

Alaska State Library
Historical Collections

Transcript

MS82-2-4

[MS82-2-4A-1]

Wednesday, Sept 9

Marian & Bob -

Will answer your questions first –

1. Your father left for Nome in June 1907 with the Fosters and Bouchers. You were 7 weeks old.

He went to the Nome Bank and Trust Company as cashier.

Pa, Marne and Nell came to live with us.

I was not well but managed to stay on my feet until your dad left. I knew he wouldn't go if I wasn't well. Now days they come home in

3 to 5 days. I was 5 wks in hospital and then confined to my room at home. You were a good baby and Marne, Nell and dad loved you so much!!

Your dad stayed in Nome that winter to see if we could take it. We went in with the

Fosters in 1908. You were 14 mos old, but you were not walking--too heavy--30#. You hitched along as little Bradley Lang does now. He, too, is too heavy like you were.

We sailed on the Umatilla on June 2nd.

We struck ice after we got into Behring Sea on or about the 9th. We were out in the ice until June 21st. The Thetis (Coast Guard ship) led us thru the ice. The Ohio was out 30 days.

Capt. Hanna was in charge of our ship.

Capt. O'Brien of the Ohio. He was reprimanded by his company as it costs so much per day.

Being Irish, he gave them answer for question in no uncertain terms. The next year he took the old Victoria in. He was a big blustery man.

**Umatilla (Steamship)*

[MS82-2-4A-2]

Notice

Marion – Read this over carefully before you start writing. I may have forgotten something you would wish to remember. For instant – when we were in the ice – we ran out of water. A Mr. McCloud (George) and A Mr. [Hamiltin?] (Charlie). McCloud was with a big mining syndicate - [?] I think. Hamilton was with the [Luspent?] and Steamship Co. They had White Rock water aboard. They gave it to me for your food and drink. Of all the men on board ship that carried you about – you preferred Sid Moore. He was a man medium height – Rather thin but strong – he drove a truck for Billy [R?]. It didn't make any difference who Was holding you, when Sid M. appeared and Walked by – you would kick & scream until he came back and took you. He was a modest retiring little fellow and it pleased him so much. The men in the [money?] would say – “What has that Fellow got that I haven't.” Believe or not, Marian, It was he cause Sid M. knew how to hold you – And carry you about. You felt safe – he carried you Like most mothers do when working about the Kitchen with a baby in their arms. With the others You were afraid you'd fall and often I was scared too. Sid was top man with you and he knew it. I Think many times he walked by purposely to get Your reaction and the other fellows goat. It was lucky for me you were an adorable baby-

[MS82-2-4A-3]

We first lived on 3rd Ave. off Stedman Ave. just across from the public school. It was a 5 room house--nicely painted and a yard. The Mort Atkinsons lived across from us on one side of the school and the Ned and Esther Bridesall Darling on the other side of school. The Deans also lived near by--the Finks lived out farther beyond the Catholic and Episcopal churches on Stedman. From the back bedroom window I could see Behring Sea. I spent a lot of time at that window watching for smoke from a ship. There was no wireless in those days, only the first smoke to announce arrival of boat. It was such a welcome sight--it meant

letters from home.

In September we moved to the Ashley House on D Street, near Tony Polett's store. It was all on one floor and the dining room window over looked the sea. We were on a hill, beneath us on River Street was the waterfront and Dutch Anna's house was just below us. There were others also. It was known as River St. as it was the opening into Snake River from the sea. The nite we landed was like day--we pulled into River St. in a dory. We landed almost on Anna's doorstep. The whole place was crowded with people waiting for the first boat. One could hardly get thru the street. It wasn't until later I got the history and picture of the street.

[MS82-2-4A-4]

Anna had a nice quiet place. I do not recall any disturbance on the street while we overlooked the street. Later the girls were moved to the stokade behind the saloons on Front St.

This was just off the beginning of D street back of the Eagle Saloon.

The Leasacks lived across the street from us, the Lomens, Gilmores, Stevensons, Artons, Hallas and Olsons lived in the next block from us.

The Pioneer Mining Bldg. was also in that block .

The Frosts and Polets lived to the left of us.

We lived there that winter--you learned to walk there at 18 mos. It was a thrill for you!! No more hitching!!

The little Leasack girl had a dog & cart--you have a picture made sitting in it. Have you it? They were nice people. His name was Johnnie.

The next summer, 1909, we moved to the Judge Moore house a block down, I believe a cross street.

Their back yard & Halla's back yard adjoined.

It was a very nice house. Mrs. Moore had gone out the fall before & Judge was going out for summer. I don't think he came back. Change of judge. The house was carpeted thruout—tastefully decorated. Nice furniture, dishes, etc. Nice yard, pebbled, of course, but large yard. Nice sunny rooms. Mame came in that summer.

We had 3 bedrooms, plenty room.
We used to walk to Belmont Point, not far from

[MS82-2-4A-5]

from where we lived. We crossed Snake River,
and saw my first and only mirage from Belmont
Point. I was told it was a Russian Village
that I saw. I was looking out over the sea
and saw this miniature village depicted
in the sky. It was very clear--at first I
thought it a reflection of Nome, but the contour
of the church and buildings were not the same.
Mame had a nice time that summer. Groggin,
Earl Hunt, P. H. Watt and many others were very
attentive to her, but she wrote Henry every boat.
There was a railroad to the mines. I believe
you have a picture of that, too. Marne,
Fosters, Baschers, Luidebergs, Watt, Hunt, Browns.
The J. C. Browns. He was the man that discovered
the 3rd Beach line. Made a million or more.
Foster, Boucher and Greenberg owned the Bessie Mine.
They leased it to Bard, Nixon and Durhart.
Greenberg staked the claim and named it
after his wife Bessie. He was leaving for
the states to spend the winter and gave Foster ([eg?]
1/2 int[erest] if Foster did the assessment work.
It was too cold and too heavy work for [?]. C.
so he gave Burcher (George) a 1/2 of his half if he
would do the work . Burcher, a good worker and a
gambler, took the job. They struck a bonanza.
Greenberg was as good as his word.

[MS82-2-4A-6]

Foster, your father's brother-in-law instilled
in your father the desire to go to Alaska.
I do not regret it. It was an adventure, and
a good experience. Your father loved it.

The fall of 1909. You and I and Aunt Mame
came out for the winter. We sailed in October.
We have a picture of that trip, too, I think.
We remained in Brainard that winter. Pa,
Mame and Nell lived with us again, in
our home on 6th. Pa and baby sister
died the next summer in August.
Your dad came out that fall.

To go back to Judge Moore house, it was across the Street from [Davon's?]. They had dog kennels and raised puppies. You always on hand for the feeding of The puppies. Mrs. D. had to fix a bottle for you too Or you would take one from the puppies. It was in the Judge Moore house too, that you Raced out to end of side walk and dropped into the ditch along the side of street. You dropped off side walk into ditch. You gave one scream- I rushed out and dragged you out of the black Muck by your hair. You were in up to your Neck. In another few moments you would have disappeared from the earth. Nome was on frozen ground. When the ground was disturbed it became muck. The streets were flooded. Yards killed from [Tailing's?] [?] Maine. There were ditches along

[MS82-2-4A-7]

Street to catch overflow.

You remember in winter the heavy snows- the houses would be up to window sills, the snow was so heavy and dry. In spring horses would trek thru the snow on streets to their bellies- some broke their legs. [Teamsters?] had to be careful.

We went back to Nome in 1911. [?] tried to persuade Your dad to go to [Silent?] Lake, but he refused to take the Position. He was sold on Alaska. This time we sailed on to the [Visman?].

Our trunk with clothes for the boat was changed with someone sailing for Victoria B.C. We had only our summer clothes. The passengers were very kind & considerate. They shared their heavy coats, [?] with us.

The S[?]nsons were aboard. He was a fur dealer for a big [?] [?] House or Company. He took the Olson house for the summer.

We went to the Elite Hotel until we could find a Place. You & the [S'nson] boy came down with Diphtheria. The boy died. Do you recall that?

If not, I write up for you later.

Dr. Hill- [Dr Sloan?] called @ [at] Elite.

Later we went to Dr. Neusnau's office.

Mrs. Sloan & Dr there.

Mr. Jance would isolate 3rd floor of hotel if necessary but we got into [? of ?]

[? Very – so ?] next door. Cold & raw.
 Etc. etc.
 Later we were to [consent?] to live. [? Of ?]
 That fall [?] to Bank Bldg. Banks consolidated
 Mariners & Merchants Bank- Cole , and Mrs. Gilmon's sisters'

[MS82-2-4A-8]

Husband- can't think of his name now. He later (Coddeu)
 Committed suicide. They had a little girl too.
 They went outside-[?]- It may come to me
 But I don't think you want that any way.
 The men who sang in Keys Elmer Reed,
 Frank Kersley, Dan Jones, Max Ronce, The
 Bunes brothers, Pierson, John Nestor, [Sain?] Taggard
 Charles June had good voice. Think he was in
 Minstrel Show-McGuire-Dr Charpe (pam H Doris)
 Can't think of Doctor & wife at first that
 directed. Her father's name was Brown. Had
 charge of theater in NYC. I got it, Dr. Meider,
 Mrs. Rau and Nel Wil [court?] in Penizon
 [Margaret]? In Bohemian girl!
 C[arbinne?] Hayden Reed & Lonie Wyeth
 C[artinne?] loved to take you out in your buggy
 As a baby. Lonie Wyeth taught you to ride a
 horse. He was crazy about C[ailenne?] but
 mama [?]waxed Cops Reed. [Peas to Platts ling [?]]
 As queen remember crown Charlie Shefflin
 made you lace curtain [nil?] dress Aunt Mame
 made. [Honey mom smog.?] [Mahel Pearle?]
 you wouldn't remembers the people. Some I
 have forgotten. There were 20 of us.
 Remember the Pehoepilds? Magnus, Mrs. Nume
 & her dog, Lawrence Kern, Lnn Gafney & Neil
 The politicians, Bob [Csmero?]. The Sheriffs wife-
 She had freckles on her hands?

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More may come to me, Marian, but that
 is all today. If you want more specific
 data, let me know.
 There were the Lomens, K[utisins?], Ayers,
 Downing, Stevensons, Van Sickles, Tom & P[erter?],
 Ed Fleming, Esther Hauks, Fred Hanks,
 Mrs. D[arapon?], Lt. Hill, Caps [Nelah?] & family,
 Ast[ermans?], Palncero (Post people)
 Mrs. Siffers (a chamster – good – [?]case).

Esther Hanks married Cal [?]. We
 visited with her [?] outside. She
 lived at Seward-Remember.
 Mame wants to go to Agnes. Will stop here.
 I'll mail this to give you a start. Will try more to-morrow.
 Haven't [?ked] since Sunday [?]. [?] feel
 Too hot. My stomach still sensitive and
 Squeezy. Will go back to morrow-nite.
 I've had dinner @ La G[?] with Vinas, [Out?] Joe
 & Betty Friday nite.
 Go to luncheon @ Mis [?]: Saturday-[?]

[MS82-2-4A-10]

Just thought of the Tidal Wave on Oct 13, 1913.
 You had fallen off the [Fountain?] River into the
 [Fountain?] Basin and hurt your nose. The
 day before. That night the nose was all puffed
 up and during the nite you hemorrhaged
 [purposely?]. I developed a stiff neck and was
 In misery. We slept late. To
 the pounding of the surf. Daddy came in later.
 (it was Sunday). He said Capt R[on?] said the
 Barometer was going down and big storm was
 on its way. I looked out and the sea was kicking
 up in great waves and to me a pretty piglet.
 It continued all morning to churn and finally
 Capt Ron sounded the alarm for all people
 On the beach side of the street to start packing and
 moving back.
 [Senty?] came over. I had made doughnuts the day
 before. She wanted every thing I could salvage.
 So I gave her all the food she could manage.
 We were to go over to her house. She lived back in
 a big duplex about 5 Blk from beach.
 Daddy insisted we go to [Senty?] Our beach land might
 Hold but he was sure the furnace would go (it had
 a furnace) out. I hated to leave for the angry sea was
 a sight to see. But we went. The sea was
 also [?] the waves to [?] land and they
 were spraying to the street above. You may remember
 it continued into the nite. Battered down the
 [?] and gutted them along the water front.
 The Elite Hotel (3 stories) collapsed, folded so
 It seemed and floated out, being churned into the

[MS82-2-4A-11]

sea. Frank Kinsley (he had a fine singing voice) he was in one of the plays. His place also went- wall paper, beds, etc.

The Bob Zehner's, j[?], had the good sense to clear all there stock out- they had been in Nome during the tidal wave in 1900. When Capt [Ron?] issued orders to move- they moved fronts. John & Tom Nestor had just put in their store of [legins?] for the winter – they had a wholesale house- They lost a couples of hundred thousand dollars. See, the tears were frozen on John's face, when [Senty?] and I came back to pack linens etc. It was a sighs[t] one sees sometimes now in the movies. The street was flooded with water a knee high. It Was filled with men, [animals?], boxes-horses & wagons dogs-all yelling orders to someone. The men had [Shipers?] & rubber boots – [?!] [Senty?] & I Got about as far as the [?] saloon, when daddy met us. Gosh, we had just met Elmer Reed, and he told the Elite had gone out. Daddy had a fit when he saw us – herded us back to the flat – [Senty?] refused to go home, until I had all silver, linens, And every thing she wanted safely packed and in the [Court?] House. She had rounded up several men And found McGuire (key to Court House) – Fred Ayer also among them. She took spread off bed & threw the unbreakable things into it. [Well? Will? Nell?], we sort them!! I kept telling her the [?] head will hold [senter?] and she kept saying if you don't want these things I do. [Sorry?] now, I didn't give her some of things. They were left there in [aft?].

[MS82-2-4A-12]

Then there was Mueller's [Silver?] wedding. Judge Lomen carving the turkey. Mrs. M. was so excited She didn't see him [seventring?] trying to make the Bird got round. He nearly collapsed when she Finally said "Judge There are men in kitchen" They had [?] sterling silver invitations- When the first package came they mailed them Out and then the others failed to come so they had Silver cards sent out – later they decided to Invite others to reception so they sent out plain White cards.

At first it was just to be a dinner & then a reception Plan was also decided on as they had so many Friends, hence so many cars.

I met Charlie Mils on the street shortly after all Cards were out. He said "Are you invited to the Silver wedding anniversary – I nodded yes – He Then asked if I was going 1st Class, 2nd class Or steerage? I asked him what he meant – then He said – did you get a sterling card, a silver card, or a plain Card!! I thought he was joking and then he explained about cards. It was a nice affair – held in AB Hall. Judge Lomen as Master of Ceremony. He gave a very nice Talk – saying how happily Muellers had been for 25 years. George [Grigstry?] was seated in center of hall. He got to his feet and in his usual manner said "I beg to differ, Judge, with your happy remarks but you are a liar!! [God?], the old Juge (he wasn't

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there) but he had grown sons was as mad as a hornet. Later they nearly came to blows. However, it seems the Muellers were having marital troubles and G[risbury?] knew it.

As we were leaving the reception, I ran into Charlie Mils – he said Mrs. B- this is the first time I ever had a steerage ticket and travelled 1st class. Charlie worked for the Alaska Steamship Company. This is the first time [I have?] thought of him in years. He and [Lenie?] [?] were great pals.

Ruth Mueller was married then but I can't think of her name. She had a sister- 19 years younger- A beautiful child – like little Eva. Mr. M. Was a nice person but he was somewhat of a pill. Had a beautiful [stove?] tho – just across the street from us.

I write as things come to me. Do you [?] [?] to compile them.

Back to B[?] – the present.

Had a woman do some cleaning and [pick?] up the [curtains?] – they look very [arry?] and give more light. Joe is coming for dinner, we are having a [standing?] Roast of beef. Good (on sale) & 2.18. 1st we have had- I have eaten ground beef until my stomach refuses to take it. Also ground coffee. Since I had [?] my stomach revolts at certain food- and [I am?] never hungry- I'm sick of chickens, too.

Haven't lost a pound tho (wrote this last week) forgot to mail it.

[MS82-2-4A-14]

Your 30th was a haul for me. I weighed 108#
 And looked like what the cat dragged in.
 Looking back I wonder how I ever lived thru three
 Years in Alaska – but on the other hand, maybe
 Alaska and its climate saved my life.
 What for? God knows!! I don't! But it has been fun.
 R[?] D[?]ing ran the Board of Trade
 Otto Van Sickle- “ “[ran the] [Nevada?]”
 Kelly's “ “[ran the] Bucket of Blood- down opposite [?] Ave.
 J[?] had a grocery store
 Nestor (John & [Tim?]) Wholesale Liquer.
 [?] Club House made of logs- all beautifully done.
 Alaskan Mining Co.
 Pioneer “ “[Mining Co.]”
 Fred Ayer with Blue Goose Mining Co.
 Tome Late – can't think of name of boat. Sea Wolf-
 Jamie Lane- his brother. (maybe)
 Chris Goodman on – boat came ashore, bank lost 90,000
 on that deal- Mrs. S[?] & I took
 the Russian Beer in my big [mug?] – Daddy was
 mad – but I kept it!!
 Think Chris' ship was Sea Wolf [?] was later then Lane.
 I'll write Charles Jones and ask him to send what date
 he has of early years – it may help.
 He is in Fairbanks on trip – then going [Kotsbue sound?]

[MS82-2-4A-15]

If there is a special session he will come
 out in January.
 [Senty?] & Tom from [Kongarsh?] – T[?] [Killen?]-
 The Murry boys, [C?]- Bassetts-
 [?]- Bassetts are doing well – on the
 west coast.
 A[?], the x plorer – ten aboard ship
 Maud – sa[?] Le [?] be for 6 [?een] Maud –
 We saw them all on floor of bank. The picked
 my 10 – the best, \$300 apiece.
 D[?] at Pioneer – then to station to get
 The time from Washington or Ny. You have a
 picture of us taken in front of miles station.
 It was just installed.
 The Governor and wife from Siberia. We met
 them. He was not unlike picture of Stalin etc.
 She was a pretty woman.

The Russian Kany Officers that came ashore
 In their gold braid, sword, etc. all tall and
 Stalwart. Beautiful womens etc.
 The first air plane.
 The C[?] always first boat in. The girls
 And dogs etc.
 M-

[MS82-2-4A-16]

(Sfin?) called for me yesterday. She & I went
 Over to see Agnes & Mrs. S. Agnes surely
 Is doing a good job but she is very tired.
 Alice still away. Kirk is showing improvement
 His like [Ike?], Kirk will have to rest.
 It is a bit scary- so many men stricken
 In their prime, or so it seems to me.
 Letter from [?] She said Barbara & Howard
 Will try to see you & Bob.
 That about covers my news for the present.
 When you write about Alaskan – just write
 your memories. You should have plenty, I'll
 jot down some now & then.
 [Fall ?] to grease his arm – then take
 His kin in hand. We'd enjoy learning
 from him about your car experiences.
 What are you trying to do – [rust?] it?
 Take care of yourself- don't push your
 luck too far. Take it easy-
 [Martin?]
 [Sr. Ron?] letter is very newsey & interesting. She
 Is quite a girl from her letter. Some personality.
 Incidentally, when you get thru dr [?'s] why
 Don't you get your masters in [sociology?] & also take
 up Political Economy & Journalsim? I should have
 thought of this for you while I was in N.Y. You would
 be thru now & rarin to go out [stomping?].