

David and Dinah Frankson

Point Hope

Series: Tanana Yukon Historical Society tapes

H 76-172, b
Conversational interview
Jacobs' home, Fairbanks
Sept. 1974
2 hours

Pilot Bob Jacobs is talking with David and Dinah Frankson about Point Hope in the 1940's when the tape opens. Another guest in the room, Mrs. Howard Sparks, asks about a painting in the room. Neville Jacobs describes some hunting experiences with Diomedes Eskimos which led to the painting.

Tape then turns to straight interview with Franksons about Point Hope life. Discussed are customs of whaling and whale ceremonials; ceremonial house groups and social relationships.

Frankson narrates his life story. Frankson is one of Eskimo Alaska's leading citizens as postmaster at Point Hope, magistrate, church elder and community spokesman.

David was crippled as a child; his father, befriended by a missionary, worked at the mission in order to remain home with his son. The missionary tutored David in English and literacy, and thus David had an unusual boyhood in a land where few learned more than a few words of English.

From a biographical narration, David turns to tell about the lives of Point Hope's first missionaries, Dr. John Driggs and A.R. Hall. Driggs came in 1889, and Hall in 1908.

Midway Reel 2, David tells about Point Hope's first "white man murder" which he witnessed--the shooting of Hall by a man substitute teaching at Hall's school. The substitute teacher became involved with a girl, let his teaching slide, and shot and killed Hall when he returned from a month-long journey.

Reel 2--Dinah Frankson tells the story of her mother's journey as a child to Point Hope from Kivalina--a journey of starvation, living on strips of umiak skin.

Conversation ends with David's duties as magistrate.