

June 15, 1981 Steve Peterson and John Mattson, ^{RUST'S FLYING} ~~Tourist~~ Service, took off from Lake Hood by float plane at 8:20 to take a look at the Forest Service lands along the Iditarod Trail....John Mattson ^{is} ~~was~~ the State Forest Service ~~Fish and Wildlife Service Forest Service~~ ^{ARCHAEOLOGIST} for the Anchorage District....

Considered funding for Eagle River Road from the visitors center down to the highway as part of the Iditarod Trail.....

First John Mattson Forest Service, on the ground there reports the remains of several structures above the railroad tracks the trees led to several cabins on the Alaska Railroad log cabin one half mile seems to be in fairly good roughly packed log structure with construction type tunnel district looks like the trail possibility to avoid using the tunnels would be to go to the east side of the tunnel the tunnel vault together let you come out at the foot of the glacier; prior to getting there there is a nice little lake that stands above the mouth of the glacier where a camp-site over there could be incorporated. It looks like that would be a feasible alternative to building bridges and such through the tunnel district.. there is recent cabin remains of one log structure ruin evidently a a wood structure, no metal, lying right adjacent to the existing Pass trail approximately 16' by 14' John Mattson reports that upstream from there are the remains of an old hydraulic giant used for mining activities since the camp was constructed in 1910. According to John Mattson, White's roadhouses was existing approximately four or five structures on the site; the remains of one old log cabin with an old metal roof on it still stand at the site and part of the original old White's roadhouse complex; that structure or any other structure adjacent to it remains an old complete blacksmith's shop complete with bellows and forges and everything. John indicated that the owners of that are really interested in trying to preserving that; those structures and have thought about perhaps putting them or giving them to the Forest Service for preservation. Additionally and approximately 100 yard up the stream from that complex is a tunnel opening that was part of the Anderson quartz claim which consists of a tunnel back into the mountains in that area.

Candy Creek Dam built by Anderson with 20 Swedes was a ~~weak~~^{WING} dam built out of one side of the bluff when it was constructed it would be swung out in the current, the current would slam it shut causing the river to dam; downstream from that are the remains of four structures, that the Wibel? site, those structures, though the roofs are gone seem to be in good shape...offer a beautiful vista on the east side of the river however, and directly across the river from Wibel on the west side of the creek are the remains of a large crate structure with the roof in tact however, it is evidently leaking...there was one out building... Swinging Bridge Dam is Swinging Wing Dam, possibility of developing beside the old trail..it is evident in that area paralleling the existing highway.

✓ Lawrencon cabin, according to John Mattson, structure still standing in good to excellent condition, and been maintained evidently there's a process of doing a determination of eligibility or a National Register nomination on the structures..there remains from 1896 mining efforts on this creek. The highly significant structure, given the location and in relation to the gold mining in the area. The Henry

— cabin is located upriver from that cabin approximately 200 yards and it is marginal as to whether it would be possible for the National Register nomination, it is also in good to excellent condition, with the roof sound and intact. Lawrenson Cabin is a frame structure, vertical

boards battened with wood, with a tin roof, new plywood door on the front. Fleet Creek Mine, evidence of an old mill still standing approximately a few miles up the draw from the highway, poor to good condition. Forest Service #141. The old mail camp by Trail Lake no~~x~~ remains evident from aerial observation, old trail is evident however running across the point to the west, east of the Moose Pass segment of the trail, maybe it's north...USGS map ...

Steve: What we've got here is just a bunch of old maps...kind of tracing the Iditarod as it goes through the section and all the old sites we can find out about....

You probably know more about it in this area than probably anyone... We talked to Carl the other day at Hope...

Ed: Carl Clark.?

Steve: Yea..He's just a walking encyclopedia on a lot of this stuff..

Ed: Oh yes, Carl's been here for a few years.

Steve: You were born here? Is that correct?

Ed: No...that mountain was just a little knoll when I came here

Steve: Is that right!

Ed: Now what?

Steve: You and your brother...I guess. Carl was saying that your brother was a surveyor and you worked on the mail route through this area?

Ed: Well I had the mail contract from Moose Pass to Hope.

Steve: To Hope, over this route here, the Moose Pass route.

Ed: It's probably about the same as the highway does now.

Steve: One of the things we are looking for is a reference on an old survey map, was that the old mail camp that was right here at the point just outside of Moose Pass. It looks like the old trail went up and over this point a little bit. Is that right?

Ed: Moose Pass, let's see, upper trail....

Steve: Probably be pretty close to where the new hatchery is going in there, somewhere in that vicinity.

Ed: It was...is right close there back in the woods, there's nothing left of the old cabin.

OLD MAIL CAMP.

Steve: There was a cabin in there though?

Ed: Yeah. Weaver had that property; it's the old Weaver property.

Steve: What did he do? Was it just a stopping place on the mail run?

Ed: Yea...just a stopover..

Steve: You ran what? Horses? when you ran your mail.

Ed: No No... I ran dogs.

Steve: You ran dogs.

Ed: Or rather they ran me!! You know you're the biggest dog in the team when you run dogs. They say go back to the good old days... I say you can go back as far as when I was mushing dogs and then cut her off....dog mushing.. that's for the birds. When you fly....and you know...what it would be like to get over there with a bunch of those crap hounds going across the hills....it ain't just exactly a picnic I'll tell you

Steve: Do you think a fellow could find the old foundation logs of that mail camp there.

Ed: I went back in there two years ago; my son Danny and I, and we tried to find it and I couldn't find it. I know it's right in that area, right there, because I was in there and looked at it oh forty-five years ago, and it was still standing. The roof was caved, one side of the roof was caved, but the logs; it was made of big logs.

Steve: Pretty good size structure:

Ed: No, no, it wasn't a big cabin, but it was made of big logs and it was sitting in there right on that one spot, and I'll be goldarned if I can walk back to that...went back in there twice.

✓ OLD MAIL LAMP

Steve: Should be able to find it... if, you know if we do a good transect, a close transect, we should be able to pick that thing up...

Ed: Well I'll tell you how to locate it, you know up there on top of the hill at 35 where those lots are and the road goes back in there, you go back in there and go back to the hill and turn back this way to a little area then make a turnaround and come back down and go back down and out a road by the gravel pit there, well the road; you can go in that road, either road, but they got a road that goes in this way and it turns up there and make a little turnaround area and that can't be over 1000 yards back in there to it, in that area, just right this way...

Steve: Should be able to, with a ground survey, we should be able to find that.

Ed: Yea should be able to.

Steve: Who was Weaver? The fellow that owned it.

Ed: Well, he homesteaded that piece of property..

Steve: I see. Part of a homestead.

Ed: Years ago, yeah... E.R. Weaver was his name.

Steve: E.R. Weaver. He never ran the mail or anything, he just had it as a stop, like a roadhouse, was that kind of what it was.

Ed: Well that's more or less what it was, stopover camp, you know.

Steve: We were able to talk to Carl about a lot of these places through here, I don't know if there's any we can kind of bounce of; we have Sunrise Station, that's over here, Johns Creek cabin, we have that down as 1920 but that thing was constructed in the 20s... do you know if that was an earlier cabin?

Ed: Johnson Pass.

✓ Steve: John's Creek. We just have John's Creek cabin, it may have been a different name..

• Ed: That's up here.. that's Johnstown.

Steve: Johnstown.

Ed; Yeah. Should be Johnstown... Johnny Gilpatrick.

— Steve: Gilpatrick's is right here; here's Gilpatrick's...and there's Johns Creek cabin; course here's Moose Pass, so it would be right as you turn here...

O.K. that's Jeremy Lake ...

Ed: Gilpatrick's right here at the Gilpatrick's is where Burt Haegins and John Gilpatrick had a cabin; that was called Johnstown...

Steve: Johnstown, another name for it then....

Carl was saying that Gilpatrick's and Slate Creeks, those two were the largest producers of any type of mining...

✓ Ed: Slater Mountain, yeah.

Steve: Slater Mountain?

Ed: Slater up Slater Creek. Well you go up Fresno Creek and then you turn off up to Slater Creek...I'm lost..

Steve: Here's Sunrise. Here's Jeremy Lake here...Moose Pass.

Ed: What did you say?

Steve: Jeremy ..excuse me..Jerome Lake... Upper Trail Lake, Summit Lake and Lower Summit Lake. Gilpatrick's there...and we have place located right there on Johnson's Creek.. I think that's a recreation cabin, it's a recent structure from the 20s...

John: Well I'm not sure exactly when but it's a recent cabin..

Ed: Oh John's Creek?

Steve: Yea.. there's a recreation cabin there.

Ed: Somebody built in there here..that isn't an old cabin.

Steve: Yeah, it's not that old..

Ed: Down here at Jerome Lake there used to be an old cabin sitting right there at Jerome Lake on this side of Jerome Lake... was a stopover cabin

Steve: Did that sort of sit up on a knob a little bit...

Ed: They tore it down.. you know...Forest Service burned it I think... Forest Service burned down a lot of our cabins...

Steve: They sure did.

Ed: Thorn in our butt about that..you know, some of those

Steve: Don't blame you.. they don't do that any more though..Do they?

John: No, I think that the policy has been changed now so that they don't burn them down.

Ed: Some goon balled up...burning those old cabins, and some of those cabins might have been just a shelter when a fellow, say for instance you're out in your plane and you go down 30 40 below you could get in and get shelter.. they should have been fixed up a little bit because they saved a man's life a lot of times...

Steve: Lordstein?

John: Lordson...

Steve: Lordson Cabin...I guess it was on Mills Creek up here on Quartz Creek at the mouth...

John: Right across the mouth of Mill's Creek there. That cabin that's still standing, right across Canyon Creek from where Mills comes in.. .there's that old cabin that sits right down there

Ed: On that point?

John: Yeah, well no, not on the point, that's a recent one..it's the old log structure has a dovetail corners on it...

Ed: Where is it sitting?

John: You know where Mills Creek joins Canyon... Okay, well just across from the mouth of Mills where Mills comes into Canyon Creek, right across from the mouth, that little log cabin that's still sitting there...maybe 20 feet long and 12 feet wide, something like that.

Ed: Down in the hole there?

John: Sits right on the stream bank right on the Canyon Creek bank. There's a newer built place on the

Ed: Right out on the point. That's - Willard Dunham had that for a while didn't he?

Are you sure..

Steve: That could be. There's some folks by the name of McHendry have it now?

Ed: Yea.

Steve: Does that sound familiar?

Ed: Yea...

Steve: It's across the stream..on the other side of the stream from that. Where the ford is, where you ford the river now.

Ed: That's down in the hole there... Well now, Bob Michaelson had a cabin up there you know...from where this more recent cabin is out on the point. It's back from the point he had a cabin.

Steve: Yeah, I think you and Lyn Mitchell visited that place one time and tried to find that old cabin site and you couldn't seem to find it.

Ed: Yeah, it was all gone. Couldn't even find any indentation in the sod where it was, but I was right on it, I know I was on it... I went in there and took Bob Michaelson out when he went blind and his niece sent for him back in New York.. and he went around that cabin and told the cabin good bye, goddamn near made me cry..I never heard anything so pitiful in my life..

Steve: He just lost his sight?

Ed: Yeah. He was still active you know but he was in his nineties... He told me he says.... I led him out, I led him in by the corner of the cabin and he went around all four corners of his cabin, mumbling and jumbling and telling goodbye.

I brought him in with me by boat..went out by boat from Seattle. Kinda touchy..

Steve: He'd been there a long time too? When you ran the mail from Moose Pass to Hope what did you do, did you overnight anywhere or did you make that entire run in one day pretty much.

Ed: Oh no...I'd go up here and stay with Dan McMillan or Frank Hilo up at Gilpatrick's, they had a cabin there, well the old cabin is still there Miss Disney stays in the old McMillan Cabin, what used to be Dan McMillan's, he built it.

Steve: That would be your first overnight then?

Ed: Yea. If it was bad weather... then we'd go over and stay with Nick Rhules then go on down stay with Mike Connelly at Sunrise and then go on to Hope.

Steve: Yea, Sunrise is right there. Where was Bruhn Rae...Bruhn Rae mine is right there...

Ed: The who?

Steve: The Bruhn Mine...You said the Bruhn Mine..

Ed: No, No, Nick Bruhn, he's just an old guy that worked on the road.

Ed: He had a still out of Seward that's when days were dry you know. ..what the devil was his name..anyway Dan McMillan was the one that built it.

Steve: Do you have any idea when he built it?

Ed: Has to be back in 26/7..right along in there..

Steve: So it isn't the original Gilpatrick settlement there...

Ed: Oh no .. that's over across the stream over there. The old Burt Hagen cabin, the old Gilpatrick cabin is still there. A little cabin sitting back. They kind of devised that... then the old cabin we used to stop at was just beyond that but that was rotted down completely. We kept our dogs in that old cabin 1927 and 28. But it's all rotted and gone away. In fact the road now took off from where it was.

Steve: I see. The old original one. Dal~~ls~~, we don't have any remaining at Dal~~ls~~...1905. Between Gilpatrick's and

Ed: Oscar Dal~~ls~~?

Steve: Yea..

Ed: Well that was built later. Oh yea... that ain't no old cabin there. Oscar Dal~~ls~~.

Steve: Is that where those Forest Service recreation cabins are. There on Summit Lake, or Lower Summit. There's a big gravel pit there and the Michaelson Cemetery is located there..

Ed: They got the Michaelson Cemetery... they was here a couple or three years ago and I didn't get a chance to go out with them...but they had it on the other side of the creek..out on the lake..you know they had it on the other side... it's not on the other side it's on this side.

Steve: It's not too far from the outhouse there is it? Where that....

Ed: Where Oscar Dal~~ls~~ has got the outhouse sitting out there.

Steve: Well this is a recent Forest Service outhouse; it's on this side of the creek...and there's depressions in the ground not too far from it..

Ed: Yeah, it's back on that point... Bob Michaelson's buried there; Joe Wilson and Bob Michaelson's wife and baby is buried there.

Steve: Was it ever marked? Were there ever markers there?

Ed: No but I can walk right within .. but there's nothing... you can't see a darn thing there.

— MICHAELSON CEMETERY.

Steve: No depresssions at all.

Ed: No I couldn't see it, but it should be marked off.

Steve: Certainly should. We need to fence that and mark them.

Ed: There used to be the baby's grave; a little fence around it and then she lay alongside of the baby's grave. Then they buried Old Man Wilson.

Steve: Who was Wilson now? Was he just a miner in the area?

Ed: Yeah, he was Old Man Joe Wilson...

Steve: If you'll refer to that sleen map of 1910 you'll see that there is a cabin indicated on there as Joe Wilson's cabin, which was located pretty close to where Saxtons built theirs. In the same general area somewhere.

Ed: Well it's actually back this way.

Steve: This way from Saxtons?

Ed: Yea, you see they go a big mining pit down in there and they was on this side and they had their camp here...and the rocks were down in the pit. There's still good signs of that yet..but it's on the old road it ain't on the ...the new road is back up this way you see; you don't even see that anymore.

Steve: Did you ever run the Johnson Trail at all?

Ed: No.

Steve: On the mail or anything else? Pretty much discontinued after 1910.

Ed: Yeah, that was discontinued when we come here in 21. See we moved over here in 21.

Steve: They just stopped using it because all the activity was more or less along this portion of the trail; that's where all the people lived... except for the Whites, I guess, and the Andersons up there.

Ed: Well you had N.O. Anderson and they were putting in that dam on Canyon Creek and they come in on the old wagon road.

✓ **CANYON CR. DAM**
Steve: When was that he put that in? Was that in the 20s. He tried putting that dam in or was it earlier than that...

Ed: It was the 20s.

Steve: Carl talked about he had 20 Swedes chopping trees for a year and a half to build that dam.

Ed: Oh there's still a lot of pile of logs up there on that bench..

Steve: Oh the logs are still up there...part of the dam's still there too it's still pretty much there.

Ed: That dam caved in... I forget what year it was, but the dirt caved out of it and blocked the river and one 4th of July it let go.

Took the bridge out going up to Lynx Creek. Then I hauled a new bridge for the Forest Service and they put it in I got a picture of the loading logs for the piling

Steve: The bridge going to Lynx Creek...

Ed: Yea, the Canyon Creek Bridge... crossing Canyon Creek...

Steve: Then White's.. they ran a roadhouse right up there at the mouth; there's still two old cabins, well there's several cabins..

✓ Ed: Yea the old Lynx Creek cabin.. then later on Boyd had it... Ted Boyd.

— LYNX CR.

Steve: Ted Boyd?

Ed: He had it and it burned down....

Steve: He did some tunneling in there?

Ed: No, no. That has been misconstrued so much. That tunnel is no tunnel it was just a sluice to carry the tailings and they had...there was sluice in here with a giant into that tunnel and then they had a tail giant sitting down here at the sluice to that tunnel wasn't for nothing, only a sluice box. That's all it was for..there was no mining in there..

Steve: No hard rock in there?

Ed: No they just drilled through that to get a race for their tailings..

Steve: Sweatman Camp. Course that's up here on Palmer Creek I guess?

Ed: Yea well that's the old Hershey mine..ain't it?

John: No I don't think so.

Ed: Well he had another camp..he had another deal down below the Hershey Mine. Then later Swatman took over the Hershey Mine but they never did much

John: The Hershey Mine is on the National Register...

Steve: Is that right?

John: Yes.

Steve: What's that, is that on Palmer Creek too..

Ed: Yea, way up on the head of Palmer Creek...Clear up at the head of Palmer Creek... you're way off the Iditarod trail...

Steve: Yeah over here... here's the Iditarod over here... what we tried to do on this whole trail thing... it's not an Iditarod trail, there's a whole bunch of them.. what we're trying to do on this plan we're doing is say okay this is the primary route based around the 1910 period... These are all like connecting routes here..going through there. We relied upon the Iditarod I guess. Then actually going up over Crow Pass down Eagle River... it actually goes up to Birchwood, Eklutna across the flats on the north end of Knik..through Cottonwood, the old roadhouse at Cottonwood down to Knik and then pretty much takes on out straight on out to Susitna and Skwentna..out through there. The railroad we found a lot of the old survey maps and such that the railroad did through this area...

KUNNEY ~~Coony~~ and Weir and there's half a dozen of them that worked on it.. Your brother was a surveyor?

Ed: Oh Yea..yea. An engineer.

Steve: An engineer. Was he with the railroad.

Ed: No with the highway.

Steve: With the highway...he did a lot of work down here on these stretches?

Ed: Well he surveyed the whole thing from Moose Pass to Hope.

Steve: Is that right?

Ed: Then here into Seward.

Steve: Is that right?

Ed: There isn't an inch of the ground that he hasn't walked on.

Steve: Do you know if he ever kept any old diaries? Besides the survey diaries.

Ed: Bill has got so much stuff but he's in Seattle now...he wasn't feeling good last fall and he went out.. he give all the land surveying that he'd done.. he give that to the surveyor in Seward.. what's his name in Seward?

Steve: Surveyor

Ed: Yea in Seward. He did the survey job on my dam project. My hydroelectric. Can't think of his name.

Steve: The surveyor.....

Steve: Be nice to look at those sometime and see how far..

Ed: Bill would be right interested to talk to you on surveying and stuff and old monuments and where they was...

Steve: Yeah of all the sections of the trail this is the easiest one to document because the railroad has been so interested in this area and they've had people you know from about 1914 the Alaska Engineering Commission just went crazy and were surveying everything here. A lot of people working then.

Ed: 1911, 12, 1914...

Steve: There was a lot of survey maps published in 14....you don't know when they surveyed before that but on up through here.

Ed: Well See the old ..up here Johnston where the end of the railroad was but...the Alaska Railroad bought it... Alaska Northern. Later.....
Ethan Brewster, he lived here, ~~Johnston~~... Freddy Delaney's got that property now.

✓

JOHNSON

— JOHNSON

Steve: He's an old retired railroad person isn't he?

Ed: Yea.. Conductor.. he's in Hawaii..

Steve: Oh is that right. He goes over there and comes back here.

Ed: Well he was back here this summer.

Steve: He has a pretty nice old cabin there...is that part of the old roadhouse?

that was there...

Ed: Yeah it's a real old cabin.

Steve: He's really taken good care of it..

Ed: That cabin's been there since we've been here.

Steve: Is that right....

Ed: I don't know when it was built... built before we come here.

Steve: Is there some hot springs up in that area right there?

Ed: Well I've heard there is but I've never.... somebody was telling me lately there was some hot springs up there but it's news to me I've never heard of it.

Steve: Is that right. Yea, I found it on an old map that referred to Johnson's Springs up there... maybe not hot springs, it could just be a ground water spring you know coming up out of there. Seems to be a bunch of old wagons up there or remains of old wagons and cabins in that area too.

Ed: That's on up the trail. About two miles up the trail.

Steve: What are they? Do you know who put those in there.

Ed: That's the old stopover cabin when they went across Johnson Pass into Hope.

Steve: They didn't stop right down here at the mouth they went on up to this other cabin...

Ed: Well, one of the stopover cabins, the old cabin part of it's still standing
it's all down in pieces.

Steve: And the other ones that are up the trail a ways...it seems the trail takes off here a little ..from what is shown on the map here...

Ed: The old snowmachine trail you mean...now they got a foot trail around the end of the lake, they got a foot trail going.

Steve: Right. But when it gets up into this area they made a new route through here and the old buildings and the remains of the wagon are on the old trail. The new one completely bypasses it..

Ed: Yea. the old trail is over to the right I think.

Steve: Yes.

Ed: Then they come down they come up through them and went to Groundhog where's Groundhog.

Steve: Right there.

Ed: My brother and I mined on Groundhog.

Steve: Oh is that right.

Ed: Then we mined on Main Street too. That would be down here.

Steve: Was that after Anderson was up there? Didn't Anderson mine most of Lynx Creek?

Ed: Well there was Chris Emmett and Jacobs boys mined on Lynx Creek, Back a long time ago, then Cooper and Stone mined on Lynx Creek; that's when they had a snowslide up there...buried six men...when Cooper had it, Cooper and Stone. They called it their Eureka Mine.

Steve: Eureka Mine on Lynx Creek.

Ed: Yea. Well it was... all the fellows was from Eureka, California. They got killed... is that right.

Ed: Yea they all slid in...I just hauled them in there not two weeks before, took em out and then they went up Lynx Creek and came out the highway... call it mile 29 it's the forks where the Hope road takes off. Now ..they went back up in there.. had a cat. they went back up then they was mining the whole hillside.. it was a good three quarters of a mile across that son of a gun.

The old northwest crane is still up there... flattened, that pipe is flattened.

Steve: Was there a George Anderson that worked up in that area too. Does that name sound familiar at all.

Ed: George Anderson... no not that I know of. Bill Carden was up there for years... up in there at Lynx Creek and he was up at Silvertip. Had a little old cabin up there at Silvertip..

Steve: George Carden.

Ed: Bill Carden.

Steve: ~~Bill Carden.~~

LYNX CR - SILVERTID

Ed: He had water problems. He had one of these things you call a catheter, and he'd keep it inside under his shirt...well we got to hunting moose one time and an alder going through the alders hooked on that, and he was up Lynx Creek and he couldn't get rid of his water and he come down here and he'd taken a pair of pliers... he just pick up a roll of this haywire and run it up his peter and spread it so he could get rid of some water...and he was just about to die...we was ...all of us guys sleeping on the top of the garage and we heard this moanin and groanin and Tanner took him into Seward and they cut him from clear down hear clear up past his belly button and Miss Merle was the nurse in Seward and of course when she come in to dress his wound you know Doc Haverstock, the doctor Miss Merle was with and Miss Merle just wanted to dress his wound and Bill was a big horrible talkin son of a gun you know, and she says that's quite a gash Bill and he says don't you worry about that gash some of you folks run around here with bigger gashes than that and never get a she was going to have him throwed out of the Drs hospital. She was mad...Miss Merle was a big woman you know and she was just and kind and gentle as can be and she was just trying to make conversation with that old turd. She went in to Doc Haverstock, I'm not waiting on that old so and so....she was a little religious too...

Steve: Must have been in pain...

Ed: That one will heal he says but them will never heal!!!

Ed: Jesus Christ.

Steve: Did you ever freight when you ran the mail?

Ed: Well I'd carry what freight I could. George Ruhls...

Steve: Did he have a store over there or something?

Ed: Yea he'd run out of or something.. small items you know.

Steve: Carl started talking about, you know he and his brother ran a ferry operation a little bit from Hope to Rainbow and other people have tried it.

I guess they did it for three or four years. I don't know, I'm not sure that date is correct.

Ed: Yea Carl and Earl used to run across Turnagain Arm.

Steve: Did anyone ever run from Sunrise across....

Ed: Not that I know of.. They come up the side of Hope and ferried across for a while before the highway was put around here.

Steve: Once in a while... nothing scheduled.

Ed: No.

Steve: But they would come from Hope.

Ed: No it was up this side of Hope they took off them and that little tight water inlet there; they'd go over an then they'd go over to

Steve: Indian? Indian or Girdwood?

Ed: No They'd go over to Potter...they tried the ferrying deal but it didn't work out.

Steve: Did they used to run little steamers, shallow draft steamers up the arm here a little bit... do you ever recall seeing boats like that on the arm?

Ed: Oh yea, my stepdad run a gasboat... he ran a gasboat for the railroad and up along Tunagain Arm when they was puttin in the railroad along there.. hauled black powder up there and stuff....went up to the station gangs.. that was all station gang work...at that time back in 1918. 17/18 along there.

Steve: When they were going from Turnagain...around Turnagain into Anchorage.

Ed: Yeah...that's the only way they'd get their freight equipment in... into different places, like into Currant Creek...

Steve: Did you ever have any experience with Crow Pass or Indian Pass?

Ed: No.

Steve: Never went up into that country much.

John: You know where these cabins are they call Wibell's Cabins, about the ruins of four little cabins ...

Ed: Oh that's over across Canyon Creek... No... Wibell...Tommy Allison had that after Wibell.

John: Well, it looks like there's a trail or a ditch that kinda runs along the mountainside along there....

Ed: That's a ditch, a water ditch. You'll see several of them

Steve: You never ran on that side with the dogs did you, you were always on the other side of the canyon....

Ed: No on this side....

Steve: There's an old cabin up there right on the ditch....that one right behind Wibell's...is that the one we saw today? Wibell's is the four little cabins in a line and then across, almost directly across Canyon Creek there was a cabin ruin sitting there too...

Ed: Right across from Wibell's? That was Tommy Allison's old cabin.

Steve: Allison's, okay.

Ed: Well I used to stay overnight with him when I was running mail.

Steve: Has that cabin been there for quite a while?

Ed: Oh that was an old cabin that was built back when Wibell built. There's a lot of ditches on this side too that Wibell put in. Clear from Fresno Creek down and it picked up past Frency and Donaldson Creek. It come clear, the ditch come clear from Summit Lake where the Summit Lake Lodge is... they ditched that and it went on around to Hope. Hope, you can follow that ditch, in fact four, five, six years ago, AAI plane crashed in there, maybe you've heard about that... it went nose right in the ditch; hit right in the ditch.. up there just above or just below the power line. When you crash into that other....I flew with one of the reporters down here for that.

Ed: What is your name?

Bill Conkler.

Ed: Seems like I've seen you before.

Bill: Yeah you look familiar to me. I've been around here, about, in and out of here for about ten years. Might have bumped into you somewhere.

Ed: Yeah.

Steve: I guess I don't have a whole lot of other questions. You ran the mail up until 1928, 29. When did they quit running those

Ed: No...

Ed: Guy wrote that.... Bill Massar, he was with the FBI in Fairbanks, he did up there.. but I went in the lake and he wrote that...it's pretty good... he wrote that after I put my truck in the lake.

Steve: It's an agreement made the 11th day of April 1930. carried United States Mail on emergency route No. 78134...Moose Pass to Hope, Alaska. Twice a month.

Ed: I always wear that little black cap of mine.

Steve: Carrying not to exceed 200 lbs of mail on a single trip each way.

Ed: Yeah I had a limit

Steve: Why did they limit?

Ed: Jesus Christ, you should have seen that poor Wilson down at the mail contract to Kenai...they come in here and they had dog team and they dumped a half of a box car load of mail for him...apples and oranges for Xmas you know, He'd take them inside one night, outside the next, inside the next night and they was just running juice out of them canvas sacks; that guy had tears in his eyes when he looked at that pile of mail..

Steve: You got \$50.00 a month? Did you get paid if you didn't get your mail there.

Ed: No the mail went on the trail whether it snowed rain or storm..the first and third Saturday of every month.

Steve: I know talking with Edgar Callen out there at Kaltag he ran mail and there they had station to station they had three days and if they didn't deliver in three days they didn't get paid.

Ed: You notice the price in there.

Steve: Yeah...

Ed: Couldn't get nobody to walk to hope for that now...let alone run a bunch of dogs.

Steve: Was that the last year then, '31, that you ran. After that..

Ed: No I had another contract after that.

Steve: Were you the last one to run dogs then up to then..
'32. What'd they do then start by road and air...

Ed: No. They begin ploughing the highway.

Steve: I see.

Ed: I took it for another four years sorta make up a little of my dog mushing days but some guy underbid me.

Bill: Quite a document.

Ed: Yeah I wouldn't let go of that for nothing now..

Steve: Nice.

Ed: In that one there I thought that was pretty good....that guy wrote there.

Steve: Estes momento.

Ed: Yea. Harvey and I was up the end of the lake hunting moose see; he has his little car up there; he turned that rear axle pulled the ujoint out.. I said I'd come back and get the truck and tow him in... it was on the ice.... I never showed up ... they kid me about that.. it's still up

there it's in about 150 feet of water. They used to say my first tracks from the truck was under 175 feet on ice where I jumped. Didn't take it long to go down, I'll tell you.

Steve: Did you get pulled in with it?

Ed: No.. I jumped.

Steve: Here's the story that's going around about the night the Ford did drown...

Bill: Were you able to get food for the dogs everywhere you stopped or did you carry your own.

Ed: I carried it with me...salmon...smoked salmon. Salmon and tallow. and Porkies. You know back then porcupines were so thick here...we'd take a pushcar and go from the section house up about where you could see the railroad up there from where you're sitting. Just about a mile 3/4 of a mile; we'd come back and we'd have eighty-six, ninety to a hundred porkies...right on the railroad track. We killed them for dog food.

Steve: Was there a time when rabbits were pretty thick in this area?

Ed: Oh yeah. At the same time..rabbits and porcupines.

Steve: Did you ever hear of the Snoring Inn up on the railroad?

Ed: Sure.

Steve: What do you know about that? The old ruins are still pretty much standing there...

Ed: I knew Blackie myself...

Steve: That was the operator?

Ed: He's Blackie... He had Snoring Inn and the Snoring Out down here *(IN MOOSE PASS)*

Steve: The Snoring Out..was that....

Ed: Just a little cabin..called the Snoring Inn and the Snoring Out..

Steve: and that was right here at Moose Pass.. a little bit south.

Ed: Yeah, he had one up about mile 40 on the railroad.

Steve: That was Snoring Out at mile 40.

Ed: Yeah. I couldn't tell you.. Snoring Inn or Snoring Out...one or the other.

Steve: The other one is up here on the railroad.

Ed: Mile 40 somewhere.

Steve: Snoring Inn. yeah just below Grandview.

Blackie; was it a roadhouse then or stopover cabin.

Ed: No..just a little cabin

Steve: He didn't live there.. He trapped through that area and prospected.

Ed: Drank wine. Yeah.. that's about all Blackie did.. Blackie... what was his name....that's the way with Bill and I we get to talking and if I forget a name then he knows. Yeah his name was Gus Goshis.

✓ Steve: Gus Goshis.

✓ Ed: Gus Roshis....

Steve: It's about the only old structure that's standing ... we did find another one this morning it's just right above Spencer here... an old cabin. right in this area.. it's standing there... pretty good old shape yet it's just right on the east side of the railroad... an old trapper cabin or something. You don't know what that is do you?

Ed: Where.

Steve: Well you know where the Spencer's on the railroad.. there's Portage, Spencer...Gleeson's camp... now that was up on the old Johnson's Trail...

You know anything about that. About 1910.

Ed: No. Brigham Young used to mine up in there...all I did was hear about it.

Steve: Brigham Young the ...

Ed: All I ever did was hear about it. That was back when Nate White he had the roadhouse at Lynx Creek. Mrs White, she was a huge woman, used to put her in the bottom of the boat to keep it from capsizing...

✓ Bill: Did you ever know the Andackers down there.. and the Andacker homestead?

Ed: Old lady Becker...

Steve: Andacher... Yeah... That was about mile 16..

Bill: On the snow river...

Ed: Yeah it should be still some remains back in there....

Bill: There still area.

Steve: She just ran a small homestead there? Is that what it was a homestead operation.

Ed: You know... old Bill.. I don't know what his name was but Jerome Hatchey and Fritz Post went down to get him... he died down on Caribou Island on Skilak Lake .. he died down there so the Commissioner in Seward sent em down there with the Yukon Sled to bring old Bill back... you know, so they went down there and he was dead in the cabin, so they put him out in the shed and built a fire and stayed overnight and they were laying there and Jerome Hatchey and Fritz Post. Fritz says "Hey Jerome he says, old Bill's a pretty good size man ain't he". Yeah.. he says, say he says, did you ever haul a moose out of the brush... guts feathers and all? Jerome says Christ...why you ask me a question like that? Well he says of course I never hauled a moose out guts, feathers and all. Well he says old Bill, he's a pretty good size guy and we're going to pack him into Seward he says...why don't we chop a hole in the lake and clean him...so they talked it over ... quite a lot of weight there... so they cleaned him...then went into Seward and they goddamn near got throwed in the jug. The carcass they had the guts.....they couldn't figure out why there wasn't guts feathers and all..

Steve: What was this guy's name.

Ed: Jerome Hatchy and Fritz Post.. I don't know the guy... Bill something... I can't remember his name.

Steve: Where was he from?

Ed: Down on Caribou Island. He did down there. Another time when Marshall Smith was in Seward and they used to have to take the boat and go clear around and go up the Yukon River...the commissioner told Marshall Smith to go up and they'd heard that there was a maurder up on the Yukon River and they had the fellow in Seward for arraignment and so the Commissioner heard that there was a squaw on the Yukon River that was an eye

witness to the murder so he told Marshall Smith to take a power boat and go up the Yukon River and bring her in. So they brought her in...and eh... she couldn't speak English worth a damn... couldn't understand.... so she got up on the hearing stand..courtroom full of people and she says ... he says eh.. young lady did Marshall Smith suphoena you.. what's that? and he says Did Marshall Smith suphoena you and bring you in? Oh yes she says once in the cabin, twice in the boat and last night in the hotel. She was suphoened. She was being suphoened....

Steve: Testimony..

Steve: Well I don't know if we've got any more questions here...sit here and talk to you all day I guess...but you're a busy man...

Ed: Well if my brother Bill was here we'd go over a lot of that old stuff ... cabin locations better than I can.

Steve: Think he'll make it back up for the summer then..

Ed: I don't know he hasn't written to me... haven't heard from him for four months. He wasn't feeling too good. He's older than I am.. he's about 75... I don't know if he'll be up or not. But if he does come up he would be the guy to get ahold of...like a lot of these reference points and stuff... The Forest Service should be really interested in getting a hold of some of that stuff.

Bill: She had a long discussion with Lynn Mitchell on several different occassions, I think, that probably you were sitting in on some of those ..

Bill: some tape recordings were made quite a few years ago... by somebody down in the Juneau office. I think interviewed your brother.

Ed: Yeah.

Bill: Those are on tapes down there...I'm not sure how to recall them but

Steve: I'd sure like to get together with both of you guys some time.

Ed: There's a lot of it that I forget names like Gus Grosis... and I don't remember but Bill would remember...I could never write about that....

Steve: You ought to get somebody to write it for you....

This is the easiest way ... a tape recorder right there and get somebody that's good on a typewriter and they can type almost as fast as you can talk. We've been working, you know, they made a historic trail here about two years ago I guess '78, three years ago now, and we had a fellow last year, that's all we did last summer with him.. he went out along the trail and was talking to a lot of oldtimers that know quite a bit about the trail... a lot of information on the old Iditarod and the trails were not that long ago so a lot of people remember a lot about it...

Ed: I've got a picture someplace of my step-father in 1905, his Mother and him taking off for Seward from Nome....she's setting in....you've got to see that picture... 1904 or 5...

Ed Estes, June 15/81