

H97-175-17  
John Butterworth  
Clara Rust  
Fairbanks, Alaska  
July 23, 1960

John Butterworth is from Dawson City. He was born in Ontario in 1913. During 1935 he came to Dawson. His brothers came later that year. He worked for YCGC in the warehouse department for seven years. In 1942 he went into the dry goods business. He married in 1938. They have five children. His oldest son works in Vancouver and the rest are attending school. His children are JoAnn, Johnny, Nancy, and Carol. They formed the Klondike Tourist Bureau in Dawson. There is big interest in the tourist business. They purchased the old auditorium. They also renovated the Robert Service cabin. They also belong to the museum committee. The museum later burned down. The KTB decided to send some its personnel to Fairbanks for Golden Days Pioneer Days. There were about thirty of them that came over to Fairbanks and most of them arrived in costume.

July 28, 1960

University of Alaska Fairbanks

Clara Rust was born in Seattle of a pioneer family. Her father, Hickman found a job with a newspaper in Seattle in 1885. He was the first printer in the state of Washington. She was born in 1890. She remembers her father always building up the business. His company went up to Dawson in 1898 by way of the Chilkoot Pass. He saw a need for a newspaper in Dawson. He used dogs to haul equipment over the Chilkoot Pass. By the time he got back to Dawson there was another newspaper starting up, too -- Dawson Daily News. The Klondike Nugget made it to the streets one hour before the other newspaper. Her father sold out after a year and went back to Seattle. He started another printing company. He came up to Fairbanks and started the Fairbanks Daily News with Mr. Wood and Campbell. There were two or three other papers after that. His first print shop was burned out. Jim Thurston and others started another paper. Thompson had the Dome Miner newspaper from Dome Creek. He and Clara's father put out a newspaper in the town of Chena. In 1909 Fairbanks wasn't doing well and her father sold the newspaper to Thompson. The paper was the Fairbanks Daily News Miner. John Crawford worked for her father in Seattle and Fairbanks.

In 1908 Clara joined her family in Fairbanks. She came on the Northwestern. It took her 32 days to get from Seattle to Fairbanks. She traveled on the last boat of the season. It was a rough trip. They stopped at Nome for a few days. They stopped at St. Michael. She took another boat up the Yukon River, the Susie. They stopped at every village to unload. They stopped at Tanana and transferred to a smaller boat, the Tanana. It was already starting to snow. They stopped to load wood at wood camps. They finally got to Chena. They stayed there all night. The river was low. They transferred to the Reliance and it became stuck on a sandbar. They finally got to Fairbanks at five in the morning. She married and had six children.

There was a question about her father's newspaper. Clara said the name was the Fairbanks Daily News. The Alaska Citizen was another newspaper in Fairbanks.

Clara talked about Madame Reno in Dawson. She gave advice to a gold miner who later struck it rich. Madame Reno was her mother-in-law. She was arrested for witchcraft and brought into court. She married a man named Madole. They moved to Fairbanks. She was a palm reader in Fairbanks.

Clara returns to her trip on the Yukon River. She described the boat, the Susie. She thought it was a beautiful boat. The pilot was named Newcomb. She described traveling on the river at night.

Someone in the audience asked her the name of her mother-in-law. Clara said her name was Mrs. George Rust. She was married to someone named Madole. She later married Fred Myers who was a miner on the El Dorado. She later moved to Kodiak and married Mr. Anderson. She returned to Fairbanks and died at St. Joseph's Hospital. Clara said she was a wonderful mother-in-law and ran a bathhouse in Fairbanks. Her father would print her advertising in the newspaper.

Someone asked about her children. Her children are <sup>Lila (1912)</sup> Laura Rust Cox, <sup>(1913)</sup> Lorraine Rust Smith, <sup>(1920)</sup> June Rust Sidars, <sup>(1921)</sup> Jesse Rust, Jr., George Franklin Rust, and Elizabeth Francis Algee <sup>(1924)</sup>

Someone in the audience said they should call up Chuck Kind since he is an old newspaperman. Clara said they need to write a book about travel on the Yukon River. She said a lot of the stories have been distorted.

Someone asked about the trip over the Chilkoot. Clara described her father carrying the equipment over the Chilkoot and down the river. She talked about a book called the Klondike Nugget.

Clara talked about her husband, Jess Rust, working in a hotel in Dawson. In 1901 he worked on the Rock Island. The Rock Island brought the railroad engine to Fairbanks. After going outside he walked back through White Pass. He hunted moose and caribou for the market. In 1909 he mined above Fox. In 1910 they went to Gilmore after they were married. They mined on the El Dorado. There were about thirty men working on the El Dorado at that time. They had to walk down about five miles to get supplies and the mail in the evening. They had their winter supplies by way of horses and a sled. They had to care for their supplies all winter to keep the supplies from deteriorating.

She said that their entertainment was supplied the citizens. They put on plays.

She worked in a dry goods store until she was married. It was located at 5<sup>th</sup> and Cushman. All the sidewalks were two to three feet high on stilts. The mud was a real problem.

She had five of her children at home. A midwife or a friend would assist. The hospital in town was St. Joseph's. The church was located at 2<sup>nd</sup> and Hall St. She watched them move the church across the river. Clara talked about the swimming pool that was located where the church is now located. The swimming pool burned down.

Clara talked about break up. They would move the large span of the bridge over to the bank. People would travel across the river by ferry or rowboats. They always had floods on the river. There was a ferry at Turner St.

She talked about the shows that the thespian club had. They had dances there, too. She talked about the different stores in the town when she first arrived in Fairbanks. She describes the dances at the Eagle Hall. They were very formal.

Someone from the audience asked what the toughest thing was for women. Clara said nothing was too difficult. Transportation was a problem. She said walking in the long

skirts in the mud and snow wasn't easy. Raising a family without a washer wasn't easy. The house was always full of clothes drying. The lack of water wasn't easy either.