

O. M. SANDVIK (1875-1976)

Dr. philos. Ole Mørk Sandvik, one of the early board members of the IFMC, one of our vice-presidents from 1953 to 1968, and a central figure during our Eighth Conference in 1955 in Oslo, died in the fall of 1976 at the patriarchal age of 101 years. His sight and hearing had weakened seriously, but his mind was clear, some of his finest qualities still well intact. The celebration of his centennial on May 9, 1975, was an inspiring experience to himself and his visitors.

The families of O. M. Sandvik and his wife and cousin, Nanna (1880-1965), included several amateur and professional folk and art singers. Sandvik himself, however, graduated in theology in 1902, but never entered a church office. He became a teacher in Oslo, and was from 1913 to 1935 a senior master; still, he devoted an important part of his practical and scholarly activities to church music. He became closely associated with the blossoming and growth of the field of musicology at the University of Oslo; the Music Department of the University Library was founded by him fifty years ago; and he was influential and admired in the academic milieu, generously assisted in later years by Øystein Gaukstad, head of the Music Department. His attitude was balanced and indulgent, but his estimation of the real value of his fellow beings was clear and unsentimental.

O. M. Sandvik's first scholarly contributions date from before World War I. His generation had to make its peace with the post-romantic, normative approach to the recording and study of folk music. His opponents in those times were inferior to him in knowledge and powers of argument. His own books and articles actually built the field of Norwegian ethnomusicology; one of them earned for him the doctor's degree in 1921.

Sandvik traveled in several Norwegian districts and published monographs on all types of folk music, with descriptions of informants and the social background of the music. In other studies he investigated the manuscripts leading to the pioneer editions from about 1860. Sandvik maintained the unprejudiced accuracy of notation and was glad when he found a similar scrupulousness in the old sources even when the editions had been "normalized." He also engaged in the traditional discussions of tonality, modality, and "folk scale," although neither he nor anybody else has in the end been able to discover the real sources of old Scandinavian folksong.

Norway's emotionally moving heritage of religious folk tunes, folkloristic variants of the melodies to the hymnbooks of Reformation, Orthodoxy, and Pietism, had Sandvik's special affection. As late as 1960 and 1964 he published collections of such tunes; they appealed to this truly pious and truly Norwegian collector and scholar.

Many men and women could claim to be friends of O. M. Sandvik; I think each of us felt that his friendship was a special privilege. He met mankind with respect and gratitude to the last. He shared with us a century's insight and first-hand knowledge *and* his immediate interest in life and his friends' lives, all stamped by his genuine humanity.

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