

Call number: 02-00-62-18

Oliver Anderson

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The recording begins with Harry Hughes announcing that they are recording on side number two of the tape. The recording cuts out. There is faint radio playing in the background. When the tape resumes Harry Hughes is saying that Tom Mayhar [?] and Clayton Bowers are with him. He tells Clayton Bowers not to mumble. The recorder being used is the Steelman Tape Recorder and he has made 5 years' worth of tapes for pioneers of Alaska. Hughes says he makes a transfer tape off of the original. Tom Mayhar asks Harry if he has ever used the tape recorder to record people with them knowing and Harry says he has never taken secret tapes but there have been times when people have been inebriated. The recording stops.

The recording resumes at 2:25 and Harry Hughes says that he is recording again at about medium volume. Hughes is doing tests for low, medium and high volumes. The recording stops and then starts with Hughes counting and saying that the background is the radio the "Wagon Train." The recording stops and starts again with Hughes addressing Tom Smith and telling Smith that the recorder he is using is a Steelman and that he paid \$214 for the recorder. The recorder is AC operated as well as batteries. Harry Hughes is attempting to sell the recorder he is currently recording with. The reason being that he has a lot of things packed and he has a tiny recorder to replace the Steelman. Hughes is explaining to Tom Mayhar the ins and outs of using the recorder. Tom Mayhar begins talking. Tom is getting promoted to a new job and according to Harry Hughes Tom is going to have to be a leader, a prospect Tomy Mayhar vehemently denies. The recording stops.

The recording resumes at 5:15 with Harry Hughes stating the day is May 16th, 1964 in Fairbanks, Alaska. Harry is in the Nordale Hotel visiting with an old pioneer friend, Oliver Anderson. Anderson is a Native Alaskan. Harry is going to try and get some of Oliver's history. He tells Oliver to talk in a normal voice. Oliver's father was a marine engineer and shipped out of San Francisco for the Alaska Fish and Glano Plant at Killasnoo Alaska in 1881, a subsidiary of the Hudson Bay Company. A few years later they moved to Trebell [?] and his mother came up in 1987 from San Francisco. He was born in 1888 and an old Native lady took care of his mother when he was born. There were two doctors on the Juneau side but it was too rough to get across the channel. Oliver and his friend Frank Schotter [?] were on the Treadwell dock when they were seven and the Steamer Willepau landed on the first trip in competition for the Big Pacific Steamship Company. The fare was originally 25 dollars but they cut the rate to 10. With the Willepau [?] being on the run the Big Pacific Steam had several other vessels on the run and they couldn't meet the cut until winter when they only had one boat on and they met the cut. He was there in Douglas during the Klondike gold rush in 1898 and 1899. Hundreds and hundreds of boats came by and one was the Clara Nevada, formerly the Hassler. The Hassler was a revenue cover for

government service. She was condemned and bought by a company that operated in the Klondike Rush. She passed through Juneau at about February of 1899. All the rats left the boats. When the rats left the boats all of the sailors quit and they shipped a new crew. She went on to Skagway and left Skagway the next night. She struck some rocks and blew up. Oliver's sisters were on the beach at Burger's Bay about 15 miles away when the explosion happened. His sister's name was Alvina Morell. The whole sky lit up and they heard an explosion. Everybody on that boat was lost. There was one body discovered a while afterwards of a purser. That was the end of the Clara Nevada. Oliver was in Douglas in 1901 when the Steamer Island left Skagway at 9m on August 14th and hit the rocks around the point of Gastineau Channel around the time the next morning of 2:15. She didn't hit the rocks she hit an iceberg. There was a loss of 42 lives. It's been said that it was 72 but at that time it was 42. In those days the kids used to ride up for free from Douglas on the ferry boat. He says he came in to Treadwell that morning at about 8:30 or 9 o'clock and there was a lifeboat from the steamer islander that was there and the mate of the boat and some sailors and fella named Billy Mullen from Dawson were on the lifeboat. They told Oliver about the wreck. The boat that Oliver came in on, the Steamer Flozey went on down to see what could be done. The bodies were picked up. That was 1901 on August 15th. There was dense fog that night. Billy Mullen was playing poker at the time that the boat struck. It's been said by Billy Mullen that he dashed up on deck they were down below. He says he could see the trees. Billy said that the boat hit the rocks but Oliver says that is all hearsay. Steamer Flozey's captain committed suicide. He was on the raft and he lit his pipe and jumped into the water after the disaster. The pilot was on watch. The captain wasn't on duty. The pilot was on the bridge and he lost his license for good. The pilot was later postmaster for the city of Victoria. Oliver says he doesn't know anyone alive that survived that boat. Sam Applebaum was the last one Oliver knew of and he died 2 or three years ago. There are reports that the Clara Nevada had a lot of gold on it. It was also reported that the Islander had a lot of gold on it. The only good was the stuff that the people had on them; there was nothing in the safe.

At 12:10 Oliver says that in 1907 four of the kids had the notion to go to the interior. They left Douglass on the Steamer Dolphin in May 1907 up to Skagway. They flipped the coins to see which kid rode the plane. The kid who rode the plane got \$5 dollars from the others because he brought their baggage over. Oliver was the one who rode the train. They got into White Horse and they bought a Yukon row boat. They started down the river and they got to the head of Lake Lavoires [?] and they pulled their boat up on the ice and waited until about 2 in the morning when it was freezing and they pulled the boat across the ice because it had runners on it. They hauled the boat 30 miles across the river. They got in the 30 Mile River. They were supposed to make their first stop at Hood Linkwin [?] and report at the police station. Lake Divarge is where they cremated Sam McGee. They check in at Hood Lalinkwa [?]. There were other stations down the river and when they passed by the police put their glasses on them to check the numbers on their boat. They checked out with four people in a boat. They could only see three. They did catch some murders that way. They got into Dawson on the Queens Burthee on May 24th. That night they weren't supposed to be there but they were there anyway. They asked them their ages and they told them they were 21 even though they were only 19. He remembers sitting there and watching the show. It was a couple of big shots up in the box buying champagne on the fellas below. The guy got up and squawked about it. They threw him \$50 down and told him to buy himself a new suit. Oliver says he sat in that spot for the rest of the evening. They had wonderful music in those

days. In the dance hall Professor Thremuth [?] was the leader of the orchestra and Ed Faucet was the second violinist. The Douglas boy was on trombone. Another Doulgas boy was trap drums. They had a fellow name Swartz who was the MC in the middle of the floor. Oliver says he can still hear the MC speaking. Oliver stayed at the old Principle Hotel and he believes the hotel is still standing there. He paid a dollar a day for the room. The other boys went to a 50 cent bunk house. He had 25 dollars so he stayed at the Principle Hotel. A banker in Juneau told him to stay in a good place because you always meet good people in good places, you don't meet them in joints. He got a job on the steamer Hamilton with John Campbell who was a Scotchman. The captain was Doulgas and Kid Marion was the pilot and Marion died only a couple years ago. He says he got on that boat for St. Michael. He says he spent two weeks in St. Michael and he helped unload the wire. The ship had 5,000 tons of freight for up the river. Then he got a job on the Oil City for Fairbanks as a deckhand. Captain Depew was on her and George Masterson was mate. Tortt was chief engineer. Creampuff Bill was the cook. Creampuff was a good cook. They got up to Fairbanks and landed in Chena first though. They unloaded the boat and they got 2.5 a day as deckhands. They had to work next to a longshoreman who was getting a dollar an hour. He walked into Fairbanks on the 5th of July. He got in at midnight on 1907. First place he went was the Floridor Dance Hall. They had wonderful music. Victor Rand was the leader of the orchestra. He remembers a girl comes up to him and asks him to dance and she came back and said she knows he dances. He got up to dance. He stayed there 10 days in Fairbanks and got rid of all of his money. He went up to Dawson and got a job with Andy Livingston who was the first mate on the ship Lavelle Young. He says the Lavelle Young was the first boat ever into Fairbanks. Andy Livingston hired Oliver as a deck hand and then Oliver got a job on the Solfort [?] as a deck hand going to Whitehorse. He went longshoreman in the middle of October at Whitehorse.

At 1948 of the recording Harry asks Oliver if he remembers any incidents while he was at Dawson. Oliver says no and Harry asks him about Hatfield the Rainmaker being brought up to Dawson. Oliver says he was on Douglas Island when Hatfield the Rainmaker came up to Dawson. Harry says the rainmaker couldn't make it rain but after he left it poured and poured and poured. Oliver says the rainmaker tried taking credit for that. Harry asks Oliver if he remembers the chief of the Nehanees [?]. The medicine man was around politicking trying to get the job that the rainmaker had. Oliver says the chief of the Indians then was Chief Isaac. Oliver says he doesn't remember any of the old miners. Harry says George Bugunice [?] was there until 1950. Albert Gadsley let in 1905. Bob Bloom left in 1903. Oliver says he was first there in 1907. He says he remembers he went back to Juneau and in 1910 he did a stampede. They came in on a train from Whitehorse and on a boat the same way they did before. On that trip he went to Tanana and he went on the steamer Martha Cloud from Tanana to Iditarod and slept on the beach all night waiting for the boat to come in. He went aboard the boat and asked the captain what the fair was to Iditarod and Oliver says he was very polite in those days he even took his hat off. The captain said it was \$50 first class and \$40 second class. Oliver says he took a first class ticket and he waited until they got out of Tanana to ask the captain about a birth. He went up to him and said "Captain, who will assign a birth to me?" The captain says he has to see the cook so he went up to the cook and he told the cook he has a first class ticket and was told the cook would assign him a birth. The cook says there are no births; anywhere he could flop is alright with the cook. As far as the meal seats were concerned, there were 60 passengers on the boat and there was only room for 12 at

the table. The first night he flopped underneath the dining room table and then they started playing poker. He didn't get any rest and it was 5 in the morning and they got him out of there so he moved out where there was a barge with horses and he went and slept in some hay. The second day out the captain was around collecting fares for those who had gotten on for the Tanana. Oliver saw him collecting \$30 from some and \$40 from others but nobody paid \$50. Oliver went up to his office and told the captain he thought the captain made an error in his fare. The captain asked "How's that kid?" Oliver says he was charged \$50. The captain said those that paid \$40 were second class and those that paid \$30 that was all they had. That's the way he got into the Iditarod. His job in Iditarod was to carry water across his back on a yoke to people's houses. He was getting paid 50 cents a bucket. He was partners with black sullen, an old time moon shiner. They got a dollar a day for the use of the pump. They had 11 people carrying their own water.

At 24:55 of the recording Harry asks Oliver how he got the news of the Iditarod stampede. Oliver says the Iditarod was struck in 1909. Oliver says it was the spring of 1910 when the big stampede was on. The steamer Martha Cloud Fairbanks boat was owned by George Finger. Some of George Finger's relations are still in the country. Harry asks Oliver what he remembers about the Purdees. Oliver confirms that Harry is talking about the Purdees in 40 mile. Oliver says Purdee was an agent for the NC Company in New Ladell. Oliver says he hasn't seen him after that. Harry says that part of the family is still living and he was living up in that chicken country 40 Mile. Oliver says he went to the Ruby Stampede in 1911. Oliver says he prospected but never made anything. Oliver says he prospected in Ruby and Koyukuk. He came up from Iditarod to Ruby with Alabama Berto. Alabama Berto used to be out in Livengood and he came out with boat by Dyckman and told Oliver to get on. They started for the Indian River stampede in Koyukuk. They found out it was a fake so they went on to Ruby. He slept on the deck of the Old Barge of Nebraska. There were 12-15 people who slept on the deck there for about two weeks until a boat came along and towed it away and they had to go ashore.

At 27:15 of the recording Harry asks Oliver if he had the opportunity to hear about any of these robberies or murderers or things that have been embellished as time went on. Oliver starts discussing 1912 on September 12th. There were three men named Dutch Marine and Fiddler John and another person Oliver can't remember and they came down from Wiseman to catch the steamer reliance to go to the Yukon. They got the Bettles a day too late. So they hired Blueberry Tommy who was a little Englishman who had a gas boat named the Seal Pup. They hired him to take them to the Yukon. He started out of Wiseman for the Yukon so his folks. Fiddler Johns folks wrote in because they never heard of him. There was no communication and there was only mail service once a month. In 1914 Oliver was at Ruby and working with Pete Johnson on the Johnson Jackson. They traded up the Koyukuk River. They used to sell to the miners at Indian River. Before they left, Captain Donovan who was a former deputy marshal in Iditarod came in and said to Oliver that he heard he was going to Koyukuk. Oliver told him yes and the captain said he would like to go with him and he would pay his fare. Oliver told him they don't have the license to collect fares so he can't collect any from him. Captain said he was going to pay his expenses in food so Oliver told him to come along. Captain told Oliver that down in Koyukuk they were going to take on another passenger. They got to Koyukuk and there was an Indian and a small boat. They brought the man and the small boat up the river about 60 miles and the Indian

man and the captain were dropped off. That was where they Indian and the captain found the remains of the three missing people. All had been killed, shot, and then burned up. They camped for the night and the ranger killed them all and robbed them. The ranger buried his boat in the slough in the sand. The ranger went down New Ladell on a raft saying he was wrecked up the river and just barely got out. The ranger never mentioned the people that were on there because no one knew they were on. He caught the steamer JP Light at New Ladell for St. Michael. He caught the Victorian at St. Michael for her last trip to Seattle. The last people heard about him he was in the British army in 1914-1915. He was never caught. Oliver says he wrote a story about those killings for the Daily Dispatch in Juneau.

At 31:30 of the recording Harry asks about wrestling and boxing matches. Oliver says Nick Burley was the champion in Dawson. George Slaven [?] was also a fighter in the early days. Harry asks Oliver if he has been to Dawson in recent years. Oliver says he hasn't been to Dawson since 1926. Harry says there are very few alive over there but there might be a few who remember the country at that time. Harry corrects Oliver and says the wrestler/boxer's name was Frank Slaven [?]. Harry says he wants to know about Oliver's experience in Fairbanks. Oliver says he never lived in Fairbanks for very long, he was in and out. Harry asks about the population in Iditarod, Circle, and Eagle during the stampedes. Oliver says he didn't go to Circle until 1924 but he was in and out. He says there weren't many people there. He says Circle was the biggest log cabin town in the world at one point. The show house was built by George T. Snow. They went from Juneau to Forty Mile and then built a show house in Circle out of logs. That was a big place. None of those buildings are standing today. The show house was used many years for a barn.

At 33:38 Harry begins investigating where Oliver was raised and asks Oliver to tell him about the Treadwell Mine, the richest mine in Alaska at the time. Oliver says he was selling papers back in those days. Oliver says he remembers everything about it. Oliver asks Harry how old he is and Harry says he is 65 and Oliver says Harry was just a kid. Oliver's father was an engineer at the Treadwell Mine. He was a stationary engineer. Oliver says he remembers everything. Harry asks about world publicity at the mine for the gold, how many men were hired, what caused the accidents. Oliver says there were four mines and the Treadwell was the first one and had a big glory hole. There was also a mine called the 700. The 700 was a Mexican mine. The Treadwell mine got too close to the top and that's where they caved in. Rayiny [Bullein] [?] Mine was saved because they thought of preventing collapse by filling up holes so no water could get through. All the mining in the Ray Bullein Mine was underwater and the shaft was on an incline on a rock formation. Harry says he doesn't remember very much as a kid. Oliver says there were about 1400 people employed by all four mines. Oliver says there were no small prospectors making money. He says the one thing the Treadwell mine did do was a good number of men got a grub stake at Treadwell and followed the stampede to Dawson. Oliver says he knew Earl Thomas very well. Earl's father was an undertaker and also handled windows and glass at Douglas. Oliver says he knew Murell Thomas' wife well as well.

At 37:10 Oliver begins discussing how he got the nickname "Doc". Oliver says there was an old doctor from Valdez named Dr. Huger. Oliver was looking for a job on Saturday and asked the doctor if he could get a job and the doctor said he didn't have any money but he does have a job for Oliver. Oliver used to wash the windows and scrub the floor every Saturday and run his errands. That's how he got the

nickname "Doc". Oliver begins talking about Robert McKenna and how they were raised together in Douglas. Robert McKenna was known as Mickey McKenna. Harry says he didn't get any stories on Bob because he was shy of the recorders. People who get recorded sometimes don't want their stories used for a number of years. Alaska Link is the president of the Auxiliary of Fairbanks, formerly Alaska Moody, and wanted Harry to make sure he got the story from Oliver. Harry wants Oliver to give a little input about his visit with Bill Cashen and Earl Viceline. Billy Cashen was born right across the street from Oliver in Dawson. Cashen's parents and grandparents were good friends of Oliver's family. Everyone was a big family back then because they had to be. Harry asks Oliver if he remembers anything about Jim Galen. Oliver says Galen used to be in Cordova at the Alaskan Transfer. Oliver didn't know little Johnny Howard who used to help Galen. Oliver says he knew Bobby Sheldon in Skagway and first met him at Douglas. Oliver first met Douglas when he was an engineer for a pile driver in 1904.

At 40:10 of the recording Harry tells Oliver thank you for the Pioneers for the information that Oliver has provided. Oliver Anderson lives at 2474 Dexter Ave. North Seattle, Washington. He has no relations in Seattle except for his wife. Oliver joined the Pioneers in Ruby at about 1912. Oliver says he doesn't remember if he was a life member or not. Oliver says he was always on the committee for all of the parties. Oliver has an appointment. Harry wraps up the interview and the recording stops.

The recording resumes at 42:12. Harry Hughes states that it is June 29th, 1964 in Fairbanks, Alaska. Harry Hughes and Bob Bloom are preparing for a trip to Paxton to Rica Rollins place. It is 5:50 am and they are getting ready to go. The day is beautiful and they are making good time. The wildflowers are along the road. They made Big Delta in about 2 hours and 15 minutes. There is no traffic on the road and they are heading to the Donnelly Flats. They haven't seen any signs of game except some pet horses. They stopped at the Donnelly camp grounds and Bob and Harry have made a couple of sandwiches. They made coffee and are getting ready to start again. They are up in the neighborhood of Slim Morris' summer house. Bob and Harry stopped and filled with gas and took a couple pictures. Now they are on their way to Paxton Lodge and Mary Jo's place. The road ahead is all torn up. Bob has had quite a visit with Mary Jo reminiscing about the farms in Idaho. Mary Jo brought out a couple of nice Grayling for bob. They stopped out at the wash out. He took a couple of pictures and now they are on their way again. They are on their way again and they stopped at George Norton's. They got a couple tickets for the Gold Poker apple and now they are on their way again. Now they got down to Rica Wallens and John Hajdukovich. She made some odd chairs and also paintings. She makes them out of the same stuff as snow shoes. She has bright colors and for a woman who is 90 years old she is very active. They have had coffee and cake. Rica says she likes to visit with the old timers. Now they are heading across the big delta ridge and up at Richardson's Road House. Denise Albright was there and she took a book of gold raffle tickets for the pioneers. Bob and Harry are heading back towards Fairbanks. They are getting into town now and traffic starting to pick up. There is quite a string of cars up here. He's letting Bob Bloom out of the car to his house. He's going to go home and deliver the message from Denise Albright. The day is June 29th, 1964 at 8 pm in Fairbanks Alaska. The recording ends.