

KENNECOTT KIDS ORAL HISTORY PROJECT
MAIL OUT INTERVIEW

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I. GENERAL INFORMATION

1. NAME: William D. Douglass
2. CURRENT AGE: 73
3. DATE AND PLACE OF BIRTH: 12-17-17 Kennecott
4. WHAT IS YOUR FAMILIES NATIONAL ORIGIN? Father Scotch/English
Mother - born in Ireland
5. WHAT OCCUPATIONS HAVE YOU BEEN INVOLVED IN MOST OF YOUR LIFE?
Lawyer since 1942
6. IMMEDIATE FAMILY NAMES:
FATHER William Crawford Douglass
MOTHER MABEL DIXON "
SISTERS Jean Douglass, Sheila Douglass, Nancy Douglass
BROTHERS 1/2 BROTHER JAMES Douglass (never lived in Alton
OTHERS LIVING WITH YOU WHILE IN KENNECOTT:
LORETTA HALLETT
Nurse friend of my mother who acted
as our NANNY
7. WHERE DID YOU LIVE BEFORE MOVING TO KENNECOTT?
BORN THERE
8. WHAT OCCUPATION WAS YOUR FAMILY INVOLVED IN BEFORE MOVING TO KENNECOTT?
MINING IN BUTTE MONTANA

9. WHY DID YOU/YOUR FAMILY MOVE TO KENNECOTT AND HOW WAS THE MOVE MADE?

MY FATHER WAS OFFERED JOB OF MINE FOREMAN
~~SUPERINTENDANT~~

10. WHAT YEARS DID YOU LIVE IN KENNECOTT AND WHAT WAS YOUR AGE AT THE TIME?

DEC 1917 UNTIL SEPTEMBER 1929

11. WHAT ROLE DID YOU PLAY IN THE KENNECOTT COMMUNITY?

That of a child going to school

A. WHAT WAS YOUR FATHER'S ROLE/OCCUPATION?

MINE FOREMAN THEN SUPERINTENDANT
OF ALL OPERATIONS - Mining Engineer graduate
OF Colorado School of Mines Golden Colorado 1916

B. WHAT WAS YOUR MOTHER'S ROLE/OCCUPATION?

Housewife / farmer Registered Nurse in Butte
Montana for Anaconda Corp.

12. WHY DID YOU LEAVE KENNECOTT?

Sept 1929

13. WHERE DID YOUR FAMILY GO UPON LEAVING KENNECOTT?

Seattle, then La Jolla, CA and San Diego CA
ultimately Kimberley, Nevada

14. WHAT OCCUPATION DID YOUR FAMILY BECOME INVOLVED IN AFTER LEAVING KENNECOTT?

Copper Mining in Kimberley, Nevada

12. WHO, FROM KENNECOTT, HAVE YOU KEPT IN TOUCH WITH OVER THE YEARS?

No one

13. DID YOU ENCOUNTER PEOPLE YOU KNEW FROM KENNECOTT AT OTHER MINING TOWNS OR MINES?

No

IF YES, WHO AND WHERE?

Many of the men (who could afford it) invested in the stock market (daily telegraph provided stock quotations) and occasionally someone would hit a big winner and leave Kennecott to spend his suddenly acquired wealth.

My father had accumulated approx 250,000 in Blue Ribbon stock in 1929 and, due to the depression starting with Black Friday Sept/Oct 1929 saw this small fortune dwindle to about 50,000 in 1931 when we left Nevada - still a lot of \$ in those times

Once or twice I recall mail order books show up on the train to seek out the lonely miner who had written them as a result of magazine ads. They were immediately exported by the Company on the return train.

Several winters the Railroad was covered by snowslide and we had no trains for 2-3 months. A lottery was run for guessing the time + date of the 1st train in late Nov low on perishable foods and there was no mail.

II. HOUSING

1. WHERE DID YOU LIVE WHILE IN KENNECOTT?

House next door to STAFF House along side and below the Mill and about 150' from canyon
I understand it has burned down

2. LIVING ACCOMMODATIONS:

A. PLEASE DESCRIBE YOUR HOUSE IN SUCH A WAY AS TO COVER THE NUMBER AND TYPES OF ROOMS, FLOOR AND WALL COVERINGS, SOURCE OF HEAT, POWER OR LIGHT, PLUMBING, HOUSING COSTS, ETC. (anything you recall will be helpful).

Steam heat, 4 bedrooms, 2 baths, kitchen, dining room, living room, carpets, all free to ~~the~~ my father as part of his salary.
One of the 2 houses that had steam heat, running toilet inside and other so-called luxury features
Most of the other family houses were equipped with outside toilets and ~~was~~ only a few had steam heat like ours which (with the offices, hospital, Bank houses, store, school) were connected to the Central Steam plant which was powered by diesel engines and a steam turbine which generated the electricity
The working men paid \$25-30 per month for room & board in the bank houses, as I recall

B. WHAT HOUSEHOLD ITEMS DID YOU BRING WITH YOU AND WHICH ONES DID YOU ACQUIRE AT KENNECOTT?

Don't know, believe house was furnished by the company and we bought new furniture when we arrived in Nevada.

C. WHAT ITEMS DID YOU TAKE WITH YOU WHEN YOU LEFT KENNECOTT?

Everything in way of furniture furnishings
appliances

D. DID THE COMPANY PAY TO MOVE YOU TO OR FROM KENNECOTT?

Don't Know

3. WHAT TYPES OF ACCOMMODATIONS WERE AVAILABLE FOR SINGLE MEN AND WOMEN?

Bunk House for Blue Collar
Staff House for White Collar

The Company maintained a closed line telephone system between offices and plant. My father's house had a Bell ringing instrument 1 long ring and 2 short rings were his call. Twice a week, he would put on heavy clothing and ride the Bucket tramway to the mines approx 30 minutes / 5,000 feet in the open over canyons several thousand feet deep for his inspection of operations, discussions with the miners and their foreman. He always wore a coat and necktie to the office or on these trips.

It was terribly cold at times in the winter. Sometimes as low as 30° below zero and we were not allowed outside even to go to school. Normally in winter about zero to 10° below zero. Snow 4-5 feet deep in the town.

III. DAILY LIFE

1. WAS YOUR FAMILY A "TYPICAL" FAMILY IN KENNECOTT?
IN WHAT WAYS?

Yes except my father was the Boss

2. HOW WAS THE HOUSEHOLD WORK DIVIDED AMONG FAMILY MEMBERS?

Somewhat, see #3

3. WHAT CHORES WERE YOUR RESPONSIBILITY?

Garbage
Feeding animals
Pick up Room make bed

4. IF YOUR FAMILY MAINTAINED A GARDEN, WHAT WAS GROWN AND HOW WAS IT PRESERVED?

Rhubarb, lettuce, radishes, potatoes

5. WHAT TYPE OF COOKING STOVE WAS USED?

Electric

6. WHAT TYPES OF ITEMS WERE AVAILABLE AT THE COMPANY STORE,
INCLUDING FOOD AND CLOTHING?

Fresh fruit, canned goods, fresh vegetables
most of the time
Dry goods, socks, shoes, work clothes

7. WHAT ITEMS WERE NOT AVAILABLE IN KENNECOTT?

Childrens clothing, sporting goods
Womens ware, suits

A. HOW DID YOU OBTAIN THESE UNAVAILABLE ITEMS?

Mail order and Catalogs
LL Bean, Shoppers Service

8. IN WHAT WAY WAS THE RAILROAD IMPORTANT TO YOUR LIFE AS A RESIDENT OF KENNECOTT?

It was an event every Wednesday
and weekend when the train arrived
In summer lots of tourists toured the
facilities, all our contact with the outside
world

IV. HEALTH

1. WHICH DOCTORS AND NURSES DO YOU REMEMBER FROM KENNECOTT?
Doctors Gillespie, Peterson
No nurses recalled
2. HOW OFTEN AND FOR WHAT DID YOU AND YOUR FAMILY USE THE HOSPITAL?
Birth of children
Father's appendicitis operation
Cuts, bruises insect bites
3. WHICH CHILDHOOD DISEASES DID YOU HAVE AND DID YOU HAVE THEM WHILE LIVING IN KENNECOTT?
Colds mostly — no contagious diseases
because of Detention House and
no contact with tourists
4. HOW WERE MAJOR AND MINOR ILLNESSES AND INJURIES HANDLED?
In the hospital just like now
5. OTHER THAN KENNECOTT, WHAT HEALTH PROFESSIONALS WERE AVAILABLE IN THE REGION, INCLUDING MCCARTHY, CHITINA, CORDOVA AND VALDEZ?
None I recall
6. DID PEOPLE FROM THESE OTHER TOWNS COME TO KENNECOTT FOR MEDICAL TREATMENT AND DID PEOPLE FROM KENNECOTT GO ELSEWHERE FOR TREATMENT?
I don't recall any outsiders getting
treatment

V. WORK AND LABOR

1. DID YOU EVER WORK FOR KENNECOTT COPPER CORPORATION AND IF SO, WHAT JOBS DID YOU HOLD?

No

2. PLEASE DESCRIBE ANY JOB AT KENNECOTT WITH WHICH YOU WERE AT ALL FAMILIAR, CONSIDERING DUTIES, PROCESSES, MACHINERY, AND WAGES.

Miners paid about 4⁰⁰ per day - some did contract work and earned more. My father ultimately was paid ~~2500~~ ⁴⁵⁰⁰ worth plus free house, utilities etc. and left Kennecott for a 3 year contract in Kimberley Nevada for 36,000 plus a company car and free housing in a 5 bedroom house which was built to his specifications by the company, Consolidated Copper Mines. The mine closed in 1930, he was paid off the balance of his contract in cash in 1931 and we left for California.

3. WERE YOU EVER AWARE OF ANY LABOR/MANAGEMENT DISPUTES? PLEASE DESCRIBE.

There were several serious strikes in the early 1920's and my father was instrumental settlement.

4. WERE YOU AWARE OF CERTAIN NATIONALITIES OR ETHNIC GROUPS PREDOMINATING IN SPECIFIC JOBS? WHICH JOBS?

lots of Swedes, ^{other} Scandinavian people,
"Cousin Jacks" (Welshmen)

VI. SCHOOL

1. WHAT YEARS AND GRADES DID YOU ATTEND KENNECOTT SCHOOL?

1st through 7th (just started)

2. PLEASE DESCRIBE YOUR SCHOOL EXPERIENCE NOTING AVERAGE CLASS SIZE, NUMBER OF TEACHERS AND OTHER PERTINENT INFORMATION. DO YOU REMEMBER ANY TEACHER IN PARTICULAR?

only child in my class, then in 5th grade joined by Soren, (Nels) KONNERUD so there were 2 in 5th and 6th grade

2 teachers for entire school - 2 rooms with Cloa Room (where our skates were kept) and rest rooms in between.

School 9 to 12 with 15 minute recess midway the 1-3:30 also with recess skating during recess and after school in winter " almost every night under lights after dinner

3. DID YOU FEEL EDUCATIONALLY PREPARED UPON LEAVING KENNECOTT SCHOOL, WHY OR WHY NOT?

Yes - good teaching by our 1 on 1 leaders tough lessons and report cards - gold and silver stars for outstanding achievement

4. WHAT TYPES OF ADULT EDUCATION WERE PROVIDED?

Regular grade school nothing beyond the 8th grade

Only adult education was by mail order, I think.

VI. SOCIAL LIFE AND RECREATION

1. WHAT TYPES OF SOCIAL ACTIVITIES DID YOU ENGAGE IN WHILE AT KENNECOTT? (dances, parties, etc.)

School program at Xmas
Baseball games in summer
Skating in winter including hockey games
between intra-mural teams
Hunting, fishing, horseback riding

2. WERE THESE ACTIVITIES PRIVATE, COMPANY OR SCHOOL SPONSORED?

private and company sponsored

3. WITH WHOM DID YOUR FAMILY SOCIALIZE (examples: mine workers, mill workers, administrative staff members, families with children in your age group, single people, married couples with no children)?

the other 20 families in town & their children
staff members, doctors, nurses, teachers
None of the mine workers were considered
acceptable for the children to socialize
with — some exception is John
Kettner mentioned in my earlier
report who helped us learn trapping.

4. HOW DID SINGLE MEN AND WOMEN FIT INTO THE SOCIAL ORGANIZATION?

There weren't many and I don't believe
it was easy for them

5. WHAT TYPES OF RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES WERE AVAILABLE TO THE RESIDENTS OF KENNECOTT?

Movies Wed + Sunday Night
lending library
see #1

A big item to Horretta and my mother
was picking the local berries, especially
currant and raspberry, in July/August and
making jellies and jam for storage and
use in winter.

When we left in 1929, one of the items we
took with us were several hundred jars
of these.

We had to be wary of the local bears
when we picked because they too
loved to eat these berries.

We had a dog (Australian Shepherd) named Joe
and a large gray cat who lived inside
companionably and were house trained.

Occasionally, 120 sled dogs, would escape from their
tethered posts in McCarthy and invade Kennecott.
Everyone was ordered indoors and the men got
out their rifles because these big dogs were
extremely dangerous to man + bears!

VII. OTHER INFORMATION

1. DID YOU TRAVEL AT ALL WHILE LIVING IN KENNECOTT?

To STRELNA in summer vacations
United States 1922, 1924 and 1927 - 3 months each
to Seattle and then to New York City to visit Grandparents

A. DID YOU TRAVEL LOCALLY, HOW OFTEN, FOR WHAT PURPOSE AND
WHAT WAS THE METHOD OF TRAVEL?

To Mr. Carthy 4th of July Celebration with floats
To various lakes, rivers for fishings and
picnics

B. DID YOU MAKE TRIPS TO THE CONTINENTAL U.S. HOW OFTEN, FOR
WHAT PURPOSE AND WHAT WAS THE METHOD OF TRAVEL?

see 1A

2. WHAT WAS THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN KENNECOTT AND MCCARTHY?

Distant - except for use of dog sleds
and entertainment of males when they could
get there for the prostitutes, drinking etc

No booze in Kennecott STORE

Our music teacher came from Mr. Carthy's husband
Jack O'Neil ran the Hardware store

3. IS THERE ANY TOPIC OMITTED ABOVE THAT YOU WOULD LIKE TO
ADDRESS?

See my earlier Report dated 3-25-76

Dark almost 24 hours in mid-winter
light " " " " " " in summer

Mosquitoes terrible after snow melted until late July
All open areas central burned after snow melted and
it dried out as a fire precaution about June eve
year

Huge glacier lake formed ¹³ every Spring between Railroad and
edge of glacier in "POT HOLE" approximately 1/2 mile
long and 1/4 mile wide - as melting continued
1 day The blockage would collapse and hole would
be closed causing flood waters to