

H97-66-41

Sig Wold

January 24, 1963

Tanana Yukon Historical Society meeting
Fairbanks, Alaska

Sig Wold is introduced. He was born in Duluth, Minnesota and worked in civil service until WWI when he was in the military. He worked as a motorcycle dispatch rider in Paris. He worked in a shipyard after the war until he was injured. One of his military friends was from Bellingham. He invited him up to Washington. His father was the president of the Pacific American Fisheries in Alaska. Sig finally got a job with them. He went up to work in a cannery at the Excursion Inlet outside of Juneau. He rotated through many different jobs. He wanted to stay on after the summer. He was sent to the Bering River cannery in the Katalla area. He had to wait in Cordova for a transport. He was going to operate the vacuum machine until the end of the season. He went back to Cordova and started looking for a job. He went up to Kennicott Mining to work. Jim Douglas was the supervisor. Sig was given a laborers job. He learned to use a six foot cross cut saw. He then worked as a bucket chaser. The supplies were taken up in buckets and the ore was brought down in the buckets. The buckets came in every minute and they had to empty the ore. He finally went to work in the machinist shop as a plumber's helper and then worked in the warehouse. He met Con Miller who talked him into going into the restaurant business with him in McCarthy. He describes all the jobs he had at the restaurant and hotel. He went back to work at Kennicott after a year. He got into the taxi cab business, waste hauling and wood business. He also got into the ice business. The mine shut down for two years starting in 1930. There was a bridge across the Nelchina River that would go out every July. Pete Benlick had fifteen head of horses. They had to haul freight across the river by horses. They had to find the horses first thing in the morning and then hauled across the river until the river rose. He was appointed the undertaker. He would go out to get the bodies and once there was a case of mistaken identification between Howard Foster and Lee Ense. In 1937 he learned that Kennicott was going to shut down. He sold his business that year and came to Fairbanks. Ted Spencer was putting up a sawmill on Garden Island and Sig invested and ran the business until 1942. He bought an apartment house with a partner. He bought a business from Romie Haight's widow.

He returns to talk about Howard Foster and the cause of his death. Lee Ense died a few months later.

Someone from the audience talks about Romie Haight's trial and the black bear mail robbery.

Sig drove from Chitina to Fairbanks in one of his cars.