

## STATEMENT OF ALFRED STEPETIN

I was 14 years of age when I was taken from my home at Unalaska, on July 30, 1942.

We were given only 2 days notice and we were told we could only take one suitcase of clothes with us. We were not allowed to take any personal belongings such as household furniture or guns, fishing gear or any native hand crafts we may have had. I had been an orphan only a month so I was to stay with my younger sister who had been adopted when she was small. My two older sisters had gone to a cannery at False Pass, Alaska for the summer and I didn't know if I would see them again. My sister Fanny the oldest, 20 years of age was my legal guardian but she was neither told or notified that I was going. She and my sister Vera 17 did join us at Burnett later in the year.

All Aleuts in Unalaska were evacuated at the same time. However, all the Caucasians living at Unalaska were not told they had to go or did they leave. Two families the Hope's and the Moller's were separated from their fathers because the wives were Aleut and the husbands Caucasians. No one other than the Caucasians were given a choice of remaining at Unalaska.

Not at any time were we told where we were going or how long we would be gone. Everyone seemed to be just in a hurry to get us out of Unalaska.

After two weeks of traveling on the S.S. Alaska, a commercial steamship, with the women and children in state rooms and the men and boys in the hold of the ship. I was placed in the hold and we were not permitted to go in the first class section. Husbands and wives were separated during this whole trip.

A couple of days out of Unalaska, a new born baby of Constantine and Helen Lekanot died aboard ship. The ship dock at Port Baider on Kodiak Island and a group of men were allowed to go ashore and bury the baby without the rites of a funeral.

On arrival at Wrangell we were taken to a BIA school, Wrangell Institute and again housed separately from our families. Men and women that is.

After 1 week we were taken to an old cannery at Burnett Inlet and all 180 of us were placed in an old 2 story Bunkhouse. There was no running water, lights, or heat, only the cooking range in the kitchen. Meals were fed camp style to all of us. There was one toilet "Outhouse" for the group no bath facilities were available.

After a few days when the men had fixed up the cabins at the cannery families were assigned a cabin. There were 8 cabins to be occupied. The largest families were assigned cabins. The rest had to live at the bunkhouse which had 9 rooms 15 x 12 ft. on the top floor and 6 rooms on the first floor. I stayed with my sister and her foster mother in one of the rooms and shared it with a married couple.

Later on the men built a school and apartment complex for the BIA teachers Mrs. Edith Long and her husband Elmer and daughter Dorothy. The school was for grades 1-6. The 7th and 8th graders were sent to Wrangell Institute which was 90 sea miles from the camp.

All the cabins were small and crowded sometimes 12-15 people shared these cabins the largest one room cabin was 20 by 30 and was shared by 15 people.

Food was issued weekly in amounts of members of household. No fresh foods were issued. If we wanted any we had to purchase them in Wrangell and have them shipped.

All home were wood stove heated and only one water faucet was provided for the 8 cabins.

I went to Wrangell Institute and did not return to Unalaska when they were returned, I never again saw my home as it had been torn down by the time I returned in 1957.

I, Alfred Stepetin, make this statement to the best of my knowledge, of how we were evacuated from Unalaska.

/s/ Alfred Stepetin

July 11, 1981