

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

For NPS use only
received 6/8/87
date entered 10/20/87

Continuation sheet

Item number

INVENTORY

Page 9

INVENTORY

NAME: The Frank Slaven Roadhouse

LOCATION: Left bank of the Yukon, approximately 1/4 mile from the mouth of Coal Creek.

UTMs: 7.248010.401030

QUADRANGLE: Charley River B-5 SCALE: 1:63 360

ACREAGE AND BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION: Four acres, boundary drawn in a rectangle: 700' along the river bank; 250' back from the river to include all identified cultural resources.

DESCRIPTION

About 1930, the Frank Slaven Roadhouse was built above the mud flats of the Yukon near the mouth of Coal Creek. It had a big landing place, with a ramp for barges to come in and unload. By 1938, the site was comprised of a large roadhouse with a number of outbuildings, including a shed, greenhouse, smokehouse, outhouse, and cache.

The roadhouse was built ca. 1930 by Sandy Johnson, Art Reynolds, Ed Brown, Alfred Johnson, and Frank Slaven. They put it up "one round a day." Sandy Johnson, an immigrant from Finland, remembered as "a good axeman," and Reynolds did the hewing while the other three did the notching. The logs came from the Charley River (Biederman).

The 21'X21'X19' log portion of the roadhouse was likely constructed with a 16' deep two-story overhang on the south end which was later enclosed by a two-story frame addition. The walls of the two-story cabin were constructed of 10" (average diameter) spruce logs hewn flat on the interior, hewn square on the ends, and grooved on the underside to fit snugly over the log below. The corners were joined with square notches. In the addition, the walls were balloon framed. The interior and exterior were covered with beaded

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tongue and groove siding. The ground floor of the cabin was constructed on tongue and groove fir planking supported by a subfloor of spruce planks on 10" (average diameter) stringers. The second floor was built with tongue and groove planks carried by spruce joists set into pockets cut into the log walls. The ground floor of the addition, where it covered the cellar, was built with planks over 10" (average diameter) stringers. The remainder of the flooring was of tongue and groove planks on grade. The second floor of the addition was built with planks carried on joists. The original roof, which covered the entire structure, was carried by 14" (average diameter) purlins which supported a roof deck of 8" (average diameter) split logs covered by 6" of sod. In 1935 this roof was covered with a second roof composed of a set of 6" (average diameter) purlins laid on top of sod. They were placed to support a deck of randomly spaced, random width planks covered with corrugated metal. This second roof changed the pitch.

Sometime between 1935 and 1938 an arctic entry was built protecting the doorway in the south gable end. It has since been removed. There is another doorway on the east side. On the north (river) end of the building, the door was apparently converted to a window. With the exception of the south gable end, where two windows on each level flanked the doorway, one opening was placed in each wall of each room.

On the first floor, the north room served as the living room and the south room the kitchen. On the second floor, the north room was the dormitory and the south room was partitioned, giving separate rooms for Slaven and the cook, Miss Bissell (Biederman). (P18,19,20,21)

CONDITION

The Frank Slaven Roadhouse site is in excellent condition. It is currently used as a seasonal ranger station and shelter cabin in Yukon-Charley Rivers National Preserve. It is still a landmark along the river. It is still a place where travelers gather to discuss the weather and the river.

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The site is clear in the immediate vicinity of the roadhouse.

North of the roadhouse stands a greenhouse, probably part of and in the same place as the 1938 shed. East of the greenhouse stands a screened cache, probably the same one that appeared in a 1938 photograph. North of the greenhouse, on the edge of the river bank, is a corrugated metal smokehouse. The outhouse is presently east of the cabin. It is covered with drop siding popular at Fort Egbert. The same type of siding covers a large shed with garage type opening southeast of the cabin. (I7)

The roadhouse itself is well maintained. Over the years, the sinking walls have caused the floors to appear to rise and have changed the proportions of the building. A plywood shower was added to the exterior southeast corner. Park Service personnel live upstairs, the downstairs serves as a shelter for travelers. (P22,23,24,25,26,27,28;I8,9,10,11)_

The site retains a high degree of integrity. It is used and maintained by the National Park Service in the historic spirit of hospitality. The site is still visible from the river. The historic period is well represented by the Frank Slaven Roadhouse.

HISTORY AND SIGNIFICANCE

Representative of those roadhouses that served as supply centers on the Yukon for mining camps up tributary creeks, the Frank Slaven Roadhouse was built at the confluence of the Yukon River and Coal Creek. Frank Slaven is representative of the early miners who sold their claims to corporations and turned to an alternative occupation.

Frank Slaven played an active role in the small-scale placer mining that developed Coal Creek in the first third of the twentieth century. He is credited with discovering gold on Coal Creek (Knutson, Fairbanks Daily News Miner, December 12, 1935). Between 1905 and 1927 he staked

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twenty-eight claims, often in association with others (Circle District Mining Locations 2:300,308,332; 3:11,20,82,222,223,224,274,302,303,304,360,452; 4:37,38,389,390; 5:295,296,297). During these years he had a cabin, or perhaps several, up Coal Creek. He worked the same general area for about thirty years before selling out to corporations. Mining on Coal Creek afforded a small-scale driftminer like Slaven enough money to get by, but never strike it rich. In 1934 Slaven and others sold their claims on Coal Creek to Gold Placers, Inc., who brought in a diesel tractor, a hydraulic plant, and a dredge. The dredge arrived on several barges at the mouth of Coal Creek and then was hauled to the camp six miles up the creek during the winter. By 1936 there were three diesel caterpillars, a "substantial camp" on Coal Creek, a radio station, air strip, an "automobile road" the six miles up Coal Creek, and another west across the ridge into Woodchopper valley (Mertie, #897-C, 254, 251). The Company employed forty men at Coal Creek and thirty at Woodchopper (E.Patty,112).

The impact of these operations gave new life to Slaven's roadhouse. After an argument, Slaven established his roadhouse only six miles from Woodchopper Roadhouse in deliberate competition with its owner, Jack Welch. (Biederman) Slaven's roadhouse was not successful before the corporations came to Coal Creek. Charlie Biederman, who ran the mail in winters by dog team, never stopped at Slaven's because it was too close to Woodchopper. Stops were usually twenty to twenty-five miles apart. Slaven's did not have a good landing, so steamboats did not stop. Slaven was not the kind of businessman who drew customers through friendship or loyalty. He was described as short, heavy-set, and extremely nervous (Biederman; S. Patty). His rabbit stew, which he served for \$2 with reluctance, was "expected to be stretched to the point of tastelessness with the repeated addition of water" (Wharton, 171). Ernest Patty described him as "a loner" with an affection for animals, particularly a pair of ravens (E. Patty, 126-128).

Slaven's roadhouse survived because of the upstream mining camps. Stan Patty and his family would come in by steamboat

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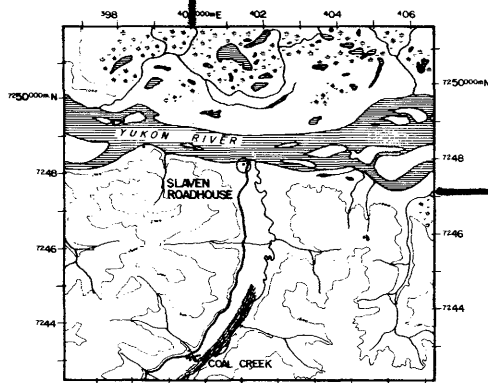
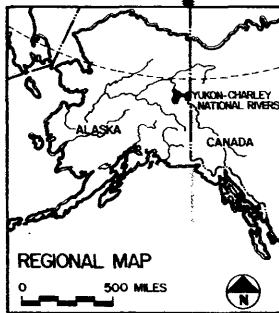
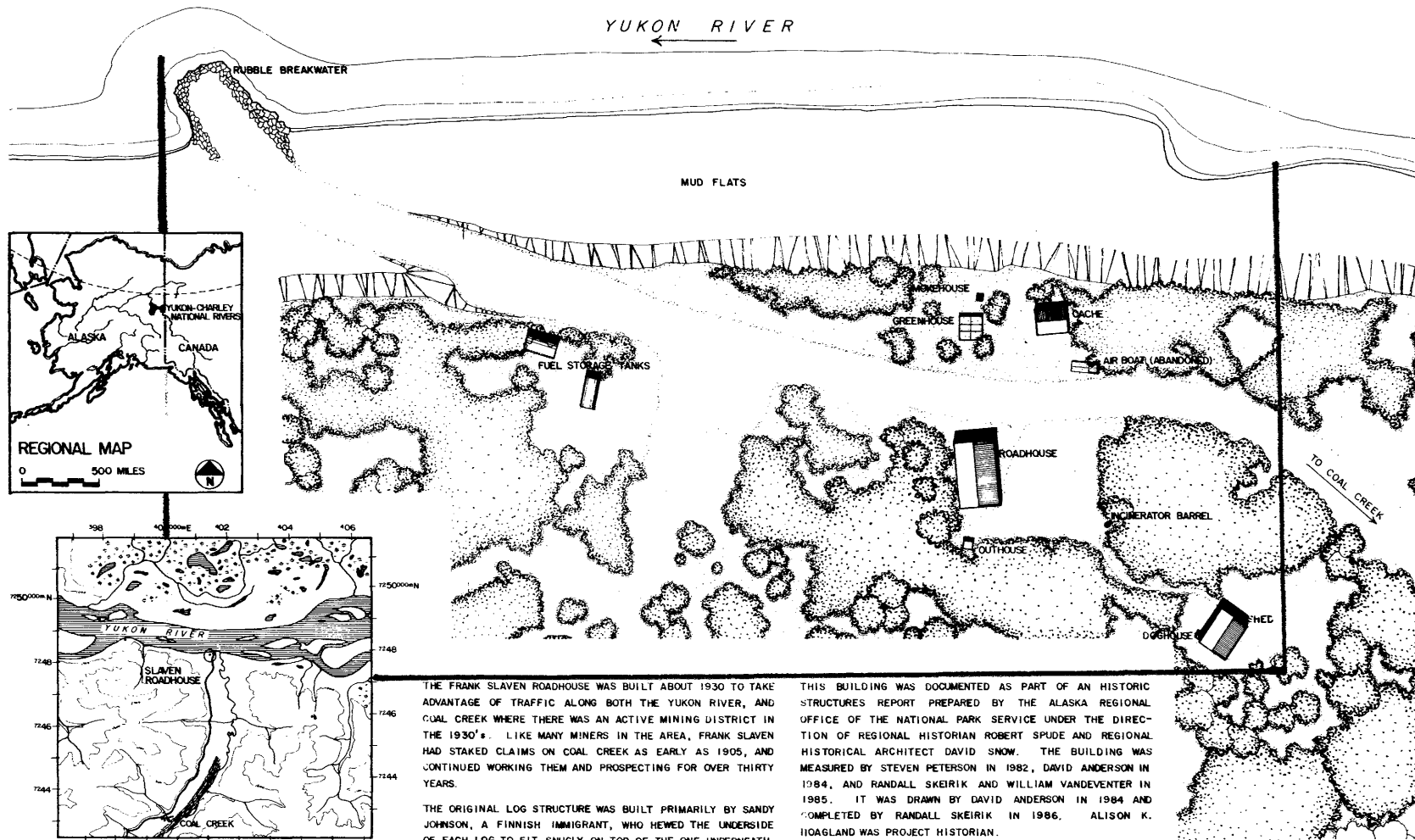
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and spend the first night at Slaven's before heading up the creek to the mining camp. After a landing was bulldozed, most of the mining freight was unloaded at Slaven's and then transported overland to the camp. The Roadhouse continued as a way station for the mining camps after Slaven left Alaska in 1938. Louise Paul, whose husband worked at Coal Creek from 1944-1952 walked down to Slaven's from the camp to do her baking. She lived at Slaven's in 1950. Mining operations closed down after World War II. Over the years, Slaven's has been looted of artifacts. The building now serves as a ranger station and shelter cabin in Yukon-Charley Rivers National Preserve.

THE SLAVEN ROADHOUSE



TAKEN FROM USGS CHARLEY RIVER (B-5) 1956
 LOCATION MAP
 SCALE: 1:63,360
 0 1 2 3 4 MILES
 0 1 2 3 4 KILOMETERS

THE FRANK SLAVEN ROADHOUSE WAS BUILT ABOUT 1930 TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF TRAFFIC ALONG BOTH THE YUKON RIVER, AND COAL CREEK WHERE THERE WAS AN ACTIVE MINING DISTRICT IN THE 1930's. LIKE MANY MINERS IN THE AREA, FRANK SLAVEN HAD STAKED CLAIMS ON COAL CREEK AS EARLY AS 1905, AND CONTINUED WORKING THEM AND PROSPECTING FOR OVER THIRTY YEARS.

THE ORIGINAL LOG STRUCTURE WAS BUILT PRIMARILY BY SANDY JOHNSON, A FINNISH IMMIGRANT, WHO HEWED THE UNDERSIDE OF EACH LOG TO FIT SNUGLY ON TOP OF THE ONE UNDERNEATH. THE FRAME SECTION WAS ADDED SHORTLY AFTER CONSTRUCTION, PROBABLY REUSING DROP SIDING FROM FT. EGBERT. THE PURLINS EXTEND THE FULL LENGTH OF THE STRUCTURE. THE CORRUGATED METAL ROOF WAS ADDED IN 1935.

THIS BUILDING WAS DOCUMENTED AS PART OF AN HISTORIC STRUCTURES REPORT PREPARED BY THE ALASKA REGIONAL OFFICE OF THE NATIONAL PARK SERVICE UNDER THE DIRECTION OF REGIONAL HISTORIAN ROBERT SPUDE AND REGIONAL HISTORICAL ARCHITECT DAVID SNOW. THE BUILDING WAS MEASURED BY STEVEN PETERSON IN 1982, DAVID ANDERSON IN 1984, AND RANDALL SKEIRIK AND WILLIAM VANDEVENTER IN 1985. IT WAS DRAWN BY DAVID ANDERSON IN 1984 AND COMPLETED BY RANDALL SKEIRIK IN 1986. ALISON K. HOAGLAND WAS PROJECT HISTORIAN.

SITE PLAN
 SCALE: 1" = 30'-0"
 0 10 20 30 40 50 FEET
 0 5 10 15 METERS

ILLUSTRATION 7

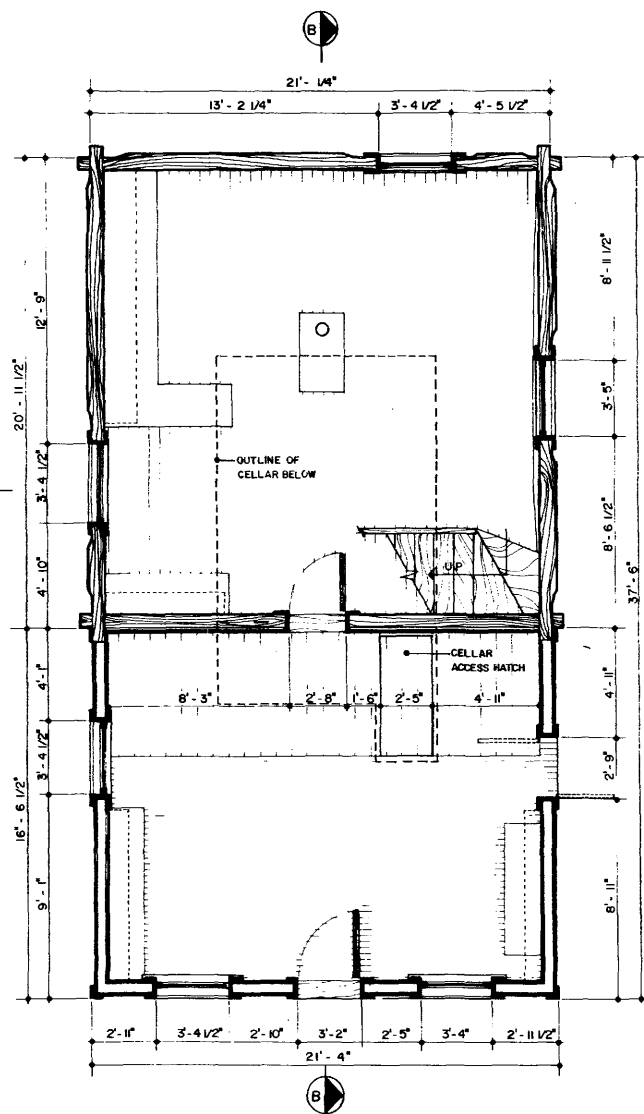
The Frank Slaven Roadhouse, site plan, with
boundary

Yukon River Lifeways

David C. Anderson, 1984

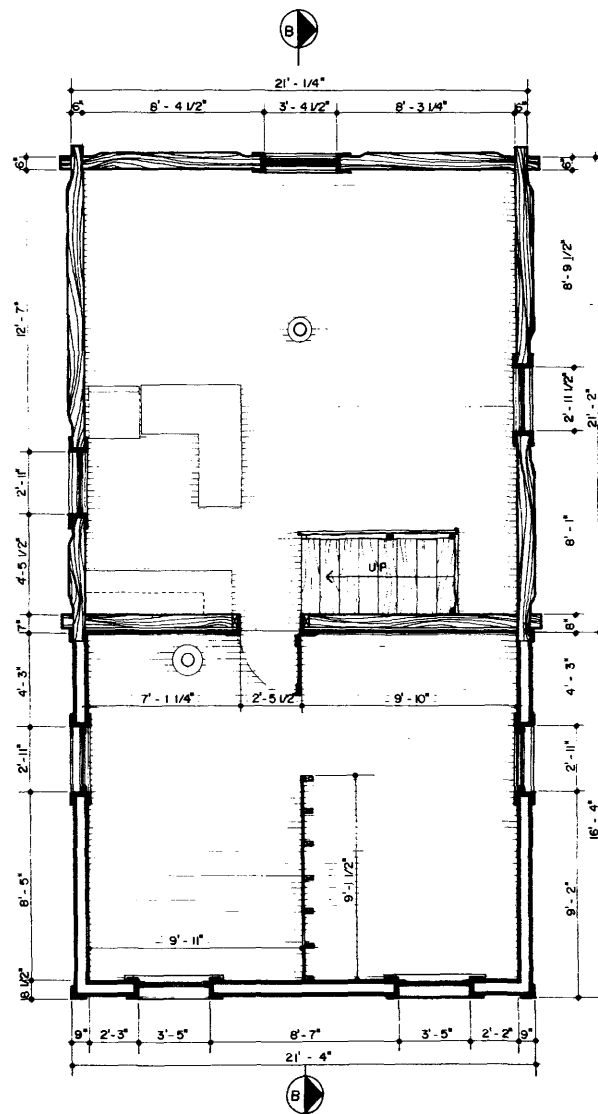
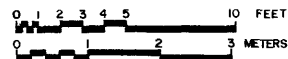
Randall Skeirik, 1986

National Park Service



FIRST FLOOR PLAN

SCALE: 3/8" = 1'-0"



SECOND FLOOR PLAN

SCALE: 3/8" = 1'-0"

MATERIALS NOTES:

WALLS:
THE WALLS OF THE CABIN ARE OF 10" AVG. DIAMETER SPRUCE LOGS HEWN FLAT ON THE INTERIOR, HEWN SQUARE ON THE ENDS, AND GROOVED ON THE UNDERSIDE TO FIT SNUGLY OVER THE LOG BELOW. THE CORNERS ARE JOINED WITH SQUARED NOTCHES. IN THE ADDITION, THE WALLS ARE BALLOOM FRAMED WITH 2" X 6" STUDS AT 1'-8" O.C. THE INTERIOR IS COVERED WITH 3 3/4" AND THE EXTERIOR WITH 6" BEADED TONGUE AND GROOVE SIDING.

FLOORS:
THE GROUND FLOOR OF THE CABIN, OF 7/8" X 3 1/4" TONGUE AND GROOVE FIR PLANKING, IS SUPPORTED ON A SUBFLOOR OF 1" X 7" SPRUCE PLANKS ON 10" AVG. DIAMETER STRINGERS. THE SECOND FLOOR IS OF 1" X 5 1/4" TONGUE AND GROOVE PLANKS CARRIED BY 2" X 8" SPRUCE JOISTS SET INTO 3" DEEP POCKETS CUT INTO THE LOG WALLS. THE GROUND FLOOR OF THE ADDITION, WHERE IT COVERS THE CELLAR, IS OF 1" X 9 3/4" PLANKS ON 10" AVG. DIAMETER STRINGERS. THE REMAINDER OF THE FLOORING IS OF 3 3/4" TONGUE AND GROOVE PLANKS ON GRADE. THE SECOND FLOOR OF THE ADDITION IS OF 1" X 6-8" PLANKS CARRIED ON 2" X 8" JOISTS.

ROOF:
THE ORIGINAL ROOF, WHICH COVERED THE ENTIRE STRUCTURE, IS CARRIED BY 14" AVG. DIAMETER CONTINUOUS PURLINS WHICH SUPPORT A ROOF DECK OF 8" AVG. DIAMETER SPLIT LOGS COVERED BY 6" OF SOD. THIS ROOF WAS SUBSEQUENTLY COVERED WITH A SECOND ROOF COMPOSED OF A SET OF 6" AVG. DIAMETER PURLINS LAID ON TOP OF THE SOD. THESE PURLINS SUPPORT A DECK OF RANDOMLY SPACED, RANDOM WIDTH PLANKS COVERED WITH CORRUGATED METAL.

ILLUSTRATION 8

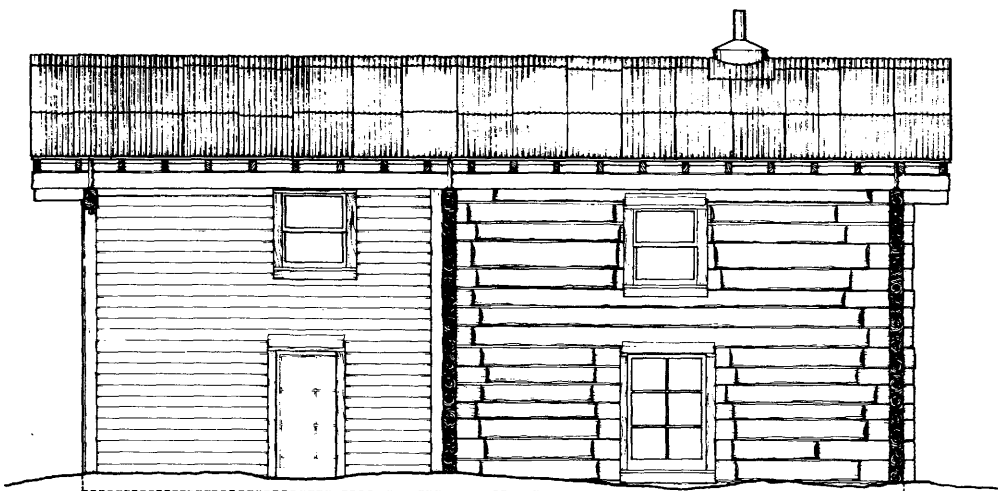
The Frank Slaven Roadhouse

Yukon River Lifeways

David C. Anderson, 1984

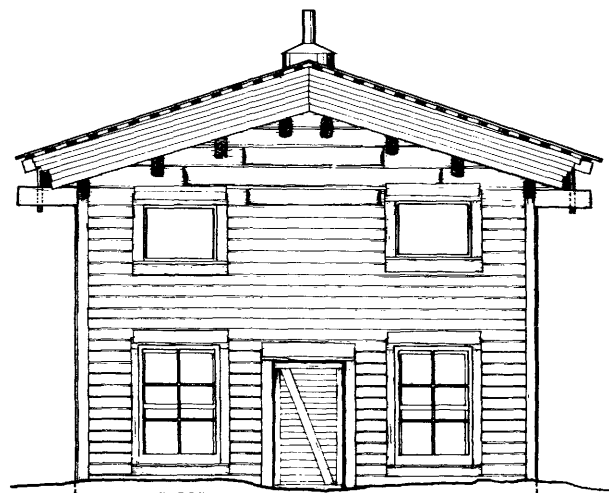
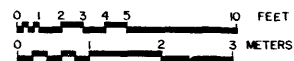
Randall Skeirik, 1986

National Park Service



EAST ELEVATION

SCALE: 3/8" = 1'-0"



SOUTH ELEVATION

SCALE: 3/8" = 1'-0"

ILLUSTRATION 9

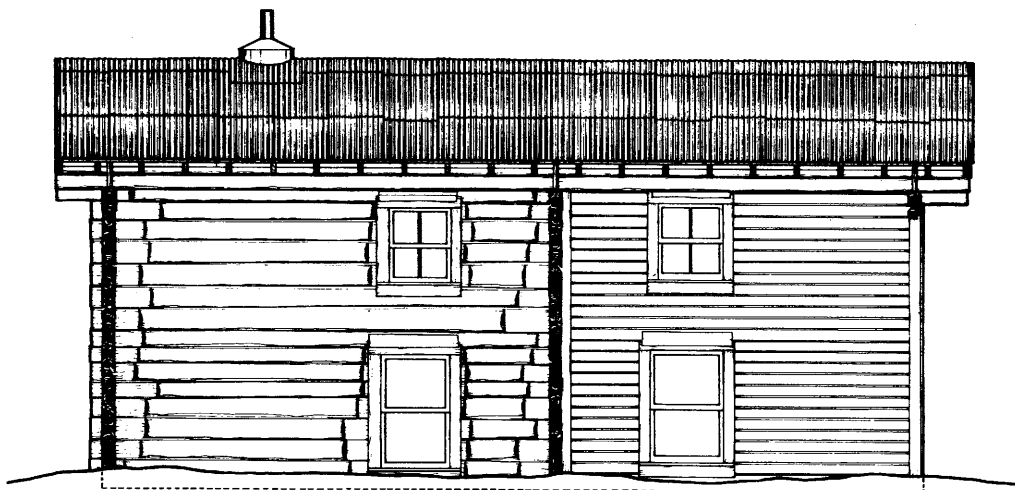
The Frank Slaven Roadhouse

Yukon River Lifeways

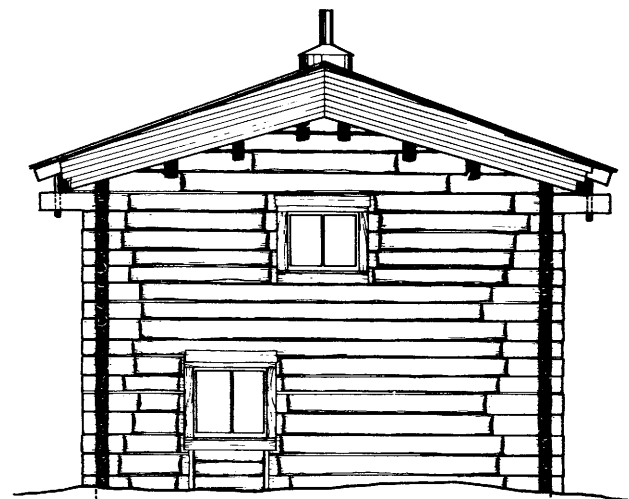
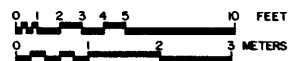
David C. Anderson, 1984

Randall Skeirik, 1986

National Park Service



WEST ELEVATION
SCALE: 3/8" = 1'-0"



NORTH ELEVATION
SCALE: 3/8" = 1'-0"

ILLUSTRATION 10

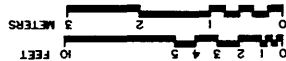
The Frank Slaven Roadhouse

Yukon River Lifeways

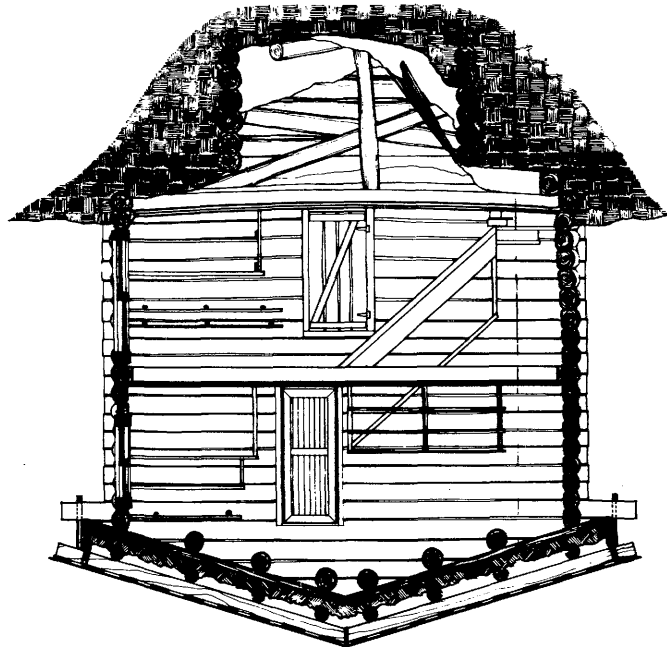
David C. Anderson, 1984

Randall Skeirik, 1986

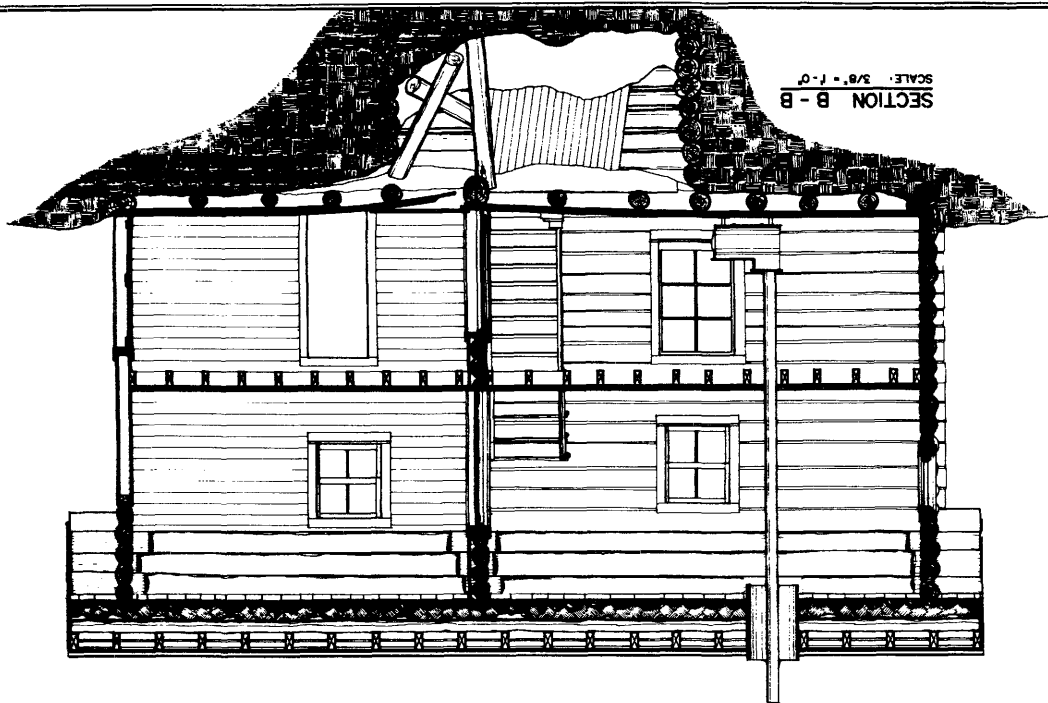
National Park Service



SECTION A - A
SCALE: 3/8" = 1'-0"



SECTION B - B
SCALE: 3/8" = 1'-0"



DESIGNED BY: DAVID C. ANDERSON AND, LINDA, BELLINI, 1988
YUKON-CHARLEY PROJECT
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
LARGE SCALE DRAWINGS OF THE SERVICE

YUKON-CHARLEY RIVERS NATIONAL PRESERVE
THE FRANK SLAVEN ROADHOUSE
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
LARGE SCALE DRAWINGS OF THE SERVICE

ALASKA

AK-42

UNION PACIFIC NATIONAL
BUILDINGS SURVEY
1987 5 or 5 meters

ILLUSTRATION 11

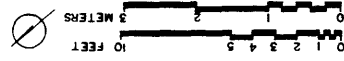
The Frank Slaven Roadhouse

Yukon River Lifeways

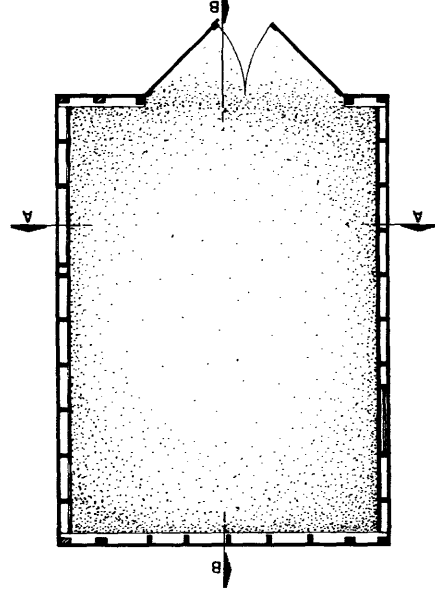
David C. Anderson, 1984

Randall Skeirik, 1986

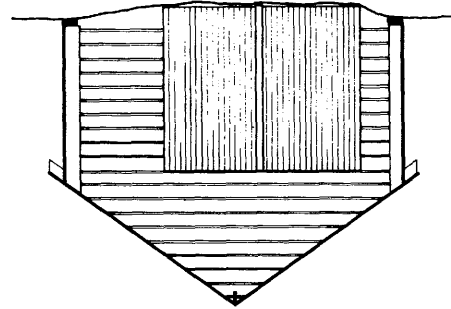
National Park Service



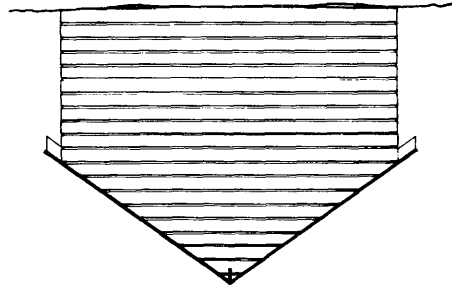
FLOOR PLAN
SCALE: 3/8"=1'-0"



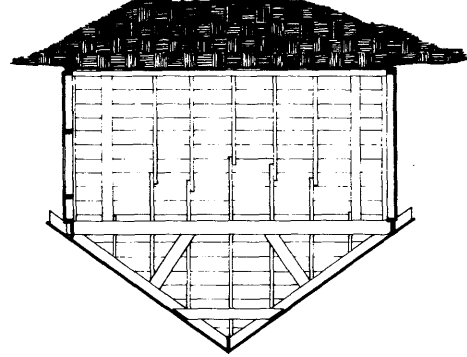
NORTHEAST ELEVATION
SCALE: 3/8"=1'-0"



SOUTHWEST ELEVATION
SCALE: 3/8"=1'-0"



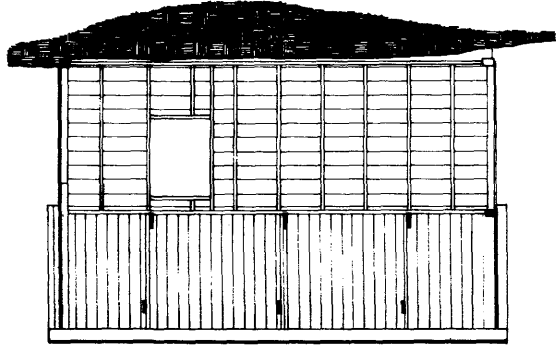
SECTION A-A
SCALE: 3/8"=1'-0"



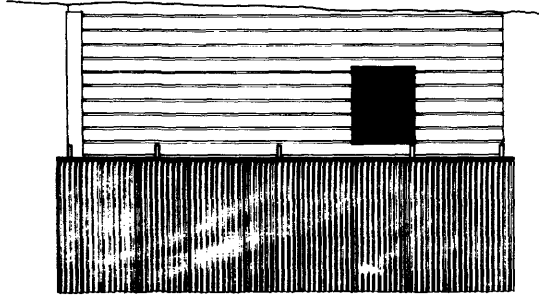
MATERIALS NOTES

THE WALLS OF THE SHED ARE FRAMED WITH 2" X 4" STUDS AT 2'-0" O.C. EXCEPT FOR THE CORNERS WHICH ARE SUPPORTED BY 3" X 5 1/2" STUDS. THE EXTERIOR IS COVERED WITH 3/4" X 3 1/2" BEADED TONGUE AND GROOVE SIDING. THE STUDS ARE EXPOSED ON THE INTERIOR.
FLOOR:
THE FLOOR IS BARE EARTH.
ROOF:
PLANKS COVERED WITH BUILDING PAPER AND CORRUGATED METAL.
2" X 6" JOISTS SUPPORT A ROOF DECK OF 3/4" RANDOM WIDTH.

SECTION B-B
SCALE: 3/8"=1'-0"



SOUTHEAST ELEVATION
SCALE: 3/8"=1'-0"



NORTHWEST ELEVATION
SCALE: 3/8"=1'-0"

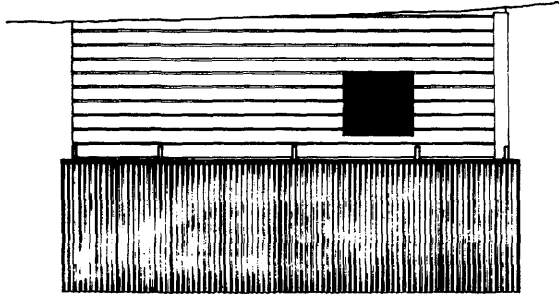


ILLUSTRATION 12

The Frank Slaven Roadhouse, shed
Yukon River Lifeways
Randall Skeirik
National Park Service, 1985



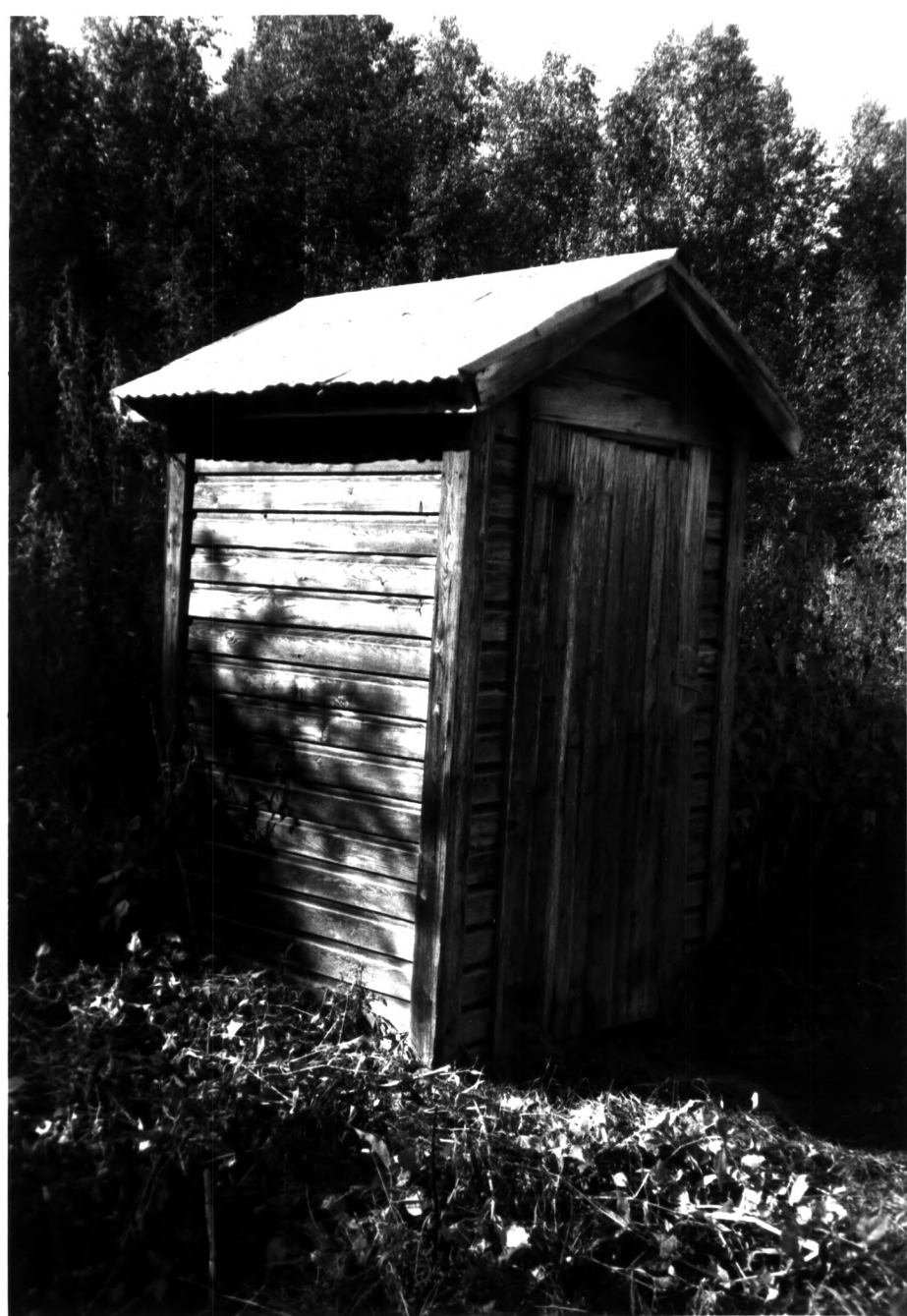
1. INTERIOR, STAIRCASE, SLAVEN ROADHOUSE;
YUKON RIVER LIFEWAYS
2. Eagle vicinity
3. Steven Peterson
4. 1982
5. NPS-ARO
- 6.
7. P23; I8, 9, 10, 11



1. INTERIOR, SECOND FLOOR, SLAVEN ROADHOUSE:
YUKON RIVER LIFEWAYS
2. Eagle vicinity, Alaska
3. Steven Peterson
4. 1982
5. NPS-ARO
- 6.
7. P24;I8,9,10,11



1. SCREENED CACHE, SLAVEN ROADHOUSE;
YUKON RIVER LIFEWAYS
2. Eagle vicinity, Alaska
3. Steven Peterson
4. 1982
5. NPS-ARO
6. looking east
7. P25;I7



1. SLAVEN ROADHOUSE, outhouse; YUKON
RIVER LIFEWAYS
2. Eagle vicinity, Alaska
3. Steven Peterson 4. 1982
5. NPS-ARO
6. looking south 7. P26;I7



1. SLAVEN ROADHOUSE; YUKON RIVER LIFEWAYS
2. Eagle vicinity, Alaska
3. Steven Peterson
4. 1982
5. NPS-ARO
6. looking west
7. P22;I7,8,9,10.11



1. FRANK SLAVEN ROADHOUSE; YUKON RIVER
LIFEWAYS
2. Eagle vicinity, Alaska
3. Jet Lowe
4. August 1984
5. Library of Congress, HABS collection
6. looking southwest
7. P27,I7,8,9,10,11



1. FRANK SLAVEN ROADHOUSE; YUKON RIVER
LIFEWAYS

2. Eagle vicinity

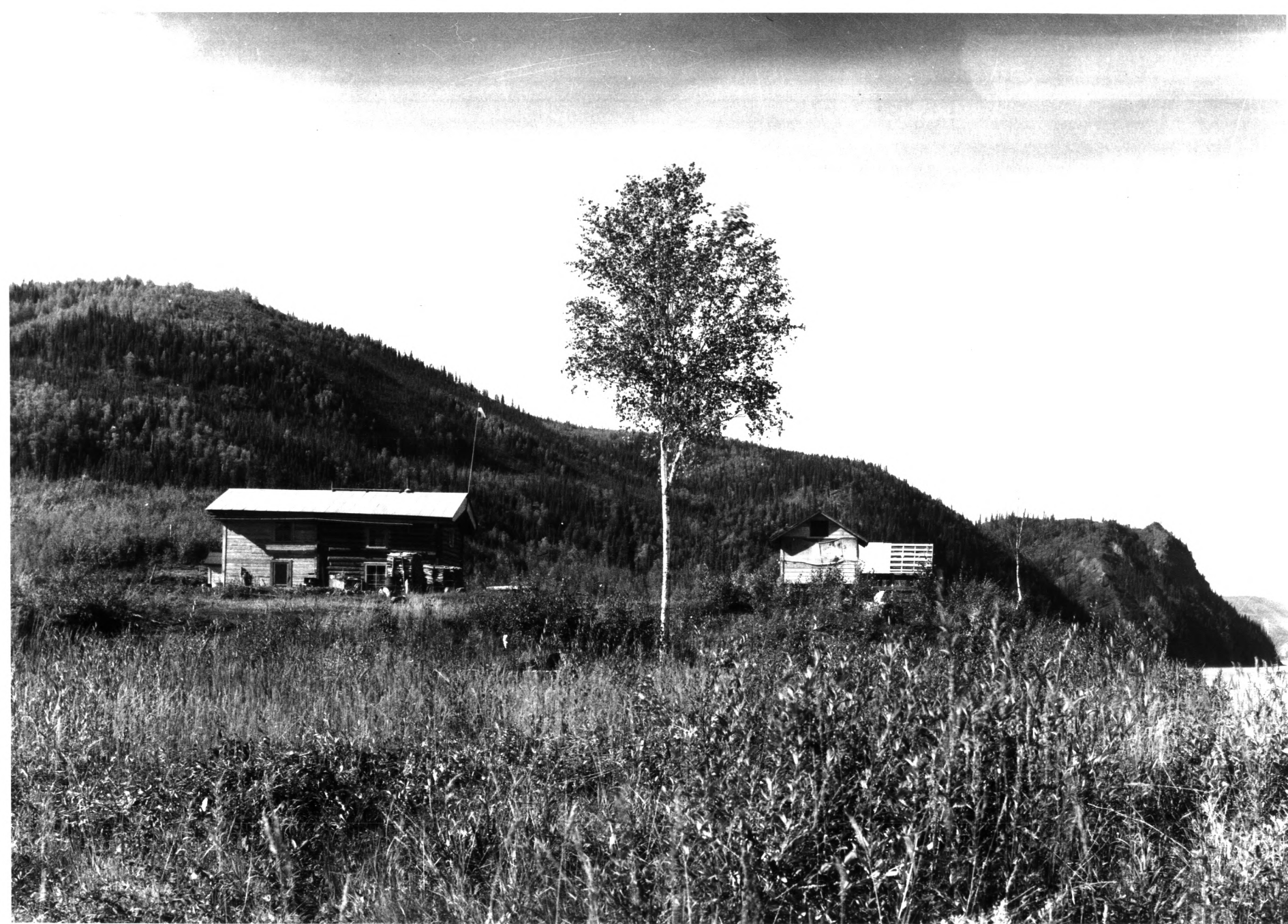
3. Jet Lowe

4. August 1984

5. Library of Congress, HABS collection

6. looking west

7. P28;I7,8,9,10,11



1. SLAVEN ROADHOUSE, GENERAL VIEW; YUKON
RIVER LIFEWAYS
2. Eagle vicinity, Alaska
3. J.B. Mertie, Jr. 4. August 26, 1938
5. USGS, Denver #2507, 2508
6. looking west 7. P20;I7



1. SLAVEN ROADHOUSE, SIMILAR VIEWS OF
CABIN AND GARDEN; YUKON RIVER LIFEWAYS
2. Eagle vicinity, Alaska
3. J.B. Mertie, Hr. 4. August 26, 1938
5. USGS, Denver #2493,2394
6. 7. P21; I7



1. SLAVEN ROADHOUSE, MAN AND WIFE AT LEFT,
OWNERS, ALSO GOLD CLAIM; YUKON RIVER
LIFEWAYS
2. Eagle vicinity, Alaska
3. 4. 1935
5. Everett S. Hammon Collection, UA Fairbanks
6. looking west 7. P19; I7,8,9,10,11



1. GENERAL MCRAE, MRS. BAKER, FRANK SLAVEN,
MISS BISSELL, SLAVEN ROADHOUSE;
YUKON RIVER LIFEWAYS
2. Eagle vicinity, Alaska
3. Ernest Patty
4. ca. 1934-36
5. NPS-ARO, courtesy of Stan Patty
- 6.
7. P18; I6