

Call number: 02-00-62-33 SIDE B

Harrie Hughes' trip through the Canada and United States, various locations and times.

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Series: Harrie Hughes Collection.

Notes: Original on 3 inch reel, master copy printed on CD.

The recording starts by Harrie stating that the time is 12:50pm and he is leaving Dawson Creek. The mileage on Harrie's speedometer says he has driven 42,104 miles at this point. Now the time is 2pm, and Harrie is stopping at a place that has coffee, gas and oil. Weather is scattered clouds, high, broken, overcast. The temperature is 73 degree on the road out of Dawson Creek. Harry is about 4 miles out. He sees miles and miles of farms that are hundreds of acres each. Tanana Valley would have the same opportunity: the right kind of work for the right kind of people. He is entering the town of Beaver Lodge which has [?] mills and grain mills and very modern buildings, such as a modern school house which is as good as any other Harrie has seen. They are doing a little construction and everybody seems busy. There is nobody standing on streets and not working. Harry reads aloud the names of grain and flower companies around and tells that there are large grain-handling silos.

At 2:36 Harrie mentions seeing a little saw-mill, a new gas station, a motel and real nice looking buildings that have been kept clean and painted. Then he is at Alberta Province's Experimental Farm and it's several times bigger than University of Alaska Fairbanks's Experimental Farm. He is 27 miles from Grande Prairie. He sees two more big grain storages and every farm has 1 or 2 ponds, presumably for irrigation purposes. He is still meeting with big semis loaded with trailers, tankers, and campers, going north towards Dawson Creek and Fairbanks. This is another long, straight road and Harrie reports being able to see several miles ahead. There is at least 8-10 miles of open road, maybe 15. There are nice green farms from which some are new, some not so new, but everybody has machinery. This highway is 4 lane highway but they have a parking strip on the edge and one is not supposed to drive there since it's for emergency parking. The strip goes all along the highway and Harrie thinks something similar would be good idea for highways in Alaska, so that a person can pull off and stop for an emergency. He is passing a large poultry farm. They have quite a few grain buildings that are off from the ground so rodents and bugs don't get in.

At 5:40 Harry tells about seeing Barney Oldfield who broke the world record by driving 62 miles an hour, but now Harry is constantly driving 60 miles an hour. That would have been unheard of in those years. Now he is in sight of Grande Torre. He can see the town site in the distance, 4-5 miles away. There is a big flat basin and left from Harrie, there is a lake. Everybody has wind mills and all farms are clean with no weeds or vegetation. They are in perfect condition. Everything else Harrie sees is loads and loads of farm equipment. There are grey storage elevators and [unclear] equipment company, all painted yellow like Caterpillars. In fact there are Caterpillars. Seems like a busy little farming community.

At 7:36 Harry says there is an elevation marker where he has stopped because of road construction, and it says 2420 feet above the sea level. The time is 3pm. He is piloted through the construction site by a pilot car on the highway between Dawson Creek and Edmonton. He is on a long stretch. The temperature is 78 degrees and it feels like a real summer. Harry gives an account of other traffic through the construction site and later reports about crossing the Smoky River Bridge. There is a beautiful little campsite with everything available: laundry, cooking, cleanup. On the uphill side of each hill there are two lanes and one coming down, which gives slow vehicles a chance to let others pass. Harry got a weather forecast from Peace River: it's 80 degrees at 4pm today. At 4:10pm Harrie is coming to Valley View and he will turn south towards Calgary. Harrie stopped at a garage in Valley View to get a new set of points [probably sparkplug points?] and there is no more rattling in the car. He has seen some goats and pigs. Harry is on the road again after stopping at Valley View and he is going over an oil field district with hundreds of oil wells. He can smell it in the air.

Alaska needs something to bring money in, like in Canada has with their farmers and oil. They might not get rich but they have got it going. He notices all the people in Canada have their roofs painted light blue or deep blue or some color like red or green. Everybody has a colored roof. Passing House River campsite which is beautiful spot in the trees and as clean as a whistle. Another thing Harrie notices is the cleanness of the highway: one doesn't see a tin can or a piece of paper or signs of any kind except for traffic signs.

The speed limit is 60 miles per hour [unclear due to bad recording quality.] Harrie is passing the Peace [unclear] pipeline, pumping station and preserve. There are quite a few trucks hauling oil equipment and traffic is kinda thin with only a couple of cars on the road. There are garbage cans and every so often there is a garbage dump. It's the longest and straightest stretch so far, everybody traveling 65 mph or faster. The temperature has dropped 10 degrees in last ½ hr. and there is beautiful sunshine with no clouds on sight. This is known as the Right Court, and Harrie is passing the McLeod River Bridge which is a wooden bridge with a steel frame. Two cars passed Harrie, driving 80-90 mph while Harrie is going right at the speed limit. A Mountie radared them and got all three. They are on the side of the road, getting citations. Harrie is passing a long, wooden, railroad truss [bridge] along the railroad and across the highway. There is an underpass of 21 Feet. He stopped at Glen Beach out of [unclear], stepped out and put gasoline in the car. It's a lovely place with everybody working on oil rigs, machinery, trailers. There is a whole flock of trailers coming towards Alaska. They are big, the ones you can live in and Harrie has probably passed 50 of them. Lots of trailers and campers coming in on the highway. The truck stop and a garage is a pretty good place to eat in, and then Harrie is on his way again and the time is 8:45pm. [Radio is playing.] "You have music when you drive, Jimmy," states Harrie.

Miles and miles of highways, miles of turnouts and four way lanes – something they don't see in Fairbanks. There has been enormous amount of work done in the highways. There are traffic signals, drive signs, [unclear] stakes, and large, green signs with reflective paint on them. Lights along the road look like an airplane landing or a runway. Automotive drivers are the same than plane pilots: there are all kinds of markers to go by. [Music playing on the radio.] Harrie explains that it is Calgary radio station. Harrie is stopping at Ed and Wallie's place around 3am, just outside Calgary. Harry had coffee. It's a good clean place.

At 19:28 Harry states that he arrived in Calgary in noon on Saturday. Everything is closing and he is at the Stampede Motors because his car has regulator and rear-end trouble. After a bit of a silence Harry talks again: A homesteader in Tanana Valley works for many years without making a profit so he doesn't have much income tax from his land but the state will [unclear] the sale of merchandise, gasoline, groceries, clothing and all the other things that support our community. Sales taxes that they [the State of Alaska?] have come out from everybody equally and Harrie thinks that they should make no concession.

He states that he stopped at the Circle Ale Service Station. They have a nice, clean restaurant there that looks like it is run by a man, wife and son. Everybody is getting ready for the rodeo and they are 20 miles out of Calgary on the road to Medicine Hat. He's about 60 miles out of Calgary and he saw a large cattle range. They must have occupied about 50 acres [unclear]. [Unclear] and cows, at least 500-600 and that is a lovely start towards a Texas ranch in Canada. Harry doesn't remember if he already told this but between Edmonton and Calgary there was several hundred vehicles and military moving down the highway, as far as the eye could see. It must have been at least 30, 50 or 300 vehicles because [unclear] Calgary [unclear] 50-mile lane [unclear]. [Unclear due to bad quality recording.] It was broadcast on the news this morning. Now Harrie left Calgary and is traveling on the coast-to-coast express way. He found Highway No. 1 in Canada that has been opened recently.

Harry is recording at the Sun Deck Hotel in Medicine Hat, Canada. He had a very good rest after turning there last night around 10pm. Now it is 11:30am on Sunday, June 16th, 1963. He has had a good rest and a good hot tub bath. He's on his way to get coffee. He stops at the Husky Oil Station and gives the address. He had hot cakes and bacon and everything was very good. Now it's 12:20 and he is on his way east. Weather just out of Medicine Hat was below 64 last night, and as for now, the temperature is 85 degrees. It's overcast. It's still mostly [unclear] and Harrie is getting towards a swift current on the Canada highway, it's a big white ferry [?] and Harrie sees farmland and cows, and pities a man with a camper since it's quite windy out there. There has been some deer in the fields, stretching their necks when Harry goes by. Harrie is talking about a nervous deer that he was watching.

At 26:12 Harry says that he took 3 or 4 exposures of some deer or antelope, whichever they may be. They were drinking before they took off, but Harry got some pictures of them. Harry talks about exposures that are to be called "Wheels", enormous amount of wagon wheels there. Lots of people are heading to the rodeo at Calgary at the Stampede. Occasionally there are decorated cars going by and everybody is hauling a horse down there. Harrie's average speed has been 58 mph since he left Medicine Hat.

[End of the recording.]