

Aleph Sigriour Thorwaldson Johannsson Born on November 9, 1882 in the Dakota Territory. Born near Pembina, which was established as a military post during the Creole Rebellion.

PARENTS Thorun Jornsottir and Stigur Thorwaldson. Both born in Iceland. Stigur came to America with his mother, five brothers, and three sisters. His father died of stomach cancer after he went to Copenhagen, Denmark for treatment. They came to America after his death. Aleph's parents were well acquainted before they left Iceland. They had plans to get married after leaving Iceland. Her mother's family came with them as well.

Her mother's father, Bjorn Peterson wanted to leave Iceland and find something to do. There wasn't anything for them here.

GRANDPARENTS Paternal - Thorvaldur Stigsson and Vilborg Jonsdottir. Thorvaldur was the oldest of six brothers. He had four older sisters. Vilborg lived in her parent's old home in Keldaskoar. (This is the name of the farm in Iceland.) Maternal - Bjorn Peterson

PARENTS' TRIP FROM ICELAND TO AMERICA 1876-9 Petersons on boat. Aleph's mother ended up coming before her father. Thorun was ready for marriage when Stigur came in 1881. She had worked and learned the language by then. Stigur's mother wanted to stay in Iceland and take care of the farm. Stigur had a man who could help her on the farm, but after he was ready to go, she backed out and wouldn't let. She decided that if he was going, they were all going. They had to get rid of the farm and animals before they left and that took time.

SETTLING IN AMERICA When they came to America, Aleph's mother had staked a claim on a homestead on the Red River, Dakota Territory. Not satisfied with the farm. It flooded every year. She found a young fellow who wanted a good fishing place. Fishing was marvelous on the Red River. They exchanged farm lots. Aleph's parents got married and settled in the Pembina Mountains, North Dakota. Her father wanted a wheat farm. An Irishman had jumped their claim and didn't want to give it up. He'd built a house there. He paid them. They settled in the Tongue River Valley and had a nice home and farm there in North Dakota.

BROTHERS AND SISTERS 10 children in the family. Oldest brother, Thorwald stayed on the farm. Bjorn had an automobile agency in Cavalier, North Dakota. Pauline became Mrs. Shaeld (sp?). Wilmar died as a small boy. The next sister was Gwen Hjalmarson born in 1890. Ole was the youngest brother. There was another brother named Wilmar. He was a policeman and died in California. Her youngest sister was Jennie Elizabeth.

SCHOOL She attended school and then Grenwold Academy, which was affiliated with the Lutheran Church. Aleph and one brother attended this academy for one season. It was a good addition to their general education. They had some business courses. Aleph attended a dressmaking school in Pembina County, North Dakota.

WORK She was a seamstress. Always worked at home because her mother was not healthy. Her mother had just lost her youngest child.

**MEETING SPOUSE** Her husband came from Iceland in 1886. His father settled a claim in the area. Her husband, Bjarni Johannsson, had two brothers who also came. Bjarni became a schoolteacher and taught at Aleph's school. They usually had school in the winter. He didn't get paid well as a teacher so he decided to attend the University of Washington. He became a pharmacist. Aleph met him while he was teaching. He was writing to her after he went to Seattle. Aleph didn't really want to correspond with him - she wasn't interested in a serious relationship.

She wanted to become a nurse. Bjarni talked her out of going to school to become a nurse. He didn't want to wait for 4 years. After he graduated, he visited her in North Dakota. He proposed so she had to decide between getting married and becoming a nurse. Her father didn't want her to become a nurse. Bjarni waited for a year and then they got married.

**THEIR WEDDING** Very nice. It was in the summer when Bjarni had his vacation. He had only one week off. Two of Aleph's friends came. They made the wedding dress and the other dresses. One was a good cook and made the dinner for the wedding.

**THE TRIP TO SEATTLE** They took the train. Automobiles weren't in use yet. When they got to Seattle; Bjarni wanted to let his boss, Mr. Preston,

know he was back. They met 3 men at Mr. Preston's door. Bjarni was acquainted with them and greeted them. The boss was mad that Bjarni had talked with his customers on such familiar terms and Bjarni lost his job. Bjarni hadn't even had a chance to introduce his wife. Bjarni got a job at another drug store in Ballard. This store was owned by a Norwegian man, H. Hourn. He wanted someone who could run the store because he wanted to start a chicken farm in Sumner. The name of the store was Cascade Drug Company. Eventually, Bjarni bought the store. He owned it until 1946. The other store was Preston's Pharmacy. Preston sold out to a larger company because he was losing his trade.

**HOUSING** Mr. Preston allowed them to live on the 2nd floor of his drug store until they could find new lodgings. Then they rented a house on 62nd Street and lived there quite a while. In 1912, they bought the house that Aleph now lives in.

**CHILDREN** Lincoln worked for Washington State Employment Service. Sigrid got married to Don Hastings. He was a teamster. They have two boys, Phillip and Neil. Phillip is a manager for Shasta. Neil works for Texaco. Thorun married Eugene Robel. He is an electrician. Wilma married Cleo Vadnaia (sp?). He worked for Pioneer Sand and Gravel. They have a boy, James, and a girl, Janis. James is a treefarm manager in Pysht, Washington. Janis is married to Gordon Prutt (sp?) and lives in Port Angeles, Washington. He drives a log truck. Alice, the youngest daughter, became ill while in school. Heart trouble. They didn't know she had diabetes. She died in a coma in 1937.

**CHURCH** Helped prepare dinners. Was in the choir. Also sang in the Ballard High Choir. They had concerts at high school and got instruction from the teacher, Harriet Charlton. All of Aleph's children were confirmed in the Lutheran Church.

ICELANDIC CLUBS These organizations were mostly for men. She did sing in the Icelandic choir.

COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES Helped organize the Anning Society. This is a charity society originally for the women in the church. Since not all women belonged to the church, they decided not to bind it to the church. They helped sick people and people with financial troubles. She tells about an old couple who had moved to the west part of Ballard from Alberta. They had nothing to live on. They lived in a tent. They helped these people. The Anning Society is still active.

TRIPS BACK TO NORTH DAKOTA She and her husband went back while her sister was still there. Her parents moved to California because of her mother's rheumatism. Her father had a brother, Horris, in Fresno, California. In 1919, Aleph, Bjarni, and the five kids all went back to North Dakota. Aleph's parents and brothers and sisters were still there. They stayed there for a month. Traveled by train. She tells about the trip back. They could only get seats in the tourist section of the train.

He went to Canada to see his brother and then went back to Seattle. His brother was a storekeeper in Saskatchewan at that time. His youngest brother had died of tuberculosis. Their mother had died in Iceland.

GOLDEN WEDDING ANNIVERSARY 1956 - They had a big party at the Calvary Lutheran Church. It was an open-house. Some of her brothers and sisters came. Ole and Dilla came and Gwen and Jessie came. Her husband died in 1970. He was born in Framnese, Iceland.

MEETING THE PRESIDENT OF ICELAND Vigdis Finnbogadottur. They had a nice visit. Aleph spoke Icelandic to her. Vigdis said she spoke Icelandic as if she were born in Iceland. Aleph received a telegram from the president wishing her well for her 100th birthday.

ICELANDIC FOOD Aleph sometimes fixed sausages made of liver. She also liked blood sausage. She also made a type of Icelandic doughnut called kojna (kleinur?). She made wienerkeppa (vieterta?), a cake with many layers. She also makes rullpoelser, a kind of sausage. She speaks a little Icelandic.