

Mrs. Catherine Spencer

What did you really like in Prince Rupert? Tell me how you got into newspaper business?

Well actually I was going to business college in Prince Rupert and I didn't want to be a nurse and I didn't want to be a teacher and I didn't want to go on to higher education in that account so I took a business course and then after I graduated I worked a couple of weeks in a lawyers office and then the newspaper phoned me to see if I could, like to work in a newspaper and I said, " Well yes." I needed a job and I don't care where I work and I hadn't thought of newspaper work at all and so eventually I did go down there and found afterwards somebody liked my personality and thought I'd be good in a newspaper. That was what he said anyway because they had eight-teen applications ahead of me but anyway I did start there. Right at the bottom, way down circulation and posting and accounts, right at the bottom of the ladder. I learned alot while I was there and it was very intersting and I found it an interesting type of work to be in because there's so much variety to it you see. When, later on somebody had gone on holidays you could take their place and I found out then, I could write and I had never taken a Journalistic course. It was just something that was in me and I could do it. This was much to my surprise because I didn't know I could and one reason I found out I could was that a young fellow that had been in the army was going to start a magazine in Prince Rupert and he wanted me to write a story about, my husband and I had a small cabin cruiser, a story of our cruise down the coast, down the inland passage as far as Clemtoo and he asked me to do this and I said, " Oh I can't write a story." "Well," he said "try." So I did but I didn't tell my husband who was Tommy and I just did it at home and didn't tell him and then Harry's paper didn't, magazine didn't, it fell through so I put it away and one night we were sitting in the living room and I said, " Would you like to read about our trip, our last summer trip?" When he read it, he said, " Why don't you send it to "Motorboat" in New York?" " Oh," I said, " You must have holes in your head." And he says, " It's gcod." Well I sent it and we had different correspondence back and forth on it.

I had to do a little changing, finally I got it in 'Motorboat' magazine. So from then on in I started to write stories. That's how I got in the writing part of it but anyway my husband came to work in the same paper and we fell in love and were married and lost a little boy and wanted more but nothing happened. Then this chance came to buy this paper up in Hazelton, it was just a four page tabloid called the Omineca Harold, it was called then and it was run by an old man called Shuck Saul who was quite a character and so it was double election time. There was a provincial election and a federal election and so he said, "If you don't buy it," he says, "I'm going to close the doors and that'll be the end of the Omineca Harold!" So it made it sort of, well we had to say yes or no so we decided to say yes but we said yes on a condition and the condition was just something that we never did know why we said it but we said, "We will buy the paper if we can move it down to Terrace but we won't have it in Hazelton." It was intuition that's all, there wasn't a thing here except between four and five hundred people, in Terrace.

Was that at New Hazelton?

That was at New Hazelton. It had been moved up from Hazelton in 1912 and so he said O.K. So after the election was over and all the to do, we moved it down in here in the August of 1949 and started here and of course from then on Terrace started to grow and you know I was in Hazelton last week and Hazelton has not changed one bit. As a matter of fact it's gone backwards and when I look at Terrace today I think, "Where did we get the intuition?" Because that's what it was. We didn't have quite enough of it because we got sort of scared off by Harry Perry I don't know if you remember Harry Perry, he was speaker of the house and he owned the Daily News and he owned the Prince George paper and he said, "Don't go into real estate, put all your money into machinery." Which we did and so we bought all the machinery and rented a place and the paper grew and it grew and we were busy and we had to start hiring help and the story, the growth of a paper is really quite interesting. It was fantastic because the town started to grow at the same time.

Columbia Celulose has the first tree, farm tree license government, first farm tree license you know that and they came just after.

What year would that be?

'51 I think it was. Well now Alcan came in, in '51, '52. So we got here just as everything was going ahead and from then on everything just sort of snow balled. It never was a boom town. You could never call it a boom town but it kept growing all the time you see and then of course the community decided oh to spill the road up to the Nass in order to bring the logs out to the Watson Alan pulp mill and this of course was a great advantage because we could use the road and so could the people in the Nass area and they were very happy about this and then of course they built the road, highway 25 to Kitimat. So now we have roads to the north, south, east and west.

Yes this is very interesting indeed. I am very interested in the Omineca Harold because there was old Chuck Saul.

He was a character, a real character. Well I'd like to tell you about him. I wish I had got his story but I didn't know enough, I didn't know what I know today, I wish I knew his story because he come down here, now most of his advertising and the reason we wanted the paper down here was because most of the advertising he had in his paper he got from Terrace. Now the Hazeltons were all in a mad mood at him because he moved from Old Hazelton to New Town when the GTP, that was the Canadian National. . that was GTP then, railroad went passed the Old Town and went to New Town so nobody wanted, would give him any advertising and there was a feuding, they always were feuding and he was always feuding with somebody else you know and this was the type of man he was and he was funny. Some of his papers I've looked back on afterwards. As I said most of the ads came from Terrace and at the end of the month, Chuck would come down here to collect, he always came down to collect the money for his ads but he always got drunk and they had to always pretty near pour him on the train to get him home you know and this was the way he was. He ended in jail for one

in one instance for something he did, and I can't, I didn't get the full story, that which I was sorry about. But when there was anything wrong, if he didn't have a place in, if he had a hole in the paper he'd put the rooster in now there is there a cut, see that cut there that's a rooster. It's an old fashioned cut, see it on top of those two books right here.

Oh there yes, yes I see.

Well he put that in, no caption, no nothing, just to fill the space and one time I was down in Vancouver and Norm Hacking was. . met Norm Hacking? Know Norm? And Norm says to me, "Oh the Omineca Harold, do you know anything about that Omineca Harold? Isn't that the one that always run that rooster?" So I did a story on it, about Norm remembering it and had it in the paper but Chuck was a real character. They used to get the paper in the drugstore in Prince Rupert and had many a laugh over it because he wouldn't stop for mistakes or anything, he did all his setting, made up all his stories and did all his setting right on the long part and pushed it threw and there was no corrections made and paragraphs are every which place and then there was blank pages but he got the paper out and we got a kick out of him. I remember the first time we put the paper out he helped us with it and he said, " Now, we're not stopping for anything, nothing, we don't have to check them, we don't stop for anything." And he got a whole, the whole paragraph, I mean the whole column was down here and up here was a different and what all, it was all mixed up and I says to Tommy, " Stop the press." And Saul looked at me and I said, " We can't run the story like that." And he was so embarrassed because it was a real bad mistake and you couldn't have run it, so we had to correct it but that's the way he was, he didn't care if there were mistakes or not but he was a grand old fellow and he's since passed away and he worked hard, put out a paper all by himself. His wife was his right hand man.

What did he look like?

Oh he was a little small person.

Could you describe him to me?

He was a little squatty, a little squatty fellow and round and you know plump and well half the time he was drunk I think because Tommy was always afraid that I would see him when he was in this drunk mood because he'd be kind of nasty but I never did see him that way. He was just a bustling around. He'd even show you how to make the paste, you had to make it exactly the way he made the paste for pasting the wrappers and all this. He was a funny little fellow really and but he did it his way and if nobody liked it they didn't have to like it, that was just his way of doing it. But he got tired and so he had to quit and we went on from there.

Where did he come from? What was his previous history? Do you know?

Not too much about his history. He was from the east I think, somewhere and I think he came out and I think one time he did work on the coast and I think in Prince Rupert, not for very long. His brother came out with him and I never really did get his story which I was always very unhappy about afterwards because it would have made such a good story really, there were many things that I could have got but starting to run a newspaper all by yourself, your time is completely taken and you have no thoughts of what you would like later on you know although I saved many antidotes and things.

He came out, the paper came out once a week?

Once a week, yes it was a weekly. All during my regime too.

Have you ever seen that cartoon, that Degfeild drew of him carting the newspaper from Old Hazelton?

Yes, I have it.

You have the cartoon?

Yes.

I have a picture.

Well I have a. . .

Wigs O'Neil gave me a post card.

It's a post card I've got.

I wonder who has the original?

I have, I think it's the original I have, I think it's the original post card.

No I have a post card but I don't know who has the original cartoon, it will be a bigger thing.

Oh yes, I don't know neither, I have the post card.

You've never seen, don't know where any other Degfeild cartoons from anywhere are you? I've been trying to trace these.

No I don't think there were any others.

He used to do alot up in that area.

But I don't think there were any others in the paper because I would have seen them because that was a very good one.

Yes.

I used it in one of my papers once because it was really very good.

I would be most interested as a matter a fact if you could tell me, taking Saul's newspaper as an example of the one you took over.

How did you get out? What was the machinery? What was the process?

What was the purpose of getting out a newspaper? That was a pioneer operation wasn't it?

Yes.

What was the machinery? How did it get put together? You know it's quite different now a days.

Well this is another thing I'm sorry about because there's equipment there that must have come up in a river boat 'cause I know it. I have an old oak desk that I'm sure came up on a river boat and if I put my coffee cup on that oak desk by golly he was right after me you know, this is the first week. Today my oak desk stands very proudly and I'm very proud of the fact that it's in the Fort St. James. . that Ruth Halixy editor and her husband's the publisher of the Fort St. James Calidonia Currier and I gave her the old oak desk but how they brought those line-a-types, he had one line-a-type, a regular line-a-type but alot of his stories were hand set, you know hand set with hand typed set you know.

So what would be the distinction between the line-a-type setting and the hand setting, I mean would they just run out of type or what?

Yea, well he'd probably do the bigger parts with hand, by hand for advertisements and for heads he'd do that by hand and for straight matter he'd do it on the line-a-type, that would be the way it was.

It was a pretty old fashioned line-a-type machine wasn't it?

Well yes was it ever, I must tell you that sir this is kind of a cute story. That line-a-type had to be, it was gas, it had to be controlled by gas to make the pot, to melt the metal in the pot and so every morning we had to get up between five and six o'clock to pump this pump like you do a one of these old gas lamps to get it going and it took about two hours for the metal to heat, to soften down so that the line-a-type could be used and we had to spend the longest time and one day Harry Perry came through, and I was always a little afraid of Harry Perry that he was going to get his foot in and own all the newspapers. And I would say to Tommy, " He's not going to own the Omineca Harold, he's not going to get his foot in here." So he came in one day and he said, " Have you still got that gas pump?" and I said, " Yes " and he said, " Why don't you get an electric one?" and I said, " We'll get an electric one when we can afford it, to get an electric one." "Well" he says, "You can't have that." He says, " You got to have an electric one, I'll write you a check." So he writes me a check for three hundred dollars for this electric pot. I still have the check for three hundred dollars in my treasures. I never cashed it. Later we got an electric pot on our own. It's nearly that same line-a-type is still operating in Joe's Printers down here. He still uses it.

With the pump?

No not the pump no we got an electric pot ourselves quick, not long after, the Saul er Perry deal.

How old would that be, that line-a-type machine?

I don't know, it's a number five I and I don't know how old it is, I wish I did know.

That, the line-a-type then and the, plus the hand set, the hand type, that's the basis of you newspaper?

Except for the press that ran it off and that was a Platinum, Platinum press, a low Platinum press and it only ran off hand fed, one page

at a time, then you'd have to fold it and do the other page, then fold it back and do the other page and fold it back and do the other page and it was a four page tabloid and the circulation at that time was about four hundred.

And how did you ink it?

Well it had an ink roller, there was a place to ink it.

Did the roller, you didn't ink it by hand?

No, no, no there was an ink roller with it.

You just rolled it through?

It, you rolled it through it, yes.

And the type was on a sort of flat bed?

It was on a flat bed, it was a, yes that's right. They're called plates you know, the set up there.

You had the paper, did the paper all arrive cut and everything like that? Did you order it all. . .

Yes.

That would come in. . .

And we'd just run it through. But then of course our circulation started to grow, our advertising started to grow and here's the two of us trying to get these things and the more it grew the more pages we had and it snow balled, just snow balled and we had to get staff. But we had the most wonderful staff all through the years of our work, our working years. There was one boy, John Chapman, was with

us the first year in '51 we hired him as a press man and he was with me when he retired, when I retired in '69 because I had to retire more or less because I sold out in '66 when off set came in you see and all my machinery was hot metal and it was obsolete, could be thrown out the back door and in order to start over again, I just didn't have that kind of vim and vigor you know. I had brought the paper by this time up to a eighteen and twenty page broad sheet which is you know the big size and had forty-one hundred circulation when I retired.

Still using the same old line-a-type machine?

No, no, no this was, we had by this time gone into off set, I sold it in '66 but I remained publisher according to the contract for three years 'til '69 so I was with it in off set for three years and then I retired when my time was up according to the contract but the thrill, I guess the one thrill of my life was going down and seeing a twenty page paper of my very own with my name, Catherine M. Fraser publisher on it. Being printed in Prince Rupert I watched it come off a big Gos press, twenty pages all at one time in two colors and forty-one hundred circulation and here I had started there when I was seven-teen. I anyone had ever told me I would have said, "No it couldn't be."

When you took the paper over from Saul it was four hundred?

Four hundred and they weren't payed up neither.

Where was it going at that time? Where did it reach?

Just the little places around, not too far away, not any further than Smithers and Terrace and Hazelton and Kitwanga and the you know little places around, Cedarvale but alot of his where on there but they weren't payed up, I became an ABC paper afterwards, which is out of circulation.

What's an ABC paper

Audited Bureau of Circulation,

What's that mean?

Well belonging to that means you have an audited circulation by a firm that the national advertiser is recognized that the figures that you give are correct figures and they don't hesitate to take the figure and then you get the national advertising if you have the circulation to warrant it you see and this is why it's good to belong to it.

Any other stories of those very early days, you weren't very long is Hazelton of course.

No we brought the whole paper down in one great big truck, one great big truck we brought the paper down in and then we had a hard time finding a place to put it but we found an old place that was an old restaurant, it still had the booth in it and we had more visitors visit from Rupert, you know we had so many friends there and I was always serving coffee in these booths along the side with all the machinery in the middle and then we ordered a Mealie press I think it was the Mealie we ordered then, I think that was the one. We had two or three presses. We waited and waited for this press to come and then we got news that it had come. So we had to have a big plate glass window about that size, and it was insured, but we had to have it taken out and all the bottom ripped up to get the press in. So we got all prepared the night before and the next morning in comes the press. Tommy was down having breakfast and I go tearing down and says, "The press is here!" and he came up, looked at it and said, "That's not a newspaper press." It turned out to be some sort of, kind of press for something up in the north country, I don't know, they sent the wrong thing and there was this all wide open space and the driver of the transfer was so mad he quit. Eventually we got out press. One of our presses is sitting out right now in, Joe M^CNottin I told you about, he still has our line-a-type, he got

the job printing shop that belonged to our paper and he has it out in his yard, he has a big area for sort of farm area, just out of the limits here and he's going to spray paint it gold and he's going to put flowers and greenery and, he's just been waiting for all the ink and goo to wash off and then that's what he's going to do. But of course we were very lucky 'cause when the Cellulose came in things started to really boom and it seems people could never say why Terrace was growing. You'd be asked the question many, many times and we had one bank, but this is how it was. This one bank was the Royal Bank and people were sharing things about this part growing you see, so in the night, one night believe it or not, the Bank of Nova Scotia sneaked in in the night. They had the place all set for it, it was a friend of ours and he never in told us and they were in, in the night for the next bank. Now I think we have all, every bank. How many banks are there? Five banks. And how many finance companies, lets see. Every finance company. I said to one of them one day, I said, " What do you know that I don't know because why are you here?" And he just laughed. But he did know that this area is going ahead and I was trying to convince these Northwest publications that it was but they were being hard to convince.

Tell me, when you moved down with the press, that was the first time you came to Terrace really was it, you weren't living in Terrace?

Oh no, no we were living in Prince Rupert. My husband was superintendent of the shop in Prince Rupert at the time.

So that's where you worked in the business, the first one you owned was the Omineca Harold?

Oh yes, we were just working for the Prince Rupert Daily News.

Was that operated the same kind of way say with the press and everything?

Oh yes. Well no, they had bigger press, they were a daily you see

and they had a bigger press, a Web press they called it and the Web press runs all the pages off at once and comes out folded you see.

Same line-a-type type of business though?

Oh line-a-types were exactly the same.

So Saul was doing everything himself?

All himself, the only thing that he didn't know, he didn't know anything about his gal darn line-a-type and he was always phoning up to get someone to come up and fix his line-a-type, something would go wrong and they always sent Tommy, that's why he knew Tommy so well you see and that's when he used to start talking to Tommy about buying the paper, see because Tommy could take a line-a-type apart and put it together again. He knew everything about it and that's how we became acquainted really.

Well then the set up that you had when you started in Terrace, it was just the two of you, you didn't have any help?

None at all.

No, like paper boys or anything like that would distribute paper or how would you get it around?

Oh all through the mail.

And who was the editor and who was the printer?

Well there was only the two of us and so we called Tommy the publisher and I was the editor.

You both worked on the line-a-type, I suppose?

No, no I wasn't that shop at all as a matter of fact I got in trouble when I ever got into the back shop 'cause I got my finger on the cutter once and I wasn't supposed to be in the back shop at all. I was the writer, I kept all the copy coming in, I fed the press and I did all the circulation and I did all the advertising and I got all the ads and I made up ads. We worked together on it but as far as the printing concerned a printer was a printer in those days, today now young girls are setting on instruments just like typewriters that's all and they don't proof read or anything. We proofread everything, even then mistakes would go through but not like they do today, they don't bother.

In Saul's paper, go back here for a moment, where would he get his news from? He would have a certain amount of advertising, he'd have a certain amount of news from outside in the world I suppose?

He did do that, yes he did do that.

How would he get that news?

I don't know how he got that, yes I think it was Canadian Press but how it got through, I'm not too sure because he had world news in some of his very early papers. You see these small papers started in these small towns, there was one even up here at Kitsilush you know but the reason they started was because this area started to grow and a newspaper, if you wanted to buy property or a piece of land, it had to be advertised in the closest paper. Well those papers, the back papers of Saul's were just full of ads, just full of ads for sale ads for property and so this is where they made their money and this is why they opened a paper. They could care less about the newspaper part of it. It was the money they were making you see.

So all this terrible type that came out was just ...but did he have stories?

Well he had a telephone and he'd phone the hospital and he'd phone the police and I wasn't very enthused with it up there, it was very difficult to get people to talk there.

When you came down to Terrace what. . .

Oh well everybody co-operated here, this was the, our paper then, the peoples paper because we made it the peoples paper, we said, "This is the peoples paper." It's your paper, whatever you want to put in it you bring it in to us and we never missed anybody. It didn't matter he was or how small the little item might mean to somebody else, to him it meant something so it went in and this is what happens today. If they don't think it's very important, it doesn't go in and this is wrong because this is still really a small town. It hasn't grown to the city size yet and everybody likes to know what the other person's been doing and this sort of thing. It isn't got to the big city style paper yet and so it's being missed that way by the old timers.

So if there was any big event that happened like a fire, or a flood or something like that of course you'd write a special column about that sort of thing that would be happening?

Oh yes.

And it came out once a week? What day of the week did it come out?

Well we changed it a couple of times, a Wednesday and a Thursday were the days.

Two days?

No, no just one day but at one time it was a Wednesday you see and another time it was a Thursday. This had to do with advertising

and how it helped our advertisers to change the day.

I suppose the big newspapers from Vancouver hardly ever come up here?

Oh they do now you know, they're up every day. Oh they did come up all right, they got them.

Weeks later?

Yes, but then people used to say to me, " Why don't you let, put the news, world wide news?" I said, " This isn't what our paper is, it's a community area paper, you get your big papers and they tell you the world wide news and so does the radio." Course radio came in after we were here but I never felt there was, that hurt us one little bit in fact we complimented each other and we felt that way.

The radio would bring the world news?

That's right and we felt that way about it so but you were just saying that you had just returned from the Nass, that Nass, little Nass bridge that the forestry, I was talking to the forestry man the other day and I said, " You don't build many bridges do you?" He says, " We build all kind of bridges." And I says, " Yea, but not a bridge like that one." The things that that bridge is going to do.

This new one you mean?

The new one, the one that's going to open officially on Sunday.

Now so Terrace, the year that you first came to Terrace was?

1949

And tell me what Terrace looked like.

Well it was a very small place really because the population had dwindled I can say to about four hundred, between four hundred and five hundred people and why I say dwindled is that part of that during the war, it was an army camp and being in an army camp, we got the airport in here. That's why we got an airport in here also the road was finished by the United States government between here and Prince Rupert because of that but it was really by the time we got here it was just a small country town and that's all it was. Was very few people around and a few stores and just old rickety, rackety buildings. The building we stayed in was the ricketiest old place you ever saw and cold that winter. We slept in sleeping bags and couldn't keep warm, it was terribly cold and none of the houses were built for the, for the really built for the cold and it was small. And what I admired in those days was the fire department. Now we had a volunteer fire department and we seemed to have an awful lot of firemen but I guess because of the cold weather and the boys were right on the job all the time but you know people with their cars would always get in the way. They'd be in the way and the police were after them all the time and I don't know how many editorials I wrote about this but I never could, I tried to tell them to keep out of the way. Might save the lives and eventually, of course me telling them, I had to keep out of the way too. They made me an honorary member of the fire department so I had fire department right across my car. It was kind of cute. But it was really a small town and you'd see them when there was a fire, coming out, running here and running from here and over there.

I suppose it was much the same as back then, just before the war?

Dusty streets, yes, oh yes.

But then the army came in and for a moment they built their own buildings and transformed the place, the place was full of army people and then when the army left. . .

They were back down to where they were again. Well those Columbia Cellulose on the main street there, those buildings are old army buildings.

And the old peoples hospital up on the hill.

And that's the old army hospital.

What would they come in here for? Do you remember the army? Why they came in here?

well there was a danger. They seemed to feel there was a danger I think of them coming down from the north and they used it as a cross roads and then of course they needed the road and they had to build the road in but the streets were very dusty and the wind seemed to blow. It blew off our side of the street and on to the other side of the street and they were forever sweeping off the other side of the street and ours would always be clear and we always made a kind of a joke over this. And in the winter time the snow would pile up in the middle of the street and you could never see across to the other side because we had no means at all of snow removal in those days it was too costly so those piles of snow stayed in the middle and we never saw the barber shop across the street 'till spring came again. But the people were friendly. We had one big community civic centre and everybody went to everything. I mean we were all just one big happy family and it was a grand feeling and everybody co-operated. I remember we used to have an awful time with deadlines, catching the post office and all this but we never had trouble with the post masters. The Kercallies had been at it for years and they were, they never let you down, they would be right there to help you out and everybody seemed to help everybody else so it was a really nice feeling. A very friendly friendly town. I felt this all along and enjoyed this and as it grew, it grew friendly. Now it's getting bigger and we don't know the people, all the people

now like we used to know them. It's still a nice town. It's a very beautiful town.

It's more so than it was probably.

Oh yes because it's been cleared up quite a bit.

It's paved.

Paved and it's a very beautiful town and a mayor now

we have a young man that was retired very early and he was born here and he's the perfect man for the job, he just went in lately so we feel we've got somebody we like right at the head of the government of the town, that's important too I think because he knows and then of course our M.L.A. was also born in Terrace, that's Dudley Little.

Was any of his family, the Littles, here when you came?

Oh they were all here. Now wait a minute, Mrs. Little I think had died.

George Little?

George was here, oh George and I used to have many many a conversation.

He was a kind of a founder of all this?

He was the founder.

Tell me about him and how he founded it and all that sort of thing.

Well it was near the turn of the 20th century that George Little ended his exploratory treck inland from Kitimat, he came in from Kitimat and he took up a preemption here and hued the first log that was carried for the site of the what's the thriving town of Terrace

today. He was the founder. The town was to be called Littleton but there was a similar name so they had to change it so they called it Terrace and it's quite obvious why because we have terraces if you'll notice bench land and that's why and he came from Ontario and he brought with him, at least he sent back for all those trees that line our boulevard on main street on Lakelse avenue. Those beautiful trees. They're all Ontario trees and they've all grown up and he planted them when they were little saplings you know. He had been up in the Yukon prior to that and went on the trails in '98 but he told me this story. He said, eventually he said, "I came this way," and he said, "and I stood on the bench land and looked down over this beautiful valley, in its setting of snow capped mountains and knew," he said, "that I found the pot of gold at the foot of the rainbow on the banks of the Skeena River." That's the way he felt and although he was a rough, tough man to work for I understand from some people who worked for him, still he was a pusher you see and I mean I think it takes a pusher to do things like this. To build a town.

So he founded this town, he lay it out?

Well yes he did, yes, that main street in down town Lakelse there and Kaylum when they went to measure it off they weren't going to make it that wide and he insisted it was going to be that wide and he wouldn't let them do anything else but make it that wide and that's how come we have that wide street there because he insisted. A lot of people don't know this and then he left park land, that park where the library is, is land that he left. The area above it is land that he left for park land and the area down at riverside is park land he left.

How many acres did he preempt? Did he preempt the whole large area?

Yes he preempted a large area and another thing that he did do, there were other people came in like the Farnxes came in but they came

into the Kaylum Valley I mean that's just down here you know where you came along the Kaylum River and but George was coming ahead of it all you see so he gives a piece of land to the Grand Trunk Pacific Railway to put our station in down here and that's why today that's where the station is because he gave them the land for that.

Course it's a better site anyway, up here than down there, there wouldn't be much room down there.

I don't know how it would have been, there's different controversies over that because we get alot of wind you know from the sweep of the river but it's the valley anyway and we're going to get wind. You know the vallies are all around, like Kitimat Valley too.

Well what was he doing? What was his business when they came in?

Oh he was a, he went to the Yukon to seek his fortune in gold.

But when he came in here he just. . .

No he was a builder actually he was a builder. He wanted, he wanted to find a place that he could build. He was a builder. That was his dream. His dream was to build. A place that he would call home and he wanted to start it out right from here.

So when the railway came along, when it was bound to come along.

. .

He realized he had something. He liked the valley.

He wasn't farming or anything like that?

No he didn't farm. He went into the logging right away. See he cleared the land and all this and then of course he was into logging and had some of the sawmills and all this sort of thing.

Yea he was a, he went in for logging and he made money logging then?

Oh yes.

Did he have a mill?

Yes. Yes he had a mill.

And did he, float it, go down the river on the boats and things like that, what would he have, then when the railway came. Yes it was his dream.

Do you have any stories about him?

Well he was a ruthless sort of a fellow and he, many people thought he was very mean and yet I never did find him that way to talk to. He left here and went up to Yellowknife I think it was and did some more mining once and had an accident and lost his leg and he came back here and so he had only one leg but he was as independent as could be. If you ever opened the door for George Little, you'd be in trouble you know. He'd do it all himself and no one was going to do it for him and some days he'd go along with crutches and no leg and another day he had a cane and he had his leg on and he was feeling better. Then I'd go in and talk to him and he had a house keeper and we'd sit and chat and I'd be writing notes down, I wrote a story on him once and every once and a while he'd reach in to a little cupboard that was there and take out a bottle and have a little swig of it, put it in, look around, see if she was looking. He was so cute with it.

What did he look like? What was his mannerisms? Was he a big man?

Yes he was a big man, not as big as his son, Dudley. Yes Dudley's bigger than, Dudley's a big man.

Did he have much of a family?

Yes he has two sons that live here, Dud and. . .

They all grew up here?

They all grew up here, yes. His mother had died I think before we got here.

He brought his wife?

Oh yes.

He brought his wife with him when he came here or he married after?

I think he married afterwards, yes.

And then he brought up his family?

And the family were all brought up here. Dud I think was the, either the first or second white child born in the valley, now I'm not sure about that. But he was one of the first.

Now what was the, the people that were in Terrace when you first came here, what was keeping them here? What were they doing here? What was their business?

You know it's a strange thing. I never did ever really know and nobody really did know why Terrace grew because of all the communities along the line and I knew them all because I used to sell subscriptions, they talked me into it for the Daily News as far as Prince George, they used to go by train and all stopped in all the little places along the line. And Terrace was the poorest place, it was the poorest place but there was the logging and it was mostly logging was done and some farming. And then of course the Dairy, the Franks had their big Dairy of course, Frank's Dairy.

Before it was washed away.

Yes but only part of it was washed away, they really did very well and it's still going strong of course. And it's actually in the early days it was a strawberry country. Remo strawberries were really well known.

Remo? Is just the name?

Remo's just out of here.

He was a chap who lived here?

No, no I mean it's a little settlement.

Remo?

Just near here.

R E M O?

Yes.

It's on this side?

Yes but it's just a small settlement but it's the same here. Strawberries grow beautiful here but they can't afford to sell them, I mean it costs too much for pickers and this sort of thing. It's too bad because the soil is ideal for that. We do have apples and cherries and that but not to many great extent. It's a, logging is the main industry but now we have a few, you know few secondary industries are coming in. Making pipes and I can't think of all of them.

Now you have things to do with roads.

Yes. Culverts.

Yes, well it's still a cross roads of course.

Well this isn't what I always think. The only reason, the one reason that I feel Terrace is because it's a hub, because of the roads to the north, south, east and west. Now this little bridge that's only going to be, it's going to be officially opened on that Saturday, July the eighth I think it is. It's opening up an astounding potential. It was only just across the river but it's opening up. . . Well Stuart never did have a way out. Allisharm. None of these places had a way out except by the water and it's a paradise of potential. It will, untold wealth of untapped minerals, there's copper and silver and gold and it's in the midst of the famous Casiar Asbestus area which alot of people have heard of and it bring, what's the, how far, it's some five hundred miles closer to Watson Lake in the Yukon than going by way of the Alaska Highway. It brings it that much more close to, and it will eventually mean the beginning of linking up all of the Alaska Panhandle like all the roads will, like Ketchikan, Anchorage, Sitcup, Petersburg, Hanes and Scagway you know. It'll open up a whole new network of roads that allow the communities to get together. This small bridge and that's how much it meant to us and that's why our chamber of commerce and Herb. Herb worked real hard for a good, many years to bring it about.

The Cellulose, the Columbia Cellulose people, they'll have to step aside a bit if they're going to let this be approved because there is going to be, have to be a highway there and you can't mix a highway and logging.

I know. This is where the difficulty going to be I guess because you can't, we can go up on weekends you see, weekends are open but you're taking a chance, if you go any other time of the week because the logs, the logging trucks have the right of way.

You couldn't have a big truck, I've been in, out in the daytime.

Although it's a government road of course.

Yes but they have to make up their minds, one way or the other.

I don't know how this is going to effect it at all.

. . .they're going to be there for years as far as I can see. It's a great big bottle neck in the whole thing because in many ways Columbia says, " Oh sure development is necessary." But they way it's all come about is not satisfactory as far as I'm really as I see. Take this . . . and the Nass Valley. _____ are people living there, the Indians there and their story _____ inaudible _____.

Did you hear some of their stories up there?

I know the story, I think I sympathize with their story. Columbia _____ inaudible _____ ? That was a big move wasn't it? How did they get in here? What did it seem like when they come? What year was that? About the same time as Alcan?

Ah yes, it was 1951 I think. It was, it was a very big thing and at that time a very wonderful thing. It was '51 wasn't it?

A man in the background: Oh they came in earlier Cathy, about '50, (three or four inaudible names spoken) Steve Kenney he was the minister of finance and forest.

Yes well some of them came in ahead. Well anyway.

When was it the road was pushed through to the Nass? At that time too?

Oh yes they started pushing the road through.

Man in the background (possibly Tommy): In '58.

'58.

Was it '58?

In a small newspaper of course, people in small newspapers like editors and publishers get advantages over bigger papers you wouldn't get a chance at what we get let's say. Now the Lord Mayor of London came to town, he came especially to see the aluminum company, plant, down here but we went up as the chamber of commerce and I was the chamber of commerce and publisher of the paper and photographer and reporter and the works you see and he was Seemore Hard. He walked off the point and it was really funny, walked right up to me and he said, " Oh you're taking my picture." He was a very friendly man and we all chatted with him for quite awhile and then found that we had a whole hour to spend with him because the other plane hadn't arrived in to take him down to Kitimat yet. So we phoned one of my friends up and said, " How would you like to have the Lord Mayor of London for tea?" And she just about flipped her lid and that was Mrs. Lina Moo, who was, her husband at that time was a Hazelton Columbia Cellulose and a good friend of mine. As we're down there we go to tea and we had a very nice time and then we came up to get the plane. And he was going to get in the other car and the women wanted to go up of course 'cause he was there so I said, " Well I'll drive up." And then he decided to not to go in the other car and come with me. So I drove the Lord Mayor of London up to the plane. Well we chatted for quite awhile and he said, " If you ever come to London, don't forget look me up." "And I'll do my best." He was quite sincere about that and I did and I looked him up and I went all through Mansion House all through the house of commons and all through the house of lords, just every place. Just meeting him at Terrace airport in a little tiny town like this. Now Prince Philip came through in the same manner and we as newspaper people and they

came up from the south on this one, went through the plant with him but of course we didn't meet him, we just followed him, where he stopped we stopped and followed him through the plant. But we did see him and it was interesting too. He was so interested in what was going on. Stopped everybody, find out all the details and made them change everything around so they dropped the first inget and they were going to just present him with one from Quebec from Narvada. Oh no no he wanted to see one poured and they never poured one before so they had to pour it and hold their fingers crossed and it came down O.K. So these are the little things you know that happened in a small towns that you don't see in larger towns.

~~You're right in the thick of it aren't you?~~

We're in the thick of it and we see, you know. Daniel Boon was here once and he was real friendly and nice and well then of course, when they come you see Cellulose was first starting up here. They had groups of people from all over the United States. Doctors and lawyers and people from Mexico and all around. They were entertaining them all the time and of course I was always included because I was a friend of the superintendent you see and besides they liked the publicity. They got plenty of publicity in those days and we kept pretty well up with it all the time. I don't know, we kept, kept I think the pulse of the people, the pulse of the country, the whole thing and as I look back on my papers, I can write a whole, I could write the whole history of Terrace from '49 'til '69 from the front page of my paper. Just the front page alone and I'm proud of the paper I put out but I'm not proud of it today. That's just not sour grapes neither but they don't know the people like we did and they don't know that it should be still kept a small, small town paper. That's what the people want.

~~It's part of a chain of papers now isn't it?~~

It's part of a chain, yes.

What have you to do with Ruperts developed inaudible ? Have

you kept in touch with Rupert?

Rupert hasn't developed. I'm afraid I must say so because Rupert hasn't got very much room for development because it's on an island you see and there is very little room mind you Watson, they got the pulp mill and they've got another mill down there too you see and they developed to a certain extent. I mean I don't say they haven't at all. I mean Hazelton hasn't. Rupert has but Terrace is a, one that's really grown. Now Kitimat is man made, I mean it was built right from scratch and a perfect city right off the bat.

Perfect you say?

Supposed to be perfect I mean they . . .

. . . free trips like I went to Expo in January when they were just putting it up you know along with other newspaper people and we were told the story and we came back and told it in our papers you see and kept our fingers crossed that what we told was the truth because it was snow and plastic all over everything and there was nothing there like what they said. However it was just the way they said it and it was beautiful, I went back in August of course and we're guests there for a couple a days there at the. . .

What's the population of Terrace now?

Well about seventeen thousand, that includes Thornhill out here though. We're not really part of the town but we're in the area, yes.

What about, when you first came, what was the area, how many people?

In Thornhill?

No, no in . . .

In Terrace? Oh about four hundred. Between four and five I would

say.

What is Thornhill?

(Tommy): It's this side of the river.

Yea.

But what is it?

Is it a development?

Tommy: It's not incorporated.

It's not incorporated?

Oh no, it's nothing right now. They're trying to incorporate it you know and you know what happened was these are people who wanted to come out here, build homes where they could get away with, from the high taxes. O.K. fine they got away from the high taxes all right but then they find they haven't got the conveniences, they haven't got the services that they need, I mean if they had, there's a fire well there's no fire engine that's all because it can't get out here and so they will eventually have to incorporate, pay taxes like the rest of the people in town will.

Yes you can't, can't get away from it.

You really can't get around, run away from it. It's going to catch up with you.

I suppose it's, it's pleasant out here. It's a nice place to live?

Oh yea, I, yes it's really nice, it's nice and quiet.

But would it, is it, chance of it joining Terrace or would it be

a separate thing?

Well it could join. It could join.

Then the taxes would go up, right then.

Depending, depending. They have their own.

Tommy: Basically I think they'll have to go with Terrace.

I think it will be a suburb sort of deal you know.

Oh yes sure. You told me about, oh yes you told me about how it was that your father was.

Oh I don't know. Maybe I'd better not. Anyway I have enjoyed my years of being a newspaper woman and very much indeed.

It seems hectic work doesn't it?

It's hectic work, it's very, yes it is and my mother told me years ago, she said, " You'll be sorry some day." And I was I mean I was on the verge of a nervous breakdown and just because of the pressure. It's pressure work. No matter what whether it's a small weekly that's only put out once a week or whether it's the Daily and the pressure's there anyway for whatever you're doing and the number of people you have doing for you.

And it seem though you're working awfully hard for relatively little return.

Oh yes, yes because we were putting everything we made back into

it you see so we really weren't making money but I must say that the staff that I had working with me all through the years was a wonderful wonderful staff and I've enjoyed every minute of being a newspaper woman and so I'm going to write a book about it so I think that's about all I can tell you. I've had a very happy life and I've enjoyed Terrace and to me Terrace is going to still go ahead whether we like it or not I guess it'll go ahead.

Well there's an awful lot of room for expansion and it won't necessarily spoil.

I hope it doesn't spoil that's all.

I don't think it necessarily will.

No, because it's a beautiful part of the world to be in.

It isn't over populated around here at all, like the Fraser Valley. You know it's still wilderness all around you.

There's still lots of wild around you. Quiet places to go and things, and that sort of thing so it's a very happy place to live. This was out very bad winter but we weren't here for the winter, we were in Arizona Mexico so we were away for the winter but this is the most snow, most snow they've ever had for many years.

Have you had much contact with the Nass? It's a strange place up there.

Yes but I like that part of the country.

It's very beautiful.

It's a very beautiful part of the country and I have had a friend used to live in Ross Wood and so Ross Wood is part way up there about

34 miles and I know quite a bit of that area. I've been up and down it alot and right up to the Nass. I like it. And of course I've been to the opening of their churches and anything that goes on and they had a little, you didn't see the foot bridge that went across the Nass did you up there. At Greenville. No you wouldn't see it. Canyon City, did you see that? Well I was at the opening of that and we had pictures and a full page on that.

When did that happen?

In. . .

Was that a year or two ago?

Not too awfully long ago, I've forgotten which year it was.

It must have been quite tough to cross there without that bridge.

Oh yes it was a very rough, it was a very rough spot.

The river of course now is roaring.

It's not that bad all the time.

That just happened there a few years ago?

Oh yes, natives themselves too and they were so proud.

They put it up themselves?

Put on a wonderful show. We had a grand time. Took pictures and wrote the story and they were very happy. But we go to any of their things that they have like that.

It would take me quite some time to get to know the Nass. This is
just my first trip. To get to talk to them in the village, I noticed
few people in Nianche now that I haven't been able to contact with.