

WILBUR JEWELL - Central, Alaska

August 11, 1973

(Interviewer Mike Dalton of Fairbanks. Mrs. Clara Rust sits in on the discussion, asks some questions, offers miscellaneous comments and/or information)

REEL 1

Wilbur Alexander Jewell was born on March 3, 1902 in Seattle, Wash. He came to Alaska in 1905, landing with his mother and brother Walter in Fairbanks. His father had come north already and was waiting for the family in Fairbanks.

His father's name was Zenith Jewell. The elder Jewell came to Valdez with 40 head of mules and freighted between Valdez and the new town of Fairbanks...before there was a Valdez Trail. Wilbur said his father followed the natural drainages. After freighting Zenith Jewell sold his mules and went into mining with Roth, a Fairbanks attorney. He went broke and so did Roth. Wilbur doesn't have good things to say about Roth.

He recalls the Dillys (freighter, too), Chris Jensen the boat and sled builder.

Wilbur and his brother Walter went to school in Chatanika and in his eighth grade his mother sent him to Fairbanks for school (1918). His mother married Grant Courtney about that same time. She and Zenith Jewell had separated earlier. She was one of the Waechter sisters (Augusta). After her marriage to Courtney the family moved to the Courtney "ranch" up stream on the Chena from Fairbanks. Wilbur went to Eagle Creek in 1919 and worked for Ed Bartlett, the father of Bob Bartlett. His first trip to Circle was in 1916 with Johnny Palm. Palm carried the mail from 1910 on. He took Wilbur Jewell to Circle in 1916, riding horses from Fairbanks.

Jewell talks about Maurice O'Leary and Walter Jewell carrying the mail to Circle from Eagle Creek. Walter Roman carried the mail as far as Eagle Creek from Fairbanks. All by dog team.

He talks about a Dalton family in Chatanika. Mrs. Dalton was related to Mrs. Paul Ringstad (no relation to Mrs. Sylvia Ringstad's family).

Wilbur said he moved to the Circle district in 1927. Been in that region since.

Bartlett: Ed Bartlett mined on Eagle Creek. Wilbur worked for him, using his horses and mules and scrapers, wagons, etc. He knew Bartlett from his father's association with him. Ed Bartlett and the elder Jewell had worked together in Seattle (construction of streets). The Circle stampede and the Klondike stampede took Bartlett and Jewell north into the Yukon and Alaska.