

Charlie Wilson - 1-6-55

Women interviewer

Side 1 - Been in Nenana 32 years; arrived in '22.

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

Built 1st <sup>marine</sup> ~~waterway~~ - slides 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 w/ army + 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 & railroad people. 1923 some of railroad moved to Fair & Dealey.

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

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

Went to Circle + Birch Creek for a year - went out in a year + came back - left in '18 again, went in Army + didn't get back until '19.

Charlie Wilson 1-6-55 Side Two

1946 Retired from railroad - worked  
on the run 26 years -

1st trip was on narrow gauge -  
"1 spot" - engine in front of station;  
used Nealy coal & before that wood  
when it was Tanana Valley Railroad.  
Ak Railroad made it into standard  
gauge.

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

Ak RR had a 1 spot on Seward  
end.

Tanana Valley RR was local -  
ran to Chatinika - most FE stuff  
was towed out by narrow gauge -

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

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

Mentions Slim Avery

Sure - shot Wilson (E) - came  
in as hockey & ball player -

Piccolo Pete - walks along river  
Rufus - couldn't speak without  
whistling

Whiskey Dan - Jack Borchard -  
2 sisters came to see him - he  
lived out of Tanquary. Sisters bought  
a tent & stayed with him anyway.  
He manufactured "two thousands of thousands  
of gallons"

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## Tape 1. Side 1 - Cut 2

Here's a Pioneer - Al McLeod and  
1-6-55 Side 1 Woman Interviewer

Came to Ak 1897 - came for gold rush.  
Left Milwaukee - went to Vancouver, Wash  
& on Steamship Centennial to Vancouver BC -  
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 when going to  
build aluminum plant -

Special meningitis epidemic on Yukon  
side of pass. Dr Frizzell from Los Angeles  
was traveling through - I did up 4-5 weeks -  
doctor had no medicine - kept fire  
going from bed. Only medicine was  
Cortegland whiskey. Jack Connelly (?)  
was bootlegging in - illegal to ship it.

Thought he was over special 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 1st still had ice - it disappeared  
overnight due to wind.

### Side 2 -

Dr. was out on ice with broken  
sleigh and dogs; all drowned -  
couldn't get to them on soft ice -

Special seats on ~~train~~ sleigh(?)  
for men with packs -  
Carried 50-60 lbs

Here's a Pioneer Al McLeod 1-6-55

Riding G-pole description -

Interviewer 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 + told her what they had found - She said she had missed the stocking + not known where it was. She had a little daughter. Raised \$7500 in 3 weeks locally for her + the child -

Tape 1 - Side 2 cut 1

Van  
George Preston Side one 1-6-55

This morning Immaculate Conception Church marked 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary in Fai.

Preston was in Fai when church was 1st built - not an active member then but is now -

He arrived Jan 4, 1904 - 1st job with HC Co. didn't know Father Monrose until later -

Preston's ~~was~~ wife was Catholic & he met Monrose that was - Trouble arose over moving church from 1st & Dundale to present location. F. Monrose determined to move church. Parishoners petitioned to try to prevent move - Monrose wanted to have it close to the hospital.

Preston came in on his own from Valdez. Left Valdez day after Thanksgiving to 1903. Got here 1/4/1904 & it was - 50. Stayed at Harry Graehl's eyes in Grack for several days. Left for creek 10 days later.

Construction of hospital - Small hospital at St. Matthews Church was too small - only a dozen patients.

Preston cont 2/3

Local businessmen wanted Monroe to build a hospital - others thought it would hurt St Matthews which was small log building.

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

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

Side two -

Preston had had some <sup>office</sup> selling experience in Scotland & the Klondike - found out mining wasn't his thing.

Had met Judge Wickersham in Valdez & Wickersham took him to meet N.C. manager Howard Turner. Got job as <sup>office</sup> roustabout. Dick Wood was office man & Jack Nealy 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.

## Preston cont 3/2.

No ladies goods then - unless  
content to use Levi Strausses &  
gun boats -

Very limited # of people on creek  
then - later that Spring word  
got out about Fair gold.  
Dawson was beginning to decline  
& boats that summer & fall  
were crowded w/ people coming  
in.

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

Spring 1900 - Fall 1902 Preston  
was in Klondike - went to ?

& returned to Valdez in 1903.  
Worked as cook for mining  
crew - News of Tanana strike  
& Susitna strike.

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

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Tape 1 - Side 2 cut 2

Here's a Pioneer Van  
George Goshaw 1-6-55

Side One -

Goshaw from Nome several times a year in past 3-4 years.

Judge Wickesham Remembrance -  
3rd Division of AK - (names 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 dog sled 1 of early  
parties to Mt McKinley -

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

Barnette came in 1902 - up  
Chena Slough in powered Steam  
Boat - Started Trading post  
1903+4 went into banking. Street  
named for him -

Crowl - 1 of 1st Fair Commissioner

Goshaw Page 2/3

1902 landed Skagway

03-04 Mushed to Fai

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

Fai was log cabin camp -  
Stores + 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 ~~Full~~ Mike Walsh -

Peter X Peterson

Nels Swamberg (1900)

Frank Washey - elected as 1st delegate to Wash in 1906-7

1st legis he presented was for Fai +

Nome land offices. In past year moved from Dillingham to Maryland. Returned to Ak - + Dillingham for summer.

## Goshaw Page 3/3

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

### Side 2 -

Early day Nome - 1898 3 white men - Sundersen, Sindberg + ?  
Came up from Golovin -  
Had gone to Anvil Creek which they named. Anvil Mtn had huge rock on top.

1st big AK Stampede 98 - 20,000 people - Camp known as Anvil City -

In 1900 when made application named it Nome.

Very describes Goshaw:

Member Amer. Legion, N.W. Ak Chamber of Commerce - working for road to Nome - John L. Sewin look - don't believe in living in the past.

"My personal belief - " Shd look into future + assist young pioneers - old matters use up our time. Greatest thing we have in Fair to develop tourists would be road to Nome. Fair would be focal point for hundreds of thousands not the "100,000 we expect of tourists

Took a month to come to Fair from Nome by dog. This year."