



UNIVERSITY OF ALASKA

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Anthropology and Historic Preservation
Cooperative Park Studies Unit

June 22, 1978

Ms. Alice Lynch
c/o John Beck, District Archaeologist
Bureau of Land Management
4700 E. 72nd Ave.
Anchorage, Alaska 99501

Dear Ms. Lynch:

In response to your letter of May 18 regarding Old Woman Cabin, I can suggest several written sources which refer to Old Woman Mountain and mention some remarks from native residents of Kaltag and Unalakleet regarding this area. First, you are probably already familiar with the works of H.N. Michael on Lieutenant Zagoskins Travels in Russian America, William Dall on Alaska and Its Resources, F. Whympier on Travels and Adventures in the Territory of Alaska, William Loyens on The Changing Culture of the Nulato Koyukon Indians, and works by members of the Western Union Telegraph Company survey (other than Dall and Whympier) such as Robert Kennicott and William Ennis. Each of these writings includes information about Old Woman Mountain and the Portage. I am also enclosing a xerox portion of Jette's manuscript "On the Geographical Names of the Ten'a" which mentions Old Woman Mountain. Further, Bruce Lutz did an archaeological survey on the Unalakleet River and the results of that survey are on file in the files of the Alaska Heritage Resource Survey of the State office. Other sources are mentioned in my paper on the Kaltag Portage as well as in my Report on the Cultural Resources of the Doyon Region, Central Alaska (see chapter on the Koyukon subregion).

Native Indian residents of Kaltag told a colleague of mine, Mary Kroul, that Old Woman Cabin was built by the Army during World War I and was used as a telegraph cabin. Also, it was used as a mail cabin and several contract mail carriers from Kaltag and Nulato are familiar with the cabin as a way station on the mail route. Another colleague, Kathryn Koutsky, mentioned that some Eskimo residents of Unalakleet thought there was an Indian village at Old Woman at one time. However the people I spoke with at Kaltag did not recall a village there although the area had been used for trapping at least as far back as the 1850's.

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I hope this has been of some use to you. If you have any specific questions please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Elizabeth Andrews". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned below the word "Sincerely,".

Elizabeth Andrews
Research Associate

EA/reb

Enclosure