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Name and place: Marie Haggard interviewed by Margaret Van Cleve

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Margaret begins the tape by telling that Marie told how her mother hiked over the Chilkoot Pass and his father came through Dyea. She asks what Marie's earliest memories are in Fairbanks, and also, if there are things that she remembers her parents telling her about their experiences.

Marie starts by telling that her mother was very deeply emotional by coming to this great country and gold rush was the way they were aware of Alaska. Her parents were among those who came to Alaska first, in 1898. Marie's mother came over the Chilkoot Pass with his mother, stepfather, two sisters and a brother. They went to all the passages that were encountered by the pioneers of that era. They had no conveniences of any kind and it was something beyond description. Marie is sad that she didn't get a tape of her mother and father's stories about the trip, but she remembers the highlights.

02:09 They went to Dawson over the Chilkoot pass the day after the "big slide" [Good Friday Avalanche] and helped in exhuming the bodies. It was in the spring. She was just a young girl then and very impressionable. They went down the Yukon on one of those barges which were very precarious. If they dipped, they would have been done. There was no half way, and their life wouldn't have been recovered. Marie's mother told some stories of it, and Marie remembers that her stories were much like Wild West stories. In saloons, where she sometimes had to go to even though she didn't drink, there was always somebody with a .45 having an argument that was usually settled on a point of a gun, but fortunately she never had to witness anybody getting shot.

Her father came through Dyea to Nome and then he went from Nome to Fairbanks. Marie doesn't know how he got to Fairbanks, and if he mused to take the old

Alamida of Alaska Steamship Company. Alamida connected Seattle ports to Nome and it was the first boat in the spring to come to Nome with fresh produce, if Marie remembers right.

4:13 In early 1900s, around 1907 or 1908, Marie's father came to Fairbanks, having gone to Nome around 1902. Marie's parents were married in Dome City, which is a short distance in Fairbanks but doesn't exist anymore. One can't even see where Dome City used to be but it's on Dome Creek. After Marie was born, her father settled on a Creek Claim on Dome Creek, about 20 miles north of Fairbanks. Marie was born in Fairbanks, however, at the old [unclear due to cross talking] hospital. The old building has been demolished. They said it was a fire trap, but it lasted there even after the 1967 flood.

05:40 Margaret asks what Marie's parents' names were. She tells that her mother's name was [Margaret] Smith, and her grandfather was James Smith. Her mother's first name was Margaret, and her father's name was Thomas H[enry]. Quirk. After Marie was born, they lived at Dome Creek for the whole time until she begun school.

Those days they operated with shafts, windlass, and sluice boxes. Marie's dad had a small team of 6 horses with which he used to haul wood for the furnace in order to keep the steam going. They didn't use gasoline in the boiler that was in the boiler house.

Marie was crazy about dogs and all animals when she was a child, and her father got her a dog that she loved very much. Her name was Ennie, for Engine, and she was with Marie everywhere Marie went. When she died, there was a gentleman who was associated with Marie's father, George Robbins, and when Marie one day asked for her dog, he explained that Ennie is no more because she died. George explained that Ennie fell down a shaft, which didn't make Marie happy since she was just a little 4-year old girl. She cried and cried while her mother tried to console her.

8:09 The years went by and Marie had a happy childhood. They picked blueberries and her father hunted grouse. For the most part, they lived off the land as far as meat was concerned. Every once in a while, a moose would come through. They were about a mile from the little town of Olnes, which was quite a big town at the

time. There is nothing there right now, but then there was a cigar store, and a narrow-gauge railroad that came from Fairbanks to Olnes, did a circle through Chatanika, and went to Fairbanks again. Marie doesn't know if it did that every day, but it was frequently enough.

They had 2-3 banks. As a little girl, Marie would go to the cigar shop where her father used to work when he wasn't busy with the mine and miners would pay her 25 cents per song. Margaret says that that was a good pay in those days and Marie agrees. When Marie was school age, they moved to town. Marie says that she was 7 years old when she started school and she went through grammar school and high school, and then she graduated from the University of Alaska in 1936. Two years of her grammar school Marie spent Outside "which is a colloquial Alaskan term for Lower-48" [Lower-48 being a colloquial term for the contiguous United States]. She went to school in Yakima in Seattle, Washington for second grade, and on 5th grade she went to school in Yakama and in Colorado. Other than that, all her schooling happened in Fairbanks.

10:52 Margaret asks if her first school was at Cushman Street, the one that burned in 1932 or so. Marie says that she remembers the Sunday morning very well when it burned, but she's not sure. She believes that Alaska Linck who was then Alaska Steward, rescued the bell. Somebody has the old school bell somewhere, and lots of people have photos of the school.

Margaret asks what some of the highlights of Fairbanks social life were, as she remembers them from her childhood. Marie tells that she wouldn't trade Fairbanks social life from those times for anything. Everybody knew what everybody else was doing and they usually had an event on Saturday night where everybody who wanted to go out went. It might have been a dance or a special program that was put on.

They had what is called tombola. It was put up by the Catholic Church to raise money. They interviewed and auditioned people for it and Marie has a picture of one of the tombola casts that must have had 40 people in it. They had a producer who had a theme for the tombolas. One year they had a Hawaiian theme. Then they had high school plays and recitals. Their lives were full and wholesome and they had [only] one policeman in town.

13:03 Marie can't think of the name of the first policeman she knew about, but her dad knew him well. The next one was Austin Gibbs who was the police when Marie was in grammar school. He was a very nice person. The kids weren't mean, but they were full of tricks and one Halloween they caught Mr. Gibbs in an outhouse that they had put on somebody's truck and took the outhouse to the school grounds. Nobody was hurt.

They had lots of wholesome good times, and as far as school is concerned, they had full activities. They didn't have some of the curricula that there is now, with music and vast assortment, but they always had a music teacher for the school, a chorus for girls. Marie ended up playing for them often instead of singing, because she was the only one who could play.

Margaret suggests that music was important in early days and it certainly is now. Marie tells that her folks started her with music when she was 11 years old. Mr. [William] Gorbracht's picture was in the latest issue of the Heartland. It showed an old group of musicians from 1912 and Marie knew all of them. Gorbracht was the band leader who played the trumpet. Margaret says that they are trying to start another community band now.

15:24 They had things going on and they weren't just huddled up in igloos. They had lots of activity that Marie thinks was genuine and she doesn't recall ever missing a Saturday night dance. Dances were held at the Moose Hall that was at Wickersham [Street]. It was quite a versatile place that had a stage and screens. They showed movies there, and they had a nice, big hall, although the building was old and rickety. It had a back area behind the pool room that would be used for dining or entertainment.

The other place was the Eagle's Hall that was torn down 8 or 9 years ago. That was in the corner of Cushman and 5th Avenue. That was a nice building.

They had experiences that people in Lower-48 didn't get, such as important aviators coming up to Fairbanks. One of them came with the Black Wolf Squadron of four airplanes and Captain Street was the commander. That was in 1920s, but Marie doesn't remember the exact year. She was in grammar school at the time. They landed on Week's Field that wasn't yet called that. It was the ball park. And they had funny little airplanes that they flew thousands of miles.

18:15 Wiley Pose and Howard Hughes are mentioned, and of course Marie knew Ben Eielson who taught in high school for a while. He wasn't a good teacher and his mind was on flying. Marie also knew Noel Wien when he came up in 1924 or 1925. Margaret asks if these people were her parents' friends or their neighbors. Marie says that everybody knew everybody else and somewhere along the way one just says hello to people whether one has met them or not.

Marie remembers when she was in Nome years ago, working as a regional director for the territorial veterans, and she had never been to Nome before, the people in streets smiled with warmest smiles and said hello. One can't see that even in Fairbanks anymore. Margaret says that one loses it when the town hits a certain population size. Marie says that people welcomed her even though "they wouldn't know me from Adam's old fox."

Marie remembers when Howard Hughes came. He was dressed in formal hat and a black suit when he flew. He had just come across the ocean from west and was heading towards the lower states. He had unloaded all these golf balls that he had for floats in case he had to land on the ocean. He was very strict and gruff in speaking with those who helped him to gas his plane and when fueling was done, his plane was so heavily loaded that he barely was able to lift up before the end of the runway.

21:07 Margaret asks if he took off from the Ball Park [Week's Field], and Marie says that he did, and that the Pan American hanger was there. A sporting goods store is all there is left of the old hanger. Marie says that after she graduated, she didn't want to do anything and hated having to get a job, but she asked Noel Wien if he had a job for her and he said sure. That was Marie's first job. Then she was offered jobs after that. She worked for E. B. Collins and Julian Hurley. One was 1am and the other in the afternoon. Julian Hurley was a trial attorney and E. B. Collins was a state attorney who was handling property, leases and so on. Then Marie was offered a job as Dr. Bunnell's secretary and she did that for 4 years from 1938 onward.

Margaret says that Marie must have lots of stories of Dr. Bunnell since he was quite a character. Then she asks if he was a good boss. Marie says he was, and that he was a fine man who helped young people. He would loan students money and

expected them to pay back, but Marie says that most of the time he didn't get paid, but he didn't care as long as the money did some good. Then Marie was offered a really good job from Pan American, as an express accountant, and she resigned. For her new job, she was preparing papers for an accountant in Seattle.

24:13 Then the war started and she was moved to Seattle. She had a difficult time. It wasn't difficult but inconvenient as she lived far from her work and had to commute. She resigned and got another job with an air transport command during the war. That was a very exciting job. Marie was located at Ladd Field in the big hanger. She met lots of famous entertainers who came up, such as Kate Francis, Ingrid Bergman, Bob Hope, Bing Crosby. Marie got autographs from some of those people.

The Russian leader was in Fairbanks too, but he didn't leave the officers' quarters and was heavily guarded until he got to the airplane. Marie can't think of his name, but Margaret says that Stalin was the Chairman in Russia. Marie tells that he had been somewhere, perhaps in Washington, and stayed at Ladd Field a few hours.

26:43 Then Marie was offered a position as a regional director of the territorial veterans. She liked that job a lot and, working with attorneys, she learned lots about legal procedures. She worked under Harry Palmer as an office clerk and when he resigned, Marie became the regional director. Then she was offered a job in a real estate office and she got into that. That was her business when she retired but she was living in California then. She was in real estate for 14 years.

She was first married in 1951 and her husband was a doctor. His name was Hugh B. Fate Sr. They lived in Fairbanks for about 7 years until he retired from his practice and the two moved to California, where they had a horse ranch in a beautiful place. Marie's husband was raising purebreds, but they both had their saddle horses and they rode to the Marble Mountains with Western Riding Club in the summer months.

29:00 There was a fellow by the name of Jimmy Kane. Everybody in Fairbanks knew him. He had a couple of horses of American Saddle breed that were always in the parades, and very often they were ridden by the Mayor in the Ice Carnival parade, or in the Golden Days. He also had a Shetland pony.

A fellow by the name Gordon Hunter, whom they called Shenie, was in charge of the pony and the kids couldn't ride it without him being there. He knew how to handle the pony. Marie has a picture of Shenie holding the pony and on the handlebars there was Agnes Snodgrass and Margaret Carlstain. It was right by where the old Presbyterian Church is.

Margaret recalls that there were lots of parades in Fairbanks those days, like the Golden Days parade. Marie says that they [current Fairbanksians] don't have the fun they used to have, but then says that maybe they have their own ways of having fun. In Marie's time, everybody in town went out to see the parade at the Ice Carnival and the Canadians would come over to play hockey. They had a queen contest and the Canadians participated in that too. They also had really nice floats in the parade – much nicer in Marie's opinion than they have now. More work was put into them back then.

They also had ice events, entertainment at the Moose Hall, and ski runs where they climbed up the hill since they didn't have ski lifts. Finally, Birch Hill got the first tow line rope, and up on Cleary Summit they developed a skiing hill with a chair lift.

32:42 Marie says she is sad that she didn't get stories recorded from her mother and father. Her father was a good storyteller and he would tell about his experiences, but Marie doesn't remember them since she was a kid when she heard the stories. She didn't realize that they were important.

Marie's parents didn't have money, but they were looking for gold. Marie remembers an incident where a fellow had a load of pipe in a vehicle that was some kind of a Dodge or Ford truck. He was going over some of the better roads. The driver knew where he was going and Marie's dad thought that he had to get there somehow but didn't have any money, so he hid himself in the pipes and logs and rode as far as the fellow went. The driver never knew he was there.

Marie says that it was a happy time, having her childhood in Fairbanks.

Margaret asks if there are some people still around that Marie grew up with. She tells that Charlotte Lynn Thomas is. She was one of Marie's closest friends in mid-years of high school and college. The first friends that Marie had were Lucille

Lavery Meath, who passed on the previous spring. They started their first grade together with Agnes Hering Schlotfeldt. Meta Bloom from Bloom family was there too, but the Bloom family left during the mid-high school years. Their dad took them to Europe or Ireland to finish school. They had very sophisticated education and they went to Sorbonne in France in summertime, and to a university in Dublin, Trinity College.

35:52 They didn't have their fun made ready for them, so they made their own. They organized ball games, for example. They didn't have uniforms or adults that were ordering them around. Margaret asks if they played where Week's Field is now. Marie tells that if they wanted to play ball, they went to somebody's yard. Herings had a big yard. Marie doesn't remember if she played ball very much because she was more into tennis, but they were there when they had all the fun things going on.

The adults were just hoping that the kids had a good time. The only mean thing the kids did was to knock on doors and run away. That was tame naughtiness. Marie can't think of anything bad that kids did those days.

Margaret asks if most of the people lived in Downtown area, and Marie tells that there were no environs but it was just the nucleus. They walked everywhere and their dad put their cars on blocks. When spring came, their dad took the car out.

All the gals wore mukluks, long coats and ski pants to keep warm. They lived on 5th [Avenue] and Lacey [Street] and they walked to the Moose Hall, unless it was -60 below. There was maybe just one cab in town and they didn't have money for cab fare, so they walked out to Moose Hall in their mukluks and carried their dancing shoes.

38:55 Margaret wonders if they had some really cold winters back then. Marie says that they weren't any colder than they are now. They were cold, but it didn't stop people from doing what they wanted to do. Marie is always amazed how people, who have traveled a lot but never to Alaska, wonder what people do in Alaska in wintertime and if they just stay in their houses until spring. Marie just tells them to come to Alaska to find out. The climate in Alaska is less depressing and prohibitive than it is down south where they have hurricanes, tornadoes, and floods that stop activity.

Marie tells that every time she uses her washing machine she thinks of her mother who didn't have any of that equipment. Marie got her a washing machine when she started working after finishing college. Before that, she had to wash with a wash board and the water was hard. Marie remembers that they had one of those oval brass tubs that they put on the stove with water from the well. Then Marie put borax in it the water and she skimmed it off to make the water softer. Marie says that if she ever complains about everything, she ought to be ashamed, since her mother went through so much. As time went on, Marie's mother got modern equipment. Evie Collins brags about having the first flushing toilet in Fairbanks, and maybe he did.

Margaret asks if most people had their water delivered by Fred the Waterman. Marie tells that his name is Fred Musjard, and that he was a nice gentleman who had two big, well cared for horses, with which he came by every day. One would buy tickets for water and leave buckets outside for him to fill. They didn't actually have to handle money.

42:47 Marie has pictures of him in several places in town, and reminisces how they used to jump on runners of his vehicle and ride them. Fred didn't like that but he let them do it.

He built a house on Cowles [Street], near where the exit of the ball park is, on the left side of the road towards the library and not far from it. Whoever bought it, built an addition to it that was exactly like the original. The house is still there and it's kind of a unique house as it's tall and doesn't have big windows. It's well built.

Margaret says that she thinks they are the oldest houses in Fairbanks save for the little log cabins on 1st Avenue. [Break in the recording.]

44:56 While Marie was working as Bunnell's secretary, Bunnell was always very casual in his dress over the summer months. He was just walking around campus and looking at things so he knew what was going on at all times. There was a tourist coming to campus, who asked Bunnell where he could find the president of the University. Bunnell pointed them to the right building. The tourist wondered around, and Bunnell knew where the fellow was all the time, so he sneaked into his office, sat down in his chair with his cigar and sun visor, and when the tourist came in, he was amazed and asked if he is the president of the University. "Yes sir, I am.

I'm doctor Bunnell. Won't you have a seat?" That was the kind of a person he was, unpretentious and brilliant.

There were some famous people coming through the university. Margaret asks if Marie was able to talk to them. She tells that she always did, and that she had the opportunity to go to special private functions like dinners and whatnot as Bunnell's secretary. That was a nice experience.

47:34 Marie asks Margaret if she got introduced to her husband Harvey, and when she says no, Marie tells that she used to come up to Fairbanks because her step-children were there. Marie visited Dr. Hube Fate, his wife Mary Jane and their three girls every summer. One summer, this man whom Marie is now married to, Harvey Haggard, had been widowed. There was a party and Marie was using Mary Jane's car to go to church, but the car wouldn't start. She found out through a friend that she should call Harvey Haggard to take her to the church. The same thing happened at a dinner party and Harvey took Marie to that party as well. That was the beginning of a nice romance. Marie had known him before, and they were married that fall, in August 1986. That's when Marie came back to Alaska to establish her residency in Fairbanks.

Margaret says that she thinks that people who grew up in Fairbanks feel nostalgia for it, and never really leave even if they go Outside. There's the tie that's never broken. Marie says that there's something unique about the place and that she's noticed it especially at the University. There were lots of new people from New England who attended the University in those years, and as years went by, people from all over came up to the university, but they were all gone when they graduated and didn't attend the alumni meetings. Those people who attended alumni meetings were from 1920s and 1930s. Those who have graduated in last 15-20 years don't show up.

50:23 Margaret says it could be compared to small-town Fairbanks where everybody knows each other, since at the University everybody knew each other too. Harvey went to an alumni union meeting that only had a handful of people there since lots of them are gone now. They don't have meetings like they used to. Margaret says that Harvey graduated in 1936 from the University of Missouri.

Margaret asks, who were some of Marie's class mates at the University of Alaska. She tells that there were only 18 of them. Helen Frank was one, Dick Date, Pat Thompson, a Finnish girl [Hilja] Reinikka, Paul Wickerstrom, Ed Stevens.

Margaret asks if the student-professor –ratio was 7 students for every professor and Marie tells that she didn't know what the ratio was but she knew all the teachers. Marie says that Lola Tilly is still around. She had a class form her.

53:11 She'd like to mention more about her parents' strength and courage. They have always been an example for her.

Margaret thanks Marie for the interview.

[End of the recording.]