

Odin Jentoft Davidson was born in Rødøy, northern Helgeland, Norway on the polar circle. Born in a fjord called Tjongsfjord. Born on March 3, 1900.

PARENTS Ole Davidson and Jakobine Olsen. Father did fishing and carpentry. Fished for cod, halibut, and herring. Father was gone out fishing for long periods of time. Had about twelve and a half acres of land. A few cows and sheep. Raised potatoes and feed for the cows. Ate lots of fish.

BROTHERS AND SISTERS Olaf farmed in North Dakota and Minnesota. Worked on the West Coast and in shipyards. He came to the U.S. in 1911. Kasbara is a housewife in Norway, she had two children. Sigur was fishing in Norway and did construction work. His wife is still there.

CHILDHOOD HOME Had eight rooms.

Odin made a trip to Norway in 1949-1950. Noticed many changes, improvements. Modernized a lot.

GRANDPARENTS Marie Olse was his maternal grandmother. Paternal grandfather was David Olsen, a fisherman, and Kasbara Olsen.

Odin's name in Norway was Olsen. Used Davidson when he got his citizen papers. Brother also changed his name when he came over.

SCHOOL Twenty minute walk. Went through the eighth grade.

WORK Went fishing.

CHURCH A mile away on an island, Rødøy. Went often in the summer. Away in the winter fishing.

Mother died with Odin was two-years-old. Had a stepmother.

CHRISTMAS Tree, apples and cookies were the trimming. Had presents.

CHRISTMAS FOOD Christmas Eve, lutefisk, potatoes, butter, lefse, flatbrød, rissengrøt. Christmas Day, rissengrøt and roast.

Went to church the second day of Christmas. Stayed home Christmas Day. Had bazaars, lots of celebrating. Had to make your own fun.

'TØYELSMESSDAG' Day they took the tree down in Norway. He spells it 'Tolesmesda.' It is not in the dictionary.

TROLL STORIES Did not believe in them. Just stories.

CONFIRMATION Was the end of schooling unless they paid for more.

FISHING Age 15 did cod and herring fishing. Stayed on a big boat. Did not fish on Sundays as it was forbidden. He fished with a neighbor who had a motorboat. They sold fish to cities down south, they shipped it out.

Had a cook on the fishing boat. He fished until he was 20 years old.

REASONS FOR COMING TO THE U.S. Came to the U.S. because he was not making enough money in Norway. Poor times in Norway. Left May 1920. His brother was in the U.S. close to Albert Lea, Minnesota. Olaf had a farm there.

They tilled farms in Minnesota, put pipes in to drain the land because it was so wet. Olaf did tiling for the county.

Olaf had written to Odin and encouraged him to come. Olaf was married in Minnesota to a girl from Sogn, Norway. Her family name was Orn (?).

Olaf sent a ticket to Odin and his brother, Aksel. His father was not thrilled about the idea, but figured it was best for the boys.

TRIP OVER Took the Stavangerfjord. Ellis Island, 'nothing to it,' no problems. Could not understand a lot of what was going on because he could not speak English. No difficulty getting on the train.

Agents helped them get on the train. Bought food on the train, he pointed at what he wanted. Train trip took 3-4 days. Went to North Dakota where Olaf was farming.

Started working on the farms. Everyone spoke Norwegian, no problems getting along. Stayed here for three years. Came out West because there was no money on the farms. Made \$40 a week.

Came out West because of the fishing. Took train out West. Shipped to Alaska after he got work in Seattle. Went salmon fishing. Had no trouble finding work. Made \$90 a month.

Stayed in Alaska until salmon season opened. Went out on a sailing boat in Ketchikan, Alaska.

Has fished all his life. Mostly in Alaska. Ran boats for others. Bought a boat with his brother in the 1960s. Was skipper for boats.

Fished for tuna, halibut, sold fish in Seattle and in Ketchikan, Alaska, and Prince Rupert. Came into port every two weeks or so.

Since 1960 there was a conservation of fish. Could not fish for ten days.

DIFFERENCES IN FISHING NOW Used to fish from the dory. Describes this. About six dorries on each big boat. On a big boat you would dress and ice the fish. Held 100,000 pounds of fish. Fished 8-10 days each trip. In the 1930s they abolished dorries because too many men were lost. Then began fishing from the big boat.

LONG-LINING-FISHING From the big boat. This was much safer, could fish in any kind of weather.

DORRIES 16 feet long, two men each. Describes working the dorrie. Stayed in them all day long.

No protection from the weather. Had to put up with it in the Gulf of Alaska and the Bering Sea. Dug out ice to get a hold of coal.

DEPRESSION Continued fishing. Sold fish for four cents a pound. A lot of work for little money.

Family lived in Seattle during the Depression. Odin bought a few acres in north Seattle. Bought a cow, few chickens, something that helped. Raised some of their own food.

There was a three bedroom house on the land. Odin paid \$900 for this, he used the money he had saved up so that he was not in debt.

DEPRESSION Many people on WPA. Odin managed to stay off WPA. Odin cleared his land, cut wood for wood burning stove, saved money.

CITIZENSHIP April 27, 1929 in Seattle. Went to school for this. Odin was married the same day.

Worked in the shipyards one winter during the 1960s, waiting for the fish season to open up.

FISHING A rough life. Conditions better in the U.S. than in Norway.

New Foundlanders. Most gone now.

No problem dealing with other minorities.

PROUD TO BE NORWEGIAN 'A good race of people.' Decent people. Doing well for themselves. Look at Ballard and see what they have built up. Other Scandinavians are also hard working people.

Did not belong to any lodges. Did not have time for meetings and such. Met Norwegians from fishing. Many live in Ballard. Met at church.

CHURCH Used to go to Rev. Nesvig's church (First Lutheran) on Boren and Virginia. Active church. They preached in Norwegian.

TRIPS BACK TO NORWAY February 1950. Took the Stavangerfjord back, took Oslofjord back to America. Boat was nice.

Oslofjord was not a good sea boat. Took eight days to get to Oslo and seven days to get home.

Stavangerfjord was sold in 1950 to someplace in South America. It was getting old.

CHANGES Improved, modernized more now than in 1920. New Norsk made it difficult to understand some people. Odin learned Old Norwegian. It is much different from New Norwegian. 'They've ruined the language.'

People are still going to church. They built a church on Odin's home place. They used to have a boat out to church.

Sister-in-law and niece still live in Norway. They still correspond.

Still speaks and understands Norwegian. He is getting rusty. Can not talk to the new people coming over.

Children could speak Norwegian when they were young. Quit when they went to school.

Other customs maintained, cooking.

Odin's father was still living when Odin went back to Norway. He was 80 years old.