calls for extreme spending cuts and instead approved tax increases, a reversal from his earlier anti-tax stance. He chose not to seek reelection. The state had a budget surplus at the end of his term.



ABOVE Al Quie on a 1974 visit to the Owatonna, Minnesota, business founded by Eberhard "Gandy" Gandrud (on the right). Gandrud founded what became the Gandy Company, a manufacturer of agricultural equipment.

As First Lady, Gretchen Quie had promoted the arts and had opened the governor's residence to be enjoyed by the public, sometimes inviting groups of ordinary Minnesotans for evenings of dinner, entertainment, and overnight stays. After her husband left office, she and a business partner opened a design firm in St. Paul focused on religious art.

No longer an elected official after his governorship, Al Quie served in other ways. He was appointed to President Ronald Reagan's Advisory Committee for Trade Negotiations in

IMAGES: NAHA



BELOW Gretchen Quie (in the striped dress) was among the members of the Minnesota GOP Wives Club pictured with Dwight D. Eisenhower.



ABOVE As Minnesota's First Lady, Gretchen Quie cut the ribbon for the the grand opening of "The Vikings" exhibit at the Minneapolis Institute of Art in 1981. **BELOW** Al and Gretchen Quie on his family's farm near Dennison. **RIGHT** The couple campaigned together during Al Quie's 1978 run for Minnesota governor.



1982. A few years later, Quie became director of the Prison Fellowship for Minnesota and North Dakota, a nonprofit prison ministry and justice reform organization. He was later the group's national vice president.

The Quies settled in the Minneapolis suburbs later in life. Devout Lutherans, their faith had shaped both their private lives as they raised five children, their public careers, and their countless roles as church and community volunteers. Their recently donated papers have been newly added to the NAHA archives catalog.

ABOVE For National Dairy Month in June 1980, Gretchen Quie dusted off her skills as a farm wife and competed with Paul Krause of the Minnesota Vikings in a milking contest on the back lawn of the Minnesota Governor's Residence (Krause won). **LEFT** In 1972, a caravan of supporters organized in Rice County to back Al Quie during his reelection campaign for the US Congress.

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Volume 200, Summer 2026
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Find Our Annual Report Online!

2025 was a year of major commemorations and successes worth celebrating—notably the completion of our Centennial Campaign for the Archives.

→ See images from our NAHA centennial and migration bicentennial events.

→ Learn how our work in 2025 strengthened our ability to preserve and share important stories.



➤ **EXPLORE** the full report at <https://norwegianamericanhistory.org/about/annual-reports/>



Representatives from Norway's Storting, Willfred Nordlund (left) and Bård Ludvig Thorheim, visited NAHA in February last year.