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Alex Gillis and the Big Sleigh continued from msld From cover (Did you build the sleigh up at the top? Or did you build it down here and take it up?) Oh, no. Oh, no. They were very heavy sticks. We had to take a double team up to twitch them over. They were about 18 inches in the small end, and 30 feet long. It's a pretty heavy hardwood stick for one horse. The skids were shaped like a runner on*the front. And we nicked--we cut in a- bout two inches all along the skid, to pro? tect the cables from wearing into the fro? zen ground. (The skid is going longways. You cut a groove along the bottom?) Yeah--where it would be touching the earth. Oh, it wore the bird's-eye maple about 3 inches. It made them 3 inches less. They were smooth. (Coming down the hill.) Yeah. Oh, so much weight. And all those little pebbles, stones, froze. It rained. The weather would cause them to be little points. It came down very--it gained speed at the steeper part. It had to. That friction all the time, tearing the bark and wearing the wood. Oh, I'm sure of 3 inches off the big part, too! You had to take all those things pretty well into consideration. We tied (the skids) one by one. We took them down. We had a cable on them, till we got them on a certain slope, degree, you know. And then we stopped each one, and put the cross members on. And that kept-- the one tie would hold it, back to the woods, to the tree that was anchoring it. (So you actually built it in the woods.) Yes, At the top of the mountain, just in that bare spot. There's a clearing at the top. (Then did you clear some of the snow from there to the bottom?) No. In fact we had to wait from fall until the 4th of Feb? ruary, 1947--before there was enough snow in the ditches, we figured that it would slide well on it.(Before the snow was there, you did work on the mountain to pre? pare for this?) Oh yes, yes. We made the ditches with one heavy horse and reliable chain traces, (These ditches--are you telling me you ploughed the side of the mountain?) Two trenches, straight up. I was sighting them and he had a packsack full of pegs, and he would drive them in. You know, like the en? gineers do when they go. I'd sight it and I'd wave to him, either way, that he'd drive it. We got to the top, and came down. (What were the pegs for?) For him, when he'd come--he was the driver. He was sit? ting on the plough and he could sight be? tween the horse's legs--he could keep the plough in line with the pegs. To make the ditches straight. Otherwise, twists or bends would cause (the sled) maybe to jump the tracks. It's very rough. If you'd let her down without ditches she'd smash to pieces quickly on the frozen ground. Then we came home and got the horse and the plough, a walking plough. And we went to the top. And it's so steep, we had to go zigzag--some of the upper, last few hun? dred feet--we had to go zigzag. You couldn't go straight up with the horse, (But you didn't make your ditch zigzag,) No, no. This was bringing the horse up, the plough. And we started. And he aimed at the two ribbons, or reins, or whatever you call them. (So when you ploughed, you ploughed down the hill,) Right. Both times. (Did it take more than one plough to make the ditch?) No, But we'd twitched a log that we fig? ured was about the size of the big end of the skids, to make it smooth. With a wedge they drive in the edge, with a ring on it-- it would pull it straight, and it made the ditch



still more straight. (So finally you have these two ditches. You've ploughed them out, you've pulled CT~rrv CO-OP Building Supplies w/ #" 1 cTATiniM