

Series: Tanana Yukon Historical Society tapes

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Earl Pilgrim

Fairbanks, Alaska

Unidentified interviewer

April 16, 1978

Earl Pilgrim received his degree in 1916 from the College of Mines at the University of Washington. He was born in Durango Colorado which was in mining country. It was an active area with a lot of gambling. It was also cattle country. It was a wild and woolly place. They still settled conflicts with guns. Hangings were common by vigilante groups. It was the way to clean up the towns. He talked about a friend of his who lives in Stampede. Earl sold him some of his property. He talked about the process of staking mining property. One of his workers was casually digging on his property and found a gold vein in quartz. Earl tried to get him to stake the property and he wouldn't do it so he did it himself.

He was in the twenty-seventh engineers during the war. It was the only mining regiment in the war. He talked about his activities during the war. He had been working as an engineer for a mining company in British Columbia. He volunteered for the army and didn't want to take an exemption. He was sent to officer's training. His regiment was a mix of young engineers and practical miners. He built bridges during the war. He had the rank of second lieutenant in the army. He returned to Seattle after the war and took a job with a mining enterprise in Washington. He went up to the mine and discovered that the mine was full of water. He started sampling and they didn't have the amount of minerals that they thought they had. He then went to northern Nevada and worked for another mine. He was married right after WWI. The mine was at about 9,000 feet. The mine shut down during the winter and they went to Salt Lake City. At one time he worked in the Treadmill Mines as a miner. He suffers from silicosis because of his occupation.

He had worked one summer in Alaska when he was a young man. He wanted to work in the Treadmill Mine. It is a mine that is under the ocean. He worked there for four months. He returned to the University of Washington. He was superintendent of a zinc oxide smelter near Harbor City, California. He received a letter from Judge Bunnell asking him to join the faculty at the college at Fairbanks. He would be a professor of metallurgy and mining engineering. He would be head of the school of mines. One of his schoolmates wanted to start an oil refinery business in Long Beach. He joined his friend in the new business. He wrote to Bunnell and explained that he didn't want the teaching job. He then received a note from Bunnell that said he would see him in Fairbanks. He was a little disappointed when he saw the college for the first time. He rented a house from Eddie Stroeker. He has enjoyed his life in Alaska. He worked at the university for four years. He didn't like teaching in particular. He started a mine under the campus to teach the students about mining. It is not longer in use.

Mining engineers \$z Alaska \$z Fairbanks.

Alaska Agricultural College and School of Mines \$x History

Alaska Agricultural College and School of Mines \$x Faculty.

Treadmill Mine (Alaska)