UPHILL - BOTH WAYS

Volume 8- Seward, Alaska 1951-56©

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December, 25, 2003

Dedicated to us...

Viola's house - SLC - 1953 - Age 11

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3 Weeks on the Tanana & Yukon Rivers:

Introduction

How do I begin. How do I tell you what it was like. 5 years in the Alaskan wilderness. A young boy out there, moving from a parched desert amongst dozens of relatives to a cold wet foggy isolated coast town of strangers, trains and rains. Passing through the change from childhood to teenagehood, moving from the simplicity and innocence of childhood, into puberty, growing hair, growing in stature, changing shape while my mind simultaneously changed. Hormones kicked in, and scales fell from my eyes. Stories, images and events that had no meaning before stunned me. I was transfixed. My mind looked at itself and recognized intelligence and agency that had always been present but which were previously unappreciated. The tempest of teenagehood erupted. Seward was where I finally glimpsed my agency and mind.

There was a build-up. The thing didn't happen over night. During the ages of 11 and 12 I was slyly seeing things. Our attention is snared about then with disturbing things that we chew on and then pass off. But the things are stored in a special file of the fodder that is digested and consumed when we erupt. The eruption lasts 2-5 years for most of us, having no clear beginning nor end, waxing and waning the whole time until we come out the end of that tempest around age 17-18. But the deed is done by then. We have finished our release from the metamorphosis that coverts the simplicity of the child into a wary, watchful, appetite-full adult.

I was 9 years old when I moved to Seward in 1951 and was 14 when I left. I look back 50 years later and see what happened inside of me. It was an extraordinary place in which to awake, 1,800 men, women, children and dogs on a rugged alluvial fan on an awe-spiring fiord, 128 miles from Anchorage, at the railhead of the Alaska Railroad, 62 annual inches of rainfall, snow, mist, ice, wind, animals and birds and fishes and clams and crabs and boats and guns and fishing rods, death in the mountains, Korean War in progress, and the military underwriting our livelihood.

Life in those early 1950's in territorial Alaska was an experiment in outdoor living in the United States' last frontier. That experiment, where moral values were imbued simultaneously and generally successfully along side a profound curiosity about the world, terminated at the end of my fourteenth year. We moved to the cosmopolitan, multi-faceted city of Boston where dad took a position as a

preparator in the Department of Vertebrate Paleontology in the Museum of Comparative Zoology in the Peabody Museum of Harvard University. A more extreme contrast with Seward and dockside stevedoring could not be found in the USA. The remote individual experience of life isolated in a true wilderness was followed by the hectic, crowded life of a metropolitan city, filled with history and hosts of loud forces and convictions. The story of Boston is told in the next volume.

2003 Interlude

I'm going to insert notes here and there from the "research" trip I took back to Seward with Dee in 2003. The memory that July 4th was the warmest day of the year -whether or not it's accurate- informed my choice of weeks to visit Seward with Deanna in 2003. I knew that the Marathon had become a nightmare of people and that I had no stomach for crowds in the Seward of my memory, so I picked the week of the 6th of July. I was willing to see the changes in the town. I knew they were there. I'd seen recent photos of the town so knew it had happened. Of course, I didn't even need photos to tell me that things would have moved on, that the town of my childhood would be altered from what it was 50 years ago. But I did not want to subject myself willingly and knowingly to 10,000 grubby tourists, yuppies and hanger's on clogging the streets where a few hundred had congregated.

As it turned out, that was one of the most remarkable weather weeks in Seward's records - no rainstorms for a week, with temperatures rising into the seventies every day. Most remarkable. I took 1,200 photos of that week in Alaska, most of them in Seward, and will cull them for you later.

That visit refreshed memories that were faint, and recovered others that were forgotten. Seward remains today a tiny subsistence town, preying this time, not on shipping and the rails, rather on eager energetic yuppies and fringe types who want to 'rough it', who revel is the glorious beauty of Mt. Alice and the bay. It is a town filled with tourist traps yet beneath it all, the old town remains. Dee and I spent 2 and a half hours walking from the south end of town to the north, following 4th Avenue for the most part, hunting for "Old Seward."

It was a remarkable 2 hours. The patina of yuppie boutique commercialism didn't bother me. I saw it and it looked like what happens to any 'discovered' place in any era. But the patina had concealed what I remembered. This slow excursion

gave time to see what was there all the time. Old Seward is alive and well. I've printed two pages in black and white of images from that little trip to show you just how alive and well Old Seward is.

The most memorable instant of that nostalgic excursion across Seward is a 3 minute exchange that I wish could have been recorded for you and me with the breeze and sounds. As Dee and I looked at and photographed a rattle-trap uninhabited house, a strong, wind-blown, thin 20'ish woman with a clinging 6 year old girl came out from behind us, mildly challenging us as if we were intruders, standing there in the middle of a public street. She had long fluffy black hair, a flowery loose top over frequently-washed black leotards, long skirts behind which the child hid, looking cautiously at us as her mom talked. In torrents of half sentences, coherent, intelligent, lonely, compulsively, protectively, worriedly. All at once sentences squeezing out to be shared with total strangers, the kids who left that blue tarp that might blow into the road and cause an accident, using drugs, threatening them to call the police, they just left it, the house left behind by a native woman who didn't care for it and wouldn't sell it, someone was going to build in the empty lot, see, and they started but didn't finish and it needs to be finished, and her house was a garrison built before the 1918 war for the commander and the house next to it was for the telegraph operator and the two houses across the street were for the soldiers and on she went. I was spell-bound as she stood there arms folded squeezing herself, right hand distractedly stroking her chest, staring at the old house, lost inside her mind, speaking to us yet not aware of us or her impact on us, a slight breeze pushing her dark hair, the child's round solemn patient face safely watching us all, understanding this woman her mom loved her and would have ferociously attacked us in an instant if we had threatened her. We finally left, feeling we had imposed on a private event. Lovely experience that I wish we could have recorded for you. When we finished taking photos of the four garrison houses, she was gone. With the tarp and her child.

Beehives

I'm interrupting the story to insert something that I discovered in Oct. 2003 when I visited mom again. I went into the "pit" and rummaged around again, looking for things of significance to UBW. That's sort of the over-riding concern for me these years, find things to pass on to you kids. I pulled out the box dad had labeled as "Hawaiian Fish casts" so I could take some pictures of them for the Hawaii section. Down in the bottom of the box I found the master model that dad made of the beehive that got us to Alaska.

This is described at the end of the Vernal volume. I don't know how many hundreds of these mom made but it was many because she was making them to order for the Lion's Club that was holding an international conference in Salt Lake City. I don't have any idea how mom and dad managed to contract with the Lion's club to make these souvenirs of Utah but whatever it was, the project earned us fares to Seward.

Dad made the original model in plasticine clay, a medium he liked. After the clay model was finished, he created this master out of plaster of Paris as the permanent model from which he created a dozen or so plaster of Paris molds so that mom could pour that many at a time, assembly line fashion. You can see the vertical pencil lines that he drew on the master to guide him each time he made another plaster-of-Paris mold. Mold making is not a simple process. The right element in particular required special attention. Due to the fact that the bees stuck out from the surface of the skep -that's the fancy old word applied to beehives made out of coils of straw- dad had to make a four part mold. There was a section for the top three tiers, and three segments for the remainder of the skep. That way when the slip had solidified and the mold was pulled off, the slip casting did not deform or tear. The problem, of course, is that more pieces meant more work and time, but that was how they did this job.

The left element was the reservoir that was filled with honey and then sealed with a piece of cellophane that was glued in place with Ducco cement. The right element was the 'cover' that slipped down over the reservoir. The left element was fired to bisque, sprayed with a clear glaze and re-fired before it was filled. The cover was sprayed a stray-color first, after which mom touched the wings of the bees with black and the body with brown. So this is the thing that got us to Alaska.

Organization

I will start Seward at the beginning in June 1951 and end in June 1956. Bookends. Five years without a sense of age or time, roughing it with rough parents, loved by them, pushed by them, controlled by them, punished by them, hauled in their wake onto mountains and the ocean, digging clams, catching salmon, camping and smoke-smelling. In a rough world that was cold and dark and wet all the time. The warmest day of the year, so it was said, was the Fourth of July. It got to 70 degrees. That is about true. The rest of the year was wet beyond imagining for a desert dweller, 62 annual inches of precipitation, but I loved the rain and the grayness and the greenness. I understood that the green came from the rain and accepted both with the simple thoughtless affection of a child who cherished a new environment that was as different from the old as I could have possibly imagined.

As usual, this volume is copiously illustrated with a combination of photos and images from the internet. The difference is that some of the photos are ones that I took myself. Dad's love of cameras rubbed off on me and I got an old Kodak box camera first and later for Christmas a smaller, fancy plastic job. You can see two windows on this box camera, one of each side. The one of the narrow top edge is to take "portrait" images and the other for "landscape" images. The long narrow silver band below the 'landscape' window is the shutter.

Figure 4
http://www.pacificrimcamera.com/images/81746.jpg

There is a narrow metal strip that isn't visible that you move from one side of the slot over to the other side during which, the shutter mechanism is tripped one time. But if you got excited, you might accidentally push it back and forth several times in which case the shutter dutifully triggers that many times, making that many overlapping images on the film. The hole on the front of the box is where the lens is placed, and the back, bottom metal thing is the film winder.

There was a window about the diameter of the lens opening that was opposite the shutter that was covered with a yellowish plastic sheet. You had to hold that up and watch as you wound the film because there was no other way to tell how far

you had advanced the film. The paper strip on the outside of the film had numbers printed such that they could be seen through this little plastic window. There were actually three repetitions of each number, i.e. "1 -1 -1", 2 - 2 - 2" etc. The reason was that as you watched the film advance you might twist the knob a little too far the first time a number appears so the first number was actually a warning to alert you that the middle number, the best one to use was coming really quick. If you missed the numbers, the images you made would not be centered on the film right and might overlap with another one.

The film was a totally different kind than the 35 mm cassettes you're familiar with. It came in paper rolls that had to be carefully opened and loaded, a laborious process. Here's an image that shows how a new roll has been attached to the empty spool that was inside of the camera. The empty spool was moved from one side to the other so that the winding wheel would advance the film.

As usual, I provide the URL's for the internet sites so you can go explore further though I've discovered that one ore two of the sites I checked have gone out of existence. The urls I provide are nonetheless accurate for the instant in time when I located them because I simply blocked and copied and pasted them out of the browser into WordPerfect.

There are a few more of dad's writing in this volume, but he wrote less about the intermediate years in his life than the early or later portions. The intermediate years are Harvard years and early BYU years. All of the things of his that are included here are clearly identified as his. His largest contribution to this volume is the final 150 page section about a 3 week trip we took down the Nenana, Tanana and Yukon Rivers immediately before we finally left Alaska. He didn't date the manuscript that I have scanned, cleaned up and inserted so I don't know specifically when he wrote it. But from internal evidence it is clear that he wrote it after about 1980. It is a startling realization at this instant to discover that he, like I, turned to his history in his 60's.

In any event, his volume about the Yukon is a major contribution to this volume, one that I would not be able to reproduce. I would have been able to prepare a sketchy narrative of a few memories but nothing like his detail history. It appears to me that he must have set up his slide projector and written from the images as he looked at them. This is the last major writing of dad's that will be included in UBW because it is his last major piece of writing that involved family events. There is one other piece that I will include, his account of 4 months in Antarctica. I have scanned it in as well so it will be included in UBW later though it

will be an accidental insertion since my own life had evolved and separated by 1969 when he was down there. He wrote it because he wanted his descendants to have it so I will include it in this compendium so it does survive the distribution and destruction of the estate at 2821 North.

As in previous volumes, I'm including a mish-mash of advertisements from this era. They include breakfast cereals, toys, clothing and toiletries, things that I remember as part of that universe. They are spread throughout the volume which makes them sort of confusing if you don't realize that they are going to appear randomly to sort of reflect the reality of seeing them randomly. I suppose I could have put them into one tidy section but chose not to.

I'll start this volume with the usual geographic-historical things to place the town for you in space and time and since Alaska was a 'special case', I'm going to give you a detailed description of certain features that I don't discuss in other volumes. It is absolutely essential for you to have all of the information in order to understand what happened there and what my daily life experience was like. Physical settings are as critical in some ways to history as the human interactions that took place in them. In this case, Seward was a tiny town in a remarkable setting that colored much of the experience and you will grasp the influence of the setting better when you understand the setting itself.

Before launching into the background information I will give you a thumbnail sketch of the key dates and events involving my time in Seward:

Date	Event
1950	Dad quits LT Payton's Machine shop and returns alone to Seward
6-1951	We fly from Seattle to Anchorage, take steam engine train to Seward to meet dad
1951-56	I attend school from Grade 4 through Grade 8.
6-1953	We drive over the Alcan Highway through the Northwest Territory, the Yukon Territory, British Columbia and Alberta to Naples, Utah and spend 2 months with grandpa and grandma Merrell in the sun
1954	I am hit by a car, also get polio that settles in injured leg
1955	Have surgery to lengthen Achilles Tendon, in cast 3 months, ultrasound therapy for 4 months

6-1955	Go to Gorsuch Scout Camp first year it is open with 5 teepees
6-1056	3 week trip down Tanana and Yukon River
6-1956	We drive out over the Alcan highway again, spend 6 weeks in Naples before mom drives us kids across country to Boston in an old overloaded pickup

Geography of Seward

I'm going to cut and paste the relevant text from Volume 5 - Seward 1941: You know where Alaska is but do you comprehend its size? It is three times larger than Texas, the largest of the lower 48 state, and is one fifth the size of the 48 continental states. The map on the following page is excerpted from Map 182 of the old Britannica Atlas that I conned out of "James", the slightly disreputable, disheveled Boise encyclopedia salesman, for you kids back in 1982. He said, 'I'm not supposed to do this so don't tell anyone. I'll sell you my demo volume for $40. That way you get a good deal and I can buy a new demo." Great deal. I took him up on the offer and still consult the volume. (I wonder how many times he worked that scam.)

I selected the mid-section of the map, from Seward on the Gulf of Alaska up past Mt. McKinley to Fairbanks to show you my old stomping grounds. The red line running up and down the map is the Alaska Railroad. Right after we landed in Anchorage we rode the train to Seward. The route is clear in this map and you see where Hope is. That's where the terrifying multiple-tiered circular trestle was located. We were some of the last people to traverse it before it was taken out of service due to its inherent instability and risk.

During the time I lived in Seward, it was the terminus of the railroad and received all shipping from the "Lower 48" or "the states" or "stateside" as it was said in those days. Considering that the Korean Conflict was going on, not too far away, and considering that there were something like 5-6 military bases in the interior of Alaska, you can see how critical Seward, the Alaska Railroad and shipping were. The smallness of the town belied its crucial role in the provisioning of the military in that era.


Fairbanks
College
North Pole
Nenana
Anderson
Clear Site
Big Delta
Delta Junction
Healy
Suntrana
McKinley Park
Cantwell
DENALI NATIONAL PARK
Summit
Denali
Paxson
Donnelly
Dot Lake
Tok
Tanacross
Tetlin
Northway
Mentasta Lake
MENTASTA MOUNTAINS
Chistochina
Gakona
Gulkana
Glennallen
Tazlina
Copper Center
Chitina
McCarthy
WRANGELL MOUNTAINS
WRANGELL-SAINT ELIAS NATIONAL PARK
Mount McKinley 6194
Mount Foraker 5304
Mount Hunter 4444
Mount Russell 3587
Broad Pass 714
Colorado
Hurricane
RANGE
Gold Creek
TALKEETNA MOUNTAINS
Curry
Chase
Talkeetna
Sunshine
Montana
Willow
Chickaloon
Sutton
Wasilla
Palmer
Birchwood
Chugiak
Eagle River
Anchorage
Spenard
Klatt Road
Girdwood
Portage
Whittier
Hope
Moose Pass
Seward
Kenai
Soldotna
Sterling
Cooper Landing
Kasilof
Cohoe
Clam Gulch
Ninilchik
Anchor Point
Homer
Seldovia
Port Graham
English Bay
KENAI PENINSULA
KENAI MOUNTAINS
Valdez
Ellamar
Tatitlek
Cordova
Eyak
Katalla
Yakataga
Prince William Sound
CHUGACH MOUNTAINS
Thompson Pass 845
Eureka
Tahneta Pass
Sovereign Mtn. 2697
Lake Louise
Skwentna
Susitna
Big Lake
Tyonek
Cook Inlet
Kachemak Bay
Blying Sound
Port Ashton
Controller Bay
KAYAK ISLAND
Mount Saint Elias 5489
Mount Logan 5950
Eagle
Eagle Village
Chicken
Boundary
Beaver Creek
Snag
Koidern
Chisana
Tanana
Manley Hot Springs
Minto
Lemeta
Chatanika
Aurora
Hamilton Acres
Ester
Lake Minchumina
Telida
Rampart
Usibelli
Gulf of Alaska

This wonderful triptych shows the town in the early part of the 20th century, a sprawling town that hatched in this particular location on Resurrection Bay

Figure 6 http://www.americaslibrary.gov/pages/jb_0330_alaska_1_e.html

because there was an alluvial fan large enough to set up housekeeping for a town with shipping. This alluvial fan is a delta that was deposited where Lowell Creek dumped into the Bay after flowing between Mt. Marathon on the left/north and Bear Mountain on the right/south in ths image. The unexpected but obvious feature of this alluvial fan that affected me every time I went outside the house was the fact that every -EVERY- road sloped down or up, depending on the direction you were headed. Most of the time the pitch was surprisingly steep. It was great for making little dams and directing tiny streams of water in the ice in the road in the spring, but it meant an irritating, slow walk back home with my bicycle while I had to balance whatever it was I had collected this time.

Directly across the bay sits Mt. Alice, left of center in this image, sort of a sentinel guarding the town. It was the dominant feature of my view when I stepped out doors, omnipresent and imposing. When I visited Seward the summer of 2003, I had the reverse experience of the size shift we usually undergo when returning to our childhood home. Usually things have shrunk but Mt, Alice had grown enormously tall and had moved much closer to the town that I remember. The degree of change was remarkable. Mt. Alice just dominates the landscape. It looked and was much closer than I remember. I remembered it being sizeable and close but not that tall, sitting on the doorstep. It dominates the landscape.

Around 1954 Mt. Alice experienced something that wasn't explained to me at the time, but I understood that it was a significant event. One morning as I looked across the bay, I noticed that there was a cloud of dust, not a cloud of moisture, rising from the ridge just to the north of the peak. I don't think there had been an earthquake although they happened but something had caused a substantial block of the face to shift. After the dust had cleared there was no way for someone who hadn't see it happen to even tell that it had, but I saw it.

The bay itself runs to 3,000 feet deep so is an excellent place for ships,

though few come today. While I lived in Seward, it was THE railhead and major port for all shipping from the "Lower 48". That's how dad made his living to support our family.

As you see in the above map, Seward is located on the Kenai Peninsula at the north end of Resurrection Bay which is a gorgeous deep narrow fjord, probably 25 miles long, bounded by tall mountains that thrust straight up from the water 4 or 5 thousand feet or more. There are few beaches along the bay, because the mountains stand on sheer cliffs everywhere. Glaciers topped some of the mountains, the most dramatic in our days being the Fourth of July Glacier just south of Mt. Alice and directly across the bay from Seward. I was surprised, and saddened actually, to hear recently that the glacier has since receded. The rough weather experienced by the Gulf of Alaska is attenuated as it enters the bay by two islands sitting squarely in the mouth of the bay, one of them named Fox Island. The head of the bay is an alluvial fan deposited primarily by the Resurrection River which is fed by smaller glacier-spawned streams and somewhat from Bear River.

Tidal movement over this tide flats is surprisingly fast and covers a great distance. I went out on the flats at low tide to explore but I never dared go all the way out to the lowest tide because I was afraid I could not run fast enough to get back to safety when the tide turned. I wanted badly to go out and explore the remainder of the Quackenbush that lay tantalizingly close on the flats, but I didn't dare. I was afraid I'd get inside the hull and be drowned in a wave.

I suspect today that I was overly anxious but a couple of small kids who had learned painfully other ways about taking care of themselves who wander out there alone without any adult supervision were not going to get in trouble that they couldn't get out of. This part of the bay was where salmon schooled prior to their migration up the rivers, providing as a result excellent fishing grounds. We caught more salmon there than anywhere else in the bay.

The depth of the bay and it's location at the head of the Gulf of Alaska made it an excellent shipping avenue, which is one of the reasons that it was selected to be the railhead for the Alaska Railroad back in the 1920's. There was no highway or rail access and air travel was minimal. At that time the sister ports of Valdez and Cordova were minor players in the shipping business and Whittier near Anchorage didn't even exist. The lion's share of shipping to and from Alaska went through Seward. Consequently there was a constant flow of ships in and out of the bay. The livelihood of the tiny community of 2,000 people was based entirely on shipping and railroading. Businesses of various sorts developed to supply the needs of the

community but they were primarily services, there being no manufacturing or industry of any type.

Seward is on the west side of the head of the bay, situated on the alluvial fan deposited by the Lowell River. It sits on the foot of Little Bear Mountain and Mt. Marathon. Anchorage is 128 miles away, at least it was in those days, and there was no town to speak of in-between. There were a few little bergs like Moose Pass, 30 miles outside of town, that's how they were described, the mile post, but it was only a dozen or so homes with a couple of businesses.

So Seward was isolated and insulated from humanity in general. In the winter the road -not a highway, just a 2-lane dirt road, would sometimes be closed by avalanches. The Alaska Railroad was also affected by avalanches but there were enormous rotary snow plows that were put on the front of a heavy locomotive that would manage to clear the track so there was generally commerce on the railroads year around. There was no commercial airline to service Seward so access to Seward was by ship or rail year round, with road access most of the year. Bush pilots like Tiny Trikowski, flying a rear-mounted engine Widgeon, operated out the Seward, doing the extraordinary things they did so in an emergency one could charter one of them to get to Anchorage. One felt the isolation and the need for interdependence.

History of Seward

The bay was discovered by Russians in the late 1700's. They built a fort and a small ship-yard down the bay to establish their claim as well as to

provide a means to repair and construct boats. Russia claimed the immense territory for its own but in 1867, at the far-sighed behest of William H. Seward, the US purchased it. The gold rush brought explorers to all parts of the territory, including Resurrection bay that was already providing trappers excellent quality pelts.

Frank Lowell was apparently the first, or at least is credited with being the first, European to settle in Seward. He brought his family with him and today the Lowell name shows up different ways, i.e. Lowell Point down the bay, Lowell Creek, etc. Mt. Alice is named for Alice Lowell.

The way family history fits into the history of Seward is that dad went to Seward in August 1940, and mom followed in May 1941 at which time they were married. At that point, Seward became part of our family history. Mom and dad bought two lots for a 2 room house that dad started in August, but the influx of soldiers and the explosive growth of Fort Raymond, even before the bombing of Pearl harbor (Dec. 7, 1941), made the place unsafe for females. Mom left in Nov 1941 and dad followed in Dec. 1941, meeting his in-laws for the first time at Christmas 1941, in Naples.

For a comprehensive view of the history of the town, look up Mary Barry's three-volume set. It's in my stuff. I have talked to her on the phone several times, a friendly auntish sounding woman who was from Seward herself. She moved stateside to go to college in 1951, the same year I moved to Seward. He dad, Mr. Paulsteiner, had a lumber yard in the years I was there. He was also a historian and wrote a colorful history of Seward that is out of print.

Seward's physical gave it a prominent role in the political arena as noted above. Its history reflects that effect of its location at the terminus of the lifeline to the interior when all shipping went through the docks that were destroyed in the Easter Earthquake tsunami in 1964.

If you're really interested in an in-depth history of Seward, go to Mary Barry's three-volume history of Seward. It is the most comprehensive one done so far. I've talked to Mary on the phone three times. She was leaving Seward at age 18 for college in Oregon I think it was in the same year I moved to Seward so our paths did not cross. Nice person who keeps the books in her basement, after paying their publication. After I saw mom's interest in the history of Seward, I called Mary and asked her to mail a copy on my dime to mom which she did. Mom looked at it and has forgotten I ever sent it to her. Later, when I referred to it, she admitted she had a copy but didn't know who sent it to her.

Territory

Alaska was a territory which means, as you know, it was a big chunk of land that was "owned" by the Unites States but which hasn't been granted "statehood". It had a variety of connections with the "Lower 48", i.e. governmental, commercial, familiar, social, etc. The incipient mechanism of statehood was there, but hadn't matured sufficiently to qualify for statehood. While I was there, the "Constitutional Convention" met and created the Constitution for the state of Alaska. That was 1956, just before we left and I still have a copy of the special edition newspaper that commemorated the event. It has photos of all of the participants in that convention. Then in 1959, after I'd been in Boston for 3 years, Alaska was "admitted to the union" and was granted Statehood. Hawaii followed by a year at which time the federation of 50 states was completed.

I knew the term "territory" and I understood that it meant we weren't a state. That was not at all distressing but it did mean that we were more primitive that a real state. That was fine, indeed, I liked the idea of being out there on the fringe of civilization. I thought that thought often while I lived in Seward, perhaps not that explicitly but I thought the kernel of that thought. To this day, I am proud of the fact that I was privileged to have the chance of living in the last frontier of the United States of America. (Hawaii was not a frontier at that time!)

Frontier and Wilderness

Pretty fancy sounding names to apply to a place I lived in, aren't they. To you kids, the words probably connote eras and places a hundred years before my days and places. Right? The fact of the matter is that you're right. Except that the territory of Alaska in general and the tiny of town of Seward in particular were left-overs. What happened is that the lower 48 states which had once been wildernesses, frontiers and territories had became inhabited, civilized - debatable in some instances- and modernized and politicized. Are those the characteristics of the transformation of a territory into a member of the union?

Turn the thing around. Define the terms "frontier" and 'wilderness" and then see if those definitions apply to Seward. Generally, a wilderness is an uninhabited region, a region that may have a few trappers, miners and explorers and even a few homesteaders, which has not been civilized with roads and established industries

and full-blown governments. Sound right? That describes the territory that abutted on all sides the town of Seward. And, generally, a "frontier" is a geographic region that is a buffer between the fully civilized areas and the wilderness areas. It has developing establishments and businesses and government but is still primitive and under-developed compared to fully civilized regions. That also describes Seward.

Those definitions did apply to Seward and they also applied to the whole territory but the only thing that mattered to me as a little kid up there was Seward. I didn't deal with the idea of the "territory". As the wags say today, "All politics is local." Indeed. All life is local and Seward itself was for me a frontier and sat in the middle of wilderness that showed up in this story.

In the summer of 1955, Robert Muller and Marshall Mahurrin who were the patrol leader and assistant patrol leader for Dickie's and my patrol in Scout Troop 620 decided that they were going to teach us orienteering, either for a rank advancement or merit badge. These two guys took their responsibilities seriously and knew how to "Take charge". In my mind, when the ordered me, in their role as patrol leaders, to do something, my dad might as well have ordered it. Granted, there's a bit of exaggeration there but not much really. I had great respect and/or fear of authority for good reasons. So when these two guys said to take our compasses and get ready for an exercise in orienteering we knew it would be the real deal. We hitched on our canteens, put on good shoes, took a jacket for warmth, and put a box of waterproof matches in our pocket "just in case." This was Alaska and you went out to the wilderness unprepared at your own peril.

They hauled us on foot way out north of Seward, north of the TB San on a dirt road we had never been on. After being sure that we could read compasses and understood how to take and change bearings, and knew our "pace", they took us to a specific spot out there in the middle of the wilderness, up in the direction of where Exit Glacier is today. They got us to where they wanted us to start, handed up a single sheet of paper with instructions, and left. No map, just instructions. Dick and I stood there alone. It was wilderness, my children. There were bears out there, foxes, eagles, all sort of creatures and there were no habitations, no street lights, no telephone poles, no running water, no people, no police, nothing that marked civilization, nothing to turn to, no where to go, just this narrow rutted dirt road and the forest in front of us. We were left on our own.

But we weren't afraid. We had faith in our leaders and in ourselves. We made sure we understood our assignment: follow the instructions on the sheet of

paper to get ourselves back to Seward - ALONE. That was the operative word. We stood out there underneath the alder and spruce forest alone, several miles from Seward and it was up to us to get back home by heading in a certain direction for a certain distance and then taking another bearing, following it for a certain distance and so on. We had canteens, jackets, compasses, good shoes and matches so we were set. Of course, we could have cheated and walked back out that road that those two guys took when they left, but to do that would be to admit that we were unable to do the job, afraid to do it. We would not consider that alternative and it's significant I think to note that we didn't even joke about, "Oh, let's just go back on that road!" which is the kind of thing that seems to be standard in such situations any more. Make jokes about thing, act like you care but don't, take the easy way out, etc. Nope, we were going forward, and we did.

We could have done the same thing in Fred Meyer's parking lot or down in the Grove at least in terms of the mechanics but this was wilderness so it was a sobering experience. We followed those directions and suffered a couple of episodes of mild panic. You gotta remember. We were 12 and 13 and we were out in the forest -wilderness- alone in totally unfamiliar territory with nothing but this paper and instructions, our compasses and our brains -and the powerful trust of our leaders which was critical- to get us home safely. We followed those instructions, had to redo a couple of stages and finally we got close enough to familiar territory to be able to finish by finding a road and following it in. But in the middle it was scary. I can testify from personal experience that Seward was a frontier town in a wilderness.

The Economy

Does that sound boring? It does to me. As a little kid I didn't even know the word. "Economy". What's that. Well, for one thing, I just happen to know that it comes from Greek. And I just happen to know that the original meaning involved the home, its food, cooking, organization and money. That is what the word originally referred to and that's how I'm actually using it here. I use the term to refer to how all of us little families sitting up there in the cold, isolated frontier survived, how we made money and bought food and cooked and kept warm.

We were 128 miles from Anchorage, a few tiny villages in between. You got any idea how far away that is from the next town? It was pretty darn far away. We

were on our own. We all had to depend on what happened in our town for survival. Even electricity was generated by a local plant. No electricity came to us from outside. When the generator went out in the winter in the middle of a snow storm, I was afraid, particularly if I happened to be walking back from Werner's Market. I felt like the mountains would spill down on us crushing us in our houses. There was a phone line to Anchorage that worked as long as there were no avalanches that broke the connection. The railroad and the auto road remained open as long as there were no massive slides. But Seward really was isolated and on its own. When avalanches blocked the little highway and the railroad and I heard about it, I felt afraid somehow.

So how did people get money to put food on the table and pay the rent? There were basically seven sources of income in the order of volume of money generated:

-The docks
-The railroad
-Small local businesses including services, i.e. medical, dental, legal
-Government
-Fishing
-Lumber
-Trapping
-Mining

The docks were the largest source of income. There were three when I moved there in 1951 and a fourth shipping dock was constructed in about 1953. These four docks serviced commercial freighters that came into the bay to drop off supplies and equipment. There were two stevedore unions that I'll talk about in detail below, the dockside and the shipside unions.

The cargo unloaded from the ships was loaded onto the railroad for shipment up the line into the interior of the territory. The railroad hired the second largest number of people.

The small businesses spanned the spectrum; several grocery stores, bakeries, laundry, hotels, restaurants, churches, bars, hardware stores, bowling alley, drugstores, gift shop. None of them was large because there were not enough people in town to support anything large. There were no "outlet stores" in Alaska at the time, and probably few in the lower 48 since that concept was unborn. Nor

were there chains or franchises in Seward. The businesses were locally owned and run. The guy who opened and closed the business was the owner. The service organizations included medical and dental and legal offices. None was large: the hospital probably had 15-20 beds at the most and was administered by Mrs. Blue.

Government also spanned the spectrum from town to territorial to federal offices. There was a fire department that was mostly volunteer, police, game wardens, "Highway" patrol, and a single school building for 12 grades.

The four remaining sources of income, fishing, lumber, trapping and mining, were marginal at best. Few men earned their livings from any of these forms of enterprise, but they were present in our awareness.

The economy from which our families derived money and goods was based entirely on the population of ~2,000 in that tiny town. Fathers worked at jobs that generated money that was spent in turn on goods and products in the community. Dad worked on the docks as a dockside stevedore/longshoreman to make the money for his family.

I'll launch into the story now, picking up where I left off in Volume 7 - Vernal.

Arrival in Anchorage

The story of our trip to and stay in Seattle before our flight to Anchorage is told at the end of the preceding volume, Volume 7 - Vernal 1945. It was a momentous event to climb into that airplane in the evening and fly away. The tiny Vernal airport was used by locals with their tiny airplanes. There were no commercial flights which meant that we didn't get to see the large airplanes that the airlines flew, TWA, PanAm, United, the first two being international companies long -dead. Just seeing a DC-3 in Seattle was an exciting thing. To actually climb into one was more exciting and the thought of flying off into the air stomach-wrenching.

You are used to long, carpeted, well-lighted tunnels that take you to the door of a large jet liner. Quiet, climate controlled, like a large long room, and no sense of the act you are committing. Getting out to board a DC-3 was a totally different experience. There were no sophisticated jetways to get you out to the plane, as it sat parked a ways from the terminal on the landing strip. We waited anxiously in the lobby until our flight was announced, nervous that we would be forgotten or would not be allowed to board. Irrational fears but real.

We had checked in, having our tickets examined and our bags carefully

weighed and measured, causing concern for mom lest she have to pay over-weight penalties. It was a relief that none was assessed. I felt blessed. Then we had to wait. Finally our flight was announced and we nervously watched mom for instructions. She was cool and calm, like an international traveler in our minds though she was probably uncertain since she hadn't flown before. People lined up in a queue at the door that had a number on it. A person opened the door and announced that we could pass through to walk to the plane.

Evening had fallen so lights showed us the pathways painted on the pavement that we had to follow to get out to the airplane that sat there waiting. I was nervous about walking outside the lines, afraid that someone would yell at me to get back inside, looking anxiously around at the immensity of the terminal, the crowds of people, the bustling uniformed workers who were calm, acting as if this were the most normal thing for them to do. Man carried her handbag and we had our books. That was all. Carry-on luggage was severely limited due to the weight limitations.

When we got to the gangway I stared up. The staircase was like a wide metal ladder with low walls, that we had to climb. A person stood at the bottom pointing where to go seemed superfluous because there was no where to go when we came to the end of the cattle chute painted on the pavement, but adults know how things should be done. The other person at the top made sense. I needed someone up there to assure me that it was OK to go up and that it would be OK to go inside the airplane.

As we got to the top of the gangway, we were face to face with the reality that we were entering a large airplane. A finality. We were committed and couldn't turn back. I had a fearful fatalistic sense about it. I wanted to go see my dad but I was as scared as I could be about that big thing getting into the air with all those people inside of it with their luggage. But there I was, holding on to mom who went inside. Suddenly things quieted down and we saw small lights that illuminated the interior. And a long, steep floor that we had to climb. The seats were sort of like those in the Greyhound busses we went to Seattle in, the busses we had ridden between Vernal and Salt Lake City, but the floor was sloped up and the ceiling was curved. We had to hold onto the seat backs to help us climb up to our seats. Then we sat down and buckled ourselves in, an unsettling thing to have to do. If this was so safe why am I tying myself in?

Things finally got underway, the pilots revved up the engines, taxied out on the runway and then shoved the throttles to the firewall. Commotion and terror and shaking and roaring and bouncing as the plane started down the runway, clawing to get into the air. It finally succeeded and eventually the plane leveled off and the stewardesses came around to see if we wanted some of the chicklets gum or half-rolls of lifesavers that would keep our ears from hurting as we changed altitude. These planes weren't pressurized like modern planes so the pressure differentials were much larger.

Figure 8 DC-3 in Anchorage museum in 2003

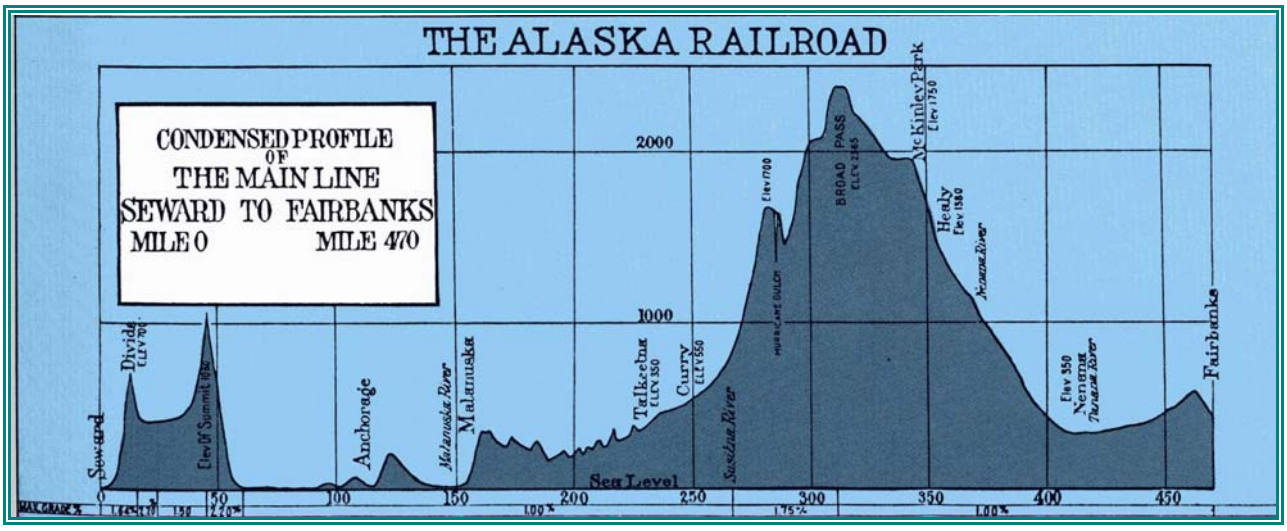
The overnight flight did not crash. We woke up in sunshine, descending into Anchorage. At the time, Anchorage was probably about 30,000 people, the largest town in the territory. Alaska didn't gain statehood until 1959, three years after I had left. I don't remember where the Anchorage airport was and don't specifically remember landing or getting to the train station, but we made it. The town had pavement on the main streets but outside the main section everything was dirt.

Alaska Railroad

Anchorage was just an impatient interval on this trip to get back to dad, to see him again, to reconnect with him and have him overshadow me. I don't even know whether we had to spend the night in Anchorage or not. I just remember that we got on the Alaska Railroad and headed with our gear to the place we had talked incessantly about for 6 months, the place where my dad lived - Seward.

The train station that we entered in 1951 is the same one I visited with Dee in 2003. I didn't see a date of construction but it was built in the style of institutional, governmental buildings of the 1920-30's, sort of a modified version of art deco. The lobby inside was enormous and had those mammoth tusks I showed at the end of Volume 7. We got our tickets and boarded the train.

This profile, from "Encyclopedia of North American Railroads" (AE Klein,



1985, Bison Books) that I found in the Depoe Bay used book store in 2002, shows the Alaska Railroad "profile" as its called from Seward, the rail head for the line, up to the terminus at Fairbanks. One of the last things we did before leaving the

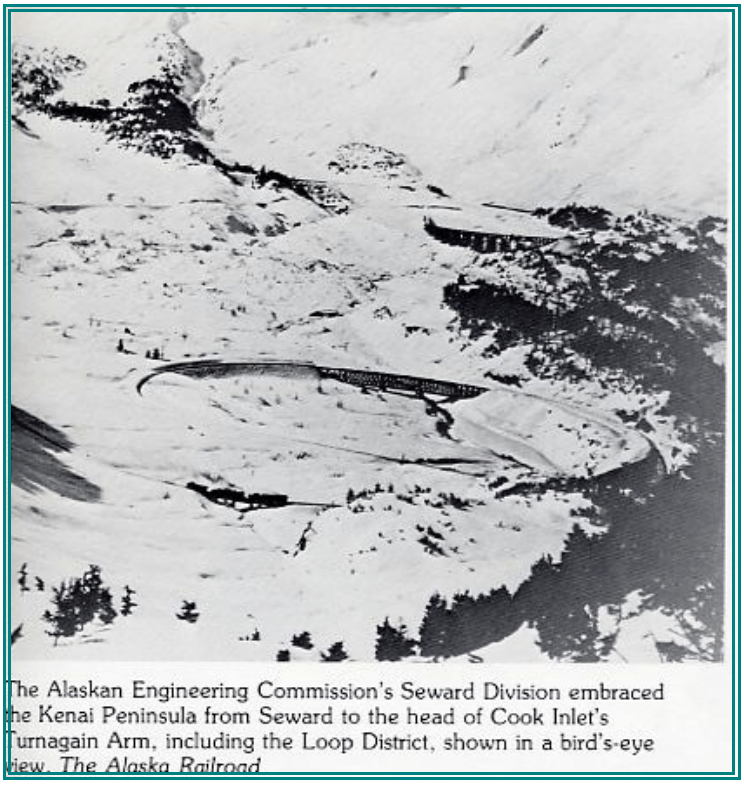
territory, a sort of Right bookend to our life in Alaska, was to take the train up to Nenana. The first trip on the railroad was to go from Anchorage to Seward. Note the sea level elevation near Anchorage and at Seward. The last 50 miles before Seward had elevation up to 1,000 feet.

The engine pulling a combine of 8 or 10 cars produced a great deal of grey smoke that billowed out the stack, blowing down along the cars as they followed. As the drivers turned, the cylinders released puffs of loud steam, the characteristic chuff-chuff sound of a steam engine. The other impressive thing about this trip was the terror I felt at one point, the point where the engine had to make a climb up from a flat area to gain entrance into a tunnel into the mountain. I suppose it had a sound engineering basis but it was unsettling that the tracks didn't just go straight into the tunnel.

This tunnel was bored into the mountain hundreds of feet above the floor of the valley so the train had to climb up to enter it. The route that was laid out for this climb was a trestle, an elevated track supported on long piles driven deep into the ground. They were obviously secure but to me they were ludicrous. This enormous train with its weight felt out of place up there on top of this narrow trestle that was nothing but a bunch of tree trunks stuck into the ground, on top of which steel rails had been laid. I imagined that the train made the track shake though I suspect that was not true. The most shocking thing about this trestle was not its length. It was long which only prolonged the risk to me of a crash off the tracks.

The shocking part was the fact that the trestle could not be constructed as a straight run from the floor of the valley up to the mouth of the tunnel. The tunnel was so far above the floor that the trestle had to gain considerable elevation. The trestle was constructed such that the track made a great turn, kept turning, and eventually crossed back over itself. It made a 360 degree turn over itself which persuaded me that the whole thing was so flimsy that it would collapse. It didn't and we made it into the tunnel that was a noise, smoky experience. It was long enough to add its own dimension of fear, i.e. that we might not come out the other end, smoke and noise filling our car.

In this image you can see a train on the bottom of the loop. It is headed to the right side of the image, will make that huge circle and pass under the trestle on a straightaway that is difficult to see, but it is there if you look carefully. It was terrifying and Ralph Tingey told me that this loop was taken out of service in 1951 due to structural problems and risks. That means that I was one of the last people to traverse it because I went over it in June 1951. (The photo is from page 48, Railroad in the Clouds, William H. Wilson, Pruett Publishing, 1977. Dad found this book in a used book store on the Oregon coast in 1988.)



The Alaskan Engineering Commission's Seward Division embraced the Kenai Peninsula from Seward to the head of Cook Inlet's Turnagain Arm, including the Loop District, shown in a bird's-eye view. *The Alaska Railroad*

2003 Interlude:

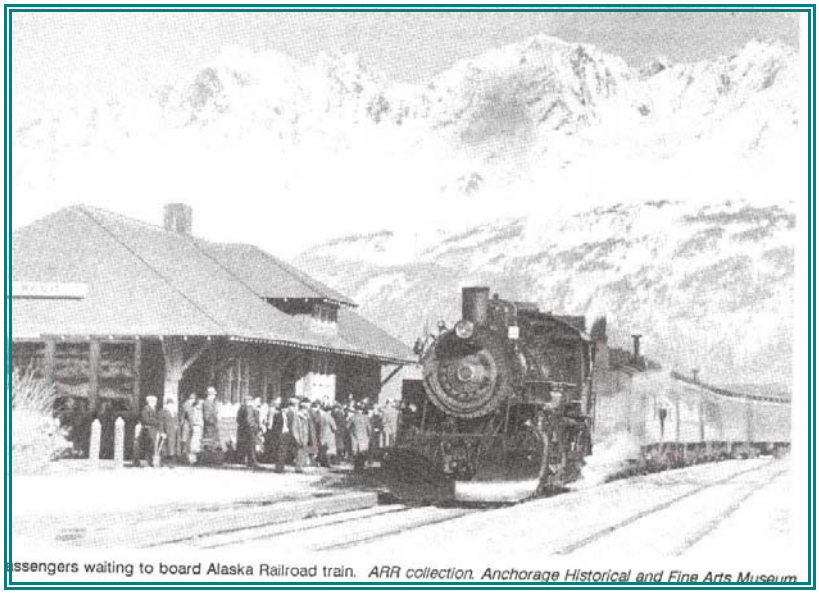
When Dee and I visited Seward, we rode the train back to Anchorage and stood on the platform between cars for the duration of the 4.5 hour ride and were astounded at the gorgeous beauty. This photo shows a forest drowned by encroaching water with rugged mountains in the background draped by hanging glaciers.

In one stretch there are about 8 tunnels that are close together, with steep drop offs between. Non-stop beauty. I took 200+ images in that 4 hours.

This obviously was the same stuff we saw when we rode the steam engine train from Anchorage to Seward in 1951.

Arrival in Seward

Eventually we arrived at the Seward train station, a small, typical train-station of that era, with the sign "Seward" on the roof. This image from Mary Barry's book shows the Seward train station as it looked when we arrived. On a train drawn by a steam engine like this. Note, again, that people are well dressed for the occasion like they were for the plane flight. The change in travel attire is not something that pleases me. Something is lost in the rush to be casual, something that bestowed a significance to the event.


ssengers waiting to board Alaska Railroad train. *ARR collection. Anchorage Historical and Fine Arts Museum*

The main street of town, such as it was, ran off to the left side of the photo, perpendicular to the long axis of the train station. The "City Dock" would be to the right side of the person who took this photo. The mountains in the background are the ones immediately to the north of Mt. Alice across the bay.

I took this photo a few years later when there were a bunch of dog sleds on display with dad standing behind the sled. The bare, white mountain on the right in the background is Little Bear. We lived at its foot about directly behind the second telephone pole from the right side of the photo in

"Homebrew Alley". We were happier to arrive in Seward than in Anchorage.

It was late in the day again and we finally got to see dad, and got to see the ocean, a fantasy to me. The train ride was long and noisy and rough but we had waited for many months to make the trip. It was time to get there. We had waited a long long time and traveled a long long way. Two little kids who have lived out on the desert their whole life are in a state of shock after waiting so long and traveling so far. It was time to see dad.

Dad was there, waiting for us, ready to take us and our bags to the house he had rented and prepared for us. It wasn't a great distance away but he didn't have a car so had to rent a taxi to get the job done. The taxi drove along the road that you see on the right hand side of my photo of the station in the winter. Imagine that the road goes straight for about 4 blocks. That takes you to the foot of that mountain, Small Bear, and to the foot of Home Brew Alley. Our house was about six houses up from this road.

Sunset all night

The evening we arrived we were so excited that we couldn't sleep. Too much stimulation we thought. Sleeping finally in a little house, up in the attic, in Seward with my dad again, finally. But after another night or so it became evident that the problem wasn't really stimulation. It was light, good ol' sunlight.

In June, the sun in Seward comes up around 4-5 am and sets around 10pm. Doesn't sound like too different from the Lower 48? Right. Except that the POSITION the sun comes up in and the position the sun sets in are totally bewildering. Here's a good illustration.

To get what this photo portrays, you have to think carefully about it.

First, this is Mt. Alice, across the bay from Seward. That means it was about due east from where I was sitting when I took this photo. I was looking straight east.

Second, this photo was taken about 10:00 **p.m.** Repeat: 10:00 **p.m.**

Third, look carefully: the sun is coming from my left as I am sitting there looking directly to the east at this mountain at 10:00 p.m. From my LEFT at that time of night. This amount of light may not be so surprising but the direction is. At that time of night, the sun should be coming from my right. The sun is northWEST of me in this photo. It should have been southWest.

Point: the sun comes up in the **north** east, makes about a 275 degree circle in the sky and sets in the **north** west. Normally, in the latitudes of the lower 48, the sun comes up in the east-south-east and sets in the west-south-west. So there is about 18-20 hours of sunlight a day and that wreaks havoc with sleep for most people who are not used to it.

Of course, the obverse is true. In the winter, the opposite is true. The sun is rarely up. It rises late in the morning in the far south-east and sets after 4 hours far south in the south-west.

Home Brew Alley

Arriving in Seward was an exciting event compounded of many things, finally seeing dad after six months and finally getting to the ocean. The

latter loomed large in my mind. Dad was exciting and was his typical how-are-you-nice-to-see-you-good-by guy. I wasn't too disappointed, however, because first, I knew he'd do that and I still loved him and knew in some way that he loved me, and second, The Ocean. The ocean was a wonder, a thing I could scarcely imagine, a body of water so large I wouldn't be able to see the end of it. I had dreamed about it in my mind, trying to comprehend a body of water that large, a body of water with waves on it, docks and ships.

After we got to the house on Homebrew Alley and had deposited our bags, dad and mom had a lot to talk about. We could sense that our company wasn't a hot item at the moment. So us kids dared beg permission to go down to the beach. We could see it when we went from the train station to our house because we went along the beach for several blocks before we got to the end of the alley and turned up. We knew where to go so we asked permission hopefully to go back down to the beach, an impossibly exciting thing. They said, "Sure, that's OK. Just be careful now and don't you go into the water." We about tipped over in our shock and quickly agreed that we would be careful and that we wouldn't go into the water. Both of us were afraid of the water. We were desert dwellers who bathed once a week. Water was not a normal part of our routine but it was compelling.

White Paper Clam Shells

We left the house and could see the ocean from the steps on the front of the house, and walked hurriedly down the alley toward the beach. It wasn't far and when we got there we crossed the road and a train track to get to the sandy beach. Finally, we were there. I had dreamed all winter of going to the beach to see the waves and to see the sea life that I had read about. I was finally there. We were timid about walking far on the beach because we were new to the area so didn't know what risks awaited us. We had seen maps with sea monsters drawn on them and we didn't believe the, but just in case, we were careful.

This is the beach we walked on first, the beach by the City Dock. The only difference between the day we were there and the way it looks here is the debris in the water from the collapse of one of the buildings on the dock. The beach was always covered with flotsam and jetsam and dunnage from the rail cars and ship. The former is garbage and junk of any kind, the latter is lumber that has been removed from ship holds or railcars which had been used to secure things for transport but which was finally removed an discarded. In this image the dock had been damaged by a bad storm so was being repaired. This is where we first met the ocean that evening. We played and beach-combed on this beach for years. The access to the dock that you can see provided a great place to fish when we weren't chased away.

We walked up to the edge of the water because the waves were as small as in this photo, so small that they weren't fearful at all. We learned about big waves later. We didn't see any sea life on the beach, just some bad smelling plants that turned out to be seaweed. As we looked intently out into the water, we discovered some white objects. They were circular and lay still. Like clams. That is what they were, clams! Man alive, our first trip to the beach and we had already discovered clams. They were too far out to be reached without getting wet, so we couldn't get any to take home to show dad, but we would drag him down to look at them with us.

The next day we managed to get his attention and convinced him to go down and look at these pure white clams with us. He went and sure enough, they were still there. He stopped and looked at them a minute, obviously thinking hard about

them. We interpreted his slow response as thoughtfulness about the importance of the find. We expected he would have something impressive to tell us. When he did speak is was a quiet comment, a kind one. He said, "See, those white paper cups you drank water out of on the train? Well, they are folded pieces of paper and when those cups get wet, the pieces of paper come unfolded and spread out like that. Those are paper cups." Oddly enough, while that was disheartening, I don't remember feeling like he had criticized us, like I had made a serious mistake. I knew when I did those. It was real clear. But in this instance, he reported the truth, a thing he loved and respected, and left it at that. So he told us where clams live and how you get them, and looked at seaweed.

The name of this waterfront neighborhood gives you some insight into what we moved into and the map on the next page shows it. The green house is the one I lived it. The house to the north of my house had two stories and was rented by a man, his wife and child, who care from the south. They were the first ones I remember speaking with an accent that I had a hard time understanding. On the south side of our house there was a narrow path that extended from the alley back to the mountain. There was door on the side of the house that we could use to get to the path and get to the mountain to climb and fool around. On the south side of the path was the Colonel's house. He was a strange, secretive type. On the south side of his house was the largest house on the alley.

Two of my best friends lived there, Darlene and Gary Mattson. Mr. Mattson had taken a powder so the kids spent the days alone because mom had to work. So they had more freedom than I did. Darlene, a largish specimen with long hair and stronger than most boys, introduced me to a new-fangled sandwich that I thought was the neatest I had ever eaten: two slices of baker's bread -as opposed to home-made bread which was still made by many moms in those days including Marie- with a couple of leaves of iceberg lettuce, a slathering of miracle whip and several tablespoons of granulated sugar. That was it, that was the recipe. When I tried to get mom to make one, she recoiled.

Aerial Photo of Homebrew Alley

This grainy photo shows Homebrew Alley on the top left. I colored our house in green so you can see it and there is a large vacant lot directly

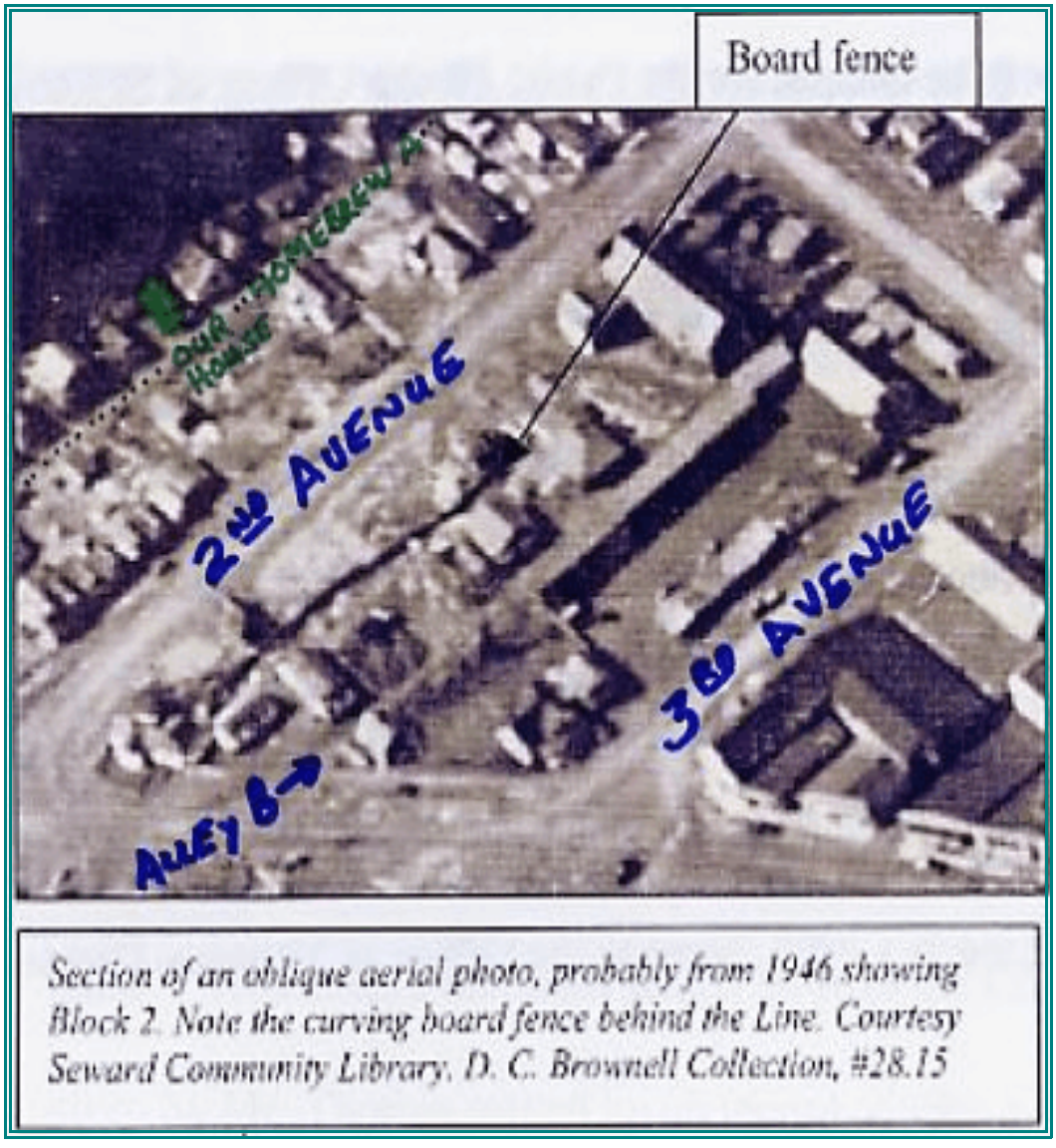


Figure 18 From "Regulated Vice: A History of Seward's Red Light District - 2002"

across the alley from our house. A structure was added to the north end of that lot which you will see later in the photos of me and Dick with some dogs and photos of salmon. Otherwise, the alley looked just like this photo. This photo is from the book written about the redlight district that flourished in Alley B. (Regulated Vice: A

History of Seward's Red Light District. Seward Visitor center Compliance Project, prepared by Annaliese Jacobs Bateman, National Park Service, Alaska Support Office, July 2002.)

Notice the roads in this photo. Homebrew Alley is on the top - the name is written in green. Our house is colored green and sits across from a large vacant lot on the other side of the alley. On the opposite side of the vacant lot is a wider white road which is Second -not First- Avenue. First Avenue doesn't show in this photo although it did exist further north in town. In the block below Second Avenue is the infamous Alley B, the redlight district which is located along the narrow alley through the center of the block. The board fence on our side of the district was next to another field that we played. More about it later.

All the roads and alleys in Seward were unpaved with the exception of several blocks of main street. Mom is standing in Homebrew alley right in front of our house. This shot looks north. We moved after about a year and a half to a house over on Second Avenue which was on the other side of the vacant lot which is to mom's left in this photo. The house we moved into was located right at the highest point in this photo. Count the telephone poles. They mark intersections. The first telephone behind mom marks the road we'd turn right on to go three blocks to get to main street where the stores were. The last telephone pole, on the left, is at the intersection by the Episcopal Church which was just south of our second house.

Homebrew Alley House

I don't really know how dad and Art Schaefermeyer traveled to Seward, other than they went together. I did find one photo of dad on a steam ship on his way to Seward so I assume Art was with him, but am not sure. Here's a great shot of Art "working" on the City Dock, about the only photo we have of him which is odd, given the amount of time we spent together. This particular day Art was assigned to drive jitney and was obviously in-between jobs. Art was apparently as fed up with his job and situation in Vernal as dad was so he joined up with dad and moved. We were all living out the tail end of the depression and the impact of World War II on the national economy and men moved around to make more money than they were otherwise making. This trip to Seward seemed to be that sort of thing, although there was doubtless a certain of nostalgia involved for dad.

I imagine that sure they traveled to Seward by ship. Commercial airlines were novel and expensive and they had little money so would travel steerage class and put up with the inconvenience to save money. When the two of them arrived in Seward, they obviously had to find a house to live in because staying in a hotel would be too expensive. Dad had friends from his previous visit 10 years earlier so they may well have stayed temporarily with them. I think it is highly likely that Rachel gave them a spot on her floor. She would have done anything she could to help and would have been upset if they didn't accept her offer.

They signed up for the union to work as longshoremen on the docks and hunted for a place that was in their price range, not very high. Even in 1951 it is likely that there were few places to rent because Seward had always been a small

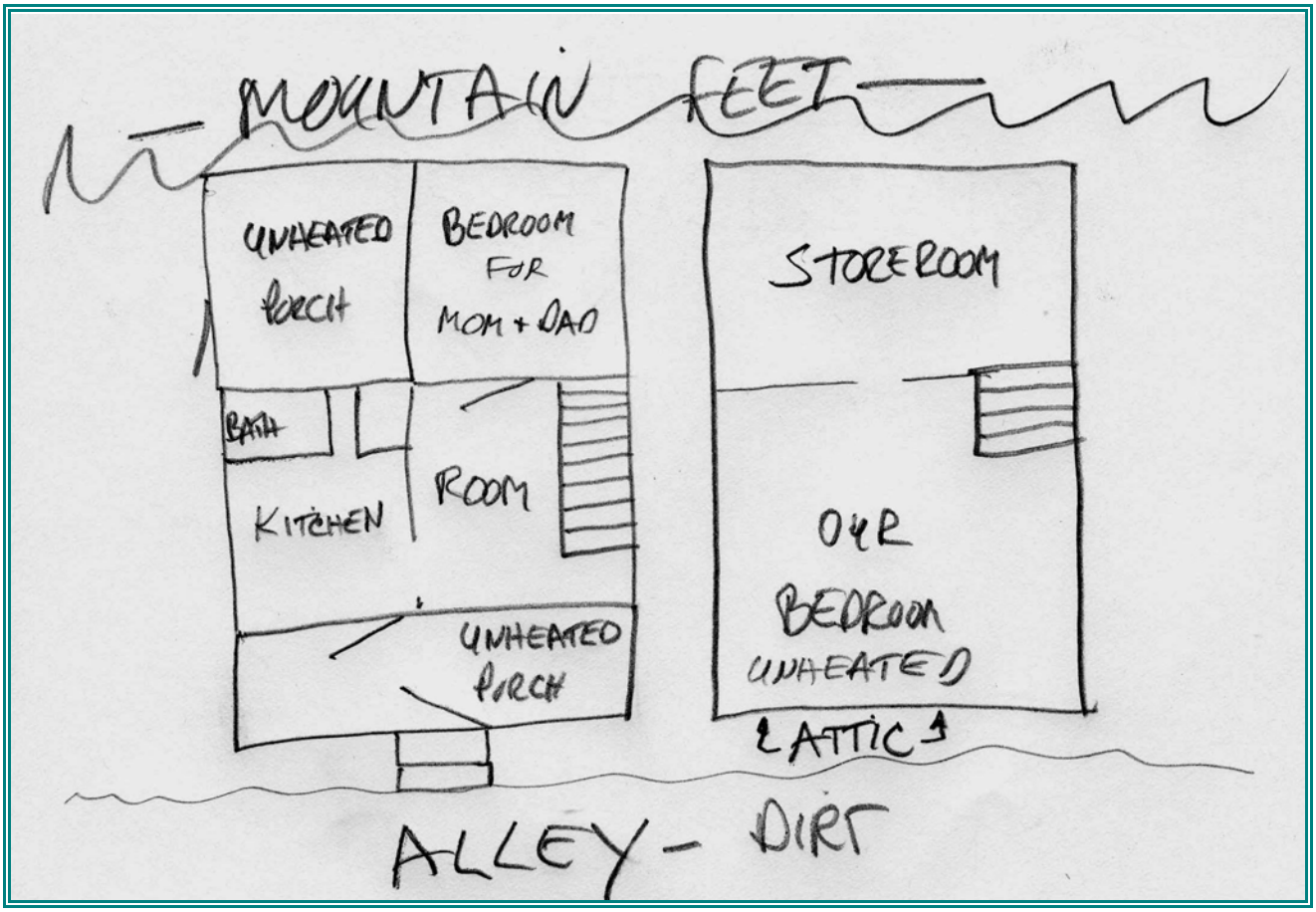
town, except for the temporary growth from the defense industry but when that industry evacuated, the housing evaporated because they took down many Quonset huts that had been used for housing. and ended up choosing this little house on Home Brew Alley.

They roomed together to save money and shared the task of cleaning it up after they first rented it. Apparently it was filthy which is not surprising. Homebrew Alley was named "homebrew" for good reason. In addition to the home brew aspect, the alley was basically flophouses for vagrants, tramps and prostitutes who plied their wares in that alley and through the block at "Alley B".

The worst cleanup job was the stove according to dad. I don't remember what fuel the stove burned but it apparently was covered in nasty smelling stuff that they could not completely remove. The sources of heat in the town were oil or propane so it was one of those. They finally resorted to burning large quantities of sage on the stove top to change the smell of both the stove and of the house. Later I learned more about "Homebrew Alley" and the fact that it was the slum part of the town. It was populated with types who didn't think highly of bending their elbows just to keep a place clean. Instead, they brewed brew, they indulged in their indulgences and generally raised hell, leaving a stinky residue .

Floor Plan

Here's the floor plan of that tiny house that had a main floor and an unfinished attic:



It wasn't large. My guess, based on the houses I've lived in, is that the width of the house was probably about 20 feet by 25 feet, not much, 400 square feet per floor. Look at mom and dad's bedroom. Their double bed occupied most of the width. That room was half the width of the house, so the kitchen side wasn't much wider than a double bed. The room where the staircase is located to the attic was too small to hold any furniture except a chest of drawers.

This set of drawers held mom's and dad's clothing, and some of ours. It was tiny. It set on the others side of the wall that backed the stairs. The space between the drawers and the wall the divided the house into halves was so narrow that there were no chairs or tables. Just space. This chest of drawers was off limits to us kids but that didn't keep me from exploring it. As described lower, we purchased goods in case lots from the "Lower 48" so had large quantities of stuff after it had arrived.

"Nigger Toes"

As I nosed about in this set of drawers, something that would have cost me my head if mom had discovered me doing it, I ran across a pile of cellophane bags of "nigger toes" in one of the drawers. This name was the common one applied to Brazil nuts. The name didn't seem pejorative to me, rather just a name, like "squaw candy" or such. These cellophane bags were from a crate that mom ordered when she sent in our annual food order. Mom loved these like her dad did. She obviously bought this extravagant luxury to pamper herself. We were not to know about it apparently because I hadn't seen them before, but one sack was half empty.

Figure 22
http://www.deliaonline.com/picture library%5Cjpeg150/br/brazil-nuts.jpg

Well, I found the hoard and in the manner of a selfish pack rat coveting that which someone else had, I liberated one of the plastic sacks and tore it open. Man alive, that was heaven. All those crunchy large nuts. To protect myself and the hoard I took the opened bag upstairs and hid it somewhere under my bed or in the back storeroom so neither Dickie or mom could find it. I explored those drawers many times, hunting for whatever interesting things were there, though I had no idea what I was hunting for.

Attic Bedroom & Storeroom

The top "floor", a mighty grand way to refer to it, was an unheated and uninsulated attic. The roof over the space was rafters covered with boards which were covered on the outside with rolls of heavy tar paper impregnated with green sand to allow it to withstand the weather. But inside, there was nothing. Just the bare rafters. There was no insulation, nor was there even wall-board or lath, nothing to make a ceiling. It was like living in a half-finished space, a barn with a ceiling that was too low to stand up in except in the center.

This attic space was divided by a partition in the middle into two "rooms", a front room and a back room. There was even a door in the partition. We slept in

the attic because there was nowhere else to sleep so the front room was called our "bedroom", another euphemism, and the back "room" was the store room. Since there was no insulation and since there was no stove or other source of hear, the cold was severe in the winter. Sleeping up there in the attic was like sleeping in a deep freeze. No kidding. You have no idea of the constant continuous relentless cold until you try to sleep in it without any protection except your own body heat and a pile of blankets. The best thing that can be said about the attic as a sleeping space was that (1) it was in fact always dry -not a trivial thing in Seward!- and (2) there was no wind blowing through it. That dryness and stillness did actually help our situation up there.

Here's how it was in the winter. In the evening after we had dawdled as long as we could without incurring the wrath, we'd see that the time had come to get ready. We'd take our clothes off while standing in front of the stove in the kitchen lingering, enjoying its warmth, dreading the ordeal. Then we'd put on the home-made flannel PJs that mom had warmed in front of the stove. After getting into our pajamas, we fooled around again as long as we dared, risking the wrath on mom. Finally, Mom made us kneel on the floor at the kitchen chairs and say our prayers before we were banished to the attic.

After we stood up from praying, we steeled ourselves, hating it every night, wanting to be allowed to sleep on the floor in the little room, just to be in a warm place. We'd go over to the staircase, pull the door open and turn the switch to light the light in the attic. Then we'd make a heroic dash up that narrow, steep stair case to the attic, stumbling over each other, anxiously trying to get into bed before our PJ's cooled off too much. Mom would holler up the stairs, "Are you in bed yet?" When we responded affirmatively, she turned off the light, shut to door and there we were outdoors freezing to death.

We each had a tiny bed set on opposite sides of the tiny front "room". We'd run to our bed, lift the covers up and hurriedly dive in, pulling the covers up completely over our heads. We had discovered that our breath was the best way to warm our beds so we trapped it inside of the bedding. We'd hold as still as mice, afraid of the new area of coldness that we would feel if we moved our legs. Water in a container in the attic would turn to ice up there. Literally. It took half an hour or so for our nests to warm up enough to be comfortable. During that time we didn't move a muscle. We'd finally warm up enough and go to sleep in whatever position we were in when we jumped into bed. Getting up during the night to go to the bathroom was terrible. We'd have to go down the stairs into the house, go to

the bathroom and then go back up and repeat the performance.

A note about those quilts: there were still in my possession at 5111 I think. Before we left Vernal to go to Seward, mom and her mom decided it would be a wise thing to make some large heavy quilts, not know what would be available there, and what the cost was. Mom had lived in Seward so knew how bitter the cold was and knew it was prudent to prepare for it. So they set up quilting frames and tied two quilts, one for each of us. The batting was doubled and the top and bottom were heavy flannel. We helped her tie them because it was an east task and it gave us a sense of ownership.

The back "room" was filled with cases of the canned goods and breakfast cereals that mom and dad purchased from the "Lower 48". These goods were shipped up the coast from Seattle via the "Coast Line" I think it was. Whatever the name of this shipping line was, all of the cargo ships had 2 pale pink smoke stacks. Our stuff took a month to arrive so we eagerly watched for these ships to come in, hoping that our next supply of food would be on it.

When it arrived, dad brought it from the dock and hoisted it up the narrow steep staircase to store in the back room. There was a great sense of comfort to see the food there, to know that we had food to live on, to know that mom and dad were taking care of us that way.

The cardboard cases we stacked much like a storehouse for a grocery store. There were boxes of Corn Flakes, Wheaties, Jello puddings, beans, spaghetti, fruit salad, mandarin oranges, Mexican Corn and other vegetables. The reason for buying stateside was that the local prices were so expensive. Even paying for the shipping cost for this much freight, the goods still cost far less than buying them from local merchants. At the time I didn't wonder how the merchants felt about people doing this but I suspect today that they had mixed feelings. The things we did buy at Warner's or the other market were things that weren't in this collection of cases or perishables like vegetables and meats.

In this photo which was taken on the City Dock, you see a pallet of cases of canned goods as they are being off-loaded from a ship. This could have been a load of the goods that mom and dad bought to tide us over the winter. It's hard to see in this photo but there are two men spotting the pallet as it is lowered by the slingman down onto one of the wheeled 'carts" that were towed by the jitneys. The front man with his back to the jitney is the driver. Once the load is settled to his satisfaction, the sling will be unhooked, the driver will mount the jitney and he will drive either to a rail box car or to a truck for local delivery. These two guys are members of the "dockside union." The slingman and his buddies who are working on board the ship belonged to the "shipside union."

Scary Faces

The attic had only one light. In the winter in the afternoon, the darkness filled that attic completely if the light wasn't turned on, there being only one small window on the east end and another on the west end in the other room. Billy Schaefermeyer and his little brother Mike came to visit us many times. The house was too small for us to play on the main floor with adults so if it was raining too hard to play outside, we had to find somewhere else to be rowdy and loud which naturally meant the attic.

There is something about a dark play space that brings out the worst in some kids like me. Instead of keeping the one light on so we could see what we were doing and maybe play some Parcheesi or Fish, one of us would run and turn it off.

Then we'd dig up some flashlights. The object of this play was to try and scare the other kids by turning the light off and turning the flashlights on.

In the dark, we'd hold the flashlight right up under touching our chin and point it straight up. When we did that, the flashlight cast funny shadows up over our face, making streaks of light and dark over our chin as we opened out mouths, nose, lips, cheeks, eye sockets and forehead. It was impossible to really make out what we were seeing which naturally scared the crap out of us which naturally made us more excited to do it.

Figure 24
http://www.ahowlinggoodtime.com/gallery/jackolanterns/images/twoscaryjol.jpg

To add to the excitement and fear, someone would start growling like a bear in a deep scary voice. At first that was just corny and no one believed it. But in the dark, our imaginations would ignite. One of the kids would get the bright idea of imitating a gorilla so he'd start swinging his arms, grunting like a gorilla, bouncing up and down like we thought gorillas would, like we saw them do in movies. The humanness of gorillas is disturbing anyway, but to have one in your bedroom in the dark is unnerving..

By this time, we'd truly get scared and start yelling for the kid to stop it. But he wouldn't. He'd continue to growl and roar and pull more funny faces while he'd crouch over to make a hunch back and swing his arm around like a gorilla. We couldn't really see his arm but we could see them well enough to know that it wasn't him doing it! We'd scream some more, Mikey would get really scared and start bawling, at which time one of the adults would open the door to the stair way and yell up at us to cut it out and ask Mikey if he was OK. He was OK and we'd all sneer at him when the adults couldn't see us -as if WE weren't scared. But if the adult came up stairs, we were solicitous of Mikey and asked him if he's OK, if he got scared, told him it was OK, said we were scared too, which we really were, etc.

This episode happened many times and was the kind of thing that was followed as we aged by scary things at campfires and in the woods at night when we were hiking of camping. There was little commercial entertainment so we made our own and in its own way, it was more authentic and scary that the stuff you see in movies and on TV with explosions and blood and torn bodies. That isn't really scary,

but when that kid started swinging his arms like a gorilla and bouncing up and down like one while he made ugly faces that were grotesque in the strange light, it was about as real as anything can be that isn't.

Front Porch

The front porch shown in the above diagram was unheated, a typical arrangement for any Scandinavian house. Today this kind of porch is given a fancy name, "Arctic Entrance." My, my, how cute. In those days, it was just a porch, plain and simple, and it had one function: it served as a sort of decompression chamber between the heated interior of the house and the windy bitterly cold outside. The fancy name "mud room" might also be applied but we didn't have that sort of artificial word. We just knew we needed to have a way to prevent the wind from souring the house, removing the precious heat we paid precious money for. We changed boots and put on or took off coats in this porch before entering or leaving the interior of the house.

The kitchen was the room you stepped into when you went through the front door. A propane stove and a table with four chairs filled it. On the back of the kitchen was a door way that went to the bathroom and a small storage room. The bathroom tub was the site of a wide variety of scientific experiments that involved sea life, clams, crabs, and starfish. Mom didn't care too much for the business of storing live sea creatures in the filled tub but understood that these experiments - that is what they were- somehow were 'good for the boys'. They were. We did other experiments out side the house with variable results.

Bathroom & Starfish

There was a bathroom in this house, a pretty darn exciting thing. This house, out there on Homebrew Alley, was the first house I ever lived in that had indoor plumbing and a bathroom inside so you didn't have to go outside in the winter and hang your bum out there freezing in the cold breeze in the winter. No kidding. I was nine years old and had obviously used indoor plumbing many times at other people's houses but I had never had it in my own house.

The bathroom was as tiny as the house. When you stepped into it, there was a clawfoot tub on the right sort of like this one. The thing about these cast iron tubs is that they take a long long time to get warm in the winter so even if the water is too hot to sit in, when you finally get set down, your bottom gets cold from the cold iron. The faucets were far away so you had to stand up to get to them which cooled your bottom off more and so on.

Figure 25
http://ftp.internetconsignment.com/photos/tubbrad1.jpg

The commode was straight ahead when you went in, and nearly touched the tub. On the left wall between the door and commode was the small sink with hot and cold running water, a mirror hanging above it to see the effect of your splashing efforts with soap, water and comb.

Another experiment involved trying to keep star fish for pets. We had an endless supply of the things. This time we put a sandy pair in the clawfoot tub and ran a few inches of water over them, watching carefully to see what happened. What happened was that mom came in and said, "Get rid of them!" Being cooperative, far-sighted children, we just thought that was the finest bit of advice we'd ever heard. So that experiment came to a crashing halt. But it didn't stop us. It just slowed us down and we had to find another lab.

Drying Starfish

One of the most memorable experiments was an attempt to dry starfish. We had seen dried starfish in stores and figured that since there were no obvious abdominal contents that all we needed to do to produce our own was to put starfish on the roof of the storage room. The roof over the porch was close enough to the elevated path that went back onto the mountain that we could climb up onto it. So we collected half

Figure 26
http://www.njscuba.net/biology/misc_starfish_etc.html

a dozen starfish down on the beach after a storm which always threw them up, arranged them on the roof and waited. Most of them were the five-legged variety - something like this- but there were starfish with something like 14 or 15 legs. We had some of those as well.

Every day we climbed onto the green roof over the back porch to check the specimens noting any change in coloration and weight. The most significant change we ever noted before we were finally told to get rid of them was the odor. Seward has 62 inches of rain a year. Do you understand how much that is? More than an inch a week. This obviously meant that the star fish were watered about every day, and also meant that the sun didn't shine. After several weeks the smell was overwhelming but I think we would have left the starfish up on the roof "just in case" if mom or dad hadn't ordered them back to the ocean. We discovered through this process, talking with mom or dad, that the store-bought dried starfish must come from much dryer climates or must be quickly dried in ovens.

Discoveries of all sorts happened at Home Brew Alley, another one involving inch-long crabs and clams. We went clam digging down the bay at Tonsina or beaches in between. There were large cockles and horse clams that we brought home. The nice thing about digging these clams is that they don't shoot out their foot and take off in the sand like razor clams do. They just lay there while you dig them out, sort of like digging potatoes. You can do it with your hands. Just find the characteristic depressions in the sand with two tiny holes. It was probably while preparing the horse clams to be cooked that someone made the discovery that some of them had one or two white, inch-long soft-shelled crabs trapped inside their siphon. The crabs appeared to be healthy and apparently were sucked in when small and grew to adulthood by eating of the stream of nutrients that the clam ingested for its own use. Much like the shrimps that enter certain sponges where they are trapped for life.

Billy's Squirrel bit me - so did Billy

I got in trouble, real trouble and Billy jumped me and started pounding on my face. I don't blame him. Billy and his family lived outside of town. First they lived over on the Old Nash Road near its ending, in a house that was as much a house of ill repute as the one we lived in, I can tell now, looking back, because there were thousands of little glass beads in the dirt from the fancy lanterns that had been used inside. I was fascinated by those little beads and

collected handfuls and wanted to make something of them but never did. They were the draping veils that hung from Tiffany style lamp shades.

Anyway, out there is the "country", as if Seward was "city', Billy did get to do things that we didn't. In this case, Billy made a trap with his dad's help to catch a squirrel. That was one of the full-time occupations of kids up there, catch some animal or bird. It was in the air, and running trapping lines had a certain romantic appeal. The Schaefermeyers came to visit us one afternoon from their place over on the old Nash Road. On this trip he had a trap with a squirrel inside.

This trap was a wooden frame covered with chicken wire. The lid was hinged and constructed in such a way that it could be propped open and then tripped shut when a squirrel entered. Billy put some sort of bait down in the interior of the box, attached a long string to the stick that held the door/lid up, walked a ways away and sat down to wait. It strikes me that he used peanut butter to bait the trap. Eventually a squirrel of which there were many identified the scent as something desirable and came to investigate. Billy told me how it was done. The squirrels were used to seeing Billy and his brothers so were't too troubled that this kid was sitting where he could be seen from the scene of the about-to-happen accident. The squirrel decided the scent was really good and climbed up on the cage/trap affair. The trap became a cage after something was inside of it. The critter then climbed down inside of the cage at which time Billy excited yanked the string pulling the stick out. The lid fell down and the squirrel was caught.

Figure 27
http://www.xs4all.nl/~kwanten/squirrels.gif

The next time he came to town, he brought the cage with him to show Dick and me. He proudly waited while his dad pulled it out of the trunk of the car and brought it over the sit on the ground between the houses. The adults then went into the house to chew the fat while us kids played. We all stood fascinatedly around the cage, seeing a squirrel up close for the first time. He was frightened and cowered in one corner looking back at us as we looked at him. Billy said not to open the cage because he'd get out. So we didn't open the cage. But for some reason I couldn't stand waiting like that while this pretty wild creature just sat there. I had to do more than that, so without Billy's permission, I undid the catch on the lid and reached down to the squirrel. I don't know what I expected to happen but what did isn't what I wished. The squirrel didn't fancy this kind of

attention and a human hand coming in his direction spelled trouble, so he did the only thing he was equipped to do: he bit this finger.

When the kid, i.e. me, screamed and jerked his hand out of the cage, the squirrel who was afraid of retribution, beat a hasty retreat out the still-open lid. At this point, Billy also attached this kid for allowing his pet squirrel to get away. He had a point, but I felt like I deserved to be given a little sympathy because I had just been bitten by a wild animal. Billy didn't appreciate that subtlety and whacked away at me while I yelled loudly.

The adults tiredly reappeared , separated the combatants, and one got lectured about minding his own business while the other was told to not worry that he could always catch another. Neither kid was happy about his lecture and was willing to trade. The rest of that afternoon with Billy was spoiled. His frame of mind was shot and he pouted and wouldn't talk to me. I can't blame him. I don't know why I even did that dumb thing because it was predictable that he would (1) bite me, and (2) get away. Neither outcome was a good one, so why did I do it? Mom said I always just had to try things and as a result got hurt. She said that when I was a really kid in Vernal, I was heart broken because I had been stung by a bee. According to her version of the attack, I was heart broken, not simply because I had been stung, rather because I meant no harm and only wanted to pet the bee. The squirrel episode seems like the same specie. Don't know what's wrong with my nervous system.

Back Porch & Boulders

There was a back porch which was unheated and uninsulated, located behind the bathroom. It was used as a storage place for some of dad's stuff, an old beat up table along with a few empty crates. The two huge wooden boxes that had been shipped up with our worldly belongings were sitting there as well, half full because the house was too small to hold all of it.

The fascinating thing about these huge heavy wooden boxes was that they were the halves of a shipping crate for a coffin. Before dad left Vernal he prowled around to find something that would be large enough and durable enough to make the trip to Seward with the belongings that he and mom picked out. I remember that he finally found this thing at a funeral parlor on the north side of Main Street, on the street that ran in front of Central Elementary. This funeral parlor was sitting in proximity to a tannery, a place I visited on a school field trip with

shocking results.

Dad took this crate over to Payton's shop and sawed it in half. Then he nailed heavy boards over the open ends of these two boxes. He sawed the lid in half as well, so he now had two separate crates to load our gear in. Since there was no intention of using the crates repeatedly to ship things, the lid was not put on hinges. When the time came to close the things for pickup by the shippers, the lid was simply and tightly nailed on. Then in Seward dad used a crowbar to carefully pry the lids off so as not to damage them of the crates just in case he needed to use them to ship things. It turned out that these crates, set on top of each other served as our closets at 307 Second Avenue later, but for now, these crates were stored in this porch.

I suppose it could also be called a back room because it was a "room", but the fact that it was uninsulated and didn't have sheet rock on the walls always made me think of it as a porch. This part of the house was in an odd place as far as I was concerned. It was actually sitting in a sort of alcove that had been dug back into the foot of the mountain to get a wide enough, flattish space to lay the catty-wompus foundation. That makes me think that the surveyors had either mis-calculated where the alley itself should be, or the layout of town started up higher, leaving this poor alley to take care of itself. As a result of the alley running so close to the foot of Little Bear this alcove thing had to be dug so deep that it extended more than half way around the house on both sides. As a result, when I stepped out the door on the south side of this porch, I was running into the angled strip of mountain that extended toward the alley. As soon as I stood on that strip I was on the mountain.

The proximity of the house to the mountain had near fatal results for dad one spring morning. There had be nearly continuous rain for several weeks. We were always wet, trying to keep warm. The sky was concealed in steel-gray clouds

and low mist that covered the mountains like a Japanese print. On this particular day, dad had worked the night shift which was from 7:00 p.m. until 6:00 a.m.. He'd get home from work about the time we were being stirred to get up, get ready, eat and be off to school. He had his own breakfast and crashed into bed, head against the back wall which was nestled into that alcove.

Mom had gone to town to do some shopping and while she was gone, something astonishing happened that could have killed dad. The constant rains must have been even more than usual because they loosened enormous boulders up above our house. There were rocky cliffs standing out here and there in the pine trees and one of them had a pair of loose boulders that sat still until this morning. The rain washed away enough soil, and loosened the rest. The boulders let go and came charging several hundred yards down the mountain. They took one final bounce and bounded several yards through the air, crashing into the back of the house. 10 feet from dad's head. He didn't hear a thing. Not until mom went into the back porch later that day was the damage discovered.

Dad and Art hiked up the mountain behind the house and were able to trace the trajectory of the boulders. They identified the cliff they fell out of, and could count the foot prints made by each boulder as it careened several hundred yards down to the house. It was a miracle that my dad wasn't taken that morning.

It was naturally his job to take care of this problem and he approached it with his usual thoughtfulness and methodicalness. Nothing that he did was random. He looked things over, thought about his options, picked one and them set about implementing it. It was an elegant solution.

His first step was to smooth and excavate the wall of this dirt alcove behind the house so he had a wall and floor without projections. I didn't understand why he spent the time doing that but I sure as H.... wasn't going to ask him. When

he was in his creative mood, interruptions were usually greeted with flaring anger that I didn't need. I learned some patience over the years of living with him, anxiously trying to figure out what he was doing - primarily because he wouldn't tell.

The second step involved a large sledgehammer. He swung this mighty thing like John Henry, mighty swings and whacks, making faintly sulphurous sparks and dust, chipping the huge boulders into small pieces. He was careful how he made these chips because the third step, the disposal step, depended on the chips being of a particular shape. He wasn't a man to just angrily muscle the darn things into chunks and haul them away. Nope. He was an artist by nature and unconsciously approached any problem from an esthetic point of view, which in this case also turned out to be an energy saving point of view.

Dad knew how to knapp flint and basically reproduced the results here except with granite boulders and with a 12 pound sledge. Who'd a thunk it. As he chipped the boulders into foot long chips, he laid them into a wall from one end to the other of the alcove, completely lining it as he moved up and the boulders when down. He didn't have to haul any stone away, a blessing given that the boulders were in a hole behind the house between the foot of the mountain and the back wall.

Then he repaired the back wall of the back room and things returned to normal, except that there was now and elegantly lined alcove. It is probably possible to find that alcove today and people will wonder why in h... anyone would go to so much effort to build a wall of flat granite chips in that place.

Homefront

A short time after we had settled into Home Brew Alley our family took a walk down the alley and up above the old Cannery. It was a Sunday and since there was no church to attend in the town, we were on our own. Since it was Sunday we were dressed up as if we were going to church. Notice again the fetish of "dress alike." Why. I don't know why. Notice, too, the formality of our clothing. Mom was not content with just a white shirt for our Sunday-best. We always had to have

sport coats and later suits. Absolutely. Without really knowing what was at the bottom of this obsession, I believe it was a by-product of the poverty of her own childhood. She was NOT going to let her kids look like 'just anybody's kids'. They were HER kids. I suppose it is the same phenomenon wherein she personally obsessed about her own appearance, clothing, shoes, make-up, hair. All of you have experienced her elaborate, complete preparation for the day, even out in their motor home. When you kids saw her for the first time in the day, every day you say you, she never had a hair out of place. Do you remember? It's all part of the deal. I don't get it.

In this photo, Homebrew Alley would be just behind us to the left -to our

right. The white house to my left in the photo is the a house at the entry of Alley B. The beach down there to my left is the one we went to the first night finding white paper clam shells. The large, two-story black-tarpaper house there in the center is on the east side of Third Avenue. The white buildings beyond the tar paper building were the 'commercial' district of town. The tall building in the background on the right side of mom's head -her left- was the Federal Building where the post office was located. The train station is touching the left edge of the nearest telephone pole. At the bottom of that same telephone pole is an old barge that was permanently beached, with an outhouse to its left. Both were used by the rail gang that lived in the string of railroad cars, a semi-permanent emplacement- that starts at the bottom of that telephone pole and extend almost up the train station. Everything right there, tight and cozy. Seward was a tiny town.

Please turn to the Panorama of Seward that follows somewhere around page 50 plus or minus 10 pages - depends on just how much more stuff I put in. That photo taken up on Big Bear Mountain gives you a bird eye view of this same scene. There you can see that the town is only 9 blocks wide, counting two blocks that are hidden by the mountain at the bottom/left. My whole life was lived in the confines of that little town. If you go to the town today, you will discover that absolutely every one of the things you see in the bottom third of this photo are gone. In their place there is a large flat field with a row of trees growing. Homebrew Alley houses were completely destroyed as well as the alley so there is no trace of anything, just a flat area that runs into the foot of Little Bear, the location that one knows was where the alley was. But there is nothing left today.

To go back to the term "neighborhood" you should note that the term is a mite presumptuous. Only 1,800 people lived in the entire town. There were really no identifiable neighborhoods although there were subtle differences in the ambience of different locations in the town that reflected socio-economic gradations of the society, artificial to be sure, but nonetheless 'real' in town. Homebrew Alley was different in two ways from the other alleys that divided blocks between two avenues. In the first place, there was no First Avenue to the west. First Avenue only came into existence further north at the level of Adams just behind the Episcopal church, and ran in front of the Whitmore family. So homes on the west side of Homebrew alley were perched at the foot of the mountain. In fact, the space for the floor of our house was excavated into Little Bear Mountain so there was a 2-3 foot space between the back wall and a cliff that

was a high as the rood. were nestled against the steep foot of Little Bear Mountain.

In the second place, the alley had a history of illicit substances and off-beat life styles so living there automatically placed a sort of stigma on us. I don't think I was really aware of it from the behavior of kids in school. Fourth graders aren't really astute about those subtle things, but I think I was aware from mom's behavior and attitude that Homebrew Alley wasn't as "nice" a place to live as higher in town. That's why we moved further north in a year and a half after a house either became available or mom and dad had paid some bills so they could afford to pay more rent.

Vacant Lot

Our house nestled in the niche carved into the foot of Little Bear. It sat right on the alley which ran north-south in front of the wooden steps. There was absolutely no front yard for the house, just the alley there. To the south of the house was the Colonel's house that set across the path that went up on the mountain, and to the north was the 2 story house of the southern gentleman, his wife and their joint baby. There was no yard on either side. Across the dirt alley there was this vacant lot that looked like someone had started to build something, or there had been something but it had burned down years before. There was the carcass of a long defunct truck that was missing wheels, motor, bumpers and bed, but it was a great place to pretend. So we had no alternative but to play either in the alley itself or over there in the vacant lot. We were satisfied however and did just that. Coming off a scrappy farm this was just fine to me.

Dad took these shots looking to across the lot and to the south. In the lower photo, our house would be directly behind me off the right edge of the photo, and the Snyder's house is on the left behind Dick. The bunker-like structure we're kneeling on didn't look like a foundation of a house and I don't know today what it was. It had a hollow space beneath it, as if it were truly designed to crawl under, like a bomb shelter but this was in 1951 so the civil defense push to build personal bomb shelters hadn't started. Since it was constructed before the atomic age, it couldn't have been a bomb shelter. I have no idea why it would have been built.

We loved dogs but weren't allowed to have our own yet, although we were given one in a year or so after we had moved up on Second Avenue. We adopted these two pups insofar as possible. Dick is holding King and I'm holding Butch. These dogs were owned by the Snyder boys who lived in the house in the left background.

Dog Dung Face Cream

Well, it was a trip playing there in the vacant lot with the "half breed" children of the marriage of a white man, Mr. Snyder, and an Eskimo woman with TB of the spine which basically paralyzed her. There were other kids but these were the ones we played with most. One of the boys was named "Woody" but I can't remember the name of the other. There were a number of children, two boys of abut our ages so they are the ones we played with. Mr. Snyder was a longshoreman like dad so was gone the same times, and the mother didn't come outside much because of her disability. The kids took care of themselves for the

most part during the day.

Note the term "half breed." That is the term that was used in the community to refer to kids/people who were a mixture of races. It was not my opinion of the kids. Indeed, I understood that it was a derogatory way to refer to anyone and had been taught -though I didn't always follow the teaching- that one should not make fun of other people. I certainly did understand, however, that mom and dad had a respect for native Americans so I did, too. It is fair to say that the term 'half breed' was not any more derogatory than the term 'nigger' which was also used at the time. I am not sure that either term was really intended to be derogatory when people used them. They were descriptors that everyone understood, hence were convenient to use, but they were not complimentary either. Just don't think I really liked either term even though I've used the term 'nigger' during your lives. For me when I used it it was as a sort of joke because it sounds so funny but it was not actually being derogatory of blacks.

We often played in the vacant lot on the other side of Second Avenue along the board fence by Alley B in clumps of what the Snyder kids called "poochskie". We didn't know the common name "Cow Parsnip". It was a huge rhubarb-looking plant that grew to 3 or 4 feet in height all in large clumps. The plants were tall enough that us little kids could crawl in amongst the stems and disappear. The clumps made great forts for war play where we were defending ourselves from the enemy. Sometimes the enemy was these Snyder boys who didn't always play by the rules, although I would have been hard-pressed to actually explain what they were. Whatever, we'd get incensed and start fighting and one side of the other was tear a branch or clump of flowers off the plant and rub it in the face of one of the other kids. The plant had nasty juices that created pain and little water blisters.

These kids were our ages and sizes so we played reasonably well. Our imaginations were comparable and the games we wanted to play were similar, cops and robbers, hide and seek, cowboys and Indians, commercial fishing and so on. For the most part it was benign play and we'd sort of wander off when we got bored, but there were times when play was rough.

We'd start arguing about some stupid rule change or someone's trivial violation of a trivial rule. If we were tired enough, in the right state of mind, these

arguments could end up being physical. None of us really understood the rules of the games we played because there were NO rules anyway, so there was always something to argue about if we were inclined.

If we got mad enough, we start pushing and shoving. We were civilized so didn't kick or hit, but there was nothing in the rule book that forbade pushing the other guy. We thought. I'd end up pushing one of the kids who was smaller than I was, which wasn't nice of me, but he wasn't much smaller I thought so kept at it. His brother, Woody, would get involved and he'd push back and call names. The words he used were ones I wasn't allowed to use, some I am not sure I even understood in which case they didn't upset me much. I'd just get mad about them because that was what you supposed to do when someone called you those names, whether or not you actually understood what they meant.

As things escalated, if a parent didn't see us can intervene or one team didn't abdicate the playing field, the outcome was unpleasant. Losing the argument by leaving wasn't an option for either side. We had pride and didn't want to loose a fight or argument so we'd hang in there. When Woody finally got to the point that his name calling wasn't working, and he wasn't able to push me around, he'd resort to scatalogical activities. Literally.

There were lots of dogs around so there was lots of the stuff that these creatures deposit all over the place. And Woody, bless his wrinkled hide, when he was angry enough, would pick up one of these brown cigars and in an instant would smear it on my face. Man alive. I hated him for that and would erupt in kicking and hitting and screaming. About this time mom would hear the noise, come out, and order us all to neutral corners. I would be so angry I couldn't speak and would have tears in my eyes, and not just from the dog dung.

Mom wouldn't wash my face for me. I had to go into the bathroom and wash up myself. That didn't seem unfair at the time, nor is it surprising. Mom was a great believer in object lessons and I am sure that she

Waterfall and Pond

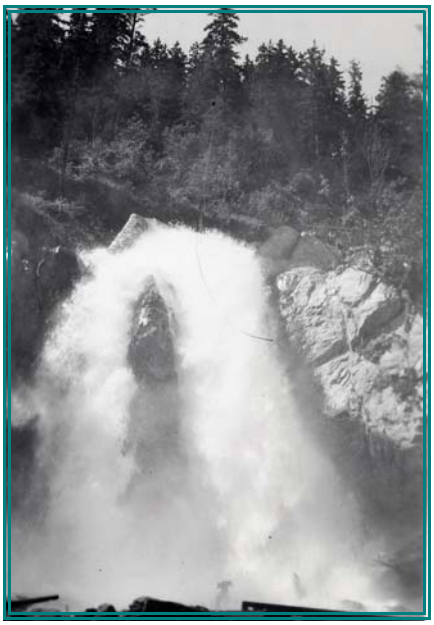
This was a sort of magical place for me, but it had a prosaic beginning. In 1940, the Army Corps of Engineers was given the assignment of diverting Lowell Creek that flowed out between Mt. Marathon and Little Bear

through Little Bear to prevent further damage to the town from the annual floods that occurred every spring as the snow melted and roared down the narrow track. According to this photo, the river was first redirected through the tunnel in Sept. 8, 1940, which would have been a month after dad arrived - which probably explains why he had the photo. Notice how sparse the trees are. Today that slope is completely covered by mature trees. I suspect that the original growth was logged off for logs and firewood and it was growing back when I went there.

Note for future reference, the scary little house sitting on the beach to the left of the torrent, with a tiny tree in front of it. The road you see in the foreground was just like that when I went there, gravel and dirt track that wobbled around the beach. The Cannery Dock is just off the left end of this photo. Widen it 2 inches and you'd see it. Go right two inches and you'd see the bottom of Homebrew Alley.

This is how the other end of the tunnel looked where it was bored into Little Bear. Note again the identical suspenders, identical shirts, identical cords, identical sneakers, and identical silly grins. I can't tell if we were happy or were petrified of standing right there where we could fall off.

It is noteworthy that the canyon has been closed off today. Good idea. Prevent some morons from trying to float through the tunnel and kill themselves at the outlet which looks like the closeup on the next page of how Lowell Creek looked where it flowed through the outlet of the tunnel. It thundered down non-stop, creating a clear-water pool of icy cold water since the water came from melting glaciers, as well as snow melt-off in the spring. The air was filled with a smoky mist that composed of large-enough drops to put a layer of water on you every time you walked past it, regardless of the temperature or sunshine.



When I walked down the alley to the beach I had to turn right or left on Railroad Street or whatever the road was called that ran parallel to the shore around the town. If I turned left, I would be headed toward the center of town, if I continued straight ahead across the road, I would run into the rail gang's rail cars and beach, and if I turned right, I'd head for the pond at the base of the falls, and to the Cannery further on. We never went beyond the cannery because the road ended right there.

This waterfall was a short distance from the alley, and when you turned the corner, it could be heard thundering and roaring day and night. It was an imposing sight with thunder and a constant mist that filled the air. As I walked around the edge of the bay on the dirt road, I passed the little house that I pointed out above. It struck me as a sort of scary place, probably inhabited by a hermit at least and a goblin at worst. It set off by itself and I think it was this isolation that created the sense of mystery and fear associated with it. It also shows in this photo, the little house on the beach I just mentioned, just to the left -your left- of the man on the left of the photo. The falls are behind the other man and the Cannery Dock is just out of sight to the left of the image. The "house" on the beach has several small rooms and I saw smoke from the chimney so knew someone lived there but never saw them. Dad's driving a jitney - not hamming it up for some reason, public audience probably.

The waterfall created a pond which was constantly rippled with small waves created by the torrent falling. It seemed like a place that would hold secrets that were probably undiscoverable to me but I always explored things. One day on my way over to the cannery, I poked around in that pond, marveling at the wall of water cascading out of the hole in Little Bear, getting wet from the heavy mist it created. As I prowled the margin of the pond, I noticed what looked like a heavy fishing line in a place none was expected. This line ran out into the water so I looked around to see if anyone was watching me and then pulled on it. It moved and had something heavy on the end. In a minute a strong of a dozen or so fish appeared.

Whoever had caught them -probably whoever lived in that scary little house- had apparently put them in this icy cold pond for storage until they were needed. I had seen an occasional man standing in the surf casting for fish but had never seen

them catch one. The proof in this pond was undeniable. The fish were fat and discoid rather than tubular, totally different than any I had ever seen. But I didn't dare ask what kind they were lest I reveal that I had been snooping in a place I shouldn't be. To this day I don't know what they were. I imagine that they were caught by the man/men who lived in the peculiar house on the beach across the road. The pond filled with glacier run-off was probably his source of refrigeration.

Alley B - the Red Light District

As noted above, this is what we saw when we looked out the front door, a vacant field that we played in every day across the alley in front of our house, Second Avenue on the other side of the vacant lot, another vacant lot on the east side of Second Avenue, and the board fence that was erected to separate the Red Light district from the rest of the community. That was a silly thing but somehow it made sense to some people.

The row of houses on the far side of this fence were where the houses where the girls and their madams lived. The fence was an attempt apparently to corral the crime. These houses set along the next alley to the east termed "Alley B." That alley divided the block between Second Avenue and Third Avenue into two halves. The south end of the alley was aimed more or less at the docks and railroad. That was doubtlessly not accidental.

This is a closeup of the fence where we played:

Us kids obviously didn't have a clue what prostitution was so we didn't understand what this alley was really for. In fact, as far as I was concerned, that alley was no different than my own alley. Homebrew Alley and Alley B looked to be the same kind of alleys as far as I was concerned. They were narrower than the avenues and rougher. Except I knew that there was a subtle difference between them that I couldn't have articulated. I sensed it. I knew it because of things I heard, not the words perhaps but the hidden text in the form of feelings and emotions and judgments.

In the last few years as I collected memories from mom about Seward, I referred in passing the Alley B, not really expecting mom to have any response. She surprised me. The told a story that amazed me primarily because she has been so buttoned up and judgment about anything dealing with sexual topics that I can not conceive of her venturing. I had referred to walking past the entrance to that block each time I walked to Warner's Market. She laughed a funny laugh and then said something funny. She said that one day when I had come home from going to the store I gave her the groceries and announced that, "Whenever I walk past that alley, I get all tingly." Mom laughed about it but I had no memory of the experience.

The substantial role in the civic life of Seward of the citizens who lived on Alley B was well documented in . "Regulated Vice: A History of Seward's Red Light District: which was published as part of the Seward Visitor Center Compliance Project, being prepared by Annaliese Jacobs Bateman, National Park Service, Alaska Support Office, in July 2002.

When us kids went outside to play in these fields we ended up playing by the board fence. When we went to the grocery store for mom, we walked past the north end of Alley B and could see down into it. And when we walked along the south end of the Alley when we played on the beach, we could look up the alley from that end. In each instance, we saw the houses and saw an occasional adult, but we didn't discriminate between females and males. The Alley was a place with a special

reputation but we didn't understand the reputation and had no concept of gender.

Ralph Tingey's associate Ted Birkedal interviewed me in the summer of 2003 regarding my experience with Alley B. He had an understanding from another informant that kids made it a point to throw rocks at these houses when they were playing in their area. But I didn't have that experience. If anything, the sense I got about the Alley was that it was a place to be avoided because I might get in trouble if I messed with it.

We did throw rocks many times. Indeed, I have a scar today on my forehead over my left eye from stopping a rock with my head. That's not recommended. Dick and I were down on the beach throwing rocks up at kids who were walking along the walkway on the road. Both teams threw rocks, ducked and ran and repeated the series with any smallish rocks they could find on the ground, Typically, no one was hurt and we all experienced an adrenalin high from the fact that we really could be hurt.

On this particular day we were having a fight with who ever was up there on the top throwing down at us. We had no conception of the advantage of the higher location. We were just lobbing rocks back up at kids who lobbed them down. This one time I had stooped over to pick up a rock and looked up like I always had, at which instant I caught a rock in my forehead. There was an enormous 'bang' inside my head and a jarring accompanied with intense pain. I couldn't understand what had happened, why my head hurt. My head hurt but I couldn't figure out why. I hadn't walked into anything, hadn't cut myself somehow.

It wasn't until I felt and saw blood dripping from my head that I understood that I had been hit with a rock that had punctured my skin and allowed it to bleed as profusely as facial wounds always do bleed. So Dickie and I went home to Home brew Alley, leaving the other kids to disappear lest someone corner them and interrogate them about what they had done. That was the farthest from my mind because I knew I had voluntarily entered into this game and that the result was an injury that I knew might happen. How could anyone else be criticized for hurting me when I was stupid enough to do what I did?

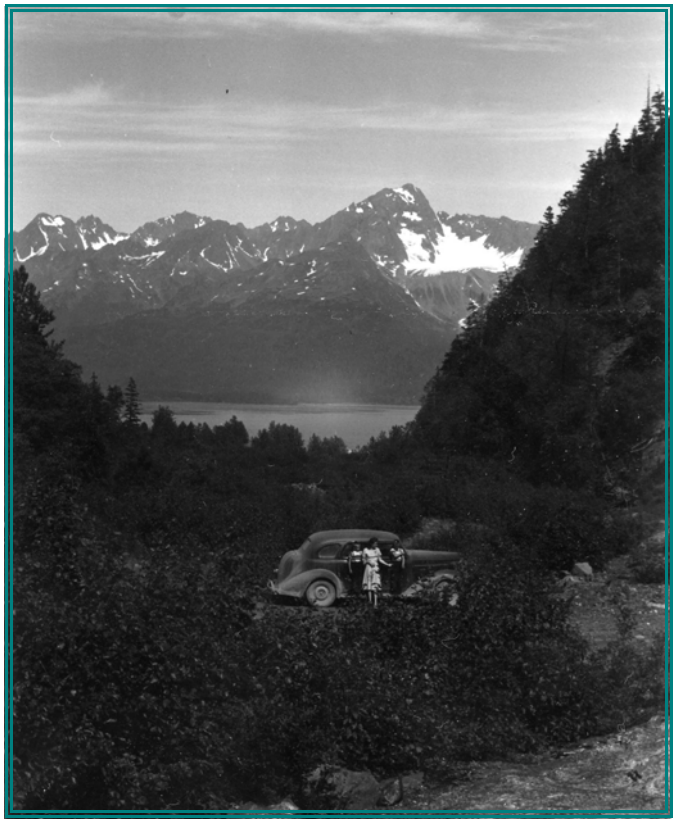
These are the kinds of rock fights that happened when we went out to play. Not once do I remember that we threw rocks at any structures ever. I don't know if that was because of strictures against it or simply because there were other more interesting things to throw rocks at. The Alaska Transfer had warehouses just past Alley B but there was no way we were going to throw rocks even at that large anonymous building. Because our value system understood that breaking

windows or doors that way was destruction of personal property, therefore expensive and subject to punishment. I suppose the latter is the reason I desisted from damaging property: I hated punishment and the best way to avoid it was to not do anything that had such penalties attached.

So none of the kids we played with threw rocks at the Alley B houses, the Snyder kids, Gary and Darlene Mattson and whoever else lived on Homebrew Alley. Swift punishment would be meted out and we had better things to do with our posterior epidermis that subject it to paddles.

4-Door Nash

Within the first year on Homebrew Alley, mom and dad scraped together enough money to buy an old car. I don't know its age but remember three things about this old timer. The first is that the back door opened from the front side, not the back like car doors today. It opened from the center post just like the front door did. The second feature was the fact that the wing window on the passenger's side was shattered. Rather than purchase a replacement window, dad used a vile smelling cement to hold the pieces together. It was a synthetic, rubber-like substance that was opaque so it looked sort of weird but that didn't bother us in the least. I was simply aware that it was different than the rest of the windows. The third feature was the fact that the front fender on the passenger's side was bent from having hit something.



The photo on the right of mom, Dick, me and the Nash with Mt. Alice in the background was taken at the diversion dam up in Lowell Canyon where the creek had been diverted into the tunnel through Little Bear Mountain emptying down just below the bottom end of Homebrew Alley. The other photo was taken in front of our second house, 307 Second Avenue. In that photo, you can see the front-opening back door, the crumpled front fender but not the shattered wing window.

Here are excerpts from those two photos enlarged to give you a better view of the car itself. It was a tough old thing. Washing a car? I never heard of such a thing. I guess after we got the 1953 Chevy it sounded like something to do but to us little kids the concept of washing a car was just a degree less stupid that the idea of washing our own bodies!

The bottom photo is taken in front of our house on Second Avenue. Dave Fleming's house is on the right side.

Irish Lord and Bear River

It was raining hard this day, but we were so excited we couldn't stand to wait another day so when mom said, "Let's go!" we went. We hadn't been in Seward very long and Dad had checked the car our to make sure it was running OK for us to take a trip out of town about 8 miles. We were going fishing. The first time in Alaska. Mom had been out to the Bear Lake Saw Mill in 1941 so knew the way. Bear Lake emptied

into Resurrection Bay through a river imaginatively named Bear River.

It was an exciting event. Dick and I argued about who got to sit in the front and finally ended up where mom said we'd sit. We loaded fishing line, hooks, sinkers and salmon eggs into the trunk of the old care. Notice what missing: no poles. No fishing poles. Standard procedure for us in those days was to make out own poles after we arrived at the fishing spot. We'd never fished with salmon eggs before and were amazed at how large they were and at the idea itself. We only used worms to fish in Utah, although older cousins used frogs to fish for catfish on the Greenriver. But if people used salmon eggs there, we'd use them too. I don't think I had even seen fish eggs that size before.

We turned of the main drag at about Mile 6 on the side road that headed out to the sawmill on Bear Lake. We were just looking for a place to park. There was no specific fishing place in mind. The road was narrow and twisty so parking was more difficult that I had expected. I was in agony to get on the river so was impatient with the slow drive and the hunt for a safe place to park. The road wasn't much wider than the car so we had to find a turnoff where the car would be safe.

We finally found a good place in the dense alder trees that formed a canopy over everything, including the river. We got out of the car lifted the trunk lid and took out our fishing gear. Mom was careful to be sure we had everything we needed and then took us down to the river which was not very wide which didn't bother me. Some of the streams we fished in Vernal were irrigation canals so size wasn't an issue.

She had to make fishing poles for us out of alder branches. We couldn't afford actual fishing poles. The delay while she hunted for suitable sticks and prepared them was unbearable. I looked at the running water through the rain, sure that the fish I was meant to catch were getting away. But there was nothing to do but wait. To say anything was to get a verbal reprimand. She wouldn't let one of us start fishing until she finally got both poles ready. Equality and sameness were her ruling words where us kids were concerned. I never understood how much she was being fair and how much she was sort of teasing or even punishing us by making us wait like this. In any event, she finally got three poles prepared with 8 feet or so of line, a hook and sinker and handed one to each of us and took her own.

She led us down to the river and baited our hooks with salmon eggs. We were standing in low shrubs and beneath the alder canopy so we couldn't swing our lines well. Naturally, we snagged them again and again and she had to come and unhook them because we were too little. I was 9 and Dick was 8 and we were too small to

get to the places we snagged the hooks up over our heads in the rainy leaves and sticks.

We finally got our baited hooks in the river and anxiously waited for a bite. Sure enough, we got one and jerked the pole. But the hook was empty and ended up stuck up in a tree again. This continued for some time and I am sure mom was exasperated with the whole thing because she was a dedicated fisherman.

Finally one of us caught a fish that was pulled out onto the rocky bank to be examined. But glory be, it wasn't a trout, it wasn't a sucker, it wasn't a catfish, it was a bizarre thing called and "Irish Lord." The name was a weird as the fish that we had never seen nor heard about. The one thing that was familiar about the thing was the spines. We knew spines from cat fish so understood the risk of painful pokes. But in terms of keeping and eating the thing, it was out of the question. And it kept drizzling, the sky leaden grey.

Mom finally managed to land several small dolly varden trout that we could take home. I wasn't then, nor am I now, an expert in trouts. I can scarcely tell the difference between them but when mom said, 'This was a dolly varden trout." I believed her. This image from British Columbia shows a small dolly varden that is probably about 6 inches long, the size mom caught.

Figure 45
http://www.zoology.ubc.ca/~keeley/dolly.htm

It was thrilling to see these fish finally after the struggle in the rain and the willows and the need to make our own poles and so on. We loaded them back into the trunk with the small amount of gear and headed home. The ride back was as bumpy as going out and the rain continued. Over the next five years we lived in rain and clouds and wetness and coldness. But it was just how it was. We didn't think, "Ah, this is depressing." Not at all. It simply was how things were.

When dad got home from the docks we triumphantly showed him the trout

that "we" had caught, i.e. mom had caught. He was pleased and went about doing his dad thing but we weren't put off because we were used to his inability to spend much time with us. We were grateful for any time and attention he gave us and the short time he looked at the fish and made his comment was sufficient for our needs. At least that's how we saw the universe in those young tender days.

Babysitting

The neighbors who lived in the house just north of us on Home Brew Alley were from the south. Their accents were pronounced but we understood them fine. They had not been married many years and had a brand new baby. The man worked on the docks like dad, like most men did who weren't in business of some sort. The wife was getting cabin fever sitting at home all day with the baby so the man decided to take her to dinner but he needed to find a baby sitter. So he approached mom about getting me to do that.

I'm not sure of the conversation they had but it must have gone something like this. This was the first paying job of my entire life. The first. So the man probably said something like, "Your son looks old enough to sit in the house with the baby for a couple of hours so I can take my wife to dinner. She'll make sure the baby is fed and changed and asleep and he can just sit in case the baby wakes up.". Reply was that, Yes, he's old enough to do that, how much are you going to pay? Plus, if he has any trouble, he's right next door so can get me if he needs to." The man paid 25 cents an hour, an astronomical figure. I have no idea whether that was the going rate for baby sitting in those days or whether the man was just being generous. Whatever, I was in a state of shock. It was my first "job". When he and his wife came home, they had been gone for 2 hours so I received two quarters, plus something they called a "tip". That's a word that meant "to push something over" and I didn't see how it meant anything here. I felt like I shouldn't take it but they insisted so I took it anyway marveling that they would pay me more than they said and at my good fortune. Sixty whole cents! Man alive, that was 12 candy bars or two movies and 2 candy bars and so on. I certainly made my way to the five and dime as soon as I could to get rid of that money that was burning a hole in my pocket.

Multileg Starfish

The only star fish I had been introduced to were the standard 5-legged versions. They washed up on the beach at odd times, but particularly after severe winter storms. When there had been one of the bad storms, we couldn't wait to be allowed to go back down to the beach. It's interesting to recall that we had to be allowed to go down after a storm because we generally were allowed to go when we wanted. There must have been some anxiety about us getting hit by large rogue waves that kept us at home.

Figure 46http://www.seanet.com/~fowler/attu/attu_91.jpg

In any event, we were finally allowed to go down on this particular day. We started by the grounded barge by the railroad gang and worked our way slowly toward the City Dock. There was no method to our searching. We just wandered walking over to whatever thing caught our attention next. Most of the stuff we checked out was just junk or garbage but every so often we would run across something that excited us. On this date, down near the waves we ran across an enormous starfish like no other we had ever seen.

This starfish was probably 10-12 inches across and was a dark violetish color. We stopped to look at it. What a thing! We have never seen a starfish with more than 5 legs and here was one that must have had a dozen legs. We weren't sure what it meant, was it actually a star fish or was it some other sort of character that looked like one, except with a lot of legs. In any event, we picked this weird thing up and noted that it felt pebbly and stiff like a starfish.

We walked it home and waited for dad to come home. We excitedly announced that we had a surprise for him. We had put the thing in the bath tub and covered it with water in the hope of keeping it alive. We drug him into the bathroom to show him the miraculous find. He squatted down and examined it slowly. Every time he saw something new, he would pay serious attention to it. His example took and my whole life is devoted to learning. The best way to snare my attention is to provide me something new and I will be hooked. That's how he was. In the end we didn't save the thing because we had already had experience with trying unsuccessfully to dry them out but we didn't really want to let it go.

Grape Nuts Flakes

Most of our favorite breakfast cereals were manufactured by Kellog Company, but there were individual cereals from other companies that we liked. One of them was Grape Nuts Flakes. I don't know where the name "grape nuts" came from but it was suggestive and disappointing at the same time. In any event, Post Cereal Co. manufactured this cereal that we liked about as much as we liked Wheaties. Mom bought the stuff by the carton.

As was the case for all breakfast cereal manufacturers of the era, they each offered extravagant toys. The idea naturally was to persuade kids that they

Figure 47http://theimaginaryworld.com/newsad05.jpg

needed a particular toy so that the little kids would persuade mom that she would prefer to buy the particular brand that just happened to have the desired toy inside of it.

This toy had a set of gimmicks to set it apart from others. For example, the item was actually in the box. No need to mail anything off, no need to spend additional money - great point to hit mom with. And 12 different versions of these little flip dealies made a set, the manufacturer's hope being that us little kids were plead and whine with mom until she threw her hands up in the air and bought a hundred boxes just to shut us up. The truth is that there was actually some truth to that view of things though the mothers of the world would have denied it.

Gary & Darlene

About three houses down from our house there was a large two story building that was more than a single family dwelling. The second floor was occupied by two families and it seems like the first floor had a garage or storage area. On the north end of this building lived the Mattson family. The dad took a powder years ago so Mrs. Mattson was the breadwinner, which explains why she could only afford that small apartment. Which also explains why we, too, lived on the Alley.

There were two kids our ages, Darlene who was my age and Gary who was Dick's age. They were European Heinz 57 Varieties like we were and had to take care of themselves during the days. I don't know where the mom worked, just that she was gone much of the time during the day. Darlene and Gary would visit us in our house but for some reason mom didn't care for them and made them -and me- feel uncomfortable. As a result we'd all gravitate out the door to play with Woody, his brother, Butch and King, or go down to the beach.

Darlene was a largish girl, heavier than I was. She always wore a scarf tied under her chin like a Russian, as most girls did. Gary was a unremarkable kid wearing a knit cap and generic clothes. Mom would not allow us to go to the Mattson apartment if the mom wasn't home. I never understood why because I had no interest in getting into trouble, but mom didn't know that. But on at least one occasion, I did go up to the apartment with Gary and Darlene, because Darlene promised to make me a special kind of sandwich I had never heard of. Baloney, jam, jelly, peanut butter, etc. were the kinds I was used to but she had a great idea.

She took two slices of bakery bread -mom was still making her own bread which was heavy and hard- and laid them on the counter. She took the jar of Miracle Whip and spread it heavily on the other piece of bread. So far, not too unusual, but then she applied the coup de grace. She got the sugar bowl down and liberally sprinkled sugar on the lettuce leaf, put the Miracle Whip-coated side on it, and handed it to me. Delicious, absolutely delicious. What a great sandwich.

The Docks

Seward had a total of 6 docks that started just south of the town and were spaced around the town, ending with the Small Boat Harbor. A seventh dock, the Barge Dock, was constructed while I lived there:

1. **Cannery Dock, the southernmost of them all -**
   (Out of operation - just a place to fish)
2. **City Dock was closest to Homebrew Alley -**
   (7/24 commercial operations)
3. **Standard Oil Dock was just north of City Dock -**
   (7/24 commercial operations)
4. **Army Dock was just north of the Standard Oil Dock -**
   (7/24 commercial operations)
5. **San Juan Dock was north of Standard Oil -**
   (Limited commercial fishing operations - buy halibut there)
6. **Small Boat Harbor - the northmost on that side of the bay.**
   (7/24 operations for private boats only)
7. **Barge Dock which was across the bay**
   (7/24 commercial operations after it was constructed 1954)

Every single one was destroyed in the tsunami generated by the Easter Day Earthquake in 1964. But while I lived there, the commercial docks - 2, 3, 4 and 7 - along with the Alaska Railroad, were the life blood of Seward. When you consider that the population of this town was around 2,000, and that the town was 128 miles from Anchorage, you begin to wonder why Seward has so many docks. The answer involves the strategic location of Seward in terms on shipping and in terms of the Alaska Railroad.

The only one of these docks that didn't affect my life was San Juan. It was a fish and shrimp packing plant so didn't handle regular shipping like the others did. The Cannery Dock is where if fished and the Small Boat Harbor is where we moored our canoe, and fished. I'll tell you about each in the same order right now to orient you to them because I refer to all of them at various points. Our livelihood and our entertainment centered on the ocean, on these various

The panorama of Seward and the head of the bay which is on the next page will be referred to many times. Please mark it so you can return easily to it. I want you to fix this image in your mind because it shows you, in a single image, 90 percent of the places I will talk about again and again.

In the center of the panorama you can see Dick and me standing with our arms outstretched on top of a rock pile high up on Big Bear Mountain on a day trip we took with dad while we lived at Homebrew Alley. Behind us you see the entire town of Seward. One the upper left end of town you see two roads entering town

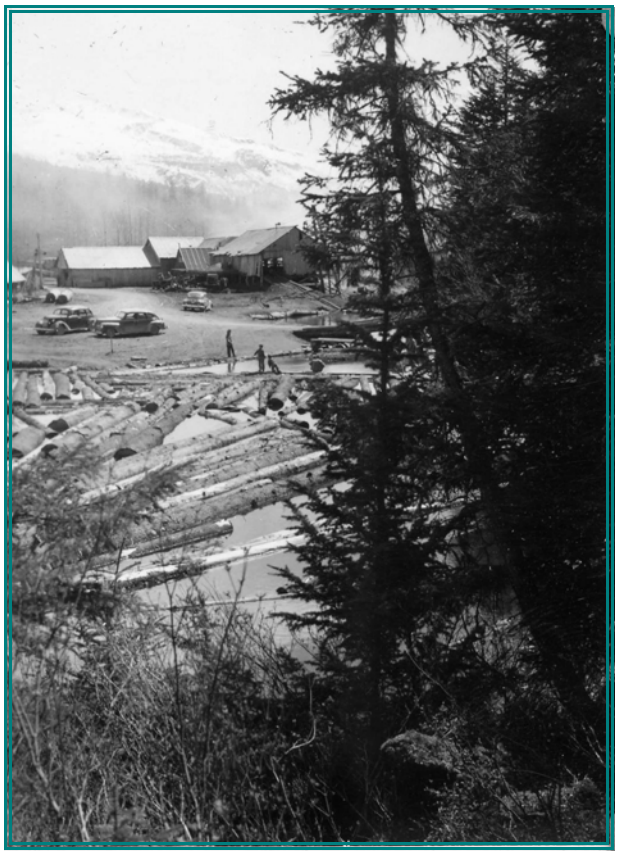
and there were few habitations out that way. I should point out that the road for vehicles is the 'new" road, the one that was built after we moved there. This new highway looks like a genuine highway because it is wide and straight. All of the curves had been removed and the right-of-way had been cleared. It wasn't that way in 1951.

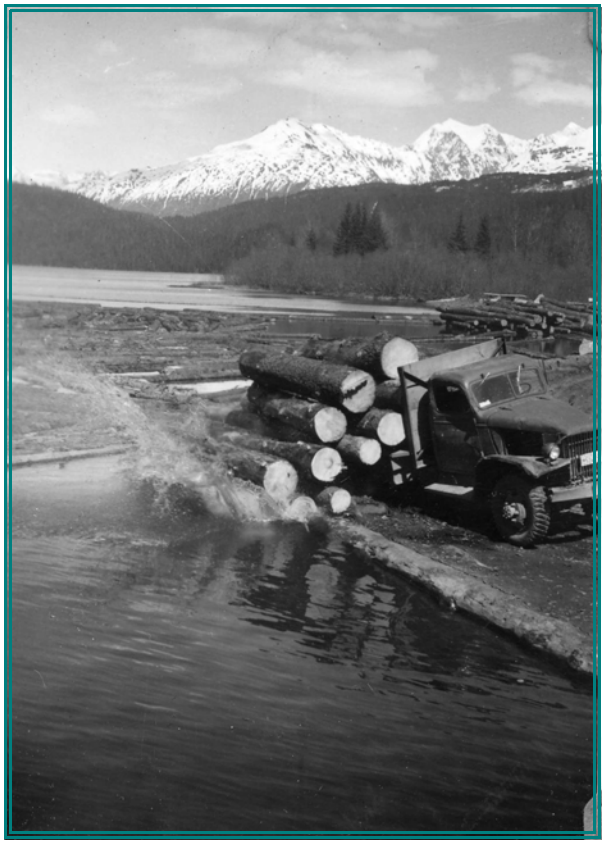
Today the area on the left of the panorama that is basically vacant is non-stop houses for about as far as you can see along that road but back then it was wilderness. The heavier gray road, on the right, is the train track, the other lighter one is the road. You can see five of the docks. Starting from the bottom (south) and moving up (north) they are in the same order as listed above: City Dock, Standard Oil, Army Dock, San Juan and Small Boat Harbor. The Cannery Dock is even further to the south outside of this image, and the Barge Dock built to handle munitions during the Korean War hadn't been built across the bay when this photo was taken.

Bear Lake

I'm going to digress for a moment because at the very top of the panorama -that's how I'll refer to it- you see a small round lake. That is Bear Lake, about 8 miles outside of town along the roads, although it was closer as the crow flies. There was a sawmill on it when mom and dad were there in 1941, with mom there.

It was still there when we lived there in 1951 as you see in the left photo





here. Our old car is the one on the left. This is the same sawmill from a different angle. We're the kids standing out on the logs while mom's standing on the shore watching us. Note the freedom we had to do stupid things. If one of those logs had turned, as they do, two little boys would have taken a cold bath at the least, been badly hurt in the middle, or drowned at the worst. Mom was by us.

That's one of the oddest things about those parents. They were rigid and strict and mean about most values, yet they gave us enormous freedom in the physical world up there in Seward for which I thank them. I developed a sense of self-reliance as a result.

Logging was done all around the area so this small saw mill was supplied with prime trees. Army Surplus trucks were used to haul the logs to the lake where they were dumped for storage and handling.

Going back to the panorama of Seward, you see the mud flats along the top of the photo that were exposed twice a day at low tide. In this photo, the tide is a moderate low, and you can see how much territory was exposed. It's a long way out from the beach and the high tide mark. When the tide was ultra low, the expanse of mud doubled. The interesting thing is that this is precisely the area where we trolled successfully for salmon when the tide was in which means it was something like 6 to 10 feet of water. The salmon congregated at head of the bay in the mouth of the three rivers you see along the head of the bay before some signal told them to "go". While they were in this location, they were susceptible to the right lures which we had.

Now back to the docks. I'll give you a few photos of these places to make them familiar and let you see them as I saw them as a little kid.

Cannery Dock

It turns out that there actually are no good photos in mom's and dad's collection of the Cannery Dock, the Army Dock or San Juan. I'll use photos that focused on other things that also showed these docks to give you a sense of their location and construction so you'll have a ground-level perspective. These three docks that don't show up in photos as the central topic were obviously of little interest to dad. I know that we seldom went to any of them.

This is a great photo for two reasons: first, it is a shot of the SS Mt. McKinley moored at the City Dock facing north-east. This is the steamship that dad took to Seward from Seattle in 1940. Second, if you look to the left edge of the slide at the edge of the water, you can see about half of the Cannery Dock. It was not far from the City Dock.

The Cannery Dock was just that, a dock with facilities for receiving, preparing, freezing or steaming fish, clams, crabs or shrimp. It saw its heyday in the 1920's and '30's and was basically vacant when mom and dad were there in 1941. There were no operations at all when I was there. The dock was empty and the decks under the buildings were so rotted that mom and dad forbade us from going inside them. So we didn't. But for reasons I don't understand, the decks around the buildings that were exposed to the elements were still sound so we could walk on them to fish, which we did a lot when we lived in Homebrew Alley.

To place things again, note in the above photo that if you run a straight line parallel to the dock, it will run into Little Bear Mountain in the background. That point is about where Homebrew Alley comes out. Our house about 5-6 houses up

the alley from that junction, sitting on the mountain-side of the alley. You can see that these places are all close to each other. Seward is really a tiny town.

Here's the great shot I used in Vol. 5 looking that was taken on the Cannery Dock, looking back to the City Dock where the previous photo was taken. The City Dock is obscured by the freighter moored to be unloaded. Dad was trying to get used to being anchored by marriage which mom said was very difficult for him. It was. To the left of dad's head on the edge of the photo is the entrance to Homebrew Alley so you see how close it was to the Cannery.

Mary Barry has another excellent photo to add here to supplement dad's photos:

The image has the graininess created by copying lithographic images but it gives you a better sense of the location of the Cannery Dock than any other I have.

This is the dock were Dick and I fished many times, having variable luck, but we liked to go there to fish. In this image, the tide is way out so the dock is almost out of the water, but when the tide was in, it rose almost to the top of the rocks to the left side of the image. We'd hunt through the rocks on this side of the dock and would find "fool's gold". Dad said it was called iron pyrite but it was close enough to gold to make me happy. We'd pry some crystals out and take them with us.

Looking just to the right side of the dock you see a whitish streak. I don't know the age of Mary's photo but that streak appears to be the waterfall where Lowell Creek emptied out of the tunnel through Little Bear. Right at the bottom of the falls is a black square that is the small, weird house. Looking to the right of the falls, you see Little Bear Mountain angling down. Right where it intersects the flat is where Homebrew Alley was. A long low building is nestled against the slope and to the right of that low building is an opening that is Homebrew Alley. This is how it looked when we played on the dock and looked back toward home. When we came out of the alley and turned to our right, we walked past the water fall, that bizarre little house on a rough dirt road that ended at the cannery dock. and around that part of the bay to get to the cannery dock.

You can also see the west access to the City -not Cannery- Dock on the right edge of this photo. From that access to the Cannery Dock is the stretch of beach where we spent many hours playing and beach-combing.

Just to the right of the mouth of Homebrew but in the water there is a small boat siting lengthways with the photo. I mention that to give you a landmark to find the barge that had apparently run aground on the beach and was left there. You see it to the right of this small boat, about halfway between that boat and the City Dock access on the right edge of the photo. We played on that barge many times. The railroad gang that was housed in the railcars stored on the spur used that barge for handling crab traps and boiling crabs.

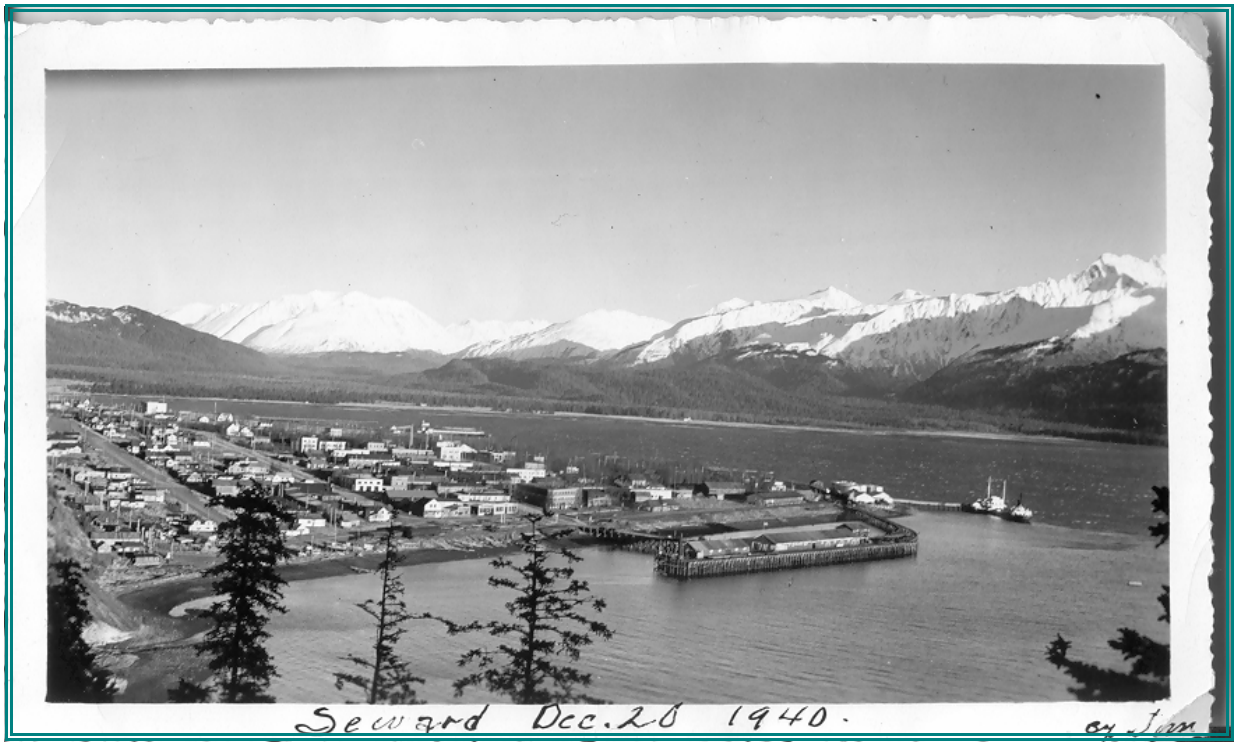
Later I found an excellent image of this part of the beach which dad took in 1941:

The Cannery Dock is on the left edge of the photo, the scary little house which has a smoke stream rising from its chimney is to the left of the light pole in the foreground and the falls are to the right of the same pole. If you could see

Homebrew Alley, it would be about a quarter inch beyond the right edge of this photo. We'd come down the alley in this direction and then turn right to follow this dirt road past the falls and pond, past the scary little house and on around to the Cannery Dock. When we passed the pond at the bottom of the falls we always walked through a shower of heavy mist. It was not a congenial walk, unless the sun was shining. That made anything OK.

The City Dock

Going back to the panorama of Seward from up on Big Bear, the bottom-most dock is the City Dock. Note in that photo that the dock has two accesses for vehicles and pedestrians. The train access is much sturdier and runs into the top -north- end of the dock. Here's another photo that I include again because it's a good illustration of the City Dock from Big Bear above the Cannery



Dock. The only problem with this shot is that the dock had an extension built onto it later so it extended to the left a fair distance. Otherwise it is an accurate representation of the City Dock.

In this photo you can see the falls on the bottom left, just to the right of the left-most pine tree. You can see how a small pond was created and the flow of water has disrupted the beach at that point.

In this photo, you can see the houses on the left side of Homebrew Alley, then the alley, and then the row of houses on the right side of the alley. on the very left edge, right along the edge of the mountains, is Homebrew Alley. Our house which I can pick out is about the 5th or 6th house on the left side of the alley, nestled in the foot of the mountain. The first long narrow whitish building you see

on the right side of the alley was across the street and just above our place. It was on the north side of the vacant lot that we ruled.

Standard Oil Dock

The Standard Oil Dock, next to the City Dock, was the rail head for petroleum products for the interior, just as the City Dock and Army Dock handled all other goods for the interior. The size of the Standard Oil Dock gives you some sense of the size of the population for the state: not much. That little terminal handled all of the fuels for all populations, including the aviation fuels for the air force bases, the diesel fuels for the army docks and so on. This image gives you a closer view of the dock, a view that's familiar because we beach combed right up to its access, though we were never allowed onto the dock:

That's Mt. Alice in the background, towering over everything. We'd wander up the beach right to the piles but no further. We didn't beach comb anywhere really except for the beach by the City Dock. I don't know why. Probably because there was a rule that forbade us from going further, as in a rule from mom or dad, though I'm not sure why that section of beach was much different than that running along the City Dock. When no tanker was tied up to the dock, it was a pretty unimpressive place:

M

Mt. Alice just dominates the whole region.

The Army Dock

Return to the panorama of Seward and you get a view of where the Army Dock set in relationship to the other docks. Here's a photo taken up on Marathon that gives a closer perspective of the configuration of the Army Dock there in the center of the image:

We're standing on the bench on Marathon on our way to the top. You can see Fourth of July creek across the bay in the top right corner. Note that there is nothing north of Fourth of July Creek which means that this photo was taken before the Barge Dock had been constructed over there. I'm the kid second from the left, grinning into the sun.

The army dock resembled the City Dock in general, though it was more heavily constructed because it handled war materiel, including tanks and vehicles of various kinds. I never went on the Army Dock because it was off limits in a different way than the City dock. The City Dock was also off limits but it was somehow more friendly feeling. The Army Dock was dark and remote and not a place I would have gone even if I'd been allowed to.

Dad worked the Army Dock when assigned and took a few photos that I'll insert here:

Figure 60 View of ship's hold and shipside crew

Figure 61 Hank Pallage, R. Doyle and O. Gilbert

I suspect that this was dad's favorite photo of the Army Dock. He captioned it, "Working on the Docks".

Figure 63 Unloading Flat car from ship - see size of men

The ship in the bay appears to be anchored, something I don't remember. I say it appears to be anchored because there is no bow-wake which would have been created even at low speeds - plus dad wouldn't have been able to set this photo up as carefully as he did. He's sitting on a 'jitney'.

I don't remember whether or not the Army Dock the entrances were guarded

but in my mind they were off limits. In my mind there was an anchor fence affair and gates that controlled access to the docks. That may be more of a mental image, however, spawned by the term "Army." The Korean War -"conflict" is the word that the media and politicians used but to me it was a war- started about 1950-51 which is the same time we moved to Seward. It affected the economy of the town for most of the time I was there.

I feel the need to sort of digress here and preach and teach a little bit. I hope it doesn't bore you because this stuff is helpful, and even necessary for your comprehension of what political forces existed at various times in my life. Those forces shaped the atmosphere of the era, molded the economy in general, and affected daily life to varying degrees and in different ways. I was always aware that there was a war going on and loved military things. Indeed, us boys coveted the insignia of the military. Boys loved to own and wear the ribbons and medals of the military. Since I had so little money, I had none to wear but I coveted them nonetheless. Kids would go down to Andy's Army and Navy Surplus store and pick through the campaign ribbons and buy one now and then and I dearly wanted one of my own. But back to the history:

Korean War History

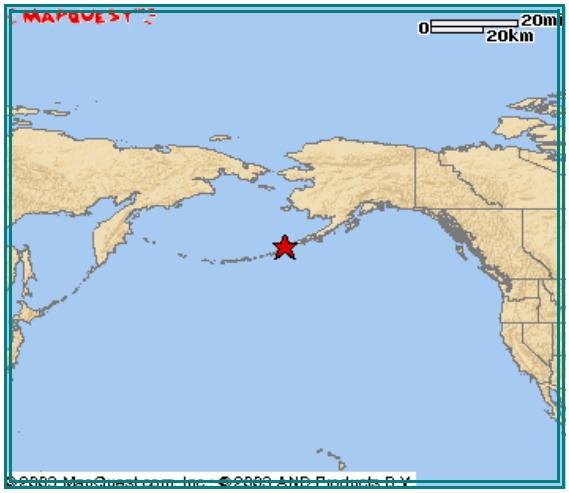
In this way, Seward was no different than Vernal: both economies were on war-footings. It's easy to overlook this fact unless it is brought clearly into focus for you. But Seward was practically an extension of the defense department when I lived there. My daily life was colored with military things, the news, dad's work on the docks, the army hats and insignia we admired and coveted, and so on.

My experience of the world around me in Seward parallels some of my earliest memories, laid out on Volume 7 Vernal, of war and government actions related thereto. The big difference between Vernal and Seward was that the Great Depression was attenuated to such an extent as to not encroach on my awareness. Dad made good money on the docks, as much as $10.00 an hour depending on the shift and dock.

Seward's entire economy was based on shipping, and shipping was driven to a substantial degree in those days by the Korean War - I call it a 'war', not a 'conflict' which is what the government technically termed it. I suppose there is a valid

diplomatic reason to make that distinction because there was no presidential or congressional "declaration of war", but to a little kid's mind that distinction was silly. We were sending men and materiel there in large quantities, there was some shooting, some dying, and there was a constant threat to Alaska of invasion, so I didn't think of the 'conflict' in any other terms than good ol' bloody, immoral, 'war.'

We need to get a fix on where this "Korea" because it illustrates the strategic importance of Alaska to the Korean war. Here's a schematic map from Mapquest that shows the key elements: Alaska is the large body of land on the upper right. The vertical black line is the border between Alaska and Canada so you see that Alaska is not part of the contiguous "Lower 48".



The Aleutian Chain of Alaska consisting of islands extends in an arc from the bottom part of Alaska to the south east and then east. The red star in the middle of the Aleutian Chain is Dutch Harbor, one of the places that was actually BOMBED by the Japanese during WW II. (Don't give the Japanese too much slack about their role in WW II. They continued to raise hell for us after Pearl Harbor and nearly succeeded in causing trouble on the west coast.)

Today there are hardly any memories of the incursions of Japanese spys trying the harbors in the west coast. But they were there trying. For that reason the Tillamook Oregon blimp hangars were constructed, where reconnaissance balloons were moored, maintained and released along the west coast. That wasn't just a foolish old soldier's favorite illusion. There were also Japanese balloons carrying bombs that appeared in a few place. The Japanese were there and there was reason to watch for them in case they tried another sneak-attack on continental US. In the map above you can see Washington, Oregon, California, Idaho, and Nevada in this map- watching for Japanese ships and subs and some were actually sighted but that's another story for another day -but one I probably won't have time to tell.

The Aleutian Chain nearly joins Siberia at the Kamchatka peninsula. There is a chain of islands extending from that peninsula down to Japan and Korea is barely visible to the west of Japan in this map. So there was basically a stair case of

islands leading to the US. It was highly unlikely that Korea itself would have even undertaken direct action against the US but the Cold War had just started in earnest so it wasn't clear who was who or who would help who. Touching Siberia, the Russian Bear, that may well have thrown in with the North Koreans at the time, posed a graver threat that did Korea. The possibility, as remote as it was, that action against Alaska might occur gave politicians spine in this matter and they chose to reinforce Alaska defenses. To give you a sense of what the US and Alaska and the world was thinking in those days here's a page with a photo and a quote from the governmental publication "Prologue", summer of 2002:

"An artillery officer directs UN troops as they drop white phosphorous on a Communist-held post in February 1951. (NARA, 111-SC-358293)"

"Early accounts of the Korean War almost without exception focused on events beginning with the North Korean invasion of South Korea. This was because few people doubted that the Soviet Union had ordered the attack as part of its plan for global conquest. President Harry S. Truman provided support for this assumption just two days after the start of hostilities. On June 27, 1950, he told the American people that North Korea's attack on South Korea showed the world that "communism has passed beyond the use of subversion to conquer independent nations and will now use armed invasion and war."3 This assessment reflected Truman's firm belief that North Korea was a puppet of the Soviet Union and Kim Il Sung was acting on instructions from Moscow. In his memoirs, Truman equated Joseph Stalin's actions with Adolf Hitler's in the 1930s, arguing that military intervention to defend the Republic of Korea (ROK) was vital because appeasement had not prevented but ensured the outbreak of World War II.4 Top administration officials, as well as the general public, fully shared these assumptions. This traditional interpretation provided the analytical foundation for early accounts of the war,

perpetuating the most important myth of the Korean conflict.5"
<http://www.archives.gov/publications/prologue/summer_2002_korean_myths_1.html>

Note the date on the caption for the photo. "1951". What happened in 1951? I moved to Seward is what happened in 1951, thank you very much.

And note that Kim Il Sung is mentioned above. This man is the father of the mad-hatter running Korea today.

This quote gives you a sense of the atmosphere that percolated down to me, a little kid. Kids aren't dumb. As you personally know, they pick up vibrations that adults may even attempt to conceal, but I understood that there was a risk over there in that place called Korea, and that because of the risk, my country was willing to do what it could to help, and was preparing for war if necessary. No kidding. That's exactly how I viewed the situation, and that's how I view it today.

I am not like young people today who are coached by the cynical media and morally bankrupt individuals, the NEA and left-wingers to distrust government and to deride all things with moral values. I believe in government and I believe that it is necessary for the well-being of any society. Ours is sure a sloppy mess, but it's ours and it is the best there is. I've lived in a communistic state (Finland) for 2 and a half years and under a military dictatorship (Brasil) for 2 years so I have some experience with what I'm saying here. We have the longest living democracy in the history of the world and we reap the benefits of that fact every moment of our lives. And it's this way because at key moments, men and women have had the moral courage to take stances in favor of wars which are immoral by nature, but necessary to preserve democracy. Blood is truly the price of freedom and anyone that doesn't believe that hasn't considered the issue objectively.

Anyway, a point I will make now is that the Armistice for World War II was declared in late 1945 about the time dad returned from Pearl harbor so that war was officially over. But wars aren't easily started or turned off. They require slow buildups in industry, training, shipping, storage and so on, like the slow build-up of speed of a large ocean liner that takes 8-10 hours to get up to speed. Similarly, wars don't end quickly. True, the actual shooting can be stopped with a single order, but once the shooting stops, the flow of material and industry winds down as slowly as it built up. The winding-down of WW II in Seward was about over when I moved there in 1951 and was then replaced by the build-up of the Korean War.

Go back to the map above: it shows that the Aleutian Chain was basically a series of stepping stones from Asia to mainland Alaska. That made Alaska

strategically important. The last thing that the US wanted was for part of its territory to be occupied by any foreign power. As a result, all of the military bases in Alaska -and I don't know how many there were but I remember Fort Elmendorf, Fort Richardson, something like Big Delta in the interior and another near Fairbanks, became critical to war plans.

Here's a photo that gives you a dramatic idea of just how much military activity was going on out on the end of the Aleutian chain. 6,000 Japanese were holed up at a place called Kiska. They were so deeply entrenched that the US military had to built up substantial forces before even daring to take them on. The staging area was at a place called Adak. And Adak is NOT Dutch Harbor. The Japanese were very busy on our territory. This photo shows SOME of the navy ships that were brought in for the invasion of Kiska. You can see that there was substantial military activity out there. In 1951 the memories were strong of those events which were supplied with men out of Ft. Raymond, there in Seward. Remember: this is in US TERRITORY that was occupied by JAPANESE, not somewhere out there in the Pacific.

The result was that as the various bases were beefed up in the interior of Alaska to support US war plans, including preparing for possible invasion, the traffic through Seward increased proportionately. That was a greater concern to me than the atomic bomb that became so famous later. I was worried that the "Red Horde" or the "yellow horde" might move up the Aleutian Chain and occupy Alaska and Seward. I didn't lose sleep over it, but I was well aware of the strategic importance of Alaska and the risk it was exposed to. So it made a great deal of sense to me to arm the bases to the teeth, just to create a formidable threat. The

best offense is a good defense was as true then as it is today.

Back to the Army Dock - it didn't exist when mom and dad went up in 1941, and it was built for purely military reasons, hence the name. The City Dock was sufficiently large to handle the freighting and shipping needs of the civilians. The Army Dock must have been built during the World War II years when the defense industry basically occupied Seward. Mary Berry reports that at the height of the build-up of Fort Raymond, up to 3,000 additional people were moved into Seward. That is an indication of the volume of activity in Seward and in the interior. Any activity requires "stuff" to work with and all of that stuff passed through Seward.

There were other deep water ports in Alaska to service the military. Everything -everything-was funneled through Seward. Everything. Valdez and Cordova to the east were deep water ports as well, but they didn't have the rail head. The only port that competed with Seward was Whittier. It had the potential to assume the role of Seward so did pose a threat for a variety of reasons, all of them political. If certain politicians had had their way, Seward would have lost its pivotal position in shipping. As it was, however, with the Alaska Railhead in Seward, it retained primacy and serviced the interior. Recall that in those days there was no cross country shipping to Alaska through Canada, because the AlCan highway was just being build, and there was no commercial airfreight carriers. Everything into Alaska was shipped up, and all shipments went through Seward. So Seward with its tiny population played an enormous role in the life of the territory.

Barge Dock

I'm going to take this dock out of physical order because it fits perfectly into this discussion of the Korean War.

The Barge Dock is the most tangible proof of the enormous amount of Korean-war related shipping in Seward. In 1951, the Army dock handled all military hardware as noted above. This included munitions. Well, it turned out that the quantities of those explosives grew to such an extent that a concern developed on the part of the local gentry, politicians, officials and any else who was paying attention, that the whole damn town just might be flattened one night when some guy fell asleep on the sling and let a pallet of tender bombs fall into the hold, igniting the whole magazine, the ship, the dock and about half of the town. The concern was so real that someone that I didn't know -I didn't even think about this

part- poneyed up the money, bought a chunk of land on the OPPOSITE side of the bay, extended the Old Nash Road, and built a brand spanking new dock called the Barge Dock for the primary purpose of handling those munitions. That's pretty persuasive, isn't it. The Korean War was real, it affected our lives and livelihood, and had a memorial erected to it - sort of like WW II did.

At the same time that the Barge dock came into existence, the two stevedore unions decided to flex their muscles and get a piece of the action. They went collectively to the powers that be, cleared their collective throats, and allowed as how the families of these poor men who had to drive clear around the bay worried all night about the safety of their husbands, dads and boyfriends, etc. So could the power that be, with all due respect, find it in their hearts to assuage this anxiety by coughing up another buck or so an hour as Hazard Pay whenever the poor stiffs were assigned to work clear over there on that high-risk dock? The logic was iron clad and impenetrable. The unions prevailed, the deal was done, and my dad earned enormous wages when he worked the Barge Dock, particularly when he worked nights and got the night premium as well. Things weren't going too bad.

This is an excellent view of a load of ammo (ammunition) boxes that are being piled on the ship's deck as they are lifted up out of the hold.

It doesn't take any imagination to see what could happen if something caused just one of the small crates to drop and explode in the middle of more. That's exactly why the powers that be prudently built this Barge Dock across the bay. It was a pain to have to use it, it was expensive and inconvenient, but the town of Seward wouldn't go up one fine night. Might make a mess over there but better there than here.

Note also how primitive the process is for emptying the hatch. These men are using a manually operated pulley to raise the boxes. The guy in the plaid shirt is holding both limbs of the pulley rope as they hang from the block. He obviously gets the hoist the boxes up. The other two men spell each other grabbing the box which probably weigh on the order of 90-100 pounds if not more and hoist it up - manually- onto the pile that will later be transferred off the ship's deck onto rail cars to haul the stuff north and out of our hair. There are two of these narrow shafts on this side of the barge with ladders secured vertically to give men a way down into the hold.

This is a great view of a portion of the Barge Dock, and a view across the bay

of Seward and Mt. Marathon and Lowell Canyon that locates the dock for you. You see just how far away from Seward this thing was built "just in case" there was an accident with munitions. Dad worked on the construction of this dock and naturally took photos of the project. Seward in barely visible along the right edge of this photo. It was simpler dock than the others because it was built right on the beach so there weren't long accesses like the City Dock had. So dad worked on the Barge Dock.

San Juan Dock and Halibut

This dock, like the Army Dock, is not memorialized in photos by dad. I don't really know why but I can guess. This dock was not used by transport ships so there was no need for the longshoremen. Dad had little occasion to go to this dock. This dock was apparently built around 1915 as a fish processing plant and that remained its sole function for the duration of its life. The best photo he has of the dock, which actually isn't of the dock at all, is of dad hamming again back in 1940.

According to Mary Barry, the principal fish that was processed at the San Juan dock in the early years was halibut. I've lost the precise URL for this internet image but it's a safe bet it's associated with the town of Seward. This gives a sense of the size of the large halibut some of which reach 450 pounds. For photo ops, people prefer to turn the white side of the fish toward the camera though I don't think it's necessary. The fascinating thing about the fish is that during their juvenile years, one of their eyes - the left eye in these specimens- literally migrates up over the bridge of the "nose" and ends up on the other side of the head by the right eye.

I'm not making this up.

It was an astounding thing to hear and I didn't believe it because when dad was in one of his rare affectionate moods he would tell us big stories. But his statement was supported by the evidence. Both eyes were on one side. When the fish are small, the swim like other fish with their body perpendicular to the bottom, but at some point in their development, the fish begins to swim near the bottom and rotates its body so that it is parallel with the bottom. In this orientation, they lay on the bottom and the dark, mottled side that they turned upmost, since that's where they eyes ended up, provides perfect camouflage.

While we lived there we would go down to the dock when halibut boats came in to buy a "chicken" halibut. These small halibut probably weigh around 15 pounds, about this size. I learned that they were better flavored than the large halibut. Today I'm not sure that's the case but if my dad said it was so, then it was. They really were delicious. Of course, we never ate the larger ones so didn't have a real basis for comparison! They were gutted and stored on ice in the fishing boats' holds until they were unloaded at the San Juan docks. Anyone could go there while unloading was done and pick out any halibut and pay for it. I don't have a sense of how the price was set, not how fair it was to both sides, but mom would take the thing home and work a miracle.

Figure 73
http://www.salmonuniversity.com/images/vin_qs_norm_halibut_190.jpg

While we lived on Second Avenue, dad bought mom a Sunbeam Deep fat fryer for Xmas or her birthday. He always bought her appliances or kitchen wares for holidays when she was to receive gifts. Rarely, he'd get some jewelry but typically, the gift was something like the fryer.

When she got the halibut home, she would fillet it and remove the skin.

Meantime she had made a batter that was unusually light for that era, bordering on the crispness and thinness of Japanese tempura. I don't recall that she chilled it like tempura batter is chilled but it cooked into a crisp tan layer. She would cut the fillets into rectangular strips that were about 4-5 inches long and about an inch thick each way.

She'd dip these strips into her batter and then drop them carefully in the heated shortening which is what she always used in the fryer. Us kids would hang around in the kitchen watching the process, enjoying the smell that rose from the crackling popping strips. The fascinating thing about the cooking process was how she would cook each side equally, but sometimes left a lighter strip between the two sides. That was probably because the strip was too thick, but the pattern fascinated me. She turned the strips to make sure that they were thoroughly cooked. Her batter seemed to seal the flesh into a package that cooked in its own juices.

When she lifted the golden-brown strips out of the fat, she would lay them on a cookie rack over newspaper to drain. They were too hot to eat immediately but one of us would get anxious anyway. He'd grab a piece while mom watched sideways with resignation knowing what was about to happen was going to happen more times. The kid who brazenly disobeyed mom's suggestion to wait a minute, either burned his finger the moment he lifted the hot package or burned his tongue when he bit into it.

Mom made a delicious tartar sauce from scratch. It wasn't until we lived in Boston that I even knew that the stuff could be purchased ready-made from the supermarket and when we tried it, it was tasteless. Her recipe was simple. She started with a cup or so of miracle whip and minced a medium sized yellow onion because they had a sweet, powerful flavor. She'd salt and pepper the mixture and add a small amount of sugar, then let the sauce sit for a few hours to allow the onion flavor to spread through the sauce. This was basically the same sauce that she used on her fantastic potato salad. The difference between the two sauces was that the potato salad sauce had some yellow mustard and minced boiled eggs.

When the fish strips were chilled sufficiently, mom would put them on plates for us. We'd lift one in our fingers, dip the end into the bowl of tartar sauce and bit it off. The flavor of fresh from the ocean halibut well-cooked in a light batter is mild and sweet, scarcely a flavor at all. Mom's recipe produced pieces of fried halibut that were as moist as they could be, basically broiled in their own juice.

Atmosphere of house

Going back to the little house I want to point out what it felt like to live there. In the first place, I was from a dusty little farm house in Vernal so had that as a frame of reference. However, this house was even smaller and I was aware of that at one level. I didn't think it out loud in my head but I understood it was smaller and it was a source of anxiety. Go back to the floor plan above of the first floor and notice not only how small it is, but how few rooms there were. There was the back porch that was uninsulated, cold and unlighted. There was a small bathroom that we weren't allowed to play in, mom's and dad's bedroom that was filled with their double bed, the small room in front of their bedroom and the kitchen. Basically there were three rooms. One was off limits because it was the bedroom, and another was too small, filled with a chest of drawers, so not a place to play. That left the kitchen as the only place to play when it was cold and wet outside. Since there was a table and chairs and the cook stove, there was little room to play there as well.

Indeed, we found ourselves getting underfoot all the time, particularly if mom was in a foul mood which wasn't every day but we could count on her being out of sorts and not happy to have us in her way when she was trying to cook and or do dishes. So there was a tension in the atmosphere all the time about being in the way, of needing to go somewhere else to play, needing to get away from the irritation that filled the kitchen often. She was doubtless frustrated at the limitations herself but little kids don't understand that their caregivers are stressed about OTHER things, only at them. The walls pressed in on us along with the rain and clouds and darkness. It was not a congenial house to live in after all.

Oh, I don't want you to think that I was running away from mom all the time and unhappy, because I wasn't generally unhappy. I was actually a pretty durable little kid who paid attention to things around me and signals in the atmosphere and knew when to vacate a room. But there was this thread of tension that was constantly present that impinged on my consciousness at some level. It was not a really congenial house to be in because it was just too tiny. That is what I think the fundamental issue was, the smallness of the house.

In Vernal we had two larger bedrooms to play in, plus the kitchen was probably larger than the kitchen at Homebrew Alley, there was a nice size covered porch -unheated but playable- to go to as well as the living room and dining rooms that we were allowed to use on occasion. Plus we had a 2 acre yard to explore and

run around in, a few cows that caused excitement, the ditches and swamp close by and other items to entertain us, like the granary that we could play in when we wanted.

Homebrew Alley, while an exciting place to live in because it was in the new town of Seward, was nonetheless a cramped place that held those tensions and anxieties spawned by its size. I also wonder today how much of the tension was related to the quality of mom's and dad's relationship. I don't have any memories of them fighting. Indeed, they always told each other, "We'll talk about that later." when there was a substantial disagreement, so we weren't seeing actual fights between them. But I look back along the string of time and see bits and pieces of dissent in mom and tension in dad in their relationship to each other. Given our poorness, the distance from mom's family that she had always lived near up to that point, and the harshness of the life we lead, it would be surprising if difficulties didn't develop between them.

The strangeness of living in a rough coast town contributed to the quality of the existence. The men were rough longshoremen, I had never lived close to bars, indeed I don't recall that I had ever been near one. When I think back to my childhood memories of Vernal and Naples, I can't even find a bar. They certainly were there, but my memories of the main street were banks, Penny's, gas stations, Ashton's Hardware, tannery, grocery stories, Safeway, churches and schools. Walking down main street of Seward where practically every other business was a bar with the door open, smoke coming out with noises, was totally new. I was sort of intimidated by that part of town because my fundamentalist upbringing equated alcohol with adultery on the scale of 1 to 10 so I understood that those men were doing nasty things that I shouldn't be near, shouldn't even see.

Small Boat Harbor

This place was the coolest place in town. I loved going there and went as often as I could - and as often as I could deal with the steep climb back home. The slope of the town going from east-to-west was greater than the slope from north-to-south for some reason. That meant that the ride from 2nd Avenue to

the Small Boat Harbor on our bicycles was fun. It was all downhill. It also meant that the ride home was all uphill. Literally. It didn't matter whether we took Adams or any other street down to the harbor, they were all up and down that way.

This is a really poor, fuzzy image but it serves its purpose. Just look at the shapes because they show you what the "Small Boat Harbor" really was. This snippet from "The Panorama", shows the Small Boat Harbor with the mud flats across the top of the image to locate it for you here. You can see three straight "lines" in this image, at different angles to each other.

The top, left-most line is the jetty that was constructed of enormous boulders. Its function was to act as a "breakwater" to reduce the power of storm waves that rushed up the bay. They attenuated the power of the waves, thereby creating a haven, a "harbor", a place in which to hide from the storms, a place to securely moor small boats that couldn't deal with the big waves.

The shorter right-most line is also a rock jetty, and has the same function. It angles up toward the top jetty. The two of these jetties created between them the triangular "Small Boat Harbor" that otherwise would have simply been a spot on the beach. I suspect that the harbor must have also been dredged. I say that because you can see how shallow the flats are at the top of the picture, and I know how the beach ran fairly gently out into the water at other points along the beach along town.

The third shorter straight line in the center which is parallel with the right jetty is the small boat harbor itself. I never wondered about the place then like I do now. Who built it? When was it built? Adults take such a different view of things. But I did wonder back then how in heck anyone could build put that pile of huge boulders in a straight row, without any road, without any way to bring large boats in to handle them. I'd stand on the dock holding my pole while I waited, looking at the rocks, wondering how they were placed there. You can see the jetty at the top 2/3ds of this photo with beach covering the remaining 1/3rd . I'd stand where the photographer stood, looking across that small expanse of water, wondering about those rocks, and admiring the brave men would actually clamber across them out to the end when the salmon were running.

These are the best views we have of the Small Boat Harbor, both of which I've used before but this time I want to point out different things. The thing I want you to look at is the actual dock running along the right side of the photo, a decking made of heavy-duty planks. That is the mooring to which the boats are tied up. There is a white boat sitting on the decking.

The deck is actually a series of equal-sized rafts constructed out of heavy lumber over empty 55 gallon barrels for buoyancy. These rafts which were constructed individually were loosely fastened to each other with steel plates and long nuts and bolts, and were secured in this location by the pilings driven into the bottom of the bay.

The pilings were probably fir tree trunks that had been impregnated by creosote, a petroleum derivative, that repelled sea worms and barnacles and creatures that set up housekeeping on any wood in the sea water. The process is done under pressure to the wood actually absorbs more of the creosote while under pressure than it will hold when decompressed. When decompressed, the logs ooze a thin layer of creosote, like armor to protect the wood. The smell of creosote was one of the omnipresent features of being on any of the docks.

The pilings were placed by a pile driver years before we moved there. Dad 's photo shows a pile drive working on the City Dock but was comparable to what had to have been used to get the Small Boat Harbor pilings in place. The way a pile driver works is basically like a large sledge hammer. The piling is raised by a derrick over the place it is to be driven and then the pile driver is moved up around this log. It is secured in place in the vertical boom you see here. At the top of the boom is a steel weight of several hundred pounds. This weight does all of the work. It is simply lifted up to the top of the boom and allowed to drop by itself down onto the top of the log. As this hammering is repeated, the log is actually driven down in to the ground.

The first pile driver I saw in Seward was steam-operated. It was driving pilings at the City Dock and may be this one. The two dramatic elements of pile driving were (1) the enormous noise made when the weight hit the top of the piling and (2) the blow of steam as the machine lifted the weight to the top of the way so

that it could drop again. It was a slow process, happening more slowly, the deeper the pile is driven. The sound is so loud that it was heard all over town. We all knew when a pile driver was at work.

Look carefully in this photo. On the left edge you can see a section of the upper deck that is 10-15 feet above the dock proper. This upper portion is built on rock and cement. It was a staging area that we all used to organize things before we hauled them down onto the dock, and then to the canoe. Think about the problem of how to connect the rigid upper deck with the floats that rise and fall with the tides. How are you going to do it so that nothing is broken and so that it takes care of itself? The tide rises and falls at 6+ hour intervals between each movement. Four times a day things reach a limit and reverse themselves. Even today. <grin> So how do it?

It was disarmingly simple. Just build a long ramp, fasten the top end of it permanently to the upper deck and allow the bottom end to rest on the deck and - here's the only moving part- allow it to move back and forth on top of the deck as the deck moved up and down. Simplest thing in the world. Didn't need any watching, didn't need any power, nothing special, just add wheels to the bottom end of the ramp that set on the dock. That way, when the dock moved up or down, the wheels would roll. That was the key to the whole organization. Allow the wheels to roll and then it didn't matter what the dock did. The wheels would tend the whole affair and keep the ramp in place on the deck. When the rafts rise or fall, the ramp will also rise and fall since there are wheels that allow it to roll along the dock. To protect the wood of the dock as the wheels rolled back and forth in the same place, steel plates were bolted to the top of the dock to create durable tracks for the wheels to roll along.

When the tide as in, as it is in the above photo, the dock was high which

means that the ramp has flattened out, and has extended further onto the dock. When the tide is out, the dock sinks in which case the wheels on the ramp allow it to roll "backwards". This gives the ramp a very steep pitch. Twice a day the tide went out and twice a day it come in, so this unpowered ramp that relied on ingenuity and the tides handled the problem of giving people constant access to their boats.

We would go down to the small boat harbor to fish about anytime we wanted to in the summer. Mom was generous in allowing us that freedom. She always cautioned us to be careful, and told us what time we were to be home, though we didn't have watches. We generally made it back home safely because if we didn't, the privilege would be curtailed the next time we wanted to go.

Note please in those photos that there are no pleasure craft, no shiny boats. There are only working boats owned by commercial fishermen or owned by little families like ours. I say that because I was amazed to see in 2003 that there were NO beat up, used, old boats like them. Times were different then, money was tight, commercialism hadn't reached in to Alaska like it has today. Just compare these old photos to what Dee and I saw in July 2003:

That "pretty" marina was built after the 1964 tsumani destroyed every damn dock.

So now you've been introduced to all of the seven docks that our life was built around in Seward for 5 years.

(1) The **Cannery Dock** was a place where my brother and I went to fish and explore the rocks.
(2) The **City Dock** was a place where dad worked to make money for the family.
(3) The **Standard Oil dock** is where we got fuel oil for our furnaces to stay warm in the cold winters.
(4) The **Army Dock** is another place dad worked at to make money to support the family.
(5) The **San Juan Dock** is where we would buy fresh halibut.
(6) The **Small Boat Harbor** is where we fished, moored our canoe and set out on adventures. And finally,
(7) The **Barge Dock** across the bay was another place dad worked at, risking his life, to make money for us.

Those are the docks and they all affected us in differing degrees. The livelihood of Sewardites revolved around them along with the railroad but there was little else the provided security and income for us. Now on with the stories.

Stealin' steel wheelbarrows

The docks and longshoremen spawned lots of stories, some true, some not. We heard them and remembered a few. In one story, a longshoreman was suspected of stealing something for a long time when he left the City Dock. He was apparently familiar to the local law, a bad sign. Two security guards stood at the end of the approach to the dock and it was their job to watch for evidence of pilferage and to take steps to remedy the problem. This particular man was known to cut things a bit too fine sometimes where the line between legal and illegal behaviors was concerned. So when he came off the pier pushing a wheel barrow full of fluffy saw dust, the guards stopped him and searched through the saw dust for any contraband. They didn't find any. The next day the same scene was enacted, for several days in a row. The guards were sure this guy was stealing something but

could not catch him doing it because the sawdust was always empty. One day, in dawned on one of the guards what was going on. He realized that the man wasn't stealing something out in the sawdust in the wheelbarrow. He was stealing the wheelbarrows themselves.

That says a lot about what went on with longshoreman and the stuff they loaded and unloaded. Dad was a "dockside" stevedore so never worked on a ship. He worked strictly on the docks -a dockside stevedore as opposed to a 'shipside" stevedore who worked only onboard ships- as goods were unloaded and had to be moved from the slings used to pull cargo out of the ships' holds onto railroad cars.

The process of securing large things inside of box cars was not complex but it required a certain amount of skill. The "colonel" who lived in the house next to us on Home Brew Alley was a universally detested son of a bitch. Disagreeable and no one liked him. Even the windows of his house were constantly covered with blankets so we could never see into the house. One day Dad and his friend, Art Schaefermeyer, decided to play a trick on the Colonel. He was cutting boards to fit inside of a box car to secure some thing. He carefully measured the board, re-measured the space in the box car that the board was to fit into, re-measured the board, and then to be really sure, went back to the boxcar to re-measure the distance. During that particular time, dad and/or Art went quickly went over to his board, turned it over and used a T-square to make a mark on the board a foot shorter than the length the Colonel had measured. The Colonel didn't see this and because his re-measure in the box car showed the same length he got the first time, he didn't re-measure the board. He simply took his saw and cut the board. A foot too short.

Another time a man on a ship got into a mild discussion with dad about a watch. I think the guy was trying to sell it to dad and dad must have had some derogatory comments to make about it. In the end, the man dared dad to throw this expensive watch over board. So Dad did. Witnesses saw the poor man "dare" dad to do it.

Another time on night shift a couple of guys were bored. So they took a 50 foot hawser, the heavy rope used to secure boats to the docks. Another guy was sleeping in his jitney, a little tractor-like affair used to pull trailers of cargo after the trailers are loaded with cargo from the ships' holds. Whoever did the deed crept up to the jitney while this guy was sleeping, threw one end of the hawser over a tongue on rear of the last trailer and threw the other end of the hawser over the top of one of the pilings that constituted the dock. After the ship side sling man

finished loading the trailers, he yelled 'Go". The man woke up, gunned the engine of his jitney, and took off. When he hit the end of the hawser, the jitney leaped into the air and he had a few things to say about the experience.

Another time a guy found a 200 foot length of high-quality one-inch rope that he decided to steal. Others guys saw what he did. After the first guy walked away from his hiding place, another guy who saw what happened, went over and stole it, and then stored it in his chosen hiding place. Whereupon another guy took it and re-hid it. This happened several times. Until one guy decided that his hiding place would be in the open. He would just secure on end of the coil of rope around the top of one of the pilings. He tied it securely. He thought. And then tossed the coil out over the dock expecting it to dangle from the secured end. Everyone near heard the splash as the coil of rope went into the ocean. He had not tied it securely. This is what the docks were like.

Dockside Longshoreman

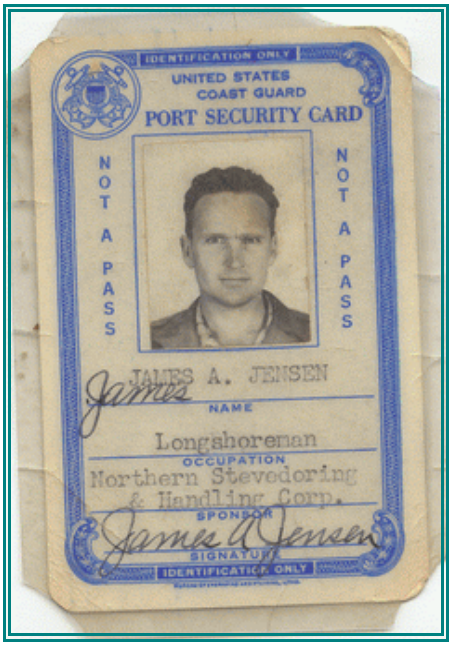
This is my dad posing on the porch at our 2nd Avenue house. A longshoreman. Outfitted in his rain gear that was absolutely necessary in the rain. Sitting on a jitney all night in a downpour without getting wet was only possible by wearing a bib overall sort of thing on the bottom over knee-high rubber boots, with a raincoat on top and a rain hat. The material was heavy duty because the wear and tear was enormous. He had a repair kit to fix the inevitable tears that resulted from sharp corners. That's Fleming's house behind him.

Northern Stevedoring & Handling Corp.

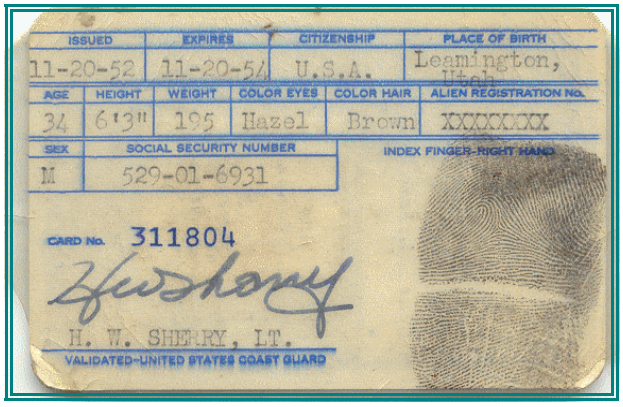
There were two unions in those days that contracted with the Alaska Railroad and whoever else they had to contract with in order to hire men

to work for them. One union provided men who worked "shipside", i.e. they all worked only on-board ship. They did not work on the docks. The other union provided men who worked "dockside", i.e. they never worked on ships. That was a convenient division of labor, though about the time we were leaving, they merged which also made a great deal of sense apparently.

Dad moved to Seward around Dec. 1950 but the first evidence I can find of his being identified as a longshoreman was this badge that was issued by the US Coast Guard in 1952 that showed that he was hired by the Northern Stevedoring & Handling Corporation. Note that it specifically states that this badge is "Not a Pass." whatever that means.

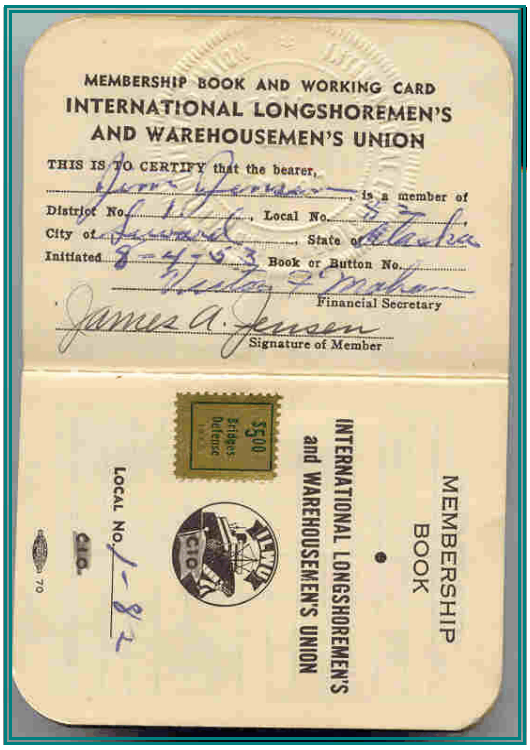


The back side of this badge shows that it was issued "11-20-52". So if he moved there in Dec. 1950, where is his badge that was in effect from that date until the issue date of this card? We'll never know the truth.



The other puzzle about his employment history involves his membership in the International Longshoremen and Warehousemen's Union. Note by the way the reference in the name of the union to "warehouses". That doesn't include ships so that explains why this group only worked shipside.

This union book was a big deal for two reasons. First, the secretary rubber-stamped the month each time dad paid his dues. None of this automatic collection by the employer. Each man had to go down and personally pay his dues and got a stamp each time he did. The other thing the book recorded was his attendance at monthly union meetings. From the latter, it's evident that dad only made it about half the time which fits with me sense of him. He belonged to unions out of necessity, not belief. Images of the inner pages that show his actual attendance and dues payment follow on the next page. He never missed a dues and never made all of his meetings.


MEMBERSHIP BOOK AND WORKING CARD
INTERNATIONAL LONGSHOREMEN'S AND WAREHOUSEMEN'S UNION

THIS IS TO CERTIFY that the bearer, James A. Jensen, is a member of District No. 1, Local No. 37, City of Seward, State of Alaska, Initiated 8-4-43, Book or Button No. [illegible]

Financial Secretary

James A. Jensen
Signature of Member

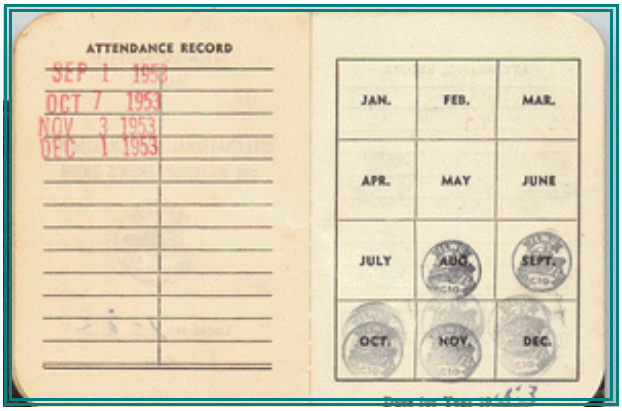
$5.00 Bridges-Robertson Defense

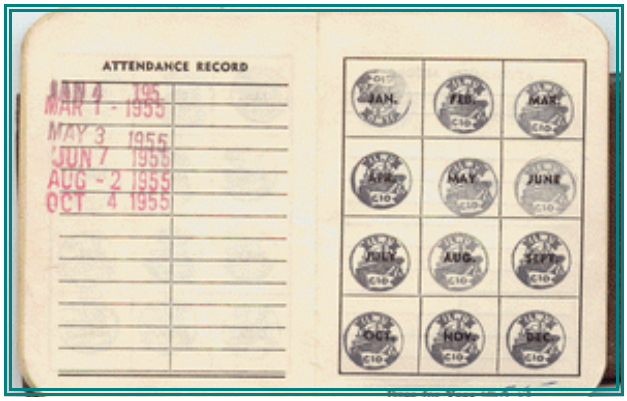
LOCAL No. 1-82

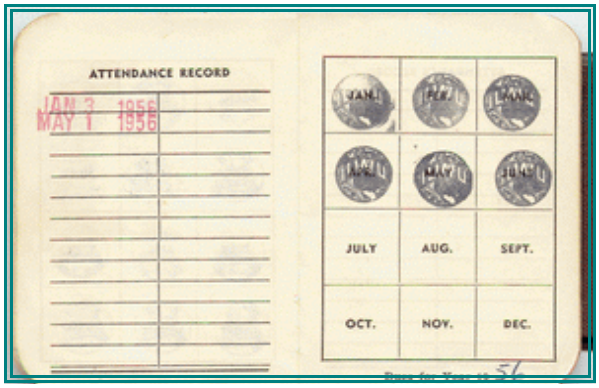
CIO

MEMBERSHIP BOOK

INTERNATIONAL LONGSHOREMEN'S and WAREHOUSEMEN'S UNION







I don't know why he didn't joint the union until September 1953. He had been in Seward working on the docks for a year and a half. Were men allowed to work without joining the union at a lower pay scale than "union scale"? Whatever the truth, dad finally did join the union in Sept. 1953 and did not miss a dues payment until he left Alaska in 1956, 35 months of payments.

Rolling Stock

As a 'dockside stevedore', dad never worked on the ships. His work, however, was considerably more varied that shipside longshoremen's duties. His duties could be divided into at least these groups:

1 Handling pallets and nets of goods as they are being lowered from the ship on a ship's boom. This meant directing the "sling" operator where to aim his load and it meant standing there, hand on the pallet as it was lowered, centering it on the trailer, train car or deck after which he'd release the cable and signal the sling operator with a circular motion to "wind it up" so it could be taken back aboard and lowered into the hold for loading again. The handler is the buy on the back side of this pallet coming out of the ship's hold.

2 Driving jitneys that pulled trailers of goods to the warehouses, train cars or wherever.

3 Manually moving "stuff" from place to place after it came out of the hold and this stuff ranged from small cases to loads of lumber that required a boom to move them around. Here Pallage, Doyle and Gilbert are wrestling some appliances into the rail car from the wheeled trailer that was driven to this point by the jitney driver.

4 Once the stuff is inside a train car, it had to be secured into place by lumber nailed to the wooden floor. It was sort of like being a framing carpenter some days. Or course, if there was a car of stuff from Anchorage to be loaded ONTO the ship, the process was reversed.

5 Another job dad might be assigned was driving "spotter", heavy vehicles to move train cars when they were to be filled or ready to be emptied. The northern access to the City Dock and the Army Dock were long railroad spurs to get cars out onto the docks to either pick up goods to haul up to the interior or to deliver goods from the interior to be sent stateside. This shot from the south of the City Dock shows how train tracks were laid out to move train cars from the tracks on the ground out onto the dock where they could be emptied or filled. The tracks extended to the end of the dock in the foreground so that ships in any location along the dock could be serviced.

When you think about it, you see that there needed to be two sets of rails running the length of the dock, with "switches" that allowed cars to be moved around each other. This image, also of the City Dock, shows both sets of tracks and one of the "switches" that could be thrown to allow a car to be moved to the other rail.

There were two general designs for these spotters. One was basically a heavy, four-wheeled, rubber-tired tractor while the other was a Caterpillar-looking thing on tracks, built by the Euclid Corporation. They both did the job but since the Euke

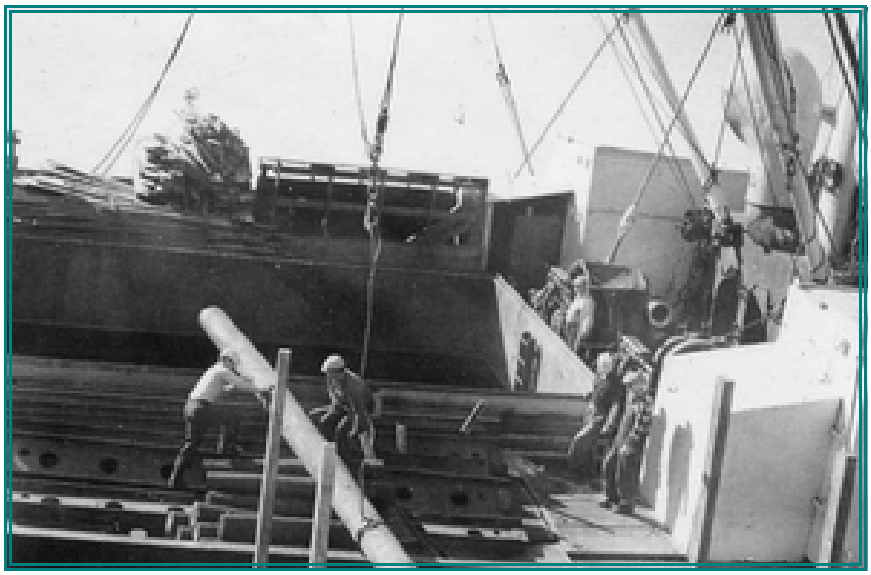
was heavier and had better traction it would be used to push a group of several loaded cars.

This is the rubber-tired spotter with Mark Walker and Charlie Sheldon waiting for the signal to move. They are connected to a flat car that is partially loaded with telephone poles that had to be shipped in from 'outside' since there were no plants in the territory that did the job. Note the fore deck behind these guys and the way two heavy hawsers cross each other to secure that end of the ship to the enormous cleats built into the docks for that purpose.

This Dick Hall (Left) with Freddie Richardson driving the "Euke". You see the tracks. Two men were teamed up on a spotter, one to drive and the other to guide him to the right location and to connect or disconnect the spotter from or two the rail car before moving. If the spotter weren't connected to the car, a push might send the car down the rails in which case it could cause injury or death. Freddie lived on the corner across from the Episcopal Church and was a nice man. He was married to "Jerry", a woman who was as nice as she was beautiful. I was too shy of her beauty to talk to her.

You can see that the work varied enormously in the demands it placed on the men. Some jobs like sitting and driving were easy but others were hard and dangerous. Here three men are guiding a sling of finished lumber onto a flat car, pushing it into place as the sling man lowered it. That's hard and dangerous. The sling man on the ship is positioned so that he can generally see where his load is so there isn't a spotter there guiding him, but in cases where the load is being put into a location he can't see well, he'll ask for a spotter - or the man-at-risk will ask. The rail cars obviously have to be positioned securely so their hand brakes are set before work starts.

Note the rough 8 x 8 beams that are standing vertically. Their function is to hold the load in place and they are tied together across the top of the load so that the load won't shift and come off. It's that kind of lumber that was frequently pitched overboard either by shipside or dockside men. They weren't supposed to do that but they did as a matter of convenience - and in the hope that they could retrieve whatever it was they somehow "lost". On the far side of the ship in this shot is lumber piled up from the hold as the load was being taken down for removal.



Now you know where all the crap came from that's lying here on the beach by south access to the City Dock:

The big chunk of something in the water is actually part of the City Dock that was blown off by a heavy storm. That's not what I'm referring to. I'm talking about the pallet and lumber lying about. Dad and us boys would go down and scavenge stuff sometimes when he had a project that called for something that he dint' have, a pretty darn helpful thing to be able to do, both for convenience as well as price. This stuff was called flotsam and jetsam and included drift wood, star fish, and rocks that were handy ammo when we were having a rock fight with kids who prowled along above the beach. Great place to hang out.

Union Board & Dispatch

Dad had to call the Dispatcher every day that he was scheduled to work to get his assignment. This meant which dock he was going to work on and what work he was assigned to do, i.e. drive jitney, drive spotter, etc.. How he was scheduled for a shift was simple. Down on the west wall just inside the door to the union hall, there was a large board. The board had each member's name in alphabetical order from top to bottom. The names were written on strips that could be pulled out of slots and moved around as new members were added or old ones left.

Next to the left end of the stip with the names there were two columns of holes which meant two holes by each name. Each union member had a peg that he put into one hole or the other, depending on whether or not he wanted to work the next day. If he wanted to work, he put the peg in the left hole. He left it in that

hole as long as he wanted to work, even if that was more than week. The dispatcher would simply walk out to the board to see who was pegged in to work, indicate their names on his work list, and use that as his basis for assigning men to work the next shift.

I don't know how the shift assignments varied, i.e. how men were moved from day shift to night shift of back. But I do know that dad rotated shifts. These shifts were enormously long, covering something like 12 hours. I don't know if they actually worked 10 hours or how it worked, but he'd start work at 7am or 7pm and work through to 6 pm or 6am. I know there was at least an hour lunch so perhaps they had other breaks as well. There must have been. But in any event, there were no three shifts a day like I ran into in the hospital world. So when dad went to work for night shift, he was gone well before we went to bed and he came home about the time we were getting up in the morning. Dispatchers knew which men were scheduled for day and evening shift.

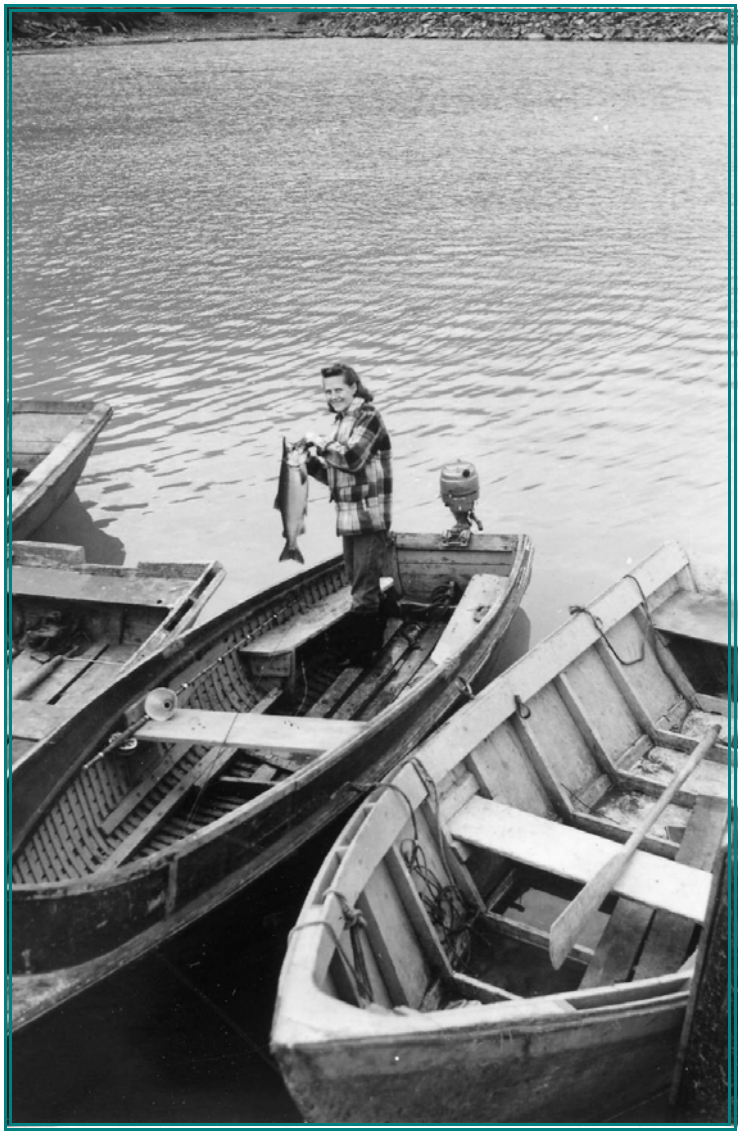
When a man was ready for a break from work, he'd go to the union hall, pull his plug and stick it in the right hole. When the dispatcher came out to see who was working the next shift, he'd pass over that name and go to the next guy. That way it was a simple matter for (1) each member to decide when he did or didn't want to work, and (2) for the dispatcher to tell who was "on". So when dad was getting ready for a vacation or break he said he was "going down to pull his plug." We understood that was a time of joy because that meant he'd be around the place and probably do something fun with us.

Of course getting work depended on there being ships that needed to be loaded or unloaded. Usually this wasn't a problem but I do have some memories of dad and mom being worried a bit when he checked in with the dispatcher and was told that there was no work that shift. It wasn't a frequent worry but I heard in their tone of voice when he hung up the phone and told her there was no work. That was a bad thing for us. Thankfully, it was rare that he didn't have work when he wanted it. I never had the sense that we were deprived for anything in Seward. Oh, I did have the sense that we lived a very controlled, financially tight life, but I didn't feel like I was lacking anything essential - only missing the luxuries and extras that I knew well I really didn't need to survive. Food was not as limited in Seward as it was in Vernal.

18' Sea-Going Freight Canoe

I'm going to spend some time on this canoe, first, because I loved it immensely, and second, because it was the thread that seemed to run through our 5 years in Seward from about the time we arrived in 1951 until we sold it a few hours before flying out of Holy Cross on the Yukon River in June 1956. This canoe was built by an artist and was the most beautiful boat in the small boat harbor. I knew it. I am sure its beauty was the selling point for dad.

I don't know today which dad bought first, the old car or the old canoe. For all I remember, he may have had this canoe before we even arrived. It would fit my expectation of him because he could walk to the small boat harbor and get out on the water with the canoe, but he couldn't go to the small boat harbor in his car and drive out on the water. His primary value would have been getting onto the ocean. My bet is that he had the canoe first.



Now I gotta tell you that using the term 'canoe' to refer to this thing is a disservice to you kids. Here's an excellent shot of this 'canoe' - I will always refer to it as a 'canoe'. When you hear the term "canoe" you all have an image of a narrow, double-ended boat that can't take an outboard motor, a thing that's tippy and unstable as the water itself. Right? Well, that ain't what this 'canoe' was like at all. I don't even know why the term was applied to it except that it must have been because of its basic construction which was that of a canoe. But

it's actual shape, design and function were totally different from your standard, boring, dangerous, run-of-the mill canoe.

This machine was designed to haul freight in the ocean. That was its primary function and it probably excelled. Imagine that. Hauling half a ton or more of gear out somewhere, like clear out to Rockwell Kent on Fox Island. This boat could do it and do it safely and well no doubt. It was shapely and sleek, unlike any other in the bay. I loved it dearly for its beauty and the service it gave us. When boats were referred to as "she", I could see this canoe as human. She was delicate but when handled by a skilled pilot, she was the match of anything else.

Note that the hull is constructed entirely of lath -thin strips of cedar in this instance because cedar is water-resistant- that was bent and laid on in three layers, totally different from the boats moored by it. A few other boards were added but that was the basic hull. The advantage of lath construction is that the shape can be skillfully adjusted and that produces a thing of beauty.

In this view of the canoe upside down, you can tell by the shadows how complex its shape was: The 'beam' -the widest segment in the middle- swells to about 4.5 feet across. That's where the bulk of the freight load would be placed. Toward the stern -left- you can see that the hull pinches in tightly, just as it does forward of the beam where dad's standing. None of those features was possible with a boat constructed entirely of planks. I suppose that if a boat builder truly wanted to reproduce this complex shape in solid lumber he could, but the cost and effort would be tremendous. This shape must have been created with an armature and access to lots of boiling water or live steam, lots of clamps, and

patience, skill and affection on the part of the creator.

The yellow strip in that photo is the cowl. No real canoe has anything like this, nor do the other boats moored by it in the small boat harbor picture. Its function has to do with spray from waves when the canoe was loaded and sitting deeply in the water. The cowling blocks the spray that comes up off waves as they strike the bow, and keeps it off the load. We'd kneel behind the cowl when running waves and peek just over the top, feeling secure inside the well it created, getting spray in our face but staying dry otherwise. The cowl worked well and you can see in the above photo that the other boats made of lumber didn't have this lovely looking device to protect the riders from the spray.

In this red photo, you can make out the main keel. It runs from the bow behind dad clear to the stern. The keep is molded seamlessly into the prow by the builder who loved this creation. Note also the lovely canted transom which probably wasn't necessary but was beautiful. The main keel was perhaps 4 inches high and 3 inches wide. Its function was to stabilize the canoe in any water. You can see how these keels work. As any boat runs diagonally over waves, there is a tendency for the boat to actually slip sideways, as if it were simply sitting on a ramp thanks to the effect of gravity. The main keel minimized that slippage tremendously by cutting into the water, preventing slippage from occurring as easily.

But in addition to the main keel that served a freighter well, the skillful builder/designer added two other keels to increase the stability and steerage of the canoe. There were two "bilge keels" centered over the beam. You see them here. They were about 8 feet in length and ran parallel to the main keel about 16 inches to each side.

This meant that when the loaded canoe was traversing waves diagonally, there were three keels cutting in to prevent the slippage that otherwise would have occurred. In a sense, the three keels provided the kind of stability that

a catamaran has and for the same reason, multiple edges cutting the water in parallel swaths. Old timers in Nenana told us with deadly earnestness before we embarked to head for shore any time we saw a tug coming, otherwise we'd capsize. That was true for their long, flat bottomed boats, but in this canoe we could run circles in the huge wake if we wished.

In the preceding photo of Dick and I standing by the canoe you can get a sense of its size. It was not a small boat. It was 18 feet long, was 4 ½ feet in the beam and I don't know how "high" it was, but it was not a tiny boat. Its trim shape belied its size which you can see here. We were 14 and 13 years old and were dwarfed by it. (Something must have gone wrong this day - we are wearing different shirts.)

I have no idea who built this lovely thing, nor when it was built, but it was old when we got it as you can tell from the photo above of mom standing in it. Beat up and dirty like all of them. Yuppie-ness hadn't struck yet so people were real and when they fished and gutted fish in the boat, the results were visible. And not particularly offensive unless you ended up sitting in it. But in spite of its age and heavy use, it was sound. There was never a need for major repairs to this canoe that served us well for 5 years. The only major thing done to it was to replace the skin in preparation for taking it down the Nenana, Tanana and Yukon rivers in 1956. The advent of fancy shiny boats was in the future. Practicality was the word.

To return to the lath construction: the inner most layer is the one we walked on, the next layer was the middle layer that ran longitudinally parallel with the keel, and the outer layer repeated the inner layer. That is simple canoe construction - lath bent to a shape that is then covered with something. In this case the covering was heavy canvas layers. As I recall the time we tore the canvas off in about April 1956, there were 3 three layers of canvas tightly and carefully nailed to the outer lath layer. The outer layer was painted with a dark green, salt-resistant paint to make it impermeable to water. It was as water-tight as a boats on either side of it made entirely out of wood. True, we always had to bail it out when we entered it but that was from the constant rain fall. The painted canvas skin did not leak.

Since the canoe was more curved that the flat-bottomed boats, it did share one feature of function with a true canoe. If a load was not distributed evenly across the main keel, the boat tended to lean to that side when it was running. It was not unstable like a canoe but it would lean a bit, making steerage a bit more difficult than otherwise, causing the boat to veer ever so slightly in the direction of the tilt so the pilot had to keep making course corrections. Consequently, us kids

were used to orders from dad to "trim the canoe." He'd tell one of us as we set on the main cross seat to move to the left or right to trim it. Similarly, whenever one of us was walking from the front to the back, the movement of our weights laterally from the keel would affect the trim, so dad would tell someone to lean a particular way to maintain trim during the time the person was moving around. It was not an alarming thing at all, just an aspect of this canoe that would not be part of the usage of a "normally' constructed boat.

Elgin 7.5 HP Outboard Motor

As I remember it, dad bought the boat before he could afford a motor which meant he didn't go far because rowing it was tough for one man to go far. I expect he saved money and paid cash. In the first place, in those days there were no such things as "credit cards". No kidding. They didn't exist. Either you paid, cash, got a loan from the bank, used "lay-away" or worked out some deal with the store owner to pay on time. Loans for old boats and outboards weren't likely, "lay-away" was used for clothing and appliances, merchants had no incentive to let you pay over time because it was their capitol that was tied up, so cash was the way we went. It wasn't just a matter of having good principles you see. It as the reality.

So when he had saved up enough money, he ordered a 7.5 horse Elgin outboard motor through the Sears catalog. We participated vicariously in the selection process by sitting quietly, listening to dad chat to mom about the benefits of various motors as he perused the beat-up Sears catalog that we used to "read". We didn't have anything to contribute to the conversation because we were 8 and 9, but that didn't mean we didn't care. We did and we wanted our dad to get the best, the biggest motor he could.

After he and mom had saved enough money to pay for the motor and shipping, dad placed his order and enclosed a money order. See, checks weren't used a great deal either. Oh, they were around and everyone knew how to use them, but cash was really the basis for everyday purchases. One of the major motivations to use cash instead of cash was the fact that it cost money to use and since money had been really tight for 20 years, no one felt like "wasting" 10 cents for the privilege of using a paper check when cash worked just as good and didn't cost anything extra.

We waited anxiously like we did whenever we knew something had been

ordered to be shipped up by freighter. That was the only way stuff got to Alaska and virtually all of it came through Seward. The Coastline Shipping Company is the only one I remember. The steamers had two funnels that were painted a light blue color which distinguished them from other lines. One day it finally came and dad brought it home in its crate.

It was a small motor even in those days. Johnson and Evinrude were making 24 horse motors but they were too expensive for us. I observed them quietly when someone was running around the harbor or bay, making enormous waves and impressing the heck out of me. But it was what we had so that was fine. It's lying here on a pile of gear that was collected for another trip on the bay. The gas can would be filled up each time, and was outfitted with a mechanism to allow him to fill the gas tank on the motor through the narrow rubber tube that is draped around the top of the can. The clamps that secured the motor to the transom of the canoe are resting on the gas can, while the handle that was used to steer the motor is folded upward just above the clamps. It was a single cylinder motor that made a fair amount of blue smoke each time dad fired it up until it got hot and he was able to adjust the carburetor.

Dad took excellent care of it from the beginning. The remarkable thing he did routinely was to run it in fresh water after EVERY use. I vaguely understood the concept of rust and corrosion and that if the salt water was allowed to remain inside the motor, the aluminum would corrode and ruin it. He had a rusty 55 gallon barrel that sat in the back yard to the left to the gas can in this photo. It would fill with rain water that he would supplement with buckets of water from the sink if necessary. He had outfitted the barrel with a wooden plank so he could sit the motor down into the water and clamp it on the block. He'd fire up the motor just like he did out the back of the canoe and he'd allow it to run several minutes to wash out the salt and minerals from the sea water. Then he'd pull it out of the

barrel and store it securely, protecting it from the weather. The funny thing is that I can't remember today precisely where he stored it in either house.

The screw -propellor- was a fancy new design that was built with a clutch. Screws were secured to the power shaft by steel pins that held them in place so that they turned when the power shaft turned, but if a screw hit a submerged rock, the blow would either break a piece off the screw or "shear" that pin. To remedy this problem, the Elgin people had built a clutch that would engage the screw securely with the power shaft which also was able to let go if the screw suddenly stopped, i.e. hit something hard. It turned out that the clutch did not work as advertized and it nearly cost our entire family our lives, a story that dad has written that I will scan and insert later down the line about where it happened.

So this canoe was purchased in 1951 and was the only boat we used until we left in 1956. Dad salvaged a fishing boat one year and got into a huge legal battle about it, but he never repaired it and put it back in the water. He worked on it and finally sold it to some one. Otherwise, we had no other boats. We used this canoe to fish and to travel around on the bay on excursions or clam digging.

Salmon Fishing

Fishing was a big deal in Vernal. It was a much bigger deal in Seward because the fish were much bigger. Because the salmon were much bigger. I'm sitting here by a bunch of fish, one of which weighed more than the entire catch from an afternoon's fishing in Vernal. Man alive. Look at the size of me compared to them. Imagine, if you will, standing by a fish that is have half as long as you. Pretty amazing isn't it.

I look to be about 7 in this photo. I know I have to be at least 9 because this is taken in

Homebrew Alley but to my eyes today, I look to be about 7. Odd how time changes one's perspective about things like one's own age in prior eras. Dad had decided early that day that he was ready to go troll for salmon so he came home earlier than usual. He rousted all of us out of bed and got us excited about trolling in the bay for silver salmon. Those were his favorite salmon, both because they were large and because they were the best fighters of them all.

Notice the detail in the middle of the fish. There were cats, as well as stray dogs, in Seward and this mess of fish was unbearable.

Note also the kind of reel we used. This reel was made for heavy work because it was old-fashioned. It didn't have a mechanism to prevent back lash and it was a direct-drive affair so all the power of the twist came from the hand, not from an inner gear mechanism that gave a mechanical advantage. Landing a fighting fish with this kind of reel was much harder than with the newer reels that we got several years later.

You can get a sense of the time of day this photo was taken by looking at the shadows. The sun is shining almost directly on my face from the east which is only possible very early in the day. It looks to be 7-8 am even by Seward standards. Then when you think about how long it takes to catch and land a dozen salmon you get an idea of how early we were out. Dad sometimes came home early from work when he worked night shift when the salmon were running. If the weather was clear and the bay was calm, it was too much for him to stand there on the docks and see huge silvers jumping simultaneously in the bay - while he helplessly watched. In this stimulated frame of mind, he'd either get off early or would come home on a dead run. Our house was close. The distance from the City Dock was a mere 300 hundred yards so he could cover that distance quickly - especially when he was in a sweat to get out there fishing.

We had the old Nash to haul us over to the small boat harbor where the canoe was moored. He'd holler up to us lazy kids to get out of bed and get dressed and come on down because we were going to go catch some salmon. His excitement was infectious and we'd tumble out of bed up in the attic, grabbing the clothes we wore the day before - remember, none of this 'change your clothes everyday' routine for us- and sort of roll down stairs to joint the hubbub he was creating. That was how it was with him.

He'd be on fire with an urgency to do some thing and that urgency which was almost painful to him which was communicated like an infection to those of us who stood around him. Come on! Come on! Let's get going! Get the gaff, get the net!

Get the life jackets! Get the spoons and treble hooks. Get out to the car! Hurry. The tide will change if we don't hurry! Come on! Come on. We gotta hurry. All the time running about, grabbing things, examining them intently to see they were right, checking to see if he and mom had their licenses, wanting desperately to be out there on the bay in the instant where all those silvers were jumping. Hurry! He'd get sharp at us if we dawdled so we never did when fishing was the stake. Primarily because we were as excited to get out there as he was. We'd be out at the car, in the car, sitting anxiously, waiting to be off in a cloud of smoke and dust up the alley and over to the small boat harbor where our canoe was moored.

When we got to the small boat harbor the same intensity and urgency was felt and I think it was compounded of two things: one was his having observed the salmon jumping for hours and the second was the reality that the tide would indeed change and create mud flats out there where the salmon schooled. If we had been going out in to the Alaska sound to fish, the tide would not have created any urgency but we fished right there in our front yard so to speak, where the tide moved swiftly, so we had to do that same.

In this image that you've already seen, note the mud flats at the head of the

bay, and the rivers that are draining into the bay. The tide is out which is why the mud flats are visible. I am making several points with this photo. First, the flats are exactly where we trolled for salmon! Second, that gives you an idea of how shallow the water was when we were trolling. Third, the small boat harbor is the top-most dock. The long narrow line sticking straight out into the bay is the jetty created of huge boulders and the small boat dock is the small line facing the jetty. Fourth, our canoe was moored in the small boat harbor, so we were immediately in trolling area as soon as we cleared the harbor created by a shorter jetty on the other side by the San Juan Dock. Fifth, Home brew Alley is just behind the mountain and the bottom edge of the photo so you can how short the distance was from the harbor to our house.

We'd park the car as close as we could to the ramp that went down to the dock. Doors were opened and gear was pulled out on the ground for us kids to haul like little coolies down to the boat. We didn't care. We loved it. Get us out there fishing! Get us on the water! Get us out in god's beauty with Mr. Alice standing tall above us, sun shining fiercely on us. Dad would have to carry the Elgin motor because it was too heavy for mom to carry. The nice thing about the tide and the small boat harbor and these fishing trips is that these trips only took place at a high tide and when the tide was high, so was the dock which meant that the ramp was much flatter than otherwise. That meant he didn't have to carry it along such a steep slope.

We'd get the stuff down to a spot on the dock close to where our canoe was moored anxiously waiting for dad to make it down with the motor. After he was down, he had to get the canoe up to the dock because we didn't always get to tie up right on the dock. I suppose dad chose to not tie up right at the dock to avoid the hassle of having other boats tied outside his. This is just speculation because as I actually try to think today about why he moored where did, I don't know why did but there were usually several reasons for anything he did.

In this shot he's gone out on someone else's boat to use a long pole to pull the

canoe into the dock, or to another boat that we'll use as a bridge to get to the canoe. You can see the breakwater there in the background and the head of the bay beyond that.

Then there were a few solemn minutes when he had to board the canoe, gingerly lift the heavy motor off the dock and into the canoe and then carry it the length of the canoe to the transom. Then he had to carefully lift it over the edge of the transom, over the water, while he carefully fitted the clamps over the transom. Unexpected motion could shake him up and make him drop the motor which would have been a disaster. No one said anything during those tense expectant moments.

When the motor was secured to the transom, we were told to get the stuff on board, hurry now! So we did, handing things up to mom was stood inside the cowling to take the life jackets, poles, gaff, rain gear and whatever else was taken along. Food was not part of these salmon fishing trips because they were so short.

While dad was firing up the outboard motor, we put on our life jackets and

tried to stow the gear so that it was distributed equally, side to side. This was essential to keep the canoe level. We could personally see that problem so were glad to do a little thing to remedy it. Finally we were all set with the outboard engine idling, at which point dad would put the screw in reverse to back us out of our moorage away from the boats next to us. The motor sputtered and made blue smoke bubbles in the water as dad slowly and watchfully pulled us out. Once we were safely outside the other boats dad would throttle back, shift to forward gear and then sit back, looking intently in front of the boat as he increased the throttle slowly and turned it gently to head out to open water.

On this morning, we were highly successful. This mess of salmon numbered 12, probably three for each of us. That's an enormous number of salmon to catch so quickly and so close to home, right there in the tide flats at the head of the bay. There are several kinds but I don't think any of them are silvers because they are too small.

Mom's First Silver Salmon Derby

We went fishing many times but I don't have any idea, really, how often. These fishing trips were highlights of the year, partially because the fish were so large and fought so hard, partly because we were out on the scary ocean in the boat, and probably more because all of us were together doing one thing. That is what made the time so special I think.

On another trip, mom did most of the fishing. Dad liked to troll while she fished because she got such a kick out of catching these huge fish. Everyone who was on the bay, and I mean everyone, knew when Marie Jensen had hooked a salmon. For reasons I don't understand, she was more successful than anyone we encountered. As a result, those other boats for some reason tended to follow dad's course "just in case". It didn't matter where he went, however. She would catch salmon and others wouldn't.

This time she caught seven fish, all large enough to be silvers. It may be that in the preceding photos some of the fish were pinks which are smaller but in this mess they are all silvers.

Note that the weather was wet this day. We fished anytime dad wanted to regardless of the weather. Those are Alley B houses behind her.

Next Marie Salmon Derby

This time the weather was obviously rainy and it must have been a bit cold because she's wearing a wool jacket that I believe is still at 2821 N. She loved it. Her catch this time was only two but they are silvers as you can tell by their size. Enormous fish and they are the funnest to catch because when they are hooked, they jump clear out of the water and seem to dance on the surface with their tail before they fall back. Compare these to the 2003 salmon.

The most memorable catch mom ever made had to do with her technique and noise. The head of the bay always had perhaps a dozen boats slowly trolling in large circles, each boat crossing where others had just been so we were all fairly close but not so close as to snag each others lines that were let out several hundred feet. We were all paying attention to who was having any luck and were aware of each other's techniques, commenting quietly to our boat mates about a particularly good or bad technique.

On this particular occasion, mom whooped when she hooked a big silver, standard response and everyone started paying attention to her because she was pure entertainment. Things were about normal for a while with her yelling and hollering as she fought the game fish that was as intent on getting away as she was in landing it.

Typically, the fish would run away from the point where the line was fastened but this particular fish had a different philosophy. He made a run straight at the boat at which point dad became panicked because he was afraid the line would get snarled in the screw so he was madly shutting down the motor and trying to hoist it up on its blocks to get the screw out of the water. He succeeded and the fish passed clear under the boat. Now mom was standing with her pole over one side of the boat while the fish was running under the boat in the other direction.

She lost her perspective at this point and did the only thing that seemed

natural because she had never had a fish do that sort of thing so had no standard response. Instead of letting out line to keep from breaking it and playing with him to tire him, maybe working him around the boat slowly, she laid the bamboo pile down on the gunwale and used it as a fulcrum try pry the fish back to her side of the boat. Dad was yelling at her to not do that because she was going to break the pole and so on. She didn't hear a thing. She just leaned on the pole that bent into a "U". Dad only settled down after the fish made a run back in the other direction and she finally landed it. Everyone of the bay was laughing and pointing at mom, all 100 pounds of her, yelling and screaming as she fought the fish, trying to pry it back under the boat.

The Railroad Gang

When I went down Homebrew Alley to go to the beach, I crossed the road that went right to the Cannery Dock or left to the center of town. Straight ahead was the railroad spur in this photo that was outfitted with a more or less permanent set of cars. There were for example, sleepers, a kitchen/dining car, an office car, storage cars, a blacksmith car and I don't know what else. The installation was basically permanent so was outfitted with storage sheds along side for their supplies, equipment and materials. This string of cars starts from the bottom and curving up to the access to the City Dock.

Near the bottom on the left you see the curved ends of two Quonset huts that were used for storage. They were left over from WW II days and had been moved from the area over near the Army dock. Two more of them are visible near the top of the photo, not far from the Seward Train Depot just to the left of the top of the telephone pole.

On the right side is the hulk of an old barge that had been grounded many

years before probably after dad and mom left in 1941 because dad's photos of that era don't show it. The barge was left where it was grounded and finally was appropriated by this gang as their personal dock. They constructed a small lean-to sort of shed on it to store their fishing gear. A privy sits next to the barge, used to supplement the primitive toilets on some of the train cars.

To supplement their diet, this creative group bought a boat and started to set crab pots out in the bay. The ones they used were enormous, rectangular heavy duty ones that held dozens of Dungeness crabs. They'd leave them out for a week or so and when they brought them back they had hundreds of crabs. They pulled them out of the pots and prepared them on the barge. They set up wash tubs filled with seawater over some kind of flames. They'd throw their catch into the boiling water and turn them orange. We'd be handed one to take home if we were there while they were doing the job.

There is a tree in the bottom center of the photo that blocks the Kitchen/Dining car. We'd go there to hang out occasionally, hoping that the cook had something good to offer us. We were actually pretty hesitant about accepting food because we knew that mom frowned on accepting things from strangers but what difference would one little cookie make. The cook, and his wife who lived there with him, was always busy, working hard in his humid car and kitchen. There were tables for the gang to sit at but we never went there when they were actually having a meal. It was a bit overpowering to think of being near a bunch of people we didn't know so we restricted our visits to familiars. Just how certain of the crew became familiar is something I don't remember but over time as we wandered down to play on the beach, we got to know some of the men and struck up friendships. The most interesting thing I learned in the cook car was how to dry table ware quickly. They had a commercial dishwasher device to process large quantities of china and flatware, but the flatware needed to be dried. Their technique that impressed the heck out of me for its efficiency, was to throw all of the wet flatware in to a clean four sack and to sort of throw the stuff around inside which did effectively dry it. When I told mom I wanted to dry stuff at home that way, she put her foot down so I never got do to that. But it looked so neat and saved so much time.

Bailey the Blacksmith

One of the guys who became a good friend was the blacksmith. I'd stop by his shop to watch what was going on and he was always a friendly sort of guy who'd chat with us kids like we were worth the time. Probably had small brothers of his own and missed them, up there alone.

I don't think it's just an accident that of all the men who worked on this line, the blacksmith was the one I liked the best. His work was what my own dad did. In this fuzzy snippet you see a shed with the door open. (That's a good sized fishing boat sitting behind the shed, prow facing left, pilot house painted white. These guys were going to repair it and fish in it.) That was his personal storage place for things that wouldn't fit in the adjacent box car where his forge was, where his tools were located. He only worked inside the box car but had to make trips back and forth for stock. He'd talk to us as he worked, asking questions, telling a bit about himself.

Mom and dad became familiar with Bailey through us, perhaps more out of concern than interest. I don't know. But they all became such good friends that Bailey came to our place for dinner several times. In the end, he gave dad a large "Hunting Encyclopedia" as a gift, with an inscription to him. The book was thick and expensive so it was a measure of his appreciate of the kindness of my family taking him in. For us, he was a friend and a source of entertainment.

The other memorable character on the gang was the superintendent or whatever the boss was called. He was a cut above the others. Most of them were common laborers who were paid a wage to bend their backs, but this man was different. He set in an office at a desk in the office car and dressed like he had important work to do and wore a fedora. He was tolerant of us and came to enjoy having us around.

The important contribution he made to my personal life was to introduce me to the postmistress whose name was something like "Miss Peacock." She was a classy dresser, with this neat hat and gloves, and intimidated the socks off me when he introduced us one evening when she was at his office and I happened by.

Remember - I was 9 years old off a farm. During the conversation it came out - probably as the result of his planning it- that she was also a stamp collector. She had some Australian stamps that she'd like to give me if I was interested. Man alive, I nearly wet my pants! I would love to have them so at some future point she gave me some stamps that are still in my collection.

So that man impressed me as a business man, and added something to my upbringing by introducing me to his important business partner who shared some of her personal wealth with me. I loved going down to the rail gang.

LDS & Oddfellows Hall

One day mom or dad saw an advertisement in the newspaper for a meeting that they decided they wanted to attend. It was for LDS people interested in starting up a branch and was to be held at the Carroll family residence. On the appointed Sunday we went to this place and met a number of other LDS who we didn't know lived in Seward. The net result as far as I was concerned was that a branch was organized and dad was appointed the priestincharge of the operation which has certain serious and not entirely pleasant consequences for me

As a little kid I obviously had no comprehension of who was doing what or how this all came to pass but I learned the truth this summer. Wilford Woodruff was one of the men we met and he later married my Aunt Ruth. I found this out because my cousin Bonnie, daughter of my Aunt Ruth telephoned me this summer the only time in my life I have heard from her. She said that Ruth and Wilford were celebrating their 50th Wedding Anniversary the summer of 2003 so the kids were putting together a book to celebrate the occasion. She asked me to send something to include and gave me the address. I wrote something up but then became uncertain about its suitability so I didn't send it in time. However, I decided, what the heck, and mailed it later. That way it got to Ruth but didn't go in to the book where it might not have really fit.

Wilford's Letter

In response, I received a letter from Wilford with two photos. He explained what he was going in Seward and how this meeting at the

Carroll's took place. Here's his letter, followed by one of the photos. Now you have it from the horse's mouth how that meeting was called which lead to so many parts of my Seward life.

"Aug. 9, 2003

Dear Jim,

Your memories to Ruth were most interesting. Let me add a little to your mystery. As you know I am one of those mystery fellows. Another was Darrel MacArthur (sp) from Idaho. He ran the marathon up Marathon mountain on the 4th of July. I will have to think about who the other one was. He will be in my journal. We were all returned missionaries and came from different places and didn't know each other till we got to mile 17 working for the Bureau of Public Roads-known as the BPR. We were there working on building the road between Anchorage and Seward. We were just plumb bobbers-holding the plum bob while others used the instrument. The big earth moving was done by big companies-like Morris / Knudson and others.

There were camps all along the hundred and twenty-one miles doing the work. Ours was the first one out of Seward. We were able on occasions to get a government Chevy Carry All and go into town. We liked Seward. There was a store in town that had and sold music records and would play them loudly so they could be heard on the street. It also had a milk bar where we bought ice cream etc. It was kind of a hang out for the town's youth.

As you know, your dad was a longshoreman. He encouraged us-me anyway, to come in Friday nights and sign up at the union hall. In a little while our names would be called and we would get a night's work. It was easy work. Mostly we just walked along side of the flat cars that received the cargo from the boats, and unloaded them in the big warehouse.

We would always go to your place and visit when we were in town. I too remember the sloping floor. You were right close to the red light district. Not that it made any difference to us, mind you. Your mom and dad were so great to us. I have often thought how fortunate for us it was that your family, and the others were there.

In the boat picture I am the one on the right side sitting down. In the picture with all of you, I took it. Let me tell you a little more .

I met a very beautiful girl in Salt Lake one night on a triple date. She was with another guy. This was a year after I got home from my mission to Australia in 1949. I was infatuated with her big beautiful eyes. -and besides, she listened to my explanations about Anthropology, which I was taking at the time at the University of Utah. She was also attending the University. (She had two jersey sweaters that she often wore. One was red and one was green. Now why should I remember those?) On that first(triple) date I decided to ask her out-which I did, later.

We went out quite a lot. She, of course, was dating others as well. At the time she was living two blocks from the UofU with Viola and Conrad, and little Connie & Raymond.

Spring quarter was just about over, and I knew I needed a summer job. One day I was sitting on a couch that was back to back with another couch. I became aware of a conversation going on between two fellows who were talking about getting a job in Alaska with the BPR. They were civil engineering students. I had just finished a three hour class on mapping using a level. The class was especially designed for Archaeology students. The area has to be mapped before a dig can start so everything can be related etc. With that one class I decided to give the BPR a shot at me. They took it and I was soon flown from Seattle to Anchorage at their expense to work for the summer and then return for my last quarter in the fall at the UofU. My assignment was mile 17 and I boarded the train for Seward along with others.

It was easy getting acquainted with the other returned missionaries. After a week or so we heard of a community dance that was to be held in town. Great! What a break. We got a vehicle and headed over the rough dirt road. At the dance I saw this pretty girl standing waiting to be asked for a dance. I mustered the courage and she accepted. Conversation quickly turned from subject to subject until I revealed my mission to Australia and in return found she and her family were also LDS. She said there were no church meetings in town. Her parents were there too, and we soon decided to put a notice in the paper of a meeting in their—the Carroll'—home.

We were delighted to have show up at that first meeting two families who had just arrived in Seward. They, of course, were yours and Schaefermeyer. There also was a couple by the name of Bennett, as I recall. After just a week or so the Odd Fellows hall was rented for our meetings.

One Sunday Marie told me that Jim's father had written and said that one of Ruth's friends had just gone to Alaska to work for the summer. It was at that

moment that we discovered that the girl I was dating was Jim's sister. Ruth and I had communicated by mail, but I hadn't put the two Jensens together. Jim had even asked Ruth if she would like to come to Alaska and live with them and get a job, but she declined. Wouldn't that have been a surprise that Sunday morning.

I also had a fifteen minute radio program where I read poetry and played tabernacle choir music and talked some about the church. After I left Jim and Art carried on for a while.

At the end of summer, the resident engineer asked me if I would stay until the season of work ended. I asked when that would be. He said when it freezes hard enough that they can't get the gravel out of the pond beds. "When will that be," I said. The answer led me to believe it would be late October or early November. I had only one quarter to finish, so I decided winter quarter would be O.K. I would get two or three more month's pay and they would pay my way home. Otherwise I was responsible for my own air fare home. The frustrating thing was it didn't freeze over until the 8th day of December. I was there six months to the day instead of about three months. That would have been O.K. except that it was cold enough to quit from October on. Every day we thought this would be the end, but they just kept breaking through the frozen crust.

I grew a beard while I was there and didn't tell anyone at home. When I got off the plane in Salt Lake I walked right by my family who had come to greet me. It was quite awhile in the airport before my sister Colleen got up enough courage to walk by me and ask in a questioning voice-"Wilford?". I said, "Yes!" After that I went to see Ruth and shocked her.

While I was away she had moved into an apartment on First Avenue and B Street with three other girls. She called them to come and see her " hairy" friend. After returning home, eating, and shaving off my itchy beard I went back to her apartment with a friend of mine, who had a car, and picked up Ruth-and one of her roommates-for a nice evening out.

Well, there is much more that could be told, but this is far more than you probably wanted.

Wilford "

So that is Wilford's letter and on the next page is the photo I wanted to include. This is an odd sort of photo that I imagine someone cooked up because

Wilford had a beard so a polygamous family image came to someone's mind. Today I look at it and chuckle and wonder what in the heck was going on in those people's heads but it certainly was innocent. Just seems so odd today.

From left to right in the back row is Mom, Mary Schaefermeyer (the ONLY photo I have of her), a woman who I don't remember, and Mrs. Carroll, all standing around Wilford who sits in a chair like a patriarch holding a child with the rest of "his" off spring spread out on the steps.

On the front row, left to right, are Ross Carroll and me. In the middle by himself is "Mikey", Mary Schaefermeyer's son. On the third row there's a Carroll boy on the left, then Billy Schaefermeyer, Dick and a boy who belongs to the woman whose name I don't remember.

This is the place we had church meetings in for the 5 years I lived in Seward, the Oddfellow's hall. It was odd, and I'll tell you a lot about it later in the right spot in time.

I mentioned this photo to mom last week on the phone and she startled me. She said without any hesitation, "I remember that photo!" That naturally interested me because she has such a hard time remembering anything these days. I asked what the occasion was and she said it was after a dinner there in the

Oddfellow's hall. When I asked for more details, she had none but asked me to send a copy of it to her because she wanted to see it.

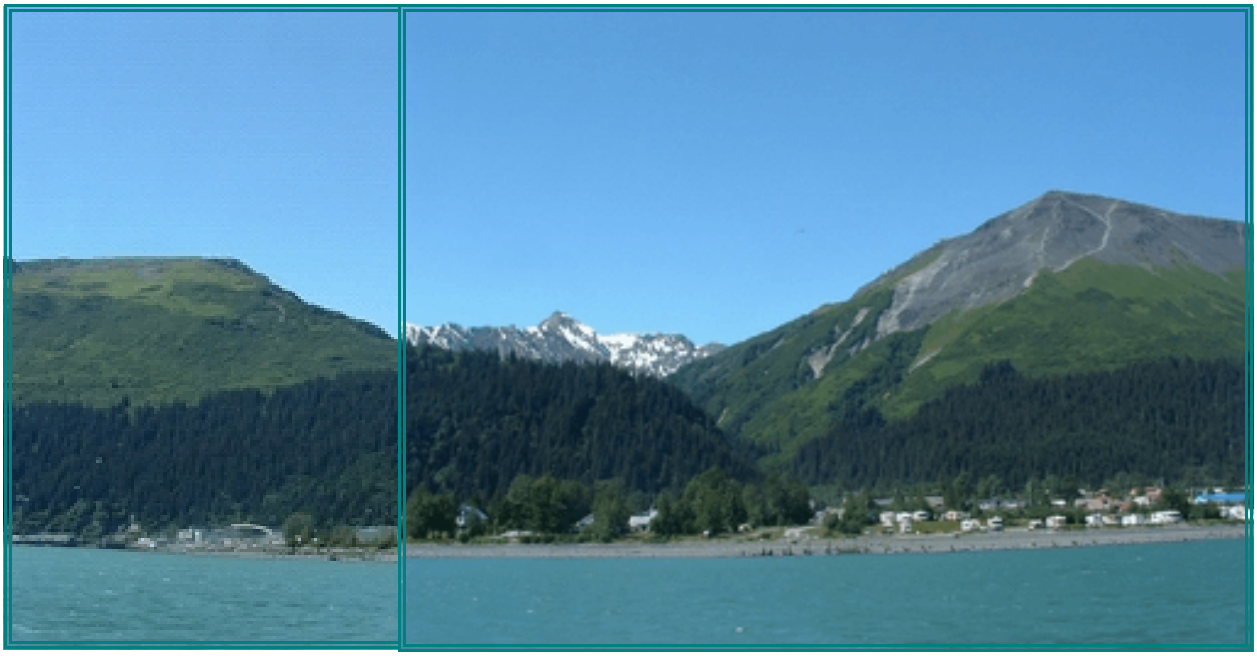
Big Bear Cairn

I wonder if it's still there. One day dad got a wild hare and decided he needed to climb Big Bear Mountain again. His photos show he did it at least one time in 1941 so this was at least his second trip. On the day he was ready to do it, he grabbed a small pack, put some grub it in, and took off for the top. He never walked. We got to the top and spent a couple of hours there and we built a cairn. Know what that is? A monument sort of affair made out of rocks that you pick up in the vicinity and just pile as high as you want. Ours was probably three feet and probably got pushed over many years ago but I still wonder. There were no other cairns up there and I like to think ours withstood the tests of time. Silly me.

To give you a sense of Big Bear I have to go to my 2003 photos to get a perspective that will show specifically what this day climb was about. This image was taken from the artificial landing created where the Fourth of July Creek USED to run.

My apologies for the fuzziness of this image. The day was too bright for the settings I was using on the new digital camera that I am still learning to handle. But this image does the job. Right in the center of the image is Mt. Marathon. However, it is not the tallest mountain, rather is the peak in front of the highest peak. To the left and at almost the same altitude you see Big Bear. Once more, there is a taller peak behind it but Big Bear is approximately the same altitude as Marathon, except a bit taller.

Here's a blend of 2003 photos, Big Bear is the left peak and Mt. Marathon the right one, that gives you a clearer perspective of the situation. Notice that



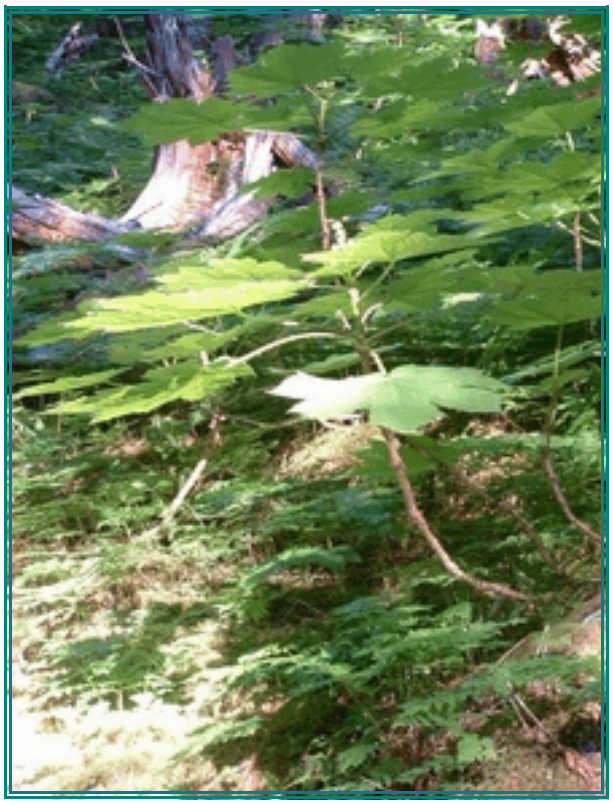
ALL the docks are gone. In this pair, Bear doesn't look quite as tall as Marathon but in reality it is a bit taller as you could see in the single image of both above. The dark green mountain in the middle of this joint image is Little Bear, though it obviously runs into Big Bear. Just where would you draw a dividing line? Homebrew Alley, that no longer existed when these photos were taken, would have been somewhere to the left side of the vertical lines.

Now you know where the peak is that dad, Dick and I climbed that rainy gray day. Our house was obviously the starting point. Grayness and rain didn't make much difference to us in those days. If we were going to do something, we did it. Gray and wet was the nature of that universe and to have hoped or waited for something different would have been a little bit like waiting for a monsoon in the Mojave Desert. We just decided when we were going to do something and dressed appropriately for the weather - which was basically gray and wet anyway.

To get underway was disarmingly simple. We just stepped out the door from the back porch and we were standing on a steep slope of Little Bear. We climbed up a short distance and found a trail that ran horizontally and followed it to the south (left). Dad knew where a good vertical trail was to get us up onto Big Bear which he did. There was the usual underbrush consisting of berry bushes, bushes I didn't

know what they were named, devil's club, scrubby alder along with spruce or pine or some kind of evergreens. Dad tried unsuccessfully to teach me how to tell evergreens apart but I never learned. Blue spruce I could tell because it hurt the back of your hand if you slapped it that way, cedar I could tell by the unusual shape, and hemlock I could tell by its lacy branches, but pines? Not on your life.

Take a break and look at a 2003 sunshine photo devil's club. It is properly named. These inch thick stalks that love the shade under the forest run 3-6 feet in length and are covered with sharp spines about a quarter of an inch long. They are needle-like rather than fat at the base like rose spines. That is one difference, the other difference, the big one, is the fact that each spine is tipped with a chemical that is injected when your skin is pierced. The first effect of the chemical is to make the hole burn fairly badly, more than from stinging nettle that abounded. The second effect was slower manifesting itself. A pustule develops over night, whether from infection of chemistry I don't know, but I know they are real. So you did your best to avoid the stuff. This stuff was omnipresent, part of the background so we never got away from it which is why I spend so much time emphasizing it here. We were getting exposed to the darn stuff most of the time we were hiking. The leaves were beautiful, like tiny flat umbrellas but they were as treacherous as the stalk, covered with nasty spines.



Dad took a set of six photos that I'm going to include because, first, they are so dramatic, and second, they show so much important information about the locale, give perspectives otherwise unavailable. They actually are the best documentation in dad's things of what the head of the bay was like, how big the town was, what the docks were like and so on. You'll see these many times.

Dick and I are sitting on top of Big Bear, looking due north, straight across Lowell Canyon to the top of Mt. Marathon. This shows you the route of the marathon race run each Fourth of July. The trail is a light gray scar that follows the rim.

The wide 'scar' is a shale slide. It serves as a chute for runners who get from the 3,000 foot peak to the foot in 15 minutes, taking 20 foot leaps. Woe to the runner who falls in his shorts, because his legs are lacerated by the sharp shale rocks.

This chute was also served the source for snow slides every winter that put a permanent pile of snow on the floor of Lowell Canyon, right next to the trail. We used this snow all summer for cooling home made root beer.

On the right side of the image you see a sliver of a River that appears to be flowing out from where the Exit Glacier is, though we'd never heard of the thing.

The pack we're holding was small, and military, being marked "U.S.". It was made to be worn like a sandwich board over the head, one pack riding on your chest and the other riding on your back. It had ties on both sides of the bottom so it could be tied into place. That way it didn't slip around when you were running or twisting over difficult places in the trail.

When we did these kinds of outings the food we took was standardized according to dad's preferences: a loaf of sliced bread, a pound of sliced baloney in white butcher paper with paper tape holding it closed, and a few oranges for juice. We didn't take water with us because it was safe to drink from any of the streams that were clear. When we got hungry we'd ask for a sandwich and if dad was in the mood at the moment, he'd take the pack off, open it up, pull out the bread and baloney. He'd tear open the paper package of meat and put one thick slice between two slices of bread. That was a sandwich. He handed it to us and we ate it. That simple. No condiments and no complaints. We learned real early and real well that if we complained about the grub we just didn't need to eat any of it. So there. When you were (1) trained this way and (2) hungry, these dry-sounding sandwiches were wonderful and we'd eat a second one some days.

Dad was obviously enamored of that peak. He took more photos from that one spot that I remember him taking from any point I ever went to with him. His appreciation of the site was well founded as you can see.

Dick and I are sitting, posed which was not his preferred method of photo taking in his later years, on a pair of granite boulders in front of this astounding backdrop. The canyon or valley is Lowell canyon that was created by Marathon on the right and Bear on the left. The snow in the background stayed year round. It wasn't deep enough to qualify as glaciers but was basically glacier.

This is the source of the water that wreaked havoc with the town each spring for obvious reasons. When all those steeply angled surfaces let go of their snow cover at the same time, there was a torrent of water, and it raged down that steep canyon. That's why the town never did succeed in taming the spring floods in spite of elaborate expensive attempts. And that's why the Army Corps of Engineers was finally called upon to bore the tunnel through little Bear to divert the water entirely out of this canyon. You've seen the outlet discussed above and here you see the business end of the river that seemed pretty innocuous most of the year. Deceitful little thing.

This image is going to pop up all over the place below because it is astonishingly full of details about the locale that I can't find in any other images. I'll only point out here the steepness of the slope. We stand there on that outcropping of rock in front of the town.

This place confused me in a particular sense because it was so open and so close to town. Odd reasons for a location to be confusing. I was used to climbing all over the place, hiking through weeds and brush and so on, but this setting presented a new challenge. I needed to pee while we were building the cairn and held it as long as I could. As long as I was focused on finding rocks to build a cairn, I could ignore the pain but finally that didn't even work. I looked around but there was no obvious place to do the job, so I whispered to dad that I "had to do number one". He gave me an odd look which prompted me to explain as I looked sideways as the town, "They might see me." He didn't really demean me though I knew by his response that he thought my modesty was excessive. He simply said, "Just go anywhere and turn your back." I did but the whole town was down there watching and I still had some anxiety about being seen do the deed in spite of dad's calmness about it.

The steep slope was obviously a lot of work while we were hiking but it provided some great entertainment later. Part of the reason the entertainment was entertaining was because it was unpredictable that my dad, my own personal dad, would do what he did. Our take on him was that he was a hard a.. and stingy and cheap and hoarded food and so on. A miser, humorless so on. Sound familiar?!

Well, you've seen the photos of him hamming it up so you know that in fact he was also a joker, a trait he concealed from his kids - why? I don't know but I wish he hadn't. In any event, he let his hair down as the saying goes when we got to dessert. We were sitting on the steep slope, practically sliding, looking down to the bay, across to Mt. Alice, Fourth of July glacier, Fourth of July creek, the mud flats and rivers, Mt. Marathon, the town, Fox Island, the Sound. After we had finished our sandwiches -without anything to drink- dad re-wrapped to baloney and bread and stowed it in the pack. He pulled out the big naval, expensive oranges and took one for himself. Then he handed each of us our orange and did the most astounding thing. He gestured to the steep slope and said, "Go ahead." He mimed throwing the orange down hill. Man alive, the man had lost his mind. My DAD? Telling me to waste food that way, telling me to do something outrageous, telling me to do something for the pure hell of it, all while he was right there to observe it?

Well, it didn't take a second offer. One of us cocked his arm back, looked one more time at dad just to be sure at which point he sort of nodded impatiently, and then the orange was rolled down hill. Dad had suggested rolling as opposed to throwing because he knew what was going to happen. Most kid would have just pitched the thing like a baseball. We all sat still watching this little orange ball roll, gathering speed, starting to bounce, bouncing higher and higher until it reached a sort of cliff at which point it exploded into pieces which disappeared over the edge forever. We were transfixed. Then the other kid repeated the action. Note the parsimoniousness of the occasion. Instead of squandering two oranges simultaneously, we each, without any order from the lord, understood that the best way to do the thing was to do it serially. That way we got to watch the whole event unfold two times. It was sort of a reprise of our Easter Egg rolls in Vernal that we couldn't do anymore on account of the water and vegetation and general nastiness of Easter Sunday.

After it was over, there was no complaint or criticism. I don't remember whether we dared tell mom about wasting two pricey oranges that way.

There are the last two photos that repeat what we saw.

This last photo of the set is particularly interesting in light of future developments, things that we would not have dreamed would even be considered, much less accomplished.

This shows the omni-present Mt. Alice above our heads and on the right side across the bay you see the Fourth of July Creek. Here it is flowing out the left side of the delta it created. It is spawned by the Glacier we knew as the Fourth of July Glacier though today it's called "Godwin's Glacier."

The interesting point is this: Darrell Schaefermeyer and a consortium of people decide that after the great Tsunami had destroyed all of the docks that Seward needed a new facility to repair ships. As a result, they obtained funding to finally divert the river to the right side of that delta! And they did it.

Dick's Broken Glasses

For some reason Dickie seemed to have chronic brokenglassitis. I don't think there was any intention on his part to break his bifocals because he paid a pretty heavy surcharge each time they had to be repaired or replaced. But for some reason he constantly broke them. New ones, old ones. He broke them.

Well, coming down from Big Bear that day poor Dick was a victim of circumstances that broke his glasses and simultaneously saved him the pain of a lecture. The underbrush was so dense that none of us could see more than five or six feet in front of us because branches were right there. We could tell when to change course by the change in the direction of the sound that we were homing on. Along the way as we did these sort of outings, we were learning the lore that went with them. One of the adages that we probably should have learned, and probably did hear multiple times, was, "Don't follow too closely!" As we neared the bottom of Big Bear, headed like horses for the barn, Dick sort of closed up on dad. Dad didn't know it and Dick didn't really understand it. In an instant as dad passed through some branches bending them forward to pass, he released them, focusing on getting down before it got too dark.

As the branch flipped back, Dick came forward and presented his glasses to the branch, which broke the glasses and inflicted an injury to his face. His yells stopped everything as we re-grouped to see how badly hurt he was. He was bleeding badly and his glass parts were hanging about his face. He knew better than to compound the problem by losing them. Dad didn't criticize him much because of the extent of the injury. Dick's eye was spared and so was he. We got down off the mountain and mom did her usual exam and repair job. She might was well have been a trained surgeon for all the emergency repairs she had to do.

Money was short, as usual, so mom and dad weren't too excited about spending any on repairing Dick's glasses. Given the fact of his constantly breaking them, dad decided that he'd find a way to repair them himself. He contacted the dentist and arranged to get some of the plastic material that was used to make dentures. After learning how to mix the stuff and how to work it, he took Dick's glass parts and re-constructed a set of glasses that never broke again.

Wind Skating

That isn't what we called it. We didn't call it anything in fact. We just did it. Winds in the winter could be really strong. And cold. I don't actually know how cold the temperature got, just that it was really cold, that things froze in the late fall and stayed frozen until May, that snow stayed around, and that ice was everywhere. So we dressed warmly. Our first winter coats were navy pea coats that mom bought at Andy's Army Surplus store.

They were made out of navy blue wool and had the double-breasted front with large flat buttons that had an anchor engraved in the center. In addition to the coats, mom bought us warm hats made out of sheepskin. The leather was on the outside with soft clipped wool on the inside. There were flaps to pull down over our ears and tie under our chin with a short visor we would pull down over our forehead. Wool mittens and galoshes over our shoes completed our winter outfits. They did a reasonable job keeping us warm most of the time but if we stayed outside a long time, we got cold, particularly our hands.

Over on Second Avenue on the block just east of Homebrew Alley, there was a long steep slope that wasn't traveled too much. Fourth Avenue was main street so had lots of traffic, but Second Avenue was a side street that was only used by people who lived on Second Avenue. This meant that it was pretty safe for us to sled if we wanted to. But on some days the winter blew so hard that we'd about freeze our faces in half an hour, hardly able to move our lips when we tried to talk, just because of the wind.

When the road was covered with smooth ice, we would find large pieces of cardboard and try to use them as sails. We'd walk up to the end of the block and turn around to face the bay. Then we'd hold the cardboard sail up behind our backs an allow the wind to push on it. Most of the time it either blew the cardboard out of our hand, or it pushed us over. The amount of force created by the wind on that large surface was too much for us little kids to handle so we didn't But on rare occasions, we would succeed in getting everything to work. We would sail on our feet down the road, faster and faster, becoming fearful about how we would crash, so we would lie down on the ice and slide to a stop.