

Finding Aid to the Aagot Raaen Papers

Raaen, Aagot, 1873-1957

Aagot Raaen Papers, 1798-1957 (bulk 1890-1957)

1.4 linear ft. (original collection 2.4 linear feet)

Collection number: Mss 177

[Biography](#)

[Scope and Content](#)

[Box and Folder List](#)

OVERVIEW

Links: Finding aid to earlier accession of [Aagot Raaen Papers](#) (Mss 8)

Access: The collection is open under the rules and regulations of the Institute.

Provenance: Donated to the Hatton-Eielson Museum & Historical Assn. by the Tosten Roan family.

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Citation: [Identification of item]. Aagot Raaen Papers, MS 177, Institute for Regional Studies, North Dakota State University, Fargo.

BIOGRAPHY

Aagot Raaen was born in Iowa on December 3, 1873, the daughter of Norwegian immigrants, Thomas and Ragnhild (Rødningen) Raaen. Thomas Raaen was born March 4, 1827 at Hol, Hallingsdal, Norway. He immigrated in 1869 and lived with his sister near Northwood, Iowa. On February 28, 1873 he married Ragnhild Berg Rødningen. Ragnhild was born March 11, 1839 in Etnedalen, Valdres, Norway. She came to America in 1870 to Shell Rock, Iowa. In 1874 the family journeyed in a covered wagon with a group of Norwegians and settled in what was to become Newburgh Township, Steele County, N.D. They had five

children: Aagot, Ragnhild (April 16, 1875-April 26, 1920), Kjersti (March 8, 1877-Feb. 2, 1907), Tosten (Dec. 30, 1879-Oct. 10, 1928) and Birgit who died an infant only two weeks old. Ragnhild also earlier had a daughter Julia, born Nov. 1870. Thomas died October 19, 1903 and Ragnhild on Nov. 6, 1923. The family is buried at the Goose River Lutheran Church Cemetery, Hatton, N.D.

Aagot attended the local schools and in 1903 was graduated from the Mayville (N.D.) State Normal School. In 1913, she graduated from the University of Minnesota. She later did graduate work at the universities of Berlin and Hawaii. She taught rural schools in the area and also at the Oak Grove Seminary in Fargo. From 1917 to 1922, Aagot was Steele County Superintendent of Schools. In 1922 she began teaching at a number of post-secondary institutions in Hawaii. On July 13, 1929 she married Thomas Garman of Honolulu, Hawaii.

Miss Raaen traveled extensively, was a member of Delta Kappa Gamma and secretary of the Hallinglaget. She was the author of several books, including *Grass of the Earth*, *Measure of My Days*, and *Hamarsbön-Raaen Genealogy*, and wrote a series of historical articles for local newspapers. She died on January 7, 1957, at Fergus Falls, Minnesota, and was buried in the Goose River Lutheran Church Cemetery at Hatton.

SCOPE AND CONTENT

The **Aagot Raaen Papers** consist of photocopies of the original papers at the Hatton-Eielson Museum and Historical Association, copied with their permission. Her diaries from Sept. 1939 to Sept. 1941 are very detailed, documenting her teaching in the Newburgh community, personal feelings, and social affairs. The handwritten 1873-1938 "diary" (ca. 42 leaves) as Raaen called it, is more accurately a chronology of her life and of the Raaen family compiled many years later. The family papers include letters received by her mother Ragnhild, and her father Thomas's files include a poem and love letters he wrote in Norway. Aagot Raaen's was very interested in researching and writing local history, some of which was published in newspapers and periodicals. They documents primarily Newburgh Township in Steele County, N.D. Her writings document the people and their way of life in this entirely Norwegian immigrant community.

The Aagot Raaen Papers have been organized into eight series: Correspondence; Personal papers; Raaen family papers; Research, manuscripts and published writings; Hallinglaget; Subject files; Publications; and Photographs.

The [Correspondence Series](#) consists of numerous letters received by Aagot Raaen from 1904 to the time of her death. They are primarily from friends and relatives, many containing historical information. Occasionally she has written comments or summarized her reply on the incoming letter. Some are in Norwegian which is true in all the correspondence files.

The Raaen Scholarship file documents her establishment and continued funding of a scholarship at Mayville State Teachers College. It includes a notebook containing a small number of letters on other topics. After her brother Tosten's death in 1928, Aagot obtained the family letters she had sent to him.

These, together with the many letters she received from him, provide valuable historical insights on their careers, family concerns as well as on friends and relatives. Because she many times wrote comments later on the envelopes, they have all been retained and are filed directly in front of the letter. How she received Tosten's letters to John Mark are not known but are a very informative collection between two close friends. John Mark was a relative and grew up near the Raaens. It should be noted that Tosten apparently changed his last name to Roan before graduating from Augsburg Seminary and becoming a Lutheran minister.

Added to the correspondence series in 2011 are photocopies of two letters written by Aagot Raaen to a former neighbor Guri (Dahl) Berge (Mrs. Nels E. Berge) of Hatton, concerning family and the flu epidemic in 1919. The original letters were donated to the Hatton Eielson Museum and Historical Assn. by Lynae (Berge) Wingate.

The [Personal Papers Series](#) documents Aagot Raaen's personal life. Included are her personal, handwritten diaries for the period Sept. 1939 to Sept. 1941. They are very detailed, documenting her teaching in the Newburgh community, personal feelings, and social affairs. The handwritten 1873-1938 "diary" (ca. 42 leaves) as Raaen called it, is more accurately a chronology of her life and of the Raaen family compiled many years later. It covers from 1873 to 1911 and then begins again in 1930 to 1938. The later years are incomplete. The two diary notes files contain the material Raaen used to compile her chronology and include letters, documents, genealogical data and numerous short notes. The Hawaii file contains letters and documents regarding her teaching career at the Baker Territorial College, and the Normal & Training School. "The Novelist as a Teacher" is her 1903 commencement address at Mayville State Normal School which was printed by P.F. Collier & Son of New York. The University of Berlin file contains letters and official documents regarding her studies there which are all in German. The small financial, school papers, newspaper clippings and several other files contain a variety of material on these matters as pertain to Aagot Raaen.

The [Raaen Family Papers Series](#) contains correspondence received by Aagot's mother, Ragnhild, from friends and relatives. The other folder of correspondence (1916-1935) was apparently Aagot's own file of correspondence regarding her mother and kept by her with her mother's other papers. It includes letters between Aagot and her mother, reports on her mother's health while at the Northwood Lutheran Old People's Home, and a number of letters regarding Ragnhild's death and funeral in 1923 when Aagot was in Hawaii.

The Thomas Raaen file of Norwegian documents includes a poem and a love letter written by him in Norway, Norwegian military discharge (1865), vaccination certificate (1858) and another Norwegian document. His American documents folder contains his Declaration of Intention to become a United States citizen (1869), Hatton Creamery Assn. account forms (1891-1892), statement of account at H.M. Heen store in Hatton (1895), homestead certificate (1901), auction bill of sale, and a 1937 land indenture.

The [Research, Manuscripts, and Published Writings Series](#) documents Aagot Raaen's interest and work in researching and writing local history, some of which was published in newspapers and periodicals. Newburgh Township in Steele County, N.D. was Raaen's home area and she took great interest in gathering data regarding the people and their way of life in this entirely Norwegian immigrant

community. The files contain all types of historical data, handwritten as notes, memos, short stories, and copies of other records. There are no manuscripts or formal writings. There is a map and letter regarding the wagon route taken by the first settlers to the area in 1874 from Northwood, Iowa. The Manuscripts subseries contains a wide variety of writings by Aagot Raaen, some of which were published. It is a mix of typescript and handwritten material. By 1935 Aagot Raaen apparently had developed a manuscript for what was to become *Grass of the Earth*. Although the manuscript is not in these papers, there is a file of letters and comments from persons to whom she had sent a draft asking for their comments.

The People files contain correspondence, notes, clippings and writings gathered by Raaen on Hazel Byrnes, Hamarsbön genealogy & Eyvind Felland, Paula Kloster, Asle Lien family, Johannes Strand family of Sharon, N.D. and Benjamin Wist. The Hamarsbön file includes copies of two Norwegian letters (1798 & 1805) written to her great grandfather & great-great grandfather. In addition to the letters from Felland there is some genealogical data. The Published Articles are primarily articles she wrote for area newspapers, all of which deal with the early settlement in Newburgh Township and surrounding area.

The [Hallinglaget Series](#) documents some of Aagot Raaen's involvement in this Norwegian-American organization composed of members with ties to the Hallingdal region in Norway. There is a small number of letters to her, clippings on its 1949 meeting at Northwood, N.D. and also a 1926 meeting also held at Northwood. The remainder are copies of its publications *Halling-Minne* (1908-1912 and complete), and very scattered issues of *Hallingen* which contain a number of articles by Miss Raaen. Only the articles by Raaen were copied.

The [Subject Files Series](#) contains a variety of papers kept by Raaen showing her interest in literature and poetry. The article by Sarah Foss Hanson on Aagot provides good insight on Raaen and contains biographical data. The Haines book lists are from the Los Angeles Public Library and contain many handwritten notations by Raaen. The Mayville State Teachers College file contains reminiscence (seven leaves) by an unnamed student who attended from 1899 to 1902. Apparently this was written for the college's fiftieth anniversary. The poetry files contain clipped, typed, and handwritten poems Raaen apparently enjoyed. Several poems in the scrapbook were authored by her.

The [Publications Series](#) consists of all the books and periodicals in the original donation, reflecting items that apparently she felt important. Few have any written comments. Only one item was photocopied.

The [Photographs Series](#) consists of 136 photographic prints of Raaen family members, scenes and people in Norway, relatives and some unidentified prints. The Institute made negatives and reproductions of only a select number of prints. All prints were photocopied and included in this collection.

BOX AND FOLDER LIST

Box/Folder	Contents
1/1	Biographical material, and Finding aid

Correspondence Series

General-

1/2	1904-1918
1/3	1922-1923
1/4	1924-1928
1/5	1931-1937
1/6	1940-1946
1/7	1947-1948
1/8	1949
1/9	1950-1951
1/10	1952
1/11	1953
1/12	1954
1/13	1955
1/14	1956-1957
1/15	1950s
1/16	Undated
1/17	Raaen Scholarship, 1946-1953
1/18	To Tosten Raaen, 1910-1928

Tosten Raaen to Aagot Raaen-

2/1	1890-1891
2/2	1897
2/3	1898-1899
2/4	1900
2/5	1901-1902
2/6	1903, 1906
2/7	1907
2/8	1908
2/9	1909
2/10	1910-1911
2/11	1920-1926 & undated
2/12	Postcards
2/13	Tosten Raaen to John Mark, 1900-1902
2/13a	Aagot Raaen to Guri (Dahl) Berge, 1919

Personal Papers Series

2/14	Cards (membership, political candidate & others)
	Diaries-
2/15	1939, September 4 - 1940, March 30
2/16	1940, April - August 31
2/17	1940, September 1 - 1941, September 2
2/18	1873-1938 chronology diary-
2/19	Notes

2/20	Notes
2/21*	Financial data, 1950-1954
3/1	Hawaii, 1922-1928
3/2	Medical papers, 1954-1955
3/3	Miscellaneous documents
3/4	Newspaper clippings on Aagot Raaen, 1918-1929
3/5	"The Novelist as a Teacher," 1903
3/6	School papers, 1902-1911
3/7	University of Berlin, 1913-1915

Raaen Family Papers Series

Ragnhild Raaen –

3/8	Correspondence, 1916-1924, 1935
3/9	Correspondence from friends, 1910-1923
3/10	Miscellaneous papers
3/11	Clippings from books
3/12	Thomas Raaen documents (Norway) 1827-1865
3/13	Thomas Raaen documents (America), 1869-1937

Research, Manuscripts, and Published Writing Series

Research notes-

3/14	Newburgh Township
3/15	Newburgh Township
3/16	Newburgh Township
3/17	Map of route taken from Northwood, Iowa to Northwood, N.D., 1874
3/18	General

Manuscripts-

3/19	"Aal Congregation"
3/20	"Clothes"
3/21	"En Ekteskabs tragedie," 1912
3/22	"Grass of the Earth" comments, 1935-1944
3/23	"Guri Settingsgaard Sondreaal"
3/24	"Halvor Pladson"
3/25	"Hash"
3/26	"Hols Menigheds Historie" (Norwegian)
3/27	"Barbo Pladson"
3/28	Mor (Ragnhild Raaen)
3/29	"New Flames," "Death," "Sunshine & Thrills," and "Book, School, Life"
3/30	"Raaen House History"
4/1	"Ragnhild Aasen Larson"
4/2	"Ragnhild Raaen"
4/3	"Thorns in the Flesh"
4/4	"Theodor Rice"

4/5 "Thomas Raaen and Ragnhild R dningen"
 4/6 Tosten Raaen
 4/7 Manuscript writings, General
 People Files-
 4/8 Byrnes, Hazel W. (N.D. State Librarian), 1953-1956
 4/9 Hamarsb n genealogy & Eyvind Felland, 1798, 1805, 1954-1956
 4/10 Kloster, Paula, 1955
 4/11 Lien, Asle (M.B. Finseth letters), 1951-1955
 4/12 Tinkey, Dagny (Johannes Strand family, Sharon, N.D.), 1951-1952
 4/13 Wist, Benjamin, 1954
 4/14 Published articles
 4/15 Published articles
 4/16 Published articles
 4/17 Published articles

Hallinglaget Series

4/18 Correspondence, 1956
 4/19 Northwood, N.D. meetings 1926, 1949
 4/20* *Halling-Minne*, No. 1-4, 1908-1909
 4/21* *Halling-Minne*, No. 5-8, 1910
 4/22* *Halling-Minne*, No. 9-12, 1911-1912
 4/23* *Hallingen*, 1918, 1932 (Raaen articles only)
 4/24 *Hallingen*, 1948-1951 (Raaen articles only)
 4/25 *Hallingen*, 1952-1953 (Raaen articles only)
 4/26 *Hallingen*, 1954 (Raaen articles only)
 5/1 *Hallingen*, 1955-1956 (Raaen articles only)

Subject Files Series

5/2 "Aagot Raaen As I Know Her," by Sarah Foss Hanson
 5/3* Booklists kept by Aagot Raaen
 5/4 Christmas
 5/5* General
 5/6* Haines, Helen E. - Book lists, 1931-1936
 5/7 Mayville State Teachers College reminiscence
 5/8 *Measure of My Days* review
 5/9* Pioneer Memorial Home, Fergus Falls, Minn., 1955-1956
 5/10 Poetry & writings
 5/11 Poetry scrapbook (some by Aagot Raaen)
 5/12* Posters
 5/13* Reindahl & Mandt family trees, by C.M. Felland, 1940

Publications Series

5/14*	<i>Ebenezer</i> , November 1956
5/15*	<i>Heimsyn</i> , by Anna Mikkelson
5/16*	<i>Korte Undervisning om den Sande Omvendelses og Gjærlige Christendoms Mulighed</i> , by August Hermann Francke, 1887
5/17	"Living under the Shadow," by Henry Sigerist, 1952 (<i>Atlantic</i> , January 1952)
5/18*	<i>Læsebog for Folkeskolen</i> , 1882
5/19*	<i>Læsebog for Folkeskolen</i> , by Nordahl Rolfsen, 1893
6/1*	<i>Minnesota-Bibelen for 1901</i> , by L.U. Stenholt, 1901
6/2*	<i>My Minneapolis</i> , by Carl G.O. Hanson, 1956
6/3*	<i>Nordisk Folkebibliotek</i> , No. 14 (<i>Folkets Almanak for 1901</i>)
6/4*	<i>North Dakota Superintendent of Public Instruction, Biennial report</i> , 1920
6/5*	<i>Norwegian-American Studies and Records</i> , vol. 17, 1952
6/6*	<i>Recollections of Early University Days</i> , by Elmer E. Adams, 1949
6/7*	<i>Reisebilleder</i> , by D. Funcke, 1878
6/8*	<i>Senior Citizen</i> , 1956
6/9*	<i>Show Me How to Write</i> , by Edith U. Conard, 1938
6/10*	<i>Solstreif</i> , by J.L. Nydahl, 1910
7/1*	<i>Storegut</i> , by A.O. Vinje, 1951
7/2*	<i>De Syv Djævlæ</i> , by B.B. Haugen, 1901
7/3*	<i>Telesoga</i> , 1952?
7/4*	<i>Thoughts in the Night</i> , by Rev. Frank Johnson Pippin
7/5*	<i>A Tribute to Norway</i> , by O. Myking Mehus
7/6*	Trinity Lutheran Church, Roseville, N.D. history, 1956
7/7*	<i>Training Leadership for Tomorrow</i> , by O. Myking Mehus
7/8*	<i>Vis-Knut</i> , by B. Bjørnson, 1878

Photographs Series

8/1	Raaen family & farm (2 items)
8/2	Raaen, Aagot (12 items)
8/3	Raaen, Aagot & Tom Garman (14 items)
8/4	Raaen, Aagot - Hawaii (11 items)
8/5	Raaen, Kjersti, Laddie & Tosten (9 items)
8/6	Raaen, Ragnhild (27 items)
8/7	Identified people (8 items)
8/8	Norway - Scenes (20 items)
8/9	Norway - People (13 items)
8/10	Paulson family (6 items)
8/11	Relatives (4 items)
8/12	Unidentified people (10 items)
8/13*	Negatives (no prints) (5 items)

*File not copied

