

Call Number: 02-00-62-03

Interview with Brade Knudson on September 6, 1962, No Location.

Summary created by: Jacob Metoxen

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Notes: Original on 5 inch reel, copy on CD.

Harry Hughes is driving and discussing Mr. Knudson's early prospecting days. Brade Knudson says he was born on the southern tip of Norway. He left there in 1913 and arrived in Fairbanks. His mother and stepfather were mining in the Pedro Dome area. The recording jumps forward and Harry Hughes says that they are 30 miles out on the Steese Highway going out to the Livengood road and Tory Anderson's Mine. Mr. Zimmerman is being discussed. Andrew Nelson, [?], and Tom King of Golden started the first hydraulic mining operation in the area on Pedro Creek close to where the Twin Creek enters Pedro Creek. He said he mined the Pedro area for five years. He left Fairbanks and went over to Kennecott for a couple mines. He worked off and on there for a number of years. Later on in the 50's he went to the Kuspik area at the Red Devil Mine. He worked for Bear Creek Mining Company and for Kennecott Copper. KC asked him to go onto the Kobuk River project this year. There is a large mining operation going on there and this year they employed about 60 for the diamond drilling, geological work, and drilling gaps. He wanted the work because it brought him back to Fairbanks after being gone for 44 years. Harry Hughes, Mrs. Eva McGown has brought a number of old timers in contact with him and he is being shown around on the creeks. They are going around to some of the places where he worked 40 years ago. His stepfather was Dr. Ovegaard. He built the first hospital in Fairbanks and did some mining. When he first came to the country his stepdad told him he went through British Columbia caribou country and down the Yukon River. He settled at Circle and there he had his first drug store. A friend of his, Don Callahan, was councilman and territorial legislature. He discusses his stepfather using a carpenter chisel to operate on Helen Callahan, daughter of Don Callahan. Brade says he met her for the first time yesterday after hearing her story 50 years ago from his stepfather. Mrs. McGown asked him some of the old timers he remembers. When Brade saw Helen Callahan the first things he said was "you're not Don Callahan." She said that Dr. Overgaard operated on her and saved her life. She almost died. Helen is 74 now.

At 9:55 Harry Hughes discusses Bear Creek mining. Bear Creek has operations in the Yukon area says Harry and Brade says that's another company. Harry is saying a white quartz rock is exceedingly rich and the rock has never been milled or broken up enough to try and see the gold in it. Harry says people are secretive about their reports from mining. Harry Hughes is discussing a canyon and prospecting as he drives. He says there is an asbestos outcropping. They are driving by Engineer Creek. They are driving up on Fox Gulch which used to be quite the little town. There is a spring about a quarter mile off the road where they are driving where the Chena Railroad used to stop and get water. Brade says he remembers traveling on the Tanana Valley Railroad. Fox was quite the town. It engineered quite a few

operations. Williams had an operation and Jack Dunn also had operation. From Fox to Gilmore was about 3 miles from Gilmore to Golden was about 3 miles according to Brade. Fox Gulch is seven miles from where they are. They are on mile 11 from the city of Fairbanks. Hughes says he is turning off of the Steese Highway onto the Livengood Road. They are driving towards Murphy Dome's cutoff. Brade does not recognize the road they are driving on. Brade says he took the Tanana Valley railroad tracks from Fox to Gilmore because it was a perfect straightaway and you could see from one end to the other. Harry says there is a cabin and last year the man who lived there disappeared. He walked off with his gun and so the state police and people were out looking for him. A couple days ago Frank young ran into him on the streets of Fairbanks. The man moved and didn't tell anybody. Harry says in the old days you didn't ask people their name and they didn't tell it was fine. Harry says they have just unlocked the gates to Tori Anderson's mining claims. The time now is 1:58 in the afternoon of September the 6th, 1962. Brade says on Dome Creek was Spalding Mill.

The second side of the tape starts at 22:30. They are at Pete Smith's mining operation. Brade discusses Twin Creek and Peter Creek, Tin Creek, Martin Hayes, Rainbow Mine, Dick Creighton. Wilson Hall is mentioned. They are driving again and are approaching Golden by Pedro and Twin Creeks. Earlier they were at the roadhouse which is run by Mrs. Pernel [?]. McKay, Burnett family with several children. Macdonald was a teamster. That was the total population of Golden except across from Golden a farm was worked there by Charlie Yaeger. Mrs. Yaeger worked at a road house on Richardson Road. They are 20 miles from Fairbanks. They can see a view of the mountains. Brade says the roads are just about the same as they were in 1913. Brade says he was mining at Skokie Joes at the shoulder of Pedro Dome. Dick Creighton and Lou Garrett [?] were mining farther up the creek. A man ran down and said that Lou shot Dick Creighton so Brade and his stepfather went up and Dick Creighton had been shot in the neck and the side of the ear. The bullet passed through Dick and he had no problem recovering. Dick's wife reached for a shotgun and Lou Garrett told her to drop the shotgun and she did. When she did it fell in the kitchen. She changed her mind and bent down to get the gun and Lou Goyd shot her. Everyone recovered and Lou Garret sat in the hillside watching the sheriffs looking for him. Finally Lou Garrett said the mosquitos are too tough and he turned himself in.

At 31:35 they have moved down the road a few hundred yards. There is another mine called Rainbow Mine near Skoogie Gouch. Brade says there were several prospects from 1913-1917. Rainbow Mine was one of them. The Rainbow Mine was worked by [?] and Ryan Maddox. The Forkman Bradley prospect and Mrs. Bradley was a really good physician in Fairbanks. Across the creek Martin Harris did some mining. Martin Harris also did some good recovery. Farther up Twin Creek there was a silver prospect that was shipped and got about \$200 a ton. The Creighton property was getting \$400 a ton. Brade says where he worked he was getting \$100 a ton. Brade says he did prospecting on the north side of Pedro Dome. Harry Hughes says that several years ago there had been a burn off in this country and the country had been burned off. Hughes says that there are stories that the fires started from carelessness and bitterness. Brade says he doesn't know about that but he says he sees a piece of equipment down the road – an oil drum and iron. Hughes says on the opposite bank it looks like there has been a cut down on the opposite side of the creek. There is also a tree marked out that could be a claim marker. The recording is cut off.

The recording resumes and Harry Hughes says the time now is 4:47 pm. He says Brade and him are getting ready to move back towards Fairbanks. Brade is discussing old Martin Harris prospecting workings. Harris worked high up on the hill towards the bottom and he had mica on the top and lower diorite. Brade says the claim is now too brushy to determine. The time now is 5:02 pm. The recording cuts off.

The recording resumes and Harry Hughes is discussing some information. He says Mr. Brade and he drove on through Fairbanks and they got in at about 5:40 pm. They both went and washed up and cleaned up and went to the Model Café and had dinner. Mr. Brade had an appointment with Tule Anderson and an exchange of information regarding the hard rock prospects in the area. He wished Mr. Brade a good trip home to the Lower 48. Mr. Brade has an operation where he is mining oil. Mr. Brade and MR. Tully were exchanging information and data on mining when Hughes said goodbye at 7:15 in the evening. The recording ends.