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Mary F. Pilgrim, May 1952, No Location, Interview by Mrs. Nick Eidam

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Mrs. Nick Eidam of the College Community Woman's Club is interviewing Mary F. Pilgrim. Mary F. Pilgrim belongs to the National League of American Pen Woman. The organization was founded in 1897. It's a national organization of professional woman engaged in created work whether it be in the field of art, letters, or music. Two members have had books published recently. The first is Mrs. Morgan of Juneau who wrote "The Very Thought of Thee." The book is a winner in the Zonderzen's [?] Christian Biography of Missionary Book Contest. The second is Mrs. Laura Jones who wrote "Hearth in the Snow." Her book was written in her maiden name Buchan and is a story of a Bering Sea village. Mrs. Jones is with the Alaska Native Service. Mrs. Gruening held a public tea at the governor's mansion in Juneau for those two women.

Some other local authors include: Lee S. Gardner, who wrote "The Optimist, American Plan." He is now running for the legislature. Lumen Becker of Ester has a book about to be published. Also, Mort Graniff is a poet. Leon Vincent has written both poetry and prose. He wrote a poem for the Ice Carnival and won an award for that poetry. Helen Wilcox has published stories in a Canadian girls' magazine. Mrs. H.C. Landru, better known as Jackie Landru, who has written boys' stories. She probably has written more work than anyone in Fairbanks. John Ryan, editor of the News-Miner, has written to Maggie Murphy. Herb Hilscher wrote "Alaska Now". David Stokesberry [sp] published a Who's Who of Alaska and an Alaskan business directory in 1947. In 1950, Stokesberry put out the business directory and almanac. David and Mrs. Stokesbury are both teaching at Fort Yukon. David's parents lived in Alaska where David's father was once associated with the News-Miner.

Ms. Pilgrim says she was at the House of Adler and she was amazed by the amount of books on Alaska. She found Judge Wickersham's book "Old Yukon." New books Ms. Pilgrim found included "Home by the Bering Sea" by Mary Edna Winchell. Ms. Winchell was a missionary at the Jesse Lee Home at Unalaska. That is the home where Simeon Oliver spent most of his boyhood. Simeon wrote two books, "Son of the Smokey Sea" and "Back to the Smokey Sea." The Olivers are on a concert and lecture tour in New Hampshire. "Barney Hits the Trail" is a book by Sara and Fred Machetanz. "Barney Hits the Trail" is an account of a boy who is invited to spend the winter with his uncle in Alaska. Fred is a nephew of the late Charles Traeger of Unalakleet. Fred has also written "On Arctic Ice" and "Panuck, Eskimo Sled Dog." "Bridge to Russia: Those Amazing Aleutians" which is an account of the experience of Murray Morgan in the Aleutians during World War Two. "Let's Read about Alaska" by Stuart R. Tompkins, "The Story of the Totem Pole" by Ruth Brindze and of course the Helmerich's books. The most interesting Pilgrim found

was "Alaska: the Trailblazers of Bygone Days Pioneers of Alaska" was authored by William Chase of Cordova. The publication was sponsored by the Grand Igloo of Alaska. Pilgrim found two new books on poetry: "A Night in Sitka" by Rita L. Thomas and "I Reached for A Star" by Lenore Dawes. Herb Hilscher's "Alaska Now", John Ryan's "Maggie Murphy" and Lee S. Gardener's "The Optimist: American's Plan" are all mentioned by Ms. Pilgrim. Pilgrim says she believes the best fiction author is Barrett Willoughby. The first story Ms. Pilgrim found by Willoughby was in American magazine called "Alaskan Moon." Rex Beach lived in the mining days and he wrote many stories. Jack London's "Call of the Wild", "Sea Wolf", and "White Fang" are mentioned by Ms. Pilgrim. Eunice Mays Boyd lived in Fairbanks once and Mary Lee Davis also lived in Fairbanks. "Alaska Nellie" by Nellie Neal Lawing is a firsthand account of her exploits in pioneering. Judge Wickersham has written "Old Yukon", and "Tails, Trails, and Trials" covers 1724-1924 of Alaska literature bibliography. Charlie Brower, Sr. wrote "50 Years Below Zero", which is the story of 50 years spent in the arctic. Dr. Devine wrote "The Time of My Life." Dr. Devine now lives in California but was a physician in southeastern Alaska. Eva Green Anderson wrote a story about Dr. Romig in the Bethel area but the name is not given. "The Apostle of Alaska" by Art Tander is the story of Reverend Duncan of Metlakatla. Reverend Duncan brought Alaska Natives from B.C. to Metlakatla. Thomas Jenkins wrote "Man of Alaska", which is the history of the Episcopal Church. May Kellogg Sullivan wrote a book called "A Woman Who Went to Alaska" which was an account of her experience during the gold rush.

Henry Poore wrote "An Artist Looks at Alaska". Poore was one of a group of artists commissioned by the War Department to cover war time Alaska. "War Discovers Alaska" by Joseph Driscoll is described by Ms. Pilgrim as a newspaper man's account of what was going on during the war from Kotzebue to Ketchikan.