

**Agnes Mayo Moore Oral History Project  
River Trip 2000**

Tara Fallat and Agnes Mayo Moore

Okay, we'll start. The reason I decided to make a book about my life, and childhood, is because I know very little about my own family, where my Dad was from. I know my Mom came from Koyukuk area and she's got a lot of relatives in that area. I don't know who they are, and its kind of shame like that. Now I want my children and grandchildren to know a little about my life, and how I was raised.

Elder Agnes Mayo Moore, at home in Fairbanks, April 2001

I met Elder Agnes Moore in the summer of 1999, and at her request began working with her to document her Life History. We met at my cabin weekly over the course of a year to record traditional stories, subsistence knowledge, and family history. One February evening, after recording a story about caribou migration near her family's homestead, we decided to visit the places of her childhood along the Yukon and Tanana Rivers. With visions of summer days on the Yukon River, we sought funding, assembled a crew, and gear.

In late July of 2000, with Greg Taylor as our boat driver and Michael Millar as our technical assistant, we pushed off from Manley Hot Springs on a ten-day journey to document Grandma Agnes' early life in subsistence fishing and hunting camps.

Within a few hours of traveling up the Tanana River, Grandma Agnes directed us to a point along the expansive wilderness shoreline. It was the site of an historic Native village called 'Cross Jacket' where her family lived in during the 1930s. We climbed the severely eroded bank to find three logs remaining of a cabin, a cache, and a barrel stove rusting in the overgrown grasses. Our digital recording equipment was running, but it was a quiet moment. We moved slowly around the old camp; Grandma Agnes lost in memories, and I in awe of history.

Along the way were welcomed into fish camps, and into the Athabascan villages of Tanana, Rampart, and Steven's Village, by local people who were honored to host a well respected Elder. Inspired by the

landscape she had not traveled in forty- three years, Grandma Agnes led us to the unmarked historical sites of Old Mission, Morelock, Little Salt, Big Salt, and Rapids, and retold the story of the last Athabascan war. Like glacial sloughs that feed the Yukon River, Grandma Agnes' stories of Athabascan traditions, culture and lifestyle flow together seamlessly to create her Life Story.

*The featured river trip, covering four hundred miles in Alaska from Manley Hot Springs to Steven's Village, was a collaborative project between Athabascan Elder Moore and researcher Tara Fallat.*

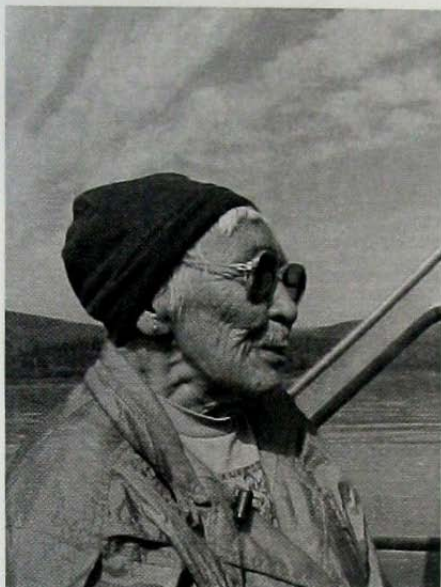


Figure 1. Agnes Mayo Moore

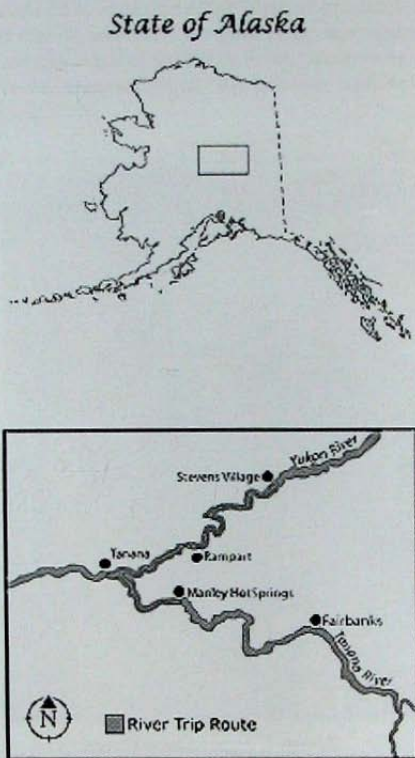


Figure 2. Our ten day journey covered 400 miles from Manley Hot Springs to Steven's Village along the Tanana and Yukon Rivers. Maps by Sara Grocott. Source: US Geological Survey.

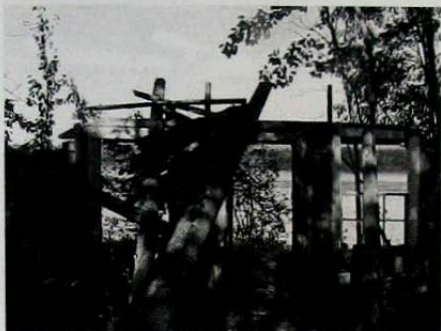


Figure 3. "This is the house frame at Crossjacket, it looked just like the one we lived in. My step-mother lived there first so that's how we got there". (Tanana River)



Figure 4. View of Yukon River from Rampart





Figure 5. "This is the house in Rampart. When we first got married we had no place to live. I had to live with bunch of relatives of Arthur's, my husband, in this big house that used to be Robert's house. We had no house to live in. So I remember I had to stay in the bedroom all the time because I was real shy when I first got married. So this house my Dad bought it, then we moved in there. That's how come we lived in this place for about eight years I guess". (Yukon River)



Figure 6. "Rampart dry fish and birch canoe. My Dad made canvas canoe every year". (Yukon River)





Figure 7. Smoked Yukon River Salmon



Figure 8. "Greg just being our Captain. He was so neat; he really took good care of us". (Yukon River)



Figure 9. "There's Linda Johnson's fish wheel. And Mike is standing there like he's pushing the fish wheel up. Linda is moving her fish wheel out of the water for the winter. I guess she get a lot of help in the spring". (Yukon River)



Figure 10. Looking for agates on the beach at Little Salt, Yukon River



Figure 11. Old Mission on the Yukon River



Figure 12. Weathering a rain shower on the Yukon River





Figure 13. ) Building a demo raft used for moving seasonal subsistence camps



Figure 14. Recording at Charlie Bolan's fish camp on the Yukon River



Figure 15. "Oh, Little Salt. Trees are all grown in it! That's where we stayed every year in the wintertime at Little Salt (during 1930s). That's where I spent about ten days all by myself when Arthur was a baby. He was just nine months old. I was poor—scared a little bit, but not too much. That's when Arthur crawled on the table and knocked the only lamp off the table". (Yukon River)



Figure 16. "Charlie Bolan's camp near Bear Creek: I'm telling Tara about how we used to use these cotton trees to make toys out of it. My brother used to make boats out of them all the time. Also used the wood for fishnet floaters."