

Phyllis Carlson
Anchorage-Cordova-Tyonek-Kodiak
1 reel

475-10
Interview by Neville Jacobs
Anchorage
Sept., 1974

Phyllis came to Cordova with her parents at age 6 in 1914. She grew up in Cordova and became a teacher; she is retired now and is a free lance writer.

Phyllis married in 1934 and came to Anchorage in 1939, and also taught at Tyonek Indian Village.

Phyllis describes life in Anchorage during World War II and; reveals the fear of invasion which prevailed in the area at that time.

In 1950 she moved back to Cordova and had a "woman to woman" radio show. She was widowed at that time, so moved on to Kodiak to be with her daughter who lived on Woody Island. Neville recalls a story about a woman she had met at Old Harbor who was the child of a lighthouse keeper but who, when orphaned, had been raised in the Woody Island orphanage then married to an Old Harbor boy--the boy and his bride rowed 22 hours down the length of Kodiak Island to reach the village of Old Harbor, where Neville met the woman--then aged--in 1959. Phyllis had not heard the story, so conversation continues with Phyllis' life in this period. She lived on Woody Island when the 1964 "Good Friday" quake struck, and describes their experiences on the island at that time.

Phyllis brought out a book, "Kodiak to King Crab," which she helped edit. Conversation focusses on the history of the book and photographs in the book.

Three-fourths through the tape, conversation turns back to Cordova. Phyllis talks about knowing Eustace Zeigler, the artist, and his family.

Finally, Phyllis reads a letter from her files which was from

an aunt recalling "early days" at Sitka during the turn of the century.

Talk next focusses on a family album and events suggested by the photos taken in the Cordova-Valdez areas in the early 1900s.

Regrettably, this is reel 2 of the original interview, but in getting started with the first part of the interview which focussed on Rhylis' early years in Cordova and teaching at Tyonek, several stops and starts were made by interruptions--I spent an afternoon trying to complete the first hour--and apparently the mike became unplugged in the opening session because the tape is blank. I had had to move the machine two or three times to "get settled" because of traffic patterns in the room, and this must have inadvertantly caused the loose connection. A great deal of value was lost, but reel 2--now reel 2 although less tight has good information including the Earthquake description and the letter about Sitka from the aunt.

Series: Tanana Yukon Historical Society Tapes