



A History of Norwegian Immigration to the United States (Norwegian migration Literature)

George T. Flom

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Among the many researchers and writers in America who have told the story of the great waves of Norwegian immigrants coming here during the early 1800s, this author, George T. Flom, is a very noticeable one. He was himself a second generation hyphenated American, born in Utica, Dane County, Wisconsin, an area then as now with many families of Norwegian settlers.

His grandfather had immigrated to the U.S. from Aurland in Sogn og Fjordane in Norway during the beginning of the 1840s. His parents who baptized him Jørgen Tobias Flom lived in Wisconsin, and George got his primary education in Madison. He grew up in an environment where people then still told and retold stories rich in details of life and struggle during those early settler days.

This large book of his benefitted from this background, and gave him a broad basis for understanding and writing about thousands of Norwegian settlers who came to the Mid-West. He had become a professor of Scandinavian languages and literature at the University of Iowa when he in 1909 privately published the present text: "A History of Norwegian Immigration to the United States: From the Earliest Beginning Down to the Year 1848."

It turned out to be one of his most important works. It was based on years of extensive research and numerous personal interviews with ageing Norwegian pioneer immigrants. He had carefully collected stories and names, enabling him to put down in great detail the progression of the earliest Norwegian settlements in the United States.

The first ones of these were the so-called "Spooners" who arrived in 1825 with the sloop RESTAURATION and settled in Murray, later called Kendall, in upper New York State. Some ten years later, when the news of their settlement reached Norway, they were followed by numerous shiploads of immigrants, especially in the period 1836-1848. These newcomers settled primarily in Illinois, Wisconsin and Iowa. From there they later moved westward and up North, to Minnesota and the Dakotas.

For those who are interested he included a long list of all the family names he mentioned in his text, as well as a list of the names of the sailing ships on which they had arrived. Some of these ships are also shown with the name of its captain at the time.

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