

ANTON MARCELIUS ISAKSEN: Born February 15, 1901 in Bøgard, Norway. Bøgard is on Andøya north of the Arctic Circle.

PARENTS: Isak Nikolai Andreassen and Agnethe Hansen. They were both from Boegard.

BROTHERS AND SISTERS: Nine children. Seven lived to be adults, Aksel, Rolf, Ingvald, Agnes, Nanny, Haldis. The three sisters are still living.

FATHER'S OCCUPATION: He was a fisherman. A strong man, but not cut out for fishing. He got seasick. He quit fishing when 32 years old. He was a salesman for a machinery company in Oslo, Norway. He had a piece of land in Boegard. Had his own cows, milk, and butter.

Anton's family had quite a lot of land. His grandfather was one of the early settlers there. Anton describes the property. Describes how land was divided among the sons in each family. Anton's grandfather's property was not divided as soon as other families' property was. Anton's father had only one sister. His other brothers and sisters died of scarlet fever.

When Anton started fishing, he gave the money he earned to his parents. Families worked together in those days in order to get along.

Anton's father got work in the community. He was a good speaker and respected for the community. He was like a county commissioner. He did this until the Germans invaded. The Norwegian word for his position was 'ordfoerer.' He was a prominent man in the community.

GRANDPARENTS: Paternal (see also I-196) they lived with their paternal grandfather until 1917 when they built their own house. This house is still standing. Andreas Andreassen and Anna Sirene. Anna died when Anton was 9 years old. His grandfather was still living when Anton came back to Norway in 1923. He died when 91 years old. Maternal grandparents lived in Boegard. Grandfather was a real fisherman. Anton describes what fishing was like. Tells about a terrible storm in 1892. Many fisherman died. Anton's grandfather could predict the weather. Tells about fishing with his grandfather.

FISHING: Had to take the boat through a narrow channel. Usually had to row. Channel too narrow to sail. His grandfather knew the good places for fishing. Anton's grandfather had a sailboat with two sails. Anton started fishing when 9 years old.

Anton's home looked out on the open sea. The island was fairly large.

After being confirmed Anton became a professional fisherman. He was 14 then. Boys usually got jobs after getting confirmed. Anton got a job on a boat with a motor. Not all fishermen had motors in their boats yet. Anton cooked on the boat. He also had to bait the lines. The days were short during the winter. Exciting in January when the sun came out for the first time. Anton would have to get bait when they stopped in fishing villages. They'd cut herring into 2 or 3 pieces when they were fishing for cod. Anton worked on this boat for two years.

When Anton was 16, he got a job on a big herring steamer. He was a fisherman. Eight people on the boat.

REASONS FOR EMIGRATION: He had relatives in America. His paternal grandfather's brother had immigrated to the U.S. Fought in the Civil War. His mother's sister was also in America. She and her husband came back to Norway in 1918. He'd heard a lot about America. One the 17th of May when Anton was 12 or 13, he carried both an American and a Norwegian flag in the parade. A relative who'd come back from America gave him the American flag.

Anton was 20 years old when he came to America. He fished in southern Norway in Haugesund the last two years he was in Norway. In 1921, his steamer brought the first herring into Haugesund. They made a little money on the catch but it turned out to be the only money they made. Anton felt he had no future where he was. He wrote to his ant and uncle in America the day before they went home to Boegard. This was just before Easter. He made arrangements to leave when he got to Boegard.

Anton's parents didn't want him to leave. His father wanted him to go to seminary or to teacher's college. Anton didn't feel this type of work suited him.

Anton kept fishing until one day when his older brother came to the Tromsø area where their boat was anchored. His papers had come so he could leave for America. His brother took his place on the boat and Anton took another boat down to Harstad. He stayed at his home for only a few days. He left for America on the Stavangerfjord on February 3, 1923. He left from Bergen.

Anton had an aunt in Tacoma, Washington, so he knew where he was going in the U.S. He didn't know much about Tacoma. Anton's father brother had done a little sailing. He had a lot of papers in English. Anton looked at these but didn't learn much from them. He only knew the words for accelerate, yes, no, and mush. When he was on the boat, he met a family who'd been to America. They were eating mush for dinner. They told him that in America they ate mush for breakfast.

BOAT TRIP: Had never been on such a big boat. Fair weather across the North Sea. Ran into stormy weather on the Atlantic.

ELLIS ISLAND: He was with a friend from school, a girl who was confirmed with Anton's brother and a little girl and her uncle. They arrived in New York on February 13.

He describes the Stavangerfjord. Lots of good food. People from many countries on the boat. Entertainment in the evenings on the boat.

ELLIS ISLAND: People from every country. Many steamers. He describes going through Ellis Island. Ellis Island was a good system for screening people. We should still use it today. (See also II-187)

As one approached the immigrant train, there was a place where one could buy a food package that contained cheese, butter, and bread.

TRAIN TRIP: Each immigrant had to have \$50 in order to be admitted into the U.S. In this way, one wouldn't be an immediate burden to the community. Tells about when he got to Chicago and had ham and eggs for the first time. Describes the scenery between New York and Chicago during that winter. Noticed that some of the farming machinery was similar to what they had in Norway. Was surprised that Americans left their machinery out in the open during that winter.

DECIDING WHAT TO BRING: Was told not to bring clothes, except what he needed to work in.

Anton had a cousin who'd been in the U.S. for three years. He got Anton a job. He could have started working two days after arriving in Tacoma. It took six days to get from New York to Tacoma, Washington.

ARRIVAL IN TACOMA, WASHINGTON: He arrived at Union Station. His aunt couldn't meet him because she was tied down with her kids. He met a Norwegian man who knew his aunt and uncle. He took Anton to the place he was to go to.

FIRST IMPRESSION OF TACOMA, WASHINGTON: He'd heard that everything was big in America and it was. People were so friendly.

Worked in a fishing camp on Whidbey Island. They used fish traps to catch salmon. This is no longer legal. They'd swim in Cranberry Lake. One of his partners was from northern Norway. It was nice to work with someone he could converse with easily. He describes the process of catching salmon in a fish trap. This was his first job.

LANGUAGE DIFFICULTIES: He met many people who spoke half Norwegian and half English. This made learning English more difficult. Many words were similar, but he had to learn to pronounce them in English. He had to learn to laugh at his mistakes. He met a French farmer. Learned a lot of English from him. Learned a lot when he was with people who couldn't speak Norwegian.

HALIBUT FISHING: Got a job through his uncle a year and half later. Could have started a year before but didn't want to. He always got seasick on the ocean. While salmon fishing, he made \$85 dollars a month. He saved \$300 so

he could pay back his cousin who'd paid for his trip to America.

Worked in a sawmill and in a logging camp before he started halibut fishing. He'd worked on Whidbey Island for two or three months. He stayed at the sawmill in Everett, Washington for only a month. The boss couldn't get along with his employees. Poor working conditions. Describes some accidents that occurred at the sawmill. He earned \$4.00 a day at the sawmill.

LOGGING CAMP: He earned \$6.50 a day. They had to build a railway up an incline. He describes this in detail. 450 people in the camp. A lot of good food at the camp. It was near Bellingham. His cousin got him the job. Worked for Bodell and Donovan.

Logging camp was owned by the Bodell brothers. Anton sat next to one of the Bodell's at dinner once. He didn't realize whom he was sitting by. Somebody told him. Bodell had a lot of money. Anton didn't feel the class difference that he would have had he met a wealthy man in Norway.

Anton observed people in town, at the train station, at the bus station, *etc.* He was impressed with what he saw. A Christmas magazine in Harstad (Harstad Tiden) asked him to write an article about work he was doing, how it was to find work, and to make a living. He wrote about his impression of how nice and wonderful people were in the U.S. This was during his first few years here.

He worked in the Bodell and Donovan's mill in Bellingham, Washington. Anton didn't bring a lunch on his first day. The boss told him to leave ten minutes early for lunch. He was going to the closet restaurant. He met the other owner, Donovan, as he left. He was very nice.

FISHING HALIBUT: Anton's uncle had built a schooner that was 75' long. Anton started fishing with him. His uncle carried five dories on his boat. Anton was to be on one of these dories. Two men to each dory. Anton explains what a dory is. An open boat, about 18' long. He describes how their fishing process operated. The men in each dory would bait and set the lines. There were 3,200 hooks for each dory per day. He did this kind of fishing from 1924-1929. They fished off the Canadian coast. They would usually fish for two weeks at a time. Then they'd try to sell their catch.

Anton started fishing halibut during the time the big steamers with twelve dories were fishing. There had not been any conservation rules. The grounds were fished out. They put in the fishing season the same year Anton started fishing. The fishermen had December, January, and February off. Finally, dory fishing was outlawed.

FISHING 1924: Fishing in the U.S. wasn't much different than in Norway. The way they tried the thin line to the ground line was different. More efficient method in the U.S.

SEASICKNESS: He was in the fishing business. Had to make the best of it. The different dories would compete with one another.

DORIES OUTLAWED: No problem because then they became 'long liners.' He describes how they fished from the big boat. They no longer competed within their own crew. Teamwork and friendliness. Describes how they cleaned the fish. Put ice in the belly of the fish after it was cleaned. Put ice in the pen where they stored the fish. Five pens and four slaughterhouses on the boat. Good trip if all the pens were full.

The sea is unpredictable. In the old days, mountain peaks seen in clear weather marked good fishing spots.

By the 1950s sight was no longer used for marking good fishing spots. They used loran (long-range navigation). The lorans were second hand. They'd been used for bombing Germany and Italy in WWII. In the 'dory days' they depended on sight and the compass. He describes how the loran was used. It was different from radar. He tells about the first time he used loran. He was off the coast of Vancouver Island. Took a chance on going through a narrow passage to a harbor. They made it in. The loran cost \$250. Many changes in fishing technology.

Anton's boat is called the 'Dauntless.' It's 91' long. He has been captain on many boats. If they didn't fish in seasons, they fished in quotas. It could be 2,000 pounds per man. Eight men per boat. As an captain, he could go out on one boat, wait ten days after they'd come back, and go out on another boat. He could make more money that way. It was worth working hard. He made more money than he could have in a lumberyard or logging camp.

NORWEGIAN ORGANIZATIONS: Didn't have time to join. Family comes first.

MARRIAGE AND FAMILY: Promised that as soon as they had paid for their first house he'd quit fishing. He had already bought a house before he got married. He got married in 1928 to Olive Margrethe Torgersen. She was also born in Norway. They met in Tacoma. She was a waitress in a logging camp near Tacoma. Her brother worked in that logging camp. Anton and Olive lived in his house when first married. He bought the house so that his brother Rolf (who he had sponsored) and his family would have a place to stay. Rolf had to find another place when Anton got married.

CHILDREN: Four girls, one son died at birth, one son died when 10 years old. They moved to Seattle. Son fell out of tree. Fatal head injury.

Son died in September. Anton didn't work for one and a half months. Told his employees that they should find other work. If they couldn't find anything by the time he was feeling better he'd take the boat out again. They went up to the Stikine River. Fished off of the river for flounder. In one day, they'd caught 100,000 pounds of flounder. Brought their catch to Bellingham, Washington. Called his wife. Said he was going to fish in a place he hadn't been before. Fished for flounder during the night. He didn't know the tides there very well. Got stuck in some rocks when the tide went out. First time he lost a boat. Called the Coast Guard. Their boat hit a log. Had to be towed to Ketchikan, Alaska. Another boat from Petersburg, Alaska came but not in time. There was a lot of weight in the boat - ice and fish. They tried to keep the boat level. It finally 'crashed like timber in the woods.' Anton and his crew were in the lifeboats. They were rescued by the Coast Guard.

Decided that he shouldn't fish anymore. Got a job at a plywood plant in Tacoma, Washington. Started working there after New Years.

Started fishing again when a friend got a new boat. The owner wasn't familiar with this new way of fishing. They fished out of Prince Rupert for about three days. Anton got appendicitis while on the boat. Had to spend four or five days in the hospital in Prince Rupert. Was operated on in Ballard, Washington. He stayed from fishing for about a year.

Started running herring boats for other people.

Anton is 79 years old (1982). He still hasn't retired. He has a 30' boat. Fishermen have been hit hard by Judge Bolt's decision. He had had his 30' boat for ten years. He has been fishing for seventy years. In 1941, he became part owner of a boat (Nordic Pride) for the first time.

TRIPS BACK TO NORWAY: Three trips. The whole family went back in 1946. They sailed from New York. They took their new car with them to Norway. They traveled by train and bus to Pontiac, Michigan to pick up the car. They brought the first brand new car into Norway that year. The car was a Pontiac. King Olav's wife bought the same model two months later. They went across the Atlantic on the Stavangerfjord.

CHANGES IN NORWAY: This was just after the war. 'It was tough to look at; especially northern Norway.' The people's spirit was there. They were so helpful. People were down to earth, just as they were before he left. People were humbled by the German occupation. Had lost self-esteem. They were picking up. A Norwegian man who was talking to Anton said that he was worried that America would start ruling Norway because Norway was getting money from them through the Marshall Plan. Anton explained that the money was a gift from the U.S. Many didn't believe that the U.S. suffered during WWII. Many suffered, Pearl Harbor, broken homes. The U.S. should have given loans instead of gifts. It's not good to help too much. One Norwegian said to Anton 'Go back and tell them to send more. We're sitting back and receiving it. We know we don't have to pay it back.'

He also visited Norway in 1954 and 1970. His mother was dying of cancer. He got another man to run then boat for him.

He has two younger sisters in Norway. The youngest is 62 years old. His other sister came to visit in the fall of 1981.