

Call number: 97-176-03

Name and place: Memos of Pioneers of Alaska, Igloo No. 4 Monument Committee, R. E. "Bob" Sheldon at Tanana-Yukon Historical Society [?]

Date: 6-10 and 23rd of June 1960

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Series: Pioneer Tapes

The recording begins with music. Harrie Hughes says it's June 10th, 1960, in Fairbanks, Alaska. This is the meeting of Pioneer Park monument committee. Harrie introduces Paul Greimann who says that they are making a desperate effort to get the land next to the Colones Park [sp?], which is about 73 acres. They are trying to acquire it from the federal government and make it into Pioneer park recreation spot. That would be the biggest thing that the Pioneers of Alaska have done in many years.

Ted Loftus says that he's a member of the committee and that they are fleshing out means for acquiring the property and of course a number of sidelights enter the picture all the time. It's one of the most fascinating committees Ted has ever been on because of the scope of their project. They are currently working on acquiring the property. A man says that the speaker was Ted Loftus, a former president of the Pioneers of Alaska.

2:20 Frank P. Young, a member of the committee of the park, introduces himself and says that they have accomplished something towards getting things lined up to present them to officials. He believes they are on the right track.

A man's voice says that Frank, too, is a past president. He confirms. [Laughter and joking.]

3:08 Colin McDonald introduces himself as a member of the Pioneer Park Committee. He says that their purpose in the park project is to preserve Alaskan history and present the early endeavors of the pioneers to the public.

Andy [Andrew] Wicken introduces himself and says he's present as a neighbor and a guest of Harrie Hughes.

Colin McDonald says that Lloyd Johnson is one of their famous pioneers, and a person who is invested in the project. He has lots of relics to give to the organization, but he is absent right now. Gene [Eugene] Rogge, one of their new members who is equally interested in the project, isn't present either. Their absence is regretted.

Harrie Hughes introduces himself as a member of Igloo no. 4 and asks if he may take the recording. Permission is granted. [Break in the recording.]

4:58 Harrie reports that he has completed three sets of copies of Pioneer charter, Igloo No. 4. He has Igloo banner and a letter that is addressed to the Department of the Interior in Washington, D.C., in which they are making a request for land for the monument. Harrie also has a form, which is dated January 5th, 1958, filled and notarized. Also, he has copies of the public land order, and a Photostat of the land office records from the Fairbanks Land Office. They are dated March 19th, 1959. He also has a plot of southwest corner of section 9, which is the piece in question, and also the minutes of Pioneer Igloo 4 meeting on March 21st, 1960, when the committee was appointed and Paul Greimann, the president, appointed the following members: Frank P. Young, Ted Loftus, Eugene Rogge, Colin McDonald, Louis A. Johnson and Harrie Hughes.

7:00 Someone says that it's June 6th, 1960 and brother Harrie Hughes gave a report on what he is doing on the park committee and a motion was made by Frank P. Young, and seconded by Andy Anderson, that they try to acquire a government land from lot 12 and the southwest quarter section of section 9 in township 1S in Fairbanks, Alaska. Total acreage is 72.64 acres. Motion was carried.

The speaker will include the copies of the letters to their representative [Edward Lewis "Bob"] Bartlett, who is a pioneer senator in Washington D.C. He reads the letter they sent to Bob Bartlett, in which they convey their sense of rapid loss of pioneer history as the old-timers pass away, and tell that they are trying to acquire a permanent display for historical objects in Alaska. They want to keep the place out of the public authority's hands and they are trying to acquire it either as a state or governmental monument. They want to circumvent the local land office but

understand that the land that they want is to be subdivided and sold as lots by the land office. They ask that Bartlett reviews their application forms and takes the necessary steps to acquire the land to be used as a monument. The letter will be signed by the park committee and the president of the igloo, and it's dated June 16th, 1960.

9:49 Also, they are including the minutes of the previous meeting, maps that they use, and tracings of original maps that were used in making the investigation. The speaker hopes that that will give Bob Bartlett sufficient information to work with.

Harrie Hughes says he's going to send the papers to President Greimann as soon as possible.

R. E. Bob Sheldon introduces himself and says that he's recording how he came to Alaska at a [Tanana-Yukon] Historical Society meeting at College, Alaska. He says that his father was born in New York in 1829, and as a young man, he went down the Atlantic coast on a sailing ship to the Isthmus of Panama. At the age of 19, he got a job surveying the first trail over the Isthmus of Panama, which is about where the canal is now. People were striving to get to Pacific side as fast as possible, rather than going through the wagon route. They could get across with pack mules and go up to San Francisco where there was a gold stampede in 1849. His father traveled to the Pacific side after the trail was cut across the Panama. He came to California in 1849.

12:10 He found some gold, but he didn't do good as a gold miner. Finally in the early 1850s, he came up the Pacific Coast to where Seattle is now. There was nothing but Indian villages at the time, but Bobby's father "put in some time" around Puget Sound area.

In the late 1850s, there was a gold stampede to the Cassiar Country on the Canadian side in British Columbia. Then his father went to Wrangel that was quite the town in those days. He traveled up the Stikine River to Cassiar Gold Stampede. Bobby thinks that it was in the late 1850s. There he met one of Alaska's famous early day pioneers, Jack McQuesten, whom they now know as the man that operated the trading post at Circle City for many years. McQuesten and Bobby's father became good friends. They started a roadhouse that they operated for several years.

14:03 Canadian government was building roads through the country at the time and Bobby's father had been engaged with road work so he started working for them. He did that until the middle 1860s. Around 1867 or 1868, he turned over his portion of the roadhouse to Jack McQuesten and went east to visit his people in New York.

While he was visiting New York, "he happened to marry a white woman." All his friends in the Pacific Coast married Native women, Jack McQuesten included.

Bobby isn't sure when Jack McQuesten came into the area, but says that the historical society should be able to find the dates somewhere. He operated a trading post at Circle City for many years. Bobby's father and the Scottish Presbyterian girl who was born in Ontario met in New York, after which they went to San Francisco. Their first child was born there in 1871. That's Bob's eldest sister who died 6 years ago in New York City.

16:11 The family moved from San Francisco to Puget Sound and located in Snohomish, Washington, which is about 35 miles from Seattle by bus. The other 8 children were born there. Bobby himself was next to the last.

His father used to get a letter from McQuesten every year, or sometimes two years would pass. In 1897 he received a letter from Jack McQuesten, which was the turning point in Bobby's career because it told about gold being found from the Canadian side. He invited them to come up to see it themselves.

To tell an old gold stamper that there's a stampede going on, is like when a retired fire horse hears a fire bell and starts rallying to go. Bob's father was eager to join the stampede and to visit Jack McQuesten too. Their mother had passed on 2 years earlier, Bob was 14 years old and his father was going to leave him with an uncle whom Bob didn't like so Bob said he would go with his father.

In December, 1897 they left Snohomish and went to Seattle in the latter part of December. They spent two days in Seattle, waiting for the old steamer Queen to pull out for Skagway. There was supposed to be one automobile in Seattle at that time that was owned by a doctor. Bob heard people talking about it at hotel lobby but never got to see it. The people said it would run about a block and then they would have to 'shove it back home.' Bob never got to see it, which had an effect

on his later life in Alaska [since he built the first automobile in Alaska without ever having seen one].

19:24 They sailed to Skagway and the boat anchored where Ketchikan is now. They unloaded the boat of mail and passengers, and they were pointed out a sultry shack on the rocks there. That was said to be the first town in Alaska, Ketchikan. When Bob heard the name Ketchikan, it stuck in his mind and he repeated it in his mind. He wondered that if that was the name of the first town in Alaska, what the other places were called. They had a Christmas dinner on the boat on 25th of December and they finally got to Juneau where they spent 18 hours.

The first people they met there were the W. W. Casey family who were operating the Circle City hotel and who came from Bob's hometown of Snohomish. Then they arrived to Skagway around 1st or 2nd of January. It took 10 days for the boat to get from Seattle to Skagway in those days. They had no aids to navigation, like lighthouses or buoys. They blew their whistle and listened to the echoes and if they bumped into something they backed up and started again. If they didn't make it, "it was too bad." As every good old-timer knows, many of them didn't make it. When they read about the beauty of Inland Passage, one wants to keep in mind [unclear]. There was fish swimming around the machinery.

22:05 They were going to start over the White Pass Trail over Skagway and towards the gold fields when they were advised not to start so soon because there was such a congestion. The trip was tough and Bob's father was getting old. Bob himself was excited to go, but they waited. People started building a wagon road from Skagway to the summit. It was known as the Bracket Wagon Road because it was promoted by Mr. Bracket and his two sons. It was to be Bracket and Sons Tow Road.

Bob and his father took employment on the wagon road. His father was in charge of one of the camps and as a youngster, Bob was waiting on tables and slinging hash at the mess house. Finally the road wasn't working out as they had hoped and the plan was abandoned. The people were paid with checks that were worthless. Then Bob's father had a heart attack and his doctor advised that he better not attempt the trip over the mountains and so Bob's father had to make a choice between returning or starting a perilous journey. He decided to return, and wanted

Bob to go with him. Bob was turning 15 and he was “getting pretty important” like 15-year-olds get. Bob told his father that he had left Snohomish broke and wouldn’t return the same way.

24:49 Bob started a business of selling Seattle P-Is [Seattle Post Intelligencer newspaper]. They were sold for 5 cents in Seattle and Bob ordered 25 Seattle P-Is on every boat, and sold the papers for 25 cents apiece since a quarter was the smallest money they used in Skagway. Bob sold the papers to “the sporting element” of Skagway, to gamblers and boys to whom money doesn’t mean much. He could sometimes get 50 cents or a dollar from somebody. The papers sold well since the United States was at war with Spain, trying to save Cuba [laughter]. It was known as the war of 1898, Spanish-American War.

The scare heads of Seattle P-I were 3 inches high and told war news. It was very interesting and exciting and the newspapers were the only communication they got from the continental United States. [Clock is ringing in the background.] There was no trouble for a boy to make a living in Skagway. He read from Seattle P-I that his father died in Snohomish in March of 1899. Somebody saw it in the paper and pointed it out to Bob. Bob had a couple of bad days and he was really on his own now.

28:03 Bob stayed in Skagway rather than ventured into Klondike. He heard so many wild stories about Klondike that he decided to stay in Skagway. He met the son of Harriet Pullen. Harriet was one of the outstanding pioneer women. Bob grew up with her boys and Harriet mothered him just as she mothered her own boys. Bob says that to some extent, he gathered courage from Mrs. Pullen because she had lots of it. She was a large, red-haired woman with four children: three boys and a girl. They came to Skagway from Washington with two teams consisting of 4 horses, and a big wagon. She hauled freight on her wagon over the rocky road that was only partially constructed. The wagon was piled high with freight and had a canvas tied over it, and “this big, red-headed woman was sitting on the high seat, driving those four horses.”

It was a dangerous road to drive, but Mrs. Pullen was very courageous. She raised her children and after the wagon road was out of business and they started building the White Pass Railroad in 1898, Mrs. Pullen started a boarding house. She earned

enough money to send her boys to Seattle to go to school. Dan Pullen, her oldest boy, became one of University of Washington's outstanding athletes.

31:01 [Unclear] was a Norseman in the drilling crew. He played football and baseball and he was a colonel in WW-1. After the war, he died of sleeping sickness. He was Mrs. Pullen's first great sorrow. Her second son, Roy Pullen, went to school and became an electrical engineer. He was working for some big electrical company somewhere in Colorado when Bob last heard of him.

Chester Pullen, the youngest boy, was going to Seattle on a boat around 1906 or 1907 and Mrs. Pullen had given him all the money she had to go out and start at the Franklin High. The boat tied up at Ketchikan as was customary. Chester never arrived in Seattle and his body was found from Ketchikan shore, displaying wounds from a robbery. Bob consoled Mrs. Pullen by telling her not to hold it against Alaska because in the opinion of many Alaskans, Ketchikan isn't a part of Alaska but a suburb of Seattle. It was principally made of those people who had to get out of Seattle for various reasons, and who would get to the nearest town and stayed there for a while. Canadians wouldn't let them get into Canada, so they stayed in Ketchikan until things cleared out and they could go back to Seattle, or finally gain enough respectability to go into business and stay in Ketchikan.

33:26 Bob had a natural flair for mechanics and he got into steamboat business. He had always been intrigued by boats and at Skagway there were many little steamboats. There were no gas boats [?] and Bob didn't know anything about diesels. He started working on steamboats and got into mail run between Juneau, Sitka and Douglas, Skagway and Haines, [unclear] and other waypoints. In winter, he worked where it was warm in the engine room, and in summer he operated hoisting engines and piledriving engines. He would drive piles in the summer because it paid a little more and it was more fun. [Long pause in the recording.]

37:26 R.E. Bob Sheldon introduces himself again and says that he is continuing his story of his early life in Alaska for the Alaska Historical Society [probably Tanana Yukon Historical Society]. He was on the [steamboat] mail run between Skagway and Juneau. When the Treadwell mine was operating in Douglas, much business was going on in Juneau, such as lumber and fishing, tourism and mining. That's

also when they moved the capital [of Alaska] from Sitka to Juneau, but Bob doesn't want to start talking about that because that's a different issue.

Finally, in April in 1903, Captain Richardson, who was the constructing quartermaster for the United States Army and who later became General Wiles P. Richardson, after whom the Richardson Highway was named, was instructed to build a post in Haines. That was to be known as Fort William H. Seward. He established his headquarters in Skagway and started employing men to go to the project to build the post. He was looking for a piledriver and was particularly interested in getting a piledriver-hammerman who runs the machine that drives the piles.

At that time, Bob was driving piles in Juneau for Ed Webster who had a piledriving business in Juneau. Mr. E. J. Shaw, who was an agent for [unclear] company in Skagway and who was a personal friend of Captain Richardson, recommended Bob to him as a dependable worker. He wired the message to Juneau and offered Bob the job in Skagway.

40:11 It was an advancement that was more exciting and meant more money so Bob went to Skagway. At that time, in 1903, when Bob came to that big army man's swanky office with his cap in his hand, Richardson thought that Bob was just some high school kid who belonged to school. Bob looked like a child to Richardson so he called Mr. Shawn and came over to confirm that Bob was the man he was talking about.

Bob got employed. They went to Haines and used the summer to build a dock, which remains are still there. They built that post that is now known as Fort Chilkoot. Captain Richardson spent a good amount of his time there. He and Bob became very good friends all through the years. Every time he came to Fairbanks, Bob and he would have a little party to celebrate the old days.

In the fall when the work was finished, Bob went to Skagway and started as a night engineer at the power plant. He stayed there for 5 years.

42:11 He has already told the story about building the first automobile in Alaska before ever having seen one. He built a little automobile, which is now in the museum, in 1905 when he was employed by the power plant. He tries not to

mention the automobile much when his wife is around because she's not the woman it was built for and that's why she doesn't like that story. However, it's a part of Alaska's history. The girl the automobile was built for finally married the boy with horse and a buggy and Bobby put the automobile in the museum. He fled to the Interior in 1908, and he has lived there ever since. He became the operating engineer at the Northern Commercial Company power plant and worked there for 5 years.

In 1913, Fairbanks was going to have the thrill of seeing its first heavier-than-air machine. A little airplane was shipped in and it somewhat resembled the Wright Brothers' Kitty Hawk gimmick. It was brought to Fairbanks by a boat from Skagway and it was set up at the site of Week's Field that was then a ball park. Incidentally, Bob shipped the first model-T Ford car into Alaska that same year and it arrived in 29th of June. They cost \$368 dollars in Detroit and in Seattle they cost \$540 something. That was the difference in freight from Detroit to Seattle. When Bob unloaded his car on the docks where the boats used to land in those days by the N. C. Company, he had to pay the freight bill of \$1,286 dollars.

45:00 He had one of the best jobs in the country. The engineer at the power plant had a steady job all year around, 12 hours a day, Sundays and holidays, even on one's birthday. He was single so he was planning on having a lot of fun with the automobile. He took a vacation from July 1st to July 15th, during which there was a big celebration and all the miners from the creeks came to town to see the airplane. It was noted in the paper that Bobby Sheldon, engineer at the power plant, received a new automobile and so his friends out at Chatanika started calling him to come and get them.

Bob was going to have lots of fun on his vacation, running his friends to town. Of course they wanted Bob to take them back too after the show because otherwise they would have had to hire a team of horses and drive through the mosquito country for a couple of days. They appreciated coming in by automobile in an hour.

Bob got some people and took them to Nordale Hotel that was where the Chamber of Commerce Log Cabin is now. They had a beer and Bob was just about ready to go get more people when they asked how much he wanted to get paid for the ride.

All the money was in gold pieces at the time. There were \$25 dollar gold pieces, \$10 dollar gold pieces and so on. Bob said he didn't want anything. Of coins, 25 cents was the smallest amount that was used and if one wanted to buy a package of gum, one had to buy two, or if one wanted a nickel cigar, one had to take two. Everything was two for a quarter. Bob's friends started shoving \$25 dollar gold pieces in his blouse, saying that they also wanted Bob to take them back. Bob got \$25 dollars apiece for taking them. Bob had to go over to NC-Company and turn the money over to Preston so he wouldn't lose it.

48:16 After the celebration was over, Bob was going night and day to take people back and bring them in. When they came in [to Fairbanks], they were fine and dandy, industrious and sober, going to see the show, but going back, they were causing problems. At the end of the two weeks of driving, Bob had acquired \$1,500 dollars. That gave him the impression that there was money in the automobile business.

Bob quit his job. He didn't have any previous business experience. After he quit the job, he drove his automobile to Valdez to see if they could connect the Interior of Alaska to the coast. Up until that time, in 1913, to get from here [Fairbanks] to Seattle in summertime, one had to take a boat down the Tanana and go either up or down the Yukon and out from St. Michael by an ocean ship, or around Dawson and Skagway. If one was lucky with connections, the trip could be made in 28 days, but mostly it took 30 to 32 days.

About that time, two of his friends in Fairbanks [unclear] needed medical service as quickly as possible.

50:21 Those days Mayo Brothers [Clinic in Seattle] was considered by Alaskans to be the last jump-off place before one went to heaven. If they couldn't save a person, they were gone. Seattle didn't have anything to attract people in those days, except for the Mayo Brothers that attracted those in need of medical services. Bob's friends got out there but the doctors said that if they had got there a little bit sooner, they could have been helped. It affected Bob greatly because he knew the people, and so he got the idea that if they could get from Fairbanks to Valdez over the wagon road that General Richardson was starting to build, they could catch a boat from Valdez and get to Seattle in 6 or 7 days. The whole trip would take

maybe 10 days instead of 30. It might be the difference of life and death to people, and so Bob went into automobile business.

After a few years of experience, he found out that there wasn't as much money in the automobile business as he had thought. He found out the hard way that when the roads were in that condition that they were in, automobiles weren't such a great business. Like a lot of people in Alaska who failed in business, he got involved in politics. He got elected as a road commissioner in Alaska in 1918 for the 4th Division.

52:52 In those days, they had four judicial divisions in Alaska and each one of them had their own road setup. There wasn't much money for road purposes in the territory. Bob had only \$15,000 dollars to be used for two years to build roads in the 4th Division. When he read about senator Gruenings' request for \$300 million, he thought that, in Bob's days, they were certainly pioneering.

After two years of being the road commissioner, he ran for the legislature. That was in 1924. He got elected and he went into Juneau to serve in 25 session. Again, he was elected in [19]26 and served in 1927 session.

He was born in Washington State when it was a territory. The boys in the new state legislature, which Bob also was a member of, were feeling pretty important because they were taking an active part in the new states' future. Bob had been through it already since he was 3 years old when Washington became a state.

54:57 Bob has been asked to talk about Soapy Smith, and says that he's one of the few surviving eye-witnesses to death of Soapy Smith. He was 15-years old when he saw Soapy Smith get shot down at the end of the dock just like in a stage play. He thought he would never see anything more exciting in his life than a man being shot down and the shooter also getting shot. The excitement in Skagway was so great with a mob out of control, that Bob's heart went out to Ike [Dwight David] Eisenhower when he turned back from the fanatical crowd that was demonstrating in Japan [?]. Bob witnessed what could happen when a crowd gets out of control. The crowd was about 50-50 divided on whether they would lynch the members of Soapy Smith gang or if they would let law and order prevail.

Bob mentions how he thought that was the most exciting thing in his life, but that now, seeing worse shootings in TV, he wonders what the future generation is going to be like. They can see excitement every hour of the day when they look at TV.

57:24 Soapy Smith had a similar standing in Skagway than Al Capone had in Chicago. The people who were in business there thought that if they can't get rid of him, their investments would be lost because the town depended 100% on trade and traffic. It had got hazardous to go through the town with anything valuable because Soapy and his 10-25 goons would get it before 24-hours had passed. Soapy Smith and his gang knew all the tricks on "how to separate suckers from their money."

Those days they were pioneering some of those things that are now taken for granted. The merchants and the better element decided that they need to get rid of Soapy Smith's gang or they are through, since people were avoiding Skagway. They were going around by St. Michael and up the Yukon River in order to get to Klondike, thus passing Skagway and, as a result, Skagway was going down economically. The future was doubtful.

59:20 The better element, about 15-20 of them, held a secret meeting one night at someone's back room and tried to devise means to rid the town of the undesirables. Soapy Smith heard about it and broke up the meeting with a gun. He said, "You people talk about running me out of here because I run gambling in my place," and wondered why they don't run rest of the gamblers out too since there are gambling places all over town. He said that when people go to other establishments, they win a little and lose a little but when they come to his place, they don't win but Soapy Smith cures them of their gambling habit. He couldn't see why he was taken out when the other people were the real menace.

A man came out from the Klondike in the middle of July – it's recorded somewhere – and he had a poke of gold. Soapy Smith had a saloon where he had a bald eagle in a cage out the back door. The fellow made the mistake of going to Soapy Smith's place with his buckskin poke of gold which contained anywhere from \$7,000 to \$17,000 at the time when gold was only worth \$20.67 dollars. He poured some of the gold out for everybody to see because gold was what was bringing people from the states to Alaska. The Soapy Smith's gang got rid of the

other people around the gold, and soon they asked if the man had ever seen the eagle. He said he's never seen it, so they went out back to see the eagle, but the boy that took him there was gone with his poke of gold.

1:02:39 That was the last straw for the business people who got together and decided that they had to get rid of Soapy Smith since the town would be gone if he could get away with that kind of stuff, like separating a man from his poke of gold in the middle of the day, in the middle of town.

They went down on the long dock. The docks had to be built so that people could get into the deep ocean where the vessels could land. There was a warehouse on the Sylvester Dock.

There has been many stories written about Soapy Smith and what happened to him and many of the stories have come pretty close. People who weren't even born at that time have written books about it even if they only had an uncle who talked to somebody who used to know a guy who heard something about it. Bob is yet to hear anyone describe what happened to Soapy Smith as from an eye witness standpoint.

Bob mentions that eye-witness testimony in court is not taken fully against circumstantial evidence either, because 10 people who see the same scene happening will tell 10 different stories after two months. Same thing happened in case of Soapy Smith, and Bob will only record what he saw at age of 15.

1:04:48 Bob intended to bring his small air rifle to demonstrate what happened, but he forgot it when he left home. Soapy and the gang were on the dock by the warehouse where they couldn't be disturbed. They left Mr. Frank Reed, the city engineer who laid out the town of Skagway, to guard Soapy Smith and his crowd right close to the dock. He was a very large man and knew Soapy Smith from Colorado before they came to Alaska. They didn't want anybody to disturb them. There were at least 75 men at the meeting. The U.S. Marshal, the Commissioner and the editor of the newspaper, Dr. Harnsby, were all on Soapy Smith's side. They were perhaps afraid to take action against him. One couldn't get any help from the marshal or the commissioner and the newspaper would write a piece favoring Soapy Smith.

The men who opposed Soapy Smith had to decide whether they would organize a vigilantes committee and go out with guns and run all the Soapy Smith sympathizers out of Skagway. While this was going on, Soapy Smith had heard about the meeting and so he started breaking up the meeting with his Winchester rifle. Soapy Smith, was 38 years old and wasn't much bigger than Bob is [how big that is, is uncertain]. He had a heavy, curled, black beard and he was a good looking man and a very clever, nice person. He had gotten by in any legitimate activity but he just preferred to get something for nothing. He knew all the trick of the trade of those days. Several preachers were, for example, soliciting funds in Skagway, for instance, to start building churches just like they are in Fairbanks and when a preacher would come and ask for a donation, Soapy would say "sure," dig up a \$100 dollars and the preacher would go away with much appreciation. Later Soapy would have one of his lieutenants follow the priest and bring the money back. That's what happened in Skagway all the time.

1:08:57 Some people have tried to make out that Soapy Smith was a sort of a Robin Hood who robbed the rich and gave it to the poor, but Bob never saw any of that even though the newspapers portrayed him that way. He not only robbed the rich, but he would rob anybody he could get his hands on.

He went to where Frank Reed was. Reed was sitting on the railing on the dock and didn't have a gun or anything. Soapy Smith had a Winchester, like everybody else in Alaska, even though they are as useful as hobby horses. All the news kids who weren't taking part of the action followed the happenings and made sure not to miss anything. This happened in 8th of June in Skagway, and the visibility of that evening was similar than it is "now" in Fairbanks, 9pm on 23rd of June. One could see a couple of hundred yards and every move anybody makes. It was just twilight enough that when anybody shot a gun, the red flash could be seen.

They could see the red flashes when the guns started going off but they couldn't hear what the men were saying. Soapy Smith was a pretty cocky guy and he was "jerking his head around there" with a gun on his side.

[End of the recording.]