

C A P T I O N S

TALL TOTEMS, which tend to dwarf visitors, are almost a trademark of southeastern Alaska. Scene here is at Sitka National Monument near Sitka. Visitors may view other totems at Ketchikan, Wrangell, Juneau, Klawock, Hydaburg, Haines, Klukwan, and other points in the Alaska panhandle.

REMINDER OF "RUSSIAN AMERICA" -- Earthquake action on the island of Kodiak exposed this remnant of Russian colonization - a portion of a seawall constructed in the 18th century when Kodiak was headquarters for Russian governor Alexander Baranof. With a new ferryliner service linking the island with mainland ports, three new tourist facilities are being readied for 1965 occupancy by visitors.

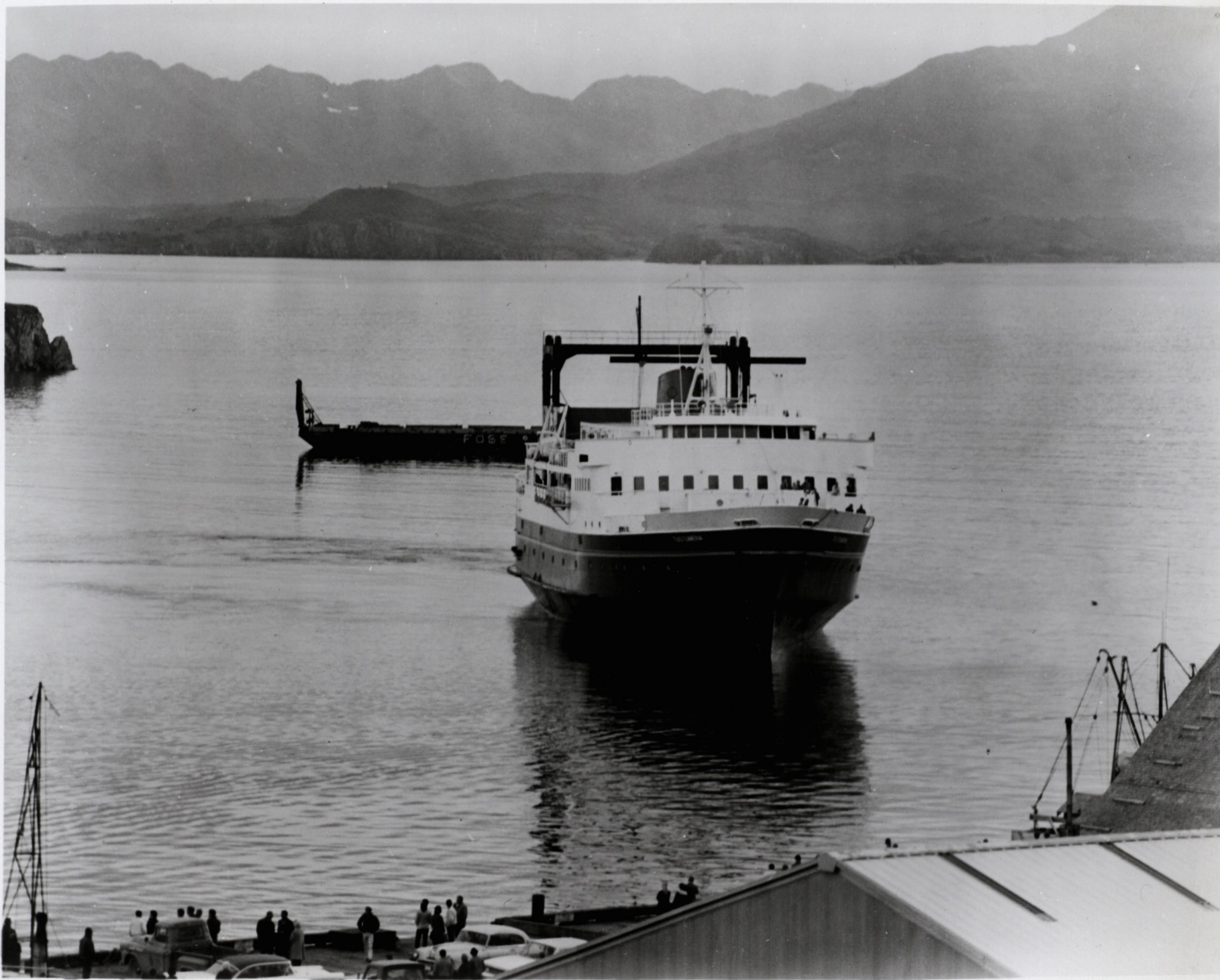
THIS TOTEM LOOKS DOWN on busy 4th Avenue in Anchorage, Alaska's largest city and one which has virtually erased most effects of the 1964 temblor. New buildings not shown here include the 15-story Anchorage Westward hotel, expanded and completed since the quake, the new Travelodge, and soon, the Captain Cook hotel, scheduled to open this spring.

KODIAK, one of Alaska's hardest hit communities during the spring 1964 'quake, has rebuilt its harbor and is readying three new hotels in anticipation of a record number of visitors. Anticipated visitor influx is due in part to the inauguration of a new ferryliner service linking the island community with mainland ports. New ferryliner, the M/V Tustumena, is shown in the rebuilt harbor.









Alaska Division of Tourism
Room 310 Alaska Office Building
Juneau

for IMMEDIATE release

An up-to-date illustrated official map of Alaska -- showing the 49th State's intra-state highway network on one side and the route of the Alaska Highway through Canada on the other -- is available now from the Alaska Division of Highways, Juneau, at no charge.

The map, which is the first official roadmap produced by the State of Alaska, was printed by Rand McNally. In addition to showing roads and highways the map also designates airports and roadside parks. Included too are illustrations of Alaska wildlife, scenery, and attractions plus pictures of the official state flag, seal, bird, and flower.

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Looking for a gala American patriotic celebration to include in your vacation plans this month? Visit Petersburg, Alaska, May 20 and 21.

Looking for a celebration with a "foreign" flavor? Visit Petersburg, Alaska May 20-21.

Or perhaps you're looking for a picturesque mountain-ringed seaport city on an island as famous for its friendly people as for its scenic beauty. You guessed it, visit Petersburg in southeast Alaska--and do it the weekend of May 20 if you want to be in on Petersburg's 1961 Spring Festival.

What's the occasion behind the festival? American Armed Forces Day is part of it. And Norwegian Independence Day is a major part of it too. (Petersburg--often called "Little Norway"--is comprised mostly of Norwegian immigrants and their descendants, who are fiercely loyal to the United States but are equally proud of their Scandinavian heritage.) And then there's Petersburg's beautiful and productive halibut fleet. The fact that the first halibut landings are in and fishermen are back in home port with their first earnings of the season certainly adds a great deal too.

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Biggest attraction of the celebration is the population of Petersburg itself--with many of its citizens dressed in colorful Norwegian costumes handed down from the "Old Country".

In addition to Festival activities, visitors take in auto trips to the salmon ladder at Fall Creek and the experimental fur farm, less than ten miles away, and many tourists are fascinated by watching the fish processing plants and seeing tons of halibut in cold storage units.

Another popular excursion is a flight over nearby LaConte Glacier, southernmost active glacier in North America. Fishing (both salt water and fresh) and photography possibilities are always described by returning visitors as "out of this world".

Cruise boats make regular short stops at Petersburg but for an extended stay the most common method of travel is by air. Two major U. S. air carriers land their four-engine big ships at Annette Island (about 100 miles south of Petersburg) and at Juneau (about 100 miles north. There connections can be made via either of two Alaska carriers for regular scheduled flights by twin-engine amphibian to Petersburg. These flights, landing in the sheltered waters of the Inside Passage at small villages and interesting logging and mining camps en route are themselves a highlight of an Alaska vacation.

RENDEZVOUS WITH HISTORY

By Ron Saroff

"I'm thinking of climbing the Chilkoot Pass," I told my wife one day last June.

"I'm thinking you're a little bit crazy," she replied.

"I've definitely decided to climb the pass," I told her early in August.

"I've definitely decided you're completely off your rocker," she said.

Now I've done it. I've hiked the most famous trail in Alaskan history. And, looking back...maybe my wife was right. I'm sure I'll never do it again. On the other hand it's a trip I'll remember as long as I live.

Certainly it was no Sunday stroll. I still have vivid memories of wringing-wet socks, steep slopes, blisters, and boulders the size of houses. But, more important, I also have memories of glacier-capped canyons, of cascading streams which drop literally from the clouds, of lush verdant woods, and of high alpine vistas.

Most of all I have deeply-etched memories of having hiked the trail that tens of thousands of stampeders hiked back in '98. Then the cry was "Gold!" and men went nearly out of their minds in their rush to get it.

There were three in our party. Raymond Gray of Belt, Montana, Mike Miller and I, both of Juneau, left Dyea (six miles from Skagway) on a Tuesday. Before we departed Skagway we checked in with U. S. Customs, with the local police chief, and with the White Pass and Yukon Route ticket office. The agent told us Saturday's train -- on which we hoped to return to Skagway from Lake Bennett -- would depart the Bennett station at 1:30 p.m. She said she hoped we made it.

We didn't get far that first night. Actually it was 6:30 before we made it by cab even to Dyea where the trail begins.

The first fifty feet is a snap.

Then the trail goes up -- really up -- fast. This gives you your initiation to a little dance number we called the Chilkoot Shuffle. It goes like this:

Up thirty-seven steps, down forty-two
Up fifty-three steps, level a few;

Down to the riverbank, lower than before,
Up to the ridgeline, fifty-nine more;

Thirteen level steps, stop for a rest,
Pant a while, walk a while, give it your best;

Just as you know that you've made it to the top,
You see ahead a higher place but first you have to stop.

Actually, that first mile is as tough, or tougher, as any you'll encounter. If you can walk a mile over that camel's back, you should be able to hack it thirty-one additional miles to Bennett.

We made the mile plus two more (easy ones, over an old logging road) before darkness set in. We set up camp at the site of an old sawmill.

As we entered a sagging old cabin there we saw a note pinned to the door. It was addressed to us, from friends who had preceded us over the trail by four days -- Warren Christianson and his two boys from Sitka, Pat Loken and her two from Juneau, and Rie Munoz and her son also from Juneau. They had, the note reported, arrived at the site thoroughly soaked from drenching rains. As it turned out, however, their next three days were dry ones. We reversed the pattern. It was dry when we arrived at the sawmill but it rained a good portion of every day that followed.

No matter. It rained on a good number of the old stampeders, too, we told ourselves. A trip like this is a rendezvous with history, not a search for a suntan.

And evidence of history we found, in abundance. Sometimes the marks were as subtle as a short stretch of "corduroy" (short, small logs laid in soggy soil) almost rotted through after seven decades in the muskeg. Sometimes the signs were more pronounced -- like the huge old boiler we came across among the ruins at Canyon City. Beside the trail we saw frequent other reminders -- scraps of wagon hardware, the old telegraph cable line, horseshoes, bottles.

The trail on the Alaska side is well defined and the shelters which the State Division of Lands has built at Canyon City and Sheep Camp are excellent. I'm sure no '98 argonaut had it so good.

The Chilkoot Pass itself is unbelievable.

Its old Indian name was "Vlekuk." I don't know what this means in Tlingit but it wouldn't surprise me if it meant "cliff straight-up:". When we first saw it we couldn't believe this was really the pass we'd hiked sixteen miles to climb.

"We're in the wrong place," Mike suggested. "This is a dead end canyon."

But it was the right place. The state Mile 16 marker was right in front of us.

And the pass turned out to be not as unassailable as it looked at first glance.

At the top, evidence of the gold rush lies everywhere: broken bottles, machine parts, old horse and dog harness, a grave, sleigh runners, rotted building wood. I started digging around an old campsite and came up with a rusty dinner knife, obviously left by a stamper. Not far away Mike brought up an old tin cup. Later on, along the trail, Ray spotted a whole pile of horse and mule shoes. Each of us cursed our already-forty-pound packs, then each of us tied a horseshoe onto our packboards.

On the Canadian side, the trail almost doesn't exist, although from time to time we did follow still-visible ruts of 1898 wagons and sleds. (How incredible that horses could even exist much less pull loads over this rocky, undulating terrain. Ray, a great lover of horses, was understandably furious whenever we came upon horse bones, as we did at several points along the way.)

In spite of the lack of a trail most of the time, we found our way easily to Lake Lindeman. There we over-nighted at an old trapper's abandoned shack. The next day, taking compass bearings, we headed off cross-country and arrived almost on schedule at almost our target point along the route of the White Pass and Yukon Route.

Incredibly, not forty-five seconds after we had reached the tracks (after climbing out of alder thickets, muskeg, and rain-swollen marshes) the train whistle sounded just around a bend. The big, beautiful diesel of the WP&YR came into sight.

We waved and shouted frantically and the engineer caught the hint. He stopped the train and took us aboard to Lake Bennett. There we enjoyed the railroad's famed roast dinner before hopping the southbound train to Skagway.

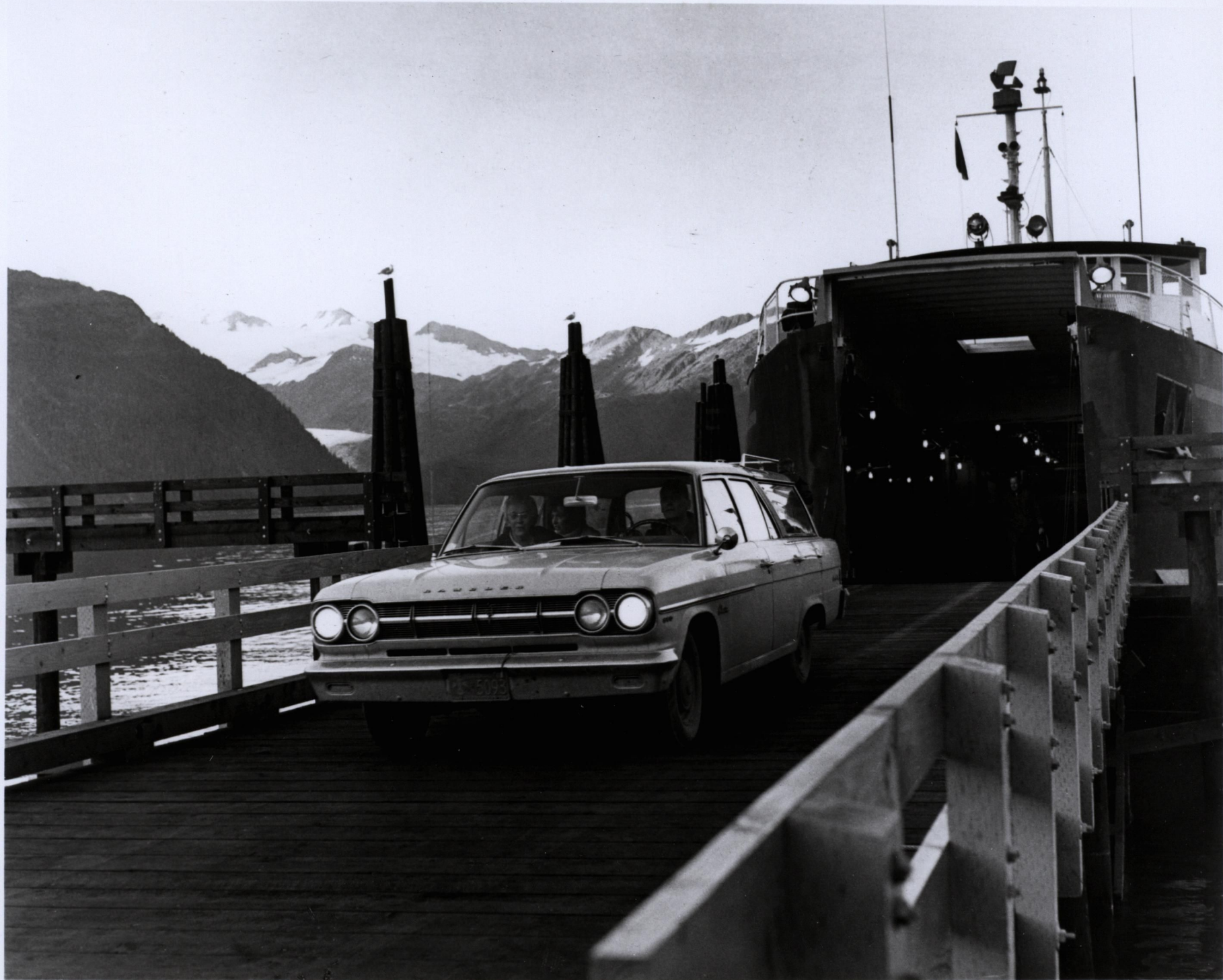
Now it's over. I'm a member of a growing group of hundreds of hikers who have crossed the Chilkoot. In the years to come, thousands will make the trek, especially after the Canadians brush out their portion. But, of course, it is not the future thousands who are important. It is the thousands -- the tens of thousands -- who crossed the trail in '98 who made the trail what it is today: a walk through beauty in a few spots...a tough rugged hike in many others...a worthwhile, significant experience throughout.



TYPICAL TERRAIN along the Chilkoot Trail. At left, Raymond Gray crosses a double-log bridge. At right he and Ron Saroff climb over boulders along the path.



END OF THE TRAIL -- almost -- is this old trapper's shack at Lake Lindeman
where most Chilkoot Trail hikers spend their final night.









WASHINGTON-ALASKA FERRY SERVICE has become a reality with the winter scheduling of the passenger and auto ferry MV Matanuska from the Alaska panhandle to Seattle and return each week. The Matanuska, one of three identical vessels in the southeast Alaska ferryliner fleet, boasts staterooms, dining salon, snack bar, observation lounges, and cocktail lounge.