INTRODUCTION

The Atlantic Richfield Company received two albums of historical photographs of the Valdez Trail area for which Bob DeArmond provided identification information. Arrangements were made in early 1982 so the library could copy the photographs which would be most useful for the library's files. This selection of 49 views were made from the two albums comprised of 96 photographs.

The Valdez Trail, a military road from Port Valdez to the Yukon River at Fort Egbert, was authorized for construction in 1899. Gold discoveries and the beginning of Fairbanks increased traffic on the trail. Winter traffic over the trail usually began in October and lasted until the end of April while swampy summer conditions usually limited travel to foot traffic. In 1905 the U.S. Alaska Road Commission was created to build and maintain trails and much effort was devoted to the Valdez Trail. In the winter of 1906-07 there were 2,300 persons, 160 head of cattle and 2,100 tons of freight that left Valdez to go over the trail. Not all went to Fairbanks as some left the trail at or near Wortman's Roadhouse at about Mile 20, to take a sled road over Marshall Pass to the Copper River Valley, etc. During the 1908-09 season, 136,002 pounds of freight and mail were carried over the trail.

About 1911 the improved Valdez Trail became known as the Richardson Trail and then Richardson Highway. All traffic over the road diminished with the completion of the Alaska Railroad from Seward to Fairbanks in 1923.

This collection of photographs shows Valdez, travel along the trail, dog and horse teams carrying the mail, freighting activity, some mining scenes, crossing the Yukon River and the riverboats. Identified roadhouses include Wortman's, Yost's, McDevitt's, Rapid's, Donnelley's and Manley Hot Springs Hotel.

Photographers whose views are in the collection include George Cantwell, Albert Johnson, P.S. Hunt, and C.L. Andrews.
1. Valdes (sic) Alaska [residential area with wooden sidewalk, center; Valdez Glacier and snow capped mountains, beyond.] ca. 1908-1910. (Geo. Cantwell)

2. Valdez Alaska [side and rear view of unidentified church in residential area; barrel lying in pond, foreground; mountains reflected in pond.] (Geo. Cantwell)

3. Bridalveil Falls--Keystone Cañon [winter view with frozen falls on canyon side; dog team with drivers, foreground.] (#74, Cantwell)

4. Government Trail at head of Keystone Canyon [pack train with riders on narrow unimproved trail at right; rocky bluff, left; stream cascading over rocks at center.] (P.S. Hunt)

5. Bridges in Keystone Canyon, Valdez-Fairbanks winter trail [planks across 2 streams; snow on sides of canyon wall.] 1904. (P.S. Hunt)

6. [Log cabin on Valdez Trail; man and horse on trail above cabin.]

7. Sheep Creek Cañon [snow filled canyon; narrow bridge, left to right; snowy mountains beyond. Canyon is Mile 18.7 on present highway.] (Geo. Cantwell)

8. Summit of Thompson Pass [four horse drawn sleds and drivers at right; tents on left; snow covered ground and mountains.] (#110, Cantwell)

9. Looking down the Summit [five horse drawn double-ender sleds with drivers at Thompson Pass; snow covered ground and mountains.] (#113, Cantwell)

10. Trail through Teikhell [Teikel] Canon [Canyon] [snow covered trail and canyons.] (Geo. Cantwell)

11. Teikhell [Teikel] Canyon. On the Fairbanks-Valdez Trail [Two dog teams with drivers on snow covered trail; unusual snow formations on canyon walls.] (Johnson)

12. The Narrows-Teikhell [Teikel] Canon [horse drawn sleds with drivers on snow covered trail; snow covered canyon walls.] (Geo. Cantwell)

13. [Four men in small passenger ferry being towed over river by cable.]

14. [Stacks of supplies(?) along snow covered trail; mountains beyond.] (#G683, P.S. Hunt)

15. [Two passengers in sled pulled by team of 9 dogs; driver behind sled: Valdez Glacier in background.]

16. Joseph Williams leaving Fairbanks for Circle City with last overland mail, April 22, 1906 [dog team with driver behind loaded sled; hill beyond.] (Johnson)

17. [Horses floundering in deep snow on trail; men and sleds at right and center.]

18. [Horses, men and sleds on snowy trail; some sleds empty; man beside bicycle on left.]
19. Trail scene near Valdez, Alaska [Five horse-drawn double-ender sleds on trail near Valdez.] (Geo. Cantwell)

20. Valdez; Gov. pack train of 30 teams returning to camp, from Camp Comfort, Jan. 2, 1905 [Teams in line on snowy trail.] (P.S. Hunt)

21. ______ outfit, 21 mules and horses, 46 sleds and 12 tons of whiskey and hardware, leaving Valdez for Fairbanks [first section on Valdez street with stores on left.] 1905. (P.S. Hunt)

22. Winter trail bridge building showing a bridge near by Valdez-Fairbanks Trail [Crew with 3 horses dragging logs over to stream for bridges.] 1904. (P.S. Hunt)

23. Working on Taslена Bridge, Mar. 18, '06 [small pile driver with upright monkey boiler and small winch; men and horses on snowy ground.] (#G788, P.S. Hunt)

24. [Team of 2 horses pulling 2 logs; driver on left; winter scene.]

25. Hewing timber [for bridge construction; men working on logs; winter scene.] (#G787, P.S. Hunt)

26. [Log float (?) with pile driving equipment and men beyond; winter scene.]

27. Copper Center, U.S. Telegraph station and Klutena River bridge [distant view of 2 bridge, center and right; telegraph station buildings, left center; small buildings beyond.] (#G750, P.S. Hunt)

28. Fairbanks-Valdez mail on the Delta Summit [horses with loaded sleds; 6 drivers; snowy trail; near Summit Lake.]


30. The White Roadhouse from opposite side of Sheep Creek [roadhouse on right beyond narrow bridge; man on bridge.] (P.S. Hunt)


32. Nested-Young outfit at Woriman's Feb. 8, 1908 [Group of horses hitched to loaded sleds and the drivers on snowy trail.] (#103, Cantwell)

33. Yost's Roadhouse [Yost's at left center with tents, far left; Pioneer Hotel at right; sleds and men on snowy trail.] (Johnson)

34. McDevitt's Roadhouse [log building, far right with loaded sleds in foreground.]

35. Rapid's Roadhouse [small building, center with horses, sleds and drivers, foreground.] (Johnson)

36. Donnelley's Road House [roadhouse on right with sleigh carrying passengers and mail, far left; other horses, sleds and drivers also shown.]

37. [Man beside pole fence with grassy field beyond; buildings on right.]
38. [Probably a clearing for a road; man with shovel near center of clearing.]

39. Placer mining somewhere in the North [two flumes on valley floor with pipelines running up slope at left; tents on slope and valley.]

40. Drifts underground, # Bel. Hunker [first claim below discovery mine; steel rails, lower right; pile of rocks at left.] (#35, Cantwell)

41. [Breakup on Chena Slough, Fairbanks; people on either side of water; Fairbanks building on far side include the "Senate" "Lacy" and "Tanana" saloons on First Ave.]

42. [Hotel and natatorium, Manley Hot Springs; large 3 story building with felled trees in foreground; natatorium at left.]

43. [Low wooden structure surrounded by stream of water; probably a greenhouse at Manley Hot Springs.]

44. Eagle Road, ARC [team of twenty horses hitches to a wheeled vehicle; trees in background; ARC possibly stands for Alaska Road Commission.]

45. [River ferry operated with haul rope on cable; small deck with latticed sides; probably on Tanana River.]

46. Transferring passengers, Yukon River. Stmr Seattle #3 on bar near Circle [loaded lightering craft, foreground; steamer near opposite shore.] July, 1905. (C.L. Andrews)

47. [Four of the five Yukon River steamboats, on skids are identified as ANGLIAN, ZEALANDIAN, BAILEY and THISTLE; in foreground are capstans used for hauling boats out of water; at Whitehouse.]

48. [River boat LAVELLA YOUNG docked at an unidentified location; people on shore and on deck; mountains on opposite side of river.]

49. [SARAH, a Mississippi River type steamboat underway on Yukon River; people on deck.]