historical essays, we have to develop a historiographical scaffold that deals with such questions as, 'What is a definition of women?' and 'How do women make history?' This need for a new theoretical framework was a dominant theme also at the second Berkshire conference on the history of women, held during October, 1974, in Cambridge, Massachusetts. There leaders in the field like Gerda Lerner, Carroll Smith-Rosenberg, and Natalie Zemon Davis called for re-examination of basic historical assumptions concerning power, property, and the definition of periods in human development.

If, as many scholars feel, women's history "came of age" at Cambridge in 1974, then perhaps a new era of widening awareness and expanding research was marked by its move to St. Paul in 1975. The WHOM conference at St. Catherine's was the first such gathering devoted exclusively to women's history (as distinguished from interdisciplinary conferences on women's studies) ever to be held in the Midwest. It drew nearly 600 registrants from twenty-six states and Canada. A broad representation was encouraged in the conference planning, and those attending included emerita professors, full-time faculty members, graduate and undergraduate students, elementary and high school teachers, high school students, and members of the community.

This response leaves no doubt that Minnesota and the Upper Midwest share the nation's growing interest in women's history. There has been still other evidence:

A well-attended session on women's history was part of the program at the Northern Great Plains History Conference held during October, 1974, in Mankato; at the Missouri Valley History Conference in Omaha last March, there were no less than three sessions on different aspects of the subject, plus numerous papers that dealt with women in more specific historical contexts; the spring, 1975, meeting of the Upper Midwest History Conference held in Winona was devoted to a panel on source materials and problems in researching the story of women. So little has been published in the past on Minnesota women that there is still a desperate need even for biographical material. To supply this in part, a book that will include sketches of a number of the state's notable women, as well as chapters on the contributions that Minnesota women have made in several selected fields, is in the process of publication by the Minnesota Historical Society Press. And in observation of International Women's Year, the 1975-76 edition of the *Minnesota Legislative Manual* features an essay on women in the history of the state.

So my skeptical friend may take note that there is indeed such a thing as women's history. On both the academic and popular levels it is currently one of the liveliest areas in the historical field, and as with other "minority" studies, we may hope that it will be the source of fresh approaches to the human story and of new ideas that cut across the frozen lines of accepted thinking.

**Book Reviews**

*The Norwegian-Americans.* By Arlow W. Andersen.

(Boston, Twayne Publishers, 1975. 274 p. $8.95.)

The year 1975 has been designated as the Norwegian-American sesquicentennial in both the United States and Norway, commemorating the first organized emigration from that country to America in 1825 and the subsequent century of mass migration. Professor Andersen's summary account of this migration and the acculturation of these hundreds of thousands of Norwegians to the American scene, particularly in the Upper Midwest, is both timely and an important contribution to the historical literature of the Norwegian ethnic group in America.

This volume does not represent new or original research, nor does the author pretend it does. Rather, it is a popularly written, although carefully objective, narrative, drawing on the rather large and impressive body of original sources and monographic studies already gathered and written by specialists in the field, particularly materials published over the past half century by the Norwegian-American Historical Association. The author's synoptic style is crisp, lucid, and eminently readable. He discusses the major aspects of the Norwegian-American society and culture in America during the pioneering period, and during its ethnic heyday, without inundating the reader with too much detail, too many names and dates, or extended analyses and interpretations. In this respect it is a popular work for the interested general reader which is nevertheless built on solid extant source material to which the reader is guided by way of footnotes and a bibliography should he want more detailed information and analysis.
Despite the fact that Norwegians are in the forefront among ethnic groups in America in the degree to which they and their descendants have preserved, recorded, and studied their experience in this country, there are gaps in their studied history, and there are aspects of their assimilation process which are not as yet fully understood. So, in effect, Mr. Andersen's volume becomes a guide to what is known and what has been studied thus far and thereby supplants earlier general historical surveys of the ethnic group. It is inevitable, therefore, that a work of this nature can not always remain the final nor definitive survey. It does reflect, nevertheless, the advanced stage of popular Norwegian-American historical writing in its scholarly objectivity. It is far less filiopietistic than earlier works of this kind and is less concerned with the "contributions" of the group to American society. All the arts are perhaps not here, but those that are have not been retouched either, which is commendable.

Of interest to Minnesotans should certainly be Mr. Andersen's discussions of politics and political figures in this state as they were influenced by the Norwegians, as well as the developing role of Minneapolis as the cultural and intellectual capital of the midwestern Norwegian America. Less consideration is given to specific areas of heavy Norwegian settlement in the state and their particular histories, so the overall understandings gained are those of the Norwegians in America in general, rather than the Norwegian contribution to Minnesota. Therefore, the book offers little that is particularly new, and a good deal of research and analysis are yet to be done before the story of Norwegian influence on the state can be told in all its social, political, and cultural aspects.

To the Minnesotan of Norwegian descent, however, the book can illuminate much about the manners, morals, attitudes, and dreams of one's forebears over those generations when a distinctly Norwegian ethnic subculture existed and flourished in our region, and thereby tell him a little more about himself. The "golden age" of Norwegian cultural ethnicity died out long ago, but the spiritual and physical ties between Norway and Norwegian-Americans are not only strong still but likely to continue in the future. For midwesterners, Mr. Andersen's study — and his concluding essay — suggest that a look at the group's past has also immediacy and relevance for the future, which is perhaps the noblest achievement of any historical writing.

Reviewed by KENNETH SMELO, professor of history and director of Scandinavian Studies at Moorhead State University, Moorhead, Minnesota.

A FOLK EPIC: THE BYGDELAG IN AMERICA. By Odd Sverre Lovoll.
(Boston, Twayne Publishers, 1975. 326 p. Illustrations. $8.50.)

IN THIS LONG overdue study of the bygdelag, or emigrant association, Odd Sverre Lovoll of St. Olaf College has ably filled an important gap in Norwegian-American historical literature. The author has produced a detailed yet readable account of these organizations, formed in the United States by Norwegian immigrants in an attempt to foster and preserve geographical bonds, local dialects, customs, traditions, and acquaintanceships of their home regions.

The heyday of the bygdelag was from the early 1900s to the 1930s, with some carry-over into the post-World War II era. Some second-generation Norwegian-Americans were drawn into these societies of sentiment and nostalgia. The author also emphasizes the role of the bygdelag and of a federation of them (Council of Bygdelags) in the consolidation of Lutheran church organizations and in helping immigrants make the transition to American life.

Most notable in the activities of the bygdelag was the annual stevne, or celebration, of from one to three days, commonly held after the harvest season. The stevne were held in communities, large and small, across Wisconsin, Iowa, Minnesota, the Dakotas, the Pacific Northwest, and even in Canada. Some were dominated by the clergy and were puritanical; others were more liberal and emphasized the enjoyment of association with family and friends. To thousands of Norwegian immigrants, the bygdelag stevne was the great event of the year. Today it has been replaced by May 17 (Sytteende mai, or Norwegian Constitution Day) celebrations sponsored by the Sons of Norway and other groups.

The movement for organizing the bygdelag reached a peak in connection with the observance in 1925 of the 100th anniversary of the coming to America of the first boatload of Norwegian emigrants. The sesquicentennial is being celebrated in 1975, but few bygdelag organizations have survived.

The book has innumerable Minnesota references. It is well edited and has a full and valuable bibliography and a good index. It constitutes an important addition to the long and distinguished list of publications of the Norwegian-American Historical Association.

Reviewed by CARLTON C. QUALEY, emeritus professor of history at Carleton College and head of the Minnesota Ethnic History Project at the Minnesota Historical Society.

A REVIEWER of Wilcomb Washburn's THE INDIAN IN AMERICA recently bewailed the paucity of scholarly work in the field of Indian-white relations, in comparison to the number of ethno­

The Forgotten Sioux. An Ethnohistory of the Lower
Brule Reservation. By Ernest L. Schusky.

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historical roots of current problems. The product of some seventeen years of field work and archival research, The Forgotten Sioux traces the history of one of the lesser-known branches of the Sioux nation from pre-Columbian times down to the 1970s.

For his treatment of aboriginal Sioux culture, Mr. Schusky relies on standard anthropological sources and adds nothing significant to the existing record. The five chapters that trace the history of white contact with the Lower Brule Sioux, however, are based largely on Indian Bureau records (which the author uses with proper caution) and break new ground. To catch the flavor of white public opinion, he also quotes extensively from frontier newspapers. The final chapter — in some ways the best — deals with the Lower Brule Reservation today and offers a critique of present government policy, which the author considers a continuation of the paternalistic policies of the past.

Although its merits far outweigh its defects, the book is flawed in certain ways. In order to relate Lower Brule history to the history of Indian policy in general, Mr. Schusky includes a great deal of material that serious readers will already be familiar with, necessarily to the exclusion of more detailed information about the reservation itself. The book would also have benefited from more extensive editorial blue-penciling. The writing is frequently awkward, the meaning of certain passages obscure. There are only two maps, one of them showing too little detail to be of much use, the other covering mainly the Rosebud Reservation, where the other branch of the Brule subtribe settled.

These faults aside, The Forgotten Sioux is a useful addition to the growing roster of individual tribal histories, on which the great-syntheses of Indian-white relations must eventually be based. If Mr. Schusky perhaps generalizes prematurely — as in the implication that the utter powerlessness of the Lower Brule tribal council vis-à-vis the Bureau of Indian Affairs is typical of tribal councils everywhere — his observations regarding this tribe are perceptive and suggestive. Taken in conjunction with parallel observations concerning other tribes, they may contribute to another in a long series of re-evaluations of government Indian policy, perhaps one more productive of real benefit to the Indian than those of the past.

Reviewed by Roy W. Meyer, professor of English at Minnesota State University and author of a History of the Santee Sioux (1967) and many reviews and articles for Minnesota History. He has been presented the Solon J. Buck Award for the magazine’s best article of the year three times, most recently in 1974.


(Minneapolis, University of Minnesota Press, 1975. vii, 344 p. $16.50.)

ALTHOUGH SURPRISINGLY few of the letters included in this volume are from or related to the Swedes of Minnesota, the book is nevertheless a valuable collection of commentaries on the American scene. The author-editor has divided the letters into three periods, 1840-64, 1865-89, and 1890-1914, with useful introductions to each. He prefaced each letter with a brief note, and he has also written an epilogue. These form a digest of the contents of the letters and provide Mr. Barton with an opportunity to generalize about Swedish emigration.

In the first section, there are three letters from Minnesota settlers, including one written by Hans Mattson from Vasa in Goodhue County. Others illustrate the experiences of Swedes in settling in both the South and the North, during the Civil War, and in the organization of religion. The second section includes two letters from Minnesota immigrants, one from Duluth and one from Minneapolis. There are also letters showing immigrant impressions of Chicago, of settlements in Texas, Nebraska, Kansas, Utah, and Michigan, and of the port of entry at New York. In the third section there are letters from five people in Minnesota locations, and three concerning other state locations from immigrants who returned to Sweden. Oddly, there are none from the two most densely settled counties of Swedes anywhere in the United States — Chisago and Isanti.

Mr. Barton includes diverse types of letters, from shipboard writings to Swedish radical critiques of American life, and letters from a range of locations, from Alaska, to California, to Texas, to the northern Michigan mines. He clearly wished to provide a wide representation of ideas, places, and types of persons, and in this he has succeeded. Letters from immigrants who returned home provide a hitherto neglected aspect of reactions. His notes and bibliography testify to the diligence of his research.

Maps of Sweden and a statement about nomenclature in an appendix are useful, and there is a good section of notes, bibliography, index, and three inserts of illustrations.

Reviewed by CARLTON C. QUALEY, head of the Minnesota Ethnic History Project at the Minnesota Historical Society.

Hired Hands and Plowboys: Farm Labor in the Midwest, 1815-60. By David E. Schob.

(Urbana, University of Illinois Press, 1975. vii, 329 p. $10.95.)

THE HIRED MAN and hired girl are well-known but elusive figures in the story of American agriculture. The home of the hired laborer was the Midwest. Although he was not unknown in the South, slavery and later the share-cropping system left little demand for a free or mobile agricultural laborer. On the western ranges, the cowboy was really a hired hand, but myth and legend have made him a star in the American firmament.

Traditionally, hired workers were farm children whose surplus labor was rented out to a neighbor. According to custom, fathers could claim the wages of their children until they had reached the magic age of “one-and-twenty.” However, it seems more likely that they kept their wages, married in the community, and then started on their own as farmers. When a boy became a hired man, he had taken the first step on the agricultural ladder that eventually could lead to the status of independent owner, the yeoman farmer of Thomas Jefferson’s dream.

The hired man and hired girl, then, represented not a class
of agricultural workers whose status was fixed, as in Europe, but rather a short period of time in the lives of many midwestern farmers and their wives. It is this brief time span that makes them such elusive individuals.

To find and fix his subject, Mr. Schob has gone through a tremendous amount of historical material. Few historians can match his industry. The result is not only a picture of the hired man and hired girl at work and sometimes at play, but also of groups of individuals who were permanently in the status of hired agricultural laborers. There were the horticultural workers, expert in tree grafting or grape culture. The Irish were in demand for their skills in ditching and draining jobs that Americans hated. Some men specialized in digging wells or excavating cellars, others made a living clearing land or breaking the prairie sod. Then there were the harvest hands, wanderers whose rootlessness was matched by an enormous appetite that made harvest time a period of extraordinary exertion for farm wives and their hired girls.

Some will recall that the young Abraham Lincoln helped take farm produce to market and that Ulysses S. Grant was a part-time teamster as a youth. It was not an unusual way for farm boys who spend a few years driving trucks as a step on the agricultural ladder would compare favorably with their teamster ancestors.

In spite of complaints to the contrary, hired hands seem to have worked long, hard hours. Their pay was low according to modern standards, but land was cheap, and with care and some luck the hired man could become a landowner, something next to impossible for European agricultural workers. Hired laborers played an important role in the development of the Midwest. Through this excellent study, the hired hand is no longer a shadowy figure, no longer just an extra on the American stage.

Reviewed by RODNEY C. LOEHR, retired professor of history in the University of Minnesota and author of many articles and reviews on the history of agriculture.

news & notes

WILLIAM E. LASS, professor of history at Mankato State University, has been selected to write Minnesota: A Bicentennial History in the forthcoming series, The States and the Nation. The fifty-one-volume bicentennial series, covering every state plus the District of Columbia, is being produced by the American Association for State and Local History through grants provided by the National Endowment for the Humanities. The Lass volume will be an interpretive essay characterizing the peoples of Minnesota historically and showing the relationship of their state's history, their particular experiences, their applications of democracy, and their values to those of the nation as a whole.

Mr. Lass's books on Missouri River steamboating and overland freighters have made him a recognized expert on various aspects of late nineteenth-century western transportation, and he is well known for his numerous articles and book reviews published in Minnesota History and several other journals. Born in Beresford, South Dakota, in 1928, he earned his B.A. and M.A. degrees from the University of South Dakota and his Ph.D. from the University of Wisconsin. He has taught Minnesota history at Mankato State University since 1960 and is at work on a history of the Minnesota-Canadian international boundary for the Minnesota Historical Society.

HOMETOWN U.S.A., edited by Stephen W. Sears and the editors of American Heritage (New York, 224 p., $24.95) is a handsome, nostalgic portrayal in pictures and words of small-town America at the end of the century.

The photographs used were gleaned from thousands in museums, historical societies, and private collections all over the United States. Most had been taken by commercial photographers, of whom there were a surprising number in small towns. Because these photographers saw nothing remarkable about what they were recording, many of their collections have been lost over the years. One exception was John Runk, who opened his photography shop in Stillwater in 1899 and took pictures for the next sixty-five years. Runk had a sense of history, tried to assemble a record of his town and of the St. Croix Valley, and eventually turned over his collection to the Minnesota Historical Society. Several outstanding pictures by him have been used in the volume, there is also one of Runk himself, taken by a friend.

The pictures are supplemented by the reminiscences of writers such as Henry Seidel Canby, William Allen White, Bruce Catton, and Minnesota's Walter O'Meara. The editors have extracted from We Made It Through the Winter (Minnesota Historical Society, 1974) several of Mr. O'Meara's vivid, detailed descriptions of growing up in a small town.

HOMETOWN U.S.A. is divided into five
general sections: "Main Street," "Hometown Daily Life," "The Family Circle," "Growing Up," and "Life's Small Pleasures." The overall impression is an idyllic one; few scenes suggest the less pleasant aspects of life. Admittedly, writes Mr. Sears, life was not so agreeable for everyone, especially the urban poor. But, he contends, the small town is the "spiritual home" of Americans, and there were "appealing and enduring qualities" about that way of life: friendliness, kindness, a mood of confidence among the people about themselves and about their country, simplicity, and directness.

TWO MINNESOTA organizations and an individual Minnesotan received special recognition from the national awards committee of the American Association for State and Local History during deliberations on September 13-15 prior to the AASLH 1975 annual meeting at Mackinac Island, Michigan. An award of merit was voted the Department of Research and Planning of the City of Duluth for "a survey of the city's architecture which is both a recognition of the past and a plan for the future." The committee also voted certificates of commendation to the Butler Square Company of Minneapolis for "insuring the preservation of an architecturally significant warehouse building by turning it into a successful shopping complex" and to Dr. Lewis I. Younger of Winona for "many years of service to Winona County History."

IN TWENTY-NINE closely-packed chapters broken into topical divisions, John T. Schlebecker has compressed the history of American agriculture under the title Whereby We Thrive: A History of American Farming, 1607-1972 (Ames, Iowa State University Press, 1975, x, 342 p. Illustrations. $12.95). Mr. Schlebecker is the curator of agriculture history at the Smithsonian Institution. In his book, he emphasizes land, markets, and technological and scientific developments, but other elements of the American story are not neglected. As one might expect from a Smithsonian expert, agricultural tools and machinery receive superior treatment. For anyone interested in American agricultural history, this book will be a handy and up-to-date guide and reference work. — RODNEY C. LOEBH

TWO BRIEF EXCERPTS from the life and work of Jane Grey Swisshelm are included in a new collection of readings entitled Women in the United States, edited by Barbara Judd and Daniel Josephs (Glenview, Illinois, 1975, 192 p.). The noted journalist, abolitionist, and feminist spent several years in Minnesota and was editor and publisher of the St. Cloud Visitor and St. Cloud Democrat.

One excerpt is about women office workers in Washington, D.C., which criticizes working conditions and the methods — used by men in "important places" — of hiring women who have "no qualifications except influential friends." The excerpt has been extracted from Crusader and Feminist: Letters of Jane Grey Swisshelm, 1858-1865, edited by Arthur Larsen and published in 1974 by the Minnesota Historical Society.

The second excerpt is from Mrs. Swisshelm's autobiography, Half a Century (Chicago, 1880). It relates the beginning of her publishing career, when the only anti-slavery newspaper in Pittsburgh had failed and she resolved to continue its publication herself — a daring decision in an age when public employment of any kind for women was considered rather shocking.

A COLORFUL illustrated brochure describing the Kerlan Collection of children's literature at the University of Minnesota is now available. The booklet, published on the collection's twenty-fifth anniversary, includes a biography of the founder (Dr. Irvin Kerlan), a description of the Research Center for Children's Books, an article on research, and a list of the 700 authors, illustrators, and translators represented by manuscripts, illustrations, and correspondence in the collection. Among many Minnesota authors included are Wanda Gag (whose work was featured in an article in the Fall, 1975 issue, 44:238-54), Emma Brock, and Glanville Smith.

A copy of The Kerlan Collection can be ordered for $2.00 (payable by check or money order to the University of Minnesota from the Curator, Kerlan Collection, 109 Walter Library, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, Minnesota 55455).

OREGON was admitted to the Union as the thirty-third state in 1859 only one year after Minnesota had become the thirty-second to be granted statehood. In an article, "House Republican Opposition to the Admission of the State of Oregon," published in the Summer, 1975, issue of Pacific Historian, Billy D. Ledbetter draws some parallels between the controversy that surrounded the admission of these two states. Both were Democratically controlled, and both were admitted at a time when the question of slavery was becoming an increasingly divisive issue.

MYSTERIES surrounding a rare Chinese porcelain punch bowl owned by the Minnesota Historical Society are investigated in an article, "The Wharton Punch Bowl," by Anna B. Kerr, published in the July, 1975, issue of Connoisseur magazine.

The author spent ten years researching the bowl, seeking answers to questions as to what mansion was painted on its sides, who commissioned it, who owned it through the years, when it came to the United States, and how it arrived in Minnesota. To get her answers, Ms. Kerr investigated early American architecture and notable mansions, the art and craft of porcelain work, and genealogies of some prominent American families. She concludes that the two scenes of the house on the bowl probably represent Rosewell Mansion, the eighteenth-century home of the Page family of Virginia. The bowl was probably shipped to the United States in the early 1800s and through intermarriage and inheritance reached Judge and Mrs. John W. Willis of St. Paul, who in 1920 gave it to the MHS museum collection along with other family heirlooms. Mrs. Willis was the former Margaret N. Wharton and was related to the Pages.

TWO SOUVENIR reproductions of old publications promoting Lake Minnetonka as a tourist haven have been issued by the Excelsior-Lake Minnetonka Historical Society. One is a copy of the first issue of the Lake Minnetonka Tourist, published in June, 1876. It is reprinted through the courtesy of Stuart Dimond, whose grandfather, A. S. Dimond, edited the original paper. The eight-page newspaper contains glowing descriptions of the lake, the hotels, boardinghouses, and boats available to tourists. There is an account of an excursion around the lake by a small party of "explorers," a description of Excelsior news from the Minneapolis area, and a number of advertisements.

The second souvenir is a fifty-page tourists' guide entitled Picturesque Minnetonka: Its Natural Beauties and Attractions. This more elaborate publication is handsomely illustrated with photographs. The elegant hotels, country clubs, and estates around the lake are given prominent display. Also included are histories of the towns around the lake, legends and stories about some of the islands and points, essays on yachting
and similar subjects, and advertisements.

The newspaper costs $1.00, the book
let $3.50. Both are available from the
Excelsior-Lake Minnetonka Historical
Society, P. O. Box 365, Excelsior 55331.

MIDWESTERN Farmer-Laborites
helped in an attempt to found a third
party in Oregon, according to Hugh T.
Lavin, writing in the June, 1975, issue of
Oregon Historical Quarterly. In the ar-
cicle, “Toward a Farmer-Labor Party in
Oregon, 1933–38,” Lavin says encour-
agement and advice were given by Min-
nesotans to their western counterparts
who were laboring to form a third par-
ty. Elmer A. Benson, then Minnesota’s go-
vernor, went to Portland in April, 1937, to
address and “bless” the founding con-
vention of the Oregon Commonwealth
Federation, the initial move in organiz-
ing the Farmer-Laborites. The attempt
founded under the weight of factional
disputes and disagreements. In De-
cember, 1937, Benson went to Oregon
again, this time to help “write Farmer-
Labor’s requiem,” says Lavin.

A REPORT by Douglas A. Birk, MHS
archaeologist, entitled “Recent under-
water recoveries at Fort Charlotte, Grand
Portage National Monument, Min-
nesota,” has been published in the
Spring, 1975 (volume 4, number 1) issue
of International Journal of Nautical Ar-
chaeology and Underwater Exploration.
Mr. Birk conducted the successful
1972 search at Fort Charlotte. In the ar-
cicle he describes and interprets a
number of the recovered artifacts: canoe
parts, wooden keg staves, brass kettle
fragments, ax heads, lead bale seals,
ceramic and glass items such as window-
panes, bottles, mirrors, plates, and snuff
jars.

The author writes that these artifacts
can help interpret historical events, so-
cial occurrences, and changing life
styles, and may answer some unan-
swered questions about the Fort Char-
lotte end of the Grand Portage trail.

THE RICH HISTORY of a sizable body
of water shared by the United States and
Canada is explored by Duane R. Lund in
a new paperback book, Lake of the
Woods: Yesterday and Today. The au-
thor, superintendent of schools at
Staples, Minnesota, and a former execu-
tive council member of the Minnesota
Historical Society, begins his 111-page
book with a brief account of the Lake of
the Woods area’s prehistory — the In-
dian cultures that existed there as ar-
chaeologists have reconstructed them.

He continues into what are probably the
most fascinating chapters of the border
country’s history: the discovery and early
exploration by white men (especially La
Vérendrye) and the development,
growth, and impact of the fur trade. He
touches on international rivalries, the
determination of the northern border,
and the almost legendary story of John
Tanner. Among other subjects are the
importance of Rat Portage, Indian
treaties, the Wolseley expedition of
1789, logging and lumbering, a gold
rush, coming of railroads, and the
steamboat era. He also brings his story to
the present.

There is an appendix with texts of In-
adian treaties and two “time lines.” There
is no index. Maps and illustrations add to
the narrative. The book is available from
the author at Staples, Minnesota 56479
for $2.95 plus 50 cents for postage and
handling.

THE MINNESOTA Historical Society
was recently the victim of a major theft of
some valuable fur trade papers. Fortu-
nately, the suspect was confronted, and
many of the papers and articles were re-
covered. Security measures were tight-
ened and will be further improved when
the Archives and Manuscripts Division
moves into its expanded quarters in the
Research Center, 1500 Mississippi
Street.

The problem is one which continues
to concern librarians and archivists
everywhere. Timothy G. Walch, asso-
ciate director of the archival security
program for the Society of American Ar-
chivists (SAA), wrote recently: “In the
past few years the theft of manuscript
materials from archives and histori-
ical libraries has reached crisis propor-
tions.”

In an attempt to remedy this situa-
tion, the SAA has begun a comprehen-
sive archival security program, sup-
pported in part by a $99,670 grant from
the National Endowment for the
Humanities.

Ann Morgan Campbell, executive di-
rector of SAA, will direct the project.
Mr. Walch will have primary responsi-
bility for its implementation.

The SAA staff is now involved in a
large-scale investigation of the nature
and extent of archival security problems
and possible solutions. Preliminary steps
include drawing up a registry of missing
manuscripts, soliciting listings, and dis-
tributing security news to the organiza-
tion’s members and interested nonmem-
bers. By fall, 1976, SAA expects to offer
a consulting service to make competent
experts available to archival institutions
to advise them in the areas of security
systems, internal archival procedures,
and legal problems. The project is ex-
pected to culminate in 1977 with the
publication of an archival security manu-
al.

For further information, write to the
associate director, Archival Security
Program, Society of American Ar-
chivists, Box 8198, University of Illinois,
Chicago Circle, Chicago, Illinois 60680.

DURING ITS 1974 centennial celebra-
tion, St. Olaf College at Northfield held
a symposium on Ole E. Rolvaag and his
work. The noted author was a gradu-
ate and faculty member at St. Olaf. Now
eight papers, presented by such Rolvaag
scholars as Einar Haugen and Paul
Beigstul, have been published in a
paperback entitled Ole Rolvaag: Artist
d and Cultural Leader, edited by Gerald
Thorson. Also included in the volume is
a checklist of books and articles about
Rolvaag and a chronology of his life.

The essays examine particular novels,
relate Rolvaag’s work to movements and
communists of his day, and present a
perspective on his life and work that will
satisfy both the reader of his novels and
the literary student,” writes Mr. Thorson
in his preface. Rolvaag’s oft-overlooked,
lesser writings such as Boat of Longing,
Feder Victorias, Pure Gold, and the re-
cently translated The Third Life of Per
Smestik are discussed, along with his epic
Giants in the Earth. The new book is
available for $2.50 through the St. Olaf
Bookstore, St. Olaf College, Northfield,
Minnesota 55057.

THE FIRST in a series of four special
issues of Picture magazine, the Sunday
supplement of the Minneapolis Tribune,
devoted entirely to Minnesota’s past,
was published September 7, 1975. The
other three are to be published in com-
ing months as part of the newspaper’s
observance of the nation’s bicentennial.

The first issue is called “Minnesota: The
Beginning.” It traces the history of
what is now Minnesota back to the arrival
of the earliest people, the cultures they
established, and the appearance of the Chippewa (Ojibway). It deals with the Euro-
pean explorers, their travels, writings,
discoveries, and peccadillos. The estab-
lishment of the fur trade and descrip-
tions of the life of the voyageur and of
the trader are briefly recounted. Excerpts
from journals and diaries of explorers
and traders and from the writings of his-
torians are included.

The magazine is liberally illustrated
with colorful photographs and paint-
ings, many from the Minnesota Historical So-

"MERIDEL LE SUEUR, Voice of the Prairie," a profile of the seventy-five-year-old Minnesota writer by Patricia Hampl, appears in the August, 1975, issue of Ms. magazine. Ms. Hampl briefly outlines the author's radical background, the development of her philosophy, and her "conversion" to a "life as an artist of the working people."

Ms. Le Sueur says in this interview that even as a girl she "felt in my bones the immense contradictions of American Midwestern life and also its hidden potential strength and beauty and, above all, the democratic traditions and history of the frontier people."

Recently she has turned to Indian myth and language as a source and an inspiration for her work.

An excerpt from one of Ms. Le Sueur's unpublished journals, which now number 130, is printed on one page opposite a full-page color portrait of the artist. Ms. Hampl says of these journals that they may be "her greatest achievement."

They are "part of the heritage women bring to literature and which at last seems to be considered something more than a behind-the-scene adjunct to 'real' literature."

A selective bibliography of Ms. Le Sueur's work is also provided in the article.

A REVIEW, an assessment, and a plan for the future are contained in a seventy-page volume, The Norwegian-American Historical Association, 1925-1975 by Odd S. Lovoll and Kenneth O. Bjork.

A capsule history of the great waves of Norwegian immigration, followed by the establishment of distinct ethnic communities, a view of immigration history from the viewpoint of the 1970s, and the background and founding of the Norwegian-American Historical Association form the first part of the book.

Other chapters deal with specific aspects of the association: its museums, its archives, its finances, its membership, and its editorial leadership. Several chapters are devoted to research and the publications issued by the association, many in series such as the Travel and Description Series better known as the "America books."

The last chapter, "A Plan for the Future," delineates several areas in which work yet needs to be done.

An appendix lists all the officers who have served the association through its fifty-year history. Among them, and mentioned frequently throughout the book, are Theodore C. Blegen, a founder and leading force in the association all his life, and Carlton C. Qualey, head of the Minnesota Ethnic History Project at the Minnesota Historical Society and for years a respected immigration history research scholar.

A SPECIAL RAIL trip by Weyerhaeuser Company officials to inspect the firm's lumber and allied operations west of St. Paul turned into a nightmare for the railroad representatives in charge, according to his reminiscences published in volume 40, number 3 (1975) of The Bulletin, a publication of the National Railway Historical Society.

Willie A. Wilson tells about the journey in "A Frustrating Rail Trip in the Days of Steam," first published in the Railway Employees Journal and reprinted in The Bulletin. A retired assistant general passenger agent of the former Great Northern Railway, Mr. Wilson in December, 1936, was placed in charge of a twelve-car special train that was to carry 132 Weyerhaeuser officials (including Rudolph M. and Frederick K. Weyerhaeuser) to northern Minnesota, Washington, Idaho, and Oregon.

The entire trip was plagued with problems, ranging from extreme cold and accidents to the death of one member of the special party; making it, in Mr. Wilson's recollection, the "most frustrating experience I had in 40-plus years of railroading."

THE HISTORY and development of Minnesota art and its place within the context of American culture are the subject of a bicentennial exhibition of Minnesota art and architecture sponsored by the University of Minnesota Gallery and the Minnesota Society of Architects. The exhibit will be in Dayton's eighth-floor auditorium in Minneapolis from February 10 to March 6 and will be on state-wide tour from April through December, 1976.

The exhibit is made up of two distinct but interrelated parts. One traces the history of Minnesota painting, sculpture, and decorative arts from the period of early exploration to World War I. This part includes a special exhibit of Indian arts. A second portion will present Minnesota architecture to the present day through large-scale photographic murals and decorative architectural details.

A series of lectures, films, and musical and theatrical events is also planned to help correlate the state's art and architecture with other aspects of Minnesota life, including immigration, agriculture, and early industry.
Since 1849, when it was chartered by the first territorial legislature, the Minnesota Historical Society has been preserving a record of the state's history. Its outstanding library and its vast collection of manuscripts, newspapers, pictures, and museum objects reflect this activity. The society also interprets Minnesota's past, telling the story of the state and region through publications, museum displays, tours, institutes, and restoration of historic sites. The work of the society is supported in part by the state and in part by private contributions, grants, and membership dues. It is a chartered public institution governed by an executive council of interested citizens and belonging to all who support it through membership and participation in its programs. You are cordially invited to use its resources and to join in its efforts to make Minnesota a community with a sense of strength from the past and purpose for the future.

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