February is the month I’m especially amazed at the experiences my Norwegian ancestors endured, particularly during the first few winters they lived in the Midwest of the United States. I compare my warm home and ability to choose from an abundance of fresh foods imported from around the world and contrast that with their first harsh winter in a crude sod home or log cabin, with a larder of simple foods hastily grown and harvested during their first short summer. The earliest immigrants in my family left Hjartdal, Telemark, arriving in New York City on August 14, 1843 and made their way to the Jefferson Prairie settlement of Wisconsin. As I’ve read some of the classic accounts of immigrant experiences by Ole Rynning, Theodore Blegen and George T. Flom, I have gained an immense appreciation for the hardships they endured, and a deep sense of gratitude to those earlier immigrants who helped house, feed and teach these new Americans about adapting to their new land.

I extend that same sense of gratitude to our longtime NAHA members, my co-workers and the gracious board with whom I work. When I arrived in the fall of 2010, new to the organization, I relied on their expertise, their wise guidance and unwavering support to get me through the first few seasons. And just as my early family members eventually struck out on their own, I am a looking forward this year to breaking new ground for NAHA in the areas of digital publication and online highlights of our archive treasures.

February has also become the time we report on health of the organization, give thanks to our supporters over the past year, and give you a preview of what to expect in 2013. I look forward to meeting more of you as I plan for a swing through the Pacific Northwest in the early Fall. Our May newsletter will have more details.
Eleven Covered Wagon Train - 1873

On August 9 - 11, 2013 an estimated 300 descendants of an Eleven Covered Wagon Train will convene in Sioux Falls, South Dakota to celebrate the 140th Anniversary of the original, incredible four week journey. It began on May 18, 1873 when the Wagon Train left Fillmore County Minnesota and headed west into the sunset to claim land in the Dakota Territory. It ended on June 18, 1873 upon their arrival in the northeast corner of Minnehaha County, about eight miles west of Garretson, South Dakota. It is believed that this Eleven Covered Wagon Train may have been one of the longest to ever enter Dakota territory.

Most of the people who comprised the Eleven Covered Wagons started emigrating from Norway to America in the mid 1850s, settling in Wisconsin, Minnesota and Iowa. Their voyage from Norway typically took 6 to 8 weeks on ships built to carry cargo, so accommodations for passengers were primitive.

At that time, most of the Norwegian immigrants to America traveled through Quebec, Canada. However, their journey was far from over as it would take another three weeks to get to their destinations in the Midwest.

In the spring of 1871, Johannes Berdahl and several neighbors started west to look over the country and see for themselves what land was available to be claimed. When they got as far as the Sioux River in Dakota Territory near the present location of Brandon, South Dakota, they found what they were looking for. The land was good and there was an abundance of timber so they turned around and went back to Minnesota, very excited about what they had seen and found. The Western Fever had begun.

They returned to the same location the following spring, but much to their dismay, somebody had already staked claim to the land they had looked over the year before. They consulted a local surveyor who took them to another area further north and east along the Slipup Creek in Edison Township. It looked good and while it didn't have timber, it did have water and hay. The next morning they started on a three day trip to the Vermillion land office to file their claims.

On May 18, 1873, a caravan of 8 Covered Wagons departed Fillmore County for their new home in Dakota Territory. The Wagon Train started with five families: Mr. & Mrs. Anders J. and Caroline O. Berdahl and family circa 1886. From the personal collection of Solveig Zempel, great-granddaughter. Used with permission.
The 140th anniversary of the Covered Wagon Journey from Fillmore County to Dakota Territory, provided by Ron Halverson.

Johannes Berdahl with 9 children; Mrs. Power (widow) with 6 children and her brother-in-law Allen Power and his son; Mr. & Mrs. John Loftesness and their 6 children; Mr. & Mrs. Olaus Jenson and 3 children; Mrs. Lars Branvold and 1 son. They were joined a few days later by Mr. & Mrs. Thor Hermanson and his 5 daughters and his grandfather Herman Wangsness and his wife and youngest son. Mr. William Tobin, traveling alone joined the group later in the journey.

They were now a caravan of 46 people with 11 covered wagons, 6 horse teams, 5 teams of oxen, along with 85 head of cattle, 8 colts, and 30 sheep. During the first few days all of the youngsters got plenty of exercise by keeping the big herd together following the wagon train. Once in the open prairie the cattle would come along when they saw the wagons move. In the evenings a large tent was used as a dining hall, although each family had to provide their own food.

It was a very bad spring for travel due to heavy rains and flooding. West of Austin, Minnesota they had to unload all of the wagons and ship goods by train to Winnebago City. There were days when they were not able to travel more than 6 to 8 miles. The horses proved to be of little use and only the faithful oxen could be hitched up as needed to cross the marshy places.

Their next challenge was crossing the Little Sioux River which was so close to their destination, yet so far away. The whole valley was under water with no hope of crossing with their loads. Fortunately, they were able to secure a boat so all of the wagons had to be unloaded again and transferred to the boat. Three youngsters were placed on each side of the boat to prevent it from tipping. The crossing was difficult and took more than six hours. One of the members of the group fell asleep from exhaustion and that evening the tent was not put up nor was there any attempt at cooking. Fortunately, the rest of the trip was on land that drained better and there were no more serious encounters or delays.

They reached their destination on June 18, 1873, a month after they left Fillmore County. The actual arrival was a shock as a prairie fire had blazed across the area a few days earlier, leaving black desolation in every direction. “Why oh why” said one of the wives, “did we ever leave Norway if this is where we must live? Surely God never intended human beings to live here.” The first years were ones of severe testing. The grasshoppers came in clouds and devoured the crops each of the first four years and then the Big Blizzard of 1881 struck, which is still talked about.

Two of Johannes Berdahl’s sons, Andrew and Erick, each wrote journals describing the journey and homesteading in Dakota Territory. One of Andrew Berdahl’s daughters, Jennie, married the Norwegian novelist, Ole Rolvaag, on the Berdahl Homestead near Garretson and that house is now part of the Heritage Park on the campus of Augustana College in Sioux Falls, South Dakota. In his classic pioneer novel, Giants in the Earth he revealed the human cost of the American pioneer experience. Rolvaag gave much credit to his father-in-law and uncle for their writings and stories about the families on Eleven Covered Wagons, as he wrote Giants in the Earth. Letters between Rolvaag and the Berdahl Family are found in archives the Norwegian-American Historical Association (NAHA) at St. Olaf College in Northfield, Minnesota.

The pioneer beginnings in this country were simple, humble and fraught with hardship and privation. Now that these hardships are partially forgotten, the past seems somewhat more romantic to us, and the ordeal is material for anecdotes. At the celebration these, and other stories, will be shared. New friendships will be made and relationships discovered, all based on the ancestors we take pride in.

They truly were Giants in the Earth.

(1) Based on relevant information contained in the Autobiography of Erick J Berdahl written about 1928 and The Thor Hermanson Family by Christie Hermanson Monson in 1950.
Additions to the Archives

Gary De Krey, Archivist &
Jeff Sauve, Associate Archivist

The Archives continue to benefit from the generosity of members and friends who have made important donations. Although we aren't able to acknowledge all donations here, we do appreciate every donation, large and small. We welcome additional donations of Norwegian-American letters, diaries, photographs, family histories, and community and congregational materials. Families can be sure that their donations will remain open for family consultation in the NAHA archives. They can also be certain that family treasures will not be discarded in a hasty move or by future generations who may have lost touch with their Norwegian-American heritage.

Recent additions to the manuscripts collection include:

- Family Histories and Genealogies, P0539:
  Torrey Savereid letters: Nearly 200 letters written to his sweetheart Marjorie Thronson between June 1942 and November 1944 while he was a soldier in the US Second Infantry Division. Savereid’s nephew, David W. Thronson published the letters in 2004 as My Love Is Always Yours: The WWII Letters of Torrey Savereid. See also Vesterheim Magazine, Vol. 5, No. 2, 2007, for an abbreviated storyline and excerpted letters. Donated by David W. Thronson.
  Olav K. Lundeberg papers, P1670:
  Correspondence with publishers (1935-1942); draft text, “Grandmother Sang for Ole Bull”; manuscript, “The Enchanted Farmstead”; photocopied article, “Mosby’s Men Thundered Through Upperville” (The South Atlantic Quarterly, July 1937); and “What is Ceceo? Inquiry and Proposal” (reprinted from Hispania, Aug. 1947). Donated by Dr. Philip K. Lundeberg, NAHA lifetime member.

- America-America Letters Collection, P1684:
  One letter provides a biography of Krogh at the time of his ordination (1874). Donated by Joel Wilhelm.


- Photograph Collection, P0655:
  Gunderson family collection. 55 photographs and 279 postcards, dated between the 1890s and 1920. (Scans only, originals returned to donor). Majority of photographs depict Anna Gunderson or one of her three sisters (Kaia, Lena, and Anna), who emigrated from Solor, Norway. Anna Gunderson worked
as a chambermaid, nanny, and store assistant in various towns located in Benson County, North Dakota. Of particular interest are several photographs taken of staff workers at the Leeds Hotel, Leeds, North Dakota, ca. 1906. Donated by Rosanne Bliss.

- **Photograph Collection, P0655:**
  Alfred C. Jesness glass negative collection. 138 glass negatives dated between 1886 and 1915, with image identifications in process. Images of family life in Swan Lake Township, Stevens County, Minnesota, and Fosston, Polk County, Minnesota. Donated by Lenore Jesness, NAHA member.

- **Photograph Collection, P0655:**
  Rydholm family collection. 300 images (ca. 1860 to 1971) taken primarily in Boone County, Illinois (depicting Johnson and Wange families), and Lee County, Illinois (depicting Williams, Jossendal, and Ullensvang families). A short biographical note regarding Wick Williams, Lee County, is included. Donated by Ralph Williams Rydholm.

<table>
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<th>What We are Reading, Jackie Henry</th>
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| **Vikings Across the Atlantic:**  
*Emigration and the Building of a Greater Norway, 1860-1945*, by Daron W. Olson. Available through the University of Minnesota Press. $34.95 |

Around the year 1000 a Viking ship landed on the Atlantic coast of what would one day be North America. Nearly a millennium later, on June 7, 1945, Norway’s King Haakon VII returned from exile under guard of the American Ninety-ninth—or “Viking”—Battalion. In *Vikings across the Atlantic*, Daron W. Olson reveals how these two moments form narrative poles for the vision of a Greater Norway that expanded the boundaries of the Norwegian nation.

Looking at matters of religion, literature, media, and ethnicity, Olson explores how Norwegian Americans’ myths about themselves changed over time in relation to a broader Anglo-American culture, while at the same time influencing and being influenced by the burgeoning national culture of their homeland. Beginning in the 1920s, homeland Norwegian identity-makers framed the concept of the Greater Norway, which viewed the Norwegian nation as having two halves: Norwegians who resided in the homeland and those who had emigrated from Norway, especially those in America. Far from being merely symbolic, this idea, Olson shows, was actually tested by the ordeal of World War II, when Norwegians the world over demonstrated their willingness to sacrifice and even die for the Greater Norway.

In its transnational approach, Olson’s book brings a new perspective to immigrant studies and theories of nationalism; Vikings across the Atlantic depicts the nation as a larger community in which membership is constructed or imagined, a status of belonging defined not by physical proximity but through qualities such as culture and shared traditions.


**We Stopped Forgetting: Stories from Sámi Americans**, by Ellen Marie Jensen. Now in Paperback, 134pp. 2012. $24.95

During the immigration period of 1880-1940 an unknown number of Sámi people left Sápmi (Samiland; “Lapland”) for North America alongside Nordic peoples. It has been estimated that there are at least 30,000 descendants of Sámi immigrants in North America and most of them are unaware of their Indigenous ancestry. The storytellers in this book give moving accounts of the history of their ancestors and tell their own life stories of cultural revitalization.

They have consciously chosen to stop forgetting their lesser known and sometimes silenced Sámi ancestry by identifying with a cultural birthright. Further, their stories demonstrate a heartfelt commitment to both historical and contemporary Sápmi and the Indigenous world in their lives.


Book descriptions courtesy of the respective publishers.
Thank you to our members and supporters for providing the financial resources needed to further our mission.

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- R.W. Anderson*
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### Legacy Circle

Legacy Circle members have indicated to us that they have made provisions for NAHA in their estate plans. These members are new to the Legacy Circle in 2012:

- Anonymous
- Blaine Hedberg
- Lillian Thorsness - deceased

+ Indicates NAHA Board Member
† Indicates Patron Member
* Indicates Sustaining Member
Andrew Lockrem was born in Norway on Dec. 22, 1838, and moved to America with his family in 1848. His family homesteaded six miles south of Northfield, Minnesota in an area known as Valley Grove.

On January 20, 1861, Andrew answered a recruiting broadside in the “Northfield Telegraph” for all superior marksmen to try out for an elite group of sharpshooters, the First Regiment of United States Sharpshooters, under Colonel Hiram Berdan.

Hiram Berdan was nationally famous for being one of the best marksmen in the country. He petitioned President Lincoln and Congress to develop a regiment of sharpshooters from all over the United States. Each company of about 100 soldiers would be from a different state making this was one of the first national regiments. Berdan wanted his regiment to be unique. He designed a uniform that hinted at an attempt at camouflage. The first uniforms were light blue trousers with hunter green frock coats and caps. The buttons were made of a hard rubber and did not shine like brass buttons. Later versions of this uniform added green trousers and brown leather leggings.

Captain William Russell sent a Northfield native, Corporal C. R. Eldridge, to test many men in the area to see if they could pass the exacting test of hitting 10 consecutive shots in a red target of 20 inches in diameter placed at two hundred yards. Lockrem passed this test of marksmanship along with his two friends and neighbors Halvor Quie and Fingal Fingalson. They all enlisted on January 20, 1862. Lockrem was 25 years old. He stood 5’ 10” tall. He had a light complexion, brown eyes and light colored hair. Halvor Quie was 27 and Fingal Fingalson was the youngest at 19. One hundred men and three commissioned officers formed “Company L” or “The Second Company of Minnesota Sharpshooters”. All but five were from Minnesota. Their captain was Captain William Russell.

The men of “Company L” gathered at Fort Snelling, Minnesota for some basic training. In April, 1862, they traveled by train to Washington D.C. On May 3, 1862, they left Washington for Virginia to hook up with the First Regiment of United States Sharpshooters who were already engaged in a Union offensive called “The Peninsular Campaign”. The men of “Company L” reported for duty to Colonel Berdan on May 7, 1862, at his headquarters at Camp Winfield Scott.

On the afternoon of May 8, 1862, the company received their arms, the Sharps 54 caliber breech-loading rifle. This rifle enabled a soldier to load the rifle from the breech instead of down the muzzle. A soldier could load the weapon lying down or on the move. The Sharps gave a soldier a greater rate of fire than most muzzle loading rifles or muskets. On May 12, 1862, they received their first lessons in company movements and in skirmishing from Captain Edward Drew of Wisconsin’s Company G. Skirmishing means to go out well in front of the main body of troops to engage the enemy, scout the enemy positions, and test their strength. The sharpshooters would also be used as snipers to harass artillery positions and enemy pickets, or to slow the enemy’s advance.

The goal of the Peninsular Campaign was to capture Richmond, Virginia, the capital city of the Confederate States of America. Andrew saw much action during this campaign in a series of battles and Union retreats known as the “Seven Days’ Battle” or the “Seven Days’ Retreat”. While in Virginia he participated in the Battles of Hanover Courthouse,
Fair Oaks, Savage Station, White Oaks Swamp, Malvern Hill, and the evacuation at Harrison's Landing.

On May 30, 1862, Lockrem and “Company L” received an order to report to The First Regiment of Minnesota Volunteers. This news was well received by the men of “Company L” who were proud to serve with their fellow Minnesotans. They joined the First Minnesota on June 3, 1862, during the Battle of Fair Oaks. From this date until November 23, 1863, the men of “Company L” fought alongside the First Minnesota.

The Union forces were battled out of Virginia in August of 1862. “Company L” moved north with the Army of the Potomac to defend Washington DC. This defeat was very hard on Union morale. In September of 1862, General Robert E. Lee’s Confederate Army invaded Maryland in the hopes of drawing the Union Army out of Washington DC, destroying it, and forcing the Northern States to sue for peace. The Union forces caught up with the invading Confederates at Sharpsburg, Maryland near a creek called Antietam.

On September 17, 1862, around 4:00 a.m. Lockrem, “Company L”, and the First Minnesota “coffeed up” and from a farm they watched the Union and Confederate forces slam into each other at a place called “The Cornfield”. Around 7:00 a.m. the Second Corps under General Sumner was called to attack. The men crossed Antietam Creek and the 5000 men of General Sedgwick’s division formed into three lines with a brigade in each line. The First Minnesota was placed in General Gorman’s front line holding the right of the line. “Company L” was on the left of the First Minnesota. As they passed a grove of trees called “The East Woods” they were greeted with a most horrific sight. Thousands of Confederate and Union dead and wounded troops were lying on the field so thick it was hard to march without stepping on the victims of that morning’s slaughter. “The Cornfield” was so shot up that the corn stalks looked as though they had been cut with a knife. The ground was soaked with blood and formed a foul mud on the shoes of Andrew and the 5000 men who marched shoulder to shoulder across this field. The pleas of the wounded begging for water or asking to not be stepped on filled their ears. Groups of exhausted Union troops from the morning’s battle cheered on the Union advance.

As they crossed the field the Union line started to experience the first artillery barrage of solid and canister shot. The Confederate forces under General Thomas “Stonewall” Jackson opened fire on the advancing Union troops from a grove of trees called “The West Woods”. The Union line entered the woods and exchanged fire with Jackson’s men for about an hour. General Sumner was confident that his Second Corps could merely sweep around the Confederate left and encircle these troops. He was surprised when the Confederate Army flanked his left and poured fire into his line. This started a massive panic and retreat of the Union forces.

When the regiment to the left of “Company L” gave way Capt. Russell thought there was a general order to retreat and he ordered “Company L” to begin to withdraw from the line. When he was told to return to the line, he ordered his men to do so and they coolly returned to their untenable position and resumed fire. It was at this point in the battle that “Company L” received almost 50% casualties. Lockrem’s friends and neighbors went down around him. Halvor Quie was shot through the left heel and was forced to limp from the field. Fingal Fingalson was shot and seriously wounded in the left arm forcing his rifle to drop and his arm to hang uselessly. Leaving the battle line for the rear, he met Captain Russell who ordered him back into the line. The wounded Fingal raised his torn and bleeding arm with his other hand and said, “You take my place now Captain.”

“Humph!” snorted the Captain; “You better go and report to the sick squad.”

“Exactly where I was headed for.” Fingalson answered.

Lockrem was shot twice in the left thigh. One bullet went clean
Lockrem and the First Minnesota - continued

through but the other lodged in his flesh. He went down and could not get up. He watched helplessly as Colonel Sully finally ordered the gallant First Minnesota to withdraw from the field. It was at that time, that Lockrem was captured and taken prisoner by the Confederate forces.

One can only imagine the nightmare of a Confederate field hospital during and after the Battle of Antietam. It was the single bloodiest day of fighting in American history. It was a miracle that Lockrem survived the experience with his leg intact. He was freed in a prisoner exchange a few days after the battle when General Lee and the Confederate Army retreated across the Potomac River to Virginia.

On Oct. 11, 1862, Lockrem was paroled at the School House Hospital in Chambersburg, Pennsylvania. While there he received a letter from his fiancee, Anna Halverson. In the letter she placed a lock of her hair fashioned into a watch fob. She also told him about the Minnesota Massacre in which hundreds of Minnesota settlers were killed when the Dakota Indians led one of the largest uprisings in American history.

Lockrem was discharged for disability and mustered out of the Army on February 25, 1863. He returned to Northfield, Minnesota to his family and his beloved Anna. They were married on May 17, 1864, and together raised a large family of seven children.

In 1882, Andrew, Anna, and their children moved to North Dakota’s Red River Valley. They homesteaded north of Park River, North Dakota along the middle branch of the Park River. These pioneers lived, loved, and eventually died there. Anna died in 1908 and Andrew died on July 20, 1910. They were founding members of the Park Center Church where they are buried in that church’s cemetery.

Note: Fingal Fingalson was wounded in the leg at the Battle of Hanover Courthouse but returned to the line. He later suffered a sunstroke which caused him to faint and experience memory loss. After his wounds at the Battle of Antietam, Fingal Fingalson was sent to the Ladies’ Hospital in New York City to recover for nine months. This hospital was also referred as the New York Army Hospital. While recovering he was ordered to help stop the “New York City Draft Riots” that were so deadly and destructive. He was later promoted to sergeant and mustered out of the service on April 27, 1865. Fingal returned to Northfield and married Andrew Lockrem’s sister Malina. They later homesteaded in Becker County near the town of Calloway, Minnesota. They raised a large family. Malina died in 1891 and Fingal died in 1930.

Halvor Quie was sent to recover from his horrible heel wound in Annapolis, Maryland. He was discharged for disability on January 8, 1863.

Quie returned to Northfield, Minnesota and married Anna Finseth in 1865. They lived in the Valley Grove community six miles south of Northfield. They also raised a large family. Quie died in 1919. He and Anna were buried in cemetery at the Valley Grove Church.

According to their military records all three of these brave and honorable men suffered greatly for the rest of their lives due to the terrible wounds they received at Antietam.

About the author: Mark Daley is a high school history teacher in Santa Fe, New Mexico. This article first appeared in the Northfield News, on September 18, 2012. The article and photographs are reprinted with permission of the author.
The mission of the Norwegian-American Historical Association is to locate, collect, preserve and interpret the Norwegian-American immigrant experience with accuracy, integrity and liveliness. In doing so, Norwegian Americans will have an identifiable position in America's past, present and future.
Annual Report of the Norwegian American Historical Association

Highlights from 2012

• April gathering of NAHA members in New York City at the residence of Consul General Sissel Breie with special presentation by author Siri Hustvedt.
• Presentations at the Bygdelagenes Fellesraad Annual Meeting, Mindekirken Tuesday program, Tre Lag Stevne and Sons of Norway monthly meeting in Cedar Falls.
• October publication and launch of From America to Norway: Norwegian-American Immigrant Letters, 1838-1914, Volume One.
• Biennial meeting in October 2012 featuring Michael and Bonnie Jorgensen and their presentation on Norwegian-American composer, teacher and performer Theodora Cormontan.

Plans for 2013

• Norwegian Heritage Day at St. Olaf College on Tuesday, May 7, 2013. Featuring Eric Dregne as keynote speaker. Watch your mail for a save-the-date postcard with registration details.
• Re-release of Theodore Blegen’s 1936 book The Civil War Letters of Colonel Hans Christian Heg in e-book and print-on-demand (anticipated completion by September 2013, in commemoration of the 150th anniversary of the Battle of Chickamauga where Col. Heg was fatally wounded).
• Meet and greet events in the Pacific Northwest (currently being arranged - again, look for information in future mailings).