



Oak Leaves

Newsletter of the ELS Historical Society

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Issue 4

The Lutheran Synod Book Company

By Erling T. Teigen



Since 1920, nearly every issue of the annual Synod Report has advertised the Lutheran Synod Book Company on the back cover. Today, though, if you walk onto the Bethany campus and ask the first student you meet where the Lutheran Synod Book

Company is located, you might get a blank stare. It's just "the Bookstore." Even the bookstore billing statement is headed "Bethany Lutheran College Bookstore."

As far as the Synod Report is concerned, "Lutheran Synod Book Company" is still its official name and it has a history almost as long as the 92 years of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod. Most of what follows is from the annual synod reports, with some information from The Lutheran Sentinel.

At the founding meeting of the Reorganized Norwegian Synod in 1918, a Forlagsskomite (publications committee) consisting of three members was established, and was charged with arranging printing of Beretning (the synod report) and determining the quantity to print. They were also to investigate the possibility of producing a Folkekalender (an annual publication with tables of readings for the church year and other de-

votional material) and also to explore the possibility of publishing an English hymnal.

In 1919, the synod directed the committee to establish a Boghandel (bookstore), and in 1920, the committee reported that they had done so, setting up "The Lutheran Synod Book Co., Minneapolis." The executive committee consisted of pastors Christian Anderson and John Hendricks, and laymen Arthur Nelson and John Moe; the latter was to be the business manager. They were directed to secure a location and purchase stock and supplies.

Then in 1921, the synod authorized the committee to make a contribution of \$1,000, which was to be regarded as a loan to be paid back. During the remaining years of the 1920s, the Book Company showed different addresses, apparently operating out of the home of whoever happened to be manager at the time. By 1930, however, Pastor John Hendricks was the manager and the Book Company's address was on 14th Ave N.E. in Minneapolis, in the University of Minnesota neighborhood. Hendricks did not serve a congregation in Minneapolis, but traveled to many of the far-flung small groups associated with the synod in northern Minnesota and North Dakota.

As money tightened, so did the straits of the Book Company, so that in 1929, the synod urged everyone who owed money to the book store to pay their bills and that "henceforth the bookstore should be on a cash basis." In 1930, the synod responded

to the committee's report by urging that the Book Company be urged to make a special effort to sell some of the present stock in order to secure a larger working capital.

But it doesn't seem that things got much better. The Lutheran Sentinel contained advertisements for discounts on several items, good for two months only. The 1931 synod treasurer's report contained an item "Book Store Inventory \$322.70" and "Accounts Receivable, Book Store \$416.31." One last time, the Synod urged the members of the synod "to show their loyalty by ordering all books and supplies from our own Book Company." In spite of the financial difficulties, the Publications Committee was authorized to investigate the offer of a printing plant at Hartland, Minnesota and purchase it if advisable. But that matter was not mentioned in any subsequent reports.

By 1932, the situation was more serious, having faced a 45% decrease in book sales, therefore the Publications Committee of the Synod asked the synod to relieve them of the burden of the Book Company. An audit report showed an inventory of \$1,344.89, \$327 accounts receivable and \$224 cash on hand, with excess assets over liabilities of \$132. The floor committee suggested to the synod that the Book Company be joined with the bookstore of Bethany College. The synod did not adopt that proposal, but turned it over to the Publication and Finance boards and the college Board of Regents. The 1933 convention approved arrangements made by the boards involved and directed that the Book Company be placed under the management of Bethany College.

It isn't clear if the Lutheran Synod Book Company was originally incorporated under its own name, or if it operated under the Synod's articles of incorporation. But the name stuck when the move to Bethany was effected.

Since 1933, the Book Company has been managed by employees of the college; Clarence Hanson (pastor of the Bethany Congregation, which later became Mt. Olive), Harry Olson, Reuben Stock, Martin Galstad, Pastor Justin Petersen, Stanley Ingebritson, Jerry Johnson, Carl Seebach, David Wiechmann,

Lance Schwarz, Val Borcharding, and presently, Paul Wold. The two grand ladies of the bookstore were Nettie (Mrs. Justin) Petersen, after her husband's death, and Bernice (Mrs. George) Lillegard.



Stanley Ingebritson, Nettie (Mrs. Justin) Petersen, Bernice (Mrs. George) Lillegard

The Book Company still serves as the synod's publisher, publishing pamphlets, anniversary books such as *Grace for Grace* and *Faith of our Fathers*, the oft reprinted *I Believe* series on the Lutheran Confessions by B. W. Teigen, as well as Neelak Tjernagel's *Harmony and Resource Book on the Book of Concord*, and other works by members of the synod. The 1955 printing of Robert Preus' *Inspiration of Scripture* was also published by the Book Company.

The synod fathers certainly showed wisdom when at their first meeting they realized the importance of publishing Christian literature for its members, and in that regard were visionary. But not included in their vision in 1918 was the downturn of the economy. Likewise unforeseen was acquisition of an institution of higher education which would be able to serve as the most efficient home for a synodical publishing house. From its home at Bethany, the Lutheran Synod Book Company has served the Norwegian Synod/ELS well, from providing Sunday School material to carrying a well-stocked inventory of theological books, and even Norwegian trinkets.

Lutheran Synod Book Company may be a bit cumbersome a name for this day and age. But the name remains, even if for most it is just "the Bookstore." ❖



The Naming Ceremony for the Sigurd K. Lee Theater was scheduled for Saturday, November 13, 2010 but due to inclement weather was held the following afternoon in the Ylvisaker Fine Arts Center at Bethany Lutheran College.

Sigurd K. Lee

By Lois Jaeger

On October 4, 1926 Peter and Agnes Lee welcomed their fifth child, Sigurd, to the world. The family would later expand to a sixth child, all of whom would grow up on the 100-acre dairy farm three miles south of Deerfield, Wisconsin. Here Sigurd learned the ethics of hard work and respect for God's creation. Like his siblings, Sigurd was baptized and confirmed at Western Koshkonong Lutheran Church. The congregational life served to reinforce and enrich the strong spiritual training that the children received at home. He attended Liberty Grade School and Deerfield High School for his first twelve years of education.

After eighteen years on the farm and graduation from high school Sigurd enlisted in the United States Merchant Marine and spent the next two years cruising the Pacific and Atlantic Oceans, including shuttle runs on a tanker bringing oil from the Persian Gulf to Europe. As a farm boy, Sigurd loved early morning shipboard duty, especially watching the sun rise over the seas.

Returning to the states in 1947 Sigurd enrolled at Bethany Lutheran Junior College. There were no theater activities at Bethany at that time; he had yet to discover the magic of dramatic performance. After Bethany, he attended the University of Wisconsin pursuing a degree in education with emphases in English and speech. An oral interpretation class with Miss Harriet Grimm introduced Sigurd to the power of the dramatized, spoken word. Sigurd reflects, "Miss Grimm was demanding but fair. In retrospect, I value her teaching so much, and other teachers at UW, especially my advisor, Dr. Ronald Mitchell, and, earlier, the fine faculty at Bethany."

After graduation in 1952, Sigurd was drafted into the United States Marine Corps and served in California and Korea. After mustering out in 1954 he began teaching at Pier Avenue Junior High School in Hermosa Beach, California. (Bonnie Franklin, later a TV star, was one of his students.) In 1956 he was called to be the principal and upper-grade teacher at Our Saviour's Lutheran School in the San Fernando Valley. In 1960 he accepted a call from Bethany to teach English on the high school and college levels, be Dean of Men (later Dean of Students), and "begin a theater program."

Under his guidance, the fledgling theater program not only survived but flourished! Some musicals, one-acts, and children's plays were staged along with full-length productions. President Bjarne Teigen encouraged Sigurd's personal and professional growth as well by granting him a leave of absence in 1963 during which time he earned his Master of Arts degree in Theater at the University of Wisconsin in Madison.

For the first twenty-nine years of the theater program at Bethany the rehearsal and performance space was the gymnasium-auditorium; schedules had to be worked around sports practices and games. In reflecting on those days, Sigurd remarks on how creative his students became with limited time, space, and resources. Finally, in 1989, the Ylvisaker Fine Arts Center was completed and Bethany theater had its own home. How fitting that now in 2010, the golden anniversary of his Call in 1960, we honor his years of dedication and service by officially naming this space the "Sigurd K. Lee Theater." May it always be a place where the best comedy and drama is directed and performed to the glory of God. ❖



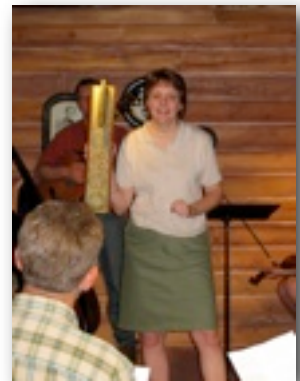
Announcements



The Evangelical Lutheran Synod Historical Society expresses gratitude to former Synod President George Orvick for his years of service as curator of the Ottesen Museum. After his retirement from the synod presidency he provided valuable service to the Synod by overseeing the institution charged with the responsibility of preserving artifacts and various items of interest for commemorating and celebrating the history of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod. The Ottesen Museum provides many insights into the lives of those who have gone before us, whose work made it possible for us to be the beneficiaries of a precious heritage. President Orvick's interest in Synod history and enthusiasm for preserving and teaching it to others played an important role in making the Ottesen Museum the interesting place it is today. We acknowledge with deep appreciation George's contribution to preserv-

ing our history, and we wish him and Ruth much happiness in their new place of residence in Madison, Wisconsin.

We are pleased to announce that Rebecca DeGarmeaux, wife of BLC Professor Mark DeGarmeaux, has now assumed the position of Director of Programming for the Ottesen Museum. Becky has long been active in the ELS Historical Society. She and husband Mark collaborated for many years as editors of *Oak Leaves*. She has been a regular participant in planning and carrying out programs at our June Annual Meeting, and has been instrumental in setting up the Historical Society display table at Synod Convention and many other events on the Bethany Campus. She will provide regular hours of access to the Ottesen Museum for visitors, and will also plan programs which will use the resources of the museum to educate both children and adults in the history of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod. We look forward to many benefits from Becky's planning and work.



Have You Entered the Treasury of Snow?

by Herman Harstad, Editor

Job wanted an opportunity to question God about why he experienced so many terrible losses. Instead God had numerous scientific questions to ask Job. One of those questions was, "Have you entered the treasury of snow?" (Job 38:22) Professor Rudolph Honsey in his commentary on the book of Job wrote that God was pointing out to Job, and by extension the readers of the book, how little we know compared to God. Those questions drove Job to repentance and God restored his losses. When shoveling and plowing snow, do we stop to appreciate the beauty of the symmetrical and unique six-sided flakes? That's a demonstration of God's creative genius.

In Psalm 147:15-18 we are told, "He sends his command to the earth; his words run swiftly. He spreads the snow like wool and scatters the frost like ashes. He hurls down his hail like pebbles. Who can withstand his icy blast? He sends his word and melts them; he stirs up his breezes, and the waters flow." Many of us ask ourselves on cold winter days, "Who can withstand his icy blast?" Many of us had ancestors who somehow withstood the icy blasts of winter without indoor plumbing as well as many other modern day conveniences of plowed roads and heated cars. In this issue of *Oak Leaves* we'll read of an icy adventure and "the Greatest Skier of them All."

But first, a look back to the snow sculpting talents of Don Moldstad who carved this head of Martin Luther on the Bethany campus in 1983. Good job!



Baby Buggy in the Ice

The following occurred in the family of Peter and Agnes Lee. The children, in birth order, were Olaf, Gerhard, Elizabeth, and baby Eunice. I and younger brother, Peter Roald, would also be occupants of the famous baby carriage. SKL

(Pictured are Sigurd Karl, two years, 8 months and Peter Roald, six months, May 30, 1929)

It was a late winter day with only a little snow in the farmyard. Though it was brisk, the sun was out and the mother decided the children—ages eight, six, and four—could play outside, could even take their one-year-old sister outside in the baby buggy to wheel about.



Children are drawn to ponds, even frozen ones, and one such lay down a short hill from the farmyard. Soon they were racing down the hill and out on the pond, sliding and spinning around with the buggy. It was so much fun. But the mother had kept an occasional eye outside and soon missed them. She put on her coat and scarf and hurried outside.

Meanwhile, the children had run into a new delight—rubber ice—that undulates in a fascinating manner. But then near some weeds sticking out of the ice, they broke through the ice, first a foot, then another, and the baby carriage. The pond was, fortunately, a field and not deep but the buggy drooped at a steep angle, partly in, partly out of the ice. The children floundered about, trying to extricate themselves and the buggy.

By now, the mother had seen them and was soon through the ice herself and reaching down to pick up the baby, luckily still in the buggy. The baby thought the tipping was part of the general fun and greeted her anxious mother with a smile. Clutching the baby in one arm, she helped the others out of the icy water, back on safe ice and they all hurried, shivering, back to the farm home. Inside it was to quickly get them out of their wet clothes, dried off, into pajamas, and then all three into one bed in the downstairs bedroom, not far from the parlor stove. She added two hot irons from the kitchen stove, wrapped in towels. The baby, the only dry one, took a bottle and impelled by the excitement and winter cool air outside, fell fast asleep.

That night the temperature dropped and the next morning the father decided to leave the baby buggy where it was, frozen in place. It provided much comment around the neighborhood. When the weather improved, it too was rescued. Besides the four children mentioned, it would be needed for the two babies yet to arrive in that household. ❖



Snowshoe Thompson

Pastor Erling Ylvisaker wrote a book titled, “Eminent Pioneers: Norwegian-American Pioneer Sketches.” It was published in 1934 by Augsburg Press. The book contains an eleven-page chapter titled, “The Mail Arrives—on Skis.” This article draws on information from the Ylvisaker book and other articles about Snowshoe Thompson found on the internet. Pictured is the cover of the book “West of the Great Divide” showing Snowshoe Thompson with a walking stick that served as a balance pole in the manner of a tight-rope walker. **Image used with permission from the Norwegian-American Historical Association.** HEH

The Early Years

John Tostensen was born in Telemark County, Norway, in 1827, an area most famous for skiing. John’s father took him on skiing excursions when he was little. His father died and his mother, having heard of the land of opportunity, decided to move to America with her two sons. John was age ten when they sailed for America (in one account he sailed under the name Jon Torstein Rui). Like hundreds of other Norwegian immigrants, they temporarily stayed in the Fox River settlement in Illinois. Then, while living in Sugar Creek, Iowa, John’s mother passed away after a short illness. The brothers decided to move to Mount Horeb in Dane County, Wisconsin, where they took up farming and became Americanized. That may be when John changed his last name to Thompson. Inspired by his memories of the beautiful mountains in Norway, John decided to join the gold seekers heading to California in 1851. Panning for gold was not to his liking and quick riches eluded him so he settled down to farming and ranching in the Sacramento Valley.

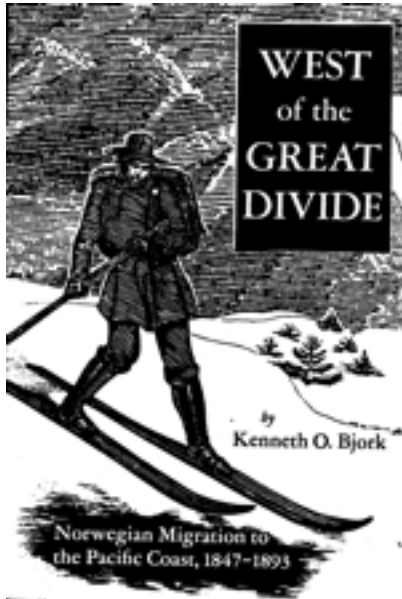
Find a Need and Fill It

John read a newspaper article stating the U.S. Congress had passed a bill in August 1856 for a post road from Placerville, California to Genoa, Utah through the Sierra Nevada Mountains. Before the railroads were built, mail was carried by stage coach but the roads were impassible in winter when snow accumulated up to 30 feet high. One day while splitting wood, John thought about how his father got around on skis in winter in Norway. He went to work and made a pair of skis ten feet long and four inches wide that weighed about 25 pounds. After some determined practicing this blond, bearded, handsome and muscular 180-pound man thought he was ready to make a proposal. Meanwhile observers came up with a nickname for him—“Snowshoe.” “Snowshoe” did not accurately describe his snowskates or cross-country skis; nevertheless the name stuck. John confidently went to the postmaster and said he could carry the mail by skis from Placerville through the 90-mile stretch that is now Highway 50 past the southern shore of Lake Tahoe to Genoa, Utah. The skeptical postmaster decided to give this “crazy” Norwegian a try. Snowshoe left on his first trip in January 1856 and the miners and ranchers thought they would never see him again. The mail went through, much to the surprise of everyone! For the next 20 winters, Snowshoe carried the mail, making two round trips a month. It took him three days to go from Placerville to Genoa and only two days to go back since much of the east-to-west trip was downhill. His full mail bag weighed between 60 to 80 pounds and on rare occasions up to 100 pounds.

Sense of Direction

During his twenty years of mail carrying he never got lost, even under blizzard conditions. He had an uncanny ability to know directions. He pointed to his forehead and said, “There is

something in my forehead that keeps me right.” He also knew how to read the moss on trees; one kind grew on tree bark on the south side of a hill. And trees with the thickest bark grew on the north side of a hill. He knew the direction of the prevailing winds and advised people who might become lost in the mountains to always head downhill. On clear nights he could use the stars. And various rock formations guided him by day. He knew that travelers in the mountains needed to keep their wits about them at all times to stay alive.



Dealing with Extreme Cold Weather

Since he could only travel about 45 miles a day, Snowshoe spent one or two nights in his trek through the mountains. He didn't carry a blanket or overcoat with him. If he was trapped in a storm where he was unable to move or find some natural shelter, he took off his skis and ran in place until dawn to keep his blood circulating. Other times he would find a leaning tree stump, pile up branches around it and set a fire. He settled down for the night on the safe side of the stump since he knew where it would fall. He slept with his feet toward the fire and his head on the mailbag. He often slept at Cottage Rock with natural shelves that served as an ideal "tavern" to spend the night.

Wild Animals

Snowshoe never had a direct encounter with a grizzly bear but he often saw fresh tracks. He carried a revolver on his first trip, but to conserve weight, he never carried one again, preferring to fill his pockets with crackers, beef jerky, and dry biscuits. When thirsty he scooped up a handful of snow or lapped water from a mountain stream. While in Norway, he had heard enough stories about wolves to develop a healthy respect and fear of them. One day while coming down a steep slope, Snowshoe came across a pack of eight wolves busily digging an animal carcass out of the snow. His intended path was about 25 yards to the side of them. When the wolves became aware of his presence, the leader turned around and sat on its haunches and the other seven followed suite. They formed a perfectly straight line with their pointed snouts and glaring yellow eyes intently focused on this strange-looking humpbacked creature. One wolf let out a howl and the rest joined in the blood-curdling chorus. Internally Snowshoe was petrified but he didn't change direction or his pace and tried his best to show no fear. The wolves did not attack and when he passed them by, they returned to their carcass. Snowshoe later admitted this experience was 'the scare of his lifetime.' Had he shown fear or changed speed or direction they most likely would have attacked the defenseless mail carrier.

Acts of Heroism

James Sisson, who lived six miles above Placerville, was on snowshoes heading for Carson Valley when he was overcome by a snowstorm. He sought shelter in a mountain cabin but his feet froze and after twelve days were gangrenous to his knees. He couldn't remove his boots. He decided his only hope for survival was to cut off his feet with an axe. It was at this time that Snowshoe Thompson came across the cabin and discovered Sisson in his predicament. Snowshoe made the helpless victim as comfortable as possible, gathered wood and kindled a fire. He traveled through the night to get help and led a group of six rescuers back to the cabin. They placed Sisson on a sled, loaded blankets on him, and traveled two days to reach a doctor. The doctor said that he needed chloroform before he could perform amputations. Snow-

shoe immediately volunteered to ski to Sacramento to get the chloroform. When he returned the doctor successfully amputated both feet. Sisson was eternally grateful, dubbing Snowshoe “the Greatest Skier of them All.”

More Than Mail

In addition to letters, Snowshoe carried other valuables such as food, clothing, sewing needles, and even gold and silver. Sometimes Snowshoe carried mail all year to and from the mining town of Virginia City. The miners pans sometimes clogged up with “black stuff.” One day in the fall of 1859 a miner asked Snowshoe to take some of the black stuff wrapped up in an old shirt over the Sierras to have it chemically analyzed. It turned out to be silver. This was the first of the “Comstock Lode” that was worth a fortune. The miners had lost out on millions of dollars when they threw the black stuff away. In the peak years of 1876-78, silver ore worth about \$36,000,000 was extracted annually.

Bureaucratic Bungling

The U.S. Postal Service didn’t come through with payment for Snowshoe’s services. The Postmaster contacted Washington many times to try to work out the problems. Finally the Nevada legislature adopted a resolution asking the U.S. government to pay Snowshoe \$6,000 for his faithful service. They received a polite reply stating that Snowshoe had received as high as \$5 per letter from some individuals whose mail he carried. This was not true. Then he decided to go to Washington to present his case. The time dragged on for weeks and months with no results and Snowshoe went home empty handed. He carried the mail for two more years without receiving any pay. On one of his last mail runs before he was replaced by the coming of the railroad, Showshoe picked up a shining piece of rock that was gold. It turned out to be from a rich vein of gold. Now the compensation issue didn’t matter—he was financially fixed for life.

Died at Age 49

Snowshoe spent the last two years of his life with his wife Agnes, a British immigrant, and their son Arthur on their ranch in Diamond Valley, Nevada. He died at the age of 49 after a brief illness. His son, who died at age 11 two years later, was buried beside him. His wife had a pair of “Norwegian Snowskates” carved on stone with this inscription: “John A. Thompson, native of Norway, departed this life May 15, 1876, aged 49 years, 16 days. Gone but not forgotten.”



A monument honors him at Cathay Center, California in 1926. The monument carries this inscription: “A pioneer of the Sierras who for twenty winters carried the mail over the mountains to isolated camps, rescued the lost, and giving succor to those in need along the way.” Snowshoe Thompson was truly an eminent pioneer and a genuine Norwegian-American hero. ❖

Information Requested about Bethany 1911

Before the ELS owned Bethany Lutheran College, it had operated as a "ladies seminary," beginning in 1911. The June 18, 2011 ELS Historical Society meeting will include a centennial commemoration of the ladies college. If you are a relative of any of the students or faculty from 1911, or have photographs, artifacts, or stories to share, please contact Dr. Ryan C. MacPherson at 507-344-7787 or submit your comments at www.els-history.org/contact.

A Review Of Store Per

A Biography by Peter Tjernagel Harstad

By Andrew Soule



Andrew Soule is a junior at BLC, majoring in history, and plans on attending Seminary after graduation. His hometown is Santiago, MN (near Princeton where he went to high school).

There is nothing a Midwesterner loves more than a good story. Whether it is Lake Wobegon, Paul Bunyan, or Laura Ingalls Wilder, Midwesterners are ripe with colorful personal interest stories. They tell them at family gatherings, town hall meetings, talk about them on the local news, and of course discuss them over a good cup of coffee at church. In Peter Harstad's book *Store Per* one sees the story of a real historical figure, a his-

torical figure who became a legendary source of inspiration for Norwegian-American immigrants. *Store Per* was a man of strength and perseverance, a family man, and a man of faith.

"Store Per," or Peder Larson Tjernagel, was born on February 12, 1826 in Hordaland, on the west coast of Norway, south of Bergen. He spent most of his boyhood years in this region on the family's farm in the Bomlo fjord. Early on, Peder earned a reputation for his strength. Later family and friends would come to call him "Big Pete" or "Store Per," in Norwegian. This would become a lasting nickname to describe Peder's strength. Harstad does a wonderful job recounting some of the many stories that have arisen about Peder's early years in Norway. Many of these stories describe a man who was strong but also quite mischievous in his youth. Peder was a man with both strength and a sense of humor. One of these stories involves Peder's early years as a crewman aboard the Baltic Sea trading vessel, *Nesha*. Peder challenged a buff crewman to an anchor lifting competition. The buff sailor named Rejanes lifted the anchor with ease. Then it was Peder's turn. Peder also lifted the anchor with ease, to the surprise and admiration of the crew. From that day Peder and Rejanes became friends. This story is an example Harstad uses to demonstrate Peder's strength and willingness to take on new challenges.

Besides being a man of great strength, Peder was a man of great heart. Peder was a family man. He married Malene Christend[aughte]r Tjernagel (his cousin) on April 13, 1852. Soon after their wedding, they moved to America, joining the massive wave of immigrants coming to start a new life in this strange new world. America offered Peder freedom and an opportunity to provide for his new wife, and their future family. Peder took advantage of this cheap American soil and determined to farm it. At first they would settle down in Koshkonong, Wisconsin. Later Peder would move his family to Iowa, northeast of Des Moines near the Skunk River, where land was even cheaper. Once they had settled down, Peder took an active role in the education of his children. He became a member of the local school board, of the school that the settlers had founded. Peder knew how important it was for his children to be educated in

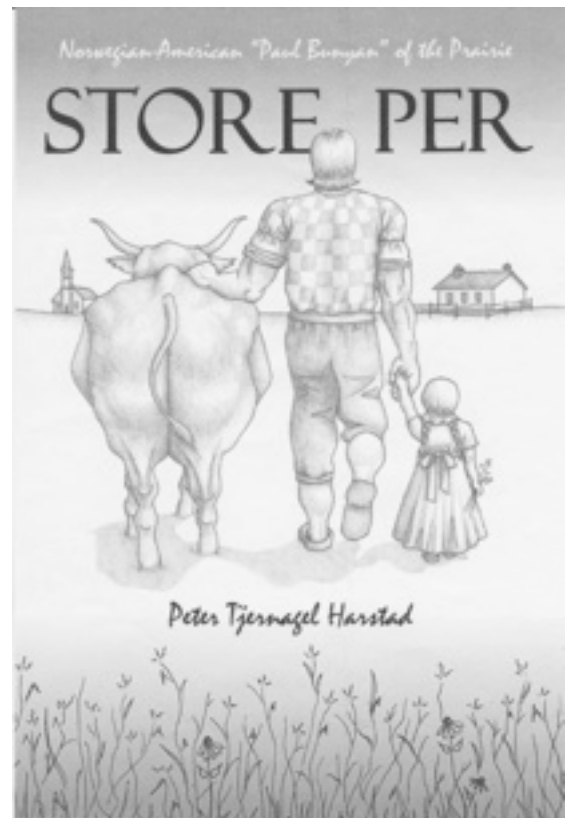
this land of opportunity. Even though he would see the death of all of his children but one, Peder persevered with his faith in God, and always provided for his family.

Peder was a man of faith. Harstad presents us with a man for whom God was always important. Peder was baptized and confirmed like most other Norwegian Lutherans. He lived in his baptism throughout his life by attending church with his family as often as he could. Peder realized that through the hardships of life the only one a person could turn to was God. In the Epilogue, Harstad writes concerning Peder's faith, "At the end of the day he took out his Bible and studied it with his family . . . Store Per knew his father's will. Spiritually, that meant that he relied solely upon the redemptive work of Christ to save him from sin and eternal death." Peder's faith would be a solid foundation upon which he could build his life, wherever life took him.

Overall, the book is very well written. I would definitely recommend this read to anyone who has an interest in Norwegian-American studies. For those of us who are of Norwegian descent it is more than just interesting, it follows the story of our people and how they endured the hardships of immigrating to this country. Without their hard work, we Norwegian-Americans would not be here today. Harstad's knowledge of "the old country" and her traditions is well presented in this book. Harstad, in telling us about Store Per's earlier years, also paints a picture of life in Norway as it was in the 19th century. Additionally, Harstad does a marvelous job describing life on the American frontier.

The illustrations are also very well done. The artist, Karyn Lukasek portrays a sense of aestheticism well suited for a 19th century immigration scene. The illustrations have a certain rustic quality about them that matches the humble, yet majestic fjords of Norway, as well as the Iowa prairie that Store Per found himself in.

Harstad has written an exceptional biography. It is a life filled with heroic deeds. Nevertheless, it is the story of a rather ordinary, humble life, lived to God's glory. This I believe is the significance of telling the life story of Store Per. There is so much we can learn from the life of everyday people. Store Per teaches us that a life lived for God and others is legendary. That is the type of story you can tell over a good cup of coffee at church, to your colleagues, your family, because it is a story we can all relate to. It is heroic and legendary in its own way. It is the story of life. ❖



Note: See the enclosed flyer for purchase information.

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Oak Leaves welcomes articles of both Synodical and local significance for publication. Articles maybe edited for style, clarity, or length to allow for publication. Submitted manuscripts will be deposited in the archives of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod.

MEMBERSHIP

All membership renewals are due **June 1**

Voting Membership:

\$10/year: individual

\$15/year: husband & wife

Associate Membership:

\$15/year: individual

\$25/year: institutional

\$5/year: student

Lifetime Membership:

\$200