

**FAMILY BACKGROUND** Magdalena Krokenes was born Magdalena Haug in Samnanger, Hordaland, Norway on February 18, 1903. Her home was about 20 km northeast of Bergen (on the west coast of Norway) towards the farmland up in the mountains surrounding Samnangerfjorden.

**PARENTS** Father was Ragneel Johan Haug and mother was Magdelee Ragnhilda Drogheda Haug. Drogheda is where she was born, a farm by Eikelandsosen (on Eikelandsfjorden), which was a boat stop and had a margarine factory. Her parents names were Engle and Marte Drogheda. Mother had two brothers: Engle and Gitle. Gitle immigrated to America as a young man. The last time they heard from him was around 1900 when he and a German fellow were undertaking a carpentry business.

Mother married father and moved to Haug in Samnanger. Father had one sister and two brothers who immigrated to America (farmers in MN and WI). One brother, Aalei (Ole ?) immigrated using her fathers' name. As a cadet in a military school in Norway, he had gotten into a fight. He didn't dare return to school, so he emigrated under an assumed name in order not to be caught.

Father died young at the age of 32 from tuberculosis. After returning from a sanatorium, he went out in the fields to help his father and had a fatal hemorrhage. Magdalena was about six years old at the time. Magdelee and the children continued to live on the Haug farm with the paternal grandparents, Peter and Magdelee Haug.

**BROTHERS AND SISTERS** There were four children in the family: Marget, Magdalena, Sigurda and Peter. Peter died of pneumonia at about one year of age - same year as father. Marget married and stayed in Norway, and Sigurda immigrated to America.

**CHILDHOOD** Magdalena loved being on the farm and helped with haying: raking and drying hay on 'hesje' (a hay drying rack). Their house was 2 stories: the grandparents lived on the first floor and her family on the second. Both floors had kitchens. But downstairs was the big room that contained the prettiest household items; it was seldom used except for company. The upstairs, besides the kitchen, had the beds and a loft, which contained her mother's loom and spinning wheel.

Father left some money and shares in a plant in a village (closer to Bergen) called OsÅ,yro. The plant was a 'sardin hermetikkk' (sardine cannery) called Peking. Mother got a job there to support herself and the girls, while Magdalena who was about 10 and her two sisters remained with the grandparents and attended school.

The one-room schoolhouse was about 3-4 miles away and it was tough to walk in the winter with the ice and snow. They wore wooden shoes because they couldn't afford galoshes. But their feet were never cold or wet as they wore heavy wool socks and 'labber' (outside wool socks).

School days weren't too structured. The teacher often put his feet up on a desk and played the violin for the children. Tells a story about boys finding and bringing dynamite to the school yard. She started school at age seven, later switching schools when they moved to OsÅ,yro.

Her paternal grandmother was little and always busy. Her grandfather told them stories about his youth as a sailor to South America. The church was about 30 miles away, across the water and very difficult to attend in winter. On these stay-at-home Sundays, Grandfather read the Bible. The children had to listen attentively, and generally be respectful to the elders, addressing them as 'De'.

As children they had a lot of fun also: skiing and skating. Tells a story how dangerous skiing could be. Her father and his two cousins, Jens and Mons Haug, were caught in an avalanche. Ragneel and Jens dug their way to the surface, but Mons died of suffocation; they found him in the Spring. Jens and Mons were sons of Hans Haug who was Grandma Magdelee's brother. The Haug farm actually belonged to the Haugs, and her grandfather Peter had married into it and adopted the name of the farm.

OSOYRO She liked being with her mother again when they moved to OsÅ,yro, but missed the farm. The new school was more strict - first hour was religion and singing hymns - and it was like starting school anew. Both the church and school were close; visible from their apartment house, which was an old converted hotel. She was confirmed in this church.

NORWEGIAN TRADITIONS Less traditions in Norway than America - no Santa Claus. They had 'julenisser' - little fellows who lived in the barn and took care of the cattle. For Christmas eve dinner they had lutefisk, risengrynsgrøet (rice pudding), flatbroed, and lefse. They had a thicker Hardanger lefse, served with butter and 'sirup' (a sugar syrup, thick like honey but darker); they used it on bread for breakfast also. Julekake, oranges and fruit were had at Christmas time; very seldom had fruit like that. Their Christmas tree was decorated with handmade chains of glossy paper and real little candles. Never happened that anyone had a fire; but there were always adults around. They sang and danced around the tree. On Christmas day there was no visiting; everyone stayed home.

In Osoyro there was a Christmas program a week before Christmas, and they attended church on Christmas day. Church was formal in Norway; the pastor never came down and greeted the people. Magdalena immediately noticed that people and events were more friendly in America.

OTHER TRADITIONS Easter, both Sunday and Monday, was a big holiday; those with ski lodges in the mountains went skiing and came back 'as brown as a nut'. Her family went skiing but didn't have a lodge. Norway has many nice vacations and places to see. She wishes she had been able to travel more.

There were stories about 'julenisser' and 'troll'. Her sister Sigurda had a 'leikarring' in Tacoma - a group of folk dancers that Magdalena also belonged to. One time they presented a skit, similar to Per Gynt, with trolls living in Jotunheimen. As children, her grandfather told them stories about trolls - a special one called 'huldra'. She could never fathom that her grandparents believed in huldra. Supposedly a nice girl that like to steal cattle, she stood behind a bush looking at the cattle, but when she turned around she had a tail. This was a legend. In Norway the cattle were kept in a barn in winter. But in Spring/Summer the cattle were let out into the mountainside to find fresh grass and water, and the huldrer were there.

CONFIRMATION Went to class from January until October.

**WORK** After confirmation she worked for relatives, the Mons and Bergit Lisse (?) family, with four children: Henrik, Harald, Johannes, and a girl. Mons was a housepainter by trade and had much fun with his children playing music. Mons played the clarinet and Henrik the violin, which he was given at age six. They also had a phonograph and records, which acquainted Magdalena with the John Sousa marches long before she came to America.

Her responsibilities were to cook wash and iron clothes, fix beds, *etc.* She stayed there one and a half years before moving to Bergen where she worked in the YMCA cafe. She and 4 or 5 other girls set the tables and served good food. They lived in a room upstairs and would go out sight-seeing in the evening. Bergen is a nice town when the sun is shining, but a lot of rain there.

**MEETING SPOUSE** When home on vacation from Bergen, she met her future husband, Valentine Krokenes, in the restaurant below their apartment. While they were engaged she worked at Fjoesanger (a little community west of Bergen) on a big estate owned by a man who was a 'skipsreder' (ship owner). She was a domestic maid: shined silver, ironed linen, *etc.* She quit to get married.

**MARRIAGE AND FAMILY** Married at the 'domkirke' (cathedral) in Bergen, an old, stone church. Wore a white dress with a veil, gloves, and silk shoes. Had a dinner afterwards at the Rosenkrans Hotel: salmon ('laks') and all the trimmings. Her mother and sisters came; she and Valentine returned to Osoyro to live in a rented apartment. The pastor in Osoyro was on vacation for a month, which is why they were married in Bergen.

**FAMILY LIFE IN NORWAY** After marriage, she did not work as it was not customary for the wife to work. These were depression years, which they called 'noeds' time, and Valentine lost his job. His uncle, John Buttker, from Sunnfjord (Valentine also) was home from America on a visit. Her husband thought it was a good idea to immigrate to America, work a few years, and then get a new start with his earnings. The idea sounded good. She actually didn't want to be left that long, but didn't say anything against it. They already had a baby girl, MÅÏfrid.

Valentine emigrated in 1924. She gave up her apartment and moved in with her mother. He got a job logging, first in Cedar Falls, Washington and then with Weyerhaeuser. Her little girl (two years) got very sick - 'an awful time'. The doctor in Osoyro thought she had a cold. But Magdalena realized it was worse and later took MÅÏfrid to a specialist in Bergen who believed MÅÏfrid had meningitis. Her condition remained basically unchanged - poor. Valentine wrote asking her to come over. She put in her application, but her girl couldn't go because of her health. 'It was an awfully hard decision to make.' But she went, emigrating in late June 1928 and leaving MÅÏfrid with the grandmother.

**EMIGRATION** She traveled with Sam Havik and his new wife. They went by boat from Bergen to England and from Liverpool to Quebec sailing up the St. Lawrence River. The trip to England was bad; it was stormy, and everyone got seasick. She was given seasick pills by another passenger and that helped her. The trip to Quebec was very nice, no storms. The train trip across Canada was long, but she really like the Canadian cities (Winnipeg, Vancouver, etc.) and the big countryside: it was so light, airy and open.

There were no problems with English because Sam Havik had lived in America before returning to Norway to marry. They entered America at Blaine where their papers were checked, and from there to Seattle. Caught a boat at

Seattle and arrived in Tacoma at the Municipal Dock where Valentine met her.

Tacoma reminded her of Bergen: waterfront and hills. They stayed in a hotel for a couple of days, dining with the Sirtunes (?) one evening. This couple helped them find a house (at M and South 53) and helped Magdalena with her English. The most difficult thing was that she couldn't read and was so happy to learn English in order to read again.

SCHOOL Went to night school one winter to learn reading and writing.

SETTLING IN DURING THE DEPRESSION Her husband worked in logging camps six days a week and came home on Saturdays. Then, something sad happened: her daughter died at the age of four in 1928. Her oldest boy, Walter, was born in 1929; he just died last summer - 1982. Walter lived and worked in California, had one daughter. She has two other sons: Raymond and Kim. Kim is a Vietnam War veteran who lives with her and helps her, because she's been sick lately. Raymond is a wood-worker and has two children.

WORK After her children were older, she worked many years as a domestic, first for Mrs. Louisa Taylor and then the Will family. She and Walter (the only child at the time) stayed at Mrs. Taylor's during the week, returning home on the weekend. When the children were in school, she did daytime domestic work. Her husband was employed at a logger except during the war years when he worked in the shipyards. Valentine died in 1983-4; they lived in their Stevens St. home since 1931.

THE DEPRESSION YEARS Her husband lost his job during this depression also, and they lost the house on 53rd and M. They lived in a little house for \$10 a month - Uncle John's property, and then a house on Proctor for one year before buying the house on Stevens St. By this time Valentine was employed. But before this, the entire family (Valentine, Magdalena, Walter, and her sister Sigurda) spent the summer at the berry fields in Kent - owned by Martin Sirtune (from Norway) along with Ben and Elisabeth Sirtune. It actually was a pretty nice summer, living in a barn and working in the berry fields; it pulled them through the worst time.

COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES She's been active in PTA, Cub Scouts, and church. She was a Sunday school teacher for many years and president of the women's group at Emmanuel Lutheran Church. Walter was baptized at Zion (on Thompson Ave.) but confirmed at Emmanuel by Milton Nesvig. The other two boys were baptized and confirmed at Emmanuel. She also belongs to Daughters of Norway.

RETURN TRIP TO NORWAY She and Kim visited in 1956 with her mother who died in 1970. They flew from Tacoma to New York and took a boat from NY to Kristiansand to Copenhagen to Oslo, then a little plane to Bergen. Bergen is built up more now. People seemed to 'know everything and be pretty sure of themselves'. (She has also visited with her sister Marget and her daughter.) When Magdalena lived in Norway, she read avidly and was always interested in the latest author. But now she thinks the people aren't interested in that.

NORWEGIAN HERITAGE Walter spoke Norwegian until he was six and started school. The teacher sent a slip home requesting that they speak English with Walter at home. She felt so bad that he was having trouble because of the language. The kids know a few phrases now.

FOOD Valentine was a good fisherman, so they had lots of fresh fish. Nobody liked lutefisk. She baked Christmas cookies and lefse.

Snakker litt norsk. Magdalena talks about her visit to Norway in 1956: De kunne ikke forstå at Amerika var hennes land n - 'Jeg liker Amerika best.'

POSTSCRIPT Sigurda Aamot passed away on August 22, 1982. She was Magdalena's sister and began the Leikarring at the Daughters of Norway in 1976. The first dance was held at Bicentennial Hall. [Sigurda's interview is T78.]