

Here's a Pioneer tapes - Tape 1, Side 1 Cut 1

Side 1 - Charlie Wilson interview (1-6-55) - Been in Nenana 32 years; arrived in '22.

Ice Classic - started when Chief Engineer of Alaska Railroad - started 1917. Today's tickets are same but date changed. Just something to do in Spring - 1st pool worth \$100.

Built 1st marine ways - skids used to get boats out of water. Explains difference between dry dock and marine ways.

1922-23 Nenana was head of navigation - 4 boats - 2 with Army and 2 with Yukon and White Pass.

1955 - Black Navigation has 3 boats; CAA 5 boats; Railroad has Steamer Nenana (500 tons freight), Steamer Tanana, the Yukon; Don Peterson has 1 boat.

Nenana had 1800 people when he first got there - construction and railroad people. 1923 some of railroad moved to Fairbanks and Healey.

Came to Alaska April 1913 to prospect; walked from Valdez. Two other guys went back. NC Co. has horses and wagons carrying mail and baggage. If you traveled light you could beat them.

Some prices on trail were very high; depended on how you looked.

Went to Circle and Birch Creek for a year. Went out in a year and came back. Left in '16 again, went in Army and didn't get back until '19.

Side 2 - Charlie Wilson interview (1-6-55) - 1946 retired from railroad. Worked on the run 26 years.

1st trip was on narrow gauge;

"1 spot" - engine in front of station; used Healy coal and before that wood when it was Tanana Valley Railroad. Alaska Railroad made it into standard gauge.

Docks were at north Nenana where White Pass boats landed. In winter laid track on ice and loaded from standard to narrow gauge. In summer towed with "Sun-beam" boat.

Alaska Railroad had a 1 spot on Seward end.

Tanana Valley Railroad was local - ran to Chatinika. Most FE stuff was towed out by narrow gauge.

In '55 still some narrow gauge at Nome operated by miners.

Won't tell a yarn - doesn't think he can write a book.

Mentions Slim Avery

Sure-shot Wilson (?) - came in as hockey and ball player.

Piccolo Pete - walks along river.

Rufus - couldn't speak without whistling.

Whiskey Dan - Jack Borchard's 2 sisters came to see him. He lived out of Tanana. Sisters bought a tent and stayed with him anyway. He manufactured "thousands and thousands of gallons".

of gallons

Here's a Pioneer tapes - Tape 1, Side 1-Cut 2

Side 1 - Al McLeod interview (1-6-55) - Came to Alaska 1897. Came for gold rush. Left Milwaukee - went to Vancouver, Washington and on steamship Centennial to Vancouver B.C., - fall of '97.

Arrived in Skagway Oct. 19, 1897. His birthday is Alaska Day (Oct. 18). Will be 79 his next birthday.

Spent whole winter between Skagway and Dyea. Steep from Dyea to Dyea (Chilkoot) Pass. Quite a grade where going to build aluminum plant.

Spinal Meningitis epidemic on Yukon side of pass. Dr. Frizzell from Los Angeles was traveling through - laid up 4-5 weeks. Doctor had no medicine - kept fire going from bed. Only medicine was contraband whiskey Jack Connelly (?) was bootlegging in - illegal to ship it.

Thought he was over spinal meningitis but had to go back to tent to stay.

Lake Bennett - Dr. Frizzell had gone near foot; in Spring of year the lake on June 1, 1898 still had ice. It disappeared overnight due to wind.

Side 2 - Al McLeod interview (1-6-55) - Dr. was out on ice with broken sleigh and dogs; all drowned - couldn't get to them on soft ice.

Special seats on sleigh (?) for men with packs.

Carried 50-60 lbs.

Riding G-pole description.

Interviewed mentions gold rush celebration coming up tomorrow - 54 (?) years ago gold discovered. (Sounds of band in background).

Describes drift mining.

Fellow came from outside - got killed in Berry Bros. mine on Ester Creek. In his effects was a baby stocking. Wrote to his wife and told her what they had found. She said she had missed the stocking and not known where it was. She had a little daughter. Raised \$7500 in 3 weeks locally for her and the child.

Tape 1, Side 2-Cut 1

Side 1 - George Preston interview (1-6-55) - This morning Immaculate Conception Church marked 50th anniversary in Fairbanks.

Preston was in Fairbanks when church was 1st built. Not an active member then but is now.

He arrived Jan. 4, 1904. 1st job with NC Co. Didn't know Father Monroe until later.

Preston's wife was Catholic and he met Monroe that way. Trouble arose over moving church from 1st and Dunkle to present location. Father Monroe determined to move church. Parishoners petitioned to try to prevent move - Monroe wanted to have it close to the hospital.

Here's a Pioneer tapes - Tape 1, Side 2-Cut 1

Side 1 - George Preston interview (1-6-55), continued - Preston came in on his own from Valdez. Left Valdez day after Thanksgiving 1903. Got here 1/4/1904 and it was -50. Stayed at Harry Graehl's over in Graehl for several days. Left for creeks 10 days later.

Construction of hospital - small hospital at St. Matthew's Church was too small. Only a dozen patients.

Local businessmen wanted Monroe to build a hospital. Others thought it would hurt St. Matthew's which was small log building.

Chena bridge was wooden and went out every year at break-out. Used to take off top to save it and only pilings went out. Small boat ferry took people across until they rebuilt bridge. Break-ups were far more exciting than now - more water would build up.

N.C. Co. came here in 1903 and took over Barnette Trading Post which Capt. Barnette had built in 1902. Site ran from 1st to 3rd Ave.

Side 2 - George Preston interview (1-6-55) - Preston had had some office experience in Scotland and the Klondike - found out mining wasn't his thing.

Had met Judge Wickersham in Valdez and Wickersham took him to meet N.C. manager Howard Turner. Got job as roustabout. Dick Wood was office man and Jack Healy was store man. May 1904 - only other employee was agent (not named).

Turner was 1st manager - he was still alive at age of 93 in San Francisco at time of recording.

No ladies' goods then - unless content to use Levi Strauss and Grim (?) boots.

Very limited number of people on creeks then. Later that spring word got out about Fairbanks gold. Dawson was beginning to decline and boats that summer and fall were crowded with people coming in.

His wife lived with Mr. and Mrs. Chas. Grime (her uncle and aunt) in Bettles - had stayed with them a year. Stopped on way outside to see sister Mrs. Richards and they met and were married about a year later.

Spring 1900-Fall 1902 Preston was in Klondike - went to ? and returned to Valdez in 1903. Worked as cook for mining crew - news of Tanana strike and Susitna strike.

In Al White's Saloon in Valdez was glass full of Susitna gold but reports from Tanana were more favorable. Jim Stewart was Preston's partner and they joined 7 other men who came from Valdez to Fairbanks.

who

Here's a Pioneer tapes - Tape 1, Side 2-Cut 2

Side 1 - George Goshaw interview (1-6-55) - Goshaw from Nome several times a year in past 3-4 years.

Judge Wickersham remembrance - 3rd division of Alaska (Nome area). 1908 became 4th division - Pioneer district judge. Handsome - known as Wick or Handsome Jim. Held court in all 4 divisions. Traveled by river boat or horse stage or dogs. Led one of early parties to Mt. McKinley.

? Dickey in '98 named it McKinley and Foraker after an Ohio senator. Dickey developed copper properties in Prince Wm. Sound. (not related to Don Dickey then current Fairbanks Chamber manager)

Barnette came in 1902 - up Chena slough in powered steamboat. Started trading post. 1903 and '04 went into banking. Street named for him.

Crowl - 1 of 184 Fairbanks Commissioners.

1902 - landed at Skagway.

'03-'04 - rushed to Fairbanks.

'04 - went to Nome looking for gold. Did some mining, mostly merchandizing.

Fairbanks was log cabin camp. Stores and saloons were 2-story. All lumber whip sawed - \$100/1000.

Went outside during war.

4 there now? Mrs. Ford, Tony Pollette - no, early day pioneers of Nome still there.

Mrs. Mike Waasch, Peter X. Peterson, Nels Swamberg (1900).

Frank Washey - elected as 1st delegate to Wash. in 1906-? 1st legislation he presented was for Fairbanks and Nome land offices. In past year moved from Dillingham to Maryland. Returned to Alaska and Dillingham for summer.

Entertained in Seattle by Nome/Alaska Club as came back up for "this" summer - planned to go to Kotzebue and Point Hope.

Side 2 - George Goshaw interview (1-6-55) - Early day Nome - 1898 3 white men - Lyndenberg, Lindberg, and ? came up from Golovin. Had gone to Anvil Crick which they named. Anvil Mtn. had huge rock on top.

1st big Alaska Stampede '98 - 20,000 people. Camp known as Anvil City.

In 1900 when made application named it Nome.

Van describes Goshaw: Member of American Legion, N.W. Alaska Chamber of Commerce. Working for road to Nome. John Lewis look - don't believe in living in the past.

"My personal belief" - She'd look into future and assist young pioneers. Old matters use up our time. Greatest thing we have in Fairbanks to develop tourists would be road to Nome. Fairbanks would be focal point for hundreds of thousands of tourists, not the "100,000 we expect this year."

Took a month to come to Fairbanks from Nome by dog.