

YUKON ARCHIVES SOUND RECORDINGS TRANSCRIPT

Title: Nelson: Dedication of the Alcan Hiway
Narrator: Robert Nelson (RN)
Date of Interview: 1992
Location: West Virginia
Transcriber: Archivist
Time: 0:03:11

Transcript information in square brackets [] provided by Archivist.

Abstract

See <http://yukon.minisisinc.com/scripts/mwimain.dll/144/FIL/LIST/SISN%208203?SESSIONSEARCH>.

Transcript

0:00:00

RN: I am Robert Nelson, presently residing in (_____)???, West Virginia. As a soldier in the 18th Engineer Combat Regiment I helped build the section of the Alcan Highway which reaches from Whitehorse [Yukon] to the Alaskan Border. Memories of the events that happened 50 years ago become only highlights. I have looked at the pictures and talked with [Clemit] Humphreys about the things that happened in the Yukon Territory from May to December 1942. The event that I want to tell about is the dedication ceremony that took place on a day between the last of November and the 16th of December.

[break]

0:00:51

RN: I recall that the sergeant told me and some of the other boys that we had to be waiters at the dedication banquet. A fella who had grown up on a farm on Nelson Mountain in West Virginia was to serve those big shots. They loaded us in trucks and took us to the big mess hall where the dedication was held.

[break]

0:01:23

RN: At least 200 dignitaries were present and here I was in white gloves and white uniform with a towel over my arm standing at attention behind a colonel whose name I can't remember. To bring him all the good food he and the people want. The names have long been gone, but I remember a lady, the only woman present, represented Alaska, a gentleman represented Canada, another represented the United States. I recall there was several [Royal] Canadian Mounted Police present in the good looking red coats. The food was prepared by chefs borrowed from the U.S. Navy. I believe they came from New York. The menu consisted of wild game, almost every kind found on the Yukon except bear, no bear. There was meat and lots of different vegetables. After the speeches and handshaking were finished the G.I. waitresses went to the kitchen. I gorged myself on such food as I hadn't seen since I left home.

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0:02:55

I have described the event that marked the completion of the gravel covered road from Dawson Creek [British Columbia] to Fairbanks [Alaska] over 1,500 miles in about six months.

[End of Recording]