

## Summary for H75-15

### Eustace Paul Ziegler, George Parks, Pat Dougherty, and J. S. McKinnon with Al Bramstedt in Fairbanks, AK 1940s

#### SIDE 1

Eustace Paul Ziegler is interviewed by Al Bramstedt in Fairbanks, AK, in 1947. Ziegler is 66 years old at this time. Detroit, MI is where he's originally from. He read a book by Lout that made AK very interesting to him, and he decided to come here to paint. He knew Bishop Rowe intimately, and Cordova was where he lived when he got here. He came to work for the Bishop at the Red Dragon Clubhouse, which had many customers during the construction of the Copper River and Northwestern Railroad to the Kennicott Mines. There were 27 saloons in town at the time, and the Clubhouse provided an alternative. St. George's Mission of the Episcopal Church sponsored it. The symbol for St. George was a red dragon, hence the name of the Clubhouse.

Ziegler had known Rowe since 1909. Rowe had been good friends with Ziegler's father; he was a great pioneer of AK and in charge of the Episcopal Church here for nearly 50 years. He only made it to Cordova about once a year. When Cap Lathrop built the first theater in Cordova, Ziegler painted a mural decoration inside with semi-nudes in it. There was a rival organization that didn't approve of the picture. When the Bishop showed up he put his arm around Ziegler and said, "My boy, they're just beautiful."

Ziegler said he knew Cap Lathrop since 1909 also. He tells a story involving Lathrop and a picture he painted of Mt. McKinley. Ziegler had gone into McKinley Park and spent 12 weeks painting a picture of the mountain. Robert Major, a partner of Hallgart and Company in New York heard about the painting and came to Ziegler's studio in Seattle and purchased the painting for \$500. He took Ziegler and his wife out to dinner at the Olympic, and disappeared. Later, in 1947, Cap Lathrop received a letter from a dealer in New York who wished to sell this picture to him for \$2,500. When Ziegler heard about it, he said he'd never sell a painting to Lathrop, only give it to him.

He relates the story behind the picture "Assessment Work." He was on a party doing assessment work in the Copper River Valley. As it turned out, the "business" of the men was comprised mainly of sheep hunting, painting pictures, and playing cards. Ziegler painted a picture of this laid-back scene and one of the others said he liked it, and that it ought to be called "Sessment Work."

Ziegler says that he knows Ted Lambert quite well. Lambert studied with him, though Ziegler doesn't consider him a student, but an associate. They traveled the length of the Yukon together. He praises Lambert's work; Lambert is sincere and Ziegler doesn't like to see that Fairbanks doesn't have an appreciation for his work.

"The Birches and the Phonograph" is based on something that happened to Lambert while he was mushing on the Yukon. As they reached a patch of birches, his dogs, which hadn't eaten in 2 or 3 days, went up a snowy bank to an abandoned cabin. Lambert went inside and started a fire. He heard a groan in the other room. He'd been suffering for the past few days and wasn't going to stand for any funny business, and went out to get his gun. He heard the groan again when he came back in, and discovered that there was an old phonograph in the next room. The lubrication had melted in the warmth of the fire and the "ghost" had been released from the record player.

Ziegler talks about Fairbanks and Anchorage's great appreciation for art. He sold 27 paintings and took orders for 27 others at an exhibition in Fairbanks. He comments that he's won the Baker Award once and the Popular Award six times. He mentions that Rusty Heurlin greeted him with courtesy and magnanimity. About George Agapuk, Ziegler thinks he'll be AK's outstanding artist for years to come.

He comes to AK to paint and to sell. He makes three fourths of his living here, by his account, though he lives in Seattle. The Copper River Valley attracts him the most; he spent 16 years there. He'll be back the following year if the reception is anything like this year.

George Parks, former governor of the territory, is interviewed by Al Bramstedt in Fairbanks, AK in 1947. He happens to be in Fairbanks surveying tracks along the Alaska Highway, but he lives in Juneau. He's lived in Fairbanks, Anchorage, Seward, and Juneau, and likes them all.

1907 is when Park arrived in AK. This is his 40<sup>th</sup> year here. Born in Denver, CO, he graduated from the Colorado School of Mines. He was employed by an English company that had mines in Mexico and Arizona. After working in Mexico, they said there was work available in AK and Parks was sent up, though Ketchikan and Skagway. AK appealed to him from the first. He traveled from Skagway on the White Pass Yukon Railroad to a point on Lake Windy Arm; and drove a buckboard from Whitehorse to Kluane Lake. He went Outside for less than a year; then the government gave him the opportunity to work in the classification of mineral lands, and he returned immediately.

According to Parks, he was never in politics. He was in Washington, DC on a business trip when he was offered the position of governor. President Coolidge appointed him as governor from 1925-1933. During the Depression of 1929 and 1930, Parks says AK didn't suffer as much as the Outside. There has never been a great deal of poverty in AK since he's lived here. The fishing industry was the same as ever. There was no change in the price of gold. There was not a particularly noticeable rate of unemployment.

When Parks arrived he thought Fairbanks probably had the largest population in the territory. Construction of the railroad started Anchorage off in its rapid growth.

Parks flew a great deal with some of the great pioneer pilots of AK, such as Joe Crosson, Bennett, and Ben Eielson. During that time, there were no federal funds for building airfields. Many small communities worked themselves to fund and build their own airfields. The first planes that flew here were all open cockpits. The first long flight Parks made was from Fairbanks to Iditarod to Unalakleet to Nome to Kotzebue to Nulato to Koyukuk to Ft. Yukon to Circle Springs back to Fairbanks. It took seven or eight days for this trip, one that would've taken months by dog team.

The coldest temperature he ever experienced was in Fairbanks in 1916-1917. It was -68 F. He mentions that he traveled quite a bit by dog team in his work in the winter. When asked about his hobbies, Parks says he enjoyed hunting and fishing in his early years; more recently he's come to enjoy taking colored photographs and golfing in Juneau (where they have a real golf course). Juneau had the first golf course, then came Anchorage's, and then that of Fairbanks, he says.

Parks says that hunting opportunities are not gone, but there's definitely less game than there used to be. He thinks there needs to be more rigid enforcement of game laws.

He thinks people need to consider conservation efforts; game won't last forever "if it's destroyed wantonly." Parks thinks AK is capable of supporting many more people; however, its development must be gradual. Some people come up very ill equipped for making lives here.

Plans have been made for significant increases in the road system; it just depends on whether Congress will set aside funds for it. A road from the Alaska Highway to the Fortymile has been projected and partially constructed. It will leave the AK Highway about 12 miles east of Tok Junction. It'll extend 150 miles into the Fortymile country. A road on the Kenai Peninsula to develop agricultural lands has been proposed. It will ultimately connect with Anchorage. At present, surveys from the Richardson Highway to the AK Railroad coming out around Windy (extending into the Mt. McKinley Park in that direction) are being taken, for a tourist road through the park. Plans have also been made for a road to Chena Hot Springs, but Parks doesn't know if funds will be available to build it.

Parks says he never intends to make his home in the States.

Patrick (Pat) Dougherty of Richardson, AK, is interviewed by Al Bramstedt in Fairbanks, AK, in the 1940s. In 1893 there was a panic in MT (Dougherty was in Butte), caused by the depreciation of silver. The mine shut down there and there was very little work. Doherty and another fellow journeyed up to Ft. McCloud, then to Calgary, and then to Edmonton, where they spent quite a while. Eventually they got hired by the Hudson's Bay Co. They traveled to Athabasca Landing down the Athabasca River to Chipewyan Island, down the Slave River to Great Slave Lake, down to where the Mackenzie runs out of the lake. There was a French mission at Ft. Liard that had a little steamboat. They wintered at Ft. Liard and drove tin by dog teams for Hudson's Bay Co., and traded tea and tobacco with local Indians for furs. Doherty didn't find much difference between Indians there and those in AK. He tells about a tribe called the Dogribs. The HB Co. encouraged this tribe to dry out their moose meat, brine it, and salt it. They did this but they used too much salt and nearly all died of scurvy, says Dougherty. After that no Indian in that country would buy salt.

The HB Co. bailed their furs, just like hay. Dougherty went up the Nelson River to the old Montague Trail to Ft. St. John, on the Peace River, about 200-300 miles with a load of furs, hauling them on little horses. There were lots of old stagnant lakes along the way. Along the trail they ran short of grub and had to kill a horse and eat it. They delivered their cargo at Ft. St. John, where a "1/2 or 1/4 breed" called Hamilton loaded the furs into a raft. Dougherty went back to Ft. Liard.

Where the Nelson River runs into the Liard River, they knocked around for the summer and winter, prospecting and trapping, then went to the Peel River (up to Ft. Nelson), to Rat's River, to Porcupine River, to Ft. Yukon, a trading post at that time, which was the fall of 1894 or so. They went up the Porcupine and trapped for the winter. There was lots of grub to be had in Ft. Yukon. In 1896 there were reports from Dawson about gold. The next spring a boat came up from St. Michael, and they went up to the Fortymile. You could rock on the bars there and make \$5-\$20 a day. They moved to Dawson during the boom. Dougherty worked for Stomley, Warren, and Elderiddle for a winter. Drifts were low, only about 4 feet high. Dougherty was building fires about 15 miles outside Dawson, as well as prospecting at this time.

In 1901 Dougherty was in on a quartz mine in the Yukon. They ran 300 feet of tunnel in it, just opposite of Dan Beaver's Roadhouse. Dougherty sold out to the chairman of the Bank of Commerce, T. G. Wilson, and Dr. Barrett. He describes how "Wada came up" to Dawson. Barnette had a boat, the Stella, which got stuck on a bar in the slough (the Chena River). Pete Wilson and Felix Pedro had struck a little gold there but nothing to speak of. Barnette sent Wada to Dawson, where Wada told stories in the Dawson Daily News about Dan McCarter being offered \$75,000 for his claim and Pete Wilson refusing \$125,000. This started a stampede. Dougherty, Dempsey Louis, Louie DeWolfe, Fred Hassler, with four dog teams went down to Steel Creek on the Fortymile and loaded up. They went up the North Fork of the Fortymile, down the Goodpaster to the Tanana.

While on the North Fork, they crossed paths with Billy Mitchell. He was a young lieutenant laying a direction for a telegraph wire to Valdez. Dougherty says he "was one of the finest little fellow I ever met." They had to break some trail with snowshoes. When they got down to the mouth of the Goodpaster, there was some open water, and an Indian boat. They had to get the dog teams across, so Mitchell jumped in the canoe and showed them how to use it. Mitchell had a 14-malemute dog team that he took on down the Tanana to meet another Lieutenant he was expecting from Ft. Gibbon. Dougherty's gang was traveling slow with their heavy loads, so that was the last they saw of Mitchell, until 1903 when the telegraph line began to be laid down the Goodpaster. They didn't see any White men and few Indians the rest of the way to Fairbanks.

In Fairbanks, Barnette had built a cabin with all his good inside. George Noble was building a cabin. He had whisky stored at Rampart and he was going to open a saloon in Fairbanks. Barnette's store was located where the NC Co. is now. Barnette gave them a good deal on it because they thought Chena was going to be the main town, though it turned out Chena didn't amount to anything.

Dougherty went out on the creeks to investigate. There were seven holes sunk on Cleary Creek. Pete Lang was working there and he had nothing but colors. Following the fall of 1903, Al Hilty struck it on Cleary, with 15 ft. of pay, 10 cents to the pan. Then Fairbanks Creek was struck, and other places too. They stayed out on the creeks investiattng for about a month; when they got back to Fairbanks there were about 500 people there, and they were "awful sore" about the news of a strike that hadn't been made. There was a meeting because some wanted to hang "the Jap." Harry Badger, Strawberry King of the Tanana Valley, was the chairman of the meeting. It turned out the desire to hang Wada was a bluff and nothing came of it.

In the late spring they started back up to the Yukon and the Fortymile but they went a different way. They started by Circle City and went up the Yukon. In Circle they met Judge Wickersham on his way to name Fairbanks and lay it out. His brother, Ed, was to be the marshal. Dougherty then made a little side trip down Sutter Creek, Black River, and the Porcupine to Ft. Yukon to buy some fur. He got 300 marten.

In 1904 Dougherty took claim #6 below Fairbanks Creek. He now lives at Richardson, because in 1905 Thunderfoot at Richardson was struck, and he followed that stampede.

J. S. McKinnon is interviewed by Al Bramstedt in Fairbanks, AK in the 1940s. He hails from Juneau, but did spend about 4 years on Cleary Creek and Bald Creek (1905-1909).

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McKinnon was born in the territory of AK in 1897, in Juneau. There are different families of McKinnons all over AK and Canada, not necessarily related. His father, Lockie McKinnon, was pretty well known in AK, a letter was once sent to him addressed: Lockie McKinnon, Alaska, and he received it.

McKinnon has been out to Cleary since he got back to Fairbanks but couldn't recognize any of the landmarks there from his childhood. Art Lutro and he are going to try to find the old cabin out on Bald Creek. Only tailing piles and brush remain of Cleary. It appears that dredges went right through the old town site of Cleary.

He moved from Cleary when he was 12. Hjalmar Nordale was his old neighbor. He went to grammar school in Seattle, high school in Juneau, and in 1916 Jim Wickersham appointed him to the Naval Academy. He graduated from there in 1920. He resigned from the service in 1926 and came back to Juneau to live. He operates a laundry service in Juneau.

During World War II, he was called back into service. First he worked with Captain Parker, in the planning stage; then he was the naval liaison officer to General Buckner. When they began to move west, he was the Administrative Commander, AK Sector, in Adak. He was in WWII service for 6 years and came back out just a year ago.

In Juneau people are hoping the pulp industry will move in. An outside firm bought the sawmill there and plans to expand. McKinnon thinks the whole area is suitable for pulp. Ketchikan is also a potential location.

McKinnon is in Fairbanks at the time of interview to see his only son graduate from college. His son's major is chemistry. McKinnon has tried to convince him to come down and run the laundry while he takes a vacation. He got no leave during the war, and has been tied down in Juneau ever since. Fairbanks, he says, has changed quite a bit since he first saw it.