# TRUCK MAKES RUN FROM SEATTLE TO FAIRBANKS IN FIVE DAYS 18 HOURS

### Gene Rogge and Art Erickson Negotiate Highway Via Alcan and Winding Connecting Southern Route

Rolling every foot of the way from Seattle to Fairbanks via the Alcan Highway and connecting roads from the south, Gene Rogge and Art Erickson, Jr., arrived in the Alaska city at the end of their journey February 26 just five days and 18 hours after they started, in a truck.

Rogge, head of the Sourdough Express, bought the truck, a four-wheel drive, model H. A. transport, from Glenn Carrington and Company in Seattle. Young Erickson is the son of Arthur F. Erickson, vice president of the Carrington Company. He recently was discharged from the army, was en route to Kantishna, where he will be engaged in mining.

**Distance Covered**

Rogge's speedometer clocked the distance from Seattle to Fairbanks at 3030 miles in contrast to the 2995 miles reported by Oliver Anderson and Charles Porter on their recent trip out. Rogge claims his figure is correct—that his speedometer checked accurately on the test he made just out of Fairbanks.

The coldest weather he found on the entire trip was at Grande Prairie where it was 15 below zero for one night.

The road, he reported was in perfect condition, even the stretch between Edmonton and the beginning of the Alaska Highway that is often reported bad. It was a "wonderful road" from Dawson Creek to Fairbanks.

Rogge carried six tons of freight in the truck. Rogge, a veteran trucker of the North, admitted it was largely an endurance test, driving through in the time he did, and that he did not sleep more than six hours total on the trip. He often has driven 48 hours with one hour's sleep.

**Log of the Trip**

Young Erickson, in a letter written at Fairbanks to his father in Seattle, wrote an interesting sketch of the trip, saying in part:

We left Seattle Wednesday Feb. 20 at 6 p. m., and arrived here in Fairbanks Feb. 26 Tuesday at Noon.

"We went from Seattle to Spokane, from there up through Sandpoint, Idaho and went over the border at Kingsgate. From there we went into Calgary, and from there to Edmonton. The roads along there were none too good, and in some spots the snow was drifted on the road. Going from Calgary to Edmonton, we got on the wrong road, and lost 3 hours tracking back. That is one of the big handicaps in Canada no sign posts giving directions where to go.

In Edmonton we gassed up, and ate, and got our permits. We also stopped here and ate. They were having an ice carnival, and the town was crowded. It is a nice place with wide streets. The weather was mild.

We next left Edmonton and went thru Athabasca, High Prarie, and Grand Prarie, up to the start of the Alcan Highway, at Dawson Creek, B. C. There we had the truck checked over, and picked up our legal permit forms. They have lots of horses up in that part of the country, the farmers using them, as farmers in the States would use trucks.

We stopped at Fort St. John, and ate and picked up some sandwiches, to eat on the way, as the next stop for food would be Watson Lake. At St. John, they have a small sawmill, thats about all I could see of the town.

It was night when we drove into Fort Nelson, so we couldn't see much, but we made very good time, as the road was in very good shape, not much snow, and graded. Along the way there are Canadian Highway Maintence Camps, and aslo about every 10 to 15 miles there are emergency shelters in case you break down. The only travel you see on the highway are R. C. A. F. trucks.

We pulled into Watson Lake around 5 o'clock in the evening and ate. It was on Sunday. There is no real town at Watson Lake. About 10 miles before you get there, there is a place called Lower Post, where there is a Hudson Bay Trading Post, and a small eating place, where we stopped and ate. Had caribou steaks. We had a hard time finding a place to get gas there so drove down to a R. C. A. F. Post, and they directed us to some gas. While we were at the post we went over to the canteen, and had a beer. Got our gas, from a civilian pump where the buses coming from Whitehorse to Edmonton gas up."

**In Whitehorse Area**

Driving from Watson Lake to Whitehorse, we ran into a snowstorm, and we had to drive in for about an hour. Then it cleared up, and it was nice again. It never at any time got real cold. We pulled into Whitehorse in the morning, and had the oil changed in the truck, and gassed up. Gene and I had a shave, and ate. We then went over to customs, got by them, and then had our permits O. K.'dby Royal Canadian Mounted Police at the station there in town.

From Whitehorse, we made our way to Kluane Lake, and to Burwash Lading. At the cut-off to Haines we went through a checking station run by the R. C. M. P. At the lower end of Kluane Lake, there is a maintainance camp, and we picked up a fellow and drove him to Burwash Landing, which was 40 miles. The scenery around the Lake is especially pretty. There is a long wooden bridge you cross, at one end of the lake, that has been going out every year.

At Burwash Landing, we stopped and had dinner, getting in there around 6 at night, just 6 hours driving time from Whitehorse. We also had a beer there at the Landing, and talked with the residents, of which there aren't very many. That is the place where O'Hara Bus Lines stops overnight, on their run to Whitehorse. We passed one of their buses that day, coming down.

From Burwash Landing, we went on up past Northway, and crossed the border into Alaska. Stopped at a maintainance camp, and had some coffee, and a bit to eat. Came to Tok Junction and dropped off a bucket for the Sunshine Mining Co. Bucket, and other parts. We also went through another checking station, run by the U. S. Amry.

From Tok Junction into Fairbanks the road is in excellent shape, and you can average 40 to 50 miles an hour on it. We had six ton on the truck, and that would keep it rolling. Stopped again for a checking station at Big Delta. We stopped at Richardson, and had some coffee, and cookies, the first thing we had to eat since leaving Burwash Landing. From Richardson, we drove on into Fairbanks, arriving at Tuesday noon. The trip was over, and we were both mighty tired, as we slept only in the cab, and one can't get much sleep from that.

I figure we lost about 21 hours driving time, with breakdowns, stopping to gas up, and eat."

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Just for a change we'd like to see a "For Rent" epidemic that would make landlords love children.