

**HULDA OLUFINE PETTERSEN ISAKSEN:** Born on Åknes, Vesterålen, Norway, an island north of the Arctic Circle. Narvik is the nearest town. Born March 24, 1903.

**PARENTS:** Konrad Pettersen and Jensine Nilsen Pettersen. Father was a fisherman. Mother was a housewife. They had a nice, comfortable home. Parents were wonderful. They had a small farm, one cow, a few sheep, some chickens. Father had his own boat.

**BROTHERS AND SISTERS:** There were ten. The first brother died when very young. Petra, the oldest, is 92 now. Lives in a nursing home in Norway.

Alf, the oldest brother, was a sailor and traveled all over the world. Kristian lived in Kirkenes. He had six children. Some of children have visited Hulda here in the U.S. The next one is Aslaug. She married a Swede and lived in Sundsvall, Sweden all her married life.

Her husband's name was Arvid Bolin. They had two children. Auduna was the next sister. She married a boy from the same island (Andøya).

They never had children. The next is Knut. He married in Sweden. He is still living. Has visited Hulda twice. He was working on a boat that went to Sweden.

He and his wife never had children. Mariot is the next brother. He was a fisherman. Married a girl from the same area. They didn't have children. Hulda's mother had a boy, Harold, when she was . There were 12 years between Mariot and Harold. Harold became a 'coast pilot' (harbor pilot). He piloted ships from other countries into the harbor. He just retired (1982). He'd had this job for 29 years. Mariot has the home place.

**GRANDPARENTS:** Paternal, Petter Knutsen, Hulda doesn't remember him. Maren Knutsen, she remembers her. Both came from the island. Petter was a shoemaker. He was a good Christian man. Hulda heard many good stories about him. They were Lutherans, but not 'born again.'

They had to walk a long ways to go to church. Maternal, Anders Nilsen. Hulda doesn't remember them. They lived across the fjord, on an island.

**CHILDHOOD:** They had wonderful parents, who taught them to obey. They loved their parents.

**CHURCH AND SCHOOL:** Confirmed in he Lutheran Church. Went to school there too. Was a good student. After confirmation, she went to Fauske, Norway, which is near Bodo. Went to school here. Educated to be a teacher, but got married and 'had her own crew.'

CHRISTMAS: Lots of baking and cooking. The children had to stay out of the way for all this. Her mother had blood poisoning in her right hand. The hand was crippled so she couldn't do things like roll out lefse. They hired two ladies to do all the baking. Hulda didn't learn to make lefse in Norway. They had a Christmas tree and talked about the 'julenissen.'

TROLL STORIES: Hulda's father sister used to tell gruesome stories. Stories old about trolls, ghosts, and scary places. They had some big stones that fell from the mountains that were like a big house. One stone fell on top of the other. You could go inside. The kids were told stories about trolls and ghosts keeping house there. They were afraid to go there.

CHRISTMAS FOODS: Sometimes they would have lutefisk. Special food. (See I-506). Her father would pull a sled with boxes down to the store. He 'handlet til jul' of bought Christmas things. Sugar, prunes, things they hadn't tasted before. They didn't go to church on Christmas. It was too far. Her dad had a book with sermons. They listened to him read on Christmas morning. They'd sing psalms too. Families stayed home on Christmas day. People would get together on Christmas Eve. Visited during the first two weeks of January. School program too. Sing and dance around the Christmas tree at school. An old man who was a Lutheran evangelist, would come and say a few words.

CHILDHOOD: They had to help at home. The girls did the dishes, worked in the house. Boys had to do things on the outside. The boys brought in tarve, which they took from the ground and dried for fuel. They don't have many trees in that part of Norway. This was peat.

MARRIAGE: Her husband came from a community about seven miles from Aaknes. Hulda had an aunt who lived there. Her husband was five and a half years older than her. His brother, Anton Isaksen lives here. (Tacoma). They were confirmed together. Her husband's name is Rolf. Hulda would often visit her cousin in his neighboring community (Boegard). They had their eyes on Rolf and Anton. Hulda was going with him before she went to Fauske to go to school. They would see each other at dances during the summer. He was a fisherman. They got married a couple years after she came back from Fauske. They got married on July 9, 1922. Hulda stayed with her mother when Rolf came to America (Tacoma) in 1924. Anton was already in America and sent money for Rolf to come. He had some relatives here. Hulda had relatives here as well. All of her father's brothers were in the U.S. except one. Rolf started fishing when he came here. They went to Alaska and fished halibut, tuna, and crab.

TRIP TO AMERICA: It was understood by Hulda's family that she would also go to America. They were glad. America was a dreamland. They said that they thought you could pick money from the streets. It was just the opposite, Hulda found. Hulda left for the U.S. in October 1926.

She had a boy then, Carl, born 2. They sailed on the Stavangerfjord or the Bergensfjord. The weather was terrible. They came to America in November. Got off in Halifax, Canada. She got sick on the boat. They had a room back by the rudder, so it was noisy. The kids didn't get sick. Her sister-in-law came too. Her name was Agnes. She got so sick on the boat that they had to take her to the boat's 'hospital.'

They traveled third class. In Halifax, they couldn't speak English. They were led like sheep. They were put on the

train that miners used. It was so dirty. Hulda was so disillusioned with the trip. They couldn't understand to order the food. They had to point to what they wanted. There was so much they had not seen before. When they go to Vancouver, B.C., her husband was there. She met her oldest brother, Alf too.

After they'd just come into the station in Vancouver B.C., and before Rolf had come, Hulda went to the restroom leaving Carl with Agnes. She went into one of the stalls and left her purse on the washbasin where she could still see it. As she was ready to go out, she noticed her purse was gone. She caught only a glimpse of the lady's skirt as she ran out of the restroom. Hulda ran after her, screaming and swearing in Norwegian she was not a Christian. The station was big. The lady knew that Hulda was really after her. She threw the purse to some ladies on the other side of a desk. The ladies knew it was Hulda's purse so she got it back. Everything she had was in that purse. It was really exciting but not in a nice way. She likes to forget those experiences.

After they left Halifax and were further in, they had to change trains. Hulda was carrying things in both hands so she told Carl to hold on to her coat. There were a lot of people. Hulda looked back and noticed that Carl wasn't here. He'd wandered off around the corner. If she hadn't noticed then, she'd have lost him. She left her things and ran after him. Then she had to find the people they were with.

She was glad to see her husband. He look over and she relaxed. When they got to Tacoma, she was really impressed with the RR station.

Rolf had already rented a small house on Portland Ave. He had relatives who had cooked food and had everything so nice.

**LEARNING THE LANGUAGE:** Not easy. They were always together with other Norwegians. Learned English as children were growing up. Learning English well not that important. This country made up of people with many different dialects.

**CITIZENSHIP:** Still not a citizen. Her husband became a U.S. citizen.

**BECOMING A CHRISTIAN:** A Norwegian lady, Mrs. Anderson, used to visit her. She came from an island near Aaknes, Norway. She was very nice and genuine. Hulda had heard of only Lutherans. Hulda saw this lady was different, she was so good and understanding.

**BECOMING A CHRISTIAN:** Some Norwegians neighbors across the street from the Isaksens, went to the Lutheran Free Church, which was kitty-corner from Normanna Hall. Hulda used to go with them and take Carl to Sunday school. By this time, they had moved to Tacoma. They bought a place on 16th and Ainsworth. This Lutheran neighbor told Hulda to watch out for these 'holy rollers.' They were really something else.

Hulda had some friends on 'K' Street who hey often went to the show with. Once, when Rolf was home, they were invited o go with them to Normanna Hall where there was a crazy Norwegian who was really funny. 'He takes off

his clothes when he preaches and throws cash.'

Hulda was the first to go in the door. Someone spoke to her 'Take your shoes off, you are stepping on Holy Ground.' Hulda started to shake.

They'd had Bible history in school in Norway. Hulda knew it was God who said it because God had said the same thing to Moses. The preacher spoke beautifully. His name was Regn Seihus. 'He was a man of God who was used so marvelously.' He was Pentecostal. Rolf and the friends were laughing. 'Ja, good show. He will start to take off his clothes now.' Hulda was so upset with Rolf. 'How could he laugh at God's people.' When they got home, Rolf and Hulda had an argument. When Rolf went to Alaska, Hulda started going to church with those people. Some neighbors invited Hulda to go to an Assembly of God church where the services were in Norwegian. This church was on 11th and 'J' Street. A lady who was a wonderful speaker was going to be there. The service was wonderful. Hulda wasn't planning on going up to the altar, but as she was going out the door, she saw Mrs. Anderson, the lady who was so nice. She pointed to the altar and 'it was like an unseen hand urred me around.' Hulda went to the altar and gave her heart and life to Jesus. After she became a Christian, she had Irene, her second child. Her relatives told her that in this country three children was enough. She believed his before she became a Christian, but after she started reading the Word of God she said she was going to take the children he gave her. He gave her en.

**HUSBAND BECAME A CHRISTIAN:** She wrote to him while he was in Alaska. She told him she had given her life to the Lord. She had peace in her heart. Carl, who was such a wirery little boy had calmed down. The house was so peaceful. Rolf read the letter and wondered if she had gone with those people. He wrote back that they had a wonderful life together and couldn't part now. He asked Hulda to pray for him.

When Rolf came home and saw Hulda and the children, he said he couldn't touch any of them until he bowed on his knees before the Lord. They had a wonderful life together. They went to Bethel Pentecostal Church on th Street. Now it's called the Bethel Christian Assembly.

Hulda went to this church for 25 years. She got the baptism of the Holy Spirit just three months after she'd been saved. She and her husband were both baptized in American Lake. There was some trouble in the church and the pastor was fired. They and a few other families supported the pastor, Vincent Newman, so they had to leave too. They joined Peoples Church on 38th and 'L' Street. Her husband passed away in 1977.

Hulda's husband was gone a lot. He fished in Alaska and then he got a job with the Biology department at he University of Washington. He cooked on the boat while they were out tagging fish. They had six acres of raspberries at home. Hulda took care of them and hired pickers. It was a job to take care of so many kids, but they were really good. They were taught to obey and to respect others.

**CHILDREN:** Carl lives in Longview. Is the boss of longshoremen in Longview, Washington, Portland, Oregon, and Astoria, Oregon. He will retire this year (1982). He married Virginia. They don't have any children. He had two children by his first wife. Ruth, she was married to Leslie Long. They are divorced. She has one daughter, Linda and four boys, Larry, Leslie. Irene, she had two girls and two boys. She's a widow now.

Her husband, Clyde Merolock (?) was a truck driver. She worked at Sears. June was a missionary in Liberia. She married when she got back to Donald Donell. He was an engineer in California. He's passed away now. She has a girl, 23 and a boy, 22. They live in Tacoma now.

Roy was in the Navy for 24 years. Was lieutenant commander when he quit. Now he has a good job at the shipyard. He is married and has one girl. He married Barbara Johnson. Nancy married and has four grown-up children. She is a widow. Her husband was Kirk. He worked for the Veterans Administration in Spokane. Joseph, a schoolteacher in Canada. Married to Shelley Riveness (?). They have three children. One of them, Kristi, is going to go to the Assembly of God Bible School in Kirkland. Helene has been in Norway. Has four boys and adopted a girl. Her husband works for Boeing. Roger works for Parker Paint on Center Street. He married Judy Sanpardo (?). They have three girls and one boy. Donald was deputy sheriff in King County but was hurt. He has been going to a chiropractor for his back. He is married to Sandy. She has a beauty shop in Auburn, 'Sandy's House of Beauty.'

RASPBERRIES: They had six acres. They've sold that land to the city. When Hulda and her husband were looking for a farm. They both agreed that they didn't want berried because they had a friend, Andrew Asbjornson, in north Puyallup who had a big family, 12 children. Hulda's girls went there to pick raspberries. They were fed up with raspberries. So many people had to work. They wanted a farm in Puyallup. They found an old house, it didn't even have a bathroom. It was a clean house and it had six acres. A widow lived there; an old English lady. Hulda and Rolf felt at home there. They had looked at many nice places. Rolf had the means to buy a nice place. They got the house and six acres for \$9,000. They bought in it May when the berries were almost ripe. Her husband had to go fishing so she had to hire pickers and get he berries picked. They had a good crop. They made almost enough money to pay for the farm. Poor people from the South came to pick. Not really 0 Mexicans. All kinds of nationalities. When they didn't have enough pickers, Hulda went to Ft. Lewis (on Sundays) and brought back soldiers to help. They just came to look at the girls, not to work. Roger was 11 months when they moved from Fife to Puyallup.

Hulda was busy with her kids as well as the raspberries. They were helpful and good to one another. They went to Sunday school and respected the Lord. Most of them are really Christians. Some of them don't serve the Lord now. The Lord wanted her to bring up her 9 kids as Christians. She's not as active in the church now as she was. She's almost 79 now (1982). She quit driving last year and gave 2 car to her youngest daughter. She was active in the church by teaching Sunday school and in helping in other ways. She donates money to the church. She has donated money to missionaries in Africa and other parts of the world. When her son, Roy, was in the Navy, he visited the home of a Japanese boy whom she helped support. She has many pictures of many of the children she has helped.

NORWEGIAN ORGANIZATIONS: They had belonged to Nordlandslaget but she wasn't active. They went as members. The people were nice there.

TRIPS BACK TO NORWAY: She has been back three times. Twice with her husband.

TRIPS BACK TO NORWAY: In 1979, Hulda and her daughter, Irene planned a trip to Norway. In May, one month before they were to leave, Hulda got a stroke. She was in the hospital for one week. They still went to Norway. She went to see Dr. McCabe after she'd been out of the hospital for one week. She was well enough to go. The trip was wonderful. They flew to Bodo. It was a charter flight organized by Nordlandslaget.

The weather was 'gruesome' when they took the boat from Bodø to the islands. People were getting sick. Hulda had always got sick before but she didn't this time. She attributes this to God. They didn't go to Sweden to visit her brother this time. He came to Norway to visit her. Hulda wasn't very active but she had a good time. They were there for six weeks.

FIRST TRIP: Their first trip back to Norway was in the 0s after WWII. There were quite a few changes. People lived better. Houses were nicer. It was still much different than the U.S., but they were starting to get things they hadn't had before.

They could see more changes on their second trip. Everybody lives a very good life. Hulda feels that the government does too much for the people. They need to learn to take care of themselves. It's beautiful what they're doing for the older people now. The older people didn't have easy lives before.

THE NORWEGIAN LANGUAGE IN THE FAMILY: The kids understand some, but don't speak it. It would have been nice for them to learn it, but Hulda was busy with other things then. Different generations are more open with each other now than they were back then. Hulda wishes she could have been more open with her children. She has asked her children to forgive her for the things she could have done, but didn't. All of her children are nice. She had a switch, which she would use to swat the kids if they needed it. Sometimes, one of the kids would get rid of the switch, but she'd find out who did it and they would have to find a new one.

Hulda got along well with her children. Carl, her oldest son, drove her to Sears, once when he was 17. Lawrence Spalsvik (?), a friend of Carl's came over to them when they were in the parking lot. He was very nice. Carl had done some fishing with his dad and was making good money.

Lawrence told Carl that he had some fun plans for that night. Carl had been working a lot that week and he needed sleep. Hulda told Carl that he wasn't going out, he was going to go home to bed. Carl turned to her and said, 'and you shut up.' That was the first time he'd talked like that. Hulda started to cry. Lawrence left. Carl apologized. He tried to give her some money to buy something for herself. She wouldn't take it. She told him she just wanted him to respect her.

NORWEGIAN TRADITIONS AT HOME: They do a lot of cooking and baking when preparing for Christmas. They all get together on Christmas Eve.

WHAT IT MEANS TO BE NORWEGIAN: Norwegians aren't better than anyone else. God made all peoples.

TAKING IN VETERANS: They took in 15 veterans. They sold half of their place to a friend, Gus Sort (?) and 'quit the berries.' Hulda got jobs housekeeping. She worked for a doctor in Sumner. She worked for many nice people. They paid good. The children were no longer at home.

Her youngest son, Donald, went to college and then joined the army. He was stationed in Germany. He visited

relatives in Norway before he came home. Hulda liked working. Hulda had some friends who worked in a veteran's home. Hulda decided she'd like to do that.

For fifteen years, she had veterans living with her. She'd take them to the hospital at American Lake once a month. She'd take them to a veteran's place nearby once a month for socializing. Some of these were mentally injured. One tired to commit suicide by cutting his throat while at Hulda's. Donald was home then to help. They called the hospital and were told to take him to Good Samaritan Hospital. He didn't die.

Two died of natural causes while at Hulda's. They let people out of the hospital because it was too crowded. Later, a law was made that you couldn't have more than two veterans in your home unless you were a licensed nursing home. Hulda didn't want to get a license so only kept three. The third one got to stay because he was paying for himself. She got many letters from the families of these men when she quit. They thanked her for the service and kindness she had given.

HANDICRAFTS: Hulda had won many prizes at the fair for her embroidery, needlepoint, knitting, Hardanger beading, and crocheting. She learned to do these things here in the U.S. She doesn't do these things anymore because she wants to spare her eyes. Her daughter, Nancy, is very good at these handicrafts.

She speaks in Norwegian.