

J. SIMPSON (SIM) MacKINNON - Juneau

HAZEL JAEGER MacKINNON - Juneau

(Dec. 1, 1974)

REEL 1

Sim and Hazel MacKinnon were both born in Juneau in 1897. He was born March 26 and she March 12.

Hazel grew up in Juneau. Sim's father spent lots of time looking for gold (and finding some). He had come to the Juneau area in 1885 or 1886. At that time he was looking for his brother (both from Nova Scotia). Found his brother in Juneau but the brother took off for South Africa shortly after they met up again. Sim's father stayed in Alaska. He partnered up with George Miller and went north. He and Miller went back to Juneau and built the Circle City Hotel, naming it after Circle City where they had been prospecting and mining. Made money in the Circle District.

Sim tells about his father and Miller being the original discoverers of Atlin B.C. pay. Lots of litigation over MacKinnon's claims.

MacKinnon moved his family to Cleary near Fairbanks in 1905. Sim recalls that he and the Nordale boys lived side by side in Cleary. His father staked on Vault Creek and left Sim to go to school in Cleary. Stayed with the Ernie Parsons family. Parsons and Volney Richmond started the Northern Commercial Co.

The family moved back to Juneau because Sim's aunt Laura died in childbirth and they took the baby. Sim returned to Juneau in 1912. Finished high school there and was appointed to Annapolis by James Wickersham, delegate to Congress. Graduated in 1920 and was first from Alaska appointed and graduated from the academy.

Sim and Hazel were married Dec. 5, 1923 in Los Angeles. Hazel wanted to escape all the bridal showers so she took off and joined her sailor sweetheart in Los Angeles and they tied the knot there. Sim was then assigned to the battleship New York. She traveled with him on the ship which was on assignment to move Naval personnel....91 day honeymoon ending in China. He was stationed in Chi Foo. Their only child Skip was born in Manila. Lived in China 2 years. Describe life there. Communists shooting the place up occasionally. Talk about Chinese leaving baby girls on steps of the pagodas or tossing them over the Great Wall.

Mrs. Mille Brandt, who is present with her husband A.P. (Bob) Brandt, tells of being born in Harbin, Manchuria. Her father with Austrian foreign service.

MacKinnon came back to the U.S. in 1925 (no, 1926) and could find no suitable Naval duty so resigned active status remaining in the Naval reserve. He wanted to go to the Navy's

radio station at Mile 13 on the Copper River Railroad but the Navy man there wanted to stay another year. MacKinnons went back to Juneau and Sim took over the Jaegers' laundry business.

He talks about the "Thousand Mile War" book. Says it's very authentic account of the Aleutian war theatre.

He was called back to active duty in 1939. Served in the Aleutians. Was liason from Navy to Army's Gen. Buckner for a time. Sent to Adak as advance rep for the Admiral. Sent on to Attu and Kiska.

Tells about Dr. Howard Romig from Anchorage for medical duty on Kiska. Humorous stories about Dr. Romig's dog. Romig there 2 years and re-assigned to South Pacific on ship (dog, too).

Sim served in Kodiak, Dutch Harbor, Adak, Kiska, Shemya and Attu.

Sim represented the Navy when they tunneled through to Whittier, Brandt interjects (tunnel for Alaska Railroad to port of Whittier). Millie and Bob Brandt talk occasionally. Bob was at Ft. Richardson when the first runway was laid in 1940 or 1941.

Sim retired in 1945 as Captain. In Navy 7 years during World War II.