

H97-175-15

Walter Buckow

Fairbanks, Alaska

Harrie Hughes, interviewer

Andy Wicken, interviewer

Clyde Burkett, interviewer

May 1960?

Walter Buckow came to Nome in 1914. He wintered in Juneau in 1914. He was in Fairbanks in 1915. He was back in Nome in 1918. He mushed from Chitina to Fairbanks and Fairbanks to Circle.

One of the interviewers asked who some of the famous people were at that time. Walter talked about Levenworth.

One of the interviewers asked him what his business was in Fairbanks. He was financed by Robinson. His first customers were people in the FE Company. They used a lot of oxygen at that time. The government took it over and then he bought it back. He supplied oxygen and acetylene. Jim Berrick used to supply it at one time. Walter said he was their agent for a long time. Walter talked about George Black.

One of the interviewers asked about some of the mines besides the FE Company. Walter said there weren't too many of them. He said it was pretty tough going for his business.

One of the interviewers asked him what he thought of a park for the pioneers. Walter thought it was a good idea and the state should give an acre or two of land. Interviewer said there was eighty acres of U.S. government reserve that will be the site of the park.

Napoleon was born in 1885. He came to Alaska in 1905. He talked about speaking French with Peter Coulombe. Napoleon came to Fairbanks in 1908. He came up the Innoko River. He was in Innoko in 1907 and Nome in 1906. Vinnie Burke was from Nenana. Napoleon was a gold miner. He also worked on the railroad around Healy. Jack Singleton was also at Healy. John Ford and Joe Gunyan were partners who mined in the area. They had a creek that they mined. Interviewer asked if he ever went sheep hunting in the area. Napoleon said he didn't but Joe Gunyan would hunt. Napoleon talked about Mary Thompson. Interviewer asked if they knew Boat Mary. She made homebrew. They would go down there to get a few bottles. They talked about another lady who sold whiskey. The interviewer asked Napoleon if he knew Popovitch. Popovitch was later taken to Morningside. He got a job cooking there. Popovitch claimed that he walked across the Bering Strait. They said there were two Popovitches. They talked about Usabella who worked started out from nothing.

Shortland Harbell was born in 1884. He came to Fairbanks in 1904. The interviewer asked him about the different people in Fairbanks in the early days. Shortland Harbell talked about Bob Bloom. Shortland thought the old timers were all gone. He said Martin Nuppy had a restaurant that he started in 1905-06. Interviewer talks about Joe Quigley. Shortland said Joe and Fannie were his neighbors. The interviewer and Shortland talk about Lignite.