The Dawn of Aviation around
LAKE CLARK PASS
1927-1960

with the Diaries of
HELEN BEEMAN DENISON
1943-1952

John B. Branson
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An early 1960s view from the Alsworth home looking east over Hardenberg Bay with Babe's SR-JR ready for loading freight, an amphibian airplane taxis in for fuel, and the Elmer Bly House visible on the point. Photo courtesy Margaret “Sis” Clum. H-2931.
As the nation’s principal conservation agency, the Department of the Interior has responsibility for most of our nationally owned public lands and natural and cultural resources. This includes fostering the conservation of our land and water resources, protecting our fish and wildlife, preserving the environmental and cultural values of our national parks and historical places, and providing for enjoyment of life through outdoor recreation.

The Cultural Resource Programs of the National Park Service have responsibilities that include stewardship of historic buildings, museum collections, archeological sites, cultural landscapes, oral and written histories, and ethnographic resources.

Our mission is to identify, evaluate and preserve the cultural resources of the park areas and to bring an understanding of these resources to the public. Congress has mandated that we preserve these resources because they are important components of our national and personal identity.

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Cover image:
An oil painting by LBowman in 2001 documenting the first aircraft landing at Tanalian Point on June 30; 1930. Matt Nieminen piloted a Waco 10 belonging to Alaskan Airways; Inc. of Anchorage. The people portrayed in the painting are left to right: Joe Kackley, Matt Nieminen, Doc Dutton, Alex Trefon, Pete Trefon, and Katie Trefon. In the background is the Dutton-Kackley Cabin and Tanalian Mountain. Photo courtesy of the writer/editor.
Acknowledgments

I am most grateful to my neighbor Anne Coray for editing early drafts of the manuscript and her efforts made for a smoother read. Any remaining deficiencies in the text are on me and not Anne.

Special thanks is due to Alaska Airlines and Scott Satterfield for allowing Lake Clark National Park and Preserve to publish the “Prologue” from the late Archie Satterfield’s history entitled The Alaska Airline Story. The “Prologue” chronicles a heroic 1939 mercy flight from Anchorage to Port Moller medevacing a critically ill women to Anchorage.

I am most grateful to Sonny Petersen for allowing Lake Clark National Park and Preserve to publish his father, Raymond Petersen’s 1934 letter to his parents, documenting Ray’s initial flight through Lake Clark Pass.

Another thank you is in order to Bella and Heidi Hammond for allowing the park to publish Jay Hammond’s eulogy for the pioneering Lake Clark aviator Babe Alsworth.

This publication would not have been possible had not LaVerne Denison Larson and her son, Terry, and daughter-in-law, Rhonda, given complete access to Helen Mae Beeman Denison’s diary to Lake Clark National Park and Preserve. A copy was thought to have been given to park historian Sara Hornberger by Floyd Denison in the mid-1980s. ¹

Many of my colleagues at Lake Clark National Park and Preserve deserve my sincere thanks for according me all manner of assistance in rounding out the manuscript to be publication ready. Long-time Volunteer-in-the-Park Jeanette Mills typed a copy of Helen Mae Beeman Denison’s diary which a essential first step to editing and annotating the diary. Administrative Technician Liz Wilcox and Administrative Assistant Lynn Welty, Interpretation Rangers Lucas Westcott and Tia Vaughan, Fish biologist Dan Young, Chief of Natural Resources Buck Mangipane, wildlife biologist Ellen Martin, Cultural Anthropologist Karen Evanoff, Maintenance worker George Alexie, and Julie Rose, GIS Specialist all provided essential assistance to me during the preparation of this book. Finally I want to thank my supervisor, Liza Rupp, Chief of Cultural Resources, and Park Superintendent Susanne Fleek-Green for their support throughout this project.

I would like to thank these friends and neighbors who helped me in various ways to fill in the blanks in Helen’s diary. Shirley Hill Nielsen of Kokhanok, and her brother Lary Hill and Alice Hedlund of Iliamna, Aggie Alexie and Gladys Evanoff of Nondalton, Martha Trefon of Chai Point and Anchorage, Butch and Pauline Hobson of Lake Clark.

¹ LaVerne Denison Larson, conversation with the editor, July 6, 2018.
Preface

A book documenting the advent and development of aviation around the Lake Clark region has long been needed. This book attempts to address the need to illuminate the early history of flight in the area and to a lesser extent in the wider Bristol Bay region. The history of Port Alsworth and of the last two decades of Tanalian Point (1930-1950), the predecessor village of Port Alsworth, has been defined by the accessibility of people and goods and services brought about by aircraft. The very raison d'être for the existence of Port Alsworth is civil and commercial aviation.

Many pilots consider the Babe and Mary Alsworth Homestead to have been situated in the most ideal location between Iliamna and Anchorage for aircraft operations; landings with floats and skis on Hardenberg Bay in summer or winter with an adjacent 3,800 foot landing strip running east-west. The western terminus of the critical Lake Clark Pass is only about 25 miles east of Port Alsworth. The Alsworth Homestead from its earliest days provided a snug refuge from the vagaries of the ever-changing weather for pilots and their airplanes. From the early 1930s pilots have spent days and nights at Tanalian Point at Floyd and Lena Denison’s house and after 1944 with Babe and Mary Alsworth waiting for Lake Clark Pass to open so they could proceed to Anchorage. In one unusually long example, around Christmas of 1953 Jay and Bella Hammond left their home in Naknek bound for Vermont to visit Jay’s parents when ice fog kept them at the Alsworth’s Homestead for one week before they could proceed to Anchorage to catch a commercial flight to the continental U.S.

This book is primarily an effort to illuminate the early years of the development of aviation and its influence on the lives of the people who lived around Lake Clark and Nondalton. The Lake Clark-Iliamna area was strategically situated half-way between the Anchorage commercial and transportation hub and the dynamic Bristol Bay commercial salmon fishery and the nascent sport hunting and sport fishing industries that commercial aviation enabled during the 1930s and 1940s.

The terse Helen Mae Denison diary has been augmented and clarified, where possible, by some 300 footnotes to provide readers with more historic context. Helen Denison’s rather enigmatic life has been illuminated by Elizabeth Appleton’s timeline and brief biographical sketch. The grandchildren and great grandchildren of Charlie Denison do not know much about Helen’s background and consequently Ms. Appleton’s research will be welcomed news to them and others. Ms. Appleton is a Technical Services Supervisor at the St. Joseph, Michigan Public Library who did some foundational research on Helen’s life because Helen lived in that Michigan city when she was a child. The diary documents the role of aviation in Helen’s Alaska life before and after she moved to Lake Clark and married Charlie Denison in 1944-1945. Reading Helen’s diary one always wishes for more detail, but the fact she documented so many people and their travels around the lake and to Anchorage provides eye witness testimony about the growing reliance on aviation Alaskans came to take for granted. There were no roads in bush Alaska but pilots and their airplanes filled that void just as well.

Another chapter of the book, “The Development of Aviation in the Lake Clark Area, 1927-1968,” is a brief account of the first bush pilots and their flying services to operate around Lake Clark on their way to and from the Bristol Bay coast and Anchorage. Pilots such as Russel Merrill, Matt Nieminen, Oscar Winchell, and Bob Ellis and such flying services as Anchorage Air Transport, McGee Airways, Star Air Service, and finally Alaska Air Lines in 1942-1944. Babe Alsworth began operating on Lake Clark the summer of 1942, although he and his wife, Mary, did not move from the north shore of Lake Clark to Hardenberg Bay until August 1944.
I was unable to find any photo of Helen at the time she lived in St. Joseph. But I did manage to gather a fairly good outline of her life, and from what I gathered, Helen was kind of amazing.

To give a brief synopsis, she was born in Grand Rapids, Michigan and lived in St. Joseph for a brief period when she was 4. Her family then moved to Three Rivers, Michigan where her mother passed away when Helen was about 5. Her father remarried a year later, and the family moved to Lansing, Michigan. When Helen was 18 she married, had a child about a year later, and then divorced from her husband, Leland Brass.

After the divorce, I believe she went to college at Michigan State College (a precursor to Michigan State University in Lansing). It’s here where there is a mild leap of faith in my research. While I mostly tracked Helen through her maiden name, Beeman, on a hunch, I searched for Helen Mae Brass in Ancestry.com and found Michigan State College yearbooks from 1928 and 1929, the years following her divorce. While all that is included in the yearbooks is the name Helen M. Brass, it had the correct city she lived in, Lansing. Whether you trust this deduction is up to you, as there is nothing completely solid linking Helen Beeman to this college, but I believe it is a reasonable leap of faith.

I know you asked specifically about Helen’s nurses training, but again, I came up with nothing concrete enough for me to give a definite answer. I did find a Helen Beeman who was a student nurse in 1930, however the Helen Beeman that showed up on the 1930s census in New York stated she was from New York, and her parents were from New York. Could this be the same Helen, I don’t know? I think it is suggestive that the Helen Beeman on the 1930s census in New York claimed to have 2 years of college—the same as the Helen Beeman from Michigan, but why would she lie on a census? The other family trees that I found on Ancestry that linked with Helen Beeman all were missing her whereabouts in the 1930s census, which is odd as well. So could this be the same Helen, maybe? I think it’s suggestive, but I don’t know if a solid link could be made unless you were able to access Helen Beeman’s student nurse records, which I am not sure are even available. So this just may just remain a mystery.

Although the location and whereabouts of Helen are a bit foggy in the 1930s, she’s definitely back on the census records in 1940. At this point she is living in New York on her own, working as a nurse (again, which makes the 1930s census a bit more interesting), it is likely it is her, but I don’t understand why the misinformation (if it was her) about her place of origin, maybe looking for a clean start? On the 1940s census she stated she lived in Chicago in 1935, but I couldn’t see any records of her in Illinois from that time period.
After the 1940s census, she’s gone – obviously she went from there to Alaska, and her trail is cold. Because I am kind of a curious person, I also tracked her son, again mostly through the census and other legal documents. He lived with both sets of his grandparents at different stages of his life, and when he was 18 he got married. He moved around a bit and eventually settled in Seattle, Washington where he passed away in 1993.

Because the information I found was so detailed, I wanted to make sure I gave a more precise breakdown of Helen’s timeline. I have attached a word document with the dates and where I found various information.

Born in Grand Rapids, Michigan about 1906 (information gathered from Ancestry.com)

By 1910 (she was age 4) she was living in St. Joseph, Michigan at 711 7th Street (this street is no longer in existence, but used to be near Lions Park Drive perpendicular to the beach.) The subdivision she lived in was called Shepherd’s Subdivision. (1910 census on Ancestry.com, and also 1903 Platt Map for St. Joseph.)

In 1910, her father worked as a postal clerk for the local post office, household members were Howard Beeman 26, Emma Beeman 26, Helen 4, Olive 2, and Martin Miller, father-in-law, 63. (Information gathered from the 1910 census on Ancestry.)

On 20 May 1911, Helen’s mom, Emma, died while the family lived in Three Rivers, Michigan. She is buried at Riverside Cemetery. (Find a Grave.com)

On August 26, 1912 Howard Leland remarried Hazel Griswold in South Lyon, Michigan. At the time of the marriage, Howard was living in Three Rivers, Michigan and worked for the railroad.

In 1920, the Beeman family lived in Wheatfield, Ingham County, Michigan (near Lansing), and the family consisted of Howard 36, Hazel 32 (new wife), Helen 13, and Olive 11. (Ancestry.com).

On 21 August 1924, when Helen was 18, she married Leland M. Brass in Lansing, Michigan. (Michigan Marriage records available through Ancestry).

Leland and Helen had a child, Howard Leland Brass, 20 September 1925. (Ancestry.com, on the Severence Family Tree.)

By January 29, 1927 the marriage between Helen and Leland had broken down, and Helen filed for divorce citing “Extreme and repeated cruelty, and non-support.” The divorce was granted on August 13, 1927 and Helen was given alimony. (Michigan divorce records for Leland Brass 1997-1952 accessed via Ancestry.)

In 1928, a freshman was enrolled at Michigan State College named Helen M. Brass. (Digitized records, 1928 Michigan State College yearbook.) This very well could be Helen Beeman, she did go to college at some point, and Michigan State College (precursor to Michigan State University) was located in Lansing which was close to her family and where she lived at the time.

In 1929, Helen M. Brass appears in the 1929 Michigan State College yearbook under the major Home Economics. Again, although her married name is used, I feel fairly confident that it is the same Helen Beeman, that she received 2 years of college education, and Michigan State College Home Economics was the only course open to women at this time.

After the divorce, it appears that Howard Leland Brass, Helen’s son, lived with his paternal grandparents (according to the 1930s census). By the 1940 census, Howard was living with his maternal grandparents, and he married in 1945 at the age of 19. (Census records 1930 and 1940).

By 1935, Helen was living in Chicago and working as a nurse.

In 1940, Helen was living in New York, New York working as a nurse for the Department of Health. She was living alone in a rented apartment, unmarried, working full time at about 48 hours a week. The highest education that Helen received was 2nd year of college. Unfortunately, the college she attended was not cited. She earned a wage of $1,260/year. (1940 census).2

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Elizabeth Appleton, e-mail message to the editor, January 6, 2017.
The Enigmatic Helen Mae Beeman Denison

by John Branson

I was only able to begin to unlock Helen Mae Beeman Denison’s origins after obtaining a copy of her death certificate from the State of Alaska. Helen was born in Grand Rapids, Michigan and this ultimately put me in touch with Technical Services Supervisor Elizabeth Appleton of the St. Joseph, Michigan Public Library. Elizabeth traced Helen from her birth in 1906 to her life in New York City in 1940. No one in Alaska knew much about Helen’s early life, and even now, 64 years after her death, as her diary is on the cusp of publication, Helen is still an enigmatic character. Few people around the Lake Clark-Iliamna area today know who was Helen Mae Beeman Denison, much less recall her. Only Shirley Hill Nielsen of Kokhanok, and her brother Lary Hill and Alice Hedlund of Iliamna, and Aggie Alexie of Nondalton knew her at Port Alsworth in the late 1940s and early 1950s, but time has even dimmed those long ago interactions.

Even Helen’s contemporaries (such as Mary Alsworth, Terry Gill, Bernie Hadfield, and Floyd Denison) who were interviewed by National Park Service historian Sara Hornberger in the mid-1980s, had little to say about her. What follows is all that a researcher has been able to glean from those interviews.

Helen died at the home she shared with her husband, Charlie Denison, on Lake Clark at Port Alsworth on March 30, 1954. Her last diary entry was made on October 20, 1952; that she lived another 15 months without confiding in her diary is a silent testament that her last year was a very difficult one. According to Mary Alsworth, who was a friend of Helen’s, she died of cancer. Her death certificate lists cause of death as “cardiac condition and apparently kidney complications.” She is buried in an unmarked grave, but next to Charlie’s grave a few hundred yards west of their house on Lake Clark.

It was Mary Alsworth who first documented Helen Beeman in Alaska because Helen delivered Mary’s first child, Leon Jr., on July 12, 1943 at Kanakanak Hospital. After contacting tuberculosis the baby died on April 1, 1944 and was buried on a terrace overlooking the Alsworth’s first home on the north shore of Lake Clark.

Kvichak River cannery man and Bonanza Creek miner, Terry Gill, worked with Charlie Denison on his sawmill and got to know Helen in 1948. Terry stated that Helen was an excellent cook. He also recalled that sawmill worker Ray Brower used to grouse to him about having to frequently pack water from Lake Clark for Helen’s bath.

Helen’s active life becomes more accessible to readers once she begins keeping her diary on November 20th, 1943 at the U.S. Public Health Service Hospital at Kanakanak, seven miles west of Dillingham, Alaska. Although she does not reveal much about her private thoughts, readers understand her independence and her courage in leaving her nursing career and striking off to marry Charlie Denison at Lake Clark. That was truly a bold move on Helen’s part.

Until she left nursing for life at Lake Clark, her time with the U.S. Public Health Service in war-time Alaska territory was very peripatetic and stressful. A closer look at the path of her career is warranted. Helen seemed to enjoy her busy time nursing and socializing at Kanakanak Hospital and Dillingham but she notes on June 13, 1944 that she has been ordered to go work at the hospital in Bethel. However, she resigned rather than take the transfer. On June 16 she was offered a


5 Terry Gill, interview with Sara Hornberger, August 29, 1984, 3.
transfer to Tanana instead, and she took it. On June 19 Helen told a colleague she planned on returning to Kanakanak.

Helen left Kanakanak on July 7 by aircraft and arrived in Anchorage in the early evening. On July 10 Helen flew from Anchorage to Fairbanks. On July 12 she flew from Fairbanks to Tanana on the Yukon River.

On August 1 the United States Indian Service (USIS) directed her to transfer to Kotzebue on the Northwest Arctic coast. However, nothing ever materialized with that proposed move. Instead, on September 23 Helen was ordered to go to Juneau. Her next travels saw Helen leave Fairbanks on September 29 and be in Anchorage on September 30, and in Iliamna on October 1. On October 4, Babe Alssworth flew Helen from Iliamna to Tanalian Point on Lake Clark where she met widower Charlie Denison and stayed with the Jim and Glenna Kennedy family at the Point. This sojourn to Lake Clark must have been a reconnaissance for Helen to check out Denison and Lake Clark to determine her compatibility with both. Obviously, she left Lake Clark with positive feelings for Denison and the other folks she met and the overwhelming scenic beauty of the Lake Clark country. Informed speculation suggests that Babe and Mary Alssworth, knowing both the recently widowed Charlie Denison and Helen Beeman’s single status, played match-makers in introducing Charlie and Helen to one another.

On October 7 Babe flew Helen to Anchorage. On October 17 Helen was ordered to Juneau via Whitehorse, Yukon Territory, arriving in Juneau on October 18. On October 19 Helen confided to her diary: “How I hate Juneau. Rain, rain and all up and down.”

On December 15, 1944 Helen wrote: “Unable to work my last day.” Previously, she had twisted her ankle. She must have finally resigned her job, knowing she could begin her life anew with Charlie Denison at Lake Clark. On December 18 she flew out of Juneau writing: “Left Juneau about noon. Did not ever look back.” On December 20 she arrived in Seward and later that day flew to Anchorage. On December 22 she flew to Iliamna on Alaska Airlines. On December 29, 1944 Helen arrived at Lake Clark for the second time to a “nice reception.”

On March 8, 1945 Franklin Smith flew over to Tanalian Point from his home in the Nushagak River country and married Helen Mae Beeman and Charlie Denison at Otis M. “Doc” Dutton’s house. For the next several years Helen would live a very busy subsistence lifestyle with her husband, punctuated with house calls to deliver babies and treat injuries and one accidental gunshot wound around Lake Clark and Iliamna. Reading her diary, one understands that she did not possess the vigorous health that Charlie was endowed with. But as her diary attests when she was healthy Helen was a hard worker and accomplished a great deal. Her last 15 months, however, must have been a very difficult time for her and Charlie as her illness became terminal.

Fortunately for posterity, Helen documented the transition from dog sled and motor boat days to the hustle bustle and the ultimate hegemony of the aviation over Alaska’s vastness, particularly bush Alaska. When Helen married Charlie Denison she married a workaholic. Reading the terse diary, it quickly becomes apparent that Helen took to Charlie’s subsistence life, even if she could not keep up with his nearly relentless pace. Nevertheless, she more than carried her own weight until her declining health intervened. Besides the never-ending cooking, washing, and house cleaning she was feeding lots of guests who were assisting Charlie in the woods or sawing logs. Helen fired the steam boiler, worked the thickness planer, helped with salmon fishing and preservation, canned vegetables, moose meat, and jelly, and participated with Charlie in various home improvement projects.

Perhaps the main reason Helen’s diary is an important historical record is because she offers a firsthand account of the life of a working woman in war-time territorial Alaska. Her role as a registered or practical nurse in the bush, where there were few if any medical professionals in the Bristol Bay region other than those working at Kanakanak Hospital is revelatory. The first documented Registered Nurse to live in the Bristol Bay region was Phillippine King, at the Moravian Mission of Carmel, at Kanulik in Nushagak Bay in 1896. However, Bristol Bay canneries had doctors and nurses on staff during the fishing season, likely as early as the late 1880s, but it was in place by at least 1918-1919 when the Spanish influenza hit the Bristol Bay region. Dr. Joseph Romig, a Moravian missionary at Carmel was the first resident doctor to reside in the Bristol Bay region during 1904-1905. He attempted to start a for-profit hospital at Nushagak or “New Kanakanak” serving the local populace and cannery workers, but the idea was not viable because of the low population and few could afford to get sick. However, it was not until the early 20th century when the first medical doctors, Dr. Henry Schalaben and Dr. Linius Hiram French treated the sick in Old Nondalton in 1908-1909 and 1914 and 1916 respectively. The Lake Clark area was more remote and more difficult to access than were the canneries on the Bristol Bay coast. It was not until 1936 when Norma Bowman, registered nurse, moved to Portage Creek that a nurse lived on Lake Clark. Helen was the second nurse. In 1950 Bertha Mooter became the third resident nurse on the lake. Since neither Elizabeth Appleton nor I were able to find documentation on the extent of Helen’s nursing education it is not known whether she was a registered nurse or a practical nurse.

In addition, Helen’s diary is important because she arrived at Lake Clark to live with Charlie Denison just four months after Babe and Mary Alsworth moved to

8 Henkelmann and Vitt, op. cit., 163; VanStone, ibid., 45.
the perfect location to establish their aviation-centered homestead on Hardenberg Bay. Helen chronicles some of Babe Alsworth’s air travels to and from Anchorage and Bristol Bay salmon canneries on the Naknek and Kvichak Rivers in which he brought piglets, chickens, goats, sheep and all manner of consumer goods to Lake Clark. Not to mention hardware, tools, and various components for a sawmill flown to Port Alsworth in his Stinson SR-JR. Helen notes going to the Alsworth’s house for mail in 1951 documenting the growth of Port Alsworth because it was in 1950 that the official Port Alsworth post office was established. 10

Finally, Helen’s diary reveals the importance of Charlie Denison’s sawmill, and how the availability of sawed lumber enabled the people of Nondalton to live in framed houses for the first time. Previously most all houses built around Lake Clark were made of logs. In spite of the fact that Helen’s diary is sparse on detail she does chronicle people and events that occurred at Lake Clark at a time of significant change and when apparently no one else was documenting the mid-twentieth century grassroots history of all the people living there.

The Diary of Helen Mae Beeman Denison

November 20, 1943 to October 20, 1952

“Helen Mae Beeman Five Yr. Diary, Keep Five Years of Alaska here and then publish it. H.B.

[Kanakanak, U.S. Public Health Service Hospital, Dillingham, Alaska]

November 20, 1943

Received this today from Jr. 11

November 24, 1943

Homesick for the first time since I left home. No Thanksgiving spirit.

November 25, 1943

On duty the first time since last Sat. morning. Had a good Thanksgiving Dinner but the spirit was not there.

November 27, 1943

Did not go to town as I felt so bad. Cold coming on.

December 4, 1943

Mitzie had 9 pups. 5 destroyed.

December 5, 1943

[Carlos] Carsons came out for her [Ona] treatment. 12 Brought some moose hide for my crocheted slippers. They have been nice to us.

December 8, 1943

Beginning to get my boxes ready to wrap for Xmas. Have some things to finish off today.

December 25, 1943

The loot consisted of candy, cig., food, soap. The Xmas mail has not come yet so have that to look forward to. Still feeling homesick.


11 Jr. refers to Helen’s son, Howard Leland Brass (1925-1993) who died in Seattle. Nothing further is known of him. Elizabeth Appleton, e-mail message to the editor, 1-6-17.

12 Carlos (1886-1963) and Ona Carson. Carlos was a game warden for the Alaska Game Commission, his wife Ona was a home-maker. Later they purchased the Bob and Bernie Hadfield cabin on Hardenberg Bay at Port Alsworth about 1949 or 1950. Mary Alsworth, “Notes and Dates” to Sara Hornberger, 1985, copy in the LACL history files at Port Alsworth, [hereafter known as LACL history]. *Petticoat Gazette*, Seward, Alaska, July 18, 1963.
December 27, 1943
Well the holidays are over even the trees have disappeared. Snow is too deep to go to town.

January 1, 1944
Terribly depressed as usual. Wish I had something to do really interesting.

January 4, 1944
Started to refile charts according to ABC rather than date. Such interesting data.

January 7, 1944
Regular blizzard today. P’s [Palmers] tried to go to town [Dillingham]. Got just over the hill. Woke up at 4 A.M. PS ċ Tonner went into town in P.M.

January 13, 1944
Capt. Kirchner came over from Post. Had Drinks @ P’s. Heard about M 6 surgery nurses always get blamed.

January 14, 1944
A lot of people from Dillingham are flown out by J. W. He even brought his own wife [Lillian] & daughter [Johanna]. A lot of business, more tomorrow. Nice weather.

13 Nothing is known of the Palmers except they probably worked at Kanakanak Hospital.
14 Helen Beeman Denison uses the symbol “ċ” as shorthand for “with” throughout the diary.
15 Nothing is known about “PC” and Tonner but they apparently worked at Kanakanak Hospital with Helen.
16 Nothing is known of Captain Kirchner or perhaps he was both a doctor and a captain? It is plausible he was detailed from the U.S Army Air Corps air base at Naknek, now known as King Salmon, to command a small army post in Dillingham that provided for civil defense and recruitment in the Nushagak district during World War II. Lillian Walatka was the Selective Service administrator in Dillingham during World War II. Selective Service board meetings were held in John and Lillian Walatka’s home in Dillingham during the war. Johanna Walatka Bouker, e-mail message to the editor, March 2, 2018.
17 “J. W.” were the initials of bush pilot John Walatka (1908-1970) who moved with his wife, Lillian, from Minnesota to Dillingham to fly for Bert Ruoff’s Bristol Bay Air Service in 1938. Within a few years Walatka started his own air taxi company and was instantaneously busy. The daughter that Helen refers to was Johanna Walatka (Bouker) who was delivered at Kanakanak Hospital by Dr. Louis.
January 15, 1944
MD left today by plane. Had to visit some in town before he left. Another lovely day.

January 18, 1944
Mail came at last. Hardly anyone could eat, so anxious to read it. Got several Xmas cards. No pkgs. yet.

January 26, 1944
-20° this A.M.

January 27, 1944
-18° this A.M.

January 28, 1944
-22° this A.M. No mail yet.

January 31, 1944
Nice snowstorm thru the nite & day. Warmer 30°

February 4, 1944
Been having Jan. thaw for a couple days. Tried to go over to P.O. Fell down. Nuff said.

February 7, 1944
Capt. Kirchner came over today. [appoint.?] tomorrow.

February 8, 1944
Plenty of business. Heard a plane several times.

February 10, 1944
Dr. K. tried to leave but plenty of snow prevented.

February 15, 1944
T. had fight c Martha. She or Martha has to go. Sade says Means… also.

February 16, 1944
T & S packed up but weather so stormy no dog teams will go out.

February 17, 1944
The fight over, T&S are staying. Something else will happen as they don’t like it here anyway. Mrs. P[almer] worked last nite.

February 19, 1944
Played cards & had hot buttered rum at Palmers.

February 22, 1944
Mrs. Opland came up & T&S&S played P.18 Had hot buttered rum again.

February 24, 1944
Jr. wants the furniture. Maybe I’ll let him have it.19

February 25, 1944
Played cards at Palmer’s had some more H.B.R. The weather is quite changeable, rain, snow & freeze & thaw.

February 26, 1944
Thought I was biggest person up here till tonight. Mrs. Haskins teacher at Nushagak came over for treatment for infected eyes.20 250 lbs.

February 27, 1944
She sure is interesting O.H. [Mrs. Haskins]. Knows a lot about Natives thru 3 children that speak language.

February 28, 1944
R. Spears brought in today has been in wrecked plane 8 days s food or water. Has fr leg Rt & laceration of head.21

February 29, 1944
Mrs. Opland came & played cards this P.M. Capt. K[irchner] arrived at 4 P.M. Quite a day - was annoyed c Mrs. P[almer] several times lately.

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18 Margaret Opland was a school teacher in Dillingham and her husband, Elfred Opland, managed the reindeer herds in the Nushagak country. The Oplands also ran a hotel in Dillingham. Mildred Opland, telephone conversation with the editor, November 20, 2017.

19 Helen refers to her son, Howard L. Brass, apparently she received a letter from him asking for the furniture. It is possible that they were living together in New York before she left for Alaska in the early 1940s.

20 Mrs. Haskins was the school teacher at Nushagak but nothing further is known about her.

21 Roscoe Spears (1909-1949) lived in Dillingham. Later on Spears and his wife Virginia and his brother Clyde and his wife, Muriel, owned the Fielder&Gale Store which later became the Dillingham Commercial (DC) Company. Roscoe died January 1949 when an Alaska Airlines DC-3 crashed in the mountains on the Kenai Peninsula. The Last Yesterday, The History of Dillingham and Nushagak Bay by Dillingham High Alaskan (sic) History Class, 1972-73, John B. Parker, instructor. Second edition, 1985 and other sources; Star-News, 1-January 23, 1949, 14 A. Clyde Spears was a high school teacher who lived in Dillingham. He and John Walatka were the witnesses for Babe and Mary Alsworth’s wedding on January 4, 1941. The Alsworths were married by Magistrate Erik Fenno. Fred Walatka, conversation with the editor, January 6, 2018; Mary Alsworth, op. cit.
March 3, 1944
The situation is more deadly every day. She had Mr. P[almer] in helping M.D. this A.M. Wonder what she is afraid of.

March 5, 1944
P[almer]'s entertain every nite except last nite. Mrs. P[almer]. Went to town & Mrs. Spears stayed all nite. M.D. there too.

March 6, 1944
Had good game of P. Opland's last nite. Had some more Hot B. Rum. Invited to go to P[almer]'s. Refused. So did Toner.

March 8, 1944
Snow all day today. Colder also.

March 9, 1944
Capt. K[irchner] left today. Had -4° this AM. Snow drifted by wind.

March 17, 1944.
Capt. K[irchner] came back to exam 50 draftees. He'll stay awhile as most are hunting.

March 18, 1944
The Rush has began. Some pt [patients?] come by plane.

March 29, 1944
Went to town first time in 3 1/2 months. Stayed @ S.

March 30, 1944
Cooked moose pot roast & onions & browned potatoes. Darn good. Had Wassillie come after me. Swell time.

March 31, 1944
Extremely sleepy today. Slept all P.M.

April 2, 1944
Delivered twin boys 6 - 8 1/2, 5 - 7 1/2 lb. Mother Lillian Gabriel. Father Bill Ingram. Nice babies.

April 4, 1944
Went to town [Dillingham] to stay over nite. Wassillie took me. Stayed same place.

April 5, 1944
Had nice time in town. Came home after the show. Saw Carsons [Carlos and Ona]. Thawing a lot. Won't be able to go much more till all snow off.

April 7, 1944
Coming down & cold. Took [sulfadiazine?]. Slept from 3 P.M.

April 8, 1944
My cold no better. Took more pills. Still thawing. Would have like to go to town as I'm off in A.M.

April 20, 1944
Went to town [Dillingham]. Has been thawing a lot for 2 days. Rather bad going. Saw R. Spears. Stayed same place as before.

April 21, 1944
More thawing. Was rather wet coming home but got here around 10 P.M. Had more onions tasted good.

April 22, 1944
Got soap & popcorn from the folks for my birthday [19]'06.

22 Mrs. Spears' first name was Virginia, the wife of the convalescing Roscoe Spears.
23 There is no information on Wassillie.
24 Lillian and Bill Ingram had twin sons, Bill Jr. and Jim, and Helen delivered them at Kanakanak Hospital. Bill and Lillian Ingram, interview with the editor, June 1, 2001.
25 Helen Mae Beeman Denison was born in Grand Rapids, Michigan on April 27, 1906.
April 26, 1944
Popped some corn. Came out so-so. Tasted good.

April 27, 1944
Steve & Tonner spent nite in town [Dillingham] ċ a little poker & liquor. Steve baked me a cake after walking home. Was hard going.

April 28, 1944
Road open. Went in on truck stayed over nite. M.D. came again.

April 29, 1944
Walked most of way home. Tire & lame.

May 1, 1944
Walked in most of the way with Steve. They are really going this time June 1. Had supper ċ S. Got home around 10.

May 2, 1944
A little snow storm today. They say it’s cold.

May 3, 1944

May 4, 1944
More snow.

May 5, 1944
Rain today.

May 6, 1944
Rained hard this early A.M. Clear this P.M. Walked to town. Stayed at same place.

May 7, 1944
Talked with Mrs. D. this P.M. A lot of gossip ċ information about Natives around here. Very interesting.

May 10, 1944
Went to town tonight. Talked ċ S[teve?] Others went to show.

May 12, 1944
Went to town between storms. Took me 2 hr. Stayed at same place. Had a few drinks. Am getting so I don’t even feel them.

May 13, 1944

May 17, 1944
Went to town just hung around. S[teve?] busy.

May 18, 1944
Just rested all day. The first time in about 6 weeks. Seemed good for a change. Boat in. Got some fresh stuff.

May 20, 1944
Went in to town tonight. Got to talking to Mr. C[arson?] etc. who had his tonsils out last year. Saw S. but he was busy as usual.

May 24, 1944
Was in town. Listened to radio in store. No decent show.

May 27, 1944
Was in town. Talked to a pt. some guy called Tiny, but like an elephant. Wanted to bring me home. Rather gone to dance.

Mrs. D. has not been identified.

Perhaps a cannery ship arrived in Dillingham with fresh produce.
May 29, 1944
Walked to town. Just hung around for a while. Bought some miniature mukluks from Smith. Hamburgs 60¢.

May 30, 1944
Mail today. Not much.

May 31, 1944
Well the gals leave today. Probably stuck all summer like last.

June 7, 1944
Field nurse came to help.

June 9, 1944
New Supt. & Miss Lambert came tonight.

June 10, 1944
Went to town. Everybody busy. A boat out there.

June 11, 1944
Mr. [Foster?] left. Seemed nice.

June 13, 1944
Orders to go to Bethel. Resigned.

June 15, 1944
Went to town. Tried to find something here to do. Nothing. Stayed over c Toner & Steve.

June 16, 1944
Got wire asking to reconsider? Offer to transfer to Tanana. Accepted. Began packing.

June 17, 1944
Mailed out some of my stuff. Have more to go.

June 18, 1944
Personnel Director came last nite. Being entertained assiduously by P[almer]'s.

June 19, 1944
Had talk c Miss Trowl. Naturally no satisfaction. Told her I was coming back here.

June 20, 1944
Was in town [Dillingham]. Stayed c T. & S. [Toner and Steve?] They are nice to me.

June 21, 1944
Got home about 3 P.M. Slept awhile.

June 22, 1944
Sent more mail in. Got pretty well hoed out. Could go in a couple hours now.

June 23, 1944
Stayed in till 4:30 Sunday morning. Same place as before.

June 25, 1944
Slept a little this P.M. Sold stamps to Mrs. Griffin. Started inventory at P.O. Won't take me long now.

June 27, 1944
Received telegram from office. Am trying to get ready to go tomorrow.

June 28, 1944
W[alatka] could not take me as he had no room. He did not get off till 6 P.M.

July 1, 1944
Still waiting for trainer. S. has supper with the girls every nite. Very depressed tontite.

July 5, 1944
Went to town [Dillingham]. Was disappointed as have been lately. Walked part way home. Lots of mosquitoes.

28 Perhaps Helen purchased some miniature mukluks from trapper Butch Smith or his wife, Ole, who was an accomplished skin sewer.

29 Apparently Helen was ordered to transfer to the Public Health Service hospital in Bethel but refused the transfer.

30 Perhaps Helen indicated she got drunk?

31 Mrs. Maxine Griffin (1916-1985) was married to Tubby Griffin (1903-1948) who was the brother of Mrs. [Marguerite] J.C. Lowe of Lowe's Trading Post. Tubby and Maxine and another Dillingham resident, Martin Ernestus, 42, were victims of carbon monoxide poisoning in their home in Dillingham in early January 1948. The two men died and Maxine was hospitalized but survived. “Mysterious Death of Two Alaska Men Investigated,” unknown newspaper, January 8, 1948; Bob King, e-mail to editor, March 2, 2018.

32 Apparently Helen had a temporary job at the Dillingham Post Office.
July 7, 1944

July 8, 1944
Got bunions taken care of. Bought suitcase, bracelet, uniform, pants, stockings etc. Got room.

July 10, 1944

July 11, 1944
Stayed in Fairbanks. Bought corset, panties. No water to wash in. No luck as to make meeting.

July 12, 1944
Left Fairbanks A.M. at Tanana @ 2:00. People seem nice enough. Will see later.

July 14, 1944
Fell down today. Feel bruised and lame. Everything seems OK.

July 20, 1944
CAA people gave a card party. Had nice time. Ate peanuts, lemonade, cake & coffee.

July 21, 1944
Army flew in some movies. Whole town turned out. Were shown in hospital hall.

July 22, 1944
Usual line of bunk about nursing etc. Had biweekly hospital party. Cards, dancing & eats.

July 23, 1944
Had to take my S04[?]. Felt better toward evening.

July 27, 1944
CAA people gave card party. Had good time ate peanuts, lemonade, cake & coffee. Nice people.

July 28, 1944
A couple men built a boat at Whitehorse and have floated this far. Were brought up to be entertained. I went to bed.

July 29, 1944
Horton & Morris came back for more. Morris is going to Arabia. Miss Mills is waiting for info. Am going to apply alias [?]. To bed at 3:30 A.M.

July 30, 1944
Had to take my S04[?]. Slept from 2:30 P.M. Felt better when I woke up.

August 1, 1944
The USIS decided they need me at Kotzebue now. Thinking it over. Wish they’d make up their mind.

August 2, 1944
Well I might as well go. [Helen is in Tanana] Will see Alaska at government expense.

August 3, 1944
First frost of fall.

August 4, 1944
CAA man traveling mechanic came Sat. Seemed nice but at party lost his dignity.

August 5, 1944
Usual party the dentist & wife were here. Some gay & good time had by all I guess.

August 6, 1944

33 Helen’s logical flight path after leaving Kanakanak would have been to stop in Naknek, then Iliamna, then Tanalian Point on Lake Clark before flying to Anchorage. The new Army Air Corp bases at King Salmon and Iliamna likely would have been available for wheeled landings in 1944. There were no wheeled landing strips at Lake Clark until the following year [1945] when the Babe and Mary Alsworth’s homestead runway would have been 1,500 feet and able to accommodate wheeled landings. However, it is probable that Helen flew in a float plane. Prior to the construction of the Alsworth strip pilot Jim Kennedy landed on a gravel bar along the lower part of Dry Creek, a channel of the Tanalian River. Iliamna, Sociocultural Study, Phase I, “Overview of Historic Contact in the Lake Clark Study Area,” by Sara Hornberger, 1986, 4-38.

34 CAA is the Civil Aeronautics Administration that regulated civil and commercial aviation services in the United States.

35 The acronym USIS was probably for the United States Indian Service which was absorbed into the Bureau of Indian Affairs.

36 Wein Alaska Airlines.
August 7, 1944
Frost again last nite.

August 8, 1944
Had impromptu party. Lots of people dropped in.

August 9, 1944
Went out to mission for a picnic. Had it inside preacher’s house. It is beautiful & well kept out there.

August 10, 1944
Army flew in movies for tonight. It gets tiresome sitting. Met an artist by name of Porter. Ran movie projector.

August 12, 1944
Had surprise on Traftons. Had lovely time. Really have lovely home. Lots of Chinese art.

August 13, 1944
Usual Sunday è much work & cleaning.

August 14, 1944
Mills & Quinn got off about 3 P.M. Such excitement & confusion. Boat unloaded some coal (Yukon).

August 15, 1944
Traftons & Lieut. for dinner. Had nice visit. Traftons left early. Am going as soon as packed.

August 16, 1944
Usual hard work. Esther cooking as well as nursing. Off tomorrow.

August 17, 1944
Mostly rain.

August 19, 1944
Usual Sat. nite party. Not many people came. Traftons stayed all nite.

August 22, 1944
Traftons came for supper & stayed all nite again.

August 23, 1944
Traftons left on steamer Yukon.

August 24, 1944
Off today. Rain again.

August 26, 1944
No party.

August 27, 1944
Walked up to picnic grounds. Rode back in car as Quinn & Tradell there.

August 28, 1944
Hurt my ankle. [Afraid] will be laid up awhile.

August 29, 1944
Foot & ankle badly swollen. Everybody good to me.

August 30, 1944
Office wants to charge me for bringing up my baggage. Am objecting. Did no good anyway.

September 2, 1944
M.D. came later. Saw my foot. Did nothing.

September 5, 1944
Worked today. Foot still sore.

September 7, 1944
More visitors. Soldiers & Coast Guard for Geodetic Survey. Back in a week to hire boats.37 Miss I, knew one.

September 8, 1944
Foot still sore. Am doing OK.

September 9, 1944
Had regular party but too tired to go. Had nice sleep instead.

September 10, 1944
Laundress came back. Patients have been doing laundry.

September 12, 1944
Worked till midnight. Usual boring time but was tired when finished. Cleaned & made up some beds.

September 13, 1944
Worked till usual time. Nothing unusual.

37 The war-time military hired cannery scows on the Naknek River to haul freight from the Naknek ship channel up the Naknek River to build the Naknek Army Base at what is now King Salmon, Alaska. It is safe to assume that the military used civilian boats on Nushagak Bay to facilitate their goals around Dillingham. Victor Monsen, various conversations with the editor, 1971-1995.
September 14, 1944
Went out to mission and upriver a little farther, had outdoor picnic. Played Chinese checkers. Geological Survey party came.  

September 15, 1944
Toner & Steve in Fairbanks. Supposed to go to Bethel but change of mind. Office asks if she wanted them. Tyler Swanson & passenger Page stayed over nite. The famous Mac dropped in, also Anderson. They talked till 2 A.M.

September 16, 1944
Party tonight for the [gang?]. They are leaving for Anchorage usual time.

September 20, 1944
Jr. 19 yrs. today. Does not seem that long.

September 22, 1944
Went off for P.M. as I had awful cold.

September 23, 1944
Got word to go to Juneau. Supposed to go on picnic but it rained. Had usual party but my cold bad.

September 26, 1944
Am packed ready to [go?]. No mail yet that I wanted.

September 28, 1944
Am on my way. Staying at Hot Springs tonight. Had a nice talk with everyone. Nice to meet new people

September 29, 1944
In Fairbanks. Stayed at Quonset Huts & Miss Carlson.

September 30, 1944
Got into Anchorage $80 round trip. Elmer Nicholson going to Dillingham in A.M.

October 1, 1944
Got to Iliamna just after Balluta left for Tenalion [Tanalian] Point. Had nice flight.

October 2, 1944
Barnely & another nurse thru here (Iliamna) for Kanakanak. Moran would not take me over to Tenalion [Tanalian] Point.

October 3, 1944
Still waiting [in Iliamna, probably at Art and Helen Lee’s Iliamna Trading Company].

October 4, 1944
[Babe] Alsworth flew in this A.M. & took me to Lake Clark. Chas. Denison seems nice. Staying at Kennedy’s.

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38 United States Coast and Geodetic Survey were involved in the war efforts in various sections of Alaska at this time.
39 Helen’s reference to Jr. is to her son Howard Leland Brass born September 2, 1925 possibly in Lansing, Michigan. Information gathered by Elizabeth Appleton, St. Joseph Public Library, St. Joseph, Michigan on Ancestry.com, on the Severence Family Tree.
41 Elmer Nicholson was the son of Hans P. and Feodora Nicholson of Kanakanak. Elmer and his brother Herb started Nicholson Flying Service in the 1930s. The brothers were grandsons of John W. Clark (1846-1896) the namesake of Clarks Point and Lake Clark, the sixth largest lake in Alaska.
42 The Balluta Helen mentions is not known. It seems Helen hoped to get a ride in an airplane to Tanalian Point on Lake Clark. Tanalian Point is based on the Dena’ina words Tanilen Vetnu or “flows into water stream.” Karen M. Evanoff, Dena’ina Ełnena, A Celebration Voices Of The Dena’ina, Anchorage: U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, Lake Clark National Park and Preserve, 2010, 117.
43 Leon Reid “Babe” Alsworth, Sr. (1910-2004) was a pioneering bush pilot around the Bristol Bay region, and particularly Lake Clark-Iliamna area beginning in 1939. He homesteaded on Lake Clark beginning in 1944 near Tanalian Point, now known as Port Alsworth. Babe knew Helen from her time as a nurse at the Kanakanak U. S. Public Health Hospital where she delivered his wife, Mary’s, the first child on July 12, 1943. The baby, a boy, named Leon Jr., died April 1, 1944 at Lake Clark. Mary Alsworth, op. cit.
44 Charlie Denison, Sr. (1884-1959) was born in Pawnee, Oklahoma and arrived in Alaska Territory in the early 20th century. He and his son Floyd and daughter-in-law Lena Denison moved to Tanalian Point on Lake Clark in 1932. In the mid-1930s Charlie Denison developed one of the first sawmills on Lake Clark. He married Helen Mae Beeman in 1945 at Tanalian Point. Floyd Denison, conversation with Sara Hornberger , November 12, 1984.
45 The Kennedys were living in the former Floyd and Lena Denison House on Tanalian Point and radioing Lake Clark weather to Alaska Airlines, who then forwarded the data to the U. S. Weather Bureau in Anchorage. Jim Kennedy (1903-) was born in Washington State and was the first resident pilot to live on Lake Clark. Glenna Kennedy (1911-) was born in Oregon and was a home maker. The Kennedys built a cruciform log house on the north shore of Lake Clark in 1938-1939. In 1944-1947 they were living at Tanalian Point in Floyd and Lena Denison’s old house and reporting weather to the Weather Bureau via Alaska Airlines. Glenna Kennedy, letter to Donald Kennedy, “The Kennedy Saga,” 1978; “Airport, Airway, Or Six-Hourly Station Record,” August 17, ?, U. S. Weather Bureau, copies in the history files at LACL office, Port Alsworth, Alaska.
October 5, 1944
Am having a nice time. Think I will like it very much on Lake Clark. Decided to come back in Jan.

October 6, 1944
Still enjoying my visit. Have to get into practice cooking etc.

October 7, 1944
Trixie had 9 pups. Got my wash into soak after Alsworth decided not to fly and then changed his mind. Had to leave things.

October 8, 1944
Got a 8 A.M. plane to Fairbanks. Naturally missed my Juneau plane. Have to wait. Ran into Miss Morgan at Quonset.

October 9, 1944

October 10, 1944
Have lots of gossip & mutual dislikes to talk over.

October 11, 1944
Still gossiping. Helping c washing & ironing. Lots to do as she has bad cold, Miss Morgan sick. Visited in hospital & expressed dissatisfaction.

October 12, 1944
Went to a showing c Mrs. B[land.] Mamma in hospital produced twin boys. Company in evening.

October 13, 1944
More gossip while serving & mending. Must write a couple more letters.

October 16, 1944
Notified to go in A.M. to Juneau.

October 17, 1944
Left after a false start at 12:30. Arrived in Whitehorse around 3:30. Had to stay here all nite.

October 18, 1944
Arrived in Juneau around 10 A.M. Reported everywhere.

October 19, 1944
Went to work. How I hate Juneau. Rain, rain and all up & down. Can’t stay permanently at hotel. Too expensive.

October 21, 1944
Examined today. Felt very bad and depressed. Awful tired.

October 22, 1944
Was promised a room next Sunday. Room not taken as relative arrived to occupy it.

October 24, 1944
Took [package] over but woman had relative to use room now. So have to find something else.

October 25, 1944
Went to see about ad in paper that I had seen. Got room. Move tomorrow.

October 26, 1944
Moved. Quite comfortable. Rather cold however.

October 27, 1944
Dr. Salazar in town.66 Talked a little.
November 23, 1944
Ate at Percy's. Good Thanksgiving Dinner. Expensive. Jacobsons asked me but am on afternoons. [nursing duty.]

December 14, 1944
Had wisdom tooth pulled after work. Some job.

December 15, 1944
Unable to work my last day. Hasseltine met me at 3:15 & gave me box of candy. She is nice.

December 16, 1944
Bought my ticket for Anchorage. Expect to leave tomorrow sometime.

December 18, 1944
Left Juneau about noon. Did not ever look back.

December 20, 1944
Arrived Seward @ 2:30. Had hair done. Left about 5:30. Arrived Anchorage at 10 P.M.

December 21, 1944
Had to stay over in Anchorage. Not flying.

December 22, 1944
Got to Iliamna with Alaska Airways. Sent message.

December 24, 1944
Tom Morgan & Oplands could not get thru to Anchorage so in Iliamna over nite.47 Dance till 3 A.M. also.

December 25, 1944
Morgan & Oplands over Xmas here. Had nice dinner. Heard all the gossip from Dillingham.

December 29, 1944
Arrived at Lake Clark. Nice reception.

January 1, 1945
Am trying to make a home. Making little progress.

January 5, 1945
Living from day to day feel more relaxed than for some time. Weather extremely mild. Got 2 days ahead here.

January 6, 1945
Got clean curtains hung & Chas [Denison] help.48 Not so good but better than nothing.

January 10, 1945
Cleaned upstairs. Got lots of dog hair. Not too bad. Really am going to be very happy here.

January 13, 1945
Took walk towards Elmer's place [Gustafson].49 Waited till Chas came home before going in. We do have fun.

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47 Tom Morgan was a pilot possibly for Alaska Airlines and he apparently died in a plane crash soon after Helen met him in Iliamna.

48 Charlie Denison was a widower and living alone so he welcomed Helen Beeman. It is plausible to believe Babe Alsworth or his wife Mary might have acted as match makers between the widower Charlie and the single Helen Beeman since they both knew the circumstances of Helen and Charlie.

49 Elmer Gustafson (1878?-1960?) was born in Sweden and was a prospector. He was reported by Lake Clark resident, Bill Park, to have been active in the Bonniefield gold strike 60 miles south of Fairbanks on Valdez Creek prior to moving to the Charlie Wolff cabin just west of the Tanalian River in the early 1940s. He had a trapping cabin at the mouth of Takoka Creek on Kontrashibuna Lake. After
Mary Alsworth and Margaret “Sis” Alsworth c. 1950 in front of the Alsworth’s second house at the Alsworth Homestead. Photo courtesy of Margaret “Sis” Clum. H-3026.

January 14, 1945
Snow last nite. Everything beautiful covered ċ snow. No woods work today because snow shakes off trees too much.

January 15, 1945
Went to Kennedy’s & Doc’s ċ dog team lovely ride on sled. Scenery lovely.

January 16, 1945
Washed today. Not so much. Chas is good help but rather of a nuisance too.

January 17, 1945

January 18, 1945
T. 36° Windy. Straightened other house upstairs.

January 19, 1945 [there are two entries for 1-19-45]
T 40° thawing windy trying to storm. Chas in woodshed A.M. I made doughnuts. Pretty good.

January 18, 1945 [there are two entries for 1-19-45]
T 46° still windy.

Mary Alsworth (1924-1994) was the wife of Babe Alsworth who had been living at the Alsworth homestead on Hardenberg Bay for 16 months. Mary was born in Pilot Point, a small cannery town on the Bering Sea side of the Alaska Peninsula, where her father was winter watchman for the Alaska Packers Association cannery at Pilot Point known as Diamond U.

Helen uses T. to designate daily temperatures.

Joe Kackley died in 1944 Elmer moved in with old Doc Dutton to take care of him in his dotage. After Doc Dutton died in 1949 Elmer stayed around a few more years but after 1952 his son came to Alaska and moved Elmer to California. Mary Alsworth, op. cit., Orth, op. cit., 152.

About one mile northeast of Denison’s place at Tanalian Point. “Doc’s” refers to Otis. M. Dutton (1859-1949) who along with his partner Jonas Elmer “Joe” Kackley (1861-1944) were the first permanent Euroamerican settlers at Tanalian Point starting in 1911.
January 20, 1945
T 40° still windy. Chas [Denison] still straightening & sorting over shop & root house.

January 21, 1945

January 22, 1945
T 40° Washed. Had lots of socks & gloves to do. Will have enough mending for rest of winter. Still some wind.

January 23, 1945
T 38° Fog & mist & rain. Wind from another direction & not so bad. Some snow late in day.

January 24, 1945

January 25, 1945
T 26°

January 26, 1945
T 40° Foggy & Rainy.

January 27, 1945
T 40° Rainy & dark all day.

January 28, 1945

January 29, 1945
T 44° Some rain but cleared late in P.M. Have been here one month.

January 30, 1945
T 42° Clearer today. Just like spring. Ironed & mended.

January 31, 1945
T 40° Lovely day. More like spring every day. Sun out all day. Chas went after spruce hens. Got 2. Went for boat ride to K[ennedy] & [Alsworth].

February 1, 1945
T 20° Fog today. Cleared toward 4 P.M. Chas went to see if there’s any mail. None.

February 2, 1945
T 20-26. Foggy till 3 P.M.

February 3, 1945
T 10-20° Foggy till 2:30 ice on lake breaking up this P.M. ċ a little breeze. Still darning mittens. 2 left.

February 4, 1945
T 5-8[°], Walked to Kennedy’s & Doc’s. Heard news & saw people.

February 5, 1945
T 8° Snowing today. Hung out some clothes but were covered with snow. Not dry. Some ice on lake.

February 6, 1945
T 20° Got some mail. Lots of reading material.

February 7, 1945

February 8, 1945
Ice filled up & lake almost closed in. T 8° Mary came after fish. Had baked some fresh cookies. Had tea.

February 9, 1945
T 40° Ice all gone due to wind.

February 10, 1945
T going down.

February 11, 1945
T -7° To Alsworth’s & Doc’s by sled. Took some 20 letters. Lake not closed due to wind.

February 12, 1945
-22° Did not wash. Kept cozy inside all day. Lake closing.

53 Alex Trefon (1912-1992) was the son of Trefon Balluta and Mary Ann Trefon and was born on Lake Clark and raised at Tanalian Point. He was a trapper and Bristol Bay fisherman and an excellent wood worker.

54 Helen Mae Beeman arrived at Lake Clark to live with Charlie Denison on December 29, 1944.
February 13, 1945
T -4° to 10°. Washed. Lake almost closed.

February 14, 1945
T 16° Ice beginning to break up. Windy. Mopped & ironed. No valentines up here.

February 15, 1945
T 40° Went to woods. Had nice bumpy ride.

February 16, 1945
T 40° Taking some letters to Alsworth’s. He [Babe Alsworth] was to Roadhouse [Iliamna] twice yesterday. Some bumpy ride. May have freight & mail. None.

February 17, 1945
T 40° Am making some curtains of handkerchief linen & lace I found here.

February 18, 1945
T 40° Walked down to Doc’s. Heard usual war news.

February 19, 1945
T 40° Finished my nice curtains. Alex Trefon & Mike Nudlash. Came to work for Chas. Nice calm day.

February 20, 1945
T 30°-40° Boys came to stay. Bought some moose. Am having moose often.

Roadhouse probably does not refer to the former Seversen’s Roadhouse around which the present-day village of Iliamna formed in the 1920s and 1930s. The Roadhouse in 1945 was owned by Art and Helen Lee and sited in a different location from Hans Seversen’s original Roadhouse. Lee’s business was called the Iliamna Trading Company. John Branson, ed., Seversen’s Roadhouse: Crossroads of Bristol Bay, Alaska, With Diary and Writings of Myrtle and Jack Bailey. Anchorage: Cook Inlet Historical Society, 2003, 41.

World War II was in its final months in Europe while in the Pacific Theater war would rage for another seven months. Doc Dutton was an avid radio news listener. Harry Shawback, Sr, conversations with the editor, 1969-1994.

Mike Nudlash (1920-1968) was a resident of Nondalton and a Bristol Bay fisherman, trapper, and fire fighter. He also lived in a cabin on the west side of the mouth of the Kijik River. Mike was a very friendly and outgoing personality. Mike and his wife Helen and newborn baby died in the Wien Consolidated Airlines crash on December 2, 1968 near Pedro Bay, Alaska. George Alexie, conversation with the editor, March 8, 2018. Sharon Van Valin, conversation with the editor March 16, 2018.

At this time it was apparently a common practice that people bought moose meat from hunters around Lake Clark.
March 8, 1945
10° Franklin Smith came and we had ceremony at Doc’s @ 8:00 P.M. He was very nice.

March 9, 1945
T 6° Lake Quiet. Thin ice.

March 10, 1945
T 0° Ice cracked some.

March 11, 1945
T -2° Boys skated home. Quite safe. Chas went down to Babe’s for seed potatoes Sam Turner sent over.

March 12, 1945
Nothing new, usual wash day.

March 13, 1945
Boys came back for Mike. Brought dogs say he has to go to Roadhouse [Iliamna]. Mary [Alsworth] & brother came to tie up fish.

March 14, 1945
Mary & brother [Gust “Ace”] came & took load home this P.M.

March 15, 1945
Mary & brother came & took rest of feed & shavings for goat bedding. Nice day.

March 18, 1945
Went down to Doc’s & Kennedy’s as usual nothing new.

River from the 1930s to his sudden death of a heart attack. It is not certain but it seems likely Private Sam Turner arrived in France in December 1917 and in January 1918 he became a foot soldier in the U.S. Army’s First Division and likely saw action in some or all of these battles: the battle of Cantigny on 5-28-1918, the battles of Soissons in July 1918, and battles in the Meuse-Argonne Forest on the Western front between 9-26-1918 and 11-11-1918 when the Armistice was signed. The battles involved 1.2 million U.S. soldiers and is considered the largest in American military history. Sam Turner likely experienced these horrific battles and became disabled as a result. WWI ended on 11-11-18 but Turner was discharged at Camp Custer, Wisconsin on 4-29-1919 with a 75% disability. Since injured men were usually given priority to return home why was Sam not sent home earlier?


Franklin Smith was a minister who flew from his home in Ekwok to Tanalian Point to marry Helen Beeman and Charlie Denison.

March 19, 1945
Boys came back just at lunch time. Washed this P.M.

March 20, 1945
Ring around sun. Maybe snow. Mrs.[Glenna] Kennedy & children [Barbara and Donald] dropped in as they were taking walk. Brought me some divinity.

March 21, 1945
Boys finished this noon. Got started home about 3 P.M. [Thought] they’d get twice what was agreed. Chas & I took a walk. Ring around sun.

March 22, 1945
T 6° A little snow this A.M. Increasing as day went by. Walked to Doc’s & Kennedy’s.

March 23, 1945
T 2° this A.M. Lovely after snow. Chas tied up pups. One out & seems hurt. Others taking it quietly to be any [?] dogs[?].

March 24, 1945
T 26° A little snow storm. Hauled wood for Doc in A.M. Too stormy in P.M.

March 25, 1945
T 40° Palm Sunday. Nice day. Chas getting ready to haul Kennedy wood. Elmer [Gustafson] does not work on Sunday so did not haul wood for him.

March 26, 1945
T 36° Snowed some all day but finished Doc’s wood & started Kennedy’s. Got mail. Babe [Alsworth] to Iliamna to take W.B. man.

March 27, 1945
T 18° Snow flurries in P.M. Chas finished wood hauling. Natives come from Nondalton for me. A girl had retained placenta. Babe flew me down.

March 28, 1945

March 29, 1945
T 26° Snow flurries.

Babe Alsworth was going to fly a man from the Weather Bureau to Iliamna, probably to catch an airplane to Anchorage.

Mary Alsworth and probably her brother Gust “Ace” Griechen, Jr. who lived with Babe and Mary Alsworth for a few years. His permanent home was Point, on the Alaska Peninsula, about 250 miles southwest of Lake Clark. Ace was a long-time bush pilot for Peninsula Airlines.
March 30, 1945
Good Friday. Went down to Kennedy’s & Doc’s in P.M. Took stuff I had for them.

March 31, 1945
Snow flurries. Elmer supposed to come to help but did not. Ran down there for few minutes in P.M.

Memoranda March 27, 1945

April 1, 1945
T -2° Had lovely Easter. Ran down to Alsworth’s in P.M. Had nice ride on sled & dogs.

Left to right, Vivian Jenks, Glen Alsworth, John Alsworth, Ace Griechen, Anna Griechen and Margaret “Sis” Alsworth at the Alsworth Homestead in 1958-1960. Photo courtesy of Margaret “Sis” Clum. H-2959.

April 2, 1945
T 0° Washed - most everything. I put on line dried & ironed.

43

April 3, 1945
T -2° Elmer [Gustafson] came to help Chas with some left over logs. Nice day.

April 4, 1945
T -2° Nice weather.
April 5, 1945
T -2° Elmer helping to haul logs. Also getting a lot by mill.

April 6, 1945
T -2° Nice weather.

April 7, 1945
T 0° Cloudy today. Probably storm in A.M.

April 8, 1945
T 34° Snowstorm but went down to Kennedy & Doc’s some hard walk[ing].

April 9, 1945
T 28° this A.M. Nice day. Wrote about furniture.

April 10, 1945
Nice warm day.

April 11, 1945
Another lovely day.

April 12, 1945
Thawing every day a little more lovely spring weather. The President died this P.M.

April 13, 1945
Thawing in P.M. again.

April 14, 1945
T 40° Trail about gone. Chas finished c Elmer [Gustafson]. Paid him $4 per day for 10 days.

April 15, 1945
T 46° Drove to Alsworth c dog team. Trail bad after leaving Doc’s.

April 16, 1945
Cloudy this A.M. Chas hauling stone & more birch.

April 18, 1945
T 48° Washed - cleaned out upstairs so we can paint & planted cabbage, celery, cabbage & crys [chrysanthemums?], in boxes.

April 19, 1945
Worked on upstairs. Got good start.

April 20, 1945
Painted some. Took some felt. Am progressing good. Plants are up a little.

April 21, 1945
Got all felt on. Some strips to put on yet. Looks much better. [?] that so called closet tore out. Mail came.

April 22, 1945

April 23, 1945
Finished upstairs. Walked to Alsworth’s. Some trail after leaving Doc’s. Real tired.

April 24, 1945
Resting today.

April 25, 1945
T 30° Raked around house some. Dumped a little stuff.

April 26, 1945
T 32° Wind. Cool. Had to put on wrap to work out. Chas sawed some fire wood. Elmer helped.

April 27, 1945
T 37° Cool & little wind. Rowed part way to Kennedy’s & Doc’s. Walked good shore there & back. No excitement.

April 28, 1945

April 29, 1945
Felt very depressed. Stayed home & in bed most of day. Chas very patient.

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64 President Franklin Delano Roosevelt (1882-1945) died suddenly of a cerebral hemorrhage in Warm Springs, Georgia. The fact that Helen knew of the President’s death the same day it occurred indicates the Denison’s had a radio and regularly listened to the news.

65 Art (1900-1973) and Helen Lee (1909-1983) built a cabin on the south side of Lake Clark about five miles east of Tanalian Point in 1935. Art Lee was a Bristol Bay fisherman. In the late 1930s they moved to Seversen’s Roadhouse to work for Hans Seversen at his trading post. Later they sold their Lake Clark cabin to retired territorial school teacher Bill Park (1892-1963). The Lee’s operated Iliamna Trading Company and sold Helen and Charlie their wedding rings. Mary Alsworth, op. cit.
April 30, 1945
Usual washing & ironing. Chas put on half of tin roof.

May 1, 1945
T 31° All day. Returned Doc’s buck saw. Very windy.

May 2, 1945
T 18° North wind.

May 3, 1945
T 14° A little snow storm. Still very windy.

May 4, 1945
T 18° Wind changing to East x North. Still cold.

May 5, 1945
T 26° Ice formed on lake. Not so much wind.

May 6, 1945
Took usual walk. Nothing new.

May 7, 1945
Wonderful day. Took boat ride to Alsworth’s & got mail. Had to walk from [the] island.66

May 8, 1945
Our nice weather coming back.

May 9, 1945
Mike here & his mother [Mary Nudlash].67 He wanted to work. Saw fire on other side of lake about 10 P.M.

May 10, 1945
A little cloudy today. Fire going good. Some wind made it go good.
Walked down to Doc’s & Kennedy’s.

May 11, 1945
Evidently had rain on other side of lake as fire seems out. Had some rain here in P.M.

May 12, 1945
Painted screen door & food cupboard. Looks nice.

May 13, 1945
Stayed home. Chas down to Doc’s as usual. Mike came to help saw.

May 14, 1945
Gave screen door another coat of paint. Men sawing.

May 15, 1945
Getting some nice lumber.

May 16, 1945
Usual busy sawing day.

May 17, 1945
Ditto yesterday. Nice weather we are having.

May 18, 1945
Mike [Nudlash] going home tonite. Has to go to Iliamna to get physical for Draft.

May 19, 1945
Washed today. Nice most of day.

May 20, 1945
Chase planted garden & flowers. We walked out into woods in P.M.
Quiet day.

May 21, 1945
Chas begun digging for potatoes. Had work to do so stayed home.

May 22, 1945
Been in Alaska 2 yrs. Was down to Doc’s for dinner.68

May 23, 1945
Chas took fertilizer down today.69 At Doc’s for supper.

May 24, 1945
Was at Doc’s for dinner & supper. Got one patch potatoes planted.

66 A small island just north of Hardenberg Bay but it has no official name, however, locally it is currently known as Osprey Island.

67 Mike Nudlash’s mother’s name was Mary Kankanton Nudlash (1885-?) they were the last Lake Clark Dena’ina family to live at Kijik. The Nudlashs left Kijik for Nondalton sometime by the mid-1940s. Mike was janitor at the Nondalton School and was a beloved member of the village and the school community. He was known as a very friendly and outgoing personality. George Alexie, conversation with the editor, March 8, 2018; Sharon Van Valin, conversation with the editor, March 16, 2018.

68 Helen apparently first came to Alaska to work in the U. S. Public Health Service hospital at Kanakanak in May 1943.

69 Charlie Denison was reported to use dog manure as fertilizer, and he certainly used salmon gurry to fertilize his gardens.
May 25, 1945  
Still planting potatoes. Cool & showery.

May 26, 1945  
Worked on potatoes. Came home early for Chas. Bath.

May 27, 1945  
Stayed home & loafed around except for having to feed Natives. Took in some money. Fed 8 besides ourselves.70

May 28, 1945  
Rainy but Chas worked some. Ate at Doc’s twice.

May 29, 1945  
Chas took one load fertilizer down to potato patch. Too windy & raining to bring boat back. Rested all P.M.

May 30, 1945  
Weather improving. Had nice active day. Was at Doc’s two meals.

May 31, 1945  
Weather turned nice. Ate twice at Doc’s.

June 1, 1945  
Finished potatoes today. Ate once at Doc’s.

June 2, 1945  
Stayed home. Washed & got most of ironing done. Chas dug up cabbage patch.

June 3, 1945  

June 4, 1945  
Usual day.

6 Helen was known as a very fine cook and baker. Terry and Victoria Gill, interview with Sara Hornberger, August 29, 1984; Alice Hedlund, conversation with the editor, March 15, 2018.

7 Brown Carlson (1878?-1975) was the first permanent Euroamerican to live on Lake Clark arriving c. 1902-1906. He was born in Norway and a Bristol Bay salmon fisherman, a superb wood worker and trapper, and he had an outstanding garden, with his strawberry patch being particularly popular with people around Lake Clark. He lived on Lake Clark almost 60 years before his vision failed and he was moved to a nursing home in Anchorage where he died in 1975.
woodwork down stairs.

**June 6, 1945**
Carlson took us over to Chulitna. Sam Turner’s place usual bachelor dump. Some nice soil around there.

**June 7, 1945**
Usual cleaning day.

**June 10, 1945**
Rested. Babe here for fish & shavings.

Lake Clark sourdough Sam Turner, left, with his brother Pete, right, taken at Turner Bay on Lake Clark in 1956. *Photo courtesy of Babe and Mary Alsworth. H-475.*

**June 11, 1945**
Washed. Ironed someday not good drying weather cloudy & cool.

**June 12, 1945**
Finished ironing & mending. Rained all day. Chas inside all day.

**June 13, 1945**
Down to Doc’s [Dutton] for lunch. Chas planted rutabagas. Elmer came home, gave us 1/4 moose, heart & some liver.

**June 14, 1945**
Finished ceiling & cleaned upstairs.

**June 15, 1945**
Helped Chas with planing. Not too hard but am lame.

**June 16, 1945**
Babe sent for lumber for chicken coop. Took 1,204 [board] ft.

**June 17, 1945**
Went down to Doc’s as usual.

**June 18, 1945**
Washed & canned 12 qt. meat.

**June 19, 1945**
Canned broth & ironed. Chas hoed potatoes.

**June 20, 1945**
Rainy. Chas putter round home.

**June 21, 1945**
Went down to Doc’s while Chas hoed. Got enough rhubarb to make 25 qt.

**June 22, 1945**
Elmer came to saw but hurt ankle so only worked half day. I fired some for Chas.

**June 23, 1945**
Help Chas by firing a little.

**June 24, 1945**
Went to see usual people. Nothing new.

**June 26, 1945**
Usual Tuesday work. Chas still on large logs.

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74 Babe Alsworth probably used the shavings for bedding for his goats and chickens.

76 Charlie Denison used a thickness planner to make finish lumber and during the process generated wood shavings that had many uses around the Alsworth homestead and Denison’s place as bedding for animals.

76 Helen means she fired the steam powered boiler by shoveling in saw dust and putting in spruce slabs in the fire box to keep the water boiling hot to make steam to power the sawmill.
June 27, 1945
Helped fire a little.

June 29, 1945
Garden is coming along good. Had greens twice now.

July 1, 1945
Was tired today. Stayed home and rested.

July 2, 1945
Usual Monday work & fired for Chas. Soon be there ċ saving.

July 3, 1945
More firing for Chas.

July 4, 1945
[???] Sawing logs.

July 5, 1945
Took day off. [Thought] it was Independence Day. Chas piled lumber.

July 6, 1945
Chas hoeing today. Had to stay home to bake bread, etc. Canned more rhubarb.

July 7, 1945
Chas hoeing potatoes. Stayed home. Canned more rhubarb. Have 42 qt. Had lettuce for lunch.

July 8, 1945

July 9, 1945
Chas went down to hoe again. Stayed home.

July 10, 1945
Earthquake today. Was at Kennedy's. Got one pike in net. Chas shot duck.

July 11, 1945
Worked this A.M. Chas finished hoeing. Got 2 pike in net.

July 12, 1945
Very calm & sultry today. Chas fussed ċ motor at Kennedy's all day. Got one lake trout in net.

July 13, 1945
Chas starts out for Iliamna this A.M. Canned 17 qt turnip greens.

July 14, 1945

July 15, 1945
Chas been gone 3 days now. Weather bad for 2nd day. Am getting along OK.

July 16, 1945
Baked bread, cake & cookies.

July 17, 1945
Am getting bored. Dog feed getting short.

It is unclear how Charlie Denison traveled to Iliamna by air plane or by boat followed by a ride in a vehicle over an approximately 13 mile overland road. He was gone six days so he likely traveled by boat and by vehicle.
July 18, 1945
Quiet Day.

July 19, 1945
Chas came home at 1:30 A.M. had couple Native boys with him. Slept late & helped pick up stuff unloaded on beach.

July 20, 1945
Put stuff away. Am real tired.

July 21, 1945
2 salmon. Washed & finished odds & ends.

July 22, 1945
26 salmon. Went down to Alsworth - Mary looks as usual.

July 23, 1945
3 salmon. Another helped hang & put out net. Am weepy today.

July 24, 1945
Canned 10 qt of salmon. Chas fussy about it.

July 25, 1945
26 salmon. Went down to Alsworth to see about engine for boat. Borrowed $210 from Doc [Dutton].

July 26, 1945

July 27, 1945
50 salmon. Canned 22 qt. salmon today. Once more tomorrow.

July 28, 1945
22 qt. more salmon.

July 29, 1945
Canned 11 qt. salmon, making 63 qt.

80 Gulia Delkittie (1909-?) was a resident of Nondalton and a commercial fisherman and trapper.

81 It appears that Helen refers to the Babe and Mary Alsworth homestead as “Alsworth.” At this time the Alsworths had been living at what is now called Port Alsworth for one year and they had a 1,500 foot long runway constructed. The name Port Alsworth became official in November 1950 when they opened up a post office at the Alsworth homestead. Linda J., Ellama, Lake Clark Sociocultural Study, Phase I, “Overview of Historic Contact in the Lake Clark Study Area,” by Sara Hornberger, Anchorage: U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, 1986, 4-43.

82 Stones for flagging is unclear unless it refers to gathering flat stones to use as flagstones for paving.

Placer miner Fred Bowman, left, and Harry Baker, right, at Bowman’s Camp near Portage Creek in 1940. Photo courtesy of Margaret “Sis” Clum. H-2700.

August 1, 1945
84 salmon. Expected man & movie camera to take pictures but did not come.

August 2, 1945
200 salmon. Mike [Nudlash?] paid back 10 gal. gas. Whole family & Gulia here for lunch.

August 3, 1945
102 fish, can [?] head fast. Went to hoe potatoes in P.M. At Doc’s for supper.

August 4, 1945
118 salmon.

August 5, 1945
Had lovely time going around lake. Saw Bear [?]. Chas that she some kid high [sentence doesn’t make sense]

August 6, 1945
Chas wanted to tend fish so put off washing till Wed.

August 7, 1945
Washed as usual.
A group of men and boys greeting Star Air Lines pilot Roy Dickson, Sr. on the ice in front of Nondalton on Sixmile Lake c. 1939. Photo courtesy of Roy Dickson, Jr. H-2818.

August 11, 1945
Usual work. Still windy & rainy.

August 12, 1945

August 13, 1945
Antone & Esther for (?) lumber.81 Came last nite. Left today.

August 14, 1945
Little Pete & Ignatius here for lumber.82 Came last nite.

August 15, 1945
Natives had to stay 2 nites. Got away this A.M. [Fred] Bowman & son stopped for short while.83

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81 Antone is probably Antone Nudlash and perhaps “Esther” was actually one of his sisters Hazel or Katherine Nudlash? The Nudlashes lived on the north side of Lake Clark, just west of the mouth of the Kijik River.

82 Helen’s Little Pete is probably Pete Koktelash (1905-2003) who was about 5 ft.4 inches tall. Ignatious Delkittie (1903-1973) was born at Old Iliamna village and he was a Bristol Bay commercial fisherman and fire fighter who lived in Nondalton. He was the father of Mike and Virgil Delkittie of Nondalton. Barbara Jacko Atwater, Walter’s Story. Anchorage: Publication Consultants, 2012, 179.

83 Fred Bowman (1890-1959) and his son Howard (1930-2003) lived at Portage Creek about 12 miles east of the Denison’s place where they operated a small placer gold mine.

August 16, 1945
Chas went ’cross the lake for fish tonight. Weather clearing after storm.

August 17, 1945
Chas got home around 11 A.M. Got 90 fish. Weather clear & lovely. Bowman’s stopped on way home. Some more Natives came for lumber.

August 18, 1945
Natives came for lumber & asked me to go down to see woman in labor 40 hr. We did not get there in time. Went down in 2 hr.
August 20, 1945 [two entries for 8.20.45]
Paul & Agnes Cusma came after lumber. Went to dock in evening & paid him $100. Stripped lead line.

August 20, 1945 [two entries for 8.20.45]
Stayed at school house. Had nice chat with Pringle. All ailments aired etc. Was awful tired when I got home.

August 21, 1945
Rainy day. Rested all day.

August 22, 1945
J[ohn] Walatka & Mr. Palmer came for some lumber. Mr. P said about 6 words. Started to W.W.[?] shop for rabbits.

August 24, 1945
Tried to cross lake to get Mike [Nudlash]. Too rough on other side.

August 25, 1945
Mr. P[almer] & J.W[alatka] back for more lumber & fish.

August 26, 1945
Too rainy & windy to go anywhere. Chas went to Doc's to get news as usual.

August 27, 1945
Still very windy. Trying to clear. Helped a little c planning. Picked 2nd batch of peas.

August 28, 1945
Calm in A.M. but windy this P.M. Still waiting for Mike. Chas began digging for strawberry bed.

August 29, 1945
Chas got quite a patch dug for strawberries. Got about 60 plants.

August 30, 1945
Chas sharpened knives.

August 31, 1945

September 1, 1945
Rain today. Odds & ends done up by Chas & Mike.

September 2, 1945

September 3, 1945
Beginning to run logs today. Had to cut driftwood out of river as it held up logs.

84 Paul (1920?-1983) and Agnes Trefon Cusma (1921-2015) lived in Nondalton with their children.
85 Helen was apparently called to make a house call and nurse someone in Nondalton. Percy D. Pringle was the first school teacher in present-day Nondalton when a new school opened in 1943. Pringle taught at least in 1943, 1944, and 1945. The first school was located in Old Nondalton in 1930 but it was closed in the late 1930s. But there was school in Nondalton in 1940 and 1941 and the teacher was Clarence E. Rusch, presumably holding class in the old school. The new school was built of 222 logs that were cut by Nondalton men and boys and were three-sided on Charlie Denison's sawmill and rafted to present-day Nondalton and built in 1942. Linda J. Ellanna and Andrew Balluta, Nuvendaitin Qah'ina The People of Nondalton, Washington, D. C.; Smithsonian Institution Press, 1992, 80; Ellanna and Hornberger,”Overview of Historic Contact,” 4-57and 4-58; “Historic Photographs From The Lake Clark Study Area,” by Andrew Balluta, Albert Wassillie, Pamela Twitchell et al.,1986, #H-59; HMC-0422, Dorothy and Grenold Collins Papers, Archives and Special Collections, Consortium Library, University of Alaska Anchorage, Grenold Collins, Wildlife Agent, February 18, 1940 Field Diary, Box 2/18 [February 5 to March 28, 1940]; and Harlan D. Unrau, op. cit, 487.
86 John Walatka owned a cabin on the north side of Lake Clark that had been built by Bill Smith in 1935 and passed to Bill Moore, Smith’s nephew in the late 1930s. After Moore’s sister-in-law, Mary Moore, was killed by a prop strike from a floatplane in May 1941 the Moores moved to Anchorage and sold the cabin to John Walatka. Walatka lived in Dillingham but used his Lake Clark cabin as a vacation place and he probably was doing home improvements with the lumber he purchased from Charlie Denison. Anchorage Daily Times, “Tells of Flight From Nazis: Thompson Moore Escapes War’s Tragedies To Meet His Own In Alaska,”June 1941, 1, courtesy of Susan Hunt.
87 Albert Johnson was a friend of Babe and Mary Alsworth who built a small framed cabin just east of the Alsworth’s home. In the early to mid-1950s Terry and Victoria Gill purchased the cabin. Mary Alsworth, op. cit.
September 4, 1945
Ran more logs & rolled them on log roll. Rain all day.

September 5, 1945
Rain early this A.M. Cleaned this P.M. Men planing.

September 6, 1945
Rain early this A.M. Men sawing. North wind. Snow on mountains this A.M.

September 7, 1945
Went across lake to Mike N[udlash’s] to tear down old shack & get some things. Broke shaft housing on motor. Got mail in evening.

September 8, 1945
Men sawing.

September 9, 1945

September 10, 1945
Usual cleaning. Men running logs.88

September 12, 1945
Chas wanted to get logs down. No wash.

September 13, 1945
Weather still holding. Running logs. All down from logrolls.

September 14, 1945
Men working around shop because of weather. Canned 12 qt of moose & did washing.

September 15, 1945
Chas 62 today. Made cake for him. Cleared a little & did ironing & mending.

September 16, 1945
Men worked all day sawing.

September 17, 1945
Men clearing river of logs today.

88 The men cut white spruce along the Tanalian River and then rolled the logs in the river and taking advantage of the fall rains and the higher swifter current ran the logs downstream to Lake Clark. Then they towed the logs to Charlie Denison’s sawmill.

September 18, 1945

September 19, 1945
Men got last of logs hauled around to beach today.

September 20, 1945

September 21, 1945

September 22, 1945
Still sawing in rain & flies.

September 23, 1945

September 24, 1945
Mike [Nudlash] returned late in P.M. Chas & I rested. He got things ready to go to Roadhouse [present-day Iliamna].90

September 25, 1945
They got started about 1 P.M. c Gabriel’s & Benny’s help.91 Looks like rain.

September 26, 1945
Stormy today. Fred Lukus & Margaret Hendrickson walked up.92 Staying at Kennedy’s for weather [reports] c others.

September 27, 1945
Walked to Alsworth’s & back. Met Mrs. Woods whose husband flying for Babe.93 Borrowed knitting book.

89 Iliamna Trading Company store-owner Art Lee used the logs in his store or house in Iliamna.
90 Art and Helen Lee owned Iliamna Trading Company which was the successor trading post in Iliamna village to Seversen’s Roadhouse whose heyday was c. 1923 to the early 1940s.
91 Father and son Gabriel Trefon (1897-1964) and Benjamin Trefon (1923-1985 or 1986).
92 Nothing is recalled about Fred Lukus and Margaret Hendrickson, they were living at the Kennedy’s place at Tanalian Point taking the weather for the Weather Bureau.
93 “Mrs. Woods” might refer to the wife of pilot Frank Woods from Dillingham who was flying for Babe Alsworth at the time.
September 28, 1945
Walked down to T.P. [Tanalian Point] for a few minutes. Gabriel’s wife brought some meat up.94

September 29, 1945
Stayed home all day. Sophie & Gabriel here early in A.M.95

September 30, 1945
Chas got home this P.M. Awful tired. Brought mail etc. Had lunch @ Kennedy’s.96

Memoranda 1945.
Mike’s [Nudlash] time 4 1/2 da[?] coming Aug 30 & 31

October 1, 1945
Washed & bathed. Rested. Chas not feeling good.

October 2, 1945

October 3, 1945
Chas went down to dig potatoes again. Men had to stay around. Weather bad. Stayed home & rested.

October 4, 1945
Mike came back at noon. Helped wash & crate potatoes.

October 5, 1945
Finished potatoes & Ruda [rutabagas]

October 6, 1945
Chas & Mike going this P.M. Doing odds & ends etc. They got away around 4:30.

94 Katherine Hobson Trefon (1904-1972) or Mrs. Gabriel Trefon she was the mother of Agnes Cusma and Benny Trefon.
95 Sophie Hobson Balluta (1912-1996) was a widow with five children who lived on the north side of Lake Clark. She worked with Charlie Denison saw lumber on his steam powered sawmill.
96 The Kennedys lived at Tanalian Point in the log house built by Floyd and Lena Denison about 1935-1939.
97 George Seversen (1912-1987), George Wassillie (1920?-?), and Gulia Delkittie (1909-?). The Delkittie is not identified, but he might have been Gulia, Ignacious, Arsinie, Mike or Virgil.

October 7, 1945
Awful tired. Have Chas’ cold or one of my own. Rested all day.

October 8, 1945
Did not do much of anything. Feel terrible.

October 9, 1945
A little windy here. Chas could make it. Sophia, Gudia & Phillip here for a while.98 Still feeling awful.

98 Sophie Hobson Balluta, Gudia (Katherine Trefon), and Philip Balluta (1936-1994?). Philip was Sophie and Anton Balluta’s fifth and youngest child. After Anton died in 1937 Katherine and Gabriel Trefon raised Philip in order to take some of the pressure off Sophie for being the sole provider for five young children.
October 10, 1945
Chas & Mike came about 2 P.M. Mike went home. Suppose to be back tonight.

October 11, 1945
Chas still tired. Luther came to help. Mike came back this noon.

October 12, 1945
Usual working day. Washed & had line put where I wanted it.

October 13, 1945
Chas cross & boys getting quite a few logs sawed.

October 14, 1945
Sunday but worked hard all day.

October 15, 1945
Started to paint living room besides other things.

October 16, 1945
Gave living room 1 coat paint, looks better.

October 17, 1945

October 18, 1945
Storm all day. Rain, Snow & Blow. Men working on other house.

October 19, 1945
East wind now & rain. Bunch of Natives came tonight for lumber etc.
Staying night 10 men & boys.

October 20, 1945
Natives here till noon then others came (2) for lunch. Men sawed today.

October 21, 1945
Straightening other house. Bathed & felt tired. Men sawed & hauled up logs today.

October 22, 1945
Another stormy day.

October 23, 1945

October 24, 1945
Clear today. Natives got off after lunch. Hard to keep up steam as so windy & cool.

October 25, 1945
Finished timber up from beach. Nice day.

October 26, 1945
Cloudy today. Sawed wood. Fired for them so they could work steady.\textsuperscript{100}

October 27, 1945
Sawed wood this A.M. Snowed in P.M.

October 28, 1945
Planed all day.\textsuperscript{101} Windy.

October 29, 1945
Still windy. Planed all day. Finished what most pressing.

October 30, 1945
Wind dying down. Hauled up logs. Chas Trefon came & helped in P.M.\textsuperscript{102}

October 31, 1945
Nice day. Worked on foundation & finished [his house logs [?three words can’t read on side of page]

Memoranda
Luther [Hobson] 11-12-13-14 - Paid
Mike’s [Nudlash] Time - 4-5-6-7-8-10-12-13-14-15-16-17-18-19-20-21

\textsuperscript{100} Helen was firing the steam boiler once again so the men could concentrate on sawing.

\textsuperscript{101} The transformation of rough sawed lumber by a thickness planer to smooth finish lumber produced a by-product of wood shavings.

\textsuperscript{102} Evan Charlie Trefon (1923-2000?) was the son of Agafia Trefon (1908-1928). After she died in 1928 Charlie was raised by his mother’s older brother, Gabriel and his wife Katherine Trefon. The Trefon’s liked children and since they only had two of their own, they raised three young boys who were children of the Trefon elder’s siblings. Ellanna and Balluta, \textit{op. cit.}, 127.
Chester Whitehead lived in as many as eight different cabins around Lake Clark between 1937 and the mid-1970s. He worked in Bristol Bay canneries and trapped, subsisting off the land. Photo courtesy of Margaret "Sis" Clum. H-1767.

November 1, 1945
Ray got away in P.M.\textsuperscript{103} Chas put away boiler.

November 2, 1945
Earthquake at noon. Lasted quite a minute. Went down to Kennedy’s in P.M. Chas went on to Alsworth’s.

\textsuperscript{103}Ray Brower (1907-1987) was a prospector, miner, and trapper who worked for Fred Bowman at the Bowman placer gold operation on Portage Creek and lived in a cabin one mile east of the mouth of Portage Creek. He had a rather unsavory reputation as a result of threatening to shoot Babe Alsworth and burning all of Doc Dutton’s journals in the late 1940s and 1950s. Allen Woodward, conversations with the editor 1974-2018; Mary Alsworth, \textit{op. cit.}, 6.

November 3, 1945
Helped pile lumber. Chas getting ready to go to Anchorage. Cleaning yard etc.

November 6, 1945
Washed today. Chas helped wring.

November 7, 1945
Ironed part of wash & mended.

November 8, 1945
Went after potatoes in A.M. [Chester] Whitehead came after lumber $40.50.\textsuperscript{104} Snow during A.M. Finished ironing.

November 9, 1945
Went down to Kennedy’s in snow storm. Clear when we got home. Snow very wet.

November 11, 1945
Finished painting ceiling. Cut some more wood. Cold 8° fog from lake.

November 12, 1945
Chas cutting & hauling birch. Trying out pups. Around 0° all day.

November 14, 1945
Went down to Babe’s A[lsworth] to take mail, see about going into Anchorage c him. Chas made will also.

November 18, 1945
Washed thinking it Sat. when it was Sunday.

November 19, 1945
Moderating up to 34° today. Chas fixing bridge [over the Tanalian River]. Went to see Kennedy’s while he was working.

November 20, 1945

\textsuperscript{104}Chester Whitehead (1903-1985) was born in Pennsylvania and became a Bristol Bay cannery mechanic, miner at Bowman’s placer mine on Portage Creek, trapper, and cabin builder. He came to Lake Clark in 1936 or 1937 and lived in eight different locations around Lake Clark until the mid-1970s, yet he never owned any land around the lake. At times he had his own small airplane and he lived for a time in Levelock on the lower Kvichak River. Chester Whitehead, “Recollections,” approximately April 9, 1985; Unrau, \textit{op. cit.}, 735.

November 21, 1945
Topsy had 5 black pups. Seems to be good mother. Kennedy here returning gas, materials, etc.

November 22, 1945
Made ice cream & applesauce cake to brighten dinner. Nice day.

November 23, 1945
Stormy day.

November 24, 1945
Took suitcase to Babe's. Nice ride but cold wind. Some snow.

November 25, 1945
Chas finished laying floor in other house. Got things so he can work when he comes back. Snowing.

November 26, 1945
Chas got away about noon. Mrs. [Glenna] Kennedy & [Mrs. ?] Woods up this P.M. Sold $8 of yarn. Mrs. [Kennedy] returned matches.

November 27, 1945
Busy today. Wood, water dogs, cookies, ironing etc. Nice day -2°, 0° most of the day.

November 28, 1945
-10° this A.M. Did not go up much. North wind. Saw a fox. Something on beach ravens & fox fighting about.

November 29, 1945
Still -10°. Hard to keep house warm till evening when wind died down.

November 30, 1945
Still -10° but west wind this A.M. Ice in front of house this A.M.

December 1, 1945
-10° had to break ice to get water. About 6-8 in.

December 2, 1945
-14° this A.M. About 4 inches ice on water hole. Bridge has gone out in last couple days. Am alone.106

December 3, 1945
About -14° in A.M. Went down to -20° in evening. Usual day, wood, water & feeding dogs.

December 4, 1945
Temp up to -8° for a while. Topsy's pups have eyes open now.

December 5, 1945
Temp about the same -10°.

December 6, 1945
Mrs. Kennedy & kids here. Came around on lake. Says there is about 5 1/2 in[ch]es of ice near mouth of [Tanalian] River braid.

December 7, 1945
-14°-18° today. Have a good start filling cracks in floor.

106 The bridge over the Tanalian River got washed away by ice bergs on the Tanalian River. This was one of three bridges over the Tanalian River built by Charlie Denison, with the help of others including Joe Kackley, Doc Dutton, Joe Thompson, Marion Mooter and others. In each case the bridges were washed away by the Tanalian River.

107 Jim and Glenna Kennedy's two children were Barbara (1939-2013) and Donald who was born 1940.
December 8, 1945
6 above A.M. Snowing a little. Got outside wood box full and lots of H2O. Chas got home around 4 P.M.108

December 9, 1945

December 10, 1945
Filling cracks in floor. Getting ready to paint it again.

December 11, 1945
Weather much milder. Chas fine. Having trouble ċ his back from rubber [shot?] and on abd.[abdomen] where adh. [adhesion] was.

December 12, 1945
Getting real mild.

December 13, 1945
Finished filling cracks & cleaned floor. Painted most of it.

December 14, 1945
Finished painting floor. Looks nice.

December 15, 1945
T thawing.

December 16, 1945
T 48. Ice unsafe for trip to Kennedy's & Babe's. Chas went after turkey.

December 17, 1945
Starting to clean for Xmas. Chas working on cupboards & draws for upstairs.

December 18, 1945
Cleaned cupboards & straightened things out.

December 19, 1945
Still very mild. Put up new curtains and finished main cleaning.

December 20, 1945

December 21, 1945
Rained in nite. Little cooler.

108 Charlie Denison apparently returned from a trip to Anchorage on this day.
December 22, 1945

December 23, 1945
Freezing again. To Babe's & Kennedy's. Ice glaring, got some Xmas mail & letters.

December 24, 1945
Opened pkg @ 8 P.M. Got towel & toweling from Olive, tie for Chas, apron from Nora. Candy from Chas.

December 25, 1945
Turning mild. T 26 @ 11 A.M. Nice turkey dinner.

December 26, 1945
Weather the same.

December 27, 1945
Cooler this A.M. Mr. [Percy D.] Pringle & 2 Natives came. Stayed over nite. Had nice visit.

December 28, 1945
Pringle went to Kennedy. Jim taking him home.

December 29, 1945
Jim Kennedy & Joe Thompson here for appraisal of Joe Kackley estate & to get bill for Chas' work on house. T 10°.

December 30, 1945
T 8° Babe & Joe [Thompson] here & Doc's part of bill $158.75.

December 31, 1945
Got rest of money on bill from Joe's [Kackley] estate. T temperature about same.

January 1, 1946
T going down. Went to Kennedy's & gossiped. Nice walk.

January 2, 1946
Took down good curtains and put up others. Threw out Xmas tree & put away decorations.

January 3, 1946
T -10° washed. Hard job to carry water from lake.

January 4, 1946
T still around 0°. Ironed. Pups sure are growing.

January 5, 1946

January 6, 1946
Had rest of turkey. Tried to hurry it. T -16° @ 3:30. Little longer days.

January 7, 1946
-29°

January 8, 1946
-22° Chas went after gift turkey. No mail. Pups growing fine.

January 9, 1946
-2° foggy today. Chas started on stair rail & desk today. It'll be nice when finished upstairs.

January 10, 1946

109 Percy D. Pringle was a school teacher in Nondalton during the years 1943-1945, but nothing further is known about him.

110 It is likely Jim Kennedy was going to take Percy Pringle back to Nondalton by airplane. Kennedy was the first resident pilot on Lake Clark, circa 1935, but in 1943 he suffered serious injuries in a crash near Upper Talarik Creek. At this time Kennedy was likely flying off the gravel outwash along lower Dry Creek at Tanalian Point. However, it is important to note that Jim Kennedy was not in the same league as bush pilot Babe Alsworth. Babe was a commercial pilot and made his living flying freight and passengers while Kennedy was a low time private pilot who did fly a few folks around the country but he could not and did not make his living as a bush pilot as Alsworth did for more than 40 years and amassing more than 30,000 hours of Alaska bush flying time. Unrau, op. cit., 485.

111 Joe Kackley died on December 3, 1944 after fighting a fire at his neighbor’s, Jim and Glenna Kennedy’s cabin. After Joe Kackley and Doc Dutton’s house burned during the winter of 1939 Charlie Denison and Joe Thompson built the old timers a new log house. Doc and Joe split the total cost which was $317.50. Joe’s share came out of his estate as he left a will. Doc Dutton was not known to have left a will. Joe Thompson (1903-1982) was a prospector, miner, fisherman, and cabin builder who was one of the most consequential early 20th century Euroamerican settlers on Lake Clark by virtue of the large number of cabins and houses he built or helped to build beginning in the late 1930s and ending about 1962 when he built his last cabin.

112 Floyd (1907-1986) and Lena Denison (1910-2000) were Charlie Denison’s son and daughter-in-law. Lena, who moved to Tanalian Point in the fall of 1932 with Floyd and Charlie, after the Bristol Bay commercial salmon fishing season concluded. Laverne Denison Larson, conversation with the editor, March 16, 2018.
January 11, 1946
32-34° above today. A little snow this P.M. Did some start toward finishing today. Bread today.

January 12, 1946
30-40°. Jim [Kennedy] had loose ski & Chas had to go see if hurt while landing. Not hurt. Brought some mail.

January 13, 1946
Strong east wind. Went to Kennedy’s for usual gossip, etc.

January 14, 1946
Still mild. Wash today. Also painting [and] varnishing etc.

January 15, 1946
Ironed with more finishing. Chas working on cupboards now.

January 16, 1946
Mild - worked on painting. Put things in desk.

January 17, 1946

January 18, 1946
Chas cut right hand when hatchet came off handle. Hit radial artery probably. Had 2 hemorrhages. Went down to bridge site. Ice sure piled high.

January 19, 1946
Mild. Windy. Chas resting. Hand better.

January 20, 1946
Chas hand better. Working upstairs some more.

January 21, 1946
Still mild. CAA plane crashed by Kennedy. They came after help & some tools. Chas walked out [on the lake ice to the crash site].

January 22, 1946
T 30° Chas returned Elmer’s hand sled. Snow from west started. Did some more painting varnishing etc.

January 23, 1946
Nothing new about same. Kennedy kids [Barbara and Donald] brought mail. Got our gears for washer.

January 24, 1946

January 25, 1946
T little cooler. Went down to Kennedy’s. Chas went on to Babe’s with some letters.

January 27, 1946
Chas worked on washer installing new gears etc. Pumped water for washing.

January 28, 1946
Washed - washer not right yet.

January 29, 1946
Ironed some. Chas took washer apart. Found trouble & fixed. T going down.

January 30, 1946
T 0° this A.M. Cold all day. Chas putting washer back together. Finished my ironing etc. Washer OK I hope.

January 31, 1946
Chas working on stairway today.

February 1, 1946
Temp cooler today.

February 2, 1946
Temp. -26° this A.M. Below zero all day.

February 3, 1946
Temp about zero. Chas finishing up most of trimming upstairs & usual chores wood, water, etc. Snow all day.

February 4, 1946
More snow today. Around zero.

February 5, 1946
T around zero. Cooler tonight. Some north wind.

113 Charlie Denison was an excellent mechanic and he often assisted pilots who had trouble with their landing gear or engines.

114 The Civil Aeronautics Administration (CAA) was the Federal agency overseeing aviation related activities. Apparently one of their aircraft crashed near Kennedy’s house at Tanalian Point.
February 6, 1946
T -26° this A.M. T hovered around -20° all day. Clear & lovely. Chas finished desk top. S[?] on [?] for a while.

February 7, 1946
Still 20° below this A.M. Lovely day. Ring around sun & three sun dogs.

February 8, 1946
T 36° below this A.M. Been around 20° below all day. Chas made dog harness & mended shoes.

February 9, 1946
Chas still working on dog harness. Still cold. More snow.

February 10, 1946
Chas got wood around. I helped him with water for Monday. Snow again.

February 11, 1946
Washed. Washer broke down again. Chas had to take apart again.

February 12, 1946
Did all ironing in one swoop. Chas had to dig us out of snow & re-pile some lumber as shed broke down.

February 13, 1946
Chas [brought] in old tent for me to lengthen old canvas. Worked all day on same & mopped late in P.M.

February 14, 1946
Finished tent for Chas. He is sewing on top loops.

February 15, 1946
T around freezing. More snow each A.M.

February 16, 1946
Chas went to K's [Kennedy's] and A[lsworth's] to see how snow on lake is. No mail as planes not able to land at Iliamna.

February 17, 1946
Down to Alsworth's for his clamps. Bruno [sled dog] had 2 fits coming home. More snow in late P.M.

February 23, 1946
0° nice day - washed.

February 24, 1946
T -10° Drove to Kennedy's. Got some mail. Lovely day. Did some mending & cleaning even Sunday.

February 25, 1946
T -16° Chas got started for Nondalton about 11 A.M. took 7 dogs. Expects to do some hunting. Nice day.

February 26, 1946
T around 30° Cloudy. Looks like snow. Seemed awful tired today. Rested all P.M.

February 27, 1946
T about same. Has cloudy look. Maybe snow.

February 28, 1946
Chas got home about 1 P.M. Brought Sophie B[alluta]. to help with logging.115 Fair day.

March 1, 1946
T around 30° all day. Sophie & Chas cut wood all day.

115 Sophie Hobson Balluta (1912-1996) was a widow who lived on the north side of Lake Clark with her children.
March 2, 1946
T 0° this A.M. Chas & Sophie hauling wood this A.M. & P.M. Cloudy all day.

March 3, 1946
Betty Balluta & Paul Cusma came last nite to stay 'til weather better on way to Anchorage. No flying today.

March 4, 1946
Betty & Paul started but returned about 6 P.M. Too windy in Pass. Mild & thawing till 4 P.M. Stormy A.M.

March 5, 1946
T10° this A.M. They [Betty and Paul] finally got off & probably in Anchorage.

March 6, 1946
Sophie Balluta very nice. Splendid worker.

March 8, 1946
Chas & Sophie cut all day, getting lots of wood.

March 9, 1946
Chas & Sophie hauled most of day. Snowing most of day, getting worse all time.

March 10, 1946
Washed this A.M. Machine broke down again. Storming all day.

March 11, 1946
T -8° this A.M. Chas & Sophie cut this A.M. hauled this P.M. Did my ironing.

March 12, 1946
T -30° this A.M. Not working today as too cold for good hauling. Made ice cream.

March 13, 1946
T -30° this A.M. Did not go to wood. Too cold. Hauled in P.M.

March 14, 1946
T -30° cut some big timber then went to look at other up [Tanalian] river. Snow too deep to work there.

March 15, 1946
T -30° this A.M. Hauling this A.M.

March 17, 1946
Chas took Sophie home this A.M. Looks stormy this P.M.

March 18, 1946
Stormy & snow all day from west.

March 19, 1946
-20° clearing off.

March 20, 1946
Kennedy kids brought books back. Hang around & played ċ pups for a while.

March 21, 1946
Chas got home about 6 P.M. Cold & blowing.

March 22, 1946
Mrs. Kennedy & kids came up to borrow some reading material.

March 23, 1946
Went over to Nondalton to see if Mike Nudlash or Delikittie? wants to work. Mike's got too much running around to do to be [of] any help.

March 24, 1946
-10° this A.M. Caught up on my work even if it is Sunday.

March 25, 1946
Chas went down lake to Nondalton after oil. Maybe help. Blew here all day. Got some things ready for across lake.

March 26, 1946
Usual day.

March 27, 1946
Chas got home in evening. Not too good a day. Blowing some. No help.

March 28, 1946
Chas hauled some lumber to Kijik in P.M. Charlie Denison was building or remodeling a small framed cabin someplace around the mouth of the Kijik River. The purpose of the cabin was unclear, perhaps it was to provide shelter while he was logging around the mouth of the Kijik River. On the north side of the Kijik River mouth was the site of the 19th century Lake Clark Dena'ina village. On the south side of the Kijik River mouth was the home of the late Big Evan Nudlash (1879-1934) and his wife Mary and their children Hazel, Cather-

116 Paul Cusma was apparently taking Betty Balluta to Anchorage by airplane. The pilot would probably have been Babe Alsworth.
March 29, 1946
Hauled more lumber in P.M. Mild again.

March 30, 1946
Chas hauled more stuff. I went to Kennedy’s at Tanalian Point & rode back & him. Herb Nicholson there with passengers for nite. 118 Did washing.

March 31, 1946
Rain all day & snow in P.M. Chas made door & fixed some things. Had usual work to get done.

April 1, 1946
Chas started over to stove but came back as it was too sloppy.

April 2, 1946
Chas took light load over to Shack [at Kijik].

April 3, 1946
Chas went over to Shack. Staying a few days [at Kijik].

April 4, 1946
Still alone. Snowed this A.M. a little rain this P.M. Clearing later.

April 5, 1946
Chas got home from Kijik was tired. I did usual work.

April 6, 1946
Chas made trip this P.M. & back to Kijik. Did my wash etc. Nice day.

April 7, 1946
T 20°-40°. Chester Whitehead came as we were getting up. Stayed till after lunch. Chas took more lumber & bed over to Kijik.

April 8, 1946
Blowing from east.

April 9, 1946
Regular wind storm from east.

118 Herb Nicholson and his brother Elmer, owned Nicholson Air Service in Dillingham and he was flying through Lake Clark Pass when the weather forced him to spend the night at Kennedy’s. He waited for the weather to improve before proceeding on through the Pass to Anchorage. Nicholson Air Service was the first locally owned air taxi to fly people from Dillingham to Anchorage in the late 1930s. John W. Nicholson, *op. cit.*, 69.

April 10, 1946
Calmer today.

April 11, 1946
Chas came home tonight. Had some kidney & tongue.

April 12, 1946
Went to Alsworth’s for mail. Got 2nd class. Chas loaded & cut wood in P.M.

April 13, 1946
Chas took load over to [Kijik] this A.M. Lovely day.

April 14, 1946
Put felt on walls & got things straightened out at Kijik.

April 15, 1946
Came home to get some lumber for J.W. 119 Nice but freezing taking some etc. back.

119 “J.W.” would be John Walatka, a bush pilot who lived in Dillingham but who purchased the Bill Moore place about two miles south of the mouth of the Kijik River sometime after 1941 and perhaps the lumber Charlie was hauling to Kijik was to build a small cabin on the property for John Waltaka.
April 16, 1946
Laid floor in Shack. After Chas got all the things off the lake.

April 17, 1946
Fixed some cans while Mike helped Chas. A little snow too deep for much logging.

April 18, 1946
Came home from Shack [at Kijik] as Chas could not cut timber because of snow. Canned one cooler of meat. Pups would not lead except Coopie [sled dog].

April 19, 1946
Canned meat all day - fixed cans.

April 20, 1946
Finished meat, washed & bathed. Quite tired.

April 21, 1946
Rested some, fixed 40 cans for salmon next summer. Usual work Sunday. Baked pumpkin pie.

April 22, 1946
Did ironing & washed & ironed curtains for downstairs. Did some house-cleaning. Start in earnest tomorrow.

April 23, 1946
Cleaned upstairs. Aired everything. Chas made out sides for water system.

April 24, 1946
Chas went up lake to see about timber. I started to wash downstairs walls.

April 25, 1946
Finished walls & changed around furniture. Cleaned some furniture. Chas got back. Had been to Bowman’s. Brought me some seed plants.

April 26, 1946
Planted our seeds to start garden.

April 27, 1946
Washed while Chas sawed some wood. Made myself a choc cake for birthday.

April 28, 1946
Ironed & helped cut wood even if it is Sunday. Lovely weather. Snow going rapidly.

Fred and Norma Bowman’s mining camp at Portage Creek, about 12 miles east of Tanalian Point. The Bowmans also had a working sawmill powered by the Fordson tractor at the Bowman Camp, but it was not nearly as busy as was Charlie Denison’s steam powered saw mill.

120 Uncertain if “Mike” refers to Mike Nudlash or Mike Delkittie of Nondalton.
April 29, 1946
East wind. Helped plane some boat lumber.

April 30, 1946
Did more planning today. Awful muddy around mill yet.

May 1, 1946
Finished planning lumber.

May 2, 1946
Sawed some wood. Not too hard throwing back.

May 3, 1946
Sawed wood most of day. About half done.

May 4, 1946
Chas got tired & lazed around today.

May 5, 1946

May 6, 1946
Apparently no progress in labor. Much lovely day. Tried to get her [Agnes Cusma] to Anchorage. No planes available.

May 7, 1946
Babe came down for me about 1 P.M. So glad to get home. Girl born 15 min. past midnight.122

May 8, 1946
Did usual cleaning & ironing. Lovely day. Wassillie Trefon here for lumber.123 Had fresh bread as Chas ran out while I was gone.

May 9, 1946
Albert Wassillie came for boat lumber & dogs.124 Thawing a lot.

May 10, 1946
Chas splitting wood. I wheeled some around to wood box.

May 11, 1946

May 12, 1946
Sawed wood this A.M. Rained this P.M. so saved.

May 13, 1946
Finished wood saving. Chas fixed boiler & worked on shop this P.M. Snowed this A.M. early. Ironed this P.M.

May 14, 1946
Usual work. Snowed quite a little early this A.M. Thawing however.

May 15, 1946
Chas stripping new garden ground. Still frozen so cannot dig up. Cool & blowy.

May 16, 1946
Wheeled dirt onto new ground & wheeled wood back into smoke house. Have some more to do.

May 17, 1946
Wheeled dirt onto new ground & wheeled wood back into smoke house. Have some more to do.

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122 Hilda Cusma was Agnes and Paul Cusma’s first child.
123 Wassillie “Wass” Trefon (1898-1958) was a younger brother of Gabriel Trefon. Like Gabriel, he was born at Telaquana Lake. His parents, Trefon Balluta and Mary Ann Trefon, were part of the founders of Tanalian Point c. 1911 and Gabriel and Wass were largely raised there during their formative years. Both was an excellent wood workers, trappers and hunters. Wass died in 1958 while commercial fishing in Kvichak Bay near Graveyard Cannery and was buried in the Naknek Cemetery. Mary Alsworth, conversations with the editor 1974 -1992.
124 Albert Cusma Wassillie (1923-1988?) was the brother-law to Wass Trefon. He was very knowledgeable about Dena’ina history and culture and in his later years worked with anthropologist Linda J. Elliamu and Priscilla Russell Kari and other scholars in preparing the ethnography on the Lake Clark Dena’ina, *Nuvendaltin Qult’ana The People of Nondalton.*

May 18, 1946
Washed & wheeled wood into smoke house. Chas still stripping fresh ground. Cool & cloudy.

May 19, 1946
Wheeled wood into smoke house & toilet of shop. Got all split [firewood] under cover. Chas went to Kennedy’s.

May 20, 1946
Helped wheel some dog manure. Ground still frozen. Planted lettuce & radishes.

May 21, 1946
Chas fixed boat ć my help. Planted B. Buttons [Blue Buttons?] Gone to get potato ground ready. Ice on lake still ć us.

May 22, 1946
Arrived in Kanakanak 3 yrs ago. Helped wheel dog manure for garden.

May 23, 1946
Helped wheel some dirt for potatoes. Chas planted 120 hills. Planted also carrots. Ice began to move but not far.

May 24, 1946
Bay was clear this A.M. but ice moved in again. Planted parsnips. Bowman’s came in P.M.

May 25, 1946
Washed while Chas got more ground ready & planted more parsnips. Fair day.

May 26, 1946
Chas worked on Garden here & planted beets for pickles & greens. Ironed and mended even if Sunday.

May 27, 1946
Worked in garden here till noon then Chas went down to [Tanalian] to work on potato ground.

May 28, 1946
Mr. Kennedy & kids. Came ć John Meggitt an old friend of Chas. Ice out of bay but moved back in so did not stay long. [?] & Luther [Hobson] came from Nondalton.

May 29, 1946
Chas went to Tanalian to work on potato ground. Ice moved out of bay about 10 min after he was gone.

May 30, 1946
I wheeled some sawdust and watched Chas dig out 5 rotten stumps for more ground. Strong east wind all day.

May 31, 1946
Still windy Chas planted more potatoes & chopped wood. I wheeled a few roots & baked pies.

Memoranda May 7, 46
Delivered baby girl from Agnes Trefon. Almost transverse position. Left knee presentation with long labor which frightened them. Mother & baby fine.

June 1, 1946
Planted potatoes at Kennedy patch [at Tanalian Point]. Mrs. K had one of her moods.

June 2, 1946
Planted potatoes. Bowman came along ć dogs for us to take care of. Met Mrs. B. [Norma Bowman] for first time.

June 3, 1946
Finished planting down at Tanalian. Brought home some dirt for boxes next spring.

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125 Helen mentions when and where she first arrived in Alaska, May 22, 1943 at Kanakanek Hospital, seven miles west of Dillingham where she worked as a Registered Nurse.

126 John Meggitt was a school teacher in Naknek beginning in about 1934 and later at Levelock and was a very close friend of Babe and Mary Alsworth. In 1939 John Meggitt came to Tanalian Point and filmed Floyd Denison and his wife Lena, Charlie Denison rebuilding the Dutton-Kackley cabin, and Jim and Glenna Kennedy and Mrs. Meggitt boating across Lake Clark.

127 Someone else came from Nondalton with Luther Hobson, Jr. but the name is illegible.

128 It appears Charlie Denison was planting potatoes in both the old Dutton-Kackley garden and in Floyd and Lena Denison’s old garden spot behind their house at Tanalian Point, the house the Kennedys were living in during the mid-1940s.

129 Agnes Trefon Cusma (1921-2015?) was married to Paul Cusma and their first daughter, Hilda, was born May 7, 1946 in Nondalton, delivered by Helen.

130 Norma Bowman (1885-1978) was a Registered Nurse with the Alaska Engineering Commission whose mission was the construction of the Alaska Railroad.
One of the first framed houses built on Lake Clark by Charlie Denison in about 1940. Charlie built the house near his home for his step-son-in-law, Thompson Moore, but Moore and Charlie could not get along so Moore and his wife Mary and their daughter Mary Ann moved across the lake to live with his brother, Bill Moore., Photo courtesy of Susan Hunt. H-2877.

June 4, 1946
Chas replanted carrots & parsnips & set out nasturtiums & fixed tomato pots. I washed mopped cleaned windows etc.

June 5, 1946
Ironed while Chas getting ready to saw Gabriel Trefon & wife [Katherine] Sophie B[alluta] & 2 children stopped on way to Brown's [Carlson] for potatoes to plant.

June 6, 1946
Chas started down to Nondalton & G.T. [Gabriel Trefon] but motor blew up so walked back.

June 7, 1946
Brown came along on way to Nondalton so Chas went with him to get mail.

June 8, 1946
Lame & tired today. Joe Thompson & Elmer Gustafson took fence to put around old Joe's [Kackley] grave. Can see both crosses from house now.131

June 9, 1946
Still awful tired. Rain & wind all day.

June 10, 1946
Chas came home. Brought mail etc. Percy Pringle came & 3 Native boys. Went on down after supper to Babe's & Kennedy's.

June 11, 1946
Natives & Pringle left early this A.M. Cool & cloudy. Awful tired this P.M. but went down beach after onions.

June 12, 1946
Started to saw. Worked really only half day as he [Charlie Denison] had lots of tinkering to do.

June 13, 1946
Sawed most of day. Beginning to get quite a hole in pile of logs.

June 14, 1946
Sawed only in A.M. Began to rain so washed in P.M. Went to Kennedy's & Babe's got lots of mail. Wedding present from [??].

June 15, 1946
Sawed all day though raining some. Did my ironing & mending at odd times.

June 16, 1946
Rested today. Chas putting around as usual. Wrote some letters.

June 17, 1946
Sawed all day. Rather warm.

June 18, 1946
Sawed all day. Frances [Wilson] and Macy Hobson & wife [Agafia] came later.132

June 19, 1946
Went to Nudlash's & Hobson's.133 Nice rest.

June 20, 1946
Sawed.

Mary Alsworth, op. cit.

131 During the past 72 years the vegetation in the form of white spruce, willow, alder, and birch has grown over the tundra and obscured the graves of Joe Kackley, Doc Dutton, Nellie Mae Alexander Denison, Helen Beeman Denison, and Charlie Denison unless one is right next to them. The crosses and white picket fence are no longer visible from the Lake Clark as they were in 1946. The first cross was for Nellie Mae Alexander Denison who was Charlie's third wife who died in 1941 of cancer.

132 Frances Hobson Wilson (1912-1999) and Agafia Hobson (1920-?). Frances was a sister to Macy and Steve Hobson. Alice Hedlund, conversation with the editor, March 15, 2018.

133 The Nudlash's home was located on the south side of the Kijik River mouth. They were the last Lake Clark Dena’ina family to live near historic Kijik village, but by the mid-1940s the Nudlash family moved to Nondalton but maintained a cabin at the old place west of the Kijik River mouth.
June 21, 1946
Sawed.

June 22, 1946
Sawed.

June 23, 1946
Rested, piled lumber. Wrote letters etc.

June 24, 1946
I washed in A.M. We went to Kennedy’s & cut some rhubarb to can (20 qts.) Raining at times.

June 25, 1946
Sawed.

June 26, 1946
Sawed - started on wood logs.

June 27, 1946

June 28, 1946
Having radishes now. Garden lovely. Chas fussed around all day getting big logs on logroll.

June 29, 1946
Sawed all but two logs.

June 30, 1946
Rested today. Chas had usual puttering to do.

July 1, 1946
Finished lumber. Sawing I washed while Chas got ready for wood sawing. Did a little.

134 Bob Hadfield (1913-1983) and Bernie Hadfield were close friends of Babe and Mary Alsworth. They decided to see if they would like living at Lake Clark so they built a cabin of framed lumber from Babe Alsworth’s sawmill in about 1945. Bob was a Bristol Bay commercial fisherman and trapper. After Jim and Glenna Kennedy left for Anchorage the Hadfields lived at Tanalian Point in the house the Kennedy’s left and took the weather readings and radioed them to Anchorage. In the spring of 1949 they left Lake Clark and returned to their home in Naknek where they owned Hadfield’s Bar and Liquor Store for more than 30 years. The business is still owned by the Hadfield family to this day. After the Hadfields sold their house on Hardenberg Bay about 1950 to Carlos and Ona Carson the Marion and Bertha Mooter family moved into it. Mary Alsworth, op. cit.

July 2, 1946
Got 2/3 wood sawed.

July 3, 1946
Went down to K. Chas hoed. Rutabagas & rhubarb. Finished sawing wood.

July 4, 1946
Chas dug out stump. I cleaned & baked cake. Cut my left hand and deep. Mosquitoes fierce.

July 7, 1946
Chas got lines ready & I hung net for him. Breezy all day.

July 8, 1946
Chas hoed. I stayed at Kennedy’s.

July 9, 1946
Chas at Garden hoeing.

July 11, 1946
Washed this P.M. while Chas ground blades & cutlery.

July 12, 1946
Ironed & mended. Finished blouses. Nice day.

July 13, 1946
Mosquitoes bad. Stayed in as much as possible.

July 14, 1946
Went to Alsworth. Bought 1 doz. eggs $1. Got rhubarb at usual place [Tanalian Point].

July 15, 1946
Raining. Chas laying foundation for new part. First lettuce.

July 16, 1946
Planed lumber.

July 17, 1946
Planed lumber.

July 18, 1946
Got first salmon this A.M. Got long lumber planed and piled. Kennedy’s & Al Andree [?] called.135

135 Al Andree was a Bristol Bay commercial fisherman who lived in Naknek. Al Andree as told to Jim
July 19, 1946  
Planed lumber this A.M. Hard rain this P.M. Finished my bed spread.

July 20, 1946  
Planed all day.

July 21, 1946  
Washed while Chas got out lumber to plane and worked on house. Mary [Alsworth], Kennedy’s & A.A. [Al Andree?] came.

July 22, 1946  
1 salmon - Chas went down to hoe potatoes. Had ironing, bread etc. to do.

July 24, 1946  
Lots of cottony stuff off cottonwood [trees] this year. Into everything.

July 25, 1946  
12 salmon. Went to Kennedy’s got mail. Chas hoed.

July 26, 1946  
Canned 28 #2 cans salmon. Helped a little č planning. Had pains in stomach.

July 27, 1946  
Canned 18 #1/2 cans, 10 #2 cans & 2 qts. & 3 pts. salmon. Cleaned & helped č roofing boards.

July 28, 1946  
Made & bottled 52 bottles root beer. Hung net. Was going to rest as Sunday. Rained & stormed all day.

July 29, 1946  

July 30, 1946  
Ironed - Chas put up 35 fish to dry. Went to Kennedy’s in P.M. Met Mr. [Bill] Parks.136

July 31, 1946  
Stormy all day rested. Help prepare strips for house.

August 2, 1946  
40 salmon - canned 6 jars beet greens - Chas working on house.

August 3, 1946  
180 salmon - finished canning salmon.

August 4, 1946  
Bowman’s came along. Was in midst of washing, canning etc. Finished fresh salmon.

August 5, 1946  

August 6, 1946  

August 7, 1946  
280 salmon to clean. Did not pick net till late. Sold 22.50 boat lumber.

August 8, 1946  
Scott [Mitchell] came from Babe’s č 3 rabbits.137 Interest in what we are doing.

August 9, 1946  
[Bill] Park & Mike [Nudlash or Vandegrift] came on way from Nondalton. Brought salt. Stayed for lunch. Mike paid $50 toward motor.138

August 11, 1946  
Rain all day. 300 fish. Chas took up nets.

August 12, 1946  
Rain all day. Canned 29 qt dried salmon & 5 pt beet[?] pickles.

August 13, 1946  

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136 Bill Park (1892-1963) was a retired territorial school teacher who taught in many villages throughout Alaska in the 1930s and 1940s. He retired from teaching in the mid-1940s and purchased the Art and Helen Lee Cabin four miles east of Port Alsworth. Sometime in the early 1960s Park relocated to his home-state of Pennsylvania where he died in 1963. He was a graduate of Pennsylvania State University. David Greenham, e-mail message to the editor, February 23, 2018.

137 Scott Mitchell was a friend of Babe Alsworth’s from Minnesota who came to Lake Clark in the mid to late 1940s to assist Babe and Mary Alsworth develop their homestead.

138 Bill Park and Mike Nudlash or Mike Vandegrift.
August 14, 1946
228 salmon. Bill Park came to put up salt & dried fish for self. Stayed nite. Interesting talker.

August 15, 1946
Bill tried to help c fish but slow & awkward. I fixed table cloth & ironed besides cooking. Rain all day.

August 16, 1946

August 17, 1946
Got 360 salmon. Chas took up short net. Left 100 to do Sunday - tomorrow.

August 18, 1946
Left net for one more day. Finished all of them.

August 19, 1946

August 20, 1946
Rested all day but going to Babe’s & Kennedy’s. Brought home another doe [rabbit]. Paid for all & got 2 doz. eggs.

August 21, 1946
Ironed & cleaned. Chas started building rabbit hutch. Mike [Nudlash or Vandegrift] came for lunch. Getting us some things at Roadhouse [present-day Iliamna].

August 22, 1946
Pringle & Alexies came for breakfast & lunch. Paul [Cusma], Ben-nie [Trefon], Luther [Hobson] came for lunch & supper. Sold $79.50 lumber.

August 23, 1946

August 24, 1946
Some more W.W. Chas building another hutch.

August 25, 1946
Both of us just too tired to move. Stormy day.

August 26, 1946
Usual wash day. Chas finished hutch.

August 27, 1946
Ironed. Usual wash day.

Memoranda
46 110 cans, 24 qts., 3 pts. salmon in cans 3,000 fish up.

September 1, 1946
Gave 3 shots Toxiof. Am to return to give CAA shots. Having nice rest except for drunk last evening.

September 2, 1946
Waiting for Babe. A couple men went hunting. Geodetic Survey here (Iliamna) Some of them were at Tanana 2 yrs ago.

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Not certain who Helen was referring to, Mike Nudlash or Mike Vandegrift (1902-1982), Babe Alsworth’s extraordinarily talented mechanic who kept Babe’s airplanes flying and was the primary builder of the Alsworth homestead from August 1944 until the early 1960s. Mary Alsworth, op. cit.

Perhaps “W.W.” stands for white washing interior walls.

Apparently Helen was flown to Iliamna to give some vaccinations.
A circa 1940s photograph of Hazel Nudlash, her mother Mary, and brother Nick Nudlash at Nondaton. By this time the Nudlash family had largely left their home on the west side of the Kijik River for a home in Nondalton. Photo courtesy Hazel Nudlash Barlip. H-448.

September 3, 1946
Men returned č 2 caribou. Babe came after me. Glad to get home.  

September 4, 1946

September 5, 1946
Macy & wife left after seeing Kennedy about landing (?) where marten are. I washed. Am tired. Chas working on kitchen. Picked 2nd batch of peas.

September 6, 1946
Help pick pea hay to cure for rabbits. Mopped & Ironed. Hope I can sew in a day or two.

September 7, 1946
Mrs. Kennedy & children came č my eggs. Scott Mitchell brought us 2 geese. Chas worked on house all day. I sewed most of day.

September 8, 1946
Finished what sewing I had. Chas still doing carpenter work.

September 9, 1946
Wanted to wash but rained all day.

September 10, 1946
Rain all day. Chas working in it.

September 11, 1946
Gabriel [Trefon] came with boys after rest of church lumber. Rain again all day.

September 12, 1946
Joe Thompson came č Antone & Mrs. Nudlash. She complains of heart(?) Raining all day but washed & cleaned upstairs.

September 13, 1946
5th day of rain. Cleared in evening but for just a few minutes. Did my ironing. Chas working on house anyway.

September 14, 1946
Rained yet early in A.M. Bud, Topsy to Bruno [sled dogs]. Baking cake for tomorrow. Went to Babe’s in P.M. Also Kennedy. Got some mail.

142 Babe Allsworth flies down to liamna village to pick-up Helen and bring her home.
143 Macy Hobson (1912-1999) was born on the Stony River to John “Jack” Martin Hobson (1868-1949) and Tatiana Konstantinovna (1860-1963). Jack Hobson was a prospector, Bristol Bay fisherman, and trapper. He was in Cook Inlet by about 1895. He was the first Euroamerican to marry in to the Inland Dena’ina and he joined the Russian Orthodox Church and was given a Russian name, Grigorii Mikhailovich. Hugh Rodman, “Alaska Diary 1897-1898,” unpublished manuscript at the Pratt Museum, Homer, Alaska, 7-8; Andrei A. Znamenski, Through Orthodox Eyes, Fairbanks: University of Alaska Press, 2003, 14, 295, and 307.
144 This entry shows Jim Kennedy is still flying as a bush pilot for local people such as Macy Hobson who wanted Kennedy to fly him to his marten trapping spot.
145 The lumber was used for a building project at the St. Nicholas Russian Orthodox Church in Nondalton.
146 Perhaps Joe Thompson brought Antone Nudlash (1932-1952) and his mother Mary (1885-?) across Lake Clark by boat to consult Helen on health issues.
September 15, 1946
Chas Birthday. Had nice cake. [Bill] Park came for fish gave us some current jam. Towed us to Babe’s for mailing.

September 16, 1946
Usual building etc. Wheeled some wood.

September 17, 1946
Chas keeping at job. Got some more wood around to smokehouse.

September 18, 1946
Finished with wood. Held sacks for sawdust in ceiling. Did some staining & varnishing.

September 19, 1946

September 21, 1946
First Mike [Nudlash] came last night along on way to Nondalton back in about 4 days. Will take Chas down to get supplies. Did usual wash.

September 22, 1946
Shirley [Hill] came for her last shot. Was here all day. Babe brought her & took her home.

September 23, 1946
Had stomach ache all day. Did manage to finish ironing.

September 24, 1946
Got house cleaned up some. Chas laying 1st floor in new part.

September 25, 1946
Went after cranberries got almost two jars. Mike came along on way home. Chas dug potatoes here. 700 lb.

September 26, 1946
Dug potatoes at Kennedy’s in P.M. Little Pete [Koktelash] brought me some blueberries ($5) Bought some lumber ($16).

September 27, 1946
Pulled rutabagas & dug potatoes on black dirt. I picked a few cranberries. Finished at Kennedy’s.

September 28, 1946
Finished potatoes. Cleaned downstairs in P.M.

September 29, 1946
I washed even if Sunday. Chas getting ready to go for supplies. Washed windows and Chas put in storm ones.

September 30, 1946
Chester [Whitehead] came for lumber. We went to get more cranberries in A.M. Chas banked house & ironed.

Memoranda
1946 Chas got $1506.75 out of his uncle’s estate. Banking it in MO. [?] [Missouri]

October 1, 1946
Went to Alsworth’s. Saw Boswold’s. Got some mail. Helped put some sawdust in walls.

October 2, 1946
Stormy. Helped put sawdust in walls. Just about finished that.

October 3, 1946
Rested after some cleaning and washed windows from Chas to put in new part.

October 6 ,1946
Went to Alsworth’s. Chas wanted to fly down č Babe. Babe not home. Alice still there.

October 7, 1946

October 8, 1946
Wind & rain all day.

147 Helen is likely referring to Shirley Hill (1937-), the daughter of Billy Hill (1893-1944?) and his wife Katie Trefon Hill. Shirley’s father died suddenly of a heart attack in 1944.

148 The name Boswolds is not recalled.

149 This is probably Alice Griechen of Pilot Point, who was Mary Alsworth’s sister.

150 Mary V. Trefon (1907?-1996?) was the wife of Wassilie Trefon and they lived in Nondalton.
October 9, 1946
Cleaned today. Lots of snow on mountains even foothills. Trefons came up about 6 P.M.

October 10, 1946
Walked to Tanalian camp. Chas came early in A.M. Chas & Mike got home 10.10 P.M. Got them supper. Bed 12.

October 11, 1946

October 12, 1946
Got home about 5:30. Some rough water. Felt bad. Chas has been ill also. Bathed. Bed early.

October 13, 1946
Chas & I both under weather. Did little. Got some things put away.

October 14, 1946
Finished putting away stuff. Lots of things unable to get.

October 15, 1946
Still resting. Chas doing a little & tearing sawdust house down.

October 16, 1946
Raining today. Chas fixing bathhouse.

October 17, 1946

October 18, 1946

October 19, 1946
Chas resting today. Natives in & out.

October 20, 1946
Still resting. Chas had cold. Rain & snow all day. Natives wanted shells. Chas refused.

October 21, 1946

October 22, 1946
Walked down to Native Camp. Felt better after.

October 23, 1946
Natives getting ready to go back to village.

October 25, 1946
Gabriel & family got off early this A.M. 9 A.M.

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151 Benny Trefon (1923-1985) was the son of Gabriel and Katherine Trefon. He was a Bristol Bay fisherman and a trapper. Paul Cusma (1920?-1983) was the son of Maxim Cusma. His mother died when Paul was five years old. He was a fisherman and trapper. Paul was married to Agnes Cusma, daughter of Gabriel and Katherine Trefon. Ellanna and Balluta, The People, 129, 131 and 135.

152 The canoe Helen refers to was likely the 18-foot Old Town Maine canoe that Maine that Colonel A.J. Macnab and Frederick K. Vreeland brought to Lake Clark in 1921 to travel in when sport hunting and exploring. The visitors gave the canoe to Doc Dutton and Joe Kackley when they left Lake Clark and ultimately the canoe was given to Fred Bowman by Doc Dutton who apparently loaned it to the Denisons in this instance, perhaps for duck hunting on the Chulitna River.

153 The Wells girls were Patricia (1935-2002) and Norma, with their father, Jim Wells (1910?-1980?) and mother they were living at the Bowman’s place mine during part of 1946 and 1947. Jim Wells helped Fred Bowman build the story and a half log house at Bowman Camp. David Barnett, conversations with the editor, July 17, 2018.

154 The exact location of this camp cannot be located, but it was likely a mile or two west of Denison’s place just off the Lake Clark shore line.
October 26, 1946
Dark & cloudy. A little wind from west.

October 27, 1946
Dark & stormy all day.

October 28, 1946
Still blowing from west also rain. Chas worried about boat & got up in nite. In morning had slewed around into C. boat lumber.\(^{155}\)

October 29, 1946
Washed in spite of wind. Dried clothes quickly & ironed most of them.

October 30, 1946
Blowing still. Snow in P.M. Chas finished filling greenhouse ċ dirt.

October 31, 1946
Went to Kennedy’s for a while in P.M. Found net & wire box washed away in storm. Freezing all day.

November 1, 1946
Wind from east today. Temp moderate. Chas digging up more ground under old lumber pile.

November 2, 1946
26° in A.M. Somewhat warmer in P.M. as sun out most of day.

November 3, 1946
20°-30° Cloudy. Chas digging for garden. I cleared some lumber away for him. Chas [refon] stopped on way to Kijik.

November 4, 1946
20° this A.M. Natives brought some supplies & freight. Not all freight present as usual.

November 5, 1946
20° this A.M. Temp rising. Got old lumber shed down.

November 6, 1946
Temp moderate. Blowing.

November 7, 1946
Temp about same. Blowing again.

November 8, 1946
Windy stormy. Mike [Nudlash] came over to see what Chas had to offer. Supposed to come back 20th.

November 9, 1946
Washed & ironed. Bathed. Chas still chopping away at ground.

November 10, 1946
Stayed home. Started new chair cover even if Sunday.

November 11, 1946
Too windy to go to Babe’s by time we got ready. Finished chair cover.

November 12, 1946
10° this A.M. Still blowing. Calm this P.M. Went to Babe’s & K[ennedy’s] May 28, 1946 to take mail. Met Hadfields.\(^{156}\)

November 13, 1946
10° this A.M. Chas got out big tree this A.M. digging getting harder.

November 14, 1946
8° this A.M. Chas cannot dig any more. Cutting trees & piling brush. North wind this A.M.

November 15, 1946
Chas working at clearing. Helped burn some brush.

November 16, 1946
Chas clearing yet. Real cold 10°-12°. Helped pile some brush.

November 17, 1946
Chas tired. Rested all day.

\(^{155}\) Charlie’s boat was turned around by the west wind and bumped and into a pile of boat lumber on the beach in front of the Denison place.

\(^{156}\) Bob and Bernie Hadfield moved to Lake Clark from their home in Naknek in the fall of 1946. Soon Bob Hadfield worked with Mike Vandegrift sawing some of Babe Alsworth’s logs for lumber and built a framed house near the present location of the bunker at Samaritans Lodge. The next few years the Hadfields found it difficult to heat their cabin in spite of having two wood burning stoves. For a time Bernie Hadfield taught her son Gary with a correspondence course and Steve Hobson asked Bernie if she would teach his daughter Aggie and Bernie agreed. However, when other parents wanted Bernie to teach their school age children she declined as she had her hands full raising her three young sons and did not want to become a school teacher. The Hadfields moved back to Naknek in 1949 where they owned Hadfield’s Bar and Liquor Store. Bernadine Hadfield, interview with Sara Hornberger, April 10, 1985, copy in the LACL history files at Port Alsworth; Mary Alworth, op. cit.; Patricia Hadfield Brackebush, telephone conversation with the editor, May 7, 2018.
November 18, 1946
Started washing walls. They are very dirty. Fels-Naptha does good job. Chas working on greenhouse.

November 19, 1946
Still working on walls. They look lighter. Chas working on greenhouse.

November 20, 1946
Went to Kennedy’s. Chas sent to Babe’s to take mail. Finished washing walls when I got home.

November 21, 1946
Chas had to fix washing machine before I could do wash. Start by hand.

November 22, 1946

November 23, 1946
Chas almost finished on greenhouse. Am staining for kitchen facings. Finished 2 dishrags for Xmas & wrapped.

November 24, 1946
Chas putting strips on rest of end of house.

November 25, 1946
Chas working on greenhouse. East wind 40°.

November 26, 1946

November 27, 1946
Colder this A.M. Chas working on veneer press [?]

November 28, 1946
Thanksgiving. Chas working in shop. Had stew. Ice cream pie etc.

November 29, 1946
Chas still working in shop.

November 30, 1946
Lots of fog over lake. Some snow fell. Saw a red fox this A.M.

December 1, 1946
Chester W[hitehead] came along on way to see if any mail. Had lunch with us. Bright day 20° most of day.

December 2, 1946
Chas still working on press so can make some doors.

December 3, 1946
Press quite a job.

December 4, 1946
Su Lin [house cat] fell over backwards trying to sit up this evening. Seemed scared. Unable to climb stairs after.

December 5, 1946
Temp about the same -10°.

December 6, 1946
Su Lin seems worse did not go outside all day.

December 7, 1946
Chas about finished press getting doors ready to glue. T -10°. Ice beginning to form on lake.

December 8, 1946
Tried sulfa on Su Lin. She very bad & weak. Helped glue door for kitchen.

December 9, 1946
Our Su Lin died early this A.M. T -14°

December 10, 1946
T -4° Chas went to see if he could cross river [Tanalian River]. Third failure.

December 11, 1946
Chas fitting door in kitchen. -4°

December 12, 1946
Chas hang outside door in kitchen. T -4°. Also fixing drum stove.

December 13, 1946
T -14° I cleaned & put up good curtains for Xmas. Chas got stove ready.

December 14, 1946
T -24° Chas working on trap door, cutting wood etc.
A c. 1947 view of the fledgling Alsworth Homestead on Hardenberg Bay. The “hurdy gurdy” (crane) and a J-3 Cub snowed-in place with various buildings in view. Photo courtesy of Margaret “Sis” Clum. H- 3019.

December 15, 1946
T -36° Chas gluing trap door today. I fixed some pads for straight chairs. Cloudy today.

December 16, 1946
Chas thought too stormy to go to K[ennedy’s]. Milder today 26° above.

December 17, 1946
Chas & I tried to go down to K[ennedy’s]. Chas thought too much over-flow. About 16° above. Ironed.

December 18, 1946

December 19, 1946
T -20° Chas went down to K[ennedy’s] & got some mail. Nice day. Getting ready to lay floor in kitchen.

December 20, 1946
Washed - Bathed usual busy day.

December 21, 1946
Usual day still cleaning for Xmas.

December 22, 1946
Kennedy kids came & some mail. Pkg. mostly but hot pads from Thomas.157

December 23, 1946
Got things ready for Xmas. Put up tree.

December 24, 1946
Started to K[ennedy’s] & A[lsworth’s] but holes in ice so stayed home took ride in woods [by dog sled].

December 25, 1946
Unexciting day. Had canned moose & etc.

December 26, 1946
Chas went to K & A. [Kennedy’s & Alsworth’s] Got candy from Bill Park. A picture & [card?] from Nora.158

December 27, 1946
Cut thru from kitchen took out saw dust etc. Got quite a lot done.

December 28, 1946
Washed - Bathed - did little to house.

December 29, 1946
Chas working on house all day. I ironed.

December 30, 1946
Mild. Thawing. Chas getting ready to glue up cupboard on work bench top.

December 31, 1946
Glued up works top. Rain & snow all day. About 38°.

157 Thomas has not been identified.
158 Nora has not been identified.
The Alsworth second house later became Mike Vandegrift’s shop and was moved from its late 1940s era location (in the present garden) to another location south, on the homestead. Photo courtesy of Margaret “Sis” Clum. H-2990.

January 2, 1947
T -10° all day. We got work table in & 2 shellac & 1 coat varnish.

January 3, 1947
T -14° went to -28° in P.M. 2nd coat of varnish on work table. 2nd section on flooring glued.

January 4, 1947
T 30°

January 8, 1947
Chas working on floors etc.

January 9, 1947
Chester Whitehead came along early in A.M. on way to Babe’s. Stopped on way back too.

January 13, 1947
Chas shoveled snow off house and sheds. Getting pretty deep.

January 14, 1947
Chas fitting door ready to veneer same.

January 15, 1947
-40° today. Chas spent most of the day cutting wood.

January 16, 1947
Kenny Armstrong came for me to care for Mary Jensen at Babe’s.\textsuperscript{159} They on the way to Anchorage T -52

January 17, 1947
Pt. [patient’s] husband got money to send her to Anchorage.\textsuperscript{160} They got off about 2 P.M.

January 18, 1947
T -44 this A.M. Chas came after me with dogs. Glad to get home & warm.

January 19, 1947
T -50 this A.M. Cold all day. Cleaned & straightened all day. -45 this P.M. Chas shot 6 ptarmigan.

January 20, 1947
-60 up to -18 Chas cutting wood.

January 21, 1947
-44 up to 0. Chas cutting wood.

January 22, 1947
-50 up to -20.

January 23, 1947
-48 up to -12. -20 this evening & some wind. Chas still cutting wood.

January 24, 1947
T -30 up to -20 cloudy.

January 25, 1947
-50 up to -20

January 26, 1947
-46 up to -20 Mended old socks for self.

January 27, 1947
-40 up to 0 Chas cut boot (left) chopping wood.

January 28, 1947
-40 up to -10 Went thru some more junk today.

\textsuperscript{159} Ken Armstrong (1909-2000) was a bush pilot who owned Armstrong’s Air Service in Dillingham. Mary Jensen lived in Pedro Bay.

\textsuperscript{160} Mary Jensen’s (1920-2014?) husband was Gust Jensen (1917-2005?), a Bristol Bay fisherman and dog musher who carried the mail by dog sled around Iliamna Lake villages just before aircraft replaced dog sleds for that task in the early 1960s.
January 29, 1947
-44 up to -2 Chas went to Kennedy’s. No mail etc.

January 30, 1947
-50 up to [nothing else written]

January 31, 1947
-50 up a little.

February 1, 1947
-48 up a little.

February 2, 1947
-50

February 3, 1947
-54 up to -14 Chas still cutting wood.

February 4, 1947
-48 up to -29. 161 Went to K[ennedy’s] Babe brought mail. Lots of cards etc.

February 5, 1947
+6 this A.M. Could not sleep last night. Tired this A.M. Wind & Snow. Chas hauled some wood.

February 6, 1947
+32 East wind. Cloudy.

February 7, 1947
Up to +54 today. Snow going fast. Washed dried lots of things outside.

February 8, 1947
Ironed & cleaned up house. T up to 54 again.

February 9, 1947
T down this A.M. a little. Getting mending done.

February 10, 1947
Little cooler today. C.W. [Chester Whitehead] came along this A.M. on way to Babe’s.

February 11, 1947
T down to +8 this evening. C.W. came back from Babe’s.

February 12, 1947
Tried to snow. T around 0 all day.

February 14, 1947
T still mild.

February 15, 1947
Lovely day.

February 16, 1947
Thawing a lot now.

February 17, 1947
[Fred] Bowman came along late in P.M. stayed for night.

February 18, 1947
Bowman started for Roadhouse [Iliamna].

February 19, 1947

February 20, 1947
Bowman left this A.M. for Babe’s. Chester W[hitehead] came up. Took some more reading material & food.

February 21, 1947
Hadfield came after his potatoes. Chas took him home & brought back some mail - radio etc.

February 22, 1947
Chas started window greenhouse. I cleaned & ironed. Tired this P.M.

February 23, 1947
T mild Chas building window greenhouse.

February 25, 1947
Chas planted celery in evening.

February 26, 1947
Chas started cold frame.

February 28, 1947
Still working on cold frame.

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161 This extraordinary cold snap began on January 18, 1947 with -44 and continued on until February 4, 1947 with -48, and a low of -60 on January 20.
March 1, 1947
T 30-40 all day. Chas hauling wood logs, etc. Went to Kennedy’s to see if Jim [Kennedy] brought mail. Roy Webber came.162

March 2, 1947
Went to Kijik, shack was not bad. Only corner broken. Chas & Roy repaired. Brought some stuff home.

March 3, 1947
Put things away & cleaned up a bit. Chas & Roy hauling wood & logs.

March 4, 1947
Chas & Roy hauling. Got big stump out of way.

March 9, 1947
Went down to Hadfield’s.163 Had nice visit.

March 10, 1947
Chas & Roy worked on old motor this A.M. Cut this P.M.

March 11, 1947
Still snowing. Boys worked on motor.

March 14, 1947
Boys hauled timbers to bridge & some logs & wood.164

March 15, 1947
Chas & Roy cut 700 ft & wood.

March 16, 1947
Usual cutting.

March 17, 1947
Usual work.

March 18, 1947
Usual work.

March 19, 1947
Usual work.

March 20, 1947
Usual work.

March 21, 1947
Went to Kennedy’s. Chas & Roy went on to Babe’s. Kennedy’s are leaving for Fairbanks.165

March 22, 1947
Ironed. Felt bad today. Mended also. Boys felled more trees.

March 23, 1947
Finished ironing. Chester stopped along. Boys hauled all day.

March 24, 1947
Boys hauled all day.

162 Roy Webber is not recalled.
163 The location of Hadfield habitation is not know precisely. They lived in Floyd Denison Cabin after the Kennedys left for Fairbanks in April 1947. The Hadfields also built a cabin just south of Babe and Mary Alsworth’s home on Hardenberg Bay where the Samaritan’s Lodge is now located. Donald Kennedy, e-mail message to the editor, March 14, 2018.
164 Over the years Charlie Denison built three bridges over the Tanalian River and all three of them eventually washed out. This is apparently one of those episodes of building a replacement after a wash out.
165 Jim and Glenna Kennedy decided to leave Lake Clark for full time employment with the U. S. Weather Bureau in Fairbanks and later at the University of Alaska. Jim Kennedy endured a serious airplane wreck near Upper Talarik Creek in 1943. After some scary flights through Lake Clark Pass the Kennedys took the opportunity to move to Fairbanks so that Barbara and Donald could be enrolled in school and hoped that city living might prove more enjoyable. Glenna Kennedy, op. cit.; Donald Kennedy, e-mail to the editor, March 14, 2018.
March 25, 1947
Chas & Roy worked on engine.\(^{166}\) Snowing all day.

March 26, 1947
Colder, more snow. Boys cutting logs.

March 28, 1947
Washed. Went to Babe's. Got some more eggs.

March 30, 1947
Palm Sunday.

March 31, 1947
Chas getting ready to go to Roadhouse [Iliamna].

Memorand.
Roy Webber -2-3-4-5-6-7-8-10-11-12-13-14-15-16-17-18-19-20-21-22-23-24-25-26

April 1, 1947
Chas went to Nondalton. Started this P.M. Stayed at Chester's tonight.

April 2, 1947
Mopped as usual.

\(^{166}\) Charlie Denison and Roy Webber were probably working on a gas engine rather than the steam engine that powered the Denison sawmill.

April 3, 1947

April 4, 1947
Wind blowing. Good Friday.
April 5, 1947
Went down as far as Hadfield's. Very slippery & windy. Did not fall down.

April 6, 1947
Easter Sunday.

April 7, 1947
Chas came home today. Francis H[obson Wilson] & Mary C. came up to fish.

April 8, 1947
Went to Bowman's. Girls came along. Quite a place. Nice view however.

April 9, 1947
Came home today. Had nice visit. Tired.

April 10, 1947

April 11, 1947

April 12, 1947
Ironed & Rested.

April 13, 1947
Chester W. came alone. Stayed over nite.

April 14, 1947
Chas went to Nondalton. Chester [Whitehead] rode along. Larry Rost went thru ice at Hadfield's.

April 15, 1947
Chas got home in P.M. Put away stuff.

April 16, 1947
Chas fixing to saw wood.

April 17, 1947
Chas fixing greenhouse.

April 18, 1947
Helped with greenhouse.

April 19, 1947
Chas went across river [Tanalian] twice to see Babe. Saw Bill Hammersly, I guess laziest man in Alaska!

April 20, 1947
Chas fixed stove for greenhouse.

April 21, 1947
Usual weather for this time of year. Holes in ice.

April 22, 1947
Chas digging.

April 23, 1947
Chas digging getting quite a lot done. Is skipping trees.

April 24, 1947
Chas digging & planting in greenhouse.

April 25, 1947
Ice began to move. Chas digging.

April 26, 1947
Washed. Had time with washer as usual. Got things dry. Made cake was failure.

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167 After the Jim and Glenna Kennedy and children Barbara and Donald left Tanalian Point the Bob and Bernie Hadfield family moved into the old Floyd and Lena Denison house and radioced the weather to Alaska Airlines in Anchorage and to the U.S. Weather Bureau in likely in Iliamna or King Salmon.

168 Frances Hobson Wilson was the wife of Bill Wilson and they lived in Nondalton. Mary C. could have been Mary L. Trefon, Mrs. Pete Trefon.

169 Fred and Norma Bowman’s Portage Creek placer mine was located about 15 miles northeast of Denison’s place on Lake Clark.

170 Mary Ann Trefon (1878-1961) was the mother of Gabriel, Wass, Alex, Pete, and Katie (Hill) Trefon. She and her husband, Trefon Balluta, were some of the founding families who began to live full time at Tanalian Point in 1911.

171 Pilot Larry Rost was apparently attempted a landing on bad ice off Tanalian Point and Hadfield’s home.

172 Rufus Knox “Bill” Hammersly (1900-1959) came to Alaska in 1926 and established a trading post/roadhouse on the upper Kvichak River across from Igiugig in the late 1920s. He ran the post until about 1938. It then became Herman Sandvik’s Roadhouse and still later, in 1949, guide Grenold Collins purchased it and it became known as the Kvichak Club which catered to wealthy sport fishermen and hunters until the mid-1980s. Anchorage Daily Times, “Fur Outlook Is Reported Good Beyond Iliamna,” October 25, 1933; Norris, Building, 141, 177; Bennett, Rods & Wings, 117.
April 27, 1947
Made myself choc birthday cake. Was a lovely day. Ice all broken up.
Did some ironing.

April 28, 1947
Did more ironing & usual cleaning.

April 29, 1947
Finished ironing. Chas went to mail letters etc.

April 30, 1947
Rain & wind. Chas took down window greenhouse. Makes house warmer.

May 1, 1947
A little snow this A.M. Windy & cold. [Bob] Hadfield came down for a while in A.M.

May 2, 1947
Lake clear of ice.

May 4, 1947
Bill Hammersly came down when Chas went to Hadfield's. Good talker. Stayed the nite.

May 5, 1947
We fixed boat after co. left. Oiled some of [the green?] house.

May 6, 1947
Cleaned up kitchen. Am lame from oiling boat. Helped pull stump & chain hoist.

May 7, 1947
Mopped kitchen. Laid some more walk [?]. Chas planting poppies.

May 8, 1947
Chas planted carrots. Saw swallows today.174

May 9, 1947
Chas sick, not much done.

May 10, 1947
Washed. Chas still planting potatoes.

May 11, 1947
Went down to Hadfield's. Went to Alsworth's for eggs while Chas worked in some fertilizer. Saw robins.

May 12, 1947
Had first lettuce from greenhouse.

May 15, 1947
Went down for incubator. Eggs not all hatched. Get it first of week. Took some lettuce to Hadfield's.

May 18, 1947
Hadfields here all day. Babe & [John] Meggit came in P.M. Pigs are in Anchorage. Had first radishes this noon.

May 19, 1947
Planted last of potatoes. [Ray] Petersen's plane stopped here for gas. Pilot Tosh.175

May 20, 1947
Went to Hadfield's. Wind too strong for going to Babe's. Received notice pigs are at Iliamna.

173 Bill Hammersly was known as a fine conversationalist and spinner of tales. Bennett, op. cit., 108-111.

174 The local Lake Clark swallows are likely either the Tree swallow Tachycineta bicolor or the Violet-green swallow Tachycineta thalassina. Priscilla N. Russell and George C. West, Bird Traditions of the Lime Village Area Dena'ina. Fairbanks: Alaska Native Knowledge Network, Center for Cross-Cultural Studies, University of Alaska Fairbanks, 2003, 198.

175 Ray Petersen (1912-2006) was the owner of Northern Consolidated Airline, the pilot Tosh is not identified. In the late 1940s Bud Branham, and Ray Petersen and John Walatka began to develop the Bristol Bay sport fishing lodge business around Lake Iliamna and in Katmai National Monument. Bennett, op. cit., 91-105.
May 21, 1947
East wind.

May 22, 1947
East wind. Digging as usual.

May 23, 1947
East wind off in P.M. Chas went down to see why Babe did not go for pigs.

May 24, 1947
Babe went for pigs at 4:30 A.M. Chas went to Babe’s in boat & then home.

May 25, 1947
Washed in spite of Sunday. Chas transplanted celery. Bob [Hadfield] brought family to see pigs.

May 26, 1947
Ironed, cooked & cleaned while Chas transplanted from greenhouse.

May 27, 1947
Went to Hadfield’s & planted peas. I went & got some eggs - Mary [Als worth] brought me a cat in P.M.
May 28, 1947
Plane came ċ Benny T[refon] & Alex B[alluta], latter shot in head. Dressed wound & sent him to Kanakanak. Wassillie T[refon] was along earlier.

May 29, 1947
Helped Chas ċ pig pen. Weather lovely. Leaves all out. Not many mosquitos.

May 30, 1947
Got pigs in pen.

May 31, 1947
Chas cleaned up other house.

June 3, 1947
Katie Hill brought children up. Stayed over nite.

June 4, 1947
Katie [Hill] down at Hadfield’s all day. I mopped. Chas digging at black garden.

June 5, 1947
Went in P.M. to help Chas get beets in black garden. Finished that patch.

June 7, 1947
Did my wash today.

June 8, 1947
Went down in P.M. to help plant beets. Had restful talk ċ Hadfields.

June 9, 1947
Finished planting back garden. Saw Hadfields for a few minutes.

June 10, 1947
Home all day.

June 11, 1947
Chas working on rutabaga patch.

June 12, 1947
Larry Rost came ċ O Pete.[?] She [?] had infected breast. Advised. Fisherman landed, did not stay. Chas planted rutabaga.

June 14, 1947
Usual wash & bathing. Went to Tanalian [Point] to see about garden.

June 15, 1947
Ironed etc. Rested some. Weather changing. Trying to rain.

June 18, 1947
Usual cleaning etc.

June 21, 1947
Washed. Bathed, etc. Chas setting out rhubarb.

June 22, 1947
Did some wash but rested as much as possible.

June 23, 1947
Some cleaning etc. Baked cookies.

176 Alex Balluta (1930-2009) was accidently wounded in the back of his head with a .22 caliber bullet while duck hunting around Dice Bay on Lake Clark. George Alexie, conversation with the editor, March 8, 2018.

177 Katie Trefon Hill (1919-1994) was born at Tanalian Point but lived in Levelock or Naknek at this time. The children were Shirley (1937-) and Lary (1943-). Shirley Hill Nielsen, telephone conversation with the editor February 24, 2014.
June 24, 1947
Went down to other garden. Chas hoed some. Met H. Smith, Mrs. H[adfield], cousins & sister.\textsuperscript{178} Lots to talk about.

June 25, 1947
Usual Cleaning & Cooking. Raining at times.

June 26, 1947
Started to saw wood. Hot & lots of mosquitoes.

June 27, 1947
Will finish wood sawing today.

June 28, 1947
Washed & cleaned etc.

June 29, 1947

July 4, 1947
Got good start on sawing.

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\textsuperscript{178} Bernie Hadfield’s sister, Helen, was married to Bob Hadfield’s brother. It is not clear who the cousins were or who Smith was. Patricia Hadfield Brakebush, \textit{op. cit.}

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July 5, 1947
Washed. Bathed etc.

July 6, 1947
Usual Sunday. Chores & Ironing, etc.

July 8, 1947
Down to see about gardens. Got some rhubarb.

July 9, 1947
Mopped. Sawed.

July 10, 1947
Cleaned kitchen in between times of sawing.

July 11, 1947
Sam Foss & Babe [Alsworth] flew in.\textsuperscript{179} Got $9 for pay of last winter’s patient. Cleaned living room. Sawing.

July 12, 1947
Washed & Sawed. Getting along nicely. Not many mosquitoes.

July 13, 1947
Went to Hadfield’s to see about beet garden.\textsuperscript{180} Put out net.

July 14, 1947
Got 1 salmon - sawing.

July 15, 1947
8 salmon - sawing.

July 16, 1947
8 salmon - sawed.

July 17, 1947
Saved 1/2 day. Rained also all nite.

\textsuperscript{179} Sam Foss (1881-1950) was born in the Dakota Territory and moved to Old Iliamna about 1904 with his parents and brother Harold “Holly” Foss (1888-1963). Sam Foss was U.S. Commissioner at Old Iliamna beginning in the 1920s and it is possible he still held that position in 1947. He and his brother had gas boats which they used to haul and passengers between Iliamna Lake and Bristol Bay. Sam Foss was married to Sophie Rickteroff (1897-1964) of Old Iliamna. He obtained the first big game guide license by a local person in the Lake Clark-Iliamna district in 1926-1927. Unrau, \textit{op. cit.}, 405.

\textsuperscript{180} The Bob and Bernie Hadfield family were now living in the Floyd and Lena Denison Cabin that was recently vacated by the Jim and Glenna Kennedy family who moved to Fairbanks.
July 18, 1947
Sawed all day. Most of logs done.

July 19, 1947
No sawing today. 16 salmon. Washed. Chas checking on what lumber needed for pigs.

July 20, 1947
Awful hot. Went to Hadfield’s & Alsworth’s in A.M. Rested in P.M.

July 21, 1947
Still hot. No sawing. Chas built me another screen door.

July 22, 1947
Went to H[adfield] to return her knitting. Sawed in P.M. Still hot. Rain in night.

July 23, 1947
Usual routine.

July 24, 1947
Saved wood in P.M.

July 25, 1947
Finished saving wood.

July 26, 1947
Washed, bathed etc. Chas marked lumber for framing & pig fence.

July 27, 1947
Chas saved marked lumber etc. Carried to site.

July 28, 1947
Chas made more pig fence & separated pigs.

July 29, 1947
Got 250 fish hung half. Had usual [pressing?] to do.

July 30, 1947
Rain & wind in P.M.

July 31, 1947
Rain & Windy all day. Chas could not pick net. We piled lumber & got things straightened.

August 1, 1947
Calming down. Chas picking net.

August 2, 1947

August 3, 1947

August 4, 1947
Fishing & caning. Canned 22 qt. salmon.

August 5, 1947
Usual work. Lary vomited again. Canned 25 qt [Greens?]

August 6, 1947
Lary has pain in side & headache. Trouble to keep anything down. Kept him on couch all day.

August 7, 1947
Lary still very ill. Usual busy day. Sent word to Katie that Lary ill.181 Canned 13 qt. salmon 7 qt broccoli.

August 8, 1947
Chas took up nets. Katie flew in with Larry Rost. Lary very listless & whining.

August 9, 1947
Katie took Lary to Anchorage to see doctor. Larry Rost took them. Washed & rested.

August 10, 1947
Windy this A.M. Went to Hadfield’s in P.M. Got some pea hay.

August 11, 1947
Blowing hard all day. Canned 5 qt peas.

August 12, 1947

August 13, 1947
Mopped. Helped ¿ fish. Usual day.

181 Lary’s mother was Katie Trefon Hill Wilson and she was in Naknek working in a cannery mess hall feeding fall work crews. Lary Hill, conversation with the editor, July 23, 2018.
August 14, 1947
Alex Trefon & son stopped on way to his cabin for washing machine.\(^{182}\)
Lots of fish.

August 15, 1947
Blowing. Chas could not pick net. Digging for foundation of pig house.

August 16, 1947
Still blowing.

August 17, 1947

August 18, 1947
Canned 5 pt peas besides other work.

August 19, 1947
Canned 5 more pt. peas.

August 20, 1947
Usual fishing etc.

August 22, 1947
Did large wash. Fair drying day.

August 23, 1947
Steve [Hobson] & a girl [Aggie Hobson?] stopped on way home.\(^{184}\)
Stayed all nite. Shirley [Hill] crying to go home. Ironed.

August 24, 1947
Sergie Evan & family stopped.\(^{185}\) Wanted lumber & potatoes stayed nite. Got mail.

August 25, 1947
Rested all day. Both of us tired.

August 26, 1947
Finished ċ fish. Chas took up net. Steve Hobson came along on way back to Nondalton. Got more mail.

August 27, 1947
Chas burying fish we got yesterday in garden for fertilizer.

August 28, 1947
Larry Rost came for Shirley in A.M. Steve [Hobson?] here in P.M. Calm day. Chas rolling logs over to saw.

August 29, 1947
Chas digging new strawberry bed.

Memoranda
400 lb. potatoes for Ball[uta?], 600 lb. potatoes for W. Trefon, 300 lb. potatoes for S[ergie] Evon.

September 2, 1947
Snow on mountains this A.M. Chas got hay in S.H.[smoke house] I wheeled some wood.

September 6, 1947
Washed & did most of ironing. Fair day.

September 7, 1947
Blowing & cold. Got mending done.

September 8, 1947
Rained most of day. Finished ironing. Wass [Trefon] came for lumber. Took our list of supplies.

September 9, 1947
Went to Hadfield’s a little while. Mary Ann [Trefon] came to Katie’s with Larry Rost.

September 10, 1947
Chas turned boards in kitchen. Started to stain & varnish it.

September 11, 1947
Sand floor & finished staining it.

September 12, 1947

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\(^{182}\) Alex Trefon, Sr. (1912-1998?) probably had Alex Jr. with him. Alex was raised at Tanalian Point and he had a cabin and steam bath and cache at his home but apparently he had moved to Nondalton with his wife Bertha and children and had come up to Tanalian Point to retrieve his washing machine.

\(^{183}\) Nothing is known of Larry Ball. CAA was the Civil Aeronautics Administration.

\(^{184}\) Aggie Hobson (1938-) was the eldest daughter of Steve and Mary Hobson. As a young girl Aggie spent a good deal of time around Helen and Charlie. She also received some schooling from Bernie Hadfield.

\(^{185}\) Sergie Evan and his wife Alma, and children were from originally from the Stony River Dena’ina band but at this time were living in Nondalton. George Alexie, op. cit.
September 13, 1947

[Bob] Hadfield brought mail. We started to finish sawing.

September 14, 1947

B[ob] Hadfield came to lunch, had southern fried chicken. Made Chas birthday cake.

September 15, 1947

Sawed in A.M. Rain in P.M.

September 17, 1947

Put last coat of varnish on kitchen floor after moping.

September 18, 1947

Chester Whitehead came up [?] dried out motor. Helped saw. Had another chicken. C.W. stayed over nite.

September 19, 1947

Sawed. Mary [Ann?] Trefon & 1 Mrs. [Mary] Nudulash brought grandson up for me to see. Sent it on to Anchorage.

September 20, 1947


September 21, 1947

Got carrots inside. Sawed wood. Chas knee still sore.

September 22, 1947

Ironed. Rested & mended in P.M. Chas has stiff knee but better.

September 24, 1947

Cleaned kitchen floor.

September 25, 1947

Felt tired. Chester Whitehead came along, stayed for lunch.

September 26, 1947

Chester & Ray Brower came long on way to Chester’s. Chester going to camp near us. Chas started to dig potatoes.

September 27, 1947

Chas dug few potatoes. I picked up what he dug. Baked pumpkin & raisin pies. Windy.

September 28, 1947

Windy. Dug some potatoes. Rested mostly.

September 29, 1947


September 30, 1947

Robins still here.

Memoranda


October 1, 1947

Went down to Hadfield’s. Took them chicken & tomatoes. She [Bernie Hadfield] gave me some blouse material.

October 2, 1947


October 3, 1947

Chester along every day. Getting along nice c cabin.

187 Chester Whitehead had several cabins on Lake Clark. It is not known for certain where he was living in 1947, but it is known that he had a small cabin near the mouth of Twenty-Two Creek, a few miles west of the Denison’s place. Chester built a cabin with Joe Thompson’s help in 1938 located south of Brown Carlson’s place near Portage Creek. Ray Brower had a cabin east of the mouth of Portage Creek. Floyd Denison, interview with BIA Realty Division, December 18, 1978; Unrau, op. cit., Draft, 733-736.

188 Ruth Bobby Koktelash (1912?-1988?) was married to Pete Koktelash (1905-2002) in 1928. Both Ruth and Pete were born on the upper Stony River at Qeghnilen village. Pete’s father moved his family to Old Nondalton in 1913 or 1914 to be closer to Hans Seversen’s store there. [Ellanna and Balluta, The People, 259] Pete had a trapping camp near the confluence of the Mulchatna and Chilikadrotna Rivers. Nickolai “Harry” Balluta (1920-2016) was the last of the traditional chiefs in Nondalton during a brief time in 1964. That same year the village created a tribal council taking the place of a chief. Ellanna and Balluta, op. cit., 283; George Alexie, op. cit.
October 4, 1947

October 5, 1947
Sergie Evan came for potatoes & lumber. Had Chester W[hitehead] for late dinner. His 44th birthday. Did my ironing etc. Chas resting his knee.

October 6, 1947
Babe [Alsworth] came c moose this A.M. East wind. Babe took some tomatoes & celery.

October 7, 1947
Chester helped c planing. Here for lunch & supper. Also a Native.

October 8, 1947
Chester helped plane. Had him & Native to lunch & supper.

October 9, 1947
Chester got away. Took our boat. Chas finished planing. Oiled boiler. Chas T[refon] came c some freight & mail.

October 10, 1947
Cleaned up house. Got freight put away. Got shavings wheeled to smoke house.

October 11, 1947

October 12, 1947
Chas digging foundation of big house. Wind, rain, hail.

October 13, 1947
Bob [Hadfield] came to help c foundation.

October 15, 1947
Bob [Hadfield] came in boat after a couple rabbit hutches.

October 16, 1947
Went down after sugar beets. Came home early after lunch.

October 17, 1947
Chas picking net all day. Did not go back to Tanalian [Point].

October 18, 1947
Washed etc.

October 19, 1947
Took down my clothes mended etc.

October 20, 1947

October 21, 1947
Bob came to help on pig house.

October 22, 1947
I helped c filling of end wall [with sawdust].

October 23, 1947
Bob still helping getting roof ready for sawdust. I pile roof boards.

October 24, 1947

October 25, 1947
Bob [Hadfield] came again. They are doing roof. N.E. wind, cloudy.

October 26, 1947
Men working even if it is Sunday.

October 27, 1947
Just end walls to finish.

October 28, 1947
Got west wall done. I finished quilt.

October 29, 1947
28° this A.M. Bob finished helping today.

October 30, 1947
Chas cleaning up around.


Memoranda

189Gary Hadfield (1944-?) was the oldest son of Bernie and Bob Hadfield. The other two sons were Ted (1943-) and Steve (1945-). A sister, Patricia Hadfield (1951-) was born after Bob and Bernie moved back to Naknek. Patricia Hadfield Brakenbush, *op. cit.*
November 1, 1947
Washed. Chas wheeling sawdust for banking back of pig house.

November 2, 1947
Chas insisted on moving Teddy [a pig]. Worked all day to get him in
house. Ironed & mended.

November 3, 1947
Teddy died about noon.

November 4, 1947
Chester [Whitehead] helped Chas in A.M. Bob [Hadfield] came to get
lumber. I cleaned pen where pig died.

November 5, 1947
Chas moved pigs into house.

November 9, 1947
Went to Hadfield’s. Stormy P.M. I stayed nite. Played monopoly. En-
joyed myself. Cold. Snow.

November 10, 1947
Came home tired. Slept all P.M.

November 15, 1947
Wass [Trefon] & Chas Trefon came for Wass’ potatoes. Had a note from
Mrs. [Norma] Bowman. Washed.

November 16, 1947

November 17, 1947
Ironed.

November 20, 1947
East wind all week.

November 21, 1947
Windy all day. Mild.

November 23, 1947
Windy. Cannot go anywhere.

November 24, 1947
Wind came up as we were ready to go.

November 25, 1947
Went to Hadfield’s. Had nice visit. Came home early. Mopped kitchen.

November 26, 1947
Fixed things for holiday.

November 27, 1947
Chester here for dinner. Had roasted chicken, potatoes, peas, jelly
salad, sorbet. Ate too much as usual.

November 29, 1947
Washed as usual.

November 30, 1947
Did some ironing & mending. Mild enough so Chas is doing some
digging in back of roothouse.

December 7, 1947
To windy to go to Tanalian.

December 8, 1947
Went to Hadfield’s in P.M. Walked to A[lsworth’s] for eggs with Mrs.

December 9, 1947
Chas still digging some.

December 11, 1947
Topsy had five pups.

December 12, 1947
Chester [Whitehead] gave us a lin[g] cod. Lingcod or burbot. Lota lota.

December 13, 1947
Washed. Chas did odd jobs. Took in nets. Bob & family came along for
a while.

December 14, 1947
Chas working on kitchen wall. I mended - rested. To windy to go to
Hadfield’s. T 40°

December 15, 1947
Ironed etc. Usual day. Windy.

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190 Lingcod or burbot. Lota lota.
December 18, 1947

December 19, 1947
Chas working on kitchen walls & ceiling.

December 20, 1947
Windy.

December 21, 1947
Wind still blowing.

December 22, 1947
Went to Hadfield’s. Had nice chicken dinner. Lake calm all day.

December 23, 1947
Cleaning & helping put on kitchen ceiling.

December 24, 1947
Still cleaning etc. Chas finished kitchen ceiling.

December 25, 1947

December 27, 1947
Did usual wash. Hung everything inside.

December 28, 1947
Did mending & some ironing. No mail.

December 29, 1947
Finished ironing.

December 30, 1947

December 31, 1947
Chester [Whitehead] here rather late. Ice almost closed up.

[December?] Memoranda
Paper for living room
Walls - 7 double rolls
Ceiling - 5 double rolls
2 lb. size[?]
5 lb. paste

January 1, 1948

January 2, 1948
Wind broke up most of ice. Chas finished closet in kitchen.

January 3, 1948
-20° this A.M. Chester stopped along.

January 6, 1948
Bob [Hadfield] came along to get more reading material.

January 7, 1948
Chas working a little each day on cupboard.

January 10, 1948
Lake looks like it is frozen over.

January 11, 1948
Bob [Hadfield] came along & some mail, Larry Rost brought up for us.

January 12, 1948
Chas got cupboards up to windows, looks nice. Fed pups cereal first time today.

January 13, 1948
Those pups sure can eat. Bob [Hadfield] came along to barrow some traps. T 12°

January 14, 1948
Bob came along & brought our lamps. They work fine. Weather milder.

January 15, 1948
Chas progressing a little each day with kitchen.

January 16, 1948
Bob [Hadfield] came along just to chat.
January 17, 1948
Washed. Rain & snow all day. Mild. Ice breaking up out in lake.

January 18, 1948
Helped Chas by oiling boards etc. Did some mending & ironing. East wind breaking up ice.

January 19, 1948
Finished ironing. Bob [Hadfield] came along for chat. He was looking at his traps. Ice all gone out of bay.

January 20, 1948
Chas fixing cupboard for ironing board. Cloudy. Rainy.

January 21, 1948
Went to Hadfield's, J.M. there.¹⁹¹ Had nice long talk of various things. Calm all day.

January 22, 1948
Chas still working on sink.

January 23, 1948
Usual day. Mild.

January 24, 1948
Bob [Hadfield] stopped by. Wind up to 70 in M.P.H.

January 25, 1948
Began to give priming coat to cupboards, walls, etc. Chas decided he had enough lumber to finish behind stove.

January 26, 1948
Painted, Chas still working on walls.

January 27, 1948
Mild but turning cold again.

January 28, 1948
Chester [Whitehead] came home fixing front so can put in cupboards.

¹⁹¹“J.M.” might be John Meggitt (1910-2001), who had been a school teacher at Naknek by 1934 and he also taught at Levelock before and after World War II. Meggitt was also a private pilot and good friends with the Alsworths and Denisons. Anchorage Daily News, “John Meggitt,” November 20, 2001, B-7.

January 30, 1948
Washed. Had nice drying day.

January 31, 1948
Mended and got ready to iron.

February 1, 1948
Ironed. Windy. Ice gone again.

February 3, 1948
Chas coming along nice with front cupboards.

February 5, 1948
Lake fairly calm all day. Went to Hadfield's.

February 7, 1948
Lake starting to freeze again. Chas finished carpenter work for now.

February 8, 1948
Chas butchered Gary [a pig]. More of a job than he expected. I rested.

February 9, 1948
Bob [Hadfield] helped butcher other pig.

February 10, 1948
Bob [Hadfield] helping cut wood also for himself. Started to put paper on walls.

February 11, 1948
I painted trimming. Gives the kitchen character.

February 12, 1948
Papered all day while men cut wood.

February 13, 1948
They hauled some wood in this A.M. I papered this A.M. Finish kitchen this P.M.

February 14, 1948
Men hauled & took some around to Bob's. Nice cold day.

February 15, 1948
Made Chas pajamas I had cut & started. Men cutting. Late start.

February 16, 1948
Bob & Chas cutting wood. I papered & patched. Temp this A.M. -18°.
February 17, 1948

February 18, 1948

February 19, 1948

February 20, 1948
Men hauled wood. Still working in living room.

February 21, 1948
Washed - Bathed. Men cut wood in P.M.

February 22, 1948
Went to Hadfield's for dinner. Stayed most of day.

February 23, 1948
Ironed - mended. Bob & Chas cutting wood.

February 24, 1948
Men hauled wood this A.M. Bob hauled some home. Finished re-varnishing furniture.

February 25, 1948
Bob Hadfield & Paul Cusma came, stayed all day. Chester Whitehead came home. Here for supper.

February 26, 1948
Ray Brower came over staying a few days then going & coming again.

February 27, 1948
Men cutting timber back in woods.

February 28, 1948
Men getting quite a little lumber down. Bathed etc. as usual.

February 29, 1948
Had offer to sell place, a couple men came to look it over, Tex Noey.

March 2, 1948
Made a blouse of flour sacks & green stripped material. Doing some crocheting & embroidery.

March 3, 1948
Made a blouse of new material.

March 4, 1948
Made another blouse & cut out grey suit.

March 5, 1948
Tex Noey & wife [Anne] came in A.M. Stayed several hours. Chas out of notion of selling. They will get lumber, however.

March 6, 1948
Washed & usual work day. Am awful tired.

March 7, 1948
Had Gills & Hadfields down for chicken dinner. Bob got off to Anchorage. Got a lot of mending done.

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192 Bob and Bernie Hadfield’s friends from the “westward” signifies from the Naknek and Alaska Peninsula region, were perhaps Charlie and Nellie Franz, and Artie Johnson from Port Moller.

193 Paul Cusma (1920?-1983) was the husband of Agnes Cusma. They lived in Nondalton.

194 Tex Noey was a pilot who lived with his family for a time at Lake Clark. Later he had a television program on Channel 11 in Anchorage during the 1960s. He apparently was interested in purchasing Charlie Denison’s place.

195 Terry (1909-1985) and Victoria Gill (1908-2004) owned a small placer mine on Bonanza Creek in the Bonanza Hills 38 miles north of Tanalian Point. They had a small cabin just east of the Babe and...
March 8, 1948
Ironed. Cleaned up after company.

March 9, 1948
Terry Gill came & was out in woods & men. Chas stayed in in P.M. Had had cold. I am still very tired.

March 10, 1948
Finished up head cheese. Made a little scrapple. Chas still feeling bad.

March 12, 1948
Ray B[rower] went back across lake to see about his cabins in Ingersoll [Lake].

March 13, 1948
Chas resting [page folded over so can’t read if any more].

March 14, 1948
Stayed on couch most of day. Made Chas get his own meals. I felt very bad.

March 15, 1948
Cold some better. Still awful tired. Chas still resting. Some snow P.M.

March 17, 1948
T. Gill came to help fall timber but had bad tooth & cold.

March 18, 1948
Snowfall.

March 19, 1948
My cold still bothering me. Also Chas.

March 20, 1948
Chas hauling in some logs.

March 21, 1948
Chas resting himself & dogs. Washed anyway.

March 22, 1948
Chas went to see how lake ice is & if Mrs. Hadfield had wood.

Mary Alsworth Homestead on Hardenberg Bay that was originally built by Albert Johnson.

In the early 20th century there was a prospector around Lake Clark and Lachbuna Lake by the name Ingersoll who might have had a cabin that has never been documented someplace near Lachbuna Lake. The name was still in common use around Lake Clark up until the late 1990s. The Dena’ina word for Lachbuna is L’ałi Vena or “deadfall collapses.” Karen E. Evonoff, op. cit., 110-111.

March 23, 1948
Went down to take Mrs. Hadfield some wood. Bob came home. Got mail also.

March 24, 1948

March 25, 1948
Terry Gill came again to help fall timber.

March 26, 1948

March 27, 1948
Gill & Ray helping Chas. Rain & wind. High wind in night.

March 28, 1948
Chas went across lake to get stove. Ray helped him. Some wind.

March 29, 1948
Hauled in some wood logs. Got half down on ice. Snow most of day.

March 30, 1948
Ray [Brower] annoyed about something.
March 31, 1948
Men hauling some logs down.

Memoranda 1948

Ray Brower 26 - 27 - 29 30 - 31 April 1
April 1, 1948
Ray went back home.

April 2, 1948
Chas hauling some.

April 3, 1948
Washed.

April 4, 1948

April 5, 1948
Walked down to H[adfield's]. [Chas] came for me in P.M.

April 6, 1948
Tired & lame from my walk. Chas busy. Chester cutting some lumber logs.

April 7, 1948
Chas hauled Chester's logs today.

April 8, 1948
Chester helped Chas haul smokehouse wood in P.M.

April 9, 1948
Getting milder. Cleaned upstairs & put up shades. Chas planted half greenhouse to celery.

April 10, 1948
Some snow & rain. Chas still hauling. Chas planting in greenhouse.

April 11, 1948
Chas has few more logs to haul. Chas working in greenhouse.

April 12, 1948
Bob came along to bring back traps. Chas finished hauling logs.

April 13, 1948
Chas installed pump. I worked on my [?] most of day.

April 14, 1948
Chas went to get stove. Stopped @ H[adfield's].

April 15, 1948
We went to H[adfield's]. Had to walk around on rocks.

April 16, 1948
Tired & not feeling too good.

April 17, 1948
Washed etc. Had pain in abdomen in night.

April 20, 1948
Laid on couch all day.

April 21, 1948
Chas started sawing Chester's [Whitehead] lumber. He & Bob [Hadfield] here to help.

Charlie Denison stands in his garden in 1948. The stairs in the right background go to the second story of the bunkhouse used by people who stayed overnight while helping Charlie on his sawmill. Photo courtesy of Patricia Hadfield Brakebush. H-242.

197 Bob and Bernie Hadfield were still living at Tanalian Point.
April 22, 1948
Some better today, very weak. Got most of Chester’s lumber sawed.

April 23, 1948
Men quit. Chester not able to keep up steam & too picky.

April 24, 1948
Feeling much better. Too cold to saw. Chas took rabbit hutch to Bob.

April 25, 1948
Some baking & rest most of day.

April 26, 1948
Finished papering living room. Looks nice. Rain all day. Snow early in A.M.

April 27, 1948
Usual day. Cloudy but not raining. Feels like spring.

April 28, 1948
Bob here to help saw lumber.

April 29, 1948
Bob came to help saw lumber.

April 30, 1948
Bob helped saw more lumber. Mostly greenhouse lumber for him.

May 1, 1948
Chas hauled Bob’s greenhouse lumber down where they can get it with tractor.\(^\text{198}\)

May 2, 1948
Rested ironed etc. Another day of rest.

May 3, 1948
Bob came along & helped saw lumber.

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\(^{198}\) The tractor was likely Babe Alsworth’s Ford-Ferguson tractor. This was probably the second tractor on Lake Clark. Fred Bowman had a Fordson steel-tired tractor on Lake Clark about 1937. The Bowman tractor came to Lake Clark via Koggiug Cannery on the Kvichak River but had been shipped from the west coast, probably from Seattle. The Alsworth tractor came up from a cannery in Naknek. Mary Alsworth, op. cit.

May 4, 1948
Not sawing today.

May 5, 1948
Bob came along so we sawed a lot of lumber.

May 6, 1948
Stormy - snow rain etc. We piled up what 1” lumber we had.

May 7, 1948
Too wet to saw lumber. Chas worked in greenhouse all day.

May 8, 1948
Sawed today. Swallows seen today. Bob & Gary [Hadfield] came along for a few minutes.

May 9, 1948
Sunday - sawing some [more?]
May 10, 1948
Sawing again today - fairly nice day.

May 11, 1948
Finished quota of sawing.\footnote{It is not clear what the “quota” Helen mentions was about, one self-imposed or something mandated by the Bureau of Land Management.}

May 12, 1948
Sawed wood all day - put boiler away.

May 13, 1948
Chas worked in greenhouse.

May 14, 1948
Washed bathed etc.

May 15, 1948
Ironed mended etc. Chas working in garden.

May 16, 1948
Rested most of day. Chas digging up ground for potatoes.

May 17, 1948
Chas continuing potato planting.

May 18, 1948
Chas continuing potato planting.

May 19, 1948
Fred Bowman came along. Hadfield’s came up for while in P.M.

May 20, 1948
Chas planting more potatoes.

May 21, 1948
Chas continuing potato planting.

May 22, 1948
Chas continues potato planting.

May 23, 1948
Went to Hadfield’s & Alsworth’s. Had some moose at both places. Nice day.

May 24, 1948
Chas planting more potatoes.

The Ford-Ferguson tractor and Babe Alsworth’s T-Craft on the beach in front of the Alsworth Homestead circa 1945-1947. The tractor was probably the first piece of “heavy” equipment to be brought to the homestead. Photo courtesy of John and Esther Alsworth. H-2791.

May 25, 1948
Babe, Mike [Vandergrift], Bob H. Tex N. came in lifeboat for plants,\footnote{Babe Alsworth owned a steel 30-foot life boat. Mike Vandergrift (1902-1982?), Bob Hadfield, and Tex Noey were also in the life boat with Babe.} Had half boat full. Still dry ground for potatoes.

May 26, 1948
Chas digging up ground by greenhouse.

May 27, 1948
Chas setting out cabbage by greenhouse.

May 28, 1948
[Carlos] Carson & pilot stopped by to see about lumber had lunch ĉ us. Chas finished setting out cabbage.

May 29, 1948
Steve H[obson] & wife [Mary] came along about 10 A.M. G[eorge] Wasillie & boy came along about 5 P.M. I washed & ironed some.201

May 30, 1948
Went to [Tex] Noey’s. They had houseful. Hadfield’s came along & had dinner ċ us.

May 31, 1948
Noey’s came along in late P.M. Had nice visit. I finished my ironing & mending etc.

Memoranda May 29
G. Wassillie ordered 50 lbs. potatoes for fall.

June 1, 1948
Mary H[obson] came along in evening after I had gone to bed. They have cute baby.

June 2, 1948

June 3, 1948

June 4, 1948
Natives tearing down Alex Trefon’s house for Art Lee’s store in village.203

June 5, 1948
Did not see any of Natives today. Chas planted potatoes. I feel sick.

June 6, 1948
Gabriel Trefon & wife [Katherine] here for lunch. Some others came along. G.T. getting some lumber for store.204 Natives left for Nondalton.

June 7, 1948
Am feeling awful. Chas doing work.

June 8, 1948
Still sick.

June 9, 1948
Feeling terrible. Staying in bed & on couch most of time. Chas working in garden.

June 12, 1948
Beginning to feel better. My leg still swollen & sore.

June 13, 1948
Went to Noey’s for most of day. Chas walked up to Babe’s. I am feeling some better.

June 14, 1948
Washed & ironed. Feeling some better.

June 15, 1948
Ironed some. Chas digging up old pig pen for turnips.

201 George Wassillie was the brother of Albert Wassillie.
202 The location of the Noey’s residence at Lake Clark is not known for certain, perhaps it was in Charlie Wolff’s old place, west of the mouth of the Tanalian River? At this time the Hadfields were living in the old Floyd and Lena Denison cabin at Tanalian Point. Bob and Bernie Hadfield took their turn managing the U. S. Weather Bureau station in the late 1940s. The Noeys stayed at Lake Clark less than one year, they stayed in the Floyd Denison cabin after the Hadfields left. Mary Alsworth, op. cit.
203 The foundation of Alex Trefon’s house is still clearly visible at Tanalian Point.
204 For ten years Gabriel Trefon ran a small variety store in Nondalton for the Alaska Packers Association. Ellanna and Balluta, op. cit.,127.
June 16, 1948

June 17, 1948
Received mail & wrote letters.

June 18, 1948
Chas digging for turnips. Transplanting flowers. Very windy. Trying to rain.

June 19, 1948
Chas building trellis for tomatoes & cucumbers.

June 24, 1948
Went to Hadfield's. Mrs. Hadfield cut & put curlers in my hair. Supper at Noey's.

June 26, 1948
Washed - Bathed etc.

June 27, 1948
Went to Hadfield's all day. Borrowed Bob's [tractor?] 

June 28, 1948
Chas writing letters etc. I ironed & mended.

June 29, 1948
Took mail to Babe's. Took 4 cans salt to Mrs. H[adfield] etc. Got some mail.

June 30, 1948
Rained all day.

July 1, 1948
Rain.

July 2, 1948
Rain.

July 3, 1948
Saved half day in P.M. about 500 ft.

July 4, 1948
Stayed home all day. Rain - straightened root house.

July 5, 1948
Rained all day. Fixed tin cans for canning. Had pain late in evening. Typed Land office application for Chas.205

July 6, 1948
Sawing.

July 7, 1948
Sawing.

July 8, 1948
Sawing.

July 9, 1948
Washed - sawed in P.M. I salmon in net.

July 10, 1948
Went to Noey's & Hadfield's in P.M. Nice day. 1 salmon & 1 whitefish.

July 11, 1948
Sawing slow. Tex [Noey] down to see about some slabs. Ironed & mended.

July 12, 1948

July 13, 1948

July 14, 1948
Finished logs today. Saved up slabs.

July 22, 1948
Trying to plane but rains all the time.

July 23, 1948
Washed as it rained all day.

July 25, 1948
Took trip around lake & told R[ay] B[hower] fish were ready.

July 26, 1948
River bloom ashore. Windy all day.

205 Helen might be working on paper work for Charlie Denison to obtain title to his land with the Bureau of Land Management.
July 27, 1948
A few fish. Fixed net to put out again.

July 28, 1948
Chas had Ray [Brower] help ċ planning. Finished.

July 29, 1948
Canned greens had first cabbage.

July 30, 1948
Stayed in bed. Had pain in left side. Chas took Ray home.

July 31, 1948
Stayed in bed.

Memoranda July 12
T[ex] Noey borrowed 7 lengths 5" pipe & elbow.

August 1, 1948
Felt awful still.

August 2, 1948
Not much better.

August 3, 1948
Feel a little stronger.

August 4, 1948
Feeling better but weak. Mail came. Tex brought it from Roadhouse [Iliamna] by boat.206

August 5, 1948
Couple prospectors came along wanted a dog207 Chas gave them Jill.
Seemed like nice fellows.

August 6, 1948
Washed & helped ċ fish. Scott Mitchell here for lunch.208

206 In 1948 and for all of prehistory, and for most of the historical period one could not go by boat from Lake Clark to Seversen’s Roadhouse because of the big cataract on the lower Newhalen River necessitates a 6-mile over land portage trail on the Newhalen Portage in order to avoid the Class 5 whitewater. However, in recent years a few high powered motor boats and perhaps a few expert kayakers have been able to negotiate the big whitewater.

207 The prospectors were likely geologists from the Bureau of Mines and the United States Geological Survey.

208 Scott Mitchell was a mechanic who worked for Babe Alsworth building the Alsworth Homestead. Mitchell was originally from around Babe’s hometown of Fairmont, Minnesota.

August 7, 1948
Those fellows after Jill had lunch with us. Chas got cleaned up for another week of fish. Ironed in P.M.

August 8, 1948
Plenty of fish to do.

August 9, 1948
Tex [Noey] borrowed Chas wheels. Brought us some fresh [???] fruit. Sent his wife flowers & celery.

August 10, 1948
Went to Hadfield’s in P.M. Got some fresh fruit.

August 11, 1948
Hadfield’s came for a few hours. Got some fish & hay. Lovely day.

August 12, 1948
Raining again.
August 13, 1948
Rain. Chas starting to get strips ready for kitchen.

August 14, 1948
Rain, Rain.

August 15, 1948
Windy & rainy all day.

August 17, 1948
Went to Tex [Noey’s] for few minutes. Took some celery & flowers. Chas picked net but no fish hung.

August 18, 1948
Tex brought his guests [unintelligible?] They were from Cleveland. Interesting people.

August 19, 1948
Stripping net while Chas [then written over and crossed out]

August 25, 1948
Was at Tex Noey’s a few minutes late in P.M.

August 26, 1948
Painted some strips for kitchen.

August 27, 1948
Finished painting some strips.

August 28, 1948
Windy. Stopped fishing for smokehouse. Did some baking.

August 29, 1948
Too wind[y] to go.

August 30, 1948
Went to Hadfield’s a few minutes. Got some P.P.[Parcel Post] Chas got his glue. I got onions. Took some flowers celery etc. Washed walls in kitchen.

August 31, 1948
Chas [kentoned?] ceiling of kitchen.

September 1, 1948
Took up rug & cleaned living room.

September 2, 1948
Kentoned some odd pieces in [?] Bowman’s came for dogs, celery, etc. Char [then written over and crossed out] with them. Got some mail when Chester W[hitehead] came home.

September 3, 1948
Chester along in P.M. Leisurely day.

September 4, 1948
Chester gave me some currants. Will make jelly. Washed. Baked bread.

September 5, 1948
Went out in P.M. & picked currants.

September 6, 1948
Took Chester [Whitehead] down to Babe’s [Alsworth]. Saw Mary & Hadfield’s for a few minutes. Made currant jelly.

The word kentoned is not known, but it might be misspelled and should be ketone which relates to the production of acetone. Perhaps Charlie Denison used a solution of water and acetone to wash the ceiling of wood smoke and grime?
September 7, 1948
Natives came past on way hunting. Suppose to bring logs in couple days. Canned beets, Ironed.

September 8, 1948
Chas cut up cabbage for kraut. Dark gloomy day. Hadfields came for day. Bob fixed boat & Mrs. H[adfield] picked some currants.

September 10, 1948
Went to Tex’s for wheel. G.T.[Gabriel Trefon] took us as he wanted some engine parts from whoever could loan them.

September 11, 1948
Went currant picking at Hadfields. Got quite a few.

September 12, 1948
George & Albert Wassillie & stepfather Little Pete & George [Koktelash] & Harry Balluta brought logs to saw early in A.M.210 Hauled all up by hand as we had no wood.211

September 13, 1948
Sawed all 57 logs in 6 hr. I am tired. Kept up steam OK.

September 14, 1948
Natives got away about 2 P.M. Had to leave some lumber on beach. My back nearly broke today.

September 14, 1948
Day off on last 3 days.

September 15, 1948
Steve Hobson came along to camp at site.

September 16, 1948
Steve to help saw wood. Too rainy to do anything. Chas fixing root house.

September 17, 1948

September 18, 1948

September 19, 1948
Babe A[Isworth] came & borrowed 10 gal. coal oil. Windy all day.

September 20, 1948
Steve & Aggie [Hobson] came to help with potatoes.212 I canned 221 lb. moose meat.

September 21, 1948
Whole Hobson family came to help with potatoes. I canned 22+ lb. moose. Finished my quilt.

September 22, 1948
Hobsons came to dig potatoes. I was sick all day.

September 23, 1948

September 24, 1948
Bob came along & left our pig. Chas baked the bread. I slept most of day.

September 25, 1948

September 26, 1948
Chas T[refon] came along. Left vinegar etc. I baked & got cans ready for meat in A.M.

September 27, 1948
Canned more meat. [?]ettie had one kitten.

September 28, 1948
Boiled up bones & canned soup. Bob [Hadfield] came along for more lumber.

210 Besides the Wassillie brothers, George and Albert, there was Pete Koktelash and his son George Koktelash, and Harry Balluta. The Wassillie brothers were raised by their step-parents Nick and Agafina Kolyaha in Nondalton.

211 Charlie Denison had a steam powered winch with which he hauled logs out of the lake into a pile by his saw and then they were rolled one log at a time on the saw cradle. Then Denison would disengage the winch and switch the steam power to his saw mill. However, he needed wood or sawdust at hand to fire the boiler to make steam to power the winch or the saw.

212 Agafia Hobson (1938-) was the oldest daughter of Steve and Mary Hobson.
September 29, 1948
Cleaned upstairs some.

September 30, 1948
Fairly nice day. Rested most of day.

Memoranda
Canning 1950
Currant Jelly 60 pt.
Strawberry Jam 9 1/2 pt.
Strawberry & Rhubarb 9 pt.
Peas 43 cans
Chicken 15 cans
Chicken broth 4 cans
Meat 41 qt. - 58 tins
Salmon 112 qt. - 100 tins
Rhubarb 112

October 1, 1948
Tex came along in A.M. Evan’s came along c logs to be squared for house.213

October 2, 1948
Sawed logs for Wm. Evan[off].214 Some boat lumber for Chas T[refon]
Finished @ 3:30.

October 3, 1948
Evans rested. I washed. Bought some more cranberries.

October 4, 1948
Balluta boys came c logs for lumber late in P.M.215 We were at Hadfield’s most of day. Bob brought us home.

213 The Evon or Evans were an extended Nondalton family with roots on the Stony River. Sergie Evan was the brother of Agafia Evanoff, Alexie Evan, and Anton Evan. Karen M. Evanoff and Gladys Evanoff, op. cit.

214 William Evan[off] was the son of Gillie and Agafia Evanoff. He was born in the Stony River country and moved to Nondalton with his family in the late 1930s. Karen M. Evanoff and Gladys Evanoff, op. cit.

215 The Balluta boys were probably Andrew and his brother Jimmy who were 18 and 16 years old respectively. Their parents were Anton Balluta (1905-1937) and Sophie Hobson Austin (1912-1996).

October 5, 1948
Boys got logs up in A.M. Saved them in P.M. I got ironing & mending done.

October 6, 1948
[Balluta] boys came for some of their lumber. Hadfields came for lumber, greens, etc. Had lunch. Made some spice cran. jam.

October 7, 1948
Made some more jam. Finished picking over berries & putting away supplies. Chas fixed roof on other house temporarily.

October 8, 1948
Chas went to work in woods c Steve [Hobson] I spent most of day in bed.

October 9, 1948
Chas working in woods. Chas T[refon] came up with mail & some freight. Bob H[adfield] came with Teddy & Gary for potatoes & fertilizer.216

216 Gary and Ted Hadfield were the oldest sons of Bob and Bernie Hadfield.
October 10, 1948
Still feel terrible. Took a sponge bath.

October 11, 1948
Stayed in bed all day. Still have terrible pain. Bowels began to move late at nite.

October 12, 1948
Feel a little better.

October 13, 1948
Still feeling terrible. Chas still working in woods.

October 14, 1948

October 15, 1948
Windy all day. I feel drowsy & weak. Chas fussing around grounds. Steve went after meat.

October 16, 1948

October 17, 1948
Fair day. Rested most of day. Chas does his usual Sunday puttering.

October 18, 1948
Chas & Steve in woods all day. I did some cleaning. Baked bread.

October 19, 1948

217 The government prospectors were Bureau of Mines geologists, R.S. Warfield and F.A. Rutledge who were conducting a study of the Kasna Creek copper claims. Another team of geologists from the USGS were probably also conducting field work at Kontrashibuna Lake the same summer. Brooks Lake was a variant for Kontrashibuna Lake. It was named after Charles T. Brooks (1850?-1906) who filed the earliest claims on the Kasna Creek deposit. He first came to the Iliamna-Lake Clark country with the Trans-Alaska Company and helped build Roadhouse No. 2 near Roadhouse Creek on the Newhalen Portage which was a trail connecting Iliamna Lake to the middle part of the Newhalen River and Nondalton and Lake Clark. The Dena’ina word for Kontrashibuna Lake is Qenłghishi Vena or “boiling lake.” Evanoff, op. cit., 117; Unrau, op. cit., Draft, 588, 591.

October 20, 1948
Washed in spite of company. Mary T[refon] wants to go to Anchorage also. Babe says he’ll take us when weather clears.

October 21, 1948
A little foggy all day. Busy cooking etc.

October 23, 1948
Lost a day this week. Still waiting to go to Anchorage. Bob [Hadfield] & family along. Lots Natives here also Steve [Hobson] to Nondalton.

October 24, 1948
Nice day. Calm most of day.

October 25, 1948
Cloudy & windy. All the gang around.

October 26, 1948
Made 2 nightgowns one for self & one for Mary.218 Still waiting for Babe [Alsworth] to go to Anchorage. All Bathed.

October 27, 1948
Gang got away for K[ennedy’s] this A.M.

218 Could be Mary Alsworth or Mary V. Trefon?
October 28, 1948  
Tex came along. Aho came took Mary & I to Anchorage. Arrived about 4:00. Went to bank in evening.

October 29, 1948  
Staying at Parson’s [Hotel]. Saw Dr. Did some shopping. Had hair fixed.

October 30, 1948  
Out to Lena & Floyd’s. Nice folks.

October 31, 1948  
Sat around all day. Went to see if Mary T[refon] arrived OK. Met Bill Moore.

Memoranda  
Steve Hobson: Oct. 6 6 hrs. 7 5 hrs. 8 7 hrs. 9 7 hrs. 11 7 hrs. 12 7 hrs. 13 7 hrs.  
Matches 75¢

November 1, 1948  
Saw M.D. again. Usual day.

November 3, 1948  
Stayed in all day. Iron for self, Lena & Betty.

November 4, 1948  
Got job at Providence. Went to hospital in evening. Lena & family lovely to me.

November 5, 1948  

November 6, 1948  
Did fairly well. Am tired however work not too hard.

219 Lena and Floyd Denison had moved into Anchorage in 1941 or 1942.
220 Bill Moore (1907-1970) came to Lake Clark to live with his uncle Bill Smith who built a cabin at what is now called Chulitna Lodge in the mid-1930s. Moore lived there until he moved to Anchorage with his wife Hazel Nudlash Moore (1924-2014) in the early 1940s. Michael Moore, conversation with the editor, August 9, 2018.
221 Lena Denison, Mrs. Floyd Denison. Betty has not been identified.
222 Apparently Helen wanted to work as a nurse at Providence Hospital in Anchorage.
223 Kurt could refer to Kurt Hoxworth, Bernie Hadfield’s brother who was a pilot.
November 24, 1948
Went to M.D. Have hemorrhoids.

November 25, 1948
Thanksgiving - good dinner.

November 28, 1948
Off. Went to Floyd’s. Had moose dinner. Got a letter from Chas.

November 29, 1948
Worked as some nurses ill. Was supposed to be off.

December 1, 1948
Worked.

December 2, 1948
Went downtown cashed & deposited check. Got new corset & sent order to Sears. Worked.

December 3, 1948
Worked.

December 4, 1948
Went to bed in hospital. Am awful sick. Worked 1/2 day.

December 5, 1948
Not very much better.

December 6, 1948
Suppose to have Pyelogram but too high temp.224

December 7, 1948
Better today.

December 8, 1948
Had X-ray. Got fired!!!

December 9, 1948
Have kidney stones & loss of function of left kidney.

December 10, 1948
Dr. W. called in [Dr.?] Coffin. Suppose to his Pt. now. To have Cystoscopy Monday.225

December 11, 1948
Feel rather lonely. Was in hopes Lena [Denison] [ & Floyd] might come.

December 12, 1948
Dr. Langston brought in some [Roehls] from Iliamna226 Had a nice talk. Relieve lonesomeness.

December 13, 1948
Had Cystoscopy today. Floyds came in evening.227 Glad to see them.

December 14, 1948
Left hospital. Came to Floyd’s. Paid $261.50 hospital bill. Half for x-rays.

December 15, 1948
Went to Dr. Coffin's office. Not much satisfaction from him.

December 16, 1948
Crocheted all day.

December 17, 1948
Paid Dr. W. He is very nice to me. Am very depressed.

December 18, 1948
Crocheted & read.

December 19, 1948
Hadfields came in for a while. Crocheted & read.

December 20, 1948
Felt about as usual. Got ready for tomorrow.

December 21, 1948
Had another Cystoscopy. Had a lot of pain with it.

December 22, 1948
Dr. gave me some prescriptions & instructions. Paid hosp. & bought med to take home.228 Going when weather clears.

224 A pyelogram is an X-ray of the urinary tract.
225 A cystoscopy is a visual examination of the urinary tract and bladder with a cystoscope.
226 The Roehl family from the Iliamna Lake region was a prominent extended family who have Dena’ina, Yup’ik, and German ancestry in their ethnic make-up. The first Roehl in the Bristol Bay region was Frederick J. Roehl (1859-1924) who was a fisherman-store keeper at Koggiung, and later at Hallerville, on the lower Kvichak River by the early 1890s. He married a Yup’ik woman, Maria Wassillie (1880-1923) from Koggiung village. The Roehl family moved to Old Iliamna in 1912.
227 Apparently, Floyd and Lena Denison came to visit Helen at Providence Hospital.
228 Helen was feeling better, and with her medicines, she was waiting for the weather to improve so she could fly back to Lake Clark.
December 23, 1948
Weather nice here [Anchorage] today.

December 24, 1948

December 25, 1948
Out to Hadfield’s for dinner. Real good. Had nice time.

December 28, 1948
Larry Rost went out & left me. Heard I’d gone with someone else.

January 1, 1949
Just another Saturday.

January 3, 1949
Went to Employment office. Got one offer. No job.

January 7, 1949
Got hired by woman for housekeeping.

January 9, 1949
Woman lost own job so not having any job.

January 10, 1949
No job.

January 15, 1949
 Tried to get job but none available.

January 17, 1949
Went to Dr. C. again. He started Streptomycin. It sure costs money to be ill.

January 21, 1949
Had another cystoscopy today.

January 22, 1949
Took shots 2x daily all week.

January 23, 1949
Rested - ironed - etc. Think I feel better today.

January 29, 1949
Took Strepto - all week.

January 30, 1949
Feel some better.

February 5, 1949
Had Strepto all week. Apparently no better.

February 6, 1949
Usual Sunday. Taking sulfa again.

February 7, 1949
Went for a ride with Smith & Bechman to Palmer & Wasilla.

February 9, 1949
Apparently no better. Dr. changed medicine.

February 10, 1949
Coming down with cold.

February 11, 1949
Lura [Lena Denison?] had couple girls come home with her. They played cards in evening.

February 12, 1949
Had cold all week. Feel awful.

February 13, 1949
Felt awful all day.

February 16, 1949

February 19, 1949
Lena cleaned up house a bit.

February 23, 1949
Had another cysto today. He hurt me a lot.

February 24, 1949
Got some medicine he ordered & made arrangements to go home.\(^{229}\)

February 25, 1949

February 26, 1949
Have so much to do & feel so weak.

\(^{229}\) Helen was finally going back to the Denison place at Lake Clark.
March 1, 1949
Went to Hadfield’s for day. Tired.

March 2, 1949
Washed - awful tired.

March 3, 1949
Did part of ironing. Thawing.

March 4, 1949
Finished ironing. Fred Bowman & Mike Nudlash came & stayed all night. Thawing.

March 5, 1949
Stayed in bed this A.M

Had temp. & felt terrible in nite.

March 16, 1949
Old Doc [Dutton] died.²³⁰

March 18, 1949
They buried Old Doc today. Bob H. called. They plan to leave next week.

March 20, 1949
At Hadfields. They gave us some stuff. Chas to haul some {????}?²³¹ Tex N. there.

March 21, 1949
Raining & blowing. Chas made to go to H[adfield’s]

March 22, 1949
Chas hauled stuff from H[adfield’s] for Steve [Hobson].

March 23, 1949
Chas finished putting on strips on kitchen. Looks nice.

²³⁰ Otis Monroe Dutton (1859-1949) was one of the founders of the Tanalian Point community. Charlie Denison, Bob Hadfield, Steve Hobson, and Marion Mooter built a coffin for Dutton and hauled his remains down the lake a few hundred yards west of Denison’s place to the tiny cemetery where Nel-lie Mae Alexander Denison and Joe Kackley were buried. The men built a bonfire to help thaw the ground before digging Dutton’s grave. At the time there was little or no brush at the site and so the graves showed up well from Lake Clark, in marked contrast with conditions in 2018. Martha Trefon, conversation with the editor, November 6, 2010.

²³¹ The Bob and Bernie Hadfield family were leaving to return to Naknek as it was just too difficult to live at Lake Clark without a steady cash income. In addition, the Hadfields wanted to have their sons attend school, Bernie did not want to home school her boys. Bernie Hadfield, op. cit., 1,4.

March 25, 1949
Steve [Hobson] went for Mike [Nudlash] to help c lumbering.

March 26, 1949
Mike [Nudlash] helping cut. Chas hauling.

March 27, 1949
Same as yesterday.

March 28, 1949
Same as last couple days.

March 29, 1949
ditto last 3 days.

March 30, 1949
Got sick in nite again. Mike [Nudlash] went home, hunting.

March 31, 1949
In bed all day.

April 1, 1949
Washed.

April 2, 1949
Rested.

April 3, 1949
Ironed some. Am feeling better.

April 4, 1949
[Fred] Bowman & Tex Noey came along in P.M. Mike back to go to work.

April 5, 1949
Boys cutting logs. Chas hauling.

April 6, 1949
Same as yesterday.

April 7, 1949
Same as two days before.

April 8, 1949
Same as all week.
April 9, 1949  
Same as all week.

April 10, 1949  
Rested, Bathed. Had Hobsons for ice cream in evening.\(^{232}\) Palm Sunday.

April 11, 1949  
George Wassillie & Sergie Evan came along after lumber.

April 12, 1949  
Boys stayed over as was stormy.

April 13, 1949  
Boys got off à lumber. Chas & Steve [Hobson] cutting smoke house wood.

April 14, 1949  
Chas started fire in greenhouse.

April 17, 1949  
Chester [Whitehead] came along & Steve down in cabin for nite.

April 20, 1949  
Stayed up but did not feel good.

April 21, 1949  
Washed & set my hair.

April 24, 1949  
Chas went down to Tex [Noey’s]. Usual gossip.

April 25, 1949  
Steve back & anxious to saw.

April 26, 1949  
Men got ready to saw.

April 27, 1949  
Made ice cream & cookies. Had Hobsons up. Wass & Mary T[refon]. came along.

April 28, 1949  
Not feeling at all well. Chas trying to saw.

April 29, 1949  
Laid down most of day.

April 30, 1949  
Washed etc.

May 1, 1949  
Got work caught up so can help saw if necessary.

May 3, 1949  
Too cold to saw lumber.

May 4, 1949  
Helped saw today. Still cold. A little warmer this P.M.

\(^{232}\) The Steve and Mary Hobson Family consisted of: Aggie, Martha, Vera, Butch, and Edna. George Alexie, op. cit.
May 5, 1949
Sawing.

May 6, 1949
Sawing.

May 7, 1949
Sawing.

May 8, 1949
Rested some. Did some odd jobs.

May 9, 1949
Gabriel [Trefon]. & Billy Wilson up for nite.233 Wanted lumber. Sawed in P.M.

May 10, 1949
Sawed all day. I am not feeling well.

May 11, 1949
We worked on garden today. Steve can spade quite fast if he wants.

May 12, 1949
Chas complains of pain in elbow, left. Chas working in greenhouse some.

May 13, 1949
Tried aspirin - menthol & heat on Chas arm. Not much help.

May 14, 1949
Chas still very bad. Has much pain. Started sulfa on him.

May 15, 1949
Chas better. Has much pain.

May 16, 1949
Chas arm much better. Take sulfa one more day. Chas worked in greenhouse.

233 Billy Wilson was a Dena’ina from Kenai who moved to Nondalton in 1942 and fished in Bristol Bay. He met Frances Hobson in Nondalton and married her in 1942. Like most Nondalton men of that era he fished in the bay in the summer and trapped in the winter. Historic Photograph Data Sheet #57 in “Historic Photographs From The Lake Clark Study Area,” Andrew Balluta, and Albert Wassillie, Sr. et al. Lake Clark Sociocultural Study, Phase 1, Linda J. Ellanna, editor, Anchorage: U. S. National Park Service, Lake Clark National Park and Preserve, April 1986.

May 17, 1949
Bob H[adfield] came along about 9 P.M. Had nice visit. Bernie [Hadfield] went to Seattle today. Chas working in greenhouse.234

234 The Bob and Bernie Hadfield family were arranging their affairs before leaving Lake Clark for Naknek.
May 18, 1949
Enjoyed some fun stuff Bob brought.

May 19, 1949
Macy Hobson & family came along in P.M. I washed - bathed. Ironed some. Men getting potato ground ready.

May 20, 1949
Ironed & mended. Men planting potatoes.

May 21, 1949
Men still at potatoes.

May 22, 1949
Chas worked only half day c Steve [Hobson]. Set out cabbage & cleaned up a bit around in P.M. Steve went x[?].

May 23, 1949
Steve & family away all day.

May 24, 1949
Steve helping with potatoes today.

May 25, 1949
Mary Hobson had another girl @ 1:30 P.M. 235 Wass T[refon] came along & borrowed $20.

May 27, 1949
Macy Hobson brought over raft of house logs.

May 28, 1949
Macy Hobson brought family & set up camp down beach. 236

May 29, 1949
Macy brought rest of logs over from other side of lake.

May 30, 1949

May 31, 1949

June 1, 1949

June 2, 1949
Sawed 2x4's. Hauled up & sawed house & lumber logs for Sergie & Wm. Evon[off]. 238 Lots of people around.

June 3, 1949
Was quite sick today. Men sawed wood all day.

June 4, 1949
Men sawed lumber.

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235 Mary Hobson had a baby girl at Tanalian Point, Edna, and her mother Agafia Evanoff helped her with the delivery. After the baby was born Helen made a house call to make sure mother and child were well. Martha Trefon and Pauline Hobson, phone conversation with the editor, February 26, 2018.

236 Macy and Aggie Hobson and children were: Alice, Judy, Paul.

237 The Gabriel Trefon Family consisted of Gabriel, his wife Katherine, Phil Balluta, and Luther Hobson.

238 William Evanoff was a brother of Gust Evanoff.
June 8, 1949

June 12, 1949
Sawed wood all day.

June 13, 1949
Steve Hobson went to Nondalton & family late in evening.

June 15, 1949
Had another spell on my left side. In bed all day.

June 16, 1949
Still feel rather bad.

June 17, 1949
Felt some better today.

June 18, 1949
Started . . . patching up wall paper in living room.

June 19, 1949
Rested some most of day.

June 20, 1949
Finished patching up paper in living room.

June 22, 1949
Went to Babe’s to borrow wheel puller. Gossip with Mrs. Noey & Mary Alsworth.

June 23, 1949
Washed. Nice drying day. Chas hoeing garden.

June 24, 1949
Ironed all day. Stormy day. West wind.

June 25, 1949
Painted floor in living room. West wind.

June 26, 1949

June 27, 1949
Chas fixed platform in front of shop.

June 28, 1949
North wind all day. Chas fixing bath house.

June 29, 1949
North wind all day. Still fixing bath house.

June 30, 1949

July 1, 1949
Wass T[refon] came along & paid $20 he owed us. Fixed whitewash & used it on bathhouse & toilet.

Forest Jones and Mike Mooter at the Mooter house under construction c. 1950 at Port Alsworth. Photo courtesy of Margaret E. Jones. H-1642.

July 3, 1949
Fixing up in other house.

July 4, 1949
Moved chickens put birch lumber in house.

July 5, 1949
Wheeled wood into shop house.

239 An Army recreation camp was built on the Newhalen River near the gorge on the lower river.
July 6, 1949
Still straightening up around.

July 8, 1949
Wheeled some saw dust away.

July 10, 1949
Have been feeling good. Went to Tex [Noey’s]. Chas got mail at Babe’s. Lot of fisherman came while we were there.

July 12, 1949
Felt very ill today.

July 13, 1949
Still felt bad.

July 15, 1949
Tried to work. Washer only ran a little.

July 16, 1949

July 17, 1949

July 18, 1949
Rainy & Windy. Got 2 fish this A.M.

July 19, 1949

July 20, 1949
G[eorge] Wassillie & some girls from Nondalton stopped by on way home. Mary A[lsworth] came after fish. We got 10 this A.M.

July 24, 1949
Skeeter had a little black belly.[?]

July 26, 1949
Canned salmon.

July 27, 1949
Howard Bowman & [Ray] Brower were here for lunch. They brought mail.

July 28, 1949
Canned 15 qt. salmon. Varnished windows & cleaned them to put in.

July 29, 1949
Canned 14 qt. salmon. Re-varnished outside windows.

July 30, 1949
Chas putting in windows.

August 6, 1949
Tex [Noey] came along - is selling out - offered tractor to Chas. We have not enough money.

August 7, 1949
Chas went to see about getting some hardware from Tex. Got mail.

August 8, 1949
Wind bad today. Chas putting up new line for clothes for me.

August 9, 1949
Went to Tex’s. Chas went on to Babe’s for rest of mail etc.

August 10, 1949
Some Geological fellows came along to fish.241 Gave them some veg etc.

August 11, 1949
Stormy again today. Getting very few fish. Steve up over nite.

August 12, 1949
Washed in spite of rain. Very tired & not feeling too well.

240 Forest Jones was the husband of Nondalton schoolteacher Cleata Jones. They lived in Nondalton between the late 1940s and early 1950s. The exact spelling of Mrs. Jones’s name is not known, it is thought to be either Cleata or Cleda. John and Claudine Coray followed the Jones’ to Nondalton in 1953 and 1954, as the next school teachers.

241 “Geological fellows” were employees of the USGS who were working at Kasna Creek on Kontrashibuna Lake. In July-August 1949 U.S.G.S. geologists Robert M. Moxham and Arthur E. Nelson with two other men surveyed the Iliamna-Lake Clark area for metalliferous deposits and claims for their radioactive potential. The geologists visited Kasna Creek and collected the copper-iron samples and found they held no radioactive properties. They also sampled some claims Joe Thompson held on sites west of the Kijik River for radioactivity but those samples were found to hold no commercial value. U.S. Department of the Interior, Geological Survey, Trace Elements Memorandum Report 235, “Interim Report on an Appraisal of the Uranium Possibilities of Alaska,” by Helmut Wedow, Max G. White and Robert M, Moxham, March 1951, 75-78. (Open File Reports, USGS, Denver Service Center Library).
August 13, 1949
Rested some. Chas doubling windows in shop house.

August 14, 1949
Ironed.

August 15, 1949
Bowman & Ray Brower stopped along on way to Iliamna.

August 17, 1949
Getting a few fish along.

August 21, 1949
Am really sick today.

August 22, 1949
Canned some beets although feel bad.

August 23, 1949
Canned more beets. Still feel awful.

August 24, 1949
Stayed in bed most of day.

August 25, 1949
Felt somewhat better. Trying to get some work done. Steve & Luther Hobson here after house logs for Martin S[even]sen ?].

August 26, 1949
Steve & Luther still here. Went to Noey for some grub he has for sale.

August 27, 1949
Steve & Luther off. Jones & Featherstone from Juneau here for a few hours.

August 28, 1949
Rested.

242 Martin Seversen (1925-1980) was the son of Hans Seversen and Yenlu Nudlash and he lived at the old Seversen’s Roadhouse in Iliamna.

243 Helen is likely referring to Forest Jones from Nondalton and Harry Featherstone who had been a prospector at Portage Creek on Lake Clark as early as 1913. He was a legendary bear and sheep hunter who worked as a tally man on a Libby, McNeill & Libby scow out of Graveyard cannery at the mouth of the Kvichak River. It would be quite plausible that Featherstone was back on Lake Clark for a sheep hunt and he had asked Jones to accompany him. I think Helen was mistaken that Featherstone lived in Juneau, more plausible is that Featherstone lived in Seattle in the winter and returned to Bristol Bay each summer to work for Libby’s.

August 29, 1949
Rainy but Bowman came after dogs.

August 31, 1949
Washed.

September 1, 1949
Ironed some.

September 3, 1949
Mended & finished ironing.

September 4, 1949
Rested & Bathed. J.W. came along. Wanted tim[ber?]. Chas won’t let him have any.

September 5, 1949
Rested.

September 10, 1949
Wass Trefon came along ċ two Air Force officers from Fairbanks. They stayed over nite.

September 11, 1949
Mike & Nick N. [Nudlash] came along with letters etc. to mail.

September 12, 1949
Washed clothes did not get dry.

September 13, 1949
Ironed & mended. Chas fixed flower bed in front of house for next spring.

September 15, 1949

September 16, 1949
Men went on to Iliamna. Had nice visit.

September 17, 1949
Still nice visit. Slept late. Men came back from Iliamna. No supplies.

244 High bush cranberry Viburnum edule.
September 18, 1949
Got home about 2 P.M. Mary A[lsworth] & her father here ċ children.245

September 19, 1949
Rested - Bathed etc. Made 5 glasses jelly.

September 20, 1949
Went after more cranberries.

September 21, 1949
Made 7 glasses jelly. Went after more berries but there seems to be none.

September 22, 1949

September 23, 1949
Canned meat. Cooked soup. Painted part of floor.

September 24, 1949
Painted rest of floor.

September 25, 1949
Rested more of day. Chas digging some potatoes.

September 26, 1949
Steve went over to get Mike Nudlash], Ignatius [Delkittle] brought one log for lumber.246 I washed. Rained all day.

September 27, 1949

September 28, 1949
Got up logs. Sawed some. Our first frost.

September 29, 1949
Sawed logs.

September 30, 1949
Finished logs. Sawed wood.

October 1, 1949
Chas pulled carrots beets etc. Steve & Mike helping.

October 3, 1949
Started digging potato, some cold north wind. Bathed in A.M.

245 Gust Griechen, Sr. (1886-1970). Mary Alsworth’s children were Leon Jr. “Lonnie”, Wayne “Bee,” and Margaret “Sis.”

246 Ignatius Delkittle (1903-?) was thought to have been born in Old Iliamna and later he married Annie Balluta of Nondalton and moved to that village on Sixmile Lake. Barbara Jacko Atwater, op. cit., 179.
October 4, 1949
Chas putting veg away in root house.

October 5, 1949
Mike [Nudlash] came over c Helen & baby. Chas digging potatoes.

October 6, 1949
[Frederick] Bowman came along, Chas would not go digging potatoes.

October 7, 1949
Raining but finishing digging potatoes.

October 8, 1949
Mike went home to come back for sawing.

October 10, 1949
Babe came along c some freight & mail chatted for a while.

October 11, 1949
Macy [Hobson] & Steve [Hobson] came along. Steve brought our sugar he tried to steal c bills[?]. Macy helped c sawing for a day.

October 12, 1949
Sawing lumber.

October 13, 1949
Sawing lumber.

October 14, 1949
Sawing.

October 15, 1949
Sawing. Chas T[refon] came along. Stopped for few minutes.

October 16, 1949

October 17, 1949
Terrible east wind. Steve [Hobson] unable to get away.

October 18, 1949
Steve got away. Macy & Pete Koktelash here but went to Macy’s.

October 19, 1949
Chas started on new room. Chester W[hithead] here brought some books.

October 20, 1949
Chester went back. Afraid of weather.

October 21, 1949
Usual day.

October 22, 1949
Washed & usual bath. Am feeling fine.

October 23, 1949
Ironed. Did not know it was Sunday. Lost a day last week.

October 24, 1949
Chas working on new room. Macy here for saw dust.

October 25, 1949
Chas got off c [Frederick] Bowman early in P.M.

October 26, 1949
Skeeter had another black & white kitten about 8:30 P.M.

October 30, 1949
Fair day. Tried to snow.

October 31, 1949
Chas got home around 2 P.M. Fred Bowman & Ray Brower stayed for lunch.

November 1, 1949
Snow. Put supplies away.

November 2, 1949
Snow again. Chas putting up temporary roof on new room.

November 8, 1949

November 9, 1949
Gabriel T[refon] came after sawdust. Took Steve’s [Hobson] logs for pay for Luther [Hobson].

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247 Mike and Helen Nudlash. George Alexie, op. cit.

248 Possibly the initials stand for “Territorial School.”
November 10, 1949
Macy [Hobson] came over. Steve & Mike stopped along.

November 11, 1949
Had nice chicken dinner.

November 14, 1949
Cleaned in living room today, pictures [?]. Chas started making stair door.

November 19, 1949
Chas got stair door up. Nice job. Windy, warm weather.

November 20, 1949
Rested most of day.

November 21, 1949
Cleaned some more in living room.

November 22, 1949
Cooked some for Thanksgiving.

November 23, 1949
Got mail. Babe [Alsworth] stopped c plane.

November 24, 1949
Chas went to Babe’s. Got more mail.

November 25, 1949
Chas went to Babe’s to take some outgoing mail.

November 26, 1949
Chas went again after starting washing machine. Cold.

November 27, 1949
Trixie had 2 pups 2 dead. Wants to take her food to them.

November 28, 1949
Ironed. Clothes awful wet from frost.

November 29, 1949
Doing some old cleaning.

November 30, 1949
Kentoned barrels etc. for cleaning.

December 1, 1949
Still clearing up as usual.

December 3, 1949
Rested. Some snow. Bathed etc.

December 4, 1949
Still Resting. Chas Kentoned 1/2 kitchen ceiling. Quite a little snow.
December 13, 1949
Babe came along to see Chas about pension checks.249

December 20, 1949
Got some Xmas mail.

December 24, 1949
Had Xmas tree.

December 25, 1949
Cats spoiled tree.250

December 26, 1949
Took down tree.

January 1, 1950
Just another day.

January 4, 1950
Rain, snow, wind.

January 12, 1950
Washed.

January 13, 1950
Mary Alsworth. Sister Sophie & children came along for a few minutes.251 I was mending.

January 19, 1950
Fred Bowman flew down to borrow dog. His had distemper, 3 died.
Pilot Oren Hudson.252

January 20, 1950
Chas not well.

February 13, 1950
Chuck came today.

February 19, 1950
Betty Balluta's husband came across from Mary's.253 Seems nice but fat.

February 25, 1950
Macy came over c dogs. Took most of his potatoes.

March 2, 1950
Men hauling in logs every day.

March 3, 1950
Bud Branham came to buy lumber.254 Be back in 2 weeks.

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249 Charlie Denison probably received Social Security and perhaps a military pension from his service in the U. S. Revenue Service in the early 20th century. Floyd Denison, interview with Sara Hornberger, op. cit.

250 Charlie Denison liked cats a great deal. Some visitors to his house remarked years later that his house occasionally smelled of cats.

251 Mary Alsworth's sister was Sophie Griechen Mollohan. The children would have been, “Lonnie,” “Bee,” and “Sis.”


253 Betty Balluta's husband was Thomas Agoney, Sr. (1927-2004) who was born in New York State and in the military. The “Mary” Helen refers is likely Mary Nudlash.

254 Bud Branham was one of the foremost big game hunting guides in post-World War II Alaska. His main hunting lodge was in Rainy Pass, but in 1949 and 1950, he hired Charlie Denison to saw lumber for a new lodge and to build the lodge at Kakhonak Falls on the south side of Iliamna Lake east of Kakhonak village. Charlie and his son Chuck helped Branham build the lodge and it was completed by the fall of 1950. Bo Bennett, op. cit., 32-33, 94.
March 21, 1950
Bud Branham came to make arrangements about lumber. Chester came along.

March 22, 1950
Pete & Mary Trefon came up with baby for fishing.²⁵⁵ Staying in shop.

March 24, 1950
Bud [Branham] came for more lumber.

March 25, 1950
Pete & Mary went home after lunch.

March 27, 1950
[Bud Branham] brought some supplies. Arranged for Chas & Chuck [Denison] to build his fishing cabin.²⁵⁶ Stayed over nite.

March 28, 1950
Men hauling wood to get supply ready. Made arrangements for Marion to come.²⁵⁷

March 31, 1950
Men getting ready to go to build cabin.

April 1, 1950
Usual work. Bath etc.

April 2, 1950
Resting some. Men getting ready etc.

April 3, 1950
They went over to Iliamna Lake today. B.B. made 2 trips. Chuck went into Anchorage with Bud [Branham].

April 7, 1950

April 9, 1950
Easter Sunday. Cold cloudy.

April 10, 1950
Chas & B.B. came after 5 more dogs.²⁵⁸ Mrs. [Cleata] Jones came to take census.²⁵⁹

April 11, 1950
Billy Wilson & Macy Hobson came to see Chas. Told them to come back in 2 weeks. Some snow.

April 14, 1950
Ray Brower came along. Wants 200 lb. potatoes saved.

April 15, 1950
Chester [Whitehead] came along.

April 16, 1950
Chester gave me a fish which cats got. A” snow.

April 17, 1950
Chester gave me another fish. I ate that one. He went back to Leve-lock.²⁶⁰

April 24, 1950
The folks came about 2:30. Bud [Branham] brought Chuck [Denison] back for the nite also, also 4 dogs.

April 25, 1950
Bud took some lumber & brought other 3 dogs back. Babe took me to see baby [Margaret]. She had high temperature.²⁶¹

April 26, 1950
Getting adjusted. I washed few clothes.

April 27, 1950
Cleaned shop & Marion [Denison]. Washed some clothes.

²⁵⁵ Pete and Mary L. Trefon and the baby was Elaine. George Alexie, conversation with the editor, March 8, 2018.

²⁵⁶ Chuck Denison was Charlie Denison, Jr.

²⁵⁷ Marion Denison was the wife of Charles “Chuck” Denison, Jr.

²⁵⁸ Apparently Charlie needed the dogs at the Kakhonak Falls building site to haul logs closer to the construction. This lodge building made of logs and sawed lumber from Denison’s sawmill was to be the first building built for the sole purpose of being a sport fishing lodge in the world famous Bristol Bay sport fishery. Bennett, op. cit., 94.

²⁵⁹ Claeta Jones was the school teacher in Nondalton. She was married to Forest Jones who took care of the school building while his wife taught.

²⁶⁰ Chester Whitehead had a Taylor Craft and lived part of the year in the Kvichak River village of Leve-lock.

²⁶¹ Margaret “Sis” Alsworth was the daughter of Babe and Mary Alsworth. She was born on July 18, 1948.
Chuck Denison was the son of Charlie Denison and half-brother to Floyd Denison. He and his wife lived for a time with Charlie and Helen before returning to the States. Photo courtesy of Floyd Denison. H-58.

April 28, 1950
Wass T. came along brought a pkg. from Sears.

April 29, 1950
Lake opening up down middle. East wind.

May 2, 1950
Macy & Billy W[ilson] came over ċ fish. I carton cig. on account.

May 4, 1950

May 5, 1950
Busy day getting started with spring work.

May 6, 1950
Swallows seen today.

May 7, 1950
Had huge wash.

May 8, 1950
Baked bread & pies. Robins seen today. Something happened to kitty Butch.

May 9, 1950
Ironed. Awful tired.

May 10, 1950
Made another pr. (?) usual had (?) of work.

May 11, 1950
Marion [Denison] & Chuck white washed walls in shop.

May 12, 1950
Chuck building shelf & cupboards in shop house.

May 13, 1950
We lost Cookie & Felix [house cats] today.

May 15, 1950
Washed - men getting ready to saw.

May 16, 1950
Bub Branham brought groceries. Landed at Babe’s. Spent nite ċ one [Albert] Johnson. Ice started to move.

262 Bud Branham brought Charlie Denison and his son Chuck back from their lodge building job at Kakhonak Falls on the south side of Iliamna Lake.

263 Albert Johnson was an old man and friend of the Alsworth Family who lived in a small cabin just east of the Alsworth’s house. A few years later the house was purchased by Terry and Victoria Gill.
May 17, 1950  
Men got ready to saw wood. Started in [P.M.]

May 18, 1950  
Sawed all day about 800 ft.

May 21, 1950  
[Bill and Rhoda] Thomas & Uzels and couple pilots came along in P.M. Had nice visit.

May 22, 1950  
Bud Branham brought our chicks. Had to land at Babe’s.

May 25, 1950  
Men planting potatoes.

May 26, 1950  
Still planting potatoes.

May 27, 1950  
Still planting potatoes.

May 28, 1950  

May 29, 1950  
Chuck took Marion & kids to Nondalton for inoculations. He got back about P.M. We rested.

May 30, 1950  
Still resting. Chuck & Chas making roller for logs.

May 31, 1950  
Marion [Denison] got home late ċ Chas Trefon.

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May 17, 1950

Bill and Rhoda Thomas worked for the Office [Bureau] of Indian Affairs in Quinhagak. Rhoda Thomas was the school teacher in Quinhagak and her husband maintained the school facilities and radio for contact with Bethel starting in 1940 and continuing on until 1946. In 1946 they also accompanied about 80 residents of Quinhagak to Libby’s Koggiung cannery at Graveyeard Point while they all worked for the cannery during the commercial fishing season. Previously the Thomases taught school in the Aleutian Islands at Atka before WWII. In 1947 Bill and Rhoda were scheduled to teach in Newhalen. Sally Monserud, “Hard Working Natives Aid Bay Salmon Pack,” The 49TH Star, c.1946.

May 21, 1950

264 Bill and Rhoda Thomas worked for the Office [Bureau] of Indian Affairs in Quinhagak. Rhoda Thomas was the school teacher in Quinhagak and her husband maintained the school facilities and radio for contact with Bethel starting in 1940 and continuing on until 1946. In 1946 they also accompanied about 80 residents of Quinhagak to Libby’s Koggiung cannery at Graveyeard Point while they all worked for the cannery during the commercial fishing season. Previously the Thomases taught school in the Aleutian Islands at Atka before WWII. In 1947 Bill and Rhoda were scheduled to teach in Newhalen. Sally Monserud, “Hard Working Natives Aid Bay Salmon Pack,” The 49TH Star, c.1946.

May 22, 1950

265 Oren Hudson’s wife, Ruth, was a public health nurse and perhaps she gave inoculations in Nondalton?

May 29, 1950

266 It is not clear here if Helen is referring to Marion Mooter or Marion, Mrs. Chuck Denison?
Babe Alsworth, left, and his son, Lonnie, right, hold two lake trout at Port Alsworth c. 1948-1949. Notice the sign on the small building on the left background reading “Dr. E. I. Bly, Dentist.” Doc Bly worked on Helen’s teeth. *Photo courtesy of Margaret “Sis” Clum. H-1781.*

June 7, 1950
*Gabriel Trefon & Co. came c 40 logs. Some for dock at river. We washed.*

June 8, 1950
*Marion [Denison] 24 today. Men hauled up logs & sawed some.*

June 9, 1950
*Sawed all day.*

June 12, 1950
*Bud Branham came along with Harris Denny for lumber.*\(^{267}\) *Brought over chick feed settled up c him.*

June 13, 1950
*Washed. Men sawed wood.*

June 14, 1950
*Sawed lumber.*

Mary Ann Trefon with her children and grandson, Henry, in front of the door. Front row, left to right: Katie, Mary Ann, and Alexandra. Back row, left to right, Pete, Gabriel, Wassilie, and Alex. *Photo courtesy of Myrtle Atenon. H-324.*

June 15, 1950
*Chas & Marion setting out more plants.*

June 16, 1950
*Went to Dr. [Elmer] Bly’s for examination.*\(^{268}\)

June 17, 1950
*Chuck [Denison] went to [Bristol] Bay c Babe for fishing.*\(^{269}\)

June 19, 1950
*Washed as usual.*

June 20, 1950
*Ironed.*

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\(^{267}\) Nothing of note is known about Harris Denny but he must have been associated with Bud Branham in the sport hunting and fishing guide industry.

\(^{268}\) Dr. Elmer Bly (1886-1966) was a dentist who had an office in Dillingham, Anchorage and for a brief time at Port Alsworth in Babe and Mary Alsworth's first house and later on the point at the Bly House, 1947-1952.

\(^{269}\) Babe Alsworth flew Chuck Denison down to Bristol Bay to participate in the commercial salmon fishing season.
June 27, 1950
Antone Nudlash was drowned. Nick Nudlash & Mrs. G[abriel] T[refon], [Katherine] came along & message for Babe. Stayed short time.²⁷⁰

June 30, 1950
Babe & Mary came along in plane. Brought mail.

July 2, 1950
Took boat ride up to Bill Park’s place.²⁷¹ Hot day. Children went wading.

July 3, 1950
Washed - finished blankets.

July 4, 1950

July 5, 1950
Chas hoeing potatoes & cabbage. Canned 2[?] rhubarb.

July 6, 1950
Had my teeth cleaned & two fillings.

July 7, 1950
Chas & Marion [Denison] thinning plants.

July 9, 1950
Got 10 salmon in net.

July 10, 1950
Canned 12 qt. Salmon not running much yet.

July 11, 1950
Mopped both rooms. Got ready for more canning.

²⁷⁰Antone Nudlash (1932-1950) was the son of Big Evan and Mary Nudlash. It was reported that he drowned near Osprey Island just north east of Hardenberg Bay at Port Alsworth. He was buried in the Tanalian Point cemetery.

²⁷¹Bill Park’s place was a cabin near the mouth of Tommy Creek, four miles east of Port Alsworth.
July 20, 1950
[Dr. Elmer and Maizie] Bly came by.

July 24, 1950
Foresters [BLM personnel or U.S Forest Service] came along checking on timber.272

July 25, 1950
Chuck Denison came home.

July 28, 1950
Bowman’s came along for a few minutes.

July 30, 1950
Finished canning salmon. Had fuss about kids. Have 112 qt. & some cans.

July 31, 1950
Usual wash day.

August 1, 1950
Dr. Bly & family came along for fishing.

August 2, 1950
Chas Trefon came along & paid $80 for sawing.

August 6, 1950

August 7, 1950
Men sawing. Sergie Evan & Macy Hobson came along. [Fred] Bowman came along brought us some strawberries.

August 8, 1950
Washed as usual. Men fished.

August 9, 1950

August 10, 1950
Put up jam & finished jelly.

August 11, 1950
Chas & Chuck went for more currants.

August 12, 1950
Chuck [Denison] & family ran off to Anchorage. Chas feels bad.273 Got me more currants.

August 13, 1950
Canned 20 pt. rhubarb, 18 pts currant jell & 4 pt peas shelled. More peas to start in morning.

August 14, 1950
Shelled & canned peas all day. 22 pt.

August 15, 1950
Put up 17 more pt. peas.

August 16, 1950
Washed - nice drying day.

August 17, 1950
Canned 5 cans chicken, one glass jar broke.

August 18, 1950
Went to Babe’s for chicken feed. Evidently Chuck not coming back.

August 20, 1950
Benny Trefon here ċ Gabriel Trefon’s boat. Went to Babe’s for a while.

August 26, 1950
Canned some more chicken.

August 27, 1950
They came back broke.274 Chas told Chuck [Denison] a few things. I washed.

August 28, 1950
Strain of relations.

August 29, 1950
Chuck [Denison] starting to take logs down to camp site.

272 It is not clear which Federal agency would have been responsible for the timber harvest in bush Alaska in the territorial days. When a forest fire broke out at Port Alsworth in 1953 the fire fighters were recruited from Nondalton by the BLM. It is plausible that BLM foresters visited the Denison sawmill, but it is also possible it was the United States Forest Service.

273 Apparently Charlie Denison did not get along very well with his two sons, Chuck and Floyd.

274 Chuck and Marion Denison returned to Charlie Denison’s place but now thought he would build his own place away from his father and Helen’s home.
August 30, 1950
Chuck went hunting c Macy Hobson.

September 1, 1950
They came home c moose, smoking some.

September 2, 1950
Canned moose.

September 3, 1950
Canned more moose.

September 4, 1950
Washed - Chas made kraut - Chuck went hunting c [Fred or Howard] Bowman.

September 5, 1950
Bowmans came back. They got calf. Chas made more kraut.

September 7, 1950
Wass Trefon brought family up from down the lake.

September 8, 1950
Sawed. Wass Trefon to help haul his logs sawed.

September 9, 1950
Rained all day. No sawing.

September 10, 1950
Sawed although its [???] Getting along OK. Made currant jam from some Mary [Alsworth] gave me. Seems good.

September 11, 1950
Sawed all day. Wass Trefon. Went back to village [Nondalton]. Left Henry. 275

September 12, 1950
Could not saw. Rained.

September 13, 1950
Bunch of Natives came along. Chas T[refon] brought 100 lbs. sugar. 276

September 14, 1950
Mooter’s came along. 277 F[red] Bowman here. Trying to saw.

September 15, 1950
Sawed all day.

September 16, 1950
Mary Trefon brought me 2 1/2 gal berries. 278

September 17, 1950

September 20, 1950
Macy & Chuck went back after logs.

September 21, 1950
H[arry] Balluta, Chas Trefon - Wass Trefon – Macy Hobson & Chuck Denison all brought in logs.

September 22, 1950
Hauled up 120 logs for Macy, Wass T. & H[arry Balluta] Chas pulled celery.

September 23, 1950
Sawing for Harry Balluta.

September 24, 1950
Started on Wass Trefon logs.

September 25, 1950
Sawed for Wass T. all day.

September 26, 1950

September 27, 1950
Planned lumber for Wass T. & Harry Balluta.

September 28, 1950
Getting ready to fix Marion Mooter’s house. Chuck took one load. Motor went on bum again.

275 Henry Trefon (1927-1985) was the first son of Wass and Mary Trefon. He was an excellent accordion player. George Alexie, op. cit.

276 One hundred pounds of sugar potentially could have made a lot of alcohol or home brew. It was reported that Charlie Denison made rhubarb wine and had a still. Mary Alsworth, conversation with Marion and Bertha Mooter and their son Mike.

277 It was probably Mary Ann Trefon (1878-1959).

September 30, 1950
Planing. Marion & I put thru boards.

October 1, 1950
Marion & I put thru more boards.

October 2, 1950
Washed. Chas Trefon help finish planning. Chuck [Denison] working on his house.

October 3, 1950
Started to dig potatoes. Got 315 lb. from 15 lbs.

October 4, 1950
Chas digging potatoes.

October 5, 1950
Went to Nondalton č Benny Trefon & Luther Hobson.279 Stayed č Forest Jones.

October 6, 1950
Slept late.

October 7, 1950
Mr. Uzzel came along to paint plane.280 He stayed over nite č Jones.

October 8, 1950
Oren Hudson went after Mrs. Uzzel. They sure had fun.

October 9, 1950
Went to Mrs. Gabriel Trefon [Katherine]. Had nice visit. Visited store.281

__cit., 127__.

279 Benny Trefon (1923-1985) was the son of Gabriel and Katherine Trefon. He was a Bristol Bay fisherman and trapper. Luther Hobson (1930-2005?) was the son of Steve Hobson, and his mother died when he was an infant and he was raised by Gabriel and Katherine Trefon. Ellanna and Balluta, _op.

280 Mr. and Mrs. [Cliff ] Uzzel probably lived at Iliamna or Newhalen and Mrs. Uzzel might have been a school teacher at the Newhalen School?

281 Helen was in Nondalton, and visited Katherine Trefon and her husband Gabriel’s Alaska Packers Store.
October 10, 1950
Had [Oren] Hudson bring me home. Mary Alsworth brought me from Elmer’s. Slept in P.M. Mrs. Uzzell sent me some cranberries.

October 11, 1950
Men sawing. Made about 20 pt. more cranberry jam. Picked over some berries.

October 12, 1950
Men sawing - Am cleaning up house etc.

October 13, 1950
Still sawing lumber.

October 14, 1950

October 15, 1950

October 16, 1950
Sawed for Natives.

October 17, 1950
Sawed for Natives.

October 18, 1950
Washed.

October 19, 1950
Rained all day. Clothes not drying. Gabriel T[refon] came along brought some supplies.

October 20, 1950
Ironed some. Got some of clothes dry behind stove & upstairs. Men almost finished sawing.

October 21, 1950

October 22, 1950
Nice weather.

October 23, 1950
Benny Trefon came after Dr. Davis lumber. Chas helping. Macy Hobson build shack for Native camp.

October 24, 1950

October 25, 1950
Benny Trefon took rest of [Dr.] Davis lumber also [Oren] Hudson.

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282 Elmer Gustafson’s home was thought to have been Doc Dutton and Joe Kackley’s old place at Tana- lian Point.

283 Henry Hope was a Koyukon Indian from Wiseman, Alaska who was living at the Bowman’s Portage Creek placer mine and working for the Bowmans. Henry Hope was a friend of Harry Baker’s. Baker and his wife, Peggy, lived in Anchorage but began working part time with the Bowman’s on their placer gold mine by 1940. The Bakers built a small log cabin east of Portage Creek in Bartos Bay in 1949. Letisha Bowman, conversation with the editor, undated; Parry and Linda Grover, conversations with the editor, March 8, 2018.

284 “Dr. Davis” was probably Dr. George G. Davis (1879-1956) a surgeon who worked for the U. S. Public Health Service and lived in Anchorage. He worked in the Bristol Bay region and he had many patients in Nondalton. He built a log cabin duplex in the early 1950s with the assistance of Nondalton men such as Benny Trefon on Sixmile Lake a few miles east of Nondalton village. After Dr. Davis died in 1956 his estate sold the cabin on a five acre parcel to aviator Ward Gay who converted it to the sport fishing lodge, Valhalla Lodge. Sharon Prien, telephone conversation from ARLIS Library, March 9, 2018; Bennett, op. cit., 254.
November 5, 1950
Macy Hobson moved into shack - more comfortable.

November 7, 1950
Men started on Carlos Carson’s house. Macy Hobson helping.

November 8, 1950
Working on Carson’s house. Chas getting some supplies.

November 9, 1950
Chas stayed home & rested.

November 10, 1950
Macy’s white female had eight pups. Some stormy weather.

November 12, 1950
Rest most of day. Men still at Carson’s. One of Macy’s dogs had pups. Chas keeping them like stingy [?].

November 13, 1950
Chuck Denison & Macy Hobson went to Nondalton.

November 15, 1950
Men came back from Nondalton bearing tales of high fur prices.

November 23, 1950
Had good chicken dinner. Thanksgiving.

November 24, 1950
Chuck went adventuring with Macy. Left us to take care of Marion Denison & kids.

November 25, 1950
Am painting cupboards. A few at a time. Will do whole kitchen.

November 27, 1950
Washed. Chas having hard time keeping up with wood.

November 29, 1950
Still painting.

285 Carlos Carson’s house was first built by Bob Hadfield just south of Babe and Mary Alsworth’s homestead on Hardenberg Bay. The location of Carson’s house is now occupied by the northern most structures of the Samaritan Lodge. Carson was a retired Alaska Game Commission game warden who was not a pilot. Instead he would fly patrols in the Bristol Bay region with Game Commission pilots such as Grenold Collins.

December 2, 1950
Had Chas help me paint ceiling. Have to do strips yet.

December 3, 1950
Washed.

December 5, 1950
Ironed. Baked Bread.

December 8, 1950
Finished painting everything.

December 9, 1950
Felt bad all day.

December 10, 1950
Felt bad. Am resting.

December 14, 1950
Sanding stuff for varnish.

December 15, 1950
Ironed & Baked Bread.

December 20, 1950
Chuck got back from trapping - 8 mink. A couple poor foxes.

December 24, 1950
Had Chuck Denison & Macy’s families in for tree. Sandwiches - Ice Cream & Cookies. Everyone seemed to have a good time.

December 25, 1950
Had roast chicken dinner.

December 26, 1950
Chuck working on his house.

December 27, 1950
Washed etc.
December 29, 1950
Ironed etc.

January 1, 1951
Chuck [Denison] moving today.

January 2, 1951
We washed & Chuck finished moving.

January 3, 1951
Seems good to be by ourselves.

January 4, 1951
Ironed. Mild weather.

January 11, 1951
Got started on wallpaper. Marion [Denison] went to K.K. [Kanakanak Hospital near Dillingham].

January 12, 1951
Coming along ċ wallpaper. Looks nice.

January 13, 1951
Marion had baby girl.286

January 14, 1951
Down to -30 tonight.

January 15, 1951
Still very cold.

January 21, 1951
Marion came home. Coming along nicely ċ papering.

January 22, 1951
Start to paint.

January 23, 1951
Upstairs looks better.

January 25, 1951
Mild - Windy 30°

January 26, 1951
Washed - first time in 4 weeks. Macy [Hobson] came back.287

January 27, 1951
Ironed some.

January 28, 1951
Finished painting upstairs. Really looks nice.

January 29, 1951
Chas started on bookshelves.

January 30, 1951
Got mail.

February 5, 1951
Chas finished bookshelves on left of windows.

February 6, 1951
Chas starting on cupboard doors.

March 25, 1951
Easter Sunday. Usual Sunday here.

April 6, 1951
Butch [a dog or cat] disappeared sometime today.

April 7, 1951
Chas planted celery in boxes in house.

April 8, 1951
Chas planting some seeds in boxes in house.

April 9, 1951
[Oren] Hudson stopped ċ couple Natives. They wanted seed potatoes.

April 17, 1951
Bud Branham came ċ supplies. Took some strips. Stayed for supper.

April 20, 1951
Chuck [Denison] sold his cabin. They won’t come back here again. Thank heavens!!

286 Marion Denison had a baby at the U.S. Public Health Service Hospital at Kanakanak.

287 Macy Hobson had a cabin across Lake Clark near Owl Bluff and a camp off the beach west of Denison’s place.
April 30, 1951
Well Marion & kids on way to Seattle. Chuck went along to Anchorage for ride.

May 1, 1951
Ice getting pretty soft.

May 2, 1951
Chuck bring back stuff they used.

May 3, 1951
Oren Hudson came along. Brought 25 lb. sugar. Also mail. Wass Trefon came also.

May 24, 1951
Chas finished planting potatoes. Natives came along. Marion Mooter around with mail.

Marion Mooter pushes a raft of 55-gallon drums of fuel on Hardenberg Bay c. 1950. Photo courtesy of Margaret “Sis” Clum. H-2953.

May 25, 1951
More Natives came along. Steve Hobson helped dig up some ground.

May 26, 1951
Chas all in today. Marion Mooter took cement & $50 on motor. Chas rested most of day.
May 27, 1951
Rain. Chas resting.

May 29, 1951
Native came in to logs to saw.

May 30, 1951
Hauled up logs. Also those that have been on beach all winter.

May 31, 1951
Got started about noon sewing. Pump got broke. Mike [Vandegrift] fixed it for us.²⁸⁹

June 1, 1951
Sawing all day.

June 2, 1951
Sawed - Took note to [Marion] Mooter for Chas.

June 3, 1951

June 4, 1951
Natives planned lumber. I washed. Some got started toward Nondalton.

June 5, 1951
Chas setting out celery. Got cabbage in at odd times while sawing.

June 6, 1951
Finished ironing & most of mending.

June 7, 1951
Natives came for rest of lumber at 3 A.M. Has been stormy down at Nondalton.

June 8, 1951
Sawing lumber.

June 14, 1951
Sawing up slabs.

June 21, 1951
Forest [BLM] man stopped about saw mill.²⁹⁰ Had a nurse from Anchorage to him.

June 23, 1951
Washed.

June 24, 1951
Mooter’s came along for a few minutes.

June 25, 1951
Ironed everything in one day for a change.

June 26, 1951
Macy Hobson came after his boat & stuff in cabin.

²⁸⁹ Miles “Mike” Vandegrift (1902-1982) was a pilot and an outstanding mechanic and builder for Babe and Mary Alsworth. He was a craftsman working with wood and metal. There was nothing he could not repair or build. Governor Jay Hammond called Mike a mechanical genius. Mike was raised in Austin, Minnesota and flew to Lake Clark from Minnesota with Babe Alsworth in April 1944. Mary Alsworth, op. cit., 1.

²⁹⁰ It is likely the Bureau of Land Management personnel monitored Charlie Denison’s logging on Federal public land, but records do not seem to exist in Alaska to rule out the possibility that the United States Forest Service might of also had a role.
June 27, 1951
Natives went back to village. Am hanging for fishing.

June 30, 1951
Chas finished hilling potatoes.

July 1, 1951
Chas planting turnips.

July 2, 1951
Water power people here. [Oren] Hudson brought them.

July 3, 1951
Went to Babe’s & Mooter’s. Got a few things.

July 4, 1951
Mooter’s came along. Forest Jones stopped by on way to get Ray Brower to stay with him.

July 5, 1951
Jones & Ray [Brower] stopped on way to Nondalton. Chas digging up some new ground.

July 6, 1951
Rainy - Chas digging some more.

July 7, 1951
Chas started putting on new roof on south side of house.

July 10, 1951
Got 3 salmon in net.

July 14, 1951
Went down to Mooter’s in P.M.

July 16, 1951
Mrs. Marion [Bertha Mooter] brought up on letters etc.

July 17, 1951
Went to Babe’s & got some supplies. Mr. [Marion] Mooter went to Nondalton.

July 20, 1951
Started to can salmon.

July 21, 1951
Canned some more salmon.

July 22, 1951
Marion Mooter came home. Brought a Sargent Steiner with him.

July 23, 1951
Had to say in bed. Can’t walk.

July 24, 1951
Still in bed. Soreness going out of leg. Marion Mooter [went] down to village again to go help to fix boat.

August 10, 1951
Oren Hudson brought one of the [U.S.] Geological Survey up. Chas getting quite a few fish.

August 11, 1951

August 12, 1951
Stormy from East.

August 13, 1951
Still stormy. Oren Hudson brought foreman of gang [USGS geologists].

August 14, 1951
Hudson beginning to fly stuff up to Brooks Lake [Kontrashibuna Lake]. Got stormy in P.M. Ray Brower & Fred Bowman & boys came along. [13?]

August 15, 1951

August 16, 1951
We both rested.

291 Helen’s water power people were likely from Federal Power Authority. They were flown in by pilot Oren Hudson who lived in Nondalton with his family.

292 Nothing particular is known about Sargent Steiner except that he was part of a group Army personnel recreating at a tent camp on the lower Newhalen River.

293 Ona Carson was the wife of retired game warden Carlos Carson and they purchased the Bob and Bernie Hadfield cabin south of the Alsworth home on Hardenberg Bay in about 1950 or 1951. The Carsons had formerly lived in Dillingham when Helen was a nurse at Kanakanak Hospital in 1943 and were well acquainted with her.
August 17, 1951

August 18, 1951
Carsons came for more lumber.

August 19, 1951
Boy’s came for bread did not get any. Wass T & family came up. Shot bear on our beach.

August 20, 1951
Baked for boys.

August 21, 1951
Canned 7 pt. peas late in evening.

August 22, 1951
Washed. Rained all day.

August 23, 1951
Carsons brought a M.D. & wife around. Canned 8 pt. peas. Little Pete Koktelash & George [Koktelash] came along to dentist [Dr. Elmer Bly].

August 24, 1951
Went around to Mooter’s, for a while. Little Pete still here. Ironed a little.

August 25, 1951
Finished ironing. Little Pete [Koktelash] went home.

August 26, 1951
Geological Survey] boys here after bread, veg. & lumber, Elmer Gustafson brought them around.

Memoranda
Carsons - Lumber $70
Stockings 7.50

294 The M.D. was Dr. George G. Davis of the U.S. Public Health Service who was building a cabin just east of Nondalton on Sixmile Lake.
295 Marion and Bertha Mooter and their son, Mike, were living in a cabin just west of the mouth of the Tanalian River that was built by Mooter and Joe Thompson.

September 2, 1951
Boys here for bread.

September 6, 1951

September 9, 1951
[Geological] boys here again. All to be here in a few days. They did not come back.

September 15, 1951
Had Birthday dinner for Chas.

September 21, 1951
Bowman & R.B. [Ray Brower] came along on way to Nondalton & Roadhouse [Iliamna].

September 23, 1951
Mooter went down lake.

September 24, 1951
Evon boys brought in logs to saw. I washed. Canned 7 pt. moose.

September 25, 1951
Hauled up logs. I ironed & mended. Steve Hobson came along. Chas[?] along.
September 26, 1951
Hauled up rest of logs. Rain all day. I sewed nylon [nightie?]

September 27, 1951
Am going to dentist. He cleaned off some tartar.

September 28, 1951
Chas started sawing for Evons. My jaw very sore.

September 29, 1951
Bowmans came along. Mooter stopped to store cement in smokehouse. Brought some Army [personnel] along.

September 30, 1951
Sawing all day.

October 1, 1951
Chas had Arsinie [Delkittie] dig potatoes etc. Pay in potatoes & sawing.

October 2, 1951
Finished everything for Chas, Wm, Gustie & Sergie.

October 3, 1951
Sergie paid for sawing. Boys sawed up slabs.

October 4, 1951
Got some money for some [?] lumber from sawing. Windy.

October 5, 1951
Natives got away in P.M.

October 7, 1951
Went down to Nondalton for a little while in A.M.

October 8, 1951

October 9, 1951
Ironed put up curtains.

October 10, 1951
Rested had toothache. Mooter came up about pulling out boat her

October 11, 1951
Cleaned some upstairs.

October 12, 1951
Mrs. [Bertha] Mooter came along for a chat.

October 20, 1951
Went to Mooters for a little while. Aleta [a house cat or dog] died 8 P.M.

October 22, 1951
Paul Zackar came along took our order down to Nondalton. Bought some lumber & potatoes. Was at Mooters.

October 24, 1951
Mooter got 140 ft. lumber to be paid back when he gets his logs. Aleta buried today.

October 25, 1951
Washed clothes - Raining.

October 27, 1951
Wass & Mary Trefon came along. Took some potatoes & celery.

October 28, 1951
Went to Mooters for dinner. Nice visit.

November 3, 1951
Swans (?) went over today.

November 4, 1951
Went to Mooter’s for a little while in A.M.

November 12, 1951

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296 Helen apparently went to Dr. Elmer Bly’s office at Port Alsworth for her dental cleaning.

297 Probably Fred and Norma Bowman stopped at Denison’s as did Marion Mooter to drop off some cement. Traveling with Mooter were some off-duty soldiers who likely were on an a rest and recreation stint at a military camp on the Newhalen River where they did a lot of sport fishing. The camp consisted of several Quonset huts overlooking the Gorge on the Newhalen River.

298 Arcinie Delikittie was a cousin to Mike Delkittie.

299 Charlie Trefon, William Evanoff, Gustie Evanoff, and Sergie Evan. The original name was Konstantinov and anglicized as Constantine. Znamenski, op. cit., 343.

300 Paul Zachar (1912-1987) was born in Old Iliamna and was the son of Wonka Zachar. Paul was married to Nastasia Wassillie (1911-2006) and one of their children was Pauline Zachar Hobson, others were Cledia, Polly, and Paul, Jr. Atwater, op. cit., 176; Pauline Zachar Hobson, conversation with the editor, March 13, 2018.
November 18, 1951
Chas went to Babe’s. After our ham & bacon. At Mooter’s.

November 21, 1951
Baked some for Thanksgiving.

November 22, 1951
Had Mooter’s for Thanksgiving Dinner.

November 26, 1951
Chas cutting & hauling wood.

November 29, 1951
Washed.

November 30, 1951
Brought in dry clothes.

December 1, 1951
Ironed. Helped saw wood.

December 2, 1951
Stripped living room to paper some.

December 3, 1951
Chas sized walls for papering. Mrs. Bertha Mooter came along for a while.

December 4, 1951
Papered most of ceiling. Looks nice.

December 5, 1951
Finished ceiling & did about half of walls.

December 6, 1951
Finished papering. Got pictures up.

December 9, 1951
Topsy had 2 pups. M[ale?] & F[emale?]?

December 15, 1951
Mrs. M. [Bertha Mooter] came along for little while in P.M.

December 21, 1951
Chas went after mail. Could not get all of it. Got quite a few things.

December 25, 1951
Had Mooters for dinner. Had baked ham etc. She brought a cake. They gave me stainless steel pan.

January 1, 1952
Had nice day to ourselves. Chas hauled wood.

January 2, 1952
Chas went to see about mail but too stormy to cross [Tanalian] River.

January 4, 1952
Chas got mail. Our Xmas pkg. from Sears.

January 7, 1952
Washing machine broke down.

January 8, 1952
Did some washing by hand.

January 9, 1952
Did some more washing by hand.

February 15, 1952
Had bad attack kidney.

February 17, 1952
Had M.S. for a couple days.

February 25, 1952
Still feeling very bad. Unable to do much.

March 5, 1952
Am some better still awful weak.

March 23, 1952
My Rt. collar bone slipped out of joint. Went to bed.

March 29, 1952
Stayed in bed all week. My legs sure are awful.

April 11, 1952
Oren Hudson delivered chain saw. Chas paid $200 down.\(^{301}\)

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\(^{301}\) Charlie Denison apparently purchased an early model of the McCulloch chainsaw, one of the first chainsaws available.
April 13, 1952
Easter Sunday. Wrote letters.

April 30, 1952
Chas got his chain saw at last.

May 9, 1952
Wass Trefon came for seed potatoes.

May 11, 1952
Fell down when moping. Hurt my Rt hip. Some more Natives came for seed potatoes.

May 18, 1952
Still in bed. Can’t stand up. Chas helped Marion Mooter & his boat.

May 25, 1952
Still in bed. Feel real bad.

May 26, 1952
Marion Mooter helping fix our boat also.

May 31, 1952
Got down stairs felt terrible & weak.

June 2, 1952
East wind took ice from Bay.

June 5, 1952
Ice still running on lake. West wind.

June 13, 1952
Marion Mooter brought another raft [logs] in late at nite.

June 14, 1952
Mooter & Joe Thompson haul up logs. Weather ideal for a change.

June 16, 1952
Mooter went to Iliamna after supplies.

June 18, 1952
Mooter got home. We got a few things. Hurt my shoulder trying to get off pot.

June 19, 1952
Stayed in bed.

June 25, 1952
They started on Mooter’s logs.

June 26, 1952
Sawing. They are hauling lumber & logs away every trip home.

June 27, 1952
Sawing. Carlos Carson came along.

June 30, 1952
Sawed 1/2 day. Finished what Mooter had here.

July 7, 1952
Oren Hudson & Forest Jones brought up Dr. Davis.302 He prescribed some med. Having it sent from Bert’s.303

July 8, 1952
Washed. Rainy weather.

July 9, 1952
Oren Hudson brought up some mail.

July 12, 1952
Mooter & Carson’s went fishing up Chulitna [River].

July 13, 1952
Rain, Rain, Rain.

July 15, 1952
Mooter brought in more logs.

July 16, 1952
Mooter hauled up his logs.

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302 Dr. George G. Davis (1879-1956) was an Anchorage based surgeon who first came to Alaska in 1943 to be Chief of Staff of the Alaska Railroad Base Hospital. In addition, he was the medical officer for the Alaska Native Service (ANS). In 1946 he entered private practice but remained medical officer for the ANS. At one point he spent a summer at a Bristol Bay salmon cannery tending to the medical needs of the workers and fishermen. By the late 1940s Dr. Davis had established close personal ties to some of his patients in Nondalton and he decided to build a cabin on five acres of land east of the village on Sixmile Lake. Dr. Davis was an avid fisherman and he used his cabin in support of his sport fishing. After Dr. Davis’ sudden death in 1956 pilot Ward Gay purchased the cabin and land and eventually it became the sport fishing Valhalla Lodge. *Anchorage Daily News*, “Dr. Davis Succumbs,” 3-21-1956, 1; “Plan Rites For Dr. George Davis,” 3-23-1956, 21; Dr. Rodman Wilson, “History of Medicine in Alaska: The Alaska Railroad Hospital and Its Last Superintendent, Fred Braun,” *Alaska Medicine*, April, May, June 1990, 83.

303 Bert’s Drugstore was a popular drug store in Anchorage.
July 17, 1952
Men sawed 1/2 day. Raining. Dr. Bly & son [David ?] came along.304

July 18, 1952
Rain. Mooter sawed part of day. Topsy had 8 pups. Kept 4 males.

July 19, 1952
Sun for a change. Washed.

July 20, 1952

July 21, 1952
2 salmon in river net.

July 25, 1952
Canned salmon.

July 26, 1952
Canned salmon.

July 27, 1952
Rested & Cleaned.

July 28, 1952
Canned salmon.

July 29, 1952
Canned salmon.

July 30, 1952
Canned salmon.

July 31, 1952
Rested & cleaned.

August 1, 1952
Canned salmon.

August 2, 1952
Canned salmon.

August 17, 1952
[Marion] Mooter went down to landing. Bowmans passed by.304

August 18, 1952
Bernadine Hadfield’s & daughter [Patricia] came for a couple days.

August 19, 1952
Had nice visit ċ Bernie Hadfield, daughter [Patricia] real good for 18 months.

August 20, 1952
Forest Jones stopped on way up lake. B.H. & daughter went home.305 Went down to Mooter’s. Mooter came home little freight.

August 21, 1952
Forest Jones had to return to village as their freight has come.

August 23, 1952
Chas still fishing. Not too many.

August 28, 1952
Chas still fishing.

September 1, 1952
Frosted.

September 2, 1952
Frosted.

September 3, 1952
Frosted.

September 9, 1952
Marion Mooter cannot bring logs as its storming.

September 10, 1952
Storming.

September 11, 1952
Mooter brought logs over from Joe’s [Thompson].306

September 12, 1952
Hauled up Mooter’s logs & sawed in P.M.

September 13, 1952
Sawed all day.

304 Probably David Bly, the son of Dr. Elmer and Maizie Bly.
305 Bernie and Patricia Hadfield were now living in Naknek and came to Lake Clark for a visit.
306 Joe Thompson lived across the lake on the north side of Lake Clark in the cabin Jim and Glenna Kennedy built in the late 1930s. Thompson traded logs to Babe Alsworth for the cabin. Mary Alsworth, op. cit.
September 14, 1952
Sawed in A.M. Mooter had to go.

September 15, 1952
Made cake for Chas. Mrs. Mooter & Sally Hart came by.\textsuperscript{307} Natives around.

September 20, 1952
Benny T[refon] brought logs for sawing (80) & pulled up about half.

September 21, 1952
Hauled logs for Benny. Balluta brought in bunch of logs.\textsuperscript{308}

September 22, 1952
Hauled up logs for Delkittie. Mooter went down to Landing.\textsuperscript{309}

\textsuperscript{307} Nothing is known of Sally Hart.

\textsuperscript{308} Perhaps Helen is referring to Harry Balluta (1922-2016) or possibly the brothers Andrew and Jimmy Balluta.

\textsuperscript{309} The Landing refers to a place on the upper Newhalen River where the road running over from Iliamna joins the river and boats land there to take on or off-load freight.

September 23, 1952
Sawing for D[elkittie] Bud Branham came, but had to land at Babe’s. Mooter came back & cement & washing machine.

September 24, 1952

September 25, 1952
Sawed in A.M. Pulled up more logs. These for William Evanoff. Had Trefons for supper.

September 26, 1952
Rain early in A.M. Sawed.

September 27, 1952
Sawed for Natives.

September 28, 1952
Sawing for Natives.

September 29, 1952
Sawing for Natives.

September 30, 1952
Sawing for Natives. Got my washer.

October 1, 1952
Sawed for Natives.

October 2, 1952
Sawed.

October 3, 1952
Sawed.

October 4, 1952
Sawed.

October 5, 1952
Sawed.

October 6, 1952
Sawed.

October 7, 1952
Sawed.
October 8, 1952
Sawed.

October 9, 1952
Sawed.

October 10, 1952
Sawed.

October 11, 1952
Chas had 5 teeth pulled.\textsuperscript{310}

October 12, 1952
Finished sawing what logs are here.

October 13, 1952
Chas winterizing.

October 14, 1952
N. Koktelash drown.\textsuperscript{311} Natives all on way to village.

October 15, 1952
Chas feeding Pete Trefon's dogs as well as our own.

October 19, 1952
Natives back from village.

October 20, 1952
Natives breaking camp. Weather turning too cold to saw.

The End

\textsuperscript{310} Presumably Dr. Elmer Bly pulled the five teeth from Charlie Denison.

\textsuperscript{311} N. Koktelash is not known.

The Development of Aviation in The Cook Inlet and Bristol Bay Region 1927-1941

"...[from] Anchorage and on to the westward toward Bristol Bay. This trans-Alaska plane trip, with ever-changing scenery of mountain ranges, glaciers and untouched lakes and it's bird-eye view of Dall sheep, Barren Ground caribou, moose and bear, was so wonderful that we had more than our share of thrills, even if, we had never wet a line. What country!"\textsuperscript{312}

Dan Holland, \textit{Field \& Stream}, April 1941, describing a flight through Lake Clark Pass.

In the 1920s the development of aviation occurred across Alaska but most especially around Fairbanks, Juneau, and Anchorage. Anchorage Air Transport (AAT) was the first airline to operate in Anchorage, beginning in 1926, with Russel Merrill as the company's first pilot. But even before, in 1925, Merrill made a flight with Anchorage entrepreneur Gus Gelles to Kodiak which ended with a wrecked airplane and a learning experience that Merrill should have absorbed, but likely did not. He was a brave pioneering Alaska bush pilot but ultimately he should have been more cautious and deferential to the vagaries of the Alaska weather.

Merrill operated out of Lake Spenard on floats and on wheels off a local hay field. Anchorage became the aviation hub for south central with Merrill flying all over the Kenai Peninsula, the interior and northern Alaska gaining great experience and knowledge of the terrain and extreme weather conditions.

On June 19, 1927, Merrill, flying Anchorage No. 1, a Travel Air Model CW, made his first trip to the Bristol Bay region carrying Nakat Packing Company executive, H. B. Friele, to the Libby, McNeil & Libby Lockanok cannery at the confluence of the Alagnak and Kvichak Rivers. It was too late in the evening to return to Anchorage so the Travel Air was moored out in the river in front of the cannery. A violent storm came up during the night and never let up until the plane was flipped over on its back in the middle of the briny Alagnak River the following day. For the next 40 days Merrill and his mechanic, Lon Cope, disassembled and then rebuilt the airplane and the engine. They returned to Anchorage on July 30 flying through Iliamna Portage Bay Pass and then north east up Cook Inlet.

On November 6, 1927 Merrill made a flight from Anchorage to Bethel. It was a fair day, and he took a straight compass bearing from Anchorage toward Akiak. Merrill flew west over Cook Inlet passing over Chakachamna Lake and south of Mount Spurr, and then northwest toward Sleetmute, and on to Akiak for the night. Flying west Merrill thought he saw a narrow winding canyon through the Alaska Range. The next day he flew to Bethel. A day later, November 8, 1927, he headed west over Cook Inlet and Bristol Bay. This trans-Alaska plane trip, with ever-changing scenery of mountain ranges, glaciers and untouched lakes and it's bird-eye view of Dall sheep, Barren Ground caribou, moose and bear, was so wonderful that we had more than our share of thrills, even if, we had never wet a line. What country!"\textsuperscript{312}

Dan Holland, \textit{Ye Gods and Big Fishes: Opening up new fishing territory where rainbows grow more bigger than salmon," \textit{Field \& Stream}, April 1941, 15-17, 67-68.
for Anchorage flying high above the mountains he named Two Lake and Upper Two Lake as he flew adjacent to the canyon he had previously seen running through the mountains, finding its abrupt narrow right turn at the eastern end. Below was Chakachamna Lake, on the east side of the Alaska Range. Merrill wrote in his Log Book “Nov. [8, 1927] Bethel-Anch. Direct via Bear Creek 435 miles, 4 hrs. 40 minutes. Through Merrill Pass-First Time.”

In March 1928 AAT hired a second pilot, Matt Nieminen, an experienced aviator from Minnesota to fly with Merrill in the company’s second airplane, a Travel Air designated Anchorage No. 2, Model BW. They each flew their respective airplanes to Bethel to bring back 1,000 pounds of raw furs to Anchorage valued at $100,000. Merrill and Nieminen continued to fly all over Alaska, and misfortune continued to shadow Merrill while Nieminen remained unscathed.

On May 13 Merrill was carrying a Fox movie expedition from Fairbanks to Barrow with pilot Noel Wien in another airplane, carrying freight and a passenger when both were forced down by fog on a snow-covered North Slope lake. Next day Wien was able to take off for Barrow but Merrill could not because his wheels were under-sized, and he and his two passengers waited for Wien’s return. Inclement weather continued for the next two weeks keeping Wien on the ground in Barrow and Merrill and his passengers stuck on the lake with ever diminishing rations. Finally on May 22, the Fox producers decided to hike to Barrow, an estimated 60 miles north. On May 24 Merrill was alone and the weather improved so in attempting a take-off he nosed the Travel Air over and bent the propeller. Merrill in a weakened condition, decided to walk to Barrow. A blizzard hit and Wien could not fly to hunt for the missing pilot and his two passengers. Wien then returned to Fairbanks to send a radio message to Anchorage asking for assistance looking for the missing men.

In the meanwhile, Anchorage Air Transport managers decided to send Matt Nieminen north to find out what had happened to Merrill and his two passengers. Nieminen left Anchorage and flew northwest by a longer safer route stopping in Ruby, Kotzebue, and Wainwright before finally reaching Barrow. Nieminen waited two days for Wien’s return. Wien was now on skis and that enabled Nieminen to change his wheels for Wien’s bigger tires. On June 1 both Wien and Nieminen flew from Barrow on the search and later that day Nieminen spotted Merrill’s Travel Air, Anchorage No.1, and soon Wien joined him and they landed and found Merrill’s logbook that told of the two passengers hiking towards Barrow and of Merrill from Barrow on the search and later that day Nieminen spotted Merrill’s Travel Air, change his wheels for Wien’s bigger tires. On June 1 both Wien and Nieminen flew two days for Wien’s return. Wien was now on skis and that enabled Nieminen to continue his odyssey. Merrill had begun his odyssey. He was immediately admitted to the Barrow hospital where he began a long road to recovery. Merrill was stricken with some mysterious wasting disease, perhaps precipitated by subsisting on rotten whale meat and voles. He was flown from Barrow to the hospital in Nome in early July for more treatment. On July 23 Merrill was flown to Fairbanks where he was again admitted to the hospital and he was reunited with his wife, Thyra, for the first time in two months.

He finally returned to his Anchorage home on July 26; Merrill continued to recover all summer and resumed his flying career for AAT on September 20, 1928. He flew several groups of big game hunters who had booked hunts with Gus Gelles and Robert Bragaw’s Alaska Guides to various locations on the Kenai Peninsula and north of Anchorage. As a result of his Arctic ordeal Merrill offered suggestions to the Aeronautics Branch of the Commerce Department on the necessary emergency equipment to be carried in all airplanes. He and his mechanic, Lon Cope, developed a combination of wheels and skis to take into account the frequently differing landing conditions encountered during winter and spring breakup. Their first effort had utility, but the second iteration was more refined and they called the gear “skeels”. The “skeels” were made in the Alaska Railroad work shops and are considered a prototype of the wheeled-ski set-up.

On August 19, 1929 Anchorage Air Transport was bought out by Alaskan Airways, Inc. and Merrill made a seamless transition to the new ownership as he continued to fly the same Travel Air, Anchorage No. 1. Russell Merrill’s luck finally ran out on September 16, 1929 when he went down in Cook Inlet while on a late afternoon flight to a mining camp on Bear Creek, 40 miles southwest of Aniak. His body was never recovered. His death was a huge loss to his wife and two young sons, and the aviation industry headquartered in Anchorage. In 1930 Merrill Field was named in honor of an Alaskan aviation pioneer, Russel Hyde Merrill.

Merrill’s bona fides as one of the first pioneers of Alaska aviation is a given. He documented his discovery of Merrill Pass in his Log Book, and he never claimed to have discovered Lake Clark Pass. But who of his successors made the initial flight

315 MacLean and Rossiter, op. cit., 113-115.
316 Ibid., 125-130.
317 Ibid., 134.
318 Ibid., 135-138.
319 Ibid., 139-146.
320 Ibid., 149-159, 162-172.
through the pass? Lake Clark sourdough, Brown Carlson, claimed to have informed Merrill of the existence of a pass through the mountains east of Lake Clark to Cook Inlet.321 But a reading of Merrill’s log book did not locate any reference to pioneering a route through Lake Clark Pass. On June 22-23, 1929 Merrill made a round trip from Anchorage to Lockanok cannyer near the Bristol Bay coast. The total distance for the round trip flights was about 600 miles. Merrill wrote in his Log Book that he crossed the Aleutian Mountains, *via pass S. Iliamna Vil.*322 This pass was used by Merrill’s fellow Anchorage Air Transport pilot Matt Nieminen in the late 1920s. Fellow pioneering bush pilot Roy Dickson referred to the pass as Portage Bay Pass, because it followed the Iliamna Portage from Iliamna Bay on lower Cook Inlet, over the divide at 900 feet above sea level, to the Iliamna River in the Bristol Bay watershed.323 But before the writer attempts to answer the question, a look at the utility and history of what eventually became known as Lake Clark Pass is in order.

The Indigneous Experience in Lake Clark Pass

Older generations of the Lake Clark Dena’ina called Lake Clark Pass, Qizhjeh Vena Tustes, or “place people gathered pass.” The Dena’ina people considered the pass a major travel corridor through the mountains connecting Cook Inlet with the Lake Clark-Iliamna country. The Lake Clark Dena’ina and their kinfolk at Tyonek used to regularly walk through Lake Clark Pass crossing the huge glaciers that sprawled across the valley floor, often camping on the glaciers when they found safe camping spots, on the divide between Cook Inlet and Bristol Bay. One oral history story tells of a group of Dena’ina traveling east from Kijik through Lake Clark Pass pulling sleds, and a sled with a baby on a cradleboard fell in a crevasse while crossing the head glacier near the summit of the pass. An adult was lowered down and was able to rescue the baby and bring him safely to the surface, still bundled in furs and still on the cradle board. The baby went on to live a long life. His name was Simeon “Singa” Kankaton (1870-1940?).324

The late Dena’ina elder Steve Hobson documented that Iliamna old timer Alec Flyum (1873-1957) was the last person to travel by dog team over the glacier at the head of Lake Clark Pass in 1918. Flyum hauled the mail from Nondalton to Tyonek and legend has it, the trip took about 40 days.325

In 1902 biologist Wilfred Osgood was the first Federal scientist to spend more than a few days on Lake Clark when he led a U. S. Biological Survey team exploring the lake by canoe. He drew the first accurate map of the lake and noted at the eastern end of the Tlikakila River [Lake Clark Pass] a “Portage [trail] to Cook Inlet.”326 This is the first American documentation that there was a pass through the nexus of the Aleutian and Alaska Ranges. Accompanying Osgood was botanist Martin Gorman, who wrote that the eastern reaches of the Chokotonk River has “for many years constituted the route by which the natives on the lake made their way to and from the head of Cook Inlet.”327

In summary, before pilots found the utility of Lake Clark Pass as a corridor through the Alaska Range the Dena’ina and American prospectors in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries used the pass to travel between Cook Inlet and the Bristol Bay watershed.

Why Matt Nieminen Seems To Be The First Pilot Through The Pass.

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321 Anchorage Daily Times, “Homesteader In Lake Clark Area Has Streak of Rugged Individuality,” Cameron Edmondson, February 21,1962, 1, hereafter ADT.

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Left to right: Simeon “Singa” Kankanton, Marfa Balluta, Agafia Kankanton, and Mary Balluta, (child) at their home at Old Nondalton in 1929-1930. As an infant, Simeon survived a fall into a crevasse on the glacier at the summit of Lake Clark Pass. *Photo courtesy of Gus and Mary Jensen. H-713.*

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Iliamna Portage Pass.\textsuperscript{328} Nieminen was very familiar with the Lake Clark country and he made lots of friends including Floyd Denison, Doc Dutton and Joe Kackley at Tanalian Point. Brown Carlson might have been confused when he told an Anchorage newspaper man in 1962 that he had told Russ Merrill about the existence of Lake Clark Pass in 1920.\textsuperscript{329} Merrill did not arrive in Anchorage until 1925 and by then Brown was no longer fishing in Bristol Bay. Rather Brown might have told Nieminen about the existence of Lake Clark Pass in 1930 and later forgot who he had actually told about the pass.

Several months later, on June 30, 1930 Matt Nieminen likely made the first landing at Tanalian Point on Lake Clark in a Waco 10 bi-plane.\textsuperscript{330} On September 12, Nieminen made a direct flight from Tanalian Point to Anchorage either flying through the pass or above it on the way to Cook Inlet.\textsuperscript{331}

Other pilots soon began using Lake Clark Pass as a funnel through the Alaska Range connecting the aviation hub of Anchorage and the Bristol Bay region, and Western Alaska. Bob Ellis, was an early 1930s pilot who hauled the mail from Anchorage to the Bristol Bay region. He recalled.

\begin{quote}
“I like to startle people with the geographical names of the mail route I flew in 1931. I used to fly out of Anchorage headed for Bristol Bay. I would fly down Cook Inlet and straight for Lake Clark Pass. If I got through Lake Clark Pass, which wasn’t easy, I would then fly up the Chulitna River and down the Mulchatna River until I came to the Nushagak River. Then I would spend the night at Kanakanak and the next day fly to Nushagak, Kogluung, Naknek, Egegik and Ugashik.” \textsuperscript{332}
\end{quote}

McGee Airways pilot Kenny Neese began his Alaska bush pilot exploits in February 1933. He flew Stinson NC 478M from Anchorage to Bristol Bay, perhaps his first flight to the bay, on July 28, 1933. He probably accessed the Bristol Bay watershed via Iliamna Portage. According to his log book, his destination was “Snog H.” or “Stog H.,” which might have been an abbreviation for the nineteenth century name for Clarks Point, Stugarok, where the Alaska Packers Association ran their large Diamond NC cannery.\textsuperscript{333} The next day Neese flew from Stog, to Iliamna (Seversen’s Roadhouse). The following day, July 30, he flew a round-trip from Seversen’s to Naknek. On July 31, 1933 Neese flew from Iliamna to Anchorage via Lake Clark Pass, for the first time referring to the pass as “Clark Pass.” \textsuperscript{334}

The National Park Service and Lake Clark National Park 1951-1980

While working for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service during the 1950s fish biologist Roger Allin flew all over the territory in the course of performing his duties becoming very familiar with much of Alaska’s splendid scenic resources. Allin was project-leader for all Fish and Wildlife Service matters dealing with sport fishing in south central Alaska and he assisted wildlife personnel in aerial game counts and predator control activities throughout the territory. Allin was an unsung hero in the struggle to preserve Alaska wilderness for future generations of Americans.

At his own initiative and in cooperation with the Bureau of Land Management he identified for future consideration 226 public sites, many of which became the nucleus of the Alaska National Interest Conservation Act (ANILCA) parks. Allin’s top three locations for future park status were: the Wood River-Tikchik Lakes area in what is now Wood-Tikchik State Park, the Lake Clark Pass area, now in Lake Clark National Park and Preserve, and the Arrigetch Peaks-John River region in what is now Gates of the Arctic National Park and Preserve. Allin’s top three locations for future park status were: the Wood River-Tikchik Lakes area in what is now Wood-Tikchik State Park, the Lake Clark Pass area, now in Lake Clark National Park and Preserve, and the Arrigetch Peaks-John River region in what is now Gates of the Arctic National Park and Preserve.

In 1962 Allin traveled to Alaska with Ted Swem, Sr., an NPS planner from Washington, D.C. on the latter’s first trip to Alaska. Swem and Allin were part of a joint federal-state survey of the Wood River-Tikchik country as a potential park. While flying to the Bristol Bay region through Lake Clark Pass Swem was awed with the overwhelming scenic beauty of the Chigmit Mountains. This fact was to auger well for the eventual creation of Lake Clark National Park and Preserve, because in 1964 NPS Director, George B. Hartzog, Jr. appointed Swem as his assistant director in charge of planning new national park units. The following year Swem returned to Alaska to learn more about potential park lands. This time he brought Minnesota nature writer, Siguard F. Olson, with him to do more reconnaissance of the Katmai area, of the Wood River-Tikchik Lakes region, and the Lake Clark Pass areas. In November 1964 Hartzog appointed a task force of NPS planners and non-government conservationists to evaluate potential sites or zones that held historic, natural and recreational values.

One of these zones containing parts of all three of the zones was the Merrill Pass and Lake Clark Pass region. The Task Force characterized the significant values as being contained in an area of approximately 175 miles long by 75 miles wide and urged it to become a future national park.

“Merrill Pass and Lake Clark Pass are two popular and highly important passes used by small aircraft in crossing the north end of the Aleutian Range. Precipitous mountains, spectacular glaciers, snowfields, waterfalls and land forms viewed from aircraft flying through either pass are probably unmatched in beauty elsewhere in Alaska. Twenty four glaciers supposedly occur in a distance of 24 miles in Lake Clark Pass.”

Eventually on December 1, 1978 President Jimmy Carter invoked the Antiquities Act designating seventeen national monuments encompassing about 56,000,000 acres of federal public land of which 41,000,000 acres were lands to be administered by the National Park Service. Including Lake Clark National Monument. Congress finally agreed to a new law to convert the new national monuments to national parks and preserves, national forests, wildlife refuges, and Wild and Scenic Rivers Systems in Alaska. The new law signed by President Carter on December 2, 1980 was the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (ANILCA). It was at this signing ceremony that President Carter created Lake Clark National Park and Preserve and all the other new conservation units thereby preserving the magnificent scenic beauty of Lake Clark Pass.

**Aviation Developments in the South Central and the Bristol Bay Region.**

By the late 1930s Anchorage was the point of departure for most of the air traffic occurring in the Cook Inlet, Bristol Bay, and Kuskokwim regions. This was primarily a result of the Alaska Railroad running north from the port of Seward to Anchorage and Fairbanks. Freight and passengers would arrive in Alaska by steamship at Seward, be taken to Anchorage on the railroad, and from there dispersed throughout the territory by aircraft. For example, in a 20-month span in the years 1938-1939 a total of 3,351 passengers and 292,572 pounds of freight was hauled between Anchorage and Bristol Bay. Between Anchorage and the Kuskokwim River country the figures were 918 passengers and 125,396 pounds of freight.


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337 Williss, op. cit., 34

338 Ibid., 35.

339 Ibid.,36.


341 Unruh, op. cit., 432.
Pilot Estol Call cooks over a campfire suggesting he was forced down by inclement weather. Call was the half-brother of McGee Airways owner Linious McGee and known as a bold pilot.


In late 1931 and early 1932 Linious “Mac” McGee and Harvey Barnhill started Barnhill & McGee Airways as a one airplane (a Stinson) air service in Anchorage but soon dissolved their partnership. Estol Call, a half-brother of McGee’s, was hired to bring back a second airplane, likely a Stinson, since McGee believed his air service would benefit by having identical planes. Maintenance would be more efficient if airplanes had interchangeable parts. Soon McGee had three Stinsons and was the sole owner of McGee Airways. Mac McGee added radios to his airplanes and hired Virgil Hansen from Pilot Point to be the company radio operator in Anchorage. Mechanic Cecil Higgins went to work for McGee in 1932. A few of the most notable bush pilots flying for McGee Airways were Estol Call, Oscar Winchell, Kenny Neese, Johnny Moore, and Roy Dickson.

Star Air Service began in April 1932 in Anchorage with Steve Mills as chief pilot, Jack Waterworth as instructor, and Charles Ruttan as business manager. The one plane air service had a two place open cockpit Fleet bi-plane that was hauled from Seattle on the Alaska Steamship Company’s Yukon to Seward.

When did radio communication become widespread in the Anchorage-based aviation community? In an Anchorage Daily Times article on February 22, 1933 entitled “Thrilling Air Trip With Insane Man Is Made By U.S. Marshall” the writer quotes Deputy Marshall H. I. Stasser describing his roundtrip journey from Merrill Field to Dillingham to pick up a mentally ill patient and the return to Anchorage via Lake Clark Pass, although he does not call it Lake Clark Pass. As this newspaper article reveals two–way radio communications between pilots and ground stations and ham radio operators was surprisingly good, even by current standards.

“The round trip from Anchorage to Dillingham and return was made in a Pacific Alaska Airways radio-equipped plane with Pilot Matt Nieminen at the controls of both radio and plane…. It’s simply marvelous, and beyond my wildest expectations of a few years ago…. Once we were off Merrill Field Pilot Nieminen

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343 Ibid. 11-15, 45; Dickson, op. cit., 41-54.

344 Satterfield, op. cit., 12-13
promptly lowered the ship’s radio antenna, turned on the switch and was immediately in radio communication with Mrs. Nieminen, his wife, here in Anchorage, who Matt calls a ‘Ham Operator.’ Very shortly thereafter he was in radio communication with the Pacific Alaska Airways radio station at Fairbanks. All the way to Bristol Bay and in returning to Anchorage Matt was in constant radio communication with either Fairbanks or Anchorage. The only time I did not fully appreciate the ship’s radio was when we were flying up the canyon [Lake Clark Pass] approaching Lake Clark, some two hours out of Anchorage. For a short distance there it seemed to me that if I were flying the ship my hands would have been full without carrying on a radio conversation with Fairbanks and Anchorage at the same time. However, I knew my pilot and could not possibly cause myself to feel any apprehension whatsoever… Further, visualize, if you possibly can, just what radio communication from an airplane flying through the mighty Alaska Mountain Range means to both pilot and passengers. . . . Years ago, when Anchorage had its first airplane, a very few of us airplane enthusiasts had very hazy dreams of flying over the mountains and tundra of Alaska in radio-equipped planes. To actually experience this still seems like a wild dream. But, it must be so, for when we arrived back in Anchorage . . . my wife had known for the last hour that we were coming up Cook Inlet at a rate of about 100 miles per hour. Matt’s wife knew that he was hungry; that we had not stopped in-route to eat because of the insane patient. Both our wives and families knew that we were safe and enjoying the beautiful scenery … None of the old airplane enthusiasts will, or could possibly believe this until they have actually experienced the thrills, feeling of safety and comfort by making such a trip in a radio equipped airplane. One time while in the air on our trip Matt informed me that there were at that time four P.A. radio-equipped airplanes flying in Alaska and all [were] in radio communication with the P.A.A. radio station in Fairbanks.”

Another notable Anchorage-based commercial airline in competition with Star Air Service and McGee Airways was Arthur G. Woodley’s airline that began flying out of Anchorage in 1932. By 1938 the company became Woodley Airways.

Woodley successfully bid on U.S. Mail contracts in 1938 to villages in Cook Inlet, such as Tyonek, and in Bristol Bay including Iliamna, from which Lake Clark received its mail. Woodley’s air fleet was made up of five 6-7 place Travelairs and one 4-5 place Waco. Woodley had a float plane-base at Lake Spenard and a hangar and shop at Merrill Field. In 1935 after his mother died, Martin Seversen of Iliamna was sent by his father, Hans Seversen, to Anchorage, to learn aircraft mechanics by apprenticing with Woodley’s mechanics with maintenance.

Woodley had three pilots working on commission. In addition, he had a mechanic with three assistants, one likely being the thirteen-year old Martin Seversen, a bookkeeper; a radio person; and a few agents in the biggest Bristol Bay villages, Dillingham and Naknek. The agents sold seat-fare tickets and made five percent of the cost of a ticket. In the years 1938-1939 Woodley Airways made 59 trips to Bristol Bay locations and hauled 481 passengers and almost 25,000 pounds of freight.

It became apparent during the winter of 1934-1935 that there was not enough aviation business in Anchorage for Star Air Service, McGee Airways, and Woodley Airways to survive. So Star and McGee merged as Star Air Service. That name was retained until November 1937 when it was re-named Star Air Lines, Inc. Star was now the largest air operator in the territory. In 1938-1939 Star flew 14 airplanes and most had both wheel or ski landing gear, and some were equipped with floats, depending on winter or summer operations. Most of the Star airplanes had two-way radios, voice and Morse code communications. Star had some ground stations in the Bristol Bay region, including in Floyd and Lena Denison’s house at Talanian Point. Star had 10 pilots, 17 mechanics and assistants, and full-time radio operators.

Star Air Lines, Inc. was headquartered in Anchorage and maintained smaller offices in Fairbanks and McGrath. The people and freight carried by the airline between Bristol Bay and the Kuskokwim country generated the biggest portion of Star’s income. During 1938-1939 Star pilots flying from their home-base in Anchorage accessed the Bristol Bay region mostly through Lake Clark Pass or Merrill Pass, and company planes made 92 trips to bay canneries hauling 710 passengers and some 29,000 pounds of freight.

For example, in June 1937 two sport fishermen, one from Anchorage, Ray E. McDonald, and one from New York City, Captain Frederick Hollander, flew with pilot Chet Brown of Star Air Lines on what was the first documented fly-out expedition to the Bristol Bay watershed solely to sport fish for rainbow trout. Their destination was Seversen’s Roadhouse at present-day Iliamna, the air crossroads of southwestern Alaska, halfway between Anchorage and the Bristol Bay coast. Since Iliamna Bay had inclement weather pilot Brown was going to fly through “Clark Pass,” the author referred to it as the “back door” over the Aleutian Range. Today it is generally accepted that the Aleutian Range is on the south side of Lake Clark Pass and the Alaska Range beyond the north side of the Pass. McDonald and writer Lucille Kempley wrote the article “Giants of the Newhalen,” that appeared in the September 1938 issue of The Alaska Sportsman.

“We flew down Cook Inlet as far as Kustatan [on the West Foreland], then turned west and gained altitude over the snow-capped Aleutian Range. I’ll never forget the thrill we had when we crossed the highest point of Clark Pass. . . . Dense level-lying clouds obscured the tops of the mountains and formed what appeared to be a treacherous ‘tunnel’ through which we were compelled to fly. It seemed to us that

346 Unrau, Lake Clark, 432-433.
the wing tips would surely graze the shoulders of the mountains… . the Pass nar-
rowed; all conversation ceased… . We were straining to see through the windows of
the plane and we saw a steep wall ahead. We were worried… . The motor droned;
seconds seemed like hours… . Somewhat reassured by the nonchalant Chet Brown,
we quieted our fears. Nevertheless, when the plane made a short turn and shot on,
through the ‘tunnel’ we were very much relieved although not past all danger. After
another half-hour, the pass widened and we had our first view of Lake Clark…. 
While gliding over Lake Clark, a terrific tail wind made [the] going very rough.
The pilot lowered the plane to within 100 feet of the waters of the lake and gave
the motor the ‘gun.’ Then, at a speed of 165 miles an hour, we flew south down the
glided over Lake Clark, a terrific tail wind made [the] going very rough.
edge of the Lake, crossed a long stretch of tundra and lake-land, and saw, opening
before us, that which appeared to be a vast inland sea [Iliamna Lake] backed by
snow-covered mountains.”

During the 1930s commercial aviation became a dominant feature of travel within
Alaska. The airplane became so widespread in rural Alaska that many Alaskans
moved from the dog sled age to the airplane era without passing through the au-
tomobile age, at least this was true on the vast majority of the Alaskan landmass.
Archie Satterfield writing in his The Alaska Airlines Story put it succinctly when he
wrote: “In a sense, Alaska skipped an entire link in the evolution of transpor-
tation. Alaskans jumped from river traffic and dog sleds to the air, bypassing the
automobiles almost entirely. Although automobiles and trucks were used in major
towns”.

In 1938 pilot Bert Ruoff incorporated Bristol Bay Air Service, which operated
from Anchorage to the Bay. Ruoff had been flying passengers to the Bay who were
either cannery workers or fishermen. The vast majority of Bristol Bay Air Service
flying was done between Anchorage and Dillingham and Naknek. By 1939 Ruoff
had three airplanes: two six or seven-passenger Travel Airs, and a five-place Waco.
At the time there were no man-made runways in the Bristol Bay region and pilots
landed on floats in the summer and skis in the winter. Pilots only landed with
wheels where there was a suitable gravel bar, a solid beach, or a level stretch of
firm tundra.

In 1938 Ruoff hired pilot John Walatka to fly a Travelair 6000 on floats from War-
road, Minnesota to Alaska and fly for him. Walatka flew for Bristol Bay Air Service
to Anchorage and Dillingham and Naknek. By 1939 Ruoff
through 1941. Then Walatka flew for the Alaska Game Commission for a brief time in
1942, as well as Morrison-Knudson, before growing his own company called
Walatka Air Service in September 1942. The following year Walatka asked his
friend in Fairmount, Minnesota, Leon R. “Babe” Alsworth, to move to the Bristol
Bay region and fly for Ruoff. Alsworth moved to Naknek and flew for Ruoff before
starting his own flying service, Naknek Air Service.

Babe Alsworth’s Naknek Air Service was undoubtedly the first air taxi to operate
from Lake Clark when he and his wife, Mary, moved to the north shore of Lake
Clark in the spring of 1942. Babe did a great deal of his commercial flying in the
Bristol Bay in support of cannery operations, in particular the Alaska Packers

349 Ray E. McDonald as told to Lucille Kempley, “Giants of the Newhalen.” The Alaska Sportsman,
September, 1938, 10-11.
351 Unrau, op. cit., 432.
Association, in the late spring and throughout the commercial fishing season. When the Alsworths moved to Hardenberg Bay in August 1944, an ideal place for both wheel and float plane operations, their air taxi and lodging business was in a superb location to capture a large portion of the slowly increasing numbers of visitors and local passengers from throughout the Bristol Bay region as the post-World War II economy began to heat-up. In addition, located near the western end of Lake Clark Pass, they provided a safe place to wait-out a weather-related closures of Lake Clark Pass. Babe and Mary Alsworth provided lodging and meals as soon as they began developing their homestead at Hardenberg Bay in the mid-1940s. Nearly 75-years later Glen Alsworth, Sr. and his wife Patty and their son Glen, Jr. and his wife, Leyla, operate Lake Clark Air and The Farm Lodge on the family homestead.354 Before leaving Merrill Field in his Beech 99 Glen Sr. gives his passengers a safety briefing followed by a “heads-up,” “Today the movie will be Lake Clark Pass,” a testament to the awesome scenic beauty of Lake Clark Pass for the flying public.

Matt Flensburg established Dillingham Air Service in 1939 but began his flying career in 1936 in Dillingham. In February 1938 Flensburg began flying a 3-place Fairchild equipped with floats in the summer and skis in the winter. Flensburg’s focus was on local Nushagak-Wood River-Tikchik Lakes country, with occasional trips to Bethel and Anchorage. Between March 1938 and April 1939, Flensburg made 108 trips in the Nushagak region hauling 888 passengers. About 30% of Flensburg’s passengers were patients going to and from Kanakanak Hospital.355

Other pioneering local aviators were two grandsons of nineteenth century fur trader John W. Clark of Nushagak village, Elmer and Herb Nicholson, who founded Nicholson Air Service sometime in the mid-to late 1930s. They were reported to have the first local air taxi to fly regularly from Dillingham to Anchorage.356 Myron Moran and Albert Ball began Western Alaska Airlines in the mid-1940s in Dillingham. Ken Armstrong’s Armstrong Air Service operating out of Dillingham was another post-World War II-era local air service. On the east side of the bay, at Koggiung, Herman Herrmann and Babe Alsworth operated Naknek Air Service about 1940. In Naknek George Tibbetts began his air taxi soon after World War II.357

Because of the growth of commercial aviation in the territory, the Alaska Aeronautics and Communication Commission (AACC) was established to manage and promote aviation and communications throughout the territory. Before World War II, pressure from the Commission helped secure federal money for the creation of certain navigation aids for aviation. In the 1940 annual Alaska territorial governor’s report it was stated that construction was ongoing for a radio communication station at the West Forelands, near the eastern entrance to Lake Clark Pass and for a landing field at the present-day village of Iliamna.358 The Iliamna air field was constructed by a subsidiary company of Morrison-Knudsen in the early 1940s and was operational by September 1944, if not earlier.359

Regular air mail was not established in Alaska until the late 1930s, yet by 1931 the post master in Anchorage apparently could initiate a limited amount of air mail service, since some mail was delivered to Iliamna and found its way to the Lake Clark people at Old Nondalton and Tanalian Point.360

Congress passed laws in 1935 and 1937 that began the process of inaugurating air mail service in the Alaska Territory. The U.S. Post Office awarded four-year contracts in Alaska for regularly scheduled air mail routes. One route between July 1938 and June 1942 started in Anchorage and ran down to the Bristol Bay region via Pedro Bay, Iliamna, Igiugig, Naknek, Koggiung, Egegik, Pilot Point, and Ugashik. The return flight ran from Clarks Point, Kanakanak, Dillingham, Ekwok, Iliamna, and back to Anchorage. The one-way distance was 467 miles at twice per month, October 15 to May 5, with 14 round-trips per year. The total weight of the mail per trip could not exceed 600 pounds.

Because of the lack of roads Alaska became an airplane-centered territory by the early 1940s. It was estimated that the Anchorage area had the highest per capita concentration of light airplanes in the world. Commercial air service from selected points in Alaska, such as Juneau, Anchorage, and Fairbanks with cities “Outside” (in the continental United States) was begun in 1940 by Pan American Airways. The intrastate aviation industry in Alaska, along with flights to and from “Outside,” became a significant industrial player during the 1940s, hyper stimulated by the World War II military involvement in the territory.361

354 Ellanna, ed. and Hornberger, op. cit., 4-60.
355 Unrau, op. cit., 447.
357 Melvin Monsen, conversation with the writer, July 5, 2018.
360 Ellis, op. cit., 13.
The Anatomy of a Mercy Flight
A verbatim copy of Archie Satterfield’s “Prologue”
from his history of Alaska Airlines entitled The Alaska Airlines Story
published here courtesy of Alaska Airlines

Late one March afternoon in 1939 an emergency radio message, relayed from station to station until it reached Anchorage, requested a plane for a sick woman at Port Moller, 525 miles southwest on the Alaska Peninsula just before it dribbles off into the Aleutian Islands. The message, sent by her husband who was the winter watchman at the salmon cannery, said she had terrible stomach pains, a bad cough and difficulty breathing.

Woodley Airways got the message first because Art Woodley had staked his claim on flying down the [Alaska] peninsula. However, all his planes were out on charters and wouldn’t be back in Anchorage or in the Port Moller area for at least two days. Even though competition was fierce between the airlines, under such circumstances they cooperated to the point of lending each other equipment to make emergency flights. An office girl called the other airline in town, Star Air Lines, and asked if they could make the trip. All of Star’s planes were out of town, too, except for one of its original planes, an aging four-place Stinson. The only pilot available was also the company president and general manager, Don H. Good-

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362 By 1939 all major Bristol Bay canneries had radio communications with other canneries, if not with the Outside world. In addition, Star Air Lines purchased radios for many ham radio operators scattered around the territory. Floyd Denison was one such radio operator who was paid by Star to communicate with flying aircraft and the main office in Anchorage. The message asking for a mercy flight to Port Moller was likely passed from Moller to Diamond U (Pilot Point), to Diamond NN (South Naknek), to Diamond J (Kvichak), to Seversen’s Roadhouse at Iliamna to Tanalian Point on Lake Clark and on to Woodley’s in Anchorage. The one-way flight from Anchorage to Port Moller is approximately 525 miles and the round-trip would have been 1,050 miles but Goodman did a lot of extra-flying while performing the mercy flight so he likely flew about a total of 1,500 miles. Jeremy Davis, conversation with the editor, July 29, 2018.

363 Port Moller is a small fishing village on the western side of the Alaska Peninsula on the Bering Sea coast. The Alaska Peninsula is a 475 mile long peninsula running SW from Iliamna Lake to Unimak Island and the start of the Aleutian Islands. In 1912 Pacific American Fisheries built a salmon cannery at Port Moller and it began operating in 1913. Art Woodley (1906-1990) was born in New York State and came to Alaska in 1928. As a bush pilot he founded Woodley Airways in 1932 and operated a four-passenger Travel Air and a four-passenger Waco. Art Woodley specialized in serving the Bristol Bay and was a good friend of Hans Seversen. alaskabushpilot.org/BushPilotsW_Y.html.; Orth, op. cit., 773.

man. Without hesitation he said he would go and had a message relayed back to expect him the following day.

Although Goodman had been flying only sporadically since taking over management of the struggling company, he had paid his dues since his arrival five years earlier. He was initiated into Alaska flying by crashing with two passengers on his first trip through Rainy Pass. He missed a turn in a series of canyons that lead through the Alaska Range between Anchorage and McGrath, and plopped a Stinson down on a forty-five degree snowbank without seriously injuring anyone. The plane’s bones were left on the slope, and the route was dubbed Goodman Pass. No dishonor was connected with the crash. All Alaska pilots had been forced down on an uneventful landing or a ‘controlled crash’ or an outright crash. The vast wilderness, the violent and unpredictable weather, and the uncertain machinery humiliated them all if they stayed in the country long enough. Goodman became a respected pilot before he took over the company management.

That day he left Star’s office on Fourth Avenue and drove the company’s Ford sedan out of town on the icy road to the hangar on Merrill Field. He went into the warm building with its familiar odors of oil and fabric dope, and called Cecil Higgs aside. Goodman told him about the woman and asked him to go along. Higgins signed on the trip with a simple, ‘Sure.’

Goodman selected the small, dapper mechanic because he was the most experienced and versatile on the crew. Others might be more adept at recovering a plane with fabric or pulling a banging piston, but none had Higgins’s wide range of experience. He could do everything well, and better than most. He had enough hours of instruction to qualify as a pilot, and at one time owned his own plane. He was a storehouse of wilderness survival information. Equally important, Higgins was completely unflappable and a good, polite traveling companion.

Since it obviously was too late to leave that day, they discussed what they needed for the trip and set about gathering all the gear. The list began with a set of wheels to replace the skis when they flew down into spring.

They loaded the Stinson with the wheels, several cans of gasoline, a few quarts of oil, tools, a second can of emergency rations sealed in five-gallon cans, two extra sleeping bags, two twelve-volt batteries, and an extra flashlight or two. When the plane was loaded there was no room for anyone in the rear seats but they would burn off enough gasoline on the way down to drop nearly half of the cans. Otherwise they didn’t worry about the equipment in the passengers’ seat; Alaska passengers were accustomed to the smell of gasoline and oil, rancid furs, or whatever else might have been in the plane before them.

Goodman and Higgins went home and were back at the hangar in the frigid predawn darkness. Higgins draped the canvas engine cover over the nose of the Stinson and crawled inside the tent-like cover with the firepot, a plumber’s gasoline torch adapted by the aviation industry to preheat engines that would otherwise shatter like glass in the cold Alaskan weather. Goodman went inside the hangar to stoke up the fire so the engine oil, stored on a shelf above the stove, would be warm. When the firepot was roaring suitably, Higgins went in to warm himself by the stove.

In half an hour the engine was warm enough to start. They removed the cover and stowed it and the firepot in the compartment behind the rear seats, poured the warm oil into the engine, and Goodman immediately started the engine to keep it from chilling and turning the oil into a molasses consistency. They let the engine idle a few minutes to build up heat and work out the rough spots, then taxied away from the hangar and lifted off.

They headed south at about a thousand feet over the southwest edge of town and out over the jumbled ice of Cook Inlet. The sun still wasn’t up but there was enough light in the long dawn for them to see the Chugach Mountains to their left and the Alaska Range to their right outlined against the clear, early morning sky.

The Stinson flew smoothly in the cold, still air, and the Lycoming engine roared evenly, making conversation difficult. There was nothing to say anyway, unless they ran into trouble.


Goodman was president of Star Air Lines and a pilot at this time.

Rainy Pass is a 3,400 foot pass through the Alaska Range connecting the Susitna River valley with the Kuskokwim River valley. Orth, op. cit., 791.

Orth, op. cit. 235.
They flew south at just over a hundred miles an hour, following the western shore of Cook Inlet until they passed McArthur Glacier. They began a long turn that took them over land and when they saw a braided stream beneath, they followed it back into the heart of the Chigmit Mountains. Goodman eased the wheel back slightly, gave the trim tab a few turns and went into a gradual climb so that when they cleared Lake Clark Pass they were nearly 1,000 above the gap in the mountains. Then Goodman pushed the nose slightly, and trimmed up for the long power glide that took them to Lake Clark. He picked up the Tlikakila River that feeds the lake, then followed the eastern shore southwest to Nondalton, where the short Newhalen River empties Lake Clark into Iliamna Lake, the largest lake in Alaska. They flew down the 1,000-square-mile inland sea, passed over Hans Seversen’s Roadhouse and picked up the Kvichak River at Igiugig, followed the river past Levelock and Kvichak, and roared across the mud flats of Bristol Bay at Koggiung and Naknek.

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368 McArthur Glacier is a glacier in the Chigmit Mountains, 33 miles west of Tyonek. Ibid., 606.
369 The Chigmit Mountains connect the Aleutian and Alaska Ranges and run from Iliamna Lake and Kamishak Bay 150 miles NE to Chakachatna River. The Alaska Native word “Chigmit” is not documented. An unknown National Park Service planner referred to the Chigmits as “a frenzy of peaks.” Ibid., 208.
370 Lake Clark Pass is the most popular aviator’s pass through the Alaska Range, its’ summit is approximately 1,000 feet above sea level. Ibid., 561.
371 The Tlikakila River flows through Lake Clark Pass 50 miles SW from Summit Lake to Lake Clark. The Dena’ina word Liq’a Qilanhtnu means “stream where salmon are.” Orth, op. cit., 971; Evanoff, op. cit., 110. Nondalton is the main Inland Dena’ina village on Sixmile Lake, 15 miles NE of Iliamna village. The Dena’ina word is Nuvendalutan or “lake extends below.” Orth, op. cit., 695; Evanoff, op. cit., 126. The Newhalen River is a 22 mile long river that drains Lake Clark into Iliamna Lake. Its’Dena’ina name is Nughil Vetnu or “waterfall stream.” Orth, op. cit., 684; Evanoff, op. cit., 133. Iliamna Lake is the largest lake in Alaska and it is 78 miles long and 20 miles wide. The Dena’ina word for Iliamna is Nilavena or “islands lake.” Orth, op. cit., 449; Evanoff, op. cit., 133
372 Hans Seversen’s Roadhouse was the most important trading post in the Lake Clark-Iliamna area between about 1921 and 1939 when Seversen died. Seversen’s Roadhouse was the air crossroads of the Bristol Bay region about half-way between Anchorage and the Bristol Bay coast. Present-day Iliamna village grew around Seversen’s Roadhouse in the 1920-1940s. Igiugig is a small Yup’ik village at the outlet of Iliamna Lake where the Kvichak River begins its’ run to the Bristol Bay. Orth, op. cit., 445. The Bristol Bay is a salmon-rich gulf in the Bering Sea that including its lands based drainage encompasses approximately 50,000 square miles of lands and waters. Robert A. Henning and Lael Morgan et al., Bristol Bay Basin, Anchorage: Alaska Geographic, the Alaska Geographic Society, Vol. 5, No. 3. Koggiung is a Yup’ik word meaning a “sandy place.” It is two near-by locations on the east side of the Kvichak River near Kvichak Bay. The upriver Koggiung was the location of a 19th and early 20th century Yup’ik village and the site of a large Alaska Packers Association variously called Diamond J, Kvichak, or Packer’s Koggiung. The down-river Koggiung was located a few miles down river from Diamond J at Graveyard Point and was the location for the Libby, McNeill & Libby’s Graveyard Cannery. Orth, op. cit., 535. Naknek is a small cannery town about 12 miles south of Graveyard Point on the north bank of the Naknek River. Several major canneries were located on both sides of the Naknek River at Naknek and South Naknek. Orth, op. cit., 671.

They made their first stop at Pilot Point at mid-morning, some 350 miles out. Goodman circled and found an unbroken stretch of ice on the lake behind the village. He taxied to shore, than he and Higgins went to work immediately removing the skis and installing the wheels. They were expected because the radio message had been heard, and several villagers were waiting to help them refuel and lift the plane for the land gear change. While they formed a bucket bridge to refuel the

373 Pilot Point is a village on the Bering Sea side of the Alaska Peninsula about 90 miles SW of Naknek. It was the location of the Alaska Packers Association Diamond U Cannery in 1939. Orth, op. cit., 756.
tanks on top of the wings, Goodman found out what he could about Port Moller, and asked for a bonfire when they returned that evening. He told them where to build it, and he and Higgins quickly climbed aboard and took off on the ice.

They were neither surprised nor pleased with the information on Port Moller. Due to the tides and the coastal characteristics, they couldn’t hope for something as simple as a landing on the beach at the cannery. Instead, they would have to find a place inland on the tundra. A month or six weeks later they could have landed on water in front of the cannery, or the same amount of time earlier they would have been on skis. It was indeed an awkward time.

Both men worried about the landing because tundra is usually the worst possible place to land. It can knock gear off a plane, or even flip it on its back. But they were committed. Firemen fight fires no matter how dangerous, and Alaska pilots in those early years completed mercy missions, no matter how high the cost to equipment and crew.

Port Moller wasn’t encouraging when they flew over that afternoon. The cannery complex was on the north shore of the broad Herendeen Bay, which was filled with broken ice. The shelf of the beach was too narrow for a landing, as they had been told, and the tundra behind the bay looked typically lumpy.

They circled low to announce their arrival, then swung out over land in search of a place to put down. It took them nearly an hour to find a place that looked reasonably safe. They dropped to almost touchdown elevation to look at it as closely as possible, then shrugged and nodded. They probably wouldn’t find a better spot. Goodman swung back toward Port Moller, circled the cannery twice, then headed almost due north toward the site so they would know where to find the plane. He landed on a flat spot just above high-tide line without incident.

They had to wait nearly three hours for the boat carrying the woman and her husband to pick her way between the ice floes in the bay, which gave them plenty of time to refuel, walk around a bit and let the roaring in their ears subside.

The woman was obviously in great pain, and several precious minutes of daylight were spent in getting her aboard the plane. When she was as comfortable as possible, and her husband strapped in beside her, Goodman and Higgins held their breath.

Everyone worked feverishly to remove the wheels, put the skis back on, and refuel for what everyone hoped was the last time. The wheels were left behind to be picked up later; nobody wanted them rolling and bouncing around to add to the woman’s misery.

With the villagers gathered around the fire, Goodman and Higgins climbed back aboard and took off across the ice into the black night, heading for Anchorage, spurred on by the woman’s cries of pain.

Only an hour out, they ran into a high overcast that cut off the light of the stars and made contact flying extremely difficult. The stars gave just enough light for them to see features on the landscape—black rivers and wavy lines where the trees ended. Without the feeble light from above, these features blended into the blurred whiteness below. Goodman dropped down as far as he dared and he and Higgins were able to pick out the northern shore of Iliamna Lake and follow the indistinct tree line until they saw the faint light from Hans Seversen’s Roadhouse winking in the gloom.

After a brief discussion, Goodman and Higgins agreed they should keep pushing toward Anchorage. As it was, they could see well enough to recognize the non-familiar country, and if it got worse, they had several alternatives for a landing. The woman was in such agony that both men wanted nothing more than to get her to a hospital.

They followed the dark thread of the Tlikakila River up as far as they dared toward Lake Clark Pass, but the overcast was too low for Higgins and Goodman to see the proper route through the pass. They had to turn back.

It was a difficult decision. Under ordinary circumstances no responsible pilot would have gone that far. Alaska flying was a daytime-only occupation during those years before instrumentation and radio ranges. Only planes on mercy missions such as this, or damned fools, were caught out after dark. When they agreed they must turn back, both men knew that if the woman died during that night, there would always be questions to ponder: Could they have made it through the pass and over Cook Inlet? How would they land on Merrill Field if the overcast dropped down to become fog? They had no real choice, but they didn’t have to like it.

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*374 Herendeen Bay is 12 miles SW of Port Moller village. It was named named for Captain Edward Perry Herendeen of the schooner *Yukon* who documented the bay for the United States Coast & Geodetic Survey in circa 1890. Orth, *op. cit.*, 417.*
They retraced their route to Iliamna Lake, where they hoped to land near Hans Seversen’s Roadhouse. At least they could give the woman and her husband a warm cabin and hot coffee until dawn. When they spotted the Roadhouse light, Goodman lined up on it from far out over the lake and eased the Stinson down on the ice. He felt it make contact, and reached up to cut the throttle. But before he could touch it, water suddenly began spraying through the propeller and over the windshield. They had hit an open patch of water!

Luckily they were still going fast enough for the skis to plane on top of the water. Quickly Goodman jammed the throttle against the firewall and began jiggling the wheel back and forth, feeling for the moment of liftoff. Then they struck the edge of the ice with a jarring crash. Goodman jerked the wheel into his lap, than eased it forward just a bit, and they were back in the air. They were silent and shaken. After they got their breath back, Higgins looked out his side with a flashlight to check for damage. Goodman did the same on his side, and neither man could see anything broken, dangling or bent. They had been lucky—this time.

The long night, however, was far from over and their choices now were even less appealing. They didn’t have enough fuel to circle until daylight, like the Flying Dutchmen, and they weren’t interested in trying Iliamna Lake again. It was at least 200 miles in the wrong direction to Pilot Point, and trying to land in the darkness on the snow near the company’s radio station on Lake Clark would be risky. Yet …

Goodman got on the radio that sometimes worked and tried to contact the operator at the Lake Clark station. Luckily the operator [Floyd Denison] knew of the flight and had been sitting beside his set in case he was needed. Goodman made contact, and asked if he could land nearby.

“Give me an hour and I’ll mark out a strip with a fire on each end,” the operator [Floyd Denison] said. Goodman and Higgins felt much better. They turned and flew back north to Lake Clark.

They found the station lights and circled until they saw a big fire come to life, then another. They came in over the lake, touched down just beyond the first fire and slid over a few drifts before coming to a bumpy halt.

Rather than move the sick woman, they bundled her up with extra sleeping bags and left her and her husband in the plane. The radio operator, Goodman and Higgins spent the remainder of the night on snowshoes tramping and scraping a better runway for their takeoff. This task completed, they returned to the station where they drank coffee, talked and waited for dawn.

As soon as they could see, they took off. To their relief they found the route clear through Lake Clark Pass. Cook Inlet was clear, and they roared on to Anchorage. Goodman radioed ahead for transportation to the hospital, and landed in clear, cold weather.

The trip had taken over twenty-four hours and neither man had been to sleep during the time. The woman’s life was saved, and the airline made a little money—not much, actually, because the charter cost the watchman $750 for two men, one plane and a lot of gasoline. Both men went home for the rest of the day, suddenly exhausted, but feeling better than if they had been hauling mail, canned peas, baby bottles, safety pins, newspapers and the other usually mundane cargo of a bush airline.

The most unusual part of this story is that it wasn’t unusual at all. Those flights, which came to be called mercy flights, were as common as the illnesses that caused them. The only real advantage Goodman and Higgins had over the first pilots in Alaska was that they had small radio sets that had been adopted throughout the territory. They could have completed the trip without a radio, but the risk would have been much greater.

At the time this trip occurred, Star Air Lines had been in existence for seven years. It was as much a part of Alaska as the Iditarod Trail, steamships that enjoyed a monopoly before the advent of the plane, and the northern lights. Even though Star had its problems from time to time, still there was something different about it. It was a little feisty, perhaps; its employees a little quicker to seize an opportunity to improve its service and its crucial maintenance. Star gave the impression it was in Alaska to stay.

Like so many Alaska success stories, it all began with a man standing on the Alaska Steamship Company dock in Seattle.

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376 The Star Air Lines station on Lake Clark was run by Floyd and Lena Denison at their log home at Tanalian Point, near what is now present-day Port Alsworth. Floyd was a ham (amateur) radio operator and he was a salaried employee at $50.00 per month from Star Air Lines to radio current Lake Clark weather and estimated Lake Clark Pass conditions to the company offices in Anchorage. Floyd Denison’s radio call signs were KINV and K7CNW.

377 It is not clear from the account exactly where the Stinson set down near Tanalian Point. However, two nearby locations are probable. The first would be on Lake Clark in front of Tanalian Point on the ice and the second and more likely landing spot was Hardenberg Bay, one mile east of Tanalian Point by which Babe and Mary Alsworth began to build their homestead in the fall of 1944. Star Air Lines was certainly using Hardenberg Bay by the winter of 1940 for their ski-equipped aircraft so it is very likely they were using it in 1939. In addition to Floyd Denison’s duties for McGee Airways beginning in 1934 and later for Star Air Lines he began operating a U.S. Weather Bureau airway station at Tanalian Point in May 1939 and the station operated until October 1948. It was after this time that Charlie Denison ran the station and other local people also were involved such as the Kennedy Family and Bob and Bernie Hadfield. Eventually Mary Alsworth took over the operation of weather reporting and currently Glen and Patty Alsworth continue the family tradition of hourly weather reporting, even though most remote sites throughout Alaska are now automated. C. E. Watson, U. S. Weather Bureau, letter to Charles Denison, August 30, 1956.

378 The distance from Tanalian Point to Merrill Field is approximately 150 miles and the flight time was about 90 to 120 minutes, depending on headwinds or tailwinds.
Ray Petersen’s Initial Flight through Lake Clark Pass, April 1934

by Raymond Petersen

Anchorage, Alaska April 23, 1934

Courtesy of Sonny Petersen

Dear Folks: Am writing these letters on the fly, so to speak, I just returned from a 12 day trip, down to Lake Clark, and Lake Iliamna country. The owner of the ship, Les Plumb, business man, and old time prospector named Fred Bowman, and myself flew down to Portage Creek, on Lake Clark, to stake some mining claims, here is the way it is.

Les furnishes the ship, Fred the money and I the flying experience necessary to fly the ship. We all stake the ground being allowed two claims a month each, if the ground pays, Fred will furnish the capital for equipment, Les the airplane, and I will complete future transportation by flying it, the proceeds will be split three ways equal.

Wednesday April 11. We loaded 3 prs. Snowshoes, a small folding stove and 2-22 rifles, gasoline fire pot, for heating engine and oil,

Raymond Petersen moved to Alaska in 1934 and flew for Star Airlines before starting Ray Petersen’s Flying Service in 1937. Photo courtesy of Katmailand, Inc.

Raymond I. Petersen (1912-2008) was born in Nebraska and raised in Wyoming before moving to Chicago in his youth where he learned to fly. He moved to Alaska in early 1934, just before embarking on this aviation adventure flying through Lake Clark Pass to Lake Clark. He flew for Star Airlines before starting his own Ray Petersen Flying Service in 1937. He served the people of the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta. The Petersen Flying Service eventually grew into Northern Consolidated Airlines (NCA). In 1968 NCA became part of Wien Air Alaska. Raymond I. Petersen (1912-2008) was born in Nebraska and raised in Wyoming before moving to Chicago in his youth where he learned to fly. He moved to Alaska in early 1934, just before embarking on this aviation adventure flying through Lake Clark Pass to Lake Clark. He flew for Star Airlines before starting his own Ray Petersen Flying Service in 1937. He served the people of the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta. The Petersen Flying Service eventually grew into Northern Consolidated Airlines (NCA). In 1968 NCA became part of Wien Air Alaska.

A Ryan ski plane from Bowman Airways in front of Brown Carlson’s place on Lake Clark at Portage Creek in the mid-1930s. Fred Bowman owned part of Bowman’s Airways. This is the location Ray Petersen and Fred Bowman and Les Plumb spent a night and took gasoline from Brown Carlson’s cache so they could fly back to Anchorage. Photo courtesy of The Robert Stevens Collection, The Museum of Flight, Seattle. H-2893.

379 Raymond I. Petersen (1912-2008) was born in Nebraska and raised in Wyoming before moving to Chicago in his youth where he learned to fly. He moved to Alaska in early 1934, just before embarking on this aviation adventure flying through Lake Clark Pass to Lake Clark. He flew for Star Airlines before starting his own Ray Petersen Flying Service in 1937. He served the people of the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta. The Petersen Flying Service eventually grew into Northern Consolidated Airlines (NCA). In 1968 NCA became part of Wien Air Alaska.

380 Nothing more of particular is known about Les Plumb except that he owned the airplane flown by Ray Petersen on the trip described in this letter. Plumb was an Anchorage-based businessman. Fred Bowman (1890-1959) was an old-time Alaskan blacksmith and miner who lived in Anchorage in 1934 but who moved with his wife Norma and son Howard to Portage Creek to develop the placer gold mine beginning in 1936. Fred Bowman actively mined Portage Creek between 1937 and the early to mid-1950s. John B. Branson, A 20th Century Portrait of Lake Clark, Alaska 1900-2000. Anchorage: U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service and the Alaska Association for Historic Preservation, 2015, 73-78.

381 The exact kind of airplane flown by Petersen on his maiden flight through Lake Clark Pass is not known. However, from his description it seems likely it was a Travel Air CW. The plane was a biplane and could carry four passengers in a closed cabin in front while the pilot sat in the back in an open cockpit. The Travel Air was powered by a 200 HP Whirlwind radial engine. MacLean and Rossiter, op. cit., 48.
emergency rations, grub for a week, and 62 gal of gas. We had about 250 lbs. over load when we took off, which is not bad, as this ship performs twice as good as the Command-Aire did empty. We flew S.W. about 250 miles to the foot of Alaska Range of mountains, from 8 to 10 thousand feet high. The [Lake Clark] Pass which we had to take through the mountains was filled with fog, so we landed at a lake [Big River Lakes] at the mouth of the Pass, and [camped] for the night. We put up the tent, spruce boughs for a bed, then putting on all the clothes we had we darn near froze.

The next morning [April 12, 1934] we broke camp and took off. We flew for an hour, practically 100 miles through a Pass, whose floor lay 6 to 7 thousand feet below us, and whose walls rose 2 to 4 thousand feet above us, so close on either side as to seem to touch the wing tips. Emerald green glaciers oozed down huge side canyons, and in the Pass itself lay a glacier 1,200 feet high which was later on to make us cuss. I forgot to say that, that morning we turned the ship around by hand, and a ski caught on a tree we were using to block it up with, and broke off the right axle on the landing gear. It had been cracked so broke quite easily. Being 100 miles from nowhere, we cut some small trees and fixed it up. After getting through the Pass, we flew down Lake Clark for about 15 minutes, until we came to a creek, we thought was Portage Creek, after landing we were not certain. There was a couple of cabins, [Brown Carlson’s place] and a few caches, but no life.

We had to go to Seversen’s, a Trading Post on Lake Iliamna, about 75 miles S.W. run by an old squaw man [sic], so decided to go there and get gas and information and return to Portage Creek and stake our claims. We loaded up and took off down the lake [Lake Clark]. Just as we left the ground there was a bump and the old ship lurched off the ground. The first thing I thought of was the broken ski. Old Fred [Bowman] stood up in the cockpit and looked at the landing gear, he turned and hollered, “It’s broke off.” “I didn’t like that a bit, I can tell you. The ship kept wanting to nose down and would hardly climb so I figured the ski was on there yet. Old Fred looked again, I never saw a man look so serious in all my life, the old ski was hanging straight down, it made me feel sick to my stomach, because the ship would give a lurch and want to nose down and I could hardly gain altitude. I expected any minute to lose control, as the ski was flat in the direction of the flight and had as much surface as my controls. I was sick but decided to try to make it to Seversen’s [Roadhouse] so if we made it one of the airplanes could take us to the hospital, after we landed. After about 15 minutes I began to feel better, as I seen it was not going to get out of control. But another worry, I was not sure where Seversen’s was and I didn’t have much gas. That scared me as if we had to land in some remote spot and get all busted up we may not be found for weeks. I began to figure out some way to land it without doing any damage, and finally doped out an idea that made me feel pretty good if we could only find Seversen’s. While I was doing all this the boys up front were pretty sick.

“Les said to Fred, “Do you think we land alright?” Fred said, and he meant it too, “I am afraid it is curtains for us.” Les said, “My God I haven’t got a penny of insurance for that poor little woman of mine.” Les just sat there and shook his head and said, “My God, My God.” I felt pretty sorry for the poor suckers, but it struck me kind of funny, so I banged on the back seat. Les turned around [and] I grinned and winked at him, and made a motion that things were not so dark as they looked. Well that made him feel better, he turned to Fred and said, “The kid is grinning back there, maybe we will get out of this alright?”

We flew the most hellish 50 minutes I have ever experienced before I saw Seversen’s over the bow, that was a relief. I thought my landing out, signaled the boys to push their goggles back and circled Seversen’s once. Everyone came outside [and] saw that ski and began waving and pointing at it. I circled around once [more], shut off my gas and cut the switch and pushed my goggles back, and picked out a slushy looking place in the lake [Iliamna] and stalled the ship in it. It settled to the ice on the tail ski and the good ski, and I was the second pilot in Alaska to land an aeroplane with a broken ski like that, and not put a scratch on the ship. It landed in such a way that the broken ski had a chance to straighten out, and it did not buckle until we had practically stopped. Maybe I didn’t have two pals up front, Les stood up in front and turned around, and I asked him how he liked the looks of his ship in one piece. He held out his hand and said, “You made it kid. You are the second one to accomplish such a feat.” The pilots of the other ships came over and congratulated me on a miracle. 383

382 Hans Seversen (1870-1939) was born in Willmar, Minnesota and arrived in Juneau by 1896 and was a placer-miner on Sixmile Creek during the Turnagain Gold Rush in 1896. In 1902 he prospected for oil on the eastern side of Becharof Lake out of the boom town of Kanatak, on the Pacific coast. Seversen’s Peninsula which juts into Becharof Lake on its eastern shore was named for him. Seversen shows up in the Lake Clark-Iliamna country in about 1908 and he lived in Old Nondalton where he ran a small store in the teens. He previously had a store on the Newhalen Portage, and established himself at present-day Iliamna village, between 1921 and 1925. In 1923 Seversen’s Roadhouse was documented on the Alaska Road Commission maps. John Branson, editor-writer, Seversen’s Roadhouse: Crossroads of Bristol Bay, Alaska. Anchorage: The Cook Inlet Historical Society, 2003, 21-29.

383 Seversen’s Roadhouse was the air crossroads of the Bristol Bay region, as it was conveniently situated half-way between Anchorage and the important Bristol Bay villages of Naknek and Dillingham. Pilots could find lodging and gasoline and a sheltered dock to secure a floatplane while performing repairs at Seversen’s. During the time of the first airplanes flying into the Iliamna-Lake Clark country from Anchorage, beginning in 1927 and until the early 1940s, there were no man-made runways for wheeled airplanes. In the pioneering period of flight in the region most all operations were conducted on floats or skis with wheeled landings being more the exception than the rule. The first runway
We stopped at Seversen’s, Friday and Saturday [April 13 and 14, 1934]. Got over to Portage Creek Sunday [April 15] after temporarily fixing our ski. The next day, Monday [April 16] we staked our claims, mine 2 above and 2 below discovery, we sure sewed up the creek. The weather held us up there until Wednesday, the [April] 18. The sky cleared, the night before a 2 inch snow fell on the lake [Lake Clark]. When we tried to take off in the morning it was dry like sand. The skis would not slip on it, we were stuck in 2 inches of snow. We wasted so much gas trying to take off that we had to break in a gasoline cache, belonging to a guy who has a cabin there. His name is Brown Carlson, he was out beaver trapping so we did not see him, we stayed in his cabin that night. I read a letter a letter written by and left by a fellow named Mike Hatton we met at Seversen’s Roadhouse. It sure gave old Carlson hell, Carlson’s wife is dead, her grave is up on the hill, they must have had a kid [who] is being taken care of by some people down at Iliamna. Mike wrote, “Mrs. Leise is going Outside and wants to know what you are going to do about the girl? You [are] nuts if you don’t send her out with them as it will give her a chance to be a lady. If she stays here she’ll be a squaw [sic]. It will only cost $20.00 a month, $240 a year, you can well afford that, get in touch with Mrs. Leise at once.”

around the lakes was built at Iliamna by Lydall-Green, a subsidiary of the construction giant Morrison-Knudsen for the U.S. Army Air Corps in about 1941-1943. The first private runway was built on Lake Clark in 1944-1945 for Babie Alswork by Mike Vandegrift and Joe Thompson at his homestead on Hardenberg Bay. In the 1930s pilots were frequently at Seversen’s Roadhouse and obviously there when Petersen made his harrowing landing. Bertha Drew, interview with editor, October 23, 2001; Seversen’s Roadhouse, 32-37, 48.

Brown Carlson (1878-1975) was a Norwegian-born Bristol Bay fisherman and subsistence hunter, fisherman, and gardener between circa 1906 and the early 1960s. He was a skilled outdoorsman and woodworker. During the 1930s-1950s his Lake Clark place looked very much like a small Norwegian farmstead. He was married to Cristina Balluta in 1906 at Kijik village on Lake Clark and they lived at Carlson’s cabin near Portage Creek but had no surviving children. Cristina died sometime between 1910 and 1920 and is buried on a terrace above Carlson’s cabin. Carlson married again in the mid-1920s to Agafia Trefon (1908-1928) and they had one daughter, Ida Marie Carlson (1926-2011). She was adopted by Bill and Clara Leise, the first school teachers in Nondalton. The Leises taught school in Tyonek before starting the first school in Nondalton in 1930-1931. With Carlson’s reluctant permission, the Leises took Ida and moved to Woodinville, Washington. But they returned later and Bill Leise taught at the Jesse Lee Home in Seward in 1939. That year Brown Carlson flew over from Lake Clark to visit his daughter, Ida, in Seward. Ida married Tommy Meyer in the late 1940s and they had four children. They moved to Lake Clark and lived next to Carlson in 1956 when Meyer was murdered by two Air Force enlisted men at King Salmon. After that tragedy Ida sold her log house to John and Claudine Coray and moved back to Washington. She passed away in 2011.

struck us as funny, 75 miles from civilization. Fred said a writer could write a book on that.

The next morning [April 19] we chopped a hole in the ice and wet the snow for a run-way and took off. We got two thirds of the way through the Pass … a streak of fog and snow, so landed on a snow covered tributary of the [Tlikakila], it is a mean place but was the best we could do. We were weather bound for three days there [April 19, 20 and 21]. We only ate one flap jack and a bowl of mush a day for fear we would not get out for [a] couple of weeks, or in case we cracked up taking off which meant a 200 mi[le] walk on very little grub, at the worst season of the year, the spring breakup. This morning the weather looked a little better, and we were hungry, we decided to take a chance. We tried to take off but the run was so short, and the snow so deep we couldn’t make it. We took out snow shoes and stamped out a runway, we were about all done in, hardly any food and all that work just about finished us. We were half starved and couldn’t get near the game which was plentiful. The foxes and lynx had them all scared out so you couldn’t get a shot. The ice was about to break under our landing field we had to get out. We took off dodging between trees up the river until we gained about 2,000 ft. altitude, which was all we could get on account of the clouds. The old gorge [Lake Clark Pass] was sure narrow that low. The floor of the canyon, sloped upward of course and was topped by a glacier, which formed a divide. One river flowing east, the other west, out of the glacier, we had 300 ft. between glacier and clouds, which we popped between. Well we got on the other side, we hit a snowstorm. Boy it was no fun flying between the canyon walls 500 ft. high in a snowstorm. When we got through the [Lake Clark] Pass it was still snowing. We could not land on the lake we had used before [on April 11] as the ice was all rotten. There was one thing to do, the only landing field for skis was Lake Spenard at Anchorage, 100 mi[les] away so in came through snow, rain, and all. Maybe the old lake didn’t look good after 12 days of that stuff.

There was quite a crowd when we landed [in Anchorage on April 22, 1934], Someone stole the rabbit foot we had tied on the broken ski. I went over to Fred’s house and threw a slug of roast beef in me, “Um Um,” it will take a week to get filled up. Can you imagine me forgetting my camera on that trip?

I saw my first dog team in action at Seversen’s, boy that sure would have burned up the film. To top things off we had no sooner landed, then a fellow came up and asked what creek we staked? We told him, he sure was disappointed, he had worked that [Portage] creek and made wages 7 years ago when gold was $17.00 an oz. He and his wife had just chartered a plane and were going to stake it. Old Fred is an old
placer miner, he made $20,000 before he was 22 years old, at Iditarod. He says if we work it, it will be worth $12-- $20 a day, but we have some better stuff, easier to handle, up in the “Fairview Country,” NW of here [Anchorage], so will sell out probably. I have a chance of making a nice piece of money sooner or later there.

This will be my last letter for a month or so, as Les [Plumb] and I are going up to Lake Clark where we left the old man [Brown Carlson] and the Indian. We are going to trap beaver, and at the same time stake some claims up there for a month or so. So I will not be near a post office than 100 miles away. We will take the wheels along this trip and change the skis for by then the snow will be gone.

John is feeling fine, and I’m not feeling so bad myself so you have nothing to worry about from this end of the world. If I can scrape the dough together I am coming Outside this winter and buy me a nice cabin plane and come back here. I could put away $500 or $600 a month if I had a good 5 or 6 place plane up here now. One independent fellow here has [a] $1200 trip to make next week.

Will write again when conditions permit,

Love,

Raymond

P. S. I am called the lucky Cheechako, because of that ski landing. (A Cheechako is an Alaska Tenderfoot).

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As one who used to be the youngest member of various groups and organizations in which I was involved, it comes as a bit of a shock to realize I am now the oldest person living here on the lake [Lake Clark]. As such, I was privileged to know Babe far longer than most of you here. Does that mean I knew him better? Of course not. Our orbits crossed by infrequently and sometimes Babe flew at an altitude to which I was not granted full clearance.

Much of what I know about Babe is anecdotal and I suspect somewhat exaggerated or just plain myth. However, many swear to his having used gold ingot as a plain door stop; or paying for a 180 with 16,000 silver dollars and his enviable capability of driving bureaucrats from the FAA or IRS to such distraction they’d abandon efforts to charge him with, shall we say, ‘oversites,’ in exchange for avoiding being submitted to a barrage of fire and brimstone assaulting their alleged sins of omission or commission. The means by which Babe was said to have been weaned off an occasional dollop of wine, however, is hotly disputed by missionaries Flo and Do who played key roles in Babe and Mary’s Christian rebirth. (Propriety precludes me from reflecting more on that matter upon this occasion.)

One example of Babe’s ability of disentangle bureaucratic red tape and stuff it down officious government gullets was exemplified by his response to a comment I made to him during a segment of a TV show I once did. I asked: ‘Babe, I’ve known you for over thirty of your flying years and I don’t recall you ever having an accident.’ To which Babe smiled craftily and confessed: ‘Just never reported ‘em.’

Certainly many of you spent far more time with Babe than I did and as a consequence knew him far better than I. However, I am not certain anyone of us really knew Babe well.

I suspect he was either a more simple, or complex individual than most of us thought. I, for one, could never quite figure out which. Part Minnesota farmer, gum boots yet mired in cow pie even while soaring aloft in Alaska; park puckish prankster and part Old Testament prophet thundering Hell and damnation from the mountain tops; Babe could steer the conversation in directions which often left listeners either unable to follow him through a labyrinth of complexities or with eyes like those of a deer caught in the headlights wondering which way to leap.

Some found Babe’s intense religious conversion a bit discomfiting. No matter how mundane the subject Babe would often warp it around to one’s need for salvation… and the greater that need, the greater was one’s discomfort. Whether Babe’s brand
of proselytizing won many converts may be disputed; however, there can be no doubt but that his convictions helped craft the legacy he left in his wake.

The measure of success for any man is not the fame or material wealth he has acquired, but the impact his actions, inadvertent or otherwise, had on his family, friends and community.

Certainly Babe’s greatest success was in wooing and winning his remarkable wife, Mary, who for years served as his anchor to the windward. Together they’ve left a mark few of us could ever hope to emulate: offspring imbued with enduring spiritual under girding which has led to exceptional accomplishment; a Bible camp designed to strengthen the sinews of yet malleable youth and community named in their honor. Not too bad for a Minnesota farm boy who flew north during the great depression and found in Alaska an arable frontier in which his talents, efforts and dedication could flourish and burgeon into an enduring legacy I for one certainly envy.
Charlie Denison’s sawmill in 1951. Charlie loved flowers and they are seen abundantly in the foreground along with piles of sawdust and slabs. The boiler pipes are venting steam. Photo courtesy of Mike Mooter. H-671.

Charlie and Helen Denison’s home on Lake Clark circa 1959. The building on the left is the smokehouse for salmon and bear meat etc. Tanalian Mountain looms in the background. Photo courtesy of Claudine Coray Wright. H-1384.


The Floyd and Lena Denison cabin was the site of the McGee Airways and Star Air Lines radio station and first weather station for the Tanalian Point area. This photograph was taken by Forest Jones of Nondalton circa 1950. Photo courtesy of Margaret E. Jones. H-1646.
Babe Alsworth, stands by his pile of cook stove wood. The red building in the background is the goat barn, next is a chicken coop and the light green woodshed and wood pile, c. 1970. Photo courtesy John and Esther Alsworth. H-1342.

The Alsworth’s third house nearing completion at the homestead in 1951-1952. Babe Alsworth’s two airplanes are on the right, a red SR-JR and a black T-Craft. Photo courtesy of Margaret “Sis” Clum. H-2059.

Pilot Oren Hudson and his wife, Ruth, hold their two children Kerry and Kent, at their home on Sixmile Lake, east of Nondalton in 1953. Oren was the first resident pilot to live at Nondalton. Photo courtesy of Oren and Ruth Hudson. H-364.

Pete Trefon, axe in hand, appears to have been chopping an Aeronca Chief free from thin ice on Hardenberg Bay in c. 1941. The plane might have belonged to pilot Jim Kennedy. Photo courtesy of Susan Hunt. H-2845.

Charlie Denison, right and Joe Thompson, left, saw timbers on the former’s steam-powered sawmill in 1956. Photo courtesy of Al Woodward. H-684.

The Marion, Bertha, and Mike Mooter family in their 18-foot Old Town, Maine canoe on Lake Clark in 1958. Photo courtesy of Mike Mooter. H-680.
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John Branson is the historian for Lake Clark National Park and Preserve and has edited or authored twelve books on the history of the Lake Clark area and the wider Bristol Bay region. He first came to Alaska in 1959 on a vacation and returned ten years later to teach high school history at the Bristol Bay High School in Naknek. He lives at Port Alsworth, Alaska.
Aviation is the dominant means of transportation in rural Alaska and in no area is this more true than at Lake Clark. Starting in the late 1920s and taking off throughout the 1930s, 1940s, and 1950s aviation has opened up the country and provided local people with a higher quality of life and profoundly altered rural existence.

Readers will be accorded a first-hand account from nurse Helen Beeman Denison as she chronicles her life at war time Kanaknanak Hospital on the Bristol Bay coast, and of her travels around Alaska by airplane during World War II. In 1945 Helen moved to Lake Clark and married sourdough Charlie Denison and began documenting the end of the tiny settlement of Tanalian Point and the slow rise of the aviation driven community of Port Alsworth until late 1952. She died of cancer in 1953 at the age of 47.

In addition, this book contains vignettes covering the heroic exploits and the more prosaic events of such pioneering aviators as Russ Merrill, Matt Nieminen, Ray Petersen, Don Goodman, and Babe Alsworth. Eye-witness accounts of 1930s era flights through the legendary Lake Clark Pass are presented along with a Dena’ina ancestral historic account of traveling through the Pass on foot.

This book offers readers first-hand accounts of life in Alaska before and immediately after the war and demonstrates the profound influence aviation has had on the area.