

YUKON ARCHIVES LEGACY SOUND RECORDINGS OUTLINE

[Interview with Father Jean-Paul Tanguay by Helene Dobrowolsky]

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Father Tanguay Interview Outline

Recorded by Helen Dobrowolsky, 8 November 1989
at Oblate House, Whitehorse
Outline corrected by Father Tanguay on 21 November 1989;
additional information is set in brackets.

Side One

<u>Tape No.</u>	<u>Topic</u>
6	Father Tanguay comes to the Yukon in 1944 from St. Rosalie, Quebec.
8	formation of the Diocese of Whitehorse from the Apostolic-Vicariate of Athabaska-Mackenzie.
15	in 1936, Bishop Coudert named ass't to Vicar-Apostolic, Bishop Bunoiz. Coudert visited existing missions in Northern B.C.
22	Death of Father (Elphige) Allard on the Dease R. in 1935.
25	Coudert named bishop in 1936 (at age 41); visits missions in Yukon: Dawson, Mayo, Whitehorse, Carcross then on to Atlin.
30	in 1939, Coudert sees the coming of the Alaska Highway and need for more missionaries in the north.
32	start of mission at Lower Post in 1937; construction of buildings and 2 fathers assigned to mission (Fathers Pouillet and Dreaan).
37	Carcross mission visited by priest from Atlin.
43	talking about the river missions.
44	Mayo Indians were visited by the priests from Fort Norman and Fort Good Hope as many Indians had moved there from those communities.
48	developing of mission in Mayo.
52	Coudert's efforts to establish more permanent missions rather than have just visiting priests.
54	in January 1944, creation of Diocese of Whitehorse. Bishop was officially installed at the end of October.
59	in 1944, Father Joseph Forget and Father Tanguay came

to the Yukon as the first priests of the new diocese. Forget came from Ontario close to the Quebec border. Previously, the Oblates recruited their priests from France.

- 64 outside the Yukon, it was necessary for the priests to be able to learn and speak the local native languages.
- 71 even Hudson's Bay Co. traders had to speak the local language.
- 74 in Yukon many Indians learned English after the gold rush. At Fort Nelson had to speak Slavey.
- 83 more about the Bishop rebuilding the Diocese. Early travel by rivers, description of getting around Northern B.C.
- 94 drowning of Father Allard. Bishop Bunoze was travelling with him, spent two days stranded on a drift pile and the effects of this experience.
- 100 death of Bunoze in 1945.
- 103 Construction of new missions. Opening of Teslin in 1938 before highway came through; could only travel there from Lower Post by dogteam or plane (and from Atlin by horseback or walking).
- 112 recruitment of new workers and how they travelled to the Yukon via the Alaska Highway.
- 117 Bishop Coudert's report on the history of the missions. Some problem with dates as often priests would be there a couple of years before mission officially opened. Date could be either when founded or officially blessed.
- 122 Missions and approx. opening dates:
Dease Lake, St. Mary Magdalen - 1935
Lower Post, Holy Family - 1937
Mayo, Christ the King - 1938
Teslin, first church built in 1939, although Father Drean came in 1938.
- 129 During a trip to Dawson, Bishop realized that first church on Yukon River was at Fort Selkirk. Had been built by a chaplain, not an Oblate, with the Field Force. This priest, Corbeil, later became parish priest in Whitehorse. Father Bobillier sent to revive Selkirk mission in 1942.
- 140 in 1943/44, worked on Fort Nelson. Father Levaque already there and authorized building of another little

- church. Old mission at Ft. Nelson was across river by the trading post. Benefactors of Father Levaque funded new mission and wished to change name to "Our Lady of the Snows" but Bishop wished to keep traditional name of St. Paul's.
- 151 St. Peter's mission built at Watson Lake in 1944 & officially opened in 1945. First priest was Father Poulet who came from Lower Post & served at both missions. He still lives in Fort Nelson.
- 167 In 1945/46, new rectory built at Teslin and Teslin became centre for area including Canol Road.
- 174 Father Bobillier's travels in Fort Selkirk area including taking his boat up Pelly and Macmillan to Ross River.
- 176 in 1944, Father Bobillier built mission, a log cabin, at Carmacks. Opened in 1945.
- 186 some biographical information about Father Tanguay: spent 15 years in Carmacks, 17 years in Teslin. His first few years in the north were spent at Telegraph Creek then at Fort Nelson.
- 191 in 1944, Father Morisset was in charge of Burwash district. At that time priests were chaplains with the army, travelled with the forces and often had their own drivers. Established native missions as a "sideline". At Burwash, built a church on land probably donated by the Jacquot brothers.
- 212 from Burwash, travelled to Canyon and Aishihik. Another building put up at Snag. In 1947, Father Tanguay helped Morisset put up church at Champagne.
- 225 after construction of Haines Road, the church at Haines Junction erected. Father Tanguay also "put a few nails in that one".
- 237 less people at Watson Lake after American army left. Impact on settlement development after construction of the highway. First oil exploration at Fort Nelson in 1952. Church locations moved to respond to shifts in population.
- 266 Old Crow mission started in 1951 by Father Buliard and Father Plaine (now in Atlin). Father Plaine used to visit Herschel Island. Was based in Fort McPherson where he studied the local language. Accompanied RCMP on patrol to Herschel Island, DEW line station.
- 290 Discussion of patrols in the north from Old Crow, to

- Herschel Is. and then back to Aklavik. Discussion of how Indian and Eskimo guides would not travel in each other's territories.
- 312 story about getting lost while out on patrol.
- 348 building in Old Crow put up ca. 1951. Used as a base then visited surrounding area from there. Old Crow mission only closed officially 4 or 5 years ago. Father Mouchet still visits there occasionally. Old Crow mission was called St. John. Missions were christened by the Bishop.
- 380 Dawson was St. Mary's but had another name originally. (It was also called St. Mary of the Immaculate Conception.) Dawson mission const. in 1898, Whitehorse in 1901. Selkirk constructed in 1898, revived in 1942.

Father Tanguay Interview Outline

Side Two

- 2 at Atlin, priests originally visited from Victoria to travel to mining areas. Father (Joe) Allard came to community in 1906 or 1907. Stayed several years and also visited Carcross. Was joined by his sister and started a boarding school with about 12 children.
- 17 Church in Carcross built ca. 1942, St. John the Baptist.
- 25 about the mission in Telegraph Creek. It was "the sanctuary of the Anglicans" but there were also some Catholics as well. Priest came from Victoria up the Stikine. (Father Allard built the church there around 1925.)
- 30 Problems with keeping track of church records due to changes in apostolic-vicariate boundaries and travelling priests. Telegraph Creek records kept in Victoria. When Father Tanguay was at Prophet River, had trouble finding baptismal records which were eventually found in Fort Resolution. (Prophet River mission was called St. Paul's).
- 55 the three churches of Carmacks. The first was built by Father Bob, a log cabin in two sections for church and residence. Father Tanguay asked bishop for permission to build a stouter building. This was built in 1956 using purchased materials from dismantled buildings at McCrae. Building was later flooded; also problems

from sitting on permafrost.

- 84 Carmacks church was first built on south side of river then moved to other side to what later became Indian village. Name of mission is St. Jude's, is visited by Father Dave. Part of old mission bldg. was moved in 1963.
- 104 Discusses relocation of Indian dwellings in late fifties. Indian Dept. wished to build only if on a reserve.
- 120 Church in Mayo built in 1937/38. Churches also built at Keno and Calumet. Calumet church was taken to Elsa for use as a residence.
- 135 Keno church was an old log cabin. Constructed about the same time the Wernecke mine started. Building still standing.
- 141 Bishop bought old school at Keno for use as church for four or five years. Building was moved to Faro in 1969.
- 159 Church in Mayo was a church that was located on one of the Creeks in the Klondike valley. Rebuilt in 1937.
- 164 in early part of century, there were about 6 churches in Dawson. There were 6 priests.
- 168 relationship between Jesuits and Oblates. Jesuits were from Alaska mission.
- 180 at one point, there was a Catholic newspaper in Dawson. Many records lost in Dawson during fires.
- 187 some comments on the history of the town of Mayo and its location.
- 214 Church in Champagne was built in 1947 and operated by Father Morisset until early sixties. Church was named St. John the Evangelist by Bishop Coudert. Church was visited out of mission at Burwash. Father Morisset would have a regular circuit during which he visited Snag, Aishihik, Champagne about once a month, often staying two or three days at each place.
- 235 Mission building at Aishihik was a one or two room cabin. Mission was occasionally visited by plane from Whse. when supplies were flown in.
- 245 talking about the Cassiar area. Church built in 1954. Iskut Lake moved back to their own village in 1963.

- 258 talking about secondary posts. Missions which were visited regularly.
- 264 Church at Bear Creek was already built by 1954 when Father Tanguay was up there for six months.
- 278 death of Bishop Coudert in 1965. History of the vicariate of Whitehorse, written by Coudert, was published by Oblates in Rome in same year. (It appeared in a monthly newsletter entitled "Agence Romaine, Oblates of Mary Immaculee" or "A.R.O.M.I".)