

H78-22

Axel and Grace Edman

Catherine "Mike" Dalton, interviewer

Nome, Alaska

1974

Axel came to Alaska in 1924 to work in the Kennecott Copper Mine. He traveled to Alaska on the steamer Northwestern in steerage. In 1925 he went prospecting on the John River. He traveled with Sir Hubert Wilkins on his arctic expedition in 1926 and traveled to Barrow. In 1926 he arrived in Nome on the cutter Bear. He talked about the cutter "Bear" sinking. In 1927 he came back to Alaska and arrived in Nome in 1931. He was in the restaurant business. The Nome fire in 1934 burned down his restaurant. He was married to Grace in 1935.

Grace talks about meeting Axel in 1934. She was a waitress in Axel's restaurant. They discuss the different restaurants in Nome. Grace was born in Nome, Alaska. Her maiden name was Swanberg. Her parents were married in Nome in 1901. Her family mined on Osborne Creek. Her mother was the cook in the mining camp. They traveled to the mine by horse and wagon. Axel talked about how Grace's father arrived in Alaska. Mr. Swanberg came to Hope and Dawson in 1896. He left in 1898 to go to the Klondike. He then traveled down the Yukon River and arrived in Nome in 1900. Her mother came from San Francisco to Nome during the gold stampede. Her parents met in Safety. Her mother and father married in May 1901. They moved to Counsel. Their first born, Harry was born in 1902 and died when he was four years old. She had one more brother and a sister. Mike talks about Vernon (born in 1892) and Esther Bookwalter settling into Nome about eight or nine years ago. They have decided to retire in Nome.

Mike and Grace talk about staying in Alaska for their retirement years. Grace talks about her father traveling over the Chilkoot Trail. Her father owned the Elkhorn Saloon in Dyea. Grace talked about a book about the early history of Nome. Nome and the Seward Peninsula by Harrison. Axel talked about being born and raised in Sweden in 1904. He came to the United States in 1923 when he was nineteen years old and didn't speak a word of English. He spent a year in the states and came up to Alaska in 1924. They traveled to Sweden in 1952. Axel had just been elected the grand president-elect of the Grand Igloo of the Pioneers of Alaska. There are about 5,000 members of the Pioneers of Alaska. They talked about planning the convention to be held in Nome in 1974. Axel is past president of the Igloo number one They discussed traffic tickets in Fairbanks and Nome.