

H97-66-42

Ed Farrell

Fairbanks, Alaska

February 22, 1962

Tanana Yukon Historical Society meeting

Edward R. Farrell was born in Minnesota in 1882 and came to Alaska in 1898 for a short visit. He returned to Skagway in 1900 and went over the White Pass to Whitehorse. He left Whitehorse for a 450 mile walk down to Dawson. They were 21-22 days walking to Dawson. He worked around the creeks some and got a lease on Hunker Creek. He came to Fairbanks in 1903 by boat. In 1905 he decided to go to the Totana country for a year or so. He went over to Dome Creek and then to the headwaters of the Chena River. After a year he got a lease on Dome Creek. The Iditarod and Ruby stampede was going on in 1911 and he went to Ruby. He returned to Fairbanks and headed down to the Valdez country. It took nine or ten days to make it down to Valdez. The road was muddy and the streams had to be forged. They went over to the Copper River country before heading back to Fairbanks. He got a lease on Pedro Creek and didn't have a good piece of ground. He then went to Livengood and staked a claim. He returned to Fairbanks for the winter. In the spring of 1915 he walked to Ruby and worked on repairing boilers. He bought some ground and made a little money. He was in the Ruby country for twelve years. He went to Mason Creek and found a little gold. From there he went over to Rampart and bought the Idaho Bar. They bought a claim on Little Manook Creek and worked there for two or three years. He went to Fairbanks and went down to the Minto Flats and ran a trading post for one summer. He got a drilling outfit and moved down to where they were going to build the Rampart Dam. He returned to Fairbanks and drilled on the Ohio Creek. From there he went to Seward and was there for a year and a half. He met his wife in Seward.

Fairbanks was just a few log cabins and Barnette had his store when Ed arrived in town. He prospected on Fairbanks Creek and Cleary Creek. The man he was with didn't think Cleary Creek looked good. They didn't claim anything there but a year later others prospected successfully. He knew Pedro well. There was a little store on Pedro Creek. Charlie Mack was on Fairbanks Creek. He told a bunch of people that he had made a strike on Fairbanks Creek. By the time he returned to Fairbanks Creek the place was staked. McCarty was on Discovery and Fairbanks Creeks. He made a lot of money there. The Cleary strike was made by Cleary. He was the brother of Barnette's wife. Bonnifield was a gambler and a banker and had a reputation of being a walker.

Someone from the audience asked about Ed Stroker. Ed Farrell said Ed Stroker carried the mail on the Yukon before he came to Fairbanks. He had also worked as a bookkeeper.

Someone from the audience asked about Ben Falls. Ed said he took his drilling outfit over to Goose Creek and didn't find anything. He went back to Livengood and worked a little bit with Ben Falls on Wilbur Creek.

He also tried mining on Suckett Creek without success. They traveled down the John River and then down to the Koyukuk. They finally made it into Bettles.

Someone asked about mining on the Dome Creek. Ed said he was out on Dome Creek when Caribou Bill was shot. There was a discussion about Cap Anderson and an attempt to get him off his claim.

Someone asked about Goldstream Valley. Ed said Fox was quite a little town at one time. Cleary Creek was also a big town at one time. Ed talked about the narrow gauge railroad out to Chatanika.

Someone asked about traveling around with everything you needed on your back. Ed said that there were quite a few birds to shoot and rabbits. He traveled by foot quite often. There were caribou in the country.

Ed said he spent more time in the Ruby country than anywhere else. They spent four years on Little Manook in Rampart.

Someone asked about the Blue Parka Man. Ed said there was quite a bit of excitement about the Blue Parka Man. They had to have guards on the wagons coming in with the gold. The Blue Parka Man never got any cleanups. Cap Anderson used to hire four or five men to come in with his cleanups.

Ed said he still goes out to prospect. He plans on prospecting as long as he can. He thinks there is still lots of country to prospect.