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"Ted" and "Babe" Lowell  
Healy Lake Roadhouse  
Fairbanks Marshall's Office  
autobiographical

Interview by Neville Jacobs  
Lowell Home, McGrath Rd.  
July 1, 1974 FAIRBANKS  
3 hours

Series: Tanana Yukon Historical Society tapes

Theodore "Ted" Lowell was U.S. Deputy Marshall from 1951 to 1959, a period of his life for which he is well known. Originally the interview was intended to explore this area of his life. Conversation, however, revealed that an equally interesting phase of the life of the Lowells was the period before he became Marshall. In the 1920's and 30's, Ted freighted by truck and river, and they owned and operated Healy Lake Trading Post and Roadhouse, on the Tanana River above Delta Junction--now abandoned but once serving the Indian village nearby.

Discussion of the Healy Lake Trading Post cross-references to the recording by Stanley Young, who discusses his life at Healy Lake when he leased this same trading post from the Lowells.

Ted and Babe Lowell came from Washington state in May, 1926, to Fairbanks. Ted worked first for the Fairbanks Exploration Company in construction. Soon after he began hauling freight on the Richardson Highway to Delta.

The Lowells bought the Healy Lake Trading Post in 1936 and operated it until 1942. With the construction of the highway and a shifting of travel from the river to the road and movement of the Indians to the newly established village at Tok, the Lowells saw Healy Lake Village diminish. They leased the post to Stan Young in 1942. Young did not make a success of the business, so the Lowell's took it back in 1944. Lowell closed the post for lack of business about that time.

Lowell says that at the time he owned the post, his business

was based on the fur trade, which he learned previously. He worked as trader for a post at Tanaeross-Teflin-Northway and learned the business there. He continued to do business as a trader for that post until 1938. At that time he also began hauling freight from Valdez for his Healy Lake trading post, hauled freight for other traders, and this led him into the freight business. In 1941-42, Lowell sold to Stan Young as he saw the Indians moving away. As trading business fell off so did freighting, and Ted went to work for the Fire Control Service, Department of the Interior, where he remained until 1946.

In 1946 Lowell began prospecting in the Forty Mile. In 1948 he decided the business was not profitable so he sold out his interests then.

Ted bought the Crystal Water Service in 1948, which he continues to operate even today. <sup>(1974)</sup> In addition, in 1949 Ted went back to the fire service. The FCS sent him to McGrath where he set up a fire control station. The Marshall's office was next in 1951, where he remained until 1959. During this period he also worked occasionally for the fire control service and also operated the water service.

After surveying the chronology of Lowell's life, conversation turns back to explore each area in greater depth. There are many interesting stories about their life, both together and separately. There are stories about winter travel by dog team, about freighting on the river, and various episodes from their life at the trading post.