LLOYD DODDING

Lloyd Dodding is a long time resident of Two Mile. Lloyd tells how he first came to Two Mile and his life from there on.

"Grandfather Dodding came out from England. He worked for a farmer in Southern Ontario and then came out to Spences Bridge and worked for a fruit farmer. That's where he met Jimmy Tait. I heard of Hazelton from my grandfather and, of course, when I decided to come to Hazelton he was working at Wrinch Memorial Hospital. He came through Hazelton in 1896 by packhorse all the way from Ashcroft. He was with Jimmy Tait, an anthropologist who was studying Native people. They came as far as Hazelton, sold their horses and took the steamboat out to Essington and then to Victoria, Spences Bridge and Merritt from there. They used horses for packing. Horses are easier to handle than mules. They had two packhorses and a saddlehorse each. There were three other men. They would make about 20 miles per day. I don't know how long it took them - it is quite a journey. The steamboats were still running when they got here so it couldn't have been too late in the summer. The steamboats ran when water was high. They couldn't run when water was low, too many gravel bars. They had as many as six steamboats at one time. They came from Port Essington to Hazelton. Grandfather came during the '30s and worked at Terrace then went back to Nicola Valley.

Then about the end of World War II, he came back to Hazelton and worked as a gardener at the hospital. And being as he was up here, I decided to come up looking for a farm. I got a job with the Department of Highways to start with. A crew of us went to tear down the buildings at the airport at Woodcock, that was a our first job. That was in 1946. Then I had a chance to go to Fort Babine with Allen Benson, Percy Foster and Tony West, the provincial policeman that was here at that time. That trip took three days each way. We took a packhorse and we had three saddlehorses. The fish warden at Babine took us to the counting gate where they count fish and on the way down we were talking to three Natives from Milkitkwa who had just caught a spring salmon. It would be, oh, more than 6' long. I don't know what the girth would be, but I would estimate it would be about 130 pounds at the least. It was <u>fantastic</u> and

the fish warden didn't get the fellows to bring it up to Fort Babine and weigh it. That was an extraordinary fish. That's not a fish story. You can ask Mr. Benson. It was a fantastic fish. We were really surprised to see such a big fish. The counting gate was about a mile down the river after the river runs out of Milkitkwa Lake near Babine. Nilkitkwa Lake is the river actually but it is quite wide and then gradually narrows down about a mile before you get to the counting gate. They put the counting gate in every summer and take it out in winter. They can count all fish and they know how many come up there. It must have gone up the river before the counting gate was put in, in the spring because he couldn't have got through the counting gate. He was so big!

Hazelton had no modern houses like there are today. The present churches in Old Hazelton were all there at that time. Two Mile and other towns have changed most. In Two Mile where the Loring, Olson, Lattie residences are there were no houses. It was just open field and the only houses right around there were Mrs. Brown's house and Mother's house and Barney Mows and Hughie MacMillan, Sr., Scotch Hughie MacMillan and Gordie MacLennan's cabin. Then there was Mr. Hodder's - it wasn't Mr. Hodder's then, it was Harry Martin's cabin. Those people have all passed away except for Mrs. Brown.

Deno built Mother's house. He moved it from his son-in-law's place way up the creek (the son-in-law's name was Mike George). Mike and him hauled the house down from his place where the Scotty Withers is now and reconstructed it. There must have been two houses there at the time. Mike George must have had a house of his own. I think these houses were used ~~with~~ when the Silver Standard Mill was operating - in the early days of 1914, I think it was. That mill was closed down when I came. Silver Standard started up fresh two or three years after I came and they built a new mill right at the mine and all the buildings were right at the mine. They operated for 10 years, I guess, then they ran out of ore.

When we first moved to Two Mile, Mr. Senden had quite a few milk cows and they used to roam all over Two Mile. They kept the brush and the grass down. It looked like a park at

that time. It was nice to have those cattle around.

There used to be road houses in the early days, but that was before my time. I don't know where they were. People claim there was one on Mother's property, but I don't know. Where Miro's place is there was a house there Mr. York built. He sold it to Dave Pratt and then the house burned down. The only other houses up this end were Mrs. Webster's house, Jack Robinson's, Mr. Arthur Hindle, and George Clarke's little cabin. Then Danley built the house Alvin Forsyth is living in now. It must have been about 1950. Then later on, the other houses - Bill Ludwig, Virgil Jensen and then Valencourt built behind Pat Lezinski's. Fargey built his about that time. Most of the houses were built not too long ago. There were about half as many people as there are now. Most were working at Silver Standard, the ones that built new houses. The Chris Wyssen house used to be Collin's store. It did quite a business at one time. When Collins moved away, the store goods were moved to O.K. Esso store.

There was quite a bit of logging here. There were three mills up this Nine Mile Road. Bob Allan had a mill there and Bob Willan and Gordon Leary had a mill past the Silver Standard. I think there was another mill up the Nine Mile Road, too.

There was in the neighbourhood of 50 mills in the Hazelton area at that time. They were small mills. I think it was better for the country than the one big mill is today. Although some people didn't get their pay, but just the same, there was a continuous supply of timber where now there isn't. They log it off, clean cut. Well, then it's going to be another 70-80 years before there's any more timber to be cut and what they cut then will be nothing but limbs. It won't be good saw timber. It will only be fit for pulp. The days of the saw timber are gone. Saw timber is only created through trees growing in the shade of other larger trees. When they grow in the shade they grow straight up. They don't limb out where if they are grown like they are today, planted in cut-off areas where they are all the same age and the sun gets them equal, therefore, they are nothing but a mass of limbs.

There was a lot of trapping. Fur was a very good price.

There were martens and they were worth $60. Beavers were a good price, too. Fur was good providing you brought your fur in at the right time of the year. The price went down at Christmas time, when the trappers came in. If they had got in the first of December with a bunch of furs, they'd have got a good price. The price went up after Christmas to encourage the trappers to go back out again, you see. If they'd have just stayed in a month and waited before they sold their furs, they'd have done well. But, of course, they were anxious to get their money as soon as they got in and they didn't think the price would be going up. Then, in the spring when they came in again the price was down again. I think they do those tricks with produce still.

Berry picking doesn't change a lot. You always have your good years and your bad years. I think the berry picking now is better, but it's not a very important thing to tell you the truth. I'd rather see the timber than improved berry picking because there's always enough berries. These huge clearings they've made now are conducive to good berry picking. Raspberries grow like mad on these burns. It means a lot of raspberries. It would take a tremendous lot of people out picking berries to keep up with the amount of berries that we have now. There's no excuse for anyone not getting enough raspberries anyhow. Huckleberries, you have to go fairly high for huckleberries. I've seen the odd real good year for huckleberries, but not very many. The thing is with them they are always good in different places in different years. You have to be a scout in order to scout out the different patches and find out where they are good.

There were a lot of bears when I came. They are like the berries - some years lots, some years very few. It depends on how much feed there is farther away on the mountains. I never saw grizzlies for quite a long time. The only ones I did see were on Nine Mile Mountain one year when feed was very scarce. I saw four that summer. They were beautiful. They had black backs and tan heads and legs, just like a German Shepherd dog. Very pretty. They were so hungry and so deprived of food, they dug up all the lupins on Nine Mile Mountain. You couldn't find a live lupin after they got through. Lupins

have a root something like dandelion. They don't normally eat lupin roots, but this year there was nothing else for them to eat. They cleaned up the lupins. It's a wonder there's one on Nine Mile Mountain now.

Cataline came from Catalonia in Northern Spain, in the Pyrenees. He came by boat to Louisiana, somewhere around the Gulf of Mexico. He walked and rode somehow to California, trekked north to B.C. When he got to Yale he met up with an old friend of his from Catalonia. This chap had been in business and had enough money to loan Cataline enough money to buy a pack. I don't know how many mules he had in his first pack train. It must have been a fair amount. Cataline went into the packing business. He started packing in the Cariboo gold rush. He packed for years from Ashcroft to Barkerville. Then, when Cariboo gold rush petered out, he packed for Manson Creek gold rush. Then, when that petered out, he packed for the Klondike, from Hazelton to Dawson City. While Cataline was packing to Barkerville there was an amusing incident. He had loaded up two trains in Ashcroft and taken his 50 mules ahead. He had a Native fellow in charge of the second packtrain. Cataline helped unload at Barkerville. He found one packet missing so he asked the packer where the packet was. The Native fellow said, "That packet went bad. I threw it out at Soda Creek. I was afraid it was going to spoil all the rest of my load." Cataline said, "Well, do you know what that was? That was Limburger cheese, special order for a wealthy man in Barkerville."

Then Cataline got packing into the Klondike and Dawson City for years. Then he got the contract for Telegraph Line. Then he took people to Dawson - travellers. He had school teachers that were going to Dawson. The teachers were in the second packtrain. Cataline had got to Dawson with his train. For some reason or other the mules got the idea they weren't going to swim the Yukon River at Dawson and those fellows couldn't get the mules into the water for love nor money. Cataline heard him across the river. He got in a boat and went over. He started swearing at the mules in Spanish. He ranted and raved at those mules for about 15 minutes, then he led

those mules up to the water and the mules all walked right in, swam across.

When the Telegraph Line disbanded Cataline moved to Telegraph Creek. He did the odd bit of packing - he was getting pretty old by then. He did the odd bit of packing to different places in the Omenica, somewhere about 1936. It was in 1936 he decided to move out to George Burns' farm to retire. When he decided to move away from Telegraph Creek, Willie Campbell, one of his packers, saw a big smoke at Cataline's farm. He didn't know that Cataline was moving. He thought something had happened up there so he got a bunch of the boys and they rushed up there and here was Cataline, he had the mules all packed up and he was down at one end of the field. The house and barn were going up in flames. Willie said, "Cataline, what's up? What are you donig?" Cataline had a big grin on his face. He said, "I'm moving out." He had his packtrain all ready to go and he was cleaning up before he went. Then he stayed at George Burns' where George had a cabin for him. He ended his days at the Burns' farm. That's where Marty Allen lives now.

I've read about Norman Lee's cattle drive through the area and the problems he had. The first trouble he met was at Rose Lake. There's a flat there. They call Poison Flat. A lot of his cattle got larkspur poisoning there. He lost quite a few. Then, of course, he didn't meet up with so much serious trouble except lack of feed. He had no feed for his animals. They must have been just nothing but skin and bones by the time they got to Lake Bennett. He butchered his animals at Lake Bennett and loaded them on scows they had built and took them down the lake. A big storm came up and swamped the scows. He lost all his animals. If he had butchered his animals and hung them up they would have kept because it was so cold then the lake was freezing. He could have taken the meat down the lake on dog-team when the river froze over. So he lost everything!

Long before there was much of a road past Marty Allen's place - when Norman Haagen was about 16 - we wanted to see the Upper Kispiox, so I made a deal with Haagen boys. They supply horses, I supply grub. This was in June and was still cold.

We got grub together, went up to Haagen's, took horses and went up the valley. We camped the first night where the 'A' frame is. There used to be a barn near there. It rained during the night and my boots got soaking wet. In the morning I put my boots a little too close to the fire and burned them. They buckled right in. They were the best boots I ever had. Luckily Henry had a spare pair which he loaned me. We went on from there and camped, then we went up as far as Sweedin River, where Sweedin runs into Kispiox. That's as far as we could go because the river was so high. We came back and camped at Corral Creek. Well, we still had lots of daylight and explored up back of Corral Creek. We saw a grizzly track about 18" long, it must have been an enormous animal. I had a 30-30 and Henry had a 30-30, we took a drink out of the creek. Henry left his cigarettes there, so when we got back to the horses we had to go back to get them. They were afraid they might meet the grizzly. We were glad the grizzly stayed away from us and the horses. The next day we got back to Tommy Jack's cabin and camped near there that night. We got back to Haagen's the next day. Maybe not a spectacular trip, but the mosquitoes and black flies had a good feed!

When I came up here there was a Native medicine man that travelled the whole of the Omineca area. His name was Luke Fowler. Luke decided he was going up to Telegraph Creek. On the way he stopped in to visit George Burns. George was a great believer in Luke's ability to forecast weather. George said, "Luke, I'll give you $10 if you can tell me what the weather is going to be like for the next two weeks." His reason for asking Luke was that George's hay was ready to cut. Luke lay down on the grass and watched the sky for a couple of hours and by this time it was lunch time and George was getting impatient. So, he said, "Well, Luke, what's your verdict?" Luke said, "We're going to have two weeks beautiful sunny weather." George was very pleased and he gave Luke his $10 and he said, "Come on in, we'll have dinner." After dinner Luke went merrily on his way north. George harnessed the horses and hooked up to the mower and cut hay for several days until he had it all down - there was about 100 acres. Then he raked it

and it started to rain. It rained all summer! So, George lost all his hay! That winter George took his horses up the Skeena almost to Kuldoe - there was huge river flat where the grass was very high and not much snow - so George's horses came through in good shape. Luke went through past George's at night after that bad forecasting!

Luke was a real medicine man. The old Natives called on him when they were sick. Of course, he travelled so much he was hard to find. He went as far north as Telegraph Creek and to Takla Lake and Vanderhoof and back to his area. You must remember all his travelling was by foot. He was a bit of a prospector, too, that took up some of his time.