

PERSONAL BACKGROUND: Maiden name is Sylthe. Born in Romsdalen, Norway on January 21, 1896.

PARENTS: Mother is Ellen Fredricksen. Father is Iver Sylthe. Father took his name from a place in Norway.

GRANDPARENTS: Paternal were farmers. Maternal, dad died young, farmers also.

Came to America with her uncle.

BROTHERS AND SISTERS: One sister and three brothers. One brother who is a painter came to the U.S. in 1925. Oldest brother works for the railroad in Norway. Youngest brother is a painter also.

CHILDHOOD: Lived in Bergen until five years old. Moved to Trondheim where her father worked as a cabinetmaker. Lived here until 16, then came to the U.S.

GRANDPARENTS: Talks about them. Good memories.

FAMILY NAME: Sylthe means 'jam.' She talks about the name.

CHILDHOOD: Bergen, took many trips and picnics. Took waling trips up Floeyfjellet. There was a lake called 'Svartedykke,' the Black Lake at the top. They went swimming or rented a boat.

BROTHERS AND SISTER: Brothers' names are Fredleif, Sverre and Ingolf. Sister's name is Ella Sylthe Kvam. She lives in Norway now.

BROTHER'S: Ingolf is retired in Trondheim. Sverre was in the U.S., was a good singer.

CHRISTMAS: Fattigmand and cookies. Couldn't see the tree until Christmas Eve. Opened presents on Christmas Eve. Danced around the tree.

CHRISTMAS: Lots of visiting. Kept the tree up for a long time.

CHURCH: Went to Sunday school and church. Quit going to church when confirmed.

SCANDINAVIAN CUSTOMS: Trolls, many stories.

JULENISSEN: Children's Christmas parties with Julenissen.

CHRISTMAS: Set out wheat for the birds.

CHRISTMAS CUSTOMS: Dress up like Julenissen. Describes the custom.

DECORATING THE TREE: Birds that clamped on. Many decoration in Norway that they don't have here today. Made trimmings.

Made baskets and filled them with fruit, candy, *etc.*

STORY: Taking lunch to her father.

FATHER'S WORK: Furniture apprenticeship for three years in Norway. He did this in Bergen.

Father had a furniture business in Trondheim after the war.

PARENTS: Father died first. Mother died in 1947 during the war.

WAR TIMES: Sweden neutral. Little food available. Mother may have died from lack of food.

Lived in Bergen for five years and in Trondheim for eleven years.

U.S.: Came to the U.S. in 1912.

WAR TIMES: Hardships. Fight for food. Did without many things.

GERMAN INVASION: Germans living in homes with Norwegians. Took over brother's house.

WAR TIMES: People escaping to Sweden.

U.S.: Came to the U.S. by herself in 1912 at the age of 14. She made up her mind to go. Took English in school.

WORK: Was making hats in Norway when she decided to come to America.

Wrote to her uncle in the U.S. Her parents could not understand why.

TICKET: Her uncle, Ivar Lee who lived in Parkland sent it to her. He farmed and sold milk.

WORK AND STUDIES: Took English classes at night in a church. Made hats during the day.

TRIP: Parents let her go with her promise to come back in three years.

Parents took her to the dock. Said goodbye to the family.

BOAT: Went to England. Met a seaman with a daughter, who was 18. They watched out for Clara. Became friends with the daughter.

LEAVING HOME: It was an adventure. There were no tears or fears.

TRIP: Sick on the North Sea, big, wide Star-Liner.

LIVERPOOL: Stayed there for one week until the ship came for America.

PROVISIONS: All things taken care of, food, lodging, etc, except the train, the whole trip.

ENGLAND: Poor children on the streets singing for money.

CROSSING THE ATLANTIC: Beautiful weather all the way. No sickness.

QUEBEC, CANADA: American agent to meet them. Immigration taken care of.

TRAVEL WEST: Two Swedish girls, no Norwegians going out west. Most went to the Midwest.

FOOD ON THE TRAIN: had a box sent from home for the trip out west. Had food for the trip.

TRAIN: Conductor passed around apples for 5 cents.

TACOMA: Waited for her uncle at the Old Milwaukie Depot on Pacific. Decided to catch the streetcar to Parkland herself.

STREETCAR EXPERIENCES: Got on the wrong car.

PARKLAND, WASHINGTON: Walked all over Parkland. Went into Thompson's Groceries looking for her uncle.

Man in the store spoke Norwegian. He helped her find her uncle.

Got a ride with a man in a horse and buggy who was going to Collins Road where her uncle lived.

FIRST IMPRESSIONS OF UNCLE'S HOME: Wondered about Indians. Big trees. Uncle lived in the first house on the right side of the Tacoma Eastern Railroad tracks.

TRIP: No problems on the ship on the way over. Ticket cost \$90 or \$95 from Norway to Tacoma, included everything.

LANGUAGE DIFFICULTIES: Some job at Gravelly Lake. Didn't know the names of vegetables.

WORK: She did housework here in Tacoma on Gravelly Lake and lived at the house.

WORK: Most difficult thing was that the house she worked at was so full of rats.

She describes the house she lived at on Gravelly Lake. Talks about the rats.

FRIENDS: Met a Norwegian girl who lived and worked close by. Moved in with the family of this girl.

ALONE IN AMERICA: Aunt and uncle went back to Norway. Knew a family in Tacoma which she visited named Thorston Olson (?).

OLSON'S CHILDREN: She grew up with many of them and they still keep in touch. Thora Westby, Bertha, Tatin (?), Henry, and Arnold.

WORK: Had a job in Tacoma with Tekla Lynda (?) who used to be Tekla Pederson (?) before she married Trygve Lynda (?).

WORK: Met Sina Skreen (?) who worked at Schoenfelds for years. She gave Clara her job at a coffee shop on Commerce Street. Sold coffee and donuts for five cents in 1913. Went to work at 6am.

WORK: Mike, her husband to be, offered her job at a coffee shop on 11th St. She worked there for two years then got married.

HUSBAND: Met him at the Scandinavian Lodge on K St. Tekla first took her to the lodge.

HUSBAND: Was a private chauffer. He was first a gardener then learned to drive and became a chauffer. He chauffeured for rich people on the north end.

WORK: After marriage, he worked for Mrs. R.L. McCormick who had the McCormick library. Worked for the Mrs. Fogg (?) for 13 years. Worked for the Perkin's and the Metcalf's. Pay ranged from \$65 per month at McCormick's to \$150 a month at the Metcalf's where he worked for fourteen years.

MARRIED: 1916 by Rev. Ordal at his home. Brother-in-law and his wife were there. Clara didn't work after marriage.

CHILDREN: Had three boys. Oldest died. All children in Tacoma. Ray has worked for the telephone company. Has three daughters and one son. Two girls are teachers. The boy goes to vocational school and one girl is married.

SON CLIFFORD: Was in the Navy for 24-25 years. In vocational school now. He had two daughters.

CHILDREN: Son, that died in 1935 when he was 18, took his own life.

Husband died in 1957. Clara bought the house she's in now. She and her husband built a house and had a shop downtown where they sold various things. It was at the Sanitary Market. (Distortions on the tape make it hard to hear for a moment.)

Lived at Mt. View for 16 years. Had a little place out on Dash Point and they moved out there in September 1956 until her husband died of a heart attack on March 14, 1957.

BUS SERVICE: Very poor. Clara couldn't drive. Because of this transportation problem, she moved.

TRIP TO NORWAY: 1957, first time. Came back to Tacoma and moved to where she is now. She talks of improvements done to the house.

WORK: When she first came to Tacoma she earned \$20 a month. In the restaurant she earned \$9 a week. She worked everyday 8 hours a day from 11 to 6:30.

PEOPLE: She worked with many Swedes and Norwegians. Lots of other minority groups downtown. Market St., 13th St., and Commerce St. Lots of Japanese and Chinese.

CHRISTMAS: Downtown Tacoma used to be very crowded. At Rose Brothers and Stone - Fisher you could hardly get waited on. Baskets on the ceiling would carry packages upstairs to be wrapped.

NEW YEARS: In Tacoma, there was dancing in the streets. Loud.

TACOMA TODAY: Not busy, very dead, not like it used to be. Nicer in older days. Shopping centers take people away from the downtown area.

TACOMA TODAY: Don't go out after dark. Not as safe as it used to be.

CHURCH: Doesn't belong to a church, but does attend church sometimes. Went to Rev. Ordal's services. Met Norwegians at church.

TRIPS TO NORWAY: Was 45 years before Clara made it back to Norway.

ORGANIZATIONS: Used to belong to the Daughters of Norway. Belongs to the Circle now. Hard to get out without a car. Belongs to the Scandinavian Fraternity. They have card parties.

SCANDINAVIAN DAYS: She participates in this.

TRIPS TO NORWAY: First time back everything had changed. People changed, moved, died, and older.

OTHER TRAVELS: In 1961, she went to Italy, loved this country. Also traveled to Taiwan, Singapore, the Orient, Greece and Germany.

HUSBAND'S FAMILY: Her husband's parents were in Menominee, Michigan. They had two children in Michigan then they moved back to Norway. Her husband stayed in Norway until he was 15 and a half then he came back to Michigan.

WORK: He worked on a farm in the Midwest. He came out west with friends. He had friends from his hometown in Norway who lived in Tacoma, Martin Strand.

WORK: Mike worked at Northern Pacific shop in South Tacoma. He went to Alaska to work.

Mike and Clara had plans to go back to Norway and live on Mike's father's place when he died. Mike changed his mind.

Still has family in Norway. Her sister and brother are still there. They keep in good contact. She mentions a letter her sister wrote talking about a new party in Norway which would be better for the country.

NORWAY TODAY: Different. High prices. More like the U.S. than before. 'They have everything.' Modernized.

NORWEGIAN HERITAGE: What it has meant to be Norwegian. She's proud of it.

LANGUAGE: She didn't speak Norwegian to her children when they were young. Now they wished they would have learned Norwegian. Her children have been back to Norway.

TRAVELS: Went with her children on a trip. Flew into Amsterdam. Had a Eurailpass so they went to Denmark and Brussels. Took a ship to Sweden and a train to Norway. Visited relatives.

SON'S TRAVELS: She describes a trip Clifford took when he was in the Navy.

SPOKEN NORWEGIAN: The Norwegian Table Prayer.