

H97-66-22 Pt. 3
Margaret Bettles Golder
July 27, 1967
Fairbanks, Alaska

Margaret Bettles Golder was the daughter of Gordon Bettles. She talked about her father's life. He came to Alaska from Anaconda, Montana in 1885. He prospected on the upper Yukon in 1886. He was a founder of towns. He printed the first newspaper north of Circle named the Yukon Press. It was the property of St. John's Mission at Fort Adams (Tanana) ~~Diamond~~ located below the junction of the Yukon and Tanana Rivers. The first edition issued on January 1, 1894. Jules S. Prevost was the editor. Gordon Bettles and George W. Howard were the printers. Mr. Prevost was very anxious to print hymns in the Native language. The Mission board approved money for a printer and type for that purpose. When the printer arrived Gordon Bettles was in Olnes. James Prevost brought the newly acquired press to Olnes. They didn't have suitable type for headlines. Mr. Prevost traveled by dog team to Anvik to have wooden type carved. They had to depend on the miners and prospectors who had visited the trading post and mission for news. There were seven trading posts at the time the paper was printed: Al Maylon and Co., Tanana Station, H. Kokrine, T.H. Bement in Fort Yukon, Gordon C. Bettles and Co., Dick McQuesten, Al Harper in Fort Sumpter, and the Alaska Commercial Company at St. Michael. In the publication there were poems, news, agriculture, steamers, average temperature, lists of missionaries and traders on the river.

She was born at New Klickiet which was known as Old Station. They left in 1896 to Montana and she was left there until 1900. They traveled to Berkeley, California and she stayed there until 1903. She left for Alaska on the old St. Paul. It was late October when they arrived. She stayed with Mr. and Mrs. Fredericks until freeze up. It took them sixteen days by sled to get to her parent's home. In 1904-1905 they were in Fort Hamlin. Her father ran a store for miners. In 1905 they traveled down the Yukon River. When they ran out of wood everyone went to shore to cut cordwood. They finally reached the town of Roosevelt. They left for the creeks in April. They moved to Fairbanks in 1906. She graduated from eighth grade in 1909. They left for Tanana in the fall of 1909. They traveled on the Kuskokwim in 1910 to Bettles and then Russian Mission where her father had a store nearby. She married W.H. Golder who was an agent for the NC Company. They were married in Georgetown. Her husband started a station at Kolmakovskiy because of the Aniok strike. Her first son, William Henry, was born there. They went to St. Michaels on the first boat and remained there until her husband's retirement in 1916. He was with the Alaska Commercial Co. in 1896. He spent twenty years with the Alaska Commercial Company. They moved to San Francisco. Her second son, Gordon was born at St. Michaels in 1915.

She won a medal made out of gold in 1909 for speech.

The town of Bettles was started in 1899. Berglin was started first. Her father was a partner with Mr. Pickers. Her father died in 1935.

There are several questions from the audience. She was also a singer. She sang in 1932 in Los Angeles when the Olympics were held in that city.

Her husband started several trading posts in Alaska. She met her husband in 1911 in Georgetown. He was an agent in St. Michael's until his retirement. Her father was active in Arctic City on the Yukon.

She was asked about reindeer herding at St. Michaels. Margaret said she didn't know anyone in St. Michaels who had a herd. * Mary had her herd outside of St. Michaels. Person from the audience talked about a herder he knew in 1926.

She has a photo of the first boat that went up the Yukon River in 1892. Many comments from the audience cannot be understood because of singing recorded on the tape. At this point the rest of the recording is difficult to understand. There is a discussion of the photos that Margaret Golder is showing to the audience. The printing press that was used to print the Yukon Press was now located at the university.