

Citizens - Captain Andrew Flagstad

By Barbara Bedau Brow
White Lake Area Historical Society



Undated picture reportedly of the Ella Ellinwood at an unknown location

Andrew Flagstad was born in Grimstad, Norway on 16 October 1837 to Morten Tostensen Flagstadt and Anna Erlandsdatter. He began sailing on the ocean when he was only 13 years old and had very interesting experiences as a sailor. He sailed all over the world and was shipwrecked twice, once off the coast of Ireland and once off the West Indies.

Captain Flagstad became a sailor on the Great Lakes in 1854. In addition to owning the Ella Ellinwood at one time, he also owned the "Swallow" and the M. T. Greene, a lumber barge which was the largest of its kind at the time. People even laughed at the idea of the Captain imagining such a large boat could ply the inland lakes. Andrew sold the Ellenwood to his older brother Captain Thomas Flagstad in 1900. Another vessel that he briefly owned was the I. M. Weston.

On 10 September 1866 Andrew Flagstad married Rosanna Keilty in Chicago. They had 6 children: Richard (1865-1876); Annie (1869-1876); Ella (1871-1876), Andrew (1874-1935) and Mathew R. (1876-1937). Three of the children died with weeks of each other from scarlet fever. One died as a newborn.

Rosanna died on 5 December 1900. She is buried in Oak Grove Cemetery along with her children. Andrew died on 29 July 1916 at the home of his son Mat in Maple Grove. He had been living there for the past ten years. Flagstad was the oldest Mason having been initiated in 1863. Andrew was also buried in Oak Grove Cemetery next to his wife and children.