

DP-18/ANGELL

DP-18

OLAF ANGELL

BIRTHDATE: MARCH 25, 1907

INTERVIEW DATE: APRIL 12, 1989

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INTERVIEWER: NANCY DALLETT

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NORWAY, 1927

AGE 20

PASSAGE ON "THE BERGENSFJORD"

DALLETT: This is interview number [DP-18] for the Ellis Island Oral History Project. My name is Nancy Dallett, and I'm here with Mr. Olaf Angell at his home in the community of Ballard in Seattle, Washington. And today is Wednesday, April 12, 1989, and we about to begin this interview at 12:45. Mr. Ballard came from Norway.

ANGELL: Angell. Mr. Angell.

DALLETT: Angell. I did that again, I'm sorry, calling you Angell.

ANGELL: You said Ballard. Mr. Ballard.

DALLETT: Oh, I said Ballard.

ANGELL: Mr. Ballard.

DALLETT: Excuse me. (they laugh) You came from Norway in,
what year was that?

ANGELL: 1927.

DALLETT: 1927.

ANGELL: July.

DALLETT: Through Ellis Island. And, again, it's the beginning
of interview number [DP-18]. Let's start back at the
beginning of your story. Could you tell me where and
when you were born.

ANGELL: I was born March 25, 1907.

DALLETT: Where was that?

ANGELL: In Norway.

DALLETT: Which part of Norway.

ANGELL: Tromso, T-R-O-M-S-O. With a dot over it, yeah. (he laughs) That's what they call an "ur." (he laughs).

DALLETT: And where is that, in Norway.

ANGELL: It's in the northern part of Norway.

DALLETT: And can you tell me a bit about your childhood in Tromso.

ANGELL: What was that?

DALLETT: Your childhood.

ANGELL: Oh, I went to school for seven years, you know. And, uh, after that I worked in a store up in the northern part of Norway for four years till I came over here.

DALLETT: What kind of store was it that you worked in?

ANGELL: Oh, a general food store. They bought fish and sold groceries. And so I worked there from when I was sixteen till I was twenty-four years up there. That's a good place to be from. (he laughs)

DALLETT: Tell me about the area a bit.

ANGELL: Ah, it's barren land, in wintertime a lot of snow blowing. Blows all the time. Something like Alaska, you know. And, uh, well, there was nothing to do, no recreation or anything. There was just, uh, I'd go to work in the morning and go back and have supper and go to bed at night. That's all you could do. (he laughs) No dancing or nothing there. There was just a little place on the island.

DALLETT: Was it a fishing community?

ANGELL: Yeah. So there was nothing but work there. I'm on here now? So then they, I had a brother over here. I had a brother that was captain on the United Fruit out of New York. And, uh, he lived on Staten Island. So he, he wrote to me and told me that I should try to get over here because there wasn't a future over there, you know. So I came over here in '27, July, and...

DALLETT: When had your brother come to this country?

ANGELL: Well, he sailed, he was sailing on the coast there, on the east coast. And, uh, I think a sailor, you had to sail three years and then you could, then you can get your citizenship. Now they have to be five, in them days, I think, tell us only three. And I had one brother over here on this coast and after I came over here, say about ten years later, then I had, my youngest brother came over here, too. And, uh, well, they were on the, come over on the ship they called the Bergensfjord. And, uh, most of the passengers didn't go through Ellis Island then. But we were about, oh, I think we were about a dozen people that had some defects, so they put us on the tug and took us over to the island. And the reason I had to go over there because I had flat feet. (he laughs) Of all things. So we came over there in the afternoon and I was amazed to see all the immigrants. There were Italians and people that didn't speak our language, you know. And, uh, like I said, it was hot and all the immigrants, and they'd carry food with them, you know, bread and stuff. And all the pigeons was coming in and out and eating all the crumbs on the floor, you know.

DALLETT: Actually they're flying into the building?

ANGELL: Yeah. They had all the windows open, you know. There was a big kind of a big room there where everybody was sitting around killing time, I guess. And in the evening they, I stayed there over night. They fed us spaghetti for dinner. I'll never forget that. That's the first meal of spaghetti I ever had.

DALLETT: What did you think of it?

ANGELL: Well, I liked it. It was kind of a frank, Italian, with Italian sauce on it, and that was pretty good. So we stayed over there till the next morning. And then my sister-in-law, my oldest brother's wife came over there and picked me up. And I stayed with them for a couple, three days. And, uh, they put me on a train and I came out here.

DALLETT: So when you came you had two brothers. You had one on the east coast and one on the west coast.

ANGELL: Yes.

DALLETT: How about your parents?

ANGELL: My parents was back home. My dad was dead, but my mother was still alive.

DALLETT: So she had sent one by one her, her boys had left.

ANGELL: In the old country when you're, they had so many kids they didn't know what to do with them anyway. So soon as they grew up and got out of school, you know. They had to get them a job, throwing them out. Like with me, they packed my suitcase and they told me to go up there because they had a job for me.

DALLETT: That's when you were sixteen.

ANGELL: Yeah. They didn't ask you if you wanted to go. They told you to go to work. And that's the reason I went up there.

DALLETT: So they arranged that job for you, to go, to go to work where you went for four years.

ANGELL: Yeah.

DALLETT: Had they arranged things for your other brothers before they...

ANGELL: No, my oldest brother, he went to school in Oslo, a seaman. He went to sea, and he stopped at Oslo and went to school there so he could get his ticket. He was captain on the banana boat over here for many, many years till he retired. And the other brother was here, he had drowned out there. He was on a fishing boat and the boat tipped over and he drowned. so that was the end of him. And then they got, my youngest brother was over here, too, fishing and he passed away about seven, eight years ago. So he got three daughters up in Snohomish, so I go up there quite often.

DALLETT: No sisters, then.

ANGELL: I have, we were six sisters and six boys, twelve of us in the family. (he laughs) So you're wondering why they sent us out of the house. (he laughs) The house probably wasn't big enough.

DALLETT: Do you remember the house where you were born?

ANGELL: Oh, yeah. We've been back a couple times, the wife and I, to see the house.

DALLETT: What was it like?

ANGELL: It looked pretty small. It looked big when we were kids, but you could, when you go back now it didn't look so big. So we had pretty hard winters back there. There was a lot of snow, and going to school, you know, we, they just dress you up in the morning and throw you out the door and you have to find your way to school, blowing and snowing and everything else. So we got by. We're still alive, I guess.

DALLETT: You walked to school?

ANGELL: Oh, yeah. There's no transportation them days.

DALLETT: Could you ski?

ANGELL: Oh, yeah, I skied a lot.

DALLETT: To school?

ANGELL: I skied to school when the weather was good and a lot of snow, then we skied. We had about a mile to go to school, a little bigger. So we grew up anyway as bad

as it was. Funny when you don't know any more, when you don't know any better, then everything is okay, isn't it? When you get used to too much good living, TV's and two cars and everything, then you couldn't go back there. So, that's the trouble today. The people want too much, you know. They want to have everything, and that doesn't always work out so good. You've got to have the money if you're going to buy everything.

DALLETT: At what age were you when your father died?

ANGELL: He died, I was about twenty. He died the year before I came over here. He died in '26, and I came over here in '27.

DALLETT: And what kind of work did he do?

ANGELL: He was a, he had a codfish schooner. He used to sail and buy codfish from the fisherman, and they took them home and they'd dry them on the rocks in the sun, you see. And then they'd sell them that way. Dried cod, salted codfish.

DALLETT: Did you help him in that work?

ANGELL: Oh, yeah. The kids, the kids was the only one that done the work on the, drying the fish. My grandfather was the boss and he hired all the kids. You know, they was out of school in the summertime. So they laid the fish out in the morning in the sun and then we'd pile them up in the evening and cover them up. So that was all kids doing that.

DALLETT: All the young boys, or young girls, too.

ANGELL: Oh, both. That was a lot of work for kids.

DALLETT: Then what happened to the fish after it was dried?

ANGELL: Well, then they'd sail to the southern part of Norway and sold it, and most of that fish used to got to Spain. They used to make bacalao. You know bacalao? Well, in Spain they eat a lot of salt codfish. They used to come over here on the east coast and fish, fresh codfish. So that's their, one of their mainstays in Spain is fish. So that's, I came over here and I worked odd jobs, and I started fishing. Of course, in 1927, 1929, you know, that's the time I started fishing, and that was during the Depression.

It was pretty hard to get any work at all. So I got a job fishing, and I stuck with it ever since.

DALLETT: Now, what were you doing before the Depression?

ANGELL: Well, in 1927, 1928 I went to Alaska for a salmon cannery, and I worked there for three and four months. Came back here in the wintertime, wasn't nothing to do, we had to just, trying to find something to, enough of the work so you could keep alive, you know. And after the Depression, well, then there was not question of getting a job. And then, you're a newcomer, you haven't got no trade, so, can't even talk the decent language. So you were pretty much handicapped, you know. So I, we fished ten days, we fished nine months out of the year, so it wasn't too bad. Didn't make any money. We fished nine months, I made six hundred fifty dollars. Now they make it in one day. (he laughs) So, I've seen the good times, and I've seen the bad times, too. And that was no fun. There was no welfare in them days. If you couldn't find enough to eat, that's just too bad, that's all. Now they, nobody could starve to death in this country, though.

DALLETT: So this was salmon fishing that...

ANGELL: I fished halibut here first. And then after I got, I bought my own boat in 1946 and I would fish, bottom fish, and I used to do a lot of, go to Alaska and do a lot of tendering for canneries. You buy, go out and pick up salmon from the fishermen and buy salmon and take it back into the cannery. They used to do that for about two months every summer. Chartered a boat out. And I kept that up till I retired.

DALLETT: Tell me about that again. You would, for two months you would charter a boat in Alaska and go...

ANGELL: For picking up salmon, buying salmon for the cannery. And then you picked it...

DALLETT: You'd buy it from the Alaskan fishermen.

ANGELL: Yeah. A lot of small boats all over and you'd have to run around, pick up the fish, and then probably carry it in, twelve hours, sometimes twenty-four hours. And then I came back and I started to fish bottom fish again the rest of the time. So I kept pretty busy the whole year.

DALLETT: Take me back to that period when you first, when you first came to this country. You came through in July of 1927. So you had a brother, as you said, on the west coast, and one on the east coast then. Did you think about, how did you decide that you were going to go west instead of east?

ANGELL: I had that arranged before I came over here. See, my brother was here and I had an uncle here that was fishing. Had a halibut boat. So that's one reason why I came out here, more or less.

DALLETT: Your uncle was here in Seattle?

ANGELL: Yeah, he was here. He had a big family. I came to them when I came over here.

DALLETT: WAS it your father's brother or your mother's brother?

ANGELL: My father. So I, uh, rode the train all by myself, you know. Couldn't talk English. Three days. Well, there was, as long as you know you're on the right track it's all right, but that's the only thing you have to watch out for that when you change the train.

We had to change the train in Chicago, see. And then you have to go from one station to the other because you don't leave from the same station as you arrived.

So I had to be sure that I got on the right train coming out.

DALLETT: How did you manage that?

ANGELL: Well, I finally got on the bus that took us from one station to the other, and I had to wait for about five hours for the next train to come out here. So I was sitting in the station there, you know, on the bench.

Pretty soon people started looking because they wondered what the heck that stupid kid was sitting over there. Everybody come over and started talking.

I couldn't understand it. So finally one guy came and he, he got it out of me that I said Norwegian. I said, "Norske," and he understood it. So he went and got hold of a Dane, and he came over and talked to me, took me to the restaurant and got something to eat, and then he put me on the train that evening. So I got here all right. Then I had, nephew of mine came, not a nephew, but a cousin of mine came down and met me at the depot.

DALLETT: How about when you were at Ellis Island? How did you communicate when you...

ANGELL: Well, there were, I think we must have been twelve guys together, Norwegians, so we talked between ourselves, you know. They told us when to go and eat, and they told you when to go to bed.

DALLETT: So you didn't expect to have to come through Ellis Island, then. You thought you...

ANGELL: No, they didn't, then they had quit that already. But there was only people that had some minor thing wrong with them, like me, I had flat feet. They sent you over there for that.

DALLETT: You already had papers. Had your uncle helped you to prepare your papers to be able to come through?

ANGELL: No, I had, you had to arrange that in Norway. And, uh, you had to, I went to a doctor, an American doctor in Oslo, so there was no reason for me to go, in the old days, you don't, they used to examine them on Ellis Island and if there was anybody sick they'd send them back home. So why send them over here and

examine them, so they started with that in the old country. And, uh, I was fine. The only thing, they looked at me the next day when I walked across the floor in the doctor's office and told my sister-in-law to pick me up, don't let him walk too much.

DALLETT: So were you nervous when you were detained with the other...

ANGELL: No. The only thing, you know, you're in a strange city among a whole bunch of strange people, you know, all kinds of immigrants that didn't talk your language. So we kind of stuck together because we didn't know what kind of guys those people were. So when we went to bed we always tried to sit, keep together, you know. There must have been quite a few people, a couple of hundred people, I think. So...

DALLETT: Anything else you remember about the Great Hall where you were where the pigeons were flying through?

ANGELL: Oh, there's a lot of benches, people laying around, and a lot of people walking around, milling around, you know, waiting to be examined or something, I suppose. Se we, uh, I got a kick out of that because

we never had pigeons in the old country, you know. And the were just flying in and out all over picking and eating right off the floor.

DALLETT: Could you see the Statue of Liberty when you came in?

ANGELL: Oh, yeah. We were up, the ship came in early in the morning, so everybody was up, and looked at the Statue of Liberty. They could see the lights, in the evening before we came in we could see the lights of the city, way, way out to sea. And everybody was up looking at the big city, you know. So I've seen both sides of life, I guess, the hard way and the good way. And I made it so far. I'm eighty-two years old, so I hope I can make it the rest of the way.

DALLETT: What about your sisters? Did they come through?

ANGELL: I had a sister in, I had a sister then that lived I Brooklyn, but I didn't stay there long enough to visit her because she lived in Brooklyn and my brother lives in Staten Island. So, my sister is still here. She came over to Brooklyn before I did. I don't know whether she came through Ellis Island or not. I never did ask her. So I got only three sisters left now,

and now I'm the only boy left of us twelve, six.

DALLETT: And of your twelve, and of your twelve brothers and sisters, or eleven brothers and sisters, how many stayed in Norway and how many came to this country?

ANGELL: Well, all the boys came over here. And the boys that was alive came over here. My, we were one, two, four of us over here, I think. And then we lost one that died in 1918. So we were here. We, out of six, one, two, three came over here. And none of, I have to think what happened to the rest of them. I know one passed away. We were six and six, half a dozen of each. In the old country, you used to (?) if you didn't have twelve kids.

DALLETT: Did your father have any plans to come over?

ANGELL: No. He had his own business over there, so he was all set.

DALLETT: And none of the sons stayed to work with him in his business.

ANGELL: Well, my oldest brother worked with him for a couple

of hers but, you know, you could see that you couldn't get anywhere there, it's just a little place, and the business wasn't that good anyway. He had his own boat. In the sailing days, he used to sail around and follow the fishing fleet and then buy their codfish and salt it, salted it in the ship, and then they sailed home and took it out and dried in on the rocks.

So he left, all them kids, you had to get away from home, because it's too many kinds and no work there for. So you just have to get out and find work to help yourselves, you know. I had, we were four boys over here. That's right. They had one of the boys over in Brooklyn. He passed away. So we were four over here. Five came, and three, I can't figure out what come of the sixth one. (he laughs) I've got to think about that.

DALLETT: And your name, when you came to this country, was what?

ANGELL: The same as I had now.

DALLETT: It was the same.

ANGELL: Yeah.

DALLETT: I thought you mentioned before that it was different.

ANGELL: No we had the same name all the time.

DALLETT: Okay. Let's talk a little bit about that period when you came and you joined your uncle in Seattle. Was it here in Ballard, in this community?

ANGELL: No. He lived in a place outside of Tacoma called Point Fostick. And he had a wife and a bunch of kids. They had about eight in his family. So I...

DALLETT: How long had he been living in this country, do you know?

ANGELL: Well, he had been, he had gotten married, he had eight kinds, so he must have been here quite a while. So I stayed with him for, oh, it must have been a couple of months. And then I got a job in the sawmill over there. The sawmill isn't there either. It burned up.

DALLETT: What was the sawmill? Which sawmill was it?

ANGELL: It was, uh, just cut ordinary lumber, building lumber.

DALLETT: And what was your job?

ANGELL: My job was the hardest job in the sawmill, because I couldn't talk English so I couldn't squawk, you know, and I needed a job. So I just had to work like hell to keep it going. All the heavy lumber that nobody else wanted to pull, that's what I got. So I worked at it all winter long till in the Spring, my uncle happened to know all the superintendents for the cannery up in Alaska and he got me a job there, so I went up.

DALLETT: Is that generally what would happen, the young men who would come and didn't have the English language would be given the hardest jobs?

ANGELL: You had to find, sure, that's the way. I used to have a partner alongside of me, and he didn't last more than two or three days. Then he quit because too damn hard work. So they knew how to work you, three dollars and sixty cents a day. Now they get sixteen dollars an hour. (he laughs)

DALLETT: So that would have been the first job you had?

ANGELL: That's the first job. That was the first job.

DALLETT: Tell me again what you would do?

ANGELL: I worked for the sawmill. That's the first job I had.
And then I went to Alaska.

DALLETT: Uh-huh. You handled the heaviest lumber.

ANGELL: Yeah.

DALLETT: You'd move it around yourself.

ANGELL: Well, you see, when it come out of the saw, all the
lumber is sawed, you know. They'd lay the log up
there and cut it up in boards, and it comes on what
they called the green chain. The green lumber comes
out, and they marked it. All the different sizes is
marked, and you would know your number, so you'd have
to pull it off the chain and pile it up in piles, you
know. That was my job. And, uh, my partner, he never
lasted very long. So then I had to do his job,
besides mine.

DALLETT: Which was what?

ANGELL: All the lumber that came with my mark on I had to pull it off. See, when you were two, of course, there wouldn't be so much lumber for me. But when he quit, then I had to take all that lumber that was marked with my mark on. So I didn't, it lasted as long as until I got another job, of course. And then I went to Alaska, stayed there for I think four months up there. And I came down here and that was during the Depression, and I started to look for work and there was, go to the YMCA and, me and another kid, we used to go down to the YMCA and get two, three days, four, five, days, look for the job the next time, next day. So that was pretty hard. And, uh, '29, 1928, '29, '29 I started to fish halibut. And, uh, of course, then the Depression come, so that was just a matter of keeping alive, that's all. Pretty hard times.

DALLETT: How did you get by in those times?

ANGELL: Well, we were single, and sometimes we had to sleep on the boat. We didn't, couldn't make enough money to go uptown and buy a room. So it was wintertime, my brother and I and another guy, we used to go together,

and hire, rent an apartment. And then we done our own cooking, (?). And we could do that pretty cheap, you know. I think it cost us around twenty-five, thirty dollars a month apiece for the room and food. So we had, we for about three months, and then we went back fishing again in the spring.

DALLETT: Now, when you fish for halibut, what kind of boat would you be on?

ANGELL: Oh, that's a boat about seventy, eighty feet long, a schooner. A hell of a schooner.

DALLETT: How many men would work on it?

ANGELL: We were all the way from, . uh, it depended on the size of the boat, but eight, nine men, ten men. It all depends on the, if you had a smaller boat, then there were five, six, and on the bigger boat there were around ten. Two, four, six, eight, nine, yeah, nine men. Because you fished around the clock, you know. And then the shifts, you go, you work 12 hours, and then you get six hours off. And then you keep that up for eight, nine, ten days, see. Pretty well (?) by then.

DALLETT: And how did you actually do the fishing, the halibut fishing?

ANGELL: You have a line with hooks on, and you bait the hooks and set them out. And then, uh, leave it out so long, and then they go and haul it, and then take out all the fish that are there and dress it and we put it in the hole and ice it. And we only stayed out, oh eight, nine, ten days, and then we had to come home. It took us six days to come home on the other side of the gulf of Alaska. So that was a hard deal too, any kind of weather, out in the ocean all the time. You had to take everything that came along.

DALLETT: Were there mostly Norwegian men that were on these boats?

ANGELL: On the halibut, say, about eighty percent of them was Norwegians, and most of the skippers was Norwegian, and so they naturally hired greenhorns, what they'd call them. And, uh, most of those was Norwegians.

DALLETT: I'm going to just flip the tape over. That's the end of side one on interview number [DP-18].

END OF SIDE ONE

BEGINNING OF SIDE TWO

DALLETT: This is the beginning of side two of interview number [DP-18] with Mr. Olaf Angell.

ANGELL: So in 19, uh, 1946, I bought my own boat. Fished halibut and, uh, I could tell you before I used to fish bottomfish, and then I'd go to Alaska and pack salmon. I guess you had that before.

DALLETT: Uh-huh. Now, in between, this is 1929 where you said they referred to you as a greenhorn, or you were a greenhorn. How long did it take you...

ANGELL: Oh, it would take you, halibutting, it would take you a couple or three trips before you, what you call broken in so you can, that's pretty much mechanized. You have a winch to haul the gear in, and you would have to get used to that, but you keep that line coming, and keep it clear, and it takes a little time to get onto it. Then you've got to dress the fish, and you've got to bait the gear, put new bait on the gear and all. So it takes you a little time to get

used to it.

DALLETT: Was it a very different fishing style than the kind of style, the cod fishing your father had done, that you had done with him?

ANGELL: Oh, yeah. I didn't fish with my father anyway. He, uh, I spent one year with my father, as a cook. (he laughs) Of course, that's the first job you had in Norway when you went fishing. You went cooking, fourteen, fifteen, sixteen year old kids. They done the cooking because they cooked mostly codfish and potatoes. So anybody could do that. Get up in the morning and make coffee, and then everybody had their own bread and butter, so you didn't have to put everything on the table. Make the coffee, and that was it. Make peas soup for Sunday, codfish the rest of the time. So that was easy, to be a cook. So I stayed out, made one season with him before I went up to Finmark and I worked in a store up there.

DALLETT: And that kind of cod fishing was, I mean, you saw the men do the fishing, you didn't do it, but was it a very different kind of fishing than halibut?

ANGELL: Oh, yeah. That was a different story altogether because halibut, that was all fresh fish, you see, and that was iced in ice and then we'd pack it down here. And they'd send it all over the country iced, re-ice it. But then in Norway that was all salted down. So fishing here was I was looking around this morning, I was going to find my old passport and, uh, I found it, a fellow made out my income tax in 1935, and I paid, I had made sixteen hundred dollars the whole year. (he laughs) I paid eleven dollars in taxes.

DALLETT: Eleven dollars.

ANGELL: I think so, yeah.

DALLETT: And that was the period where you were doing the halibut fishing. Is that right?

ANGELL: Yeah. That's right. That's the first money that I made that much in one year, fifteen hundred dollars. I made so much money I went back to the old country to see my mother.

DALLETT: Oh, you did?

ANGELL: Yeah. 1935.

DALLETT: What was that like? How did you feel when you went back?

ANGELL: I went back for Christmas and everything was dark. The northern part of Norway is dark all day long, twenty-four hours, and snow and wind, that's all. So I don't think you would have liked it either. I was glad to get back. So it sure had changed a lot from when we were kids. Then you don't mind it because we you didn't know any better. When you don't know any better, then you're satisfied no matter where you are.

DALLETT: Did you miss the country, though?

ANGELL: No. I had nothing to miss there. Nothing but misery back there. Of course, we had practically the same thing here, you know, during the Depression. There was no easy living here either. I made six hundred fifty dollars in nine months. So, but then it started to pick up a little after that, '35, '36, and then it started to pick up a little bit.

DALLETT: So the men who came over like yourself, was that sort

of a normal pattern that they'd either go into the sawmills or the fishing.

ANGELL: Sawmill and logging, that industry, there was a lot of Swedes and a lot of immigrants went into that. Because the Swedes, they came over here and started to chop the, haul the lumber down in one day, you know. (he laughs) So there were a lot of Swedes in the logging camps, and some of us too because it was a lot of hard work and there wasn't many people that like to work hard. So I sure got a good breaking in when I first came over. But I can't kick, I got along all right the last few years. I got my own boat.

DALLETT: How did you manage to get our own boat? It was only like ten years later.

ANGELL: I started, well, I started, like from '35 and up. Then it started to pick up a little bit, so I started to save my money. And I, me and another guy, we had ten thousand together, we went to the bank and I borrowed thirty thousand dollars and I bought my own boat. You can't do that today, either.

DALLETT: And what kind of boat was it, your first boat?

ANGELL: Well, that was a dragger. We fished bottomfish with it, and we also fished halibut with it. So that was a good boat, and I had that for quite a few years. I sold it, and then I rigged up another one, ninety-eight feet long. And I, uh, I sold that, I think, in 1975, I think. I've been retired ever since.

DALLETT: And so you would put together a crew for your boat?

ANGELL: Yeah. I had to hire, you have to hire a crew to do the work, you know.

DALLETT: Who would you hire for that work?

ANGELL: Anybody, any fisherman that came along, you know. A lot of fisherman on the beach looking for work, you know.

DALLETT: Were there then also a lot of Norwegians?

ANGELL: Yeah, there was. Now it isn't so many because you haven't got so many immigrants that you had in the old days. And quite a few Portuguese over here now, Portuguese fishermen, and a lot of, what do you call,

second hand Europeans, yeah, second generations that's trying to break in. Of course, a few years ago they made money hand over fist up fishing king crab, you know, in the, say, ten years ago. They used to make up to one hundred thousand dollars to a man a year. So a lot of people, you know, they got together and bought boats, and boats that cost up to five, six million dollars.

DALLETT: So in '46 when you got your boat, um, and you did bottom and halibut fishing, would you go out for, how many days at a time would you go out?

ANGELL: Oh, we'd stay out about, the most, ten days at the most. I used to fish and come in here and sell it fresh. So then you stayed home a couple of days, and then you'd go back out again.

DALLETT: And home was where, Seattle?

ANGELL: Well, that, yeah. I've been in Seattle all my life. We've been here in this house since 1946.

DALLETT: So you got your house and your boat in 19...

ANGELL: No, '47. I got the house a year after.

DALLETT: It was a big period in your life then.

ANGELL: Yeah. I got a loan and started like everybody else, pay so much a month. I paid thirteen thousand dollars for the house in 1947 and, uh, they got valued at over one hundred thousand dollars. So...

DALLETT: I can imagine the lot itself would be very expensive, because the view here is, can you describe the view that we have here? I'm not sure which of the mountain ranges we can see from here.

ANGELL: That's a mountain range, that's what they call the Olympic mountains. What you have on the other side is Cascade.

DALLETT: And the different peaks that we can see from here are...

ANGELL: Oh, that's what they call the Brother, the two peaks there by that tree. And I, I got a picture, write the name on all of them. I can't remember now.

DALLETT: And the body of water that we're on here is what?

ANGELL: This is what they call the Puget Sound, and on the other side of that is a canal that goes in there, what they call the Hood's Canal. I don't know if you've seen it or not.

DALLETT: Uh-huh. Yeah, I went over that Hood Canal Bridge, I think right? There's a bridge over it, the Hood Canal Bridge.

ANGELL: Did you ever go over that?

DALLETT: Yes.

ANGELL: No.

DALLETT: Yes. Not today, but the other day.

ANGELL: Oh, yeah. I got a cabin over there, by there, close to the bridge. And that canal goes in maybe close to a hundred miles, all the way down to the capital, down to Olympia.

DALLETT: And I see a big ship going by now. Can you tell me

what kind of ship that is?

ANGELL: That's a navy ship. That goes in once in a while here. They're out on a trial run or something. See, then there, the Puget Sound Navy are just over here, across from Seattle.

DALLETT: So you have a lot of ship traffic that goes by.

ANGELL: Oh, yeah. A lot of container ships that goes in and out of here.

DALLETT: Does the logging industry still use this, or does it go by rail?

ANGELL: They go, they got to get out here for a hundred miles, and then if they want to go to California, then they got to go out, and then to a point they call Cape Flattery, the end of that peninsula there. Then they've got to go south. So they've got to go a hundred miles up, and to come going back.

DALLETT: Is this view anything like what you would have seen in Norway as a boy?

ANGELL: Well, we had, we lived on the beach too, just about like we are now. And there wasn't the traffic. We wasn't on the main traffic lane, so we had to, we were up on the fjord. But we used to play in the water all the time, go fishing, when we were kids, you know.

DALLETT: So did this help to make you feel at home when you came here, or was it very strange?

ANGELL: When you, uh, when you're an immigrant, it isn't what you want to do. You have to take what you have to do, that's the main thing. And I can't say that I loved fishing, but I had to do it. You hadn't got no education, you know, so there's nothing else you can do. You can, the only thing you can do is work with your hands.

DALLETT: Tell me a bit about this community here in Ballard.

ANGELL: They claim it's supposed to be a lot of Scandinavians that lives in Ballard. We have a reputation for that, but I wouldn't say it's lots of them. There's quite a few of them, but, uh, they have a Norwegian club here and they have a Swedish club. They have a Nordic Heritage Museum. They started, the Swedes, the five

Scandinavian countries went together and they rented, or got an old school they had set down. They got that, so they were making a museum from the old days.

One room for the Swedes, one for the Norwegians, one for the Finns. It's a real nice place, it's right up here about two blocks from us. But there we have, well, we have a Scandinavian order, the wife to the man that lives up next door, her father was a Norwegian. And all the rest of them around here, I don't know. They come from all over.

DALLETT: But back in the forties when you were first here?

ANGELL: Well, I, of course, when you were, what do you call, a greenhorn, then, of course, you're trying to hang around people or associate with people that are Norwegian because you can talk the language, you know.

I had to pick up my language the hard way, the school of hard knocks. (he laughs) So it went very slow, but I made it all right. So you handled it, you know, you knew a lot of fisherman and in the wintertime when they had, we had three months closed season, so we associated more, kind of a clique, hanging together.

DALLETT: When you began to have your children, did you speak

Norwegian to them?

ANGELL: No. My son, he took Norwegian in, my wife was born here in Alaska. But she went to school, she learned to talk Norwegian. In fact, we went to Norway, so she got along pretty good. But my son, he didn't, he took it in school, but I don't think he learned enough to get along. Then he went to Australia, and he was over there for ten years. He was over there ten years, and he came back here and finished his schooling, went to the university and finished up. And now he's on, he's a speech pathologist, so he worked for the schools down in Centralia.

DALLETT: And he went, I'm sorry, you said he went to Norway for ten years.

ANGELL: No, Australia.

DALLETT: Australia, oh, I'm sorry.

ANGELL: He was over in Perth, western Australia.

DALLETT: And do you go back and visit Norway?

ANGELL: Yeah. We went back, the wife and I and him when he was about ten, twelve years old we went to Paris and then we picked up a Volkswagen and then we drove all the way up to the top of Norway and back again. And then, uh, in 1970, I think Maxine and I, we went, made a trip to Norway, too. So I've been back three times in all this time. In Norway, I haven't got anybody there. I got two sisters still alive there, and one of them has been over here, because she got her daughters married here, on Mercer Island.

DALLETT: You never thought about wanting to go back to Norway?

ANGELL: Not any more, no. No, that's, now they're doing okay and all, because they've got all the oil, you know, from the North Sea. So they've got a good, kind of welfare state in Norway, you know, everybody got paid for doing nothing. So they're doing okay. But when I left, you know, there was nothing but hard going. And they, uh, but I wouldn't go back to it anyway, because they're about twenty years behind us here.

DALLETT: How do you mean that, in terms of what?

ANGELL: Well, anything. Say that you want to send your car

out and have it greased, you'd better make an appointment with the gas station. That's one thing. And anything you want done, you know, if you want to send clothes out to the cleaners and stuff like that, you don't get them back overnight like we do here, you know. (he laughs) You want to grease your car, you go up there, and if he can't take you, you go next door and get the other guy. So people here is pretty independent. You want stuff, you want it right now. you don't wait till tomorrow. Outside that, in the summertime, we had been around the world quite a bit, Maxine and I. We travelled quite a bit a few years ago. But, uh, in the summertime, in July and August, it's a beautiful country to go and see. The sun shines twenty-four hours a day, and things just grow overnight because they have sun all the time, so everything, they don't stop at night, they just keep on growing. So it's a beautiful country in the summertime. I wouldn't mind taking a trip back there yet, but I don't think that's going to be.

DALLETT: Are you in touch with any of the friends you had when you were a young man, who stayed?

ANGELL: No, not any of those. You go back there now, you

can't hardly find anybody. But now I've been here sixty years, it's pretty hard to find somebody that you went to school with, you know. Probably don't even remember the name, so it, but we had a pretty good time. I had a sister there that was living in another house, so we stayed with here. But she passed away, so there isn't many people I would find that I would really know. I got some cousins, but they were kids when I left, and I wouldn't even know them either.

DALLETT: Tell me, can you tell me about the three painting that you have over the fireplace?

ANGELL: That's from Norway. That's a fellow in Norway that carved them. It's kind of a three-dimensional deal.

DALLETT: They're carved.

ANGELL: They're carved, yeah.

DALLETT: They're not painted.

ANGELL: No. They're carved out of wood, and then they used to paint, then they painted the carvings after they got

through carving them.

DALLETT: And what are the three scenes of?

ANGELL: Oh, in the middle scene, that's called "The Old Lonely People." The man is sitting there reading the Bible to his wife, you see. And then there's a fishing boat on one of them, and that boat on the mantle, that brass boat, I bought that in Quebec, Canada a couple of years ago.

DALLETT: And that, the "Old Lonely People"...

ANGELL: The "Lonely Old People."

DALLETT: The Lonely Old People, does that pretty much tell the story?

ANGELL: Yeah, I guess so.

DALLETT: Is that what it was like?

ANGELL: It was, in the old days.

DALLETT: In the old days, yeah.

ANGELL: Sure. You know, on the farms back in the old country in the old days, there's nothing else to do. There was no movies and no other outside entertainment, especially people that lived out in the farms, you know. So I imagine the evening, that's the only entertainment they had, reading the Bible to their wife.

DALLETT: When you went to visit your mother in, what was it, 1936, I think you said?

ANGELL: Yeah. '35, '36.

DALLETT: Was there any chance of her coming to this country?

ANGELL: No, she was, she was getting pretty old by then, see. It's pretty hard for an old person, because my niece and my sister, she's been here a couple of times. It's pretty hard for them, because they don't know the language, and you get in a party with everybody, this guy gabbing in English, so you sit there, you don't understand or nothing. You don't know what goes on. So it's pretty hard for older people. And that's, they're too old to learn English anyway. You don't

learn when they, they tell you that you can learn to talk English when you're eighty years old, somebody selling you a bill of goods, I think. (he laughs).

DALLETT: Okay. I think I've asked you everything I need to.

ANGELL: Well, that's about all I can tell you.

DALLETT: Unless there's anything else you want to add?

ANGELL: Most of the time I done fishing, so that's all I can tell you.

DALLETT: Well, I think our next oral history project should be about that fishing.

ANGELL: Yeah.

DALLETT: Okay. Thank you. That's the end of interview number [DP-18] with Mr. Olaf Angell, and it is now 1:45.