



Read all about the exciting adventures of Slide Rule and Clodhopper as it actually happened! It's thrilling. It's captivating. It's like you were really there.

Moose Camp 2019

911 Revisited

By Rick Luebbers

Featuring ...

Dan Sterley as Slide Rule, and

Rick as Clodhopper

Moose Camp 2019

(911 Revisited)

The Beginning

It all started in 1967 when Slide Rule graduated from high school somewhere in eastern Washington. His girlfriend at the time was delighted. She said, "Now we can settle down, get married and have six kids." When Slide Rule finally stopped running, he found himself 110 miles north of Fairbanks, Alaska. After several years of bouncing back and forth between college semesters and exciting adventures, Slide Rule graduated from the University of Alaska with an engineering degree. He was soon employed by the Alaska Department of Transportation where he was involved in the design and construction of new highways in the northern part of the state. It was at a remote construction site on one of these projects, where Slide Rule met Camp Master; and a lifelong friendship developed.



Mining Camp

Camp Master's extended family has a long history in northern Alaska that includes homesteading, business interests, and mining activities. At some point, Camp Master's ancestors obtained several mining claims at an undisclosed location in the Chena River basin. The claim site is accessible only by bush plane during the summer months; so, over the years, equipment and building supplies were brought in on snow roads during the winter. The camp site was originally developed as a significant placer mine with a large bunk house, mess hall, maintenance shop, elevated food cache, outhouse, and several supporting structures. In August 1967, a great flood flushed most of the camp down river leaving only a small cabin and several small outbuildings.

Camp Master has since hauled in a couple of RV trailers, a used shipping container, earth moving equipment, and not much else. To this day, it is the center for mining activities and annual moose and caribou hunts in the area.



Life Happens

As time passed, Slide Rule married Catwater, built a house near Fairbanks, and had three children: Abacus, Catwater's Kid, and Laptop. After a couple of decades, the Slide Rule family grew weary of the harsh Fairbanks winters and moved south to the balmy climate of Anchorage. There, Slide Rule left the ranks of government employees and joined CH2M HILL's Anchorage office. Working in the Northwest Region's Transportation Group, Slide Rule met compatriots in Washington, Oregon, Idaho, and Montana, including Clodhopper. Together they pursued clients, won projects, and found staff to deliver transportation projects throughout Alaska.

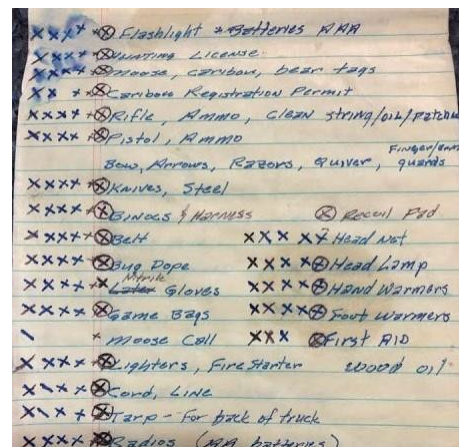
911

In a serious lapse of judgement, Slide Rule invited Clodhopper to join Camp Master's annual moose hunting trip in 2001. Clodhopper readily agreed to attend; but without a hunting license, he could participate in most of the group's activities but couldn't actually hunt. No matter. It would be fun. Flying in on a ratty looking but great running bush plane, they joined Camp Master's hunting party. While sitting on a viewing position overlooking the valley a couple of days later, they noticed that no airplanes were flying. No bush planes, no military planes, no commercial planes. Nothing. Total silence, even so far out in the bush, is unheard of. They knew something was happening but had no idea what it might be. At the time, Camp Master had a satellite phone that received text messages with a 24-hour delay. It was noon the next day before they learned what had happened on September 11, 2001. Slide Rule and Clodhopper shared thoughts each year on that date and vowed to revisit the site where they first experienced "911." That time came 18 years later in 2019.

The List

At Slide Rule's invitation, Clodhopper was once again planning to fly into the bush country to be at moose camp for most of 2 weeks. Knowing that Clodhopper was a rube when it came to Alaska hunting trips, Slide Rule provided a copy of the list he uses to pack for such a trip. It was a hand-written, two-page, multiple column listing of all things necessary for survival and success. It had multi-colored ink, circles, 'X's, arrows, underlines, and other enhancements.

The list included licenses and permits, weapons (rifles, hand guns, and knives), gear (moose call, game bags, radios, binoculars, flashlights, cameras, bug dope), clothing (cold weather, wet weather, field and camp) and miscellaneous (batteries, first aid kit, sun glasses, fishing rod). And, of course, food and booze. Being an engineer, Clodhopper promptly entered the data into an Excel spreadsheet and emailed it back. Odds are Slide Rule would be hard pressed to find it today (being an engineer).



Transportation

The bush plane scheduled to fly Slide Rule and Clodhopper into moose camp turned out to be a 1961 Cessna 180, with a 6-cylinder engine, variable-pitch three-bladed prop, and tundra tires. It was nearly 60 years-old, but the pilot assured them that many of its parts were much younger due to ongoing maintenance requirements. Still, the plane was almost as old as Slide Rule and Clodhopper. They were familiar with their own personal maintenance and parts replacement. And they both know how well they got around these days



The combined weight of Slide Rule, Clodhopper, with all their gear and supplies, approached but did not exceed the weight limit of the bush plane. In the end, they cheated death again as the flight to the remote air strip was interesting but uneventful.

There they were met by Camp Master with his luxurious limousine – a John Deere 300B backhoe. The gear went into the bucket and the pair onto the fenders as Camp Master drove through the river to the camp side where four-wheel (quad) ATVs awaited. They became the primary form of transportation for the hunt.



Moose Camp

Upon arrival at moose camp, Slide Rule and Clodhopper presented Camp Master with an official Alaska First Aid Kit, which is a bottle of Jack Daniels and a roll of duct tape. Clodhopper also provided three books for the cabin: “Alaska Bear Stories”, “It’s Not the End of the Earth, But You Can See It From Here”, and “A Pretty Good Joke Book” (really, that’s the actual name). The camp cabin is small (8’x24’) and outfitted for basic shelter. It is covered with corrugated steel siding and has barbed wire on the door and windows to keep the bears out. A black bear looked in the window a few days before Slide Rule and Clodhopper arrived.



Over the next two weeks, the cabin was the site of good food, better booze, sound sleep, and great lies.



Radios and Handles

Moose camp is in a remote area where cell phones don't work at all and satellite phones work only in certain places. While the hunting area encompasses several square miles, handheld radios provide pretty good coverage and a degree of safety for people who would otherwise be quite alone. You never know who is monitoring radio calls, so it is common to provide a code name (a handle) for each person. Slide Rule gained his handle hiking the Pacific Crest Trail. Clodhopper grew up on a farm and spent too many hours busting dirt clods. Camp Master was, obviously, the master of his own camp. Gold Digger was the miner who was working one of Camp Master's claims. Gold Digger's assistant, Body Snatcher, gained his handle later on, as you will learn.

Fire Power

Camp Master was prepared for almost anything the hunt might bring. He had a big moose hunting rifle (.338), a smaller caribou rifle (30-06), a .22-caliber rifle for small varmints, a 12-gauge shotgun for bears and a .45-caliber handgun for personal protection. Note that everyone in camp carries a handgun almost all of the time, even to the outhouse. You just never know when a bear or wolf will appear. Slide Rule had a moose rifle (.300-Ultra Mag) and a .44-magnum revolver. Clodhopper was also provided with a .44-magnum revolver just like the one Dirty Harry carried in the movies (Do you feel lucky?). The miners both carried handguns, even when mining and even though they were hard to keep clean.



Slide Rule checked the accuracy of his rifle and scope with a target at 100 yards. After three shots, a closed fist could cover all the target hits. When asked if he would like to give it a try, Clodhopper fired one shot that landed within Slide Rule's pattern (the red marking). Not bad for a lower 48, flat-land farmer.

Later in the hunt, Slide Rule found that his scope had been bumped offline. He borrowed Camp Master's rifle while Camp Master was busy with mining activities. The misaligned scope would later be sent in for adjustment.

Clodhopper also fired the handgun at a small target. The shot was right online and only two inches low. Good enough for a big bear. This was important because, during the 911 visit, Clodhopper was provided with a similar revolver and carried it for several days, secure in the knowledge that he was well protected. However, it was ultimately found that the gun was inoperable. Out in the bush, the most it could have been used for was a club. In the cabin that evening, Camp Master, Slide Rule, and Clodhopper, with an entire bottle of Jack Daniels, could not get the gun to operate correctly. Clodhopper carried a shotgun for the remainder of that hunt.

The Hunt

Based on a long history in the area, Camp Master and Slide Rule had narrowed their hunting focus to a valley along a branch of the Chena River. The valley is about 1 mile wide and maybe 3 miles long.



It is filled with willows, black spruce, birch, and muskeg. It is a great place for moose but a hard place to walk through. Instead of stalking through the muck, Camp Master and Slide Rule developed an overlook on Spyglass Hill that provides an overall view of the valley and beyond. Moose can be seen coming and going, and sometimes just wandering about in the valley. All you have to do is sit there comfortably with a good pair of binoculars, which is the good news. The bad news is that Spyglass Hill is 300 yards from the nearest quad trail and at least half that high up. The trek is up the hill through the trees and wet muskeg and is a challenge for younger hunters. For old guys like Slide Rule and Clodhopper it could be a life altering experience. However, there are chairs at the top where hours can be spent enjoying the view, weather not withstanding, while scanning the valley for any sign of life, particularly if it has big antlers.

Such was the case for Slide Rule and Clodhopper in 2019. For the first week, each morning started with a 2.5-mile trip on the quads from the camp to the river to check for animal signs and water level. Next was the long ascent up Spyglass Hill. Clodhopper remained an observer as he had on the previous hunt. So, hour after hour, day after day, he helped Slide Rule search for any sign of moose. As point of reference, a big bull moose is 7 feet tall, weighs more than 1,000 pounds, and has a big rack of antlers. They are not hard to see if they are up and moving around; but when they lay down, they become almost invisible. And, so it was. Almost a week went by without sight of a single moose. If there was any good news, it was that the weather was very nice. It was warm



and sunny. But it was much too nice for a moose hunt.

The quad trail first thing in the morning provided a quick look at what had happened overnight. Tracks were seen for a moose cow and calf, maybe a small bull moose, a black bear, and a wolf. Alas, big tracks for a big moose were not to be found. But the knowledge that animals were in the area kept things interesting. And bear and wolf tracks ensured that handguns were taken to the outhouse.



Several days into the hunt, Clodhopper was alone on the Spyglass Hill looking for anything that moved. In spite of being able to see for miles, there was no movement anywhere. But then suddenly there was! Something dark in color with white on top was moving through the trees. It appeared and disappeared as it roamed about, the white head moving atop the dark body. It was the first real sign of life in the woods. Clodhopper stared intently at the beast through the high powered binoculars, sure to make a full report to Slide Rule and Camp Master. The critter was there, but something was off. What was it? Something seemed odd. That was it! Moose don't have satellite phones! Instead of a bull moose with big antlers, the culprit was Body Snatcher who had come down the trail to get a good phone signal. He was dressed in black, had a bushy head of blond hair, and wandered about as he talked on the phone. Exciting, but a false alarm. Good thing that Clodhopper didn't have a rifle with him.

Diversions Activities

While the hunt takes up much of the day, there is always time for other activities, as demonstrated by Slide Rule.

The real activities actually started during final shopping for supplies. While Slide Rule was engaged in finding exactly the right artificial flies for his fly rod, Clodhopper secured a bag of the original Base Camp coffee. Not to be outdone, Slide Rule searched the liquor store until he found bottles of Knob Creek whiskey – one of bourbon and one of rye. Now Clodhopper had brought along two flasks and asked which bottle to take. Slide Rule, who was known for being decisive, said, "Both," and there began the Dueling Flasks research project. Given that hours were spent in quiet solitude, hardly moving while scanning the valley, cold will begin to creep in. One way to fight the cold is to walk about, do some jumping jacks, build up some body heat. Nah. It is much easier to pull out a flask and get warm from the inside. But which whiskey would be best –



bourbon or rye? It took many days and many tests to develop a statistically significant sample. By the end of the hunt, it seemed that the rye was winning. However, to this day, the jury is still out. Slide Rule and Clodhopper agree that many more samples will be required before a final conclusion can be reached.

Similarly, a heated debate emerged over the appropriate use of mustard. During the ensuing Mustard Wars, one side (Clodhopper) insisted that mustard could easily take the place of both ketchup and mayonnaise, rendering them superfluous (except of course for ketchup on French fries and hash browns). But the other side (Slide Rule) maintained that mayonnaise could be used on anything and everything, and that ketchup was better than mustard on everything else. The battle raged on, meal after meal, with no clear winner. However, Slide Rule was observed near the end of moose camp secretly sneaking mustard into the cabin as lunch-time sandwiches were being prepared. Busted! Meanwhile, Camp Master remained aloof during the entire skirmish.

Slide Rule and Clodhopper also showed off their mechanical skills one afternoon. They set out to fix a winch that had jammed on one of the quads. Camp Master and Gold Digger had made an earlier, unsuccessful attempt to fix it, so bragging rights were on the line. With the quad on a ramp made of logs, Slide Rule slid underneath and removed the winch from its mounts. Clodhopper proceeded to disassemble it until finding that the engagement pins were covered with grit from too many trips through the creek. A little cleanup and a little lube oil and the pins were free. Reassembled and reinstalled, the winch worked fine. Suffering from an over-inflated sense of accomplishment, Slide Rule and Clodhopper dove into an old winch. After it quit working years ago, it was replaced and had been lying about ever since. Using makeshift tools from Camp Master's incredible stash, the pair disassembled the old winch and amazingly found it to be in working order, so they continued on into the electric motor. The problem was obvious when the first bolt was removed. It was very rusty. In fact, the entire motor was full of rust. The problem was that the unit had no waterproofing. It had no seals at all and yet had been driven through endless bodies of water on the front of a quad. The motor parts were pulled apart and cleaned. The electrical pickups were carefully worked loose. The entire motor was wiped clean and reassembled. A couple of temporary leads were attached and handed to Camp Master to apply by hand to a fully-charged battery. To Camp Master's shock (literally and figuratively), the winch worked when the leads were pressed down on the battery posts. When the leads were held one way, the cable was let out. When the leads were held the other way, the cable was pulled in. Another victory for the dynamic duo who admonished Camp Master to never subject the winch to water again. Flasks were pulled out to celebrate.

On a particularly nice afternoon, Slide Rule decided to try out the new flies he had selected just for this trip. He knew of a fishing hole not far from the quad trail and was determined to bring back fresh grayling for dinner. The path to the river, through the trees and brush, ended on a gravel bar at a bend in the river. Surely graylings lurked in the shade on the far side. Slide Rule extended his fly rod, attached one of the new flies and began to cast aimlessly about.

No worries that the first fly didn't attract anything. Slide Rule just attached a second fly and went at it with more vigor. After significant damage to his rotator cuff with no fish in the creel, Slide Rule attached a final, sure-not-to-fail, fish lure. And gee boy howdy did it work. Within just a few casts, Slide Rule hooked on to a big one. It was all he could do to keep it from bending his fly rod beyond the breaking point.



Calling for help from Clodhopper, Slide Rule began to reel in the monster. By the time Clodhopper arrived, Slide Rule was about to land a large rock cod. It seems that the hook had worked its way into a hole in a rock on the bottom of the river. It was firmly stuck in place, ensuring that the catch of the day would not escape from the wily fisherman. While it had a good weight, the rock would be hard to clean, would be tough to eat, and didn't have much food value anyway; so Slide Rule tossed it back into the stream. Just another day of catch and release fishing. Evidently the Great Grayling Migration to deeper water downriver was already history.

In addition to maintaining the moose camp, Camp Master also had to oversee Gold Digger's mining activities underway on one of his claims. Camp Master had learned that the easiest way to mine was to take a percentage of whatever the actual gold mining activities produced. In this case, Camp Master had contracted with Gold Digger to work a claim a couple of miles above the camp. One nice day, Camp Master, Slide Rule, and Clodhopper took a quad ride up to the mining site to see what was going on. There they found a floating ore processing plant that was fed by a track-mounted backhoe. The unit had a rock grill, a rotating trammel, and four sluice boxes.

Under the watchful eye of Body Snatcher, raw material was dumped in the rock grill, passed through the trammel while being washed. The clean rocks were deposited in the pond while the ore-laden water passed through one of the four sluice boxes. The water passed over the riffles in the boxes and gold settled to the bottom of the riffles where it was periodically removed for further processing. Although it was a small system, the set up was yielding more than an ounce of gold a day. As always with gold fever, hope springs eternal; and Gold Digger was confident he would double, even triple, his take as he worked better ground. Only time will tell.



Gold Digger occasionally brought a bucket of cleanings from the sluice boxes to the cabin. There, Camp Master would pan the material to extract the gold. It was done with an old-fashioned mining pan and a tub of water. It was a chilly process, so Camp Master alternated between working a cold pan outside and washing a warm pan of dishes in the cabin. It was a good way keep his hands working. No one noticed how clean the dishes really got.



Not to be outdone, Slide Rule and Clodhopper tried their hand at panning for gold. Spoiler alert! It is harder than it looks. After multiple attempts, and with help from Camp Master, the pair of Pickers and Grinders produced several small vials of gold.

Weather

During the first week at moose camp, the weather was very nice. About freezing at night, but sunny and into the 60s during the day. Slide Rule and Clodhopper enjoyed being out in the field, basking in the global warming. Sitting in the sun while scoping or moving around on the valley floor were both comfortable activities.

Unfortunately, moose hunker down in good weather and move less during the day. When weather conditions are nice, moose are simply harder to find. Sure enough, almost a week passed without sighting a single moose.



Fortunately, the weather turned cooler and cloudier, with a bit of rain, in the second week. Slide Rule spotted the first moose from Spyglass Hill soon after. It was a cow, a long way off. Seen once and never again. But it was a sign that luck might begin to change.

To cover more ground, Clodhopper was soon stationed at various locations in the valley with a good set of binoculars, while Slide Rule was on Spyglass Hill. One of the places was at the intersection of two trails near the end of the valley.

Clodhopper could see several hundred yards down each trail and carefully watched for any sign of activity. The weather the first day was pretty good but without any activity. Clodhopper strolled down one of the trails and spent some time on the Rock, another overlook at the far end of the valley. Nothing moving.



The very next day the weather turned cool and cloudy, spitting rain now and then. Clodhopper was back at the stand near the trail crossings. After sitting stationary for hours, he began to chill (thank goodness for the flask). But suddenly, late in the day, the sound of breaking branches erupted in the woods about 200 yards away. After several minutes, it was followed by the sound of antlers scraping on tree trunks. A bull moose for sure! The noise had ended; but Clodhopper was still leaning over the quad staring down the trail, waiting for the moose to wander out when Slide Rule stopped by on his way to the river. Slide Rule and Clodhopper searched the area until it was too dark to see, but the moose had slipped away. The ride back to camp that evening was both disappointing and exhilarating. Bull moose in the valley!

Bullwinkle and the Bucket

The following morning, Slide Rule and Clodhopper were up early. It was still cloudy and cool, with light rain falling, but a bull moose was out there somewhere. The plan was to ride to the river looking for signs, then Clodhopper would go back to the location where the moose had been heard the night before while Slide Rule went up the hill to get a long-range view. Moose can move many miles during the night, so he could be anywhere in the valley or even long gone. Donning rain gear, they set out, hoping to see some fresh tracks. Slide Rule led the way, with Clodhopper close behind.

The quad trail has many twists and turns, with low areas and mud holes. Moose often take the trails as the easiest walking path. They leave tracks in the soft mud. Slide Rule was in the lead, looking for signs, as he made his way to the river. Clodhopper followed, going slowly to look for tracks as well, while also checking ahead for moose on the trail. There were a few new tracks. A good sign.

As the trail got closer to the river, it curved to the right to line up for a creek crossing; and suddenly, there it was! A moose was crossing the stream in the direction of the quads. The moose turned, went back across the creek, and headed for a nearby marshy area. Adrenaline rush!!

It was barely light, but the moose could be seen walking away, partially obscured by a bunch of willows. No one could not tell if it was a bull and, if so, how big the antlers might be. A small rack was expected since a young bull had been seen in the area a couple of weeks earlier. When the moose cleared the willows, it turned to look back. Not only did it have antlers, it had a huge rack. It was a big bull!



The rifle came up as the moose turned for the marsh. A quick shot as he crossed the creek slowed the moose, but he continued into the marsh. A second shot brought it down where it stood and kept the bull from wandering deeper into the marsh. In less than a minute from the time he was spotted, Slide Rule's moose was down, and the hunt was a success. To top it off, it was shot with Camp Master's rifle. This was a big deal because Slide Rule and Camp Master hunt for meat. It feeds their families over the winter, and their freezers were almost empty. It was a big moose and would provide many steaks, roasts, and moose burgers.



Minutes later Slide Rule and Clodhopper were tamping down the adrenalin with long pulls from the flask.



Clodhopper grabbed the radio, "Bullwinkle is in the bucket!"; but there was no reply from Camp Master. So, they jumped on the quads and headed back to the cabin. They met Camp Master as they drove in. By then, it was only a bit past 8 o'clock in the morning; but the pair disgustedly said that the weather was crappy. It was cold and rainy. They were done hunting for the day. Camp Master thought the two were wimping out and began to say so. Then Clodhopper tossed Camp Master a bullet casing from his own rifle. "We are done hunting for the day because we have a big bull down. Fire up the backhoe!"

Camp Master soon had the backhoe loaded with chains and straps, headed for the marsh. With help from Body Snatcher, Slide Rule and Clodhopper got chains on the moose and worked with Camp Master on the backhoe to pull the moose from the marsh and up onto the quad trail



From there, he was rolled into the front bucket and ceremoniously carried to the butchering site.

Butcher Shop

The butchering site is along the trail, next to 30-foot drop-off to the edge of a creek. It is a convenient place from which to haul the meat to the cabin. The carcass and hide are then rolled over the edge to be scavenged by ravens, bears, wolves, and wolverines. Nothing goes to waste in the bush.

Slide Rule says that bull moose come in three sizes, as measured by the antlers: Small is 20-40 inches, Medium is 40-60 inches, and Large is anything above 60 inches. This moose's rack measured 52 inches, well into the medium category. It was estimated that he weighed 1,100-1,200 pounds.



The bullets had taken out the lungs and liver; but all the quarters, back straps, tenderloins, and other meat were in good shape, including the heart. It would yield about 600 pounds of quality meat and fill two freezers.



The butchering process took most of the day. In addition to knives, bags, and other tools, a handgun was kept close by because bears can smell blood miles away. One could be lured to the site and appear anytime. But not today.

By 4 pm, the butchering was safely done. The carcass was in the canyon, and the meat bags were hanging in the van box at the cabin. The van box is a recycled shipping container. It is made of heavy metal and has strong doors. Both essential to keep bears out. A sign on the door says, "Whatever doesn't kill you makes you stronger, except for bears. Bears will kill you."

The moose head was set aside during butchering, then brought to camp. Slide Rule skinned and cleaned it in preparation for a few months on top of the van box for the camp robbers to do the final cleanup. Camp Master plans to bring it out by snow machine in the winter.

Soon the rack will be hanging at the yurt Clodhopper and Slide Rule have been working on at an undisclosed location in the Pacific Northwest.





Bugging Out

Slide Rule, Clodhopper, and Camp Master celebrated the successful hunt with a champagne breakfast with all the trimmings.

It was a festive occasion, so they enjoyed a few tales out of the Pretty Good Joke Book. However, they couldn't find a good "A moose walks into a bar" joke; so they set about working on one. After a number of misfires, this is the one that emerged. "A moose walks into a bar and says to the bartender, "What do you suggest for someone with a 52" rack?" The bartender said, "I usually go with a bottle of wine and a box of chocolates.""



A call was made to the pilot; and plans were made to pack up, break camp, and fly out the next day. Remember the weather? Right. The next morning was cloudy, foggy, and spitting rain. No good for flying into the primitive airstrip. It stayed that way until late afternoon, but the weather cleared too late in the day to make the two round trips necessary to get everything out. The departure plans were reset for the next day.

The weather was much better the following morning, and the plane was rescheduled. It was time to load up. Camp Master fired up the backhoe, and Gold Digger brought a flatbed truck from the mining site. All the gear went into the backhoe bucket, and all the meat went onto the flatbed.

Body Snatcher dove in to help load the truck. Rather than wait for another set of hands, he grabbed a full hind quarter and lifted it up himself. Clodhopper said, "Be careful. It's heavy." Body Snatcher just turned and said, "It's not nearly as heavy as a human body." Dead silence! No one asked how he knew that.



The group made the trip to the river and waded across to the airstrip to wait for the plane. When it arrived, the pilot said that he could take two people and all the gear on one trip, and one person and the moose meat on the second trip. It was decided that Slide Rule and Clodhopper would fly out first and get things ready at the Fairbanks Airport. Camp Master would come out with the meat on the second trip.



By this time, Gold Digger and Body Snatcher had been mining in the bush for several months. They expected to close down for the winter within a week or two and had been living off the remains of their food supply. There were rumors of too many Top Ramen meals. So, as the plane was loading, Gold Digger asked the pilot to bring out a pizza when he returned for the second trip. OK. No problem. Wait, there was a problem. Gold Digger wanted a Hawaiian pizza! It has pineapple on it. Real pizza doesn't have pineapple, and a whole 'nuther debate raged on.

Slide Rule and Clodhopper quickly organized things on arrival at the Fairbanks airport, then set out to relax with an adult beverage at the bar overlooking the airfield. However, Camp Master landed back in Fairbanks a bit sooner than Slide Rule and Clodhopper had expected. Slide Rule dashed out of the bar, leaving his beer for Clodhopper to attend until he got back. A sketchy decision at best. Clodhopper finished his drink and slyly slipped out the back door with Slide Rule's unfinished glass. Slide Rule finished the beer after everything was transferred from the plane to the waiting trucks. He really meant to return the glass but somehow wandered off before doing so. Another souvenir of a good hunting trip.

The next day, Slide Rule and Clodhopper said goodbye to Camp Master and headed down the highway to Anchorage. They stopped for lunch at Rosie's Diner along the way. When Slide Rule asked the waitress for ketchup, Clodhopper asked for mustard. The waitress said, "My son hates ketchup, but he loves mustard so much that he makes mustard sandwiches." As Slide Rule turned green, Clodhopper just smiled.