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Harry O. Orend

Fairbanks, Alaska

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Harry Orend is introduced. Harry Oscar Orend talks about being born in Spokane, Washington in 1903. His parents were William Fred Orend and Ida Augusta Schemonski. He spoke German until he started school. His mother learned English from him. He retained his knowledge of German. He heard about Alaska in 1916 when he was in the boy scouts. He heard about Ketchikan and the trail from Dawson to Nome. His father came to Ketchikan in 1926. The following year his father went to Fairbanks. Six years after that Harry moved to Fairbanks. In 1932-33 he was practicing as a lawyer in Vancouver, Washington. He had to take products for fees. In the summer of 1933 he applied for a teaching job in Nenana, Alaska. He was paid \$200 a month. He talked about his trip from Seattle to Seward. Everyone in Alaska knew who was coming because the passenger lists were published. He arrived in Nenana by train. He arrived on August 26 and there was already frost. He enjoyed living in the small community of Nenana. There was a population of 400 people in Nenana at the time. He met a lot of sourdoughs in Nenana. He met Captain Polty who had been on an expedition to the Arctic in 1881. Captain Polty had been sent on a mission for help one time. He was the only one who survived the trip because he could tolerate the cold. He misses the nicknames that were used at one time. He talks about Whiskey Jack, Hapless Joe, and Whiskers Bill. When he first arrived in Nenana he heard a lot of stories. He worried about what happened to bodies during the winter. Some of the high school students told him the bodies were stored in the warehouse. Someone else told him that they were driven into the ground. They had primitive conditions. He lived in a cabin and enjoyed it. He talked about a homesteader named Berg who had served in the Union Army. Through his church he organized a group of students to collect information from the cemeteries. They sent the information to Salt Lake City. He has been able to trace his family line back to the 1300s.

He was admitted to practice law in Alaska in 1934 by E. Coke Hill. He talked about Sam White who was a field marshal in the area. One of the men they put in jail in Nome was a wanted man. The man had committed murder. He had been sentenced to life in prison and was on parole. The man left Connecticut and jumped parole. The warden wanted the man back so he would play on their baseball team. Joe McDonald was able to grow corn in Fairbanks. He had the city steam pipes running under his yard.

In Nenana he taught in the high school from 1933-1935. He taught every class except typing. He would come to Fairbanks in the summer and studied Alaska law. In 1935 he got a few cases which he worked on in the summer. He had drafted an ordinance in Nenana which prohibited mushers from driving their dog teams on sidewalks. He stayed in 1936 and opened up an office. In 1938 Ralph Rivers wanted him to apply for the assistant United States attorney position. He stayed with Ralph Rivers until 1944. Ralph Rivers ran for attorney general of Alaska. Harry was appointed as the United States attorney. He was reappointed in 1949. His wife was having medical problems and Tom Clark arranged for Harry to be appointed to a position in Los Angeles. He stayed there for five years and then returned to Alaska.

There were five brothers and sisters in his family. His most interesting case in Fairbanks were estate cases for Hilda Ford and Dr. Bunnell. He talked about several murder cases including an ax murder.

Two men were found guilty. Warren Taylor was the attorney on the case. The case was retried two years later. He talked about another murder case. The suspect had gone into a tunnel and refused to come out. They built a fire in front of the tunnel and killed the suspect. He talked about John Noble who was an FBI agent in Alaska for a few years.