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Guide to the Collections
of the UAF Alaska and Polar Regions Department
related to
The Alaska Highway

by Jane G. Haigh
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For Terrence Cole
NORS 697- Research
WWII in the North

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Finding Aid: Alaska Highway

The 50th anniversary of the Alaska Highway was commemorated in 1992. As part of the commemoration, the University of Alaska Museum and the Arctic and Polar Regions Dept., collaborated to create a special exhibit : Alaska or Bust: The Promise of the Road North.

Research for the exhibit began in 1990. As principle researcher, I looked through the many pertinent collections in the Archives. Over 200 individuals and organizations were contacted for information or to loan objects for the exhibit. As a part of the effort for the exhibit, materials were also solicited to enhance the Alaska Highway collections at the Archives. Many photographs and manuscript collections were received as a result.

This comprehensive finding aid includes:

PART 1

Collections relating to the highway, Arctic and Polar Regions Dept., UAF (Archives.)

1. Photo Collections:

Annotated references to photographs collections consulted during research for the exhibit and new collections received during the exhibit

2. Manuscript collections-

Annotated references to collections consulted during research for the exhibit

3. Manuscript Collections- new

Shorter references to collections which are new

4. Films

PART 2 *Jane Haigh Alaska or Bust* Alaska Highway Exhibit Collections *Collection*

1. Jane Haigh collection

Exhibit Catalog

Contact notebook

Research Notes

2. Alaska Highway Exhibit collection individual files annotated

*References to Alaska or Bust
4 box collection annotated
is deposited in the UAF
archives*

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This finding aid includes some subjects not normally associated with the Alaska Highway.

See also the following index subjects

Roadhouses

Big Delta

Tanacross

Tok

Northway

Guikana

McCarty

Aircraft-land lease

Military

Ladd Field

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PART 1

Collections relating to the highway, Arctic and Polar Regions Dept., UAF (Archives.)

Photograph Collections

Hannah Call Collection

See photos of Japanese bombing of Dutch Harbor, June 1942
(Bombing increased the urgency of the highway project)

US Army Signal Corps photos on fiche

Photos are in collection of Alaska State Historical Library
miscellaneous subjects

Fred Machetanz Collection

As a young man, Machetanz took two trips down the highway to Ohio, in 1949 and 1951. Machetanz took many photographs of the route, including photographs of many of the roadhouses, and roadhouse interiors.
Note: the Machetanz photograph collection is separate from the manuscript collection

Willis Grafe Collection

The collection includes 4x4 color transparencies taken in 1942-43. these have also been printed as 8x10 black and white photos for reference., and inventoried. The photographs are by Gail Pinkstaff, a PRA photographer, and were given to Grafe by the FHA in 1975.

The collection also includes a short history of the Highway written by Grafe in 1978.

Grafe went to work as a surveyor for the Public Roads Administration in 1942. He worked in the Kluane Lake Area, and in Haines. Following his return, in 1943, he joined the navy. After the war, he received a Civil Engineering Degree from Oregon State University, and was hired by the Bureau of Public Roads, successor to the PRA., beginning a career which culminated with the Federal Highway Administration in Washington D.C.

At FHA, he was involved with the negotiations to rebuild the portions of the highway in Canada in 1973. In 1975 he prepared the Alaska Highway portion of the publication America's Highways, published by the Federal Highway Administration in honor of the bicentennial.

See also, Grafe's book , An Oregon Boy in the Yukon (Albany, Or, Chesnutus Press, 1991) with recollection of his experiences during the construction of the highway.

Willis Vanderberg Collection

Vanderberg was a war correspondent and professional photographer. This collection includes 129 kodachrome slides taken on a trip up the highway

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1942-43. The collection also includes black and white photographs of the Canal Project. Many of Vanderberg's photographs were published in Life Magazine and other highway publications.
See also Vanderberg films in this collection- "War Comes to Alaska".

Anna Martin Collection

Martin was a missionary who drove the Highway. the collection includes kodachrome slides, not labeled.

Frederick B. Drane Collection v.3-43

Drane was an Episcopal missionary in the interior from 1915 to 1925. This collection of photographs includes many rare views of the people of Tanacross and the surrounding areas during the period.
Also included is an autobiographical manuscript: "A Circuit rider on the Yukon."

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George C. "Smitty" Smith Collection

Smith was a professional photographer. This collection, donated by a friend posthumously, includes more than 300 photographs. Most seem to pertain to the work of the Utah Construction Co., a private contractor working on the section of highway between Kluan Lake and the border in 1943, however there is no documentation or identification. This group of photographs includes many memorable portraits of highway workers, as well as construction scenes and equipment, and highway scenes, winter and summer.

Rod Christianson Collection

350+ photos of the Alaska Highway, 1942, inventoried, including workers, and scenes, from the Peace River, Dawson Creek, Whitehorse, etc. Christianson was a professional photographer, and some of the photographs were made into postcards marked Christianson.

Tom Christianson Collection

A set of photos taken in 1942-44 of the airbase in Nome. Views of military aircraft as well as Russian flight crews, construction, work, entertainment, etc.

William Craig Collection (73-159, and 79-90)

73-159- 235 includes photographs, inventoried, which includes Fairbanks, 1944, airplanes, Alaska Highway sign, aerial photographs of highway bridges and airfields

79-90- slides of 1961 Alaska highway trip

Rexford A. Buck Collection

80 color slides with black and white copy negatives and prints, of the Alaska Highway. Rex Buck was director of civilian personnel with the Army Corps of Engineers.

Peg and Bob Carstens VFSP

6 3x5 photographs of construction and heavy equipment scenes.
Also see oral History tapes, of Bob, "Heine Carstens" TYHS collection

Harrie Hughs Collection

Bert and Mary's roadhouse, Big Delta, and John Hajdukovich

See also manuscript collections Robert McKennan

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Manuscript collections

Estell Angier Collection

Memorabilia from a 1954 trip to Alaska via the highway with a side trip to Juneau. Includes, Milepost Guidebook, maps, tickets, brochures, Herbarium, decal, car repair bills, postcards, menu.

Bartlett Collection-Alaska highway Survey, 1944

An album with detailed planning for Alaska Highway development, 1944.

Anthony Dimond Collection

Dimond's congressional papers include information from the congressional record concerning committee hearings on the subject of building the highway, maps, studies, and other materials concerning early efforts to build the highway, and other highway information.

Lulu Fairbanks Collection

Box 1, "Clipping file Alaska Highway" contains many related clippings, 1940-1943.

Earnest Gruening Collection

Gruening was Governor of Alaska during the war years. His compiled scrapbooks of 1942 and 1943 contain a variety of items and information concerning the highway and the war years. The collection also includes copies of the various reports of early Alaska international highway commissions, as well as relevant letters.

John Hajdukovich Collection.

This collection contains the Ledger books from a series of trading posts operated by Hajdukovich in the upper Tanana area in the 1920's and 1930's. There are a variety of other items related to trading and trapping, and mining.

Kay J. Kennedy Collection

Kay Kennedy was an important Alaskan journalist during and after the war years. Her Alaska Highway File includes a copy of the "Report of the Commission to study the Proposed Route to Alaska, 1933; Report of the Alaska International Highway, HD71L, 1940; plus a variety of maps, and tour brochures.

Following the completion of the highway, Kennedy wrote a booklet on the Alaska Highway, published in 1944. she also interviewed Donald Mac Donald for an article. Original copies of both of these items, plus supporting documentation and photographs are also included.

Frank Leaphart Collection

Leaphart worked as a construction engineer on the highway. His collection includes "Certificate of Merit," Highway Engineers Handbook, plus miscellaneous photographs

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Robert A. McKennan Collection

McKennan was an anthropologist. He first visited the upper Tanana area while conducting field work for his dissertation among the upper Tanana Indians in 1929 and 1930. He returned to the area many times and conducted a variety of archeological digs and field work including work at the Duxthada site, and at Healy Lake. Included in his collection are papers and photographs, including a series of color slides of Dot lake, Healy Lake and Tanacross in 1962.

See Also, McKennan's book, Upper Tanana Indians.

International Highway Association-VFMS,
Stock Certificate

Manuscript collections, New

Delta Junction History ; VFMS

Delta Junction is the terminus of the Alaska Highway. This collection consists of manuscript drafts of "Chronological Outline: History of the McCarty Military Reservation at the junction of the Tanana and Big Delta rivers" and "Chronological Outline: Regional History of the Big Delta Area" By Douglas Christopherson, January, 1987. This is the only known source of this information.

Raynold I. Savela Collection*

Savela was a construction worker on the Alaska Highway. This collection consists of a spiral bound notebook which chronicles his experiences. Mr. Savela also loaned some of his personal objects to the museum exhibit.

Benjamin B. Talley Collection v.3-63

Talley was the officer in charge of Alaska Construction, Alaska Defense Command during World War II. This collection includes his daily logs, covering construction activity at Ladd Field, Fort Richardson, and on the Alaska Highway.

Claire Gillette Collection V.3 -080

Gillette was a mail carrier from Fairbanks to Tok for six months during 1943. This collection consists of papers and photographs.

Alaska Highway--Canada Section- VFMS

1. 1948 Official Road Map- Peace River Highway, Edmonton to Fort St. John
2. Canadian Government Travel Bureau, Information Bulletin No. 4, "Alaska Highway, Canada Section" Ottawa, 1953. 5"x8", 15 pgs.
3. 4 8x10 B&W photos
4. Brochure, "General information concerning The Alaska highway, Canadian section" Issued by Northwest territories and Yukon Services Lands and Development Services branch, department of mines And Resources, Ottawa. August 1, 1948

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Everett P. Wood

Manuscript Collection , including correspondence and clippings, re highway improvements, 1954-1956.

Jim Kelly Collection

Includes:

1. Map
2. 3x5 color copies of original highway tour photographs, probably 1946
3. "Regulations governing travel on the Alaska Military Highway Canadian Section, 10, December, 1946. Issued by Traffic Control Board, Edmonton
4. "General information Concerning the Alaska Highway-Canadian Section" Bureau of NW Territories and Yukon affairs, Ottawa, circular No. 2, May 13, 1947; includes map
5. Transit manifest, Sept. 1947
6. Two Alaska License plates, 1947, and 1948

Harry Heins Collection

Harry was a construction worker. This collection contains ephemera including permits and contracts from his highway work, Alaska Highway souvenir booklet, as well as an "Alcan highway 1943 "pennant" which was used in the exhibit.

Edward S. Kling Collection

Kling, Edward, "An Axman's View of the Building of the Alaska Highway," manuscript, donated through the Sitka Historical Society, 1991. Kling was with Co. B, 18th engineers.

Film and Video

KAKM-TV Collection

As part of the commemoration, KAKM -TV Anchorage, created a television documentary. They collected a variety of available historic footage from the National Archives, Army Corps of Engineers, news organizations, and private individuals.

"The Alaska Highway"- video produced 1992 by Tom Morgan

Raw film footage: This material is not currently available, but is expected in the future.

Vanderberg, Willis War Comes to Alaska , color silent, 300 feet- now transferred to video

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PART 2

Alaska Highway Exhibit Collections

Jane Haigh Collection

Exhibit notebook

created by Jane Haigh, 1990-1992

contains contact sheets for all those contacted in the process of putting together the exhibit, each sheet contains address and phone #, notes on phone conversations, lists of objects.

Categories- include Archives; Organizations; Military; Individual

Research Notes

Research notebook

Alaska or Bust Exhibit Collection

This collection contains material collected in the course of research for the exhibit created for the UAF Museum in 1992. Included are correspondence, photographs, and photocopies of documents used for research purposes.

Individual Correspondence Files

These consist of correspondence, photographs, documents, and photographs of objects collected for research, study, or possible inclusion in the exhibit.

Alaska Gold Co.

Black and white photographs of potential objects by Barry McWayne. 2 Contact sheets, 7 8x10, 16- 5x7.

Alberta Provincial Museum and Archives

An inventory of 98 photographs of a project tour of Canol Pipeline and the Alaska Highway in August 1944 with 23 Xeroxes of photographs in the collection. collection.

Anchorage Museum of History and Art

Xeroxes of photographs from the collections including Iris Woolcock Collection, and contact prints of photographs from the McCutcheon Collection including Tok: Tok Lodge, Parker House, Post's Service, Tok Customs; Delta Junction: Delta Motors, Modern Motel, and Aurora Lodge, Border Trading Post, Dot Lake.

Central Circle Museum

Photo of an highway vintage truck in their collection

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Thomas Crowell Jr.

Copies of a series of letters written by Col. Albert Lane in 1944 recalling his experiences with the Army Corps of Engineers on the Alcan in 1942-43. Experiences include Christmas 1942 at a Regimental Headquarters in Canada, the trip up from Fort Ord in April 1942, reconnaissance by air of the sections from Ft. St. John to Ft. Nelson, and Ft. Nelson to Watson Lake; and constructing the pioneer road around Charlie Lake. Also includes details of an accident at Charlie lake in which 12 men drowned when their pontoon boat overturned.

Col. Lane is pictured in the February, 1943 national Geographic article on the highway, and in these letters, describes the visit of the World Wide Press photographer Sigrid Arndt and the staging of the photograph. There is a description of an assembly of Pack trains at Becker's ranch, Becker and his family, and some of the Indian guides.

Also includes Xerox of clipping about Charlie lake tragedy.

DOT-Federal Highway Administration-

A collection of Photocopies of Documents and articles- introduced with a form letter and short bibliography

THESE ARE ALL PHOTOCOPIES

A. New York times: December?? "Alcan highway is no place for Pleasure Driving" by Theodore Strauss "Third of four articles on the construction and significance of the new Canada-Alaska highway as viewed by a New York Times staff writer who has returned from an Army-approved tour, by truck and by airplane, of the route"

B. Look Magazine, April 6, 1943- 1 Page only, with Bechtel-Price Callahan sign "This is no Picnic"

C. Extension of Remarks of Hon. Homer D. Angell of Oregon in the House of Representatives Friday, Jan. 8, 1943- Rep. Angell reads into the record a poem by Hazel A. McEwen "The Canalaska Highway, and one by Richard L. Neuberger "The Great North Road."

D. "General Information concerning THE ALASKA HIGHWAY-CANADA SECTION (Northwest highway System" June 15, 1948: Travel description, regulations, and map.

E. Christian Science Monitor, "The highway to Russia" by Morris McDougall, April 3, 1943. "Shortly after completion of the Alcan Highway- that circuitous route cutting through North Americas wildest lands- a swashbuckling prospector drove claiming stakes into ground which he later said would be his location for a filling station and tourist cabins for post war traffic." "Canada and the United States are extremely interested in developing postwar tourist travel to this region, which may well become North America's new frontier."

F. Source unknown- "Mrs. Albee tells of pioneering on Alaskan highway" by Gretchen Smith. 1-12-43. She and her husband and two small children traveled by foot over 1,100 miles of the highway route prior to construction.

Dot Lake Lodge

Photographs of possible objects- old chevron signs and old gas pump.

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Milton Duesenberg

M. Milton Duesenberg's father and uncle were contractors on the Alaska section of the Highway. Mr. Duesenberg has contacted many of the Iowa construction workers and assembled photographs, film footage and objects related to the Highway construction.

This file includes correspondence with Mr. Duesenberg relating to objects used in the exhibit, plus copies of photographs donated by Mr. Duesenberg, and copy negatives.

Duesenberg video

John Freise

Freise was a construction worker, his album is in the exhibit. This file includes a description of the sleeping bag he loaned to the exhibit.

Green Alaska Inc.

Ralph Green and Lytle and Green Construction were the management contractors for the PRA on the Alaska section of the highway. This file contains correspondence from Green Alaska, Inc., a successor company; "The Green Trumpet," Fall, 1963, a company publication with a history of the Ralph Green and the company; and 6 black and white negatives with prints with construction scenes and a photo of Gulkana.

G.T.E. Alaska Northwest books- publishers

A. Photocopy "Thirty five years of The Milepost" Alaska journal, Spring 1964.

B. photocopy, 1945 fire control map- precursor to the Milepost

Albert C. Haman

son of Ray Haman, an employee of E.M. Duesenberg, Inc.
.Adventure on the Alcan (Alaskan) Highway by Ray C. Haman published in 1945- Mr. Haman's diary of his trip up the highway in the spring of 1943 in a convoy of equipment for the Duesenberg Co., and work at the camp at Midway lake, near northway.

Photocopies of documents: Employee's license; Travel Time form; Permit for Registrant to Depart U.S.; Contract of Employment; Permit to Enter Alaska

Mary Hanson

Photograph of display at the Delta Historical Society museum of Mary Hanson's china. Mary was the proprietor of Bert and Mary's Roadhouse, across the Tanana from Rika's roadhouse in Big Delta.

See also notes on a visit with Mary Hanson in Jane Haigh collection

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Virginia Heins

Harry Heins collection

Harry was a construction worker. This collection contains ephemera including permits and contracts from his highway work, as well as an "Alcan highway 1943" pennant which was used in the exhibit.

photograph of Harry Heins pennant plus Xeroxes of ephemera

William Hill

1. 3x5 photographic copies of original highway photos- 1943-44

Carl Hiller

A. "The Long Trail"- 341st Engineer regiment mimeographed newsletter August 1942, Vol. 1, No. 4, August 1942; Vol. I No 3, July 1942, May 23rd 1942, Vol. I, No. 2, June 1942; Vol 2, No 1, January 1943-

Photographs- 4 photos 2.5x2.5

Trout river, 1942

Photocopies of letters home from the highway

Roger Hughs

A. Photo Copy of letter from mayor of Edmonton to mayor of Fairbanks which traveled with first mail

Robert King

Xerox copy of an album belonging to Bob's father, Myron, a construction worker, plus Xerox copies of ephemera including tickets, immunization records, and separation record.

Louis Krize

Black and white photograph from an album

R.W. Lee

Photocopy of Alaska Highway Poems by Frank Lee, a cook for the Duesenberg's.

Loussac Library

photocopy of Alaska road Log: Covering twenty five days on the Alaska highway, by George Hayden of Anchorage, pub. 1947.

Judith Lundin

Ms Lundin's father, Col. Walter Hodge worked on the highway project first on a survey crew from Whitehorse to Northway. He was Executive officer of the 18th Engineers who built the sector between Whitehorse, Yukon Territory and

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the Alaska Boundary, and later was commanding officer of the 93 engineers in charge of constructing sector from Morley bay to Whitehorse. Prior to the highway, Hodge had been stationed in Alaska as a young lieutenant from 1930-1932 Col. Hodge was killed in a military plane crash near Mt. Hood, Oregon in April 1949. Following his death, a military apartment building in Whittier was named in his honor. Collection includes photocopies of the following:

- A. Employment history detailing military career
- B. Letters dated 1942 and 1943 from Col. Hodge to his daughter Judy (now Mrs. Judith Lundin).
- C. Photocopy of field notebook from highway reconnaissance trip. "Whitehorse, Y.T. Canada west and northwest to Mt. Scottie on US Canada border- then to Northway Airfield, Alaska, Under command of Major Walter Hodge May and June, 1942."

A most interesting field journal, Left May 18th Includes Champagne, Alshihik River, Mrs. MacIntosh at Bear Creek Roadhouse, May 21- drove 23 miles to Kluane Lake. Jack Hayden and his Indian wife

- D. Photocopies of photos-
 - 1. 5 photos from pack train trip
 - 2. Kluane Lake 7-4-42
 - 3. Road building
 - 4. Permanent and pontoon bridge- Donjek river
 - 5. Highway at Kluane lake
 - 6. Alcan opening ceremony.

E. Photocopy of 18 page typescript-"Our Trip to Alaska, 1948" By Mrs. Walter Hodge. Col. and Mrs. Hodge made a trip to Alaska over the highway in 1948.

Left Arizona July 15, 1948. Dawson Creek BC, milepost C- July 19
It is a most interesting story. Mrs. Hodge has a delightful chatty style, and notes many interesting details, about people, prices of food, meals and lodging.

Walter Mason #1

F. Document: special orders April 11, 1942-ordering 97 engineers to Ft. Lewis

G. Photo-Cpl. George Green and "Dynamite" the company pet bear
H.2- Original 10x10 black and white Aerial photographs: numbered 110-14, and 110-16, plus copy negatives, plus copies

Walter Mason #2

PHOTOCOPIES OF DOCUMENTS AND ARTICLES

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I. photocopies of Lt. Walter Mason's photographs-courtesy of Charles Mason, Journalism Dept.

Black and white photographs from Walter Mason's collection

J. Correspondence with Milton Duesenberg relating to the highway-letter from Duesenberg plus response-includes list of current (March 1991) addresses of officers of 97th engineers

K. Photocopies of various military documents

1. Outline of record groups at National Archives relating to the Highway

2. March 23, 1942 "Memorandum relative to location of a military highway in Alaska. Relates to construction of Tok Cut-off as a direct link to Ft. Richardson.

3. Feb. 14, 1942 From War Dept. Adjutant General's Office to Chief of Engineers. "It is desired that you undertake the construction with Engineer troops, of a pioneer type road from Ft. St. John, Canada, to Big Delta, Alaska, via Fort Nelson, Watson Lake, Whitehorse, and boundary, Alaska. It is further desired that you arrange with the Public Roads Administration to follow the Engineer troops...

4. Headquarters Whitehorse Sector: Monthly Progress reports to chief of Engineers, Washington, D.C. for May, June, July, August, September '42; Include General, weather, Troop dispositions, -locations, strength, supplies and equipment reconnaissance, operation status, future operations

5. Headquarters, Whitehorse Sector- July 1, 1942. Selection of Route refers to road from Whitehorse to Slana,

6. April 29, 1942- from office of the Chief of Engineers: "Specifications of Alcan highway Construction"

7. "The Canadian-Alaskan Military highway: Historical Data" Author unknown- 2 pages

8. Memorandum for the Chief of Staff: Subject: International highway- ...Action recommended- the Secretary of War Directs... with memorandum typed on dated Feb. 11 "Mr. Schott, Office Secretary of War Telephoned at 2:45 p.m., the following message," I have discussed this matter with the President, and he approves. You are authorized to immediately proceed with the project. the President has some suggestions, which he will transmit to you later. these however, will not interfere with immediate commencement of the project." R.W. Crawford, Br.Gen. GSC"

9. "Report on Hauling freight by Tractors and sleds in Alaska, the Arctic, and /or Siberia." By John H. Leavell, Lt. Col. Eng. Res. July 15, 1942 "The Alaska road now building, will be a bitter and disastrous disappointment for hauling large quantities of freight to Central Alaska on wheeled vehicles, and this same conclusion will apply to any long new roads quickly built either in Alaska or Eastern Siberia."

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L. Clipping: Stuart news, Sept. 1, 1990: "Blacks helped pave the Arctic"

M. Partial clipping??

N. Clipping Engineer Update April 1986-"Alcan: The story of Black Engineers and the road they made Reality."

Lael Morgan

photocopies of photographs from her "Miles and Miles" Exhibit.

Bob Russell

Mr. Russell worked for Horrabin Construction Co. of Iowa City, the sub-contractor for the most northerly section of construction- from Big Delta east

Clipping- Iowa City Press Citizen, June 6, 1987 "Iowa Citizens Remember going North to Alaska" by Irving Weber. Has list of 85 Iowa citizens who worked on the highway.

Donald Rawlins

Mr. Rawlins worked at the Canol refinery in Whitehorse.

Letter from Mr. Rawlins about his work

Photocopy: "Northwest newscast" [newsletter] Friday March 9, 1945. Headline: "Canol Project ends June 30th."

miscellaneous photocopies of permits, badges, etc.

Photocopies of various photos

Ray Walter

Utah Construction co. Photo- "The Last Gap" Nov. 15, 1943