

[Monologue while in plane.]

Interview with ~~Rhodes~~: CARL CLARK, HOPE, JUNE, 1981

Steve: When did you come here? You said 1913, is that what you said?
Twenty years ago or so then.

~~Rhodes~~: ^{CLARK}
Yes.

Unknown: Weren't you at Sunrise, too?

~~Rhodes~~: ^C
No. There were quite a few people in Sunrise then too. That burnt about '15' or '16'.

Steve: It burnt down also, in 1915?

~~Rhodes~~: ^C
Most of the men were out fiddlin around in the creek there trying to make a living. A few women there, about half a dozen women, and the darn grass caught fire _____.

Steve: We flew in today. We come down from Seward flying the route. I have an old map here with a bunch of things I wanted to try to check with you...

Interview with Carl Clark:

Steve: How old are you?

Carl: Seventy-three. I'll be seventy-four.

Steve: We've tried to take a look at that old trail a little bit and a lot of what we found--a lot of this information--we found a bunch of old railroad surveys--The Alaska Northern Railroad and they got just everything along this route pretty well nailed out as far as places through the years, when they were located. We got a lot of maps from 1908 up till present time. We are just taking a look at some of these trails--the Johnson Pass Trail, Moose Pass Trail. The understanding is that there was also a trail that ran along the coastal area at one time, over from Sunrise?

Carl: Not that I know of.

Steve: Not even a winter trail?

Carl: No trail up there.

Steve: --at that end at all. On one of the maps we had drawn up we had located some sort of seasonal trail. But, you don't know of any?

Carl: I don't know anybody ever traveled a trail there and I know some of them here are ninety-five, old friends of mine. I know if there had been a trail there they would have mentioned it. No, they went up through here (Granite Creek). There was a trail up there, they had done a little mining up there. There was an old wagon road that went up in there.

Steve: Who had the mining road up there?

Carl: Well, old Al Peales, who used to be in Seward. He had some claims up there about where the road goes through now. They prospected all them creeks--never amounted to nothing. ~~Links~~ ^{LYNK} Creek was the main one up there.

Steve: Is that Links Creek? Should have been on the left or the right.

Carl: ~~White~~'s had a roadhouse there.

Steve: There's a couple of old cabins there, do you know whose those are?

Carl: I don't know who has got them now, but they are old ones.

Steve: Are they? Are they White's do you think?

Carl: The biggest one burnt up.

Steve: The main roadhouse burnt up. Do you know when that happened?

Carl: Oh, late thirties, middle forties.

Steve: Is that right? The other ones, do you think they are outbuildings that were with the old roadhouse?

Carl: Yes, that's all they are, just outbuildings. They mined up there. A guy had a mine there _____ through there.

Steve: Which town?

Carl: White, I guess, put the tunnel in. Then Anderson had it afterwards.

Steve: You've got Anderson's right down here a little bit below White. Is that right?

Carl: Well Anderson had the whole works afterwards. White had the roadhouse, him and his wife they were in the roadhouse.

Carl: Yes, up from the cabin. He mined right in the creek and then some more guys tried it later. Seven of them got killed in a slide over there.

Steve: A rock slide?

Carl: Snow slide. They got up the creek a little too far.

Steve: We show Anderson in there about 1910.

Carl: Well, he was in there after we come here because my dad worked for him. He was in there up until 1915.

Steve: We show Whites in there 1896.

Carl: Oh, he was in there after that, because we hauled old Anderson and his crew over here with a boat and we didn't start that till around '22'.

Steve: The old trail over at Johnson, of course the Forest Service trail you can see through there now, but you really can't see much of any other trail. Of course it's all that low willow. How did the trail follow through there, pretty much right down on the creek?

Carl: Pretty much the same way.

Steve: We really didn't see any cuts up on the ridges or anything that would indicate that the trail...

Carl: Well, about the only thing that has changed much on that is this road into Hope, they call it Beach, _____.

Steve: That was right down on the beach?

Carl: Well, close to it--it was off the beach and on the beach , but it hit the beach quite a bit.

Steve: And they'd go out on the ice too.

Carl: Well, not too much. There was a regular trail that crossed out there.

Steve: But, it was right...

Carl: It come down over them points.

Steve: So, it's more or less between Hope and Sunrise, between the highway and the ocean.

Carl: Right, it crosses the highway about half way to Sunrise, on the upper side.

Steve: You mean from Halfway Point to Sunrise, it was above the road. Then from Halfway Point it was below the road.

Carl: Yes, followed pretty close to that, beached (?) in the timber and out of the timber.

Steve: I'll have to take a look. I suppose most of that went with the earthquake though.

Carl: No, I think if I could find it it's probably brushier than any other place now, that's the way most of these trails are.

Steve: Come back thicker than before.

Carl: You see the brush real thick, that's where the trail was.

Unknown: _____.

Carl: There was always somebody had a roadhouse there. Whoever had it-- that was Anderson's--another one of his mining camps.

Steve: So Anderson mined right there at the _____ off on Links Creek. Right there today, just as you turn south to go down here to Moose Pass on the highway there is four or five old buildings in there. Look's like they are fairly well maintained.

Carl: Yeah, there is an old barn there and the other old buildings.

Steve: There is four buildings there, and all right in a row.

Carl: Real old buildings there.

Steve: Is that Anderson's site there?

Carl: Anderson had it once. He was going to build a log dam across Canyon Creek there and bring Canyon Creek up and run it right down to the where the road runs.

Steve: But that old site was there before Anderson owned it. What's it called now, do you know?

Carl: I don't know who owns it. We just call it the Fork.

Steve: That place is known as the Fork.

Carl: Where Canyon Creek and Six-Mile come together there.

Steve: Then there's that highway station there now, that maintenance shed. You kind of drop over the hill down towards the stream there then towards that Six-Mile Creek. There was some old foundation ruins right in there.

Carl: Well, there's a lot of remains of old cabins up there and across the creek there's a lot of old mining junk over there. There was people all over. Canyon Creek up there that was the main one, the one that goes up toward the lake there.

Steve: Canyon Creek, now where's that at?

Carl: That comes down along the road there from Summit Lake up there down towards Sunrise.

Steve: On the old Moose--what did they use to call it? The Moose Pass Freight Trail--Government Trail.

Carl: Well, the miners made it. They were mining over out of Moose Pass. _____ Creek was the richest. There was quite a little done there. It started with a pack trail and kept getting improved till they finally could get a wagon over it.

Steve: Widening out a little bit. Did you know anything about--this is probably a little south further than what you know of--Primrose Mine? South of Kenai Lake.

Carl: I don't know too much about that. Different ones have owned it.

Steve: We flew over it and all we saw was one little cabin up there and some little old ruins.

Carl: _____.

Steve: What about Falls Creek? They've got quite an ore building up there yet--a mill or...

Carl: Yeah, they tried to mine up there too, but that didn't pan out either.

Steve: Is that right? That's a real early one, '96'.

Carl: No, there's more gold took out of, well outside, Mills Creek and Canyon Creek up there, then Resurrection that was the main producer.

Steve: Resurrection, Mills Creek and Canyon Creek.

Unknown: What about Silvertip? On the map there's a place called Silvertip.

Carl: You know--well, that's above the forks there. Where they use the road _____.

Steve: There's an old cabin there right now that's standing. Did they go into the Granite Creek Route? Was that used more than the Johnson Route down to the railroad? I guess what I would have to ask is, when they were freighting I suppose they brought by rail, did they basically bring their freight to Johnson or Portage, or did they bring it to Moose Pass and then freight her back up?

Carl: Well, early ones come to Johnson Pass.

Steve: The earliest ones came to Johnson Pass--for this area, the whole Sunrise area. When did they start using the Granite Creek Route?

Carl: Well, they were still using that when we come here. Most everything came from Johnson Pass. Then, they used to bring freight into Sunrise and haul it up to Mills creek and up that way, that's how the wagon road got up there. They'd haul her from the army or...

Steve: What did they do, they'd just dock here at Sunrise, and then they'd just haul it on up?

Carl: Yes.

Steve: Did they ever run across the Arm (Turnagain) at all?

Carl: The trail? _____

Steve: Can't do it with the tide in the winter.

Carl: No, that ice all breaks up and it moves every tide. There has been people who crossed way up at the head of there around Portage. It gets pretty solid there sometimes, but it don't last too long.

Steve: You might do it once, or a half of one time, huh?

Carl: No, it never freezes solid, it's always moving.

Steve: You said you worked for the road commission here for some years, or trail crew?

Carl: No, I worked for them one summer when they built the road up _____ . I knew the country and I helped them figure out the route.

Steve: You were the consultant?

Carl: Packer, guide, and brush cutter mostly.

Steve: You did mostly what, mining then through this area?

Carl: I've done everything, besides work for somebody else. Well, I trapped mostly when I was real young. I would do an odd job once in a while and then got into mining. I was up in the interior on a trapping expedition--a guide up there.

Steve: Whereabouts was that?

Carl: In the Alaska Range. Came back from that and bought--well a mine is what brought us here _____ up the creek there. _____ started it then then we bought it and mined most of it. We run from 1930 to 1942 on that then the War came on so went fishing--bought a boat--and fished Bristol Bay, Cordova, and the whole cockeyed works wound up in Cook Inlet. (For about 12 years.) Then started cutting the seasons down on that, sold out and bought a bunch of horses and went into the guiding business and I done that for about 12 years. So, it's been one thing or another. I've been a logger, guide--anything come along that I could make a dollar.

Steve: We've been here, oh I guess a couple of days. We might sit down with some of the people from the Forest Service too. They seem to know where a lot of these old sites were at, if anything remains. There's not too much left along the railroad, it's all pretty well...

Carl: Along these old roads here there used to be old cabins, along about every 4-5 miles there would be somebody. They're all rotted down. The roads have been changed and missed some of them.

Steve: Through, what do you call that up through Forks to Dall and down, is that the Moose Pass Route, or is it up Quartz Creek?

Carl: Moose Pass Road. When they quit taking the mail through Johnson Pass, well after the railroad got established, they started hauling to Moose Pass and come with mail from there.

Steve: But, they would still haul freight over Johnson after that?

Carl: Well, there wasn't a great lot of freight _____.

Steve: So Johnson was really a pretty short lived trail for most of its use. What was it used for after this.

Carl: Nothing, it grew up in brush. They quit mining up there.

Steve: When would that have been, the twenties? Earlier?

Carl: No, in the twenties. Then in the 30s we were just about the only ones that mined there.

Steve: Along Moose Pass there is a heck of a lot more sites along through there. The Brush Ray Mine, that's at the Fork.

Carl: Yes, well, there's a lot of them mines that were never mined. They were just claims. None of them ever took out anything, outside of that area around Gilpatrick Mine and that little group up there.

Steve: ✓ ^h
Dall, that never amounted to anything?

Carl: Well, in the early days, at Mill Creek that comes out right close there, old Smeaser had that claim right in the mouth of Mill Creek and he shoveled in \$60,000 there one summer. Pick and shovel. That's pretty good ground. He took about a half million out of there.

Steve: This was what, 1905?

Carl: Before that, he was one of the first ones in the there.

Steve: What happened? Did he leave?

Carl: They mined it out. They picked above and below him and took a lot of gold out of there. He died up there, the dirtiest man ever saw. He wouldn't even go to the bathroom outside, he done it in the house and took the paper and throwed it out the door. He made all of his money, went Outside and was gone for about two years. Had a big blow out and came back broke. He couldn't find any more gold and was so disgusted that he quit doing anything but hunt for that pay streak and he never did find it. He was going to find the mother lode. He stayed right up there and died in his cabin. I don't think that bugger took a bath in ten years.

Steve: What was the other one--Saxton's Camp?

Carl: Yeah, that was old Bill Saxton's place. That was recent.

Steve: We've got it down '96' as a first reference on it. Is that possible or is it known by something else?

Carl: Sexton maybe.

✓ Steve: Saxton? Roughly between Dahl and Wievel.

Carl: That's the old Saxton place up there.

Steve: Not that old, huh?

Carl: No. There was nothing there.

Steve: Before he came there?

Carl: There was some cabins down there at the mouth of _____. No, Bill Saxton he worked on the road there. He built that house there. I got his old car out here, an old '40' Chevrolet.

Steve: Is that right? We'll have to check that over. We've got records showing that was some sort of acting mining camp in '96'. But...

✓ Unknown: What about ~~Wievel~~? WIEBEL

Carl: Yeah, ^{WIEBEL}~~Wievel~~, that's down this way, though quite a ways, about halfway down between Saxton's and the Fork. Across the creek there's some old buildings, at least there was.

Unknown: What was ^{WIEBEL}~~Wievel~~? Another camp?

Carl: Yeah, that was a placer deal. He had some good ground there. He hit the old channel of Canyon Creek where it cut across that point and found where it come across. It was a real old channel. He mined it out. They come out of Canyon Creek and went back into Canyon Creek with it.

Steve: Did anybody ever go hard rock then underneath Canyon Creek to try and find it?

Carl: Well, it is just placer gold.

Steve: That's all it is. It's not a vein, no quartz in it?

Carl: No.

Steve: Did you say that Anderson at Canyon--did he build the dam at Canyon Creek or not?

Carl: He built it partly. He had everybody worried in Sunrise because they knew it would go out if he ever got it up there and Creek, cause when she went out she'd wash Sunrise away down there. He had about 20 Swedes up there logging and building on that thing for I guess a year and a half, two years maybe. You can see it yet if you go down in that first canyon above the .

Steve: It's on the east side as you go south there? Is that Moose Creek it's on?

Carl: No, it's right on Canyon Creek. Just up through that canyon from where the bridge crosses down there on the highway. He had it walled up about half way to the top there once. Had a big spillway in there and he was going to log around the top and then shut the gate. All that canyon up through there was supposed to fill up with water and then run over and come down right to the road, by them buildings there--that was supposed to run \$4 a foot on bedrock, but there was a lot of overburden so he was going to swipe all that off and mine the bottom.

X Steve: What about the Oracle Mine?

Carl: It was about the only producer over there of hard rock.

Steve: Oh, it was a hard rock, huh?

Carl: Yeah, they took a little gold out of there. George Linsey was the last one, he had a high grade ore and took out about \$30-40,000 one summer.

Steve: And moved on.

Carl: Well, that was about the tail end of it I guess. There was two or three good prospects there, took a little out of them.

Steve: Right in that same area as ~~Sligh~~^{ATE} Creek I guess.

✓ Carl: Yeah, ~~then the Gilpatrick Mine~~--they never took a whole lot out of, but it was the richest in spots. I've seen the rock come out of there and the rock was hanging together with gold. Strings of gold--the rocks were all rotten--just pockets. Old Gilpatrick he had all of these--he run a tunnel in there and he saved all that to sell the mine on, only he didn't. There was just little spots here and there--rich, and the rest of it...

Steve: He pulled in partners in on and everything too.

Carl: He sold out. It's been sold two or three times on the strength of those little pockets that he found there.

↳ Steve: You've ever been over where the old Russian diggings are supposed to be? That's on the other side here.

Carl: _____. Yeah, I know where it is.

Steve: Placer diggings? Supposed to be some old piles of rock, etc. Did anybody else ever mine that later?

Carl: Not that I know of. I think the Russians worked here too. We were mining up here--we worked the whole valley from one bank to the other pretty much. We cleared off some big timber, cottonwood trees through there and big spruce, logged off and we mined it. We ran into some old sluice boxes right down in the clay, about six or seven feet or gravel over them, still intact.

Steve: That was up Canyon Creek?

Carl: No, Resurrection Creek. That was back and then trees has grown since then. We were mining there in the 30s when this happened, so they went way back somewhere. Nobody seems to know just who would have done that.

Steve: You never took any pictures of that or anything?

Carl: _____. They didn't take out much because the pit was just about as good as any of them, they just put these boxes in towards the middle probably.

Unknown: Was there any quartz _____ in the creek bed?

Carl: No, not in the creek bed. Farmer creek is the place--Hershey (?) had his mine up there.

Unknown: Is that still up there?

Carl: No, a snow slide took it.

Steve: Who had the scheduled runs more or less between Hope and the railroad. Were there scheduled freight runs at all?

Carl: No, not freight. The main part of the freight was brought in the summer and you didn't see any more freight until the next spring. If you wanted to get something you could haul in a dog sled and run down to Seward and get it.

Steve: So they brought everything in on the wagon road then?

Carl: Yeah, come up the Arm on boats and they'd unload freight here or Sunrise and then the guys up the creek would come down with their wagon and load up and go home.

Steve: Were they doing that even before you came? Was that pretty up to standard?

Carl: Well, a lot of it when we come here they had to pack it in on horses. _____ when they were operating there--that was before my time--they packed everything in with horses.

Steve: And then they ran the mail--was it Estes, out of Moose Pass, didn't he run the mail from Seward to Hope?

Carl: Well, Moose Pass to Hope. That was later.

Steve: How did he run that? Was that dog or sled?

Carl: He did one year with the dogs--one or two years--and then he made the first snowmobile they had here. Well, he had a little old D2 cat, he used that part of the time--snowmobile he called it. He had the cat and an old horse sled. Him on the sled sitting and he had lines on the cat just like driving a horse, all geared up there. He'd sit with the _____ there by the stove.

Unknown: Do you know an Anton Eide? He was the first mail carrier.

Steve: ...got out there and were walking around the old buildings and such and the two bit machine quit on us. He was telling about who lived there, who hauled water, who had the mail service. Putting all this neat stuff together and we get back and the tape recorder was broken.

Carl: Well, when we first come here, about the time we come here, that's when Ravell (?) he had all the mail contracts--the Hope, the Iditarod, the whole works. From Andy Simons he carried it from mile 23 or 34 to Johnson Pass to Hope. He was mail carrier then. Then it went from him to old Al Farren (?) I guess he carried longer than anybody, but he went to Moose Pass.

Steve: Is any of ^ERavell's family still around at all?

Carl: His stepson. He was up here visiting a couple of years ago.

Steve: Where does he live?

Carl: He's out in Oregon.

Steve: I wonder if he has any old papers or anything.

Carl: I don't know. He had some old pictures and stuff that he turned into the Historical Society in Seward. I don't know just what it was. His mother was the first white woman or white kid born in Seward. She was part Russian.

Steve: Of course they were the early ones down there. They had an old homestead just north of Seward.

Carl: They owned Seward just about. In order for Harry and Buster, the two boys--she gave a whole homestead to somebody there in Seward to take care of the kids one winter so they could go to school. She was one of the Lowells, they owned _____.

1 Steve: Mary Lowell?

Carl: I don't know. I think there was a Mary Lowell.

Steve: I know we found some old records, the old homestead of Mary Lowells, and that's where the terminus for the Alaskan Northern began, right at one of her corner monuments.

Unknown: Did you know Jack Lean?

Carl: Oh, yeah.

Unknown: What happened to him after, I guess, he had the Rainy Pass Roadhouse or one of the roadhouses?

Carl: He carried mail there too. After that he was more or less a trapper. He lived up there for years after he quit the mail route.

Steve: Who's that?

Carl: Jack Lean.

Unknown: Did he come back or did he stay up there?

Carl: He come down here and was a guide around _____. Him and Andy Simon, Buster Revell and Franky _____, they were all in the hunting business.

Steve: Hunting and guiding.

Unknown: Was that who you guided with up in the Alaska Range?

Carl: No, John Hyducovitch was the guy I started with.

Steve: Whereabouts in the Alaska Range where you?

Carl: Up around the Delta there. ^{BIG DELTA - near Roadhouse} They had the road to Valdez but we hunted from G _____ Creek clean up to the head of the Robinson, around the glacier up there. Forty day trip last time I went up there. We had 22 head of horses and 4 hunters. We took everything with us and brought everything back.

Steve: Who were your clients?

Carl: Well, Andicott (?) was one of them. He put up the money for the whole trip. Andicott's Shoe Company and then he's got mines in South America--he's a rich guy. He brought his friends. About the nearest thing to a gentlemen I've ever met. He's just as common as an old farmer, you know. I hunted with him a lot--he was just a nice guy to be around.

Steve: Of course in that country you do alot of caribou and sheep hunting.

Carl: Oh, we got sheep, caribou, moose, grizzly, black bears, the whole works. They had everything. At that time, why them darn sheep --there hadn't been anybody hunting them up in there and there was lots of them--I know one day I was out there with him and one of the other ones--they wanted to take pictures that day. We went up there and--about 2-300 sheep on the mountain there --got right up among them and the sheep wouldn't run. They wanted to get pictures of them standing and running. I had to throw rocks at these wild sheep to make them run so they could take pictures. They just stood around and looked at you--they never saw anybody.

Steve: Well, I tell you they run today.

Carl: And then there was grizzlies up there. Anytime you shot a caribou or anything up there, if you didn't take it home that night the bears would have it the next morning. There was that many of them. The place was crawling with them.

No, we had the pack train. We all had a saddle horse. We took everything enough for this forty day trip. We'd eat up the grub we had loaded on the horses and by the time we got through we had everything loaded with horns and stuff coming out. It worked just right. We moved every other day, a short distance of a mile or so.

Steve: Trip of a lifetime wasn't it?

Carl: Yeah.

Steve: Well, we won't take a whole lot more of your time. Trying to --working on this trail, like that meeting we said, every time we turned around we'd find more and more information on the trail.

Carl: What have they come with now, it's going to kind of follow the railroad, huh?

Steve: Yeah, that's the historic route. What we're doing is saying that there is a primary route and the only way you can do that is try to define it within a set period of years, so you can have more or less a continuous connection from Seward to Nome. And then we're also looking at a lot of others like the Johnson Pass and Moose Pass Trails and calling those connecting trails, just for lack of anything else to call them. Because, like in this area, when you get around Iditarod and such it's a network, it's a whole system of trails.

Carl: Yeah. That's what the trail was for anyhow. Feeders that come in kept it going.

Steve: Different things happened in different areas so the trail changed too, but when they declare a historic trail you almost have to try to define an artery or vein and so that's what we've done. We've said this is our primary route and tried to identify the other routes that branched off of it that became pretty significant and then tried to define it around that.

Unknown: ...Before the earthquake--was the tide the same as it is now, did it go out as much before the earthquake as it does now?

Carl: Yeah, it went out just as much, but right after the earthquake it came in bigger than it ever did. The ground sunk and it still came higher than it did before because it's flat down there and it sunk about five feet...

Steve: They never had anything like a ferry or anything back and forth to the other side?

Carl: Well, one year or two Matt had a kind of ferry, but we used to run a regular boat back and forth. The Alaska Railroad went to Rainbow--to pick up the mail and passengers, my brother and I we ran the boat there from about 1919 to 1924. One summer we never missed a tide, either we'd be going to Rainbow to pick up some mail or freight, always 2 or 3 bags, and then we'd go to Anchorage twice a week.

Steve: You'd go all the way to Anchorage in the boat?

Carl: That's right. It'd take you two tides to do it. You'd go down to the lower end of Fire Island and get there about the time the tide turned, and the tide pushed the boat. Then you'd catch the outgoing tide so you'd get down to Fire Island just in time for the tide to turn again.

Steve: What kind of boat did you run?

Carl: Thirty footer. Sometimes we'd pack 15-20 passengers in that little old thirty foot boat.

[Looking at a picture album]

2nd Tape:

Carl: ...Ravell he had about 200 of them over here.

Steve: Kenai Lake?

Carl: Kenai Lake and Trail Lake up there where the Johnson Pass Road turns off.

Steve: Where Johnson Pass turns off to Kenai.

Carl: Well, it comes out at Trail Lake.

Steve: That was a dog boarding...

Carl: Yeah, there, and we had part of them down at _____.

Steve: Any place they could have fish they would board them.

Carl: And that's right out in the lake there, _____.

Steve: The Iditarod Mail Team, Hope Street, 1914.

Carl: Brought them in the summer on the boat...and that's Joe Richardson, he lived here quite a long time.

Steve: Says mail leaving Hope. An old freighter with a 'Gee' pole on the front there.

Carl: That's the way--there wasn't no glamour to this dog mushing then. Just wanted the buggers to pull, not how fast they could go.

Steve: Hey, look at those horns!

Carl: Them's over in Tony's Bar now. Seward. If you go into Tony's Bar, that's the moose horns.

Steve: How big are they?

Carl: Oh, they are not too big. They're a nice set of horns. When they opened that joint up, Old Tony come over here and he wanted to borrow the moose horns to open up his place. He thought them moose horns were pretty good. So, I said all right take them over and open up the place, and they haven't come back yet. There'll still hanging.

Steve: We've found a lot of old pictures. A lot of the Universities have them and such. We're picture poor--we've been ordering them and getting them together. One thing that's nice once the trail thing gets set up maybe they'll get some kind of central library for the Iditarod.

Left Hope at approximately 4:30 after arriving here at about 2:30. Spent two hours talking to Carl Clark, resident of the Hope area since 1913.