

# NELSON GIMBY

Interview conducted by Logan W. Hovis  
and Geoff Bleakley  
National Park Service  
May 27, 1998  
Tape #1  
Side #1

Hovis: *... Logan Hovis, National Park Service, May 27, 1998, at Kennicott Lodge, Kennecott Kids Reunion. We're speaking with Nelson Gimby. Geoff Bleakley is also sitting in. Welcome back to Kennecott!*

Gimby: *Thank you.*

Hovis: *How did you first come here?*

Gimby: *Well, I worked at the Road Commission down at Nabesna Mine, at Chitina, and then ... at the Road Commission down there.*

Hovis: *Um-hum.*

Gimby: *And ... of course, when [I found] they, the Nabesna mine ... would not allow women ... married couples in there, I had to look [laughs] elsewhere.*

Hovis: *So.*

Gimby: *So, when I called up ... Kennecott here, Jim Duggan was ... the "sup." at that time. And, so ... I got a job here, and came up here.*

Hovis: *How old were you at the time?*

Gimby: *Let's see, about twenty ... twenty eight, or thereabouts.*

Hovis: *O.K. Wife? Several children?*

Gimby: *I had ... two children after we left here. After '38. After the mine closed down.*

Hovis: *Um-hum. So you worked right through till the mine closed?*

Gimby: *Yeah. Well no! [Unintelligible] ... that we have here, I didn't care for too much. So I ... sent her back to California to our folks. And that's ... a month before the baby arrived. I ... left, you know, about, about ... that would be, in May. And I think the mines closed down that fall.*

Hovis: *O.K.*

Gimby: *So, I was here practically till the end.*

Hovis: *Um-hum. You ... you left in May 1938.*

Gimby: *Yeah.*

Hovis: *And you came over here from the Nabesna in what year?*

Gimby: *Ah, [unclear words] ... thirty five, I think it was. Thereabouts.*

Hovis: *Um-hum. What kind of housing did you have ... you and your wife?*

Gimby: *Here?*

Hovis: *Um-hum. Here at Kennecott.*

Gimby: *Well this building here [Kennicott Lodge], was ... the apartment building.*

Hovis: *Um-hum.*

Gimby: *I've had ... apparently ... I don't know what year this place burnt ... the apartment burnt down, and they built this [apartment] right were the old apartments was.*

Hovis: *Um-hum. Do you remember which unit you were in?*

Gimby: *Yeah, I was in number two.*

Hovis: *Number two.*

Gimby: *Yeah. ... John Heiser [sp.?] was in the first one, and we were at the next one. John Heiser. He worked in the ... in the power plant at that time.*

Hovis: *Um-hum. And where did you work?*

Gimby: *I was in the flotation. When I first came here, I worked in the ball mill.*

Hovis: *Um-hum.*

Gimby: *Crushers. And ... they ... then I ... was transferred down the ... operation, to flotation.*

Hovis: *Could, could you describe the operation of the ball mill?*

Gimby: *Well, it was just ... a great big ... where the rock goes in and it crushes it up, you know. And then it goes on down to the next floor below, and ...*

Hovis: *Was what, four foot diameter? I think ... the one that's in there now ... is a four foot diameter mill.*

Gimby: *I couldn't tell you. I don't know. It was a big ... thick ... It wasn't a ball machine. But ... it was ... [a] big crusher. A fairly good size crusher, Yeah.*

Hovis: *And what ... how did you ... what was your work in the flotation unit?*

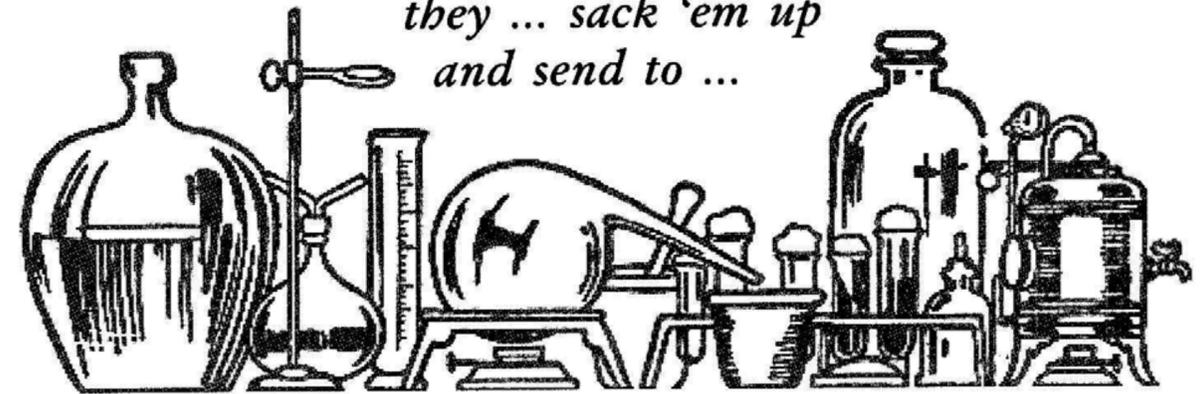
Gimby: *Just operatin' the ... the whole business. I was doin' the one end of that.*

Hovis: *O.K. Then you should know it very well!*

Gimby: *Well ... [laughs].*

Hovis: *How would ... how would you make it work?*

Gimby: *Well, there's a ... It's run by chemicals, and ... ah... 'course, I don't know if you know anything about the flotation. They ... they got these big gyrators turn' around. And I put these chemicals in that ... When bubbles form on it, and the paddles take the ... the chemicals... draw the ... the concentrate, I guess they call it, up into the bubbles. Then they sweep the bubbles off, and that's what they ... sack 'em up and send to ...*



Hovis: *What sort of chemicals would be put in the mix?*

Gimby: *Oh, I don't ... I forget now what all. But cyanide, and ...*

Hovis: *Put cyanide in did they?*

Gimby: *Yeah. Two or three different types.*

Hovis: *Um-hum.*

Gimby: *You have to keep that regulator [background noise] just so.*

Hovis: *Um-hum. Would you do your own testing on it?*

Gimby: *No, they had an assay, or they'd come in, and ... if you didn't [do it] right, why they come after you, and [unclear word].*

Hovis: *Um. Particularly nasty were they?*

Gimby: *Oh no. No.*

Hovis: *O.K. Good.*

Gimby: *No, it was ... nothing.*

Hovis: *Did you do the maintenance on the machine, as well as the operation?*

Gimby: *No, no they had maintenance ... mechanics, and stuff like that take care of that kind of stuff. All you did was take care of the ... watch the ... chemicals on one end ... to ... make it run. That's the whole thing.*

Hovis: *These were Janie cells weren't they?*

Gimby: *Hub?*

Hovis: *Janey cells.*

Gimby: *Janey? I ...*

Hovis: *Janey ... was the, the [a] master mechanic for Utah Copper.*

Gimby: *You may not ...*

Hovis: *... the type of flotation unit?*

Gimby: *I don't know what kind it was. No. That was ... they were big, ah ... Oh, I suppose ... each one of the*

- cells would be maybe four foot square - something like that.
- Hovis: *Um-hum.*
- [Gap in tape].
- Hovis: *... well lit back then?*
- Gimby: *Hub?*
- Hovis: *Was it a well lit where you worked?*
- Gimby: *Oh yeah, yeah.*
- Hovis: *Would you sack the product? And ah ...*
- Gimby: *I didn't. No. They had a person come in. I was one of the fellows ... sackin' all the time. Regular, regular man sackin'.*
- Hovis: *Um-hum. O.K.*
- Gimby: *Yup.*
- Hovis: *So, until 1935 you were working for Carl Whitham over at Nabesna?*
- Gimby: *I worked for him, um-hum.*
- Hovis: *Where were you ... What [was] your [unintelligible sound] housing situation like at Nabesna?*
- Gimby: *Well ... [it was] not for married couples.*
- Hovis: *But, when you were single; when you ...*
- Gimby: *I ... Well, no. I was married at the time. But, then my wife stayed in Chitina, see? And ... that's why I ... left there. And ... then I went back to work for the road commission. And ... then came up here. ... I wo...*
- Hovis: *You, you were working for the road commission before you went to work as [unclear words].*
- Gimby: *Yeah. And then I went to Nabesna. And then ... after I left Nabesna ... after, you know ... they wouldn't ... they wouldn't have any ba... married couples there ... she was livin' in town [Chitina], 'n I was there at the mine. I ... I drove truck for a while. And then ... then after that, I came up here.*

Hovis: *Were you working for the Road Commission when the Nabesna road was built?*

Gimby: *Yeah.*

Hovis: *Could you tell me any thing about ... shelter cabins?*

Gimby: *Shelter cabins? Over there?*

Hovis: *Yeah, yeah - on the Nabesna road.*

Gimby: *Oh, yeah, they [I] ... helped build some of them!*

Hovis: *Where were they located? That ... the one at the head of Jack Creek? Was that ...*

Gimby: *Was above Jack Creek, I think.*

Hovis: *Above Jack Creek?*

Gimby: *Yeah. Um-hum.*

Hovis: *How 'bout those ones ... Did you ever go over Cooper Pass - over into the Shusana [Chisana]?*

Gimby: *No.*

Hovis: *'Cause there was stuff ... was a couple of 'em in there, too.*

Gimby: *Oh is there? One by the ... fellow that worked in the office, Bill Cameron, he ... ah ... had ... His wife up there. But ... he build a cabin about ... mile or so ... from ... down the hill from the mine.*

Hovis: *Um-hum.*

Gimby: *And ... that was the only ... [the] only married couple that was ... that I worked with. I wasn't about to build a cabin ... you know, cause ...*

Hovis: *Yeah, we talked to Bill Cameron in the early eighties, I think ... in Chitina.*

Gimby: *Bill died I think, last fall, didn't he?*

Hovis: *Yeah.*

Gimby: *That's what I heard.*

Hovis: *Yeah.*

Gimby: *I used to hear from him every year. But, I haven't heard from him the last couple years. And, ah, Inger was telling me that he had ... he had passed away.*

[Gap in tape].

Hovis: *Besides missing your wife while you were at Nabesna, how was the ... how was it to work there?*

Gimby: *Oh ... it was good to work there.*

Hovis: *Um-hum.*

Gimby: *Real good. Had real good [chuckle] at this place. Sure was good to work there too. You know.*

Hovis: *What was your job at Nabesna?*

Gimby: *I worked in flotation.*

Hovis: *Flotation [unclear word].*

Gimby: *Well, they had tables and flotation there. But they don't ha... They didn't have tables here, see. Tables ... they're [used to] work up the gold only, I think.*

Hovis: *Could you describe the operation of the flo... of the table? How ... what you would do to make the table work properly?*

Gimby: *Well ... I ... you've seen 'em work, I guess?*

Hovis: *Yes, I have.*

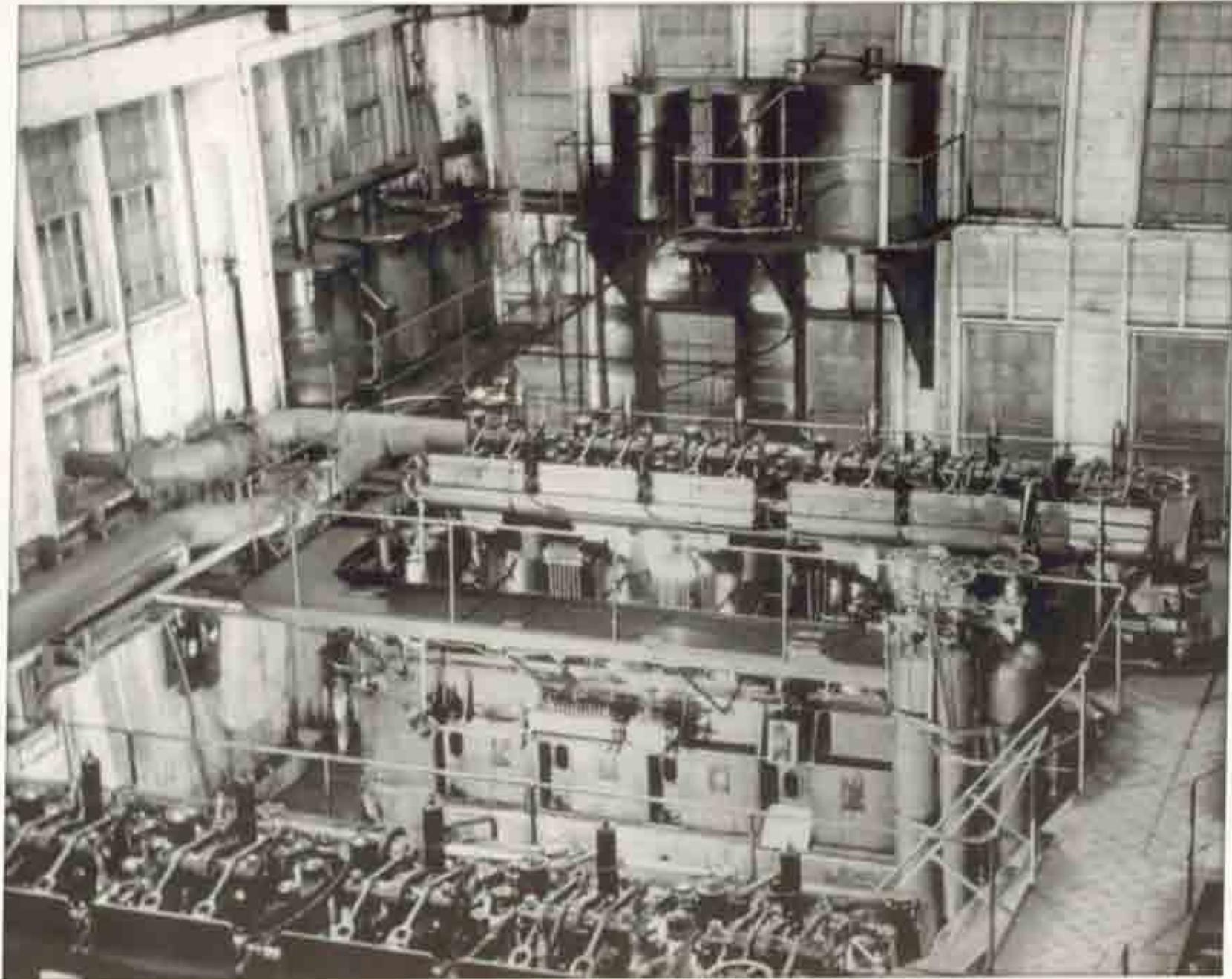
Gimby: *Well, then...*

Hovis: *But, I'd like to hear [it described by] someone that actually worked with them [Gimby, Hovis and Bleakley laugh].*

Gimby: *Well, they [laughing continues] they're on a slant ...*

Hovis: *Um-hum.*

Gimby: *... and I don't know how [unclear word] say, maybe ... fifteen, eighteen feet long. And ... it's a vibration, and ... the gold worked to the ... it comes out the end and ... goes into a ... a pot there. And they'd haul it away [laughter].*



*Two big Macintosh-Seymour Diesel Engines, Kennecott Mill Power House.*

Hovis: O.K. [laughter] ... *Did you enjoy your time at Kennecott?*

Gimby: *Oh yeah! I did. I really did. Yup. And when my wife was, came up to this ... part of the country, she ... didn't like it at all. And ...*

Hovis: *Where did she come from?*

Gimby: *Well, she was, she was born [in] Australia. But, she was in this country ... until we got married. And ... But she ... she really didn't like ... didn't like it ... the first winter. After that you couldn't drive her out of here.*

Hovis: [Chuckle] *O.K. How did ... what was it about this place that changed her mind?*

Gimby: *Well, she was pregnant! See, she had ...*

Hovis: *Um-hum.*

Gimby: [to go] *that summer out to the hospital to have her baby. And...*

Hovis: *Um-hum.*

Gimby: *And then the mine closed down. So...*

[Gap in tape].

Hovis: *Where were you originally from? I forgot to ask that question.*

Gimby: *I was born 'n Canada.*

Hovis: *Canada?*

Gimby: *Yeah.*

Hovis: *What part? Western? Eastern?*

Gimby: *Ah, western. Down near Regina.*

Hovis: *Regina. Saskatchewan? Um-hum.*

Gimby: *Yeah.*

Hovis: *Did you ever mine there?*

Gimby: *No.*

Hovis: *Or in Alberta?*

Gimby: *No, I came to the states when I was ... oh ... fifteen, or sixteen years old, I guess.*

Hovis: *From Regina. Were your parents grain farmers?*

Gimby: *No. My father wa... he worked, he worked in the ... grain elevator for .... He used to ... He had a hardware store for ... several years.*

Hovis: *Um-hum. ... After you ... after Kennecott closed ... did you stay in mining? Did you go mining elsewhere?*

Gimby: *No, I went back into the lumber business.*

Hovis: *Um-hum.*

Gimby: *I run ... ah ... I worked in a saw mill for a while.*

Hovis: *Um-hum.*

Gimby: *Then I worked in the lumber yard, loading lumber and stuff like that.*

Hovis: *In ... Alaska? Or ...*

Gimby: *No. No. [unclear word] Down in California.*

Hovis: *California. O.K.*

[Gap in tape].

Hovis: *I've always heard there was a very active social life here in Kennecott.*

Gimby: *There is. There was! Yeah.*

Hovis: *Any special friends that you're ... of your family ... you and your family?*

Gimby: *Well the ... quite a few friends. Yeah! We ... There was Nell; and Mat ... Pat McCann; and, ah ... Gertrude and Bob Sullivan; and ... Ruth and Mary Gulliffson [sp.?]. ... Oh several people like that; yeah.*

Bleakley: *I just talked to Nell McCann about ...*

Gimby: *Pardon?*

Bleakley: *I just talked to Nell McCann about two months ago [unclear word].*

Gimby: *Is that right? How is she?*



*Bob Sullivan.*

- Bleakley: *She was doin' real good. She's in the Pioneer's home.*
- Gimby: *Yeah, I heard that.*
- Bleakley: *But, her mind 's just as sharp as a tack.*
- Gimby: *Is that right?*
- Bleakley: *Yup.*
- Gimby: *I'll be darned, ... You know, I was up here in ... about three years ago, I guess it was. N' ... I tried to get in touch with her, but I couldn't find her. Didn't know ... and I don't know her ... daughter's name. And, so I couldn't get in ... couldn't find her. So, I [was] really disappointed in that, because, Nell and my wife were ... real good friends.*
- Bleakley: *Her daughter's very protective of her.*
- Gimby: *I see.*

Bleakley: *Yeah. ...Yeah ... She was there the whole time I was talking to her. I looked at ... I looked at her photographs. She's got some wonderful photographs of ....*

Gimby: *Photographs?*

Bleakley: *Yeah.*

Gimby: *My wife is in a lot of 'em too.*

Bleakley: *Yeah, probably.*

Gimby: *Yeah. Nell was a wonderful woman. She was ... special for [unclear words] of my wife's. ... I lost my wife to ... Ah, she had a heart attack several years ago. But, I'm, remarried again now.*

[Gap in tape].

Hovis: *Do you remember any other shelter cabins on the Nabesna Road besides the one by Jack Creek? Was there more than just one?*

Gimby: *'S the only one I knew of. Yeah. See, there could have been some*

[built] after I left, though. I was up here ... oh, four, or five years ... four years anyway, almost.

Hovis: *Um-hum.*

Gimby: *But now I don't know what year [it was] that the mine closed down. It must have closed down durin' the war, I believe.*

Hovis: *Closed for the war. And then, he [Whitham] tried to reopen it briefly after the war. And then ... and then he died.*

Gimby: *Carl died?*

Hovis: *'47 he died.*

Gimby: *Oh, is that right? I didn't know that.*

Hovis: *Yeah ... But, I ... he'd run out of ... he'd run out of gold 'bout then anyway ...*

Gimby: *Oh..*

Bleakley: *The Bear vein was depleted, and ... they were tryin' to ....*

- Hovis: *Open the Rambler process.*
- Bleakley: *... to open the Rambler process, yeah. ... And they never really did [open] it up there.*
- Gimby: *Oh, is that right?*
- Bleakley: *Yeah.*
- Gimby: *Oh.*
- Hovis: *But, I mean, he still did pretty well.*
- Gimby: *Oh, yeah ... yeah. ... I know [laugh]. Well, I worked there in the mill then; when I first went to work ... But I worked up ... run the tram ... But, I didn't like it up there, 'n workin' underground at night, you know? So I ... got ... transferred down to the mill, and I enjoyed that. I really enjoyed that. Then, when I come over here, I went right into [the] mill right from the start, see.*
- Hovis: *Was Phil Holdsworth there then?*
- Gimby: *Yup. He was the boss of that ... of the mill. Yeah.*
- Hovis: *He's still alive.*
- Gimby: *Where's he?*
- Hovis: *He's in Anchorage.*
- Gimby: *He is?*
- Hovis: *Yeah. He was in Juneau for years, but I think he's in Anchorage now.*
- Gimby: *Is that right? Do you know his address?*
- Hovis: *No, I don't off the top of my head. I'm not sure ... that he remembers any of that stuff, now ... His ... I think he's kind ah gone down hill in the last couple of years.*
- Gimby: *Oh, has he?*
- Hovis: *Yeah.*
- Gimby: *Was ... he ... [strained sounding] is his family up here too? Or ... Was he married ... I never did [really] know whether he was married, or not. I think he was married when they lived in Seattle.*

Bleakley: *Well, after ... Did you know him? ... You know he went ... he was captured by the Japanese. ... You know all about that?*

Gimby: *No.*

Bleakley: *He was in the Philippines durin' the war. And he was captured ...*

Gimby: *Oh was he?*

Bleakley: *... And he spent most of the war in a P.O.W. camp.*

Gimby: *Is that right?*

Bleakley: *Yeah.*

Gimby: *Well, I'll be darned. No, I didn't know that ...*

Bleakley: *'N then he came back, and was Commissioner of Natural Resources ... for the territory.*

Gimby: *Oh.*

Bleakley: *For a long time. [Phil Holdsworth was the Territorial Commissioner of Mines from 1952 to 1959, then*

*State Commissioner of Natural resources from 1959 to 1967].*

Gimby: *Is that right?*

Bleakley: *Yeah.*

Bleakley: *Yeah, I mean he had a great career ... after that.*

Gimby: *Yeah, he ... [was a] pretty ... nice fellah. He was a ... He was my ... he was my boss. Yeah. He was pretty good. ... I did ... There's ... someone ... thought it was from Seattle, but I forget their names now. Yeah. 'N God, that's been long time ago.*

Bleakley: *Long time, yeah.*

Gimby: *[Laughing].*

Hovis: *Do you remember anybody else that was working in there?*

Gimby: *Well, Bill Cameron.*

Bleakley: *Bill Cameron, yeah.*

Gimby: *Yeah. You'd said, though, he died here just [unclear word].*

Bleakley: *Yeah.*

Gimby: *And his wife ... when she ... first came up, she was ... came up as a school teacher. And ... she ... arrived from her [unclear word] ... We're pretty good friends. That's from ... I was workin' the mine, and ... I just said, oh, they come to get married, I guess, or som... The wife 'n her were ... I went to that pla...*

Bleakley: *Um-hum.*

Gimby: *Yeah, I was there when Bill got married.*

[Gap in tape].

Hovis: *Did you work at any other mines before Nabesna?*

Gimby: *No.*

Hovis: *Or, after Kennecott?*

Gimby: *Kennecott and Nabesna's the only two I ever worked on.*

Bleakley: *When ... What period did you work for the Alaska Road Commission? From when ... to when ... the first time? Before Nabesna.*

Gimby: *Well, I came up in ... thirty ... one, or pretty close. And, I worked there for ... two years - for the Road Commission. Or, thereabouts. And, [then] I went to work in Nabesna.*

Hovis: *What did you do at the Road Commission?*

Gimby: *Oh, [I] drove truck ... [or] whatever there was to do. Worked 'n the kitchen, and ... anything to ... get a little money ahead.*

Hovis: *Um-hum. O.K.*

Gimby: *Wasn't particular what it is, as long [I] got something to do.*

Bleakley: *You, ah ... Did you know anything about ... the airstrip there at Nabesna bar? Or ... the airstrip at Orange Hill? I think the Alaska Road Commission had something to do with ...*

Gimby: *I didn't even know they had one.*

Bleakley: *Yeah, I think ... the Alaska Road [Commission] eventually ... contracted ... one of 'em. They, they [were] built in twenty nine I think.*

Gimby: *Oh is that right?*

Hovis: *I guess it's the one down on the flats below the mine. ... Reeve, I believe, had something to do with that.*

Gimby: *Bob Reeve?*

Hovis: *Um-hum.*

Bleakley: *Yeah, well, Reeve did it later.*

Gimby: *I knew Bob Reeve real well. [Reeve lived in Valdez from 1932 to 1942. Later, he founded Reeve Aleutian Airways].*

Hovis: *Yeah.*

[Gap in tape].

Hovis: *Know him did yeah?*

Gimby: *Oh, yeah, yeah.*

Hovis: *Good friend? Or ...*

Gimby: *Yeah, I knew him quite well. I ... [was] drivin' a truck from Nabesna one time ... and he was at Slana in ... [the] fall of that year. And it [was] pretty cold. ... And he ... I was goin' up to the mine, and ... he said "you want 'ta wear my suit?" And I says 'You bet I will'. [Chuckling].*

Hovis: [Chuckling].

Gimby: *So, I wore his ... flight suit [Both laughing].*

Hovis: *Uh-huh. Yeah.*

[Gap in tape].

Hovis: *... was the airstrip at the Nabesna mine that they ...*

Gimby: *I didn't even know they had one [there].*

Hovis: *O.K.*

**Gimby:** *No, I didn't even know they had one [there]. And ... in fact ... Bob ... After[wards] walked ... When I first went in ... to Nabesna, I was, ah ... That winter, I stayed at ... Chistochina.*

**Hovis:** *Um-hum.*

**Gimby:** *And, ah ... Carl Whitham had come through that fall, or winter ... Or spring, I guess it was. And I asked Carl for a job. And he said, O.K.! And so ... ah ... Chistochina's quite a walk! From ... there to the mine.*

**Bleakley:** *Yeah! It's about seventy five miles, isn't it!*

**Hovis:** *Um-hum. [Laughing].*

**Gimby:** *'bout that. Yeah. And, but ... that's what we did. Walked in ... with Al and Floyd. ... I don't know whether you ... You never?*

**Bleakley:** *No, I never.*

**Gimby:** *You didn't know him? He ... was with us ... The two of us. We*

*walked in and ... was out there, I think, one day. When ... here come a fellah walkin' up the hill ... in the spring of the year, you know. There was nobody around. No roads in there at that time, at all. And here was Bob. Bob - Bob Reeve. And I says, 'for Gods sake', what are you doin' up here'. Well, he says, 'you know', he says, 'I had ... somethin' went wrong' ... And he says ... 'I landed down there in the lake'. And it was about a mile from Nabesna. And ... That was [laugh] ... [the] last time I saw him, actually.*

**Bleakley:** *When you were at Chistochina, was Earl Hirst ...*

**Gimby:** *No, Karl Wurst. Karl ... Not Karl, but ... Stewart - Claude Stewart. You know him?*

**Bleakley:** *Claude Stewart? No.*

**Gimby:** *He married Mrs. Tibbs [sp.?] in Chitina.*

**Bleakley:** *Yeah, that name's familiar.*

Gimby: *Yeah. Well, he married her ... and made her run the, ah, roadhouse that winter. I stayed with them that winter. And I stayed from [loud noise] from there, and walked in to the mines in Nabesna.*

Hovis: *So that was in about ... thirty four?*

Gimby: *Yeah ... thereabouts. Yeah.*

Hovis: *Was ... the road wasn't completely built then, was it?*

Gimby: *No, there was no road at all.*

Hovis: *You just went in [on] the old trail?*

Gimby: *From Slana on ... there was no road at all.*

Hovis: *What was the trail like?*

Gimby: *There was no [laugh] trail at all! You just had, ah ... just a cow trail up ...*

Hovis: *Um-hum.*

Gimby: *Cow path, that's all.*

Hovis: *Um-hum.*

Gimby: *Yeah.*

Hovis: *An old packers' trail to get into Shushanna [Chisana], I believe.*

Bleakley: *Yeah, um-hum.*

Gimby: *Yeah. You know ... it was ... you mention Shushanna [Chisana], I was tryin' to think of that ... name here the other day, and it just couldn't ... come to me at all. But, just as you mention it, why ...*

Hovis: *Did you know any of those folks from out there?*

Gimby: *No. No. I heard a lot of stories from out [laughs] that part of the country, you know.*

Hovis: *Yeah, I thought you might have run into some guys in Nabesna, 'cause they use to pass through there, you know.*

Gimby: *No. Well, there ... there wasn't many eld... elderly fellows in there at Nabesna. ... Young, young. Lot a young fellows from Seattle.*

Hovis: *Um-hum.*

[Gap in tape].

Gimby: *... was the matter with Carl ... when he died? Did you know?*

Bleakley: [To Hovis] *Do you remember?*

Hovis: *I do not know.*

Bleakley: *I ... sort of thought he had a heart attack. But, I'm not sure. It seemed to me it was pretty sudden.*

Hovis: *Um-hum.*

Gimby: *It was, huh? Carl was an awful drinker. God ... You .... Somethin' terrible!*

Hovis: *Is that right? I thought he wouldn't allow any alcohol ...*

Bleakley: *I guess, maybe that was [chuckle] for everybody else.*

Hovis: *... any alcohol around the mine.*

Gimby: *There'd be days at the mine, he'd be just damn drunk! He [laugh] ... It was awful!*

Hovis: *Is that right?*

Gimby: *Yeah.*

Hovis: *Oh.*

Gimby: *He was ... [a] wonderful guy, though, when he was sober. But when he was ... when he was drinkin', he was ... really somethin'!*

Hovis: *All, all those years over on Gold Hill probably did that to him. Well, he'd been a ... He'd been a miner over in Gold Hill at Shushanna before.*

Gimby: *Oh, was he?*

Bleakley: *Yeah. [two unintelligible words] Little Eldorado Creek.*

Gimby: *Oh, I see. I didn't know that.*

[Gap in tape].

Hovis: *... you lived in this apartment building for several years?*

Gimby: *Four years, yeah.*

Hovis: *Um-hum.*

Bleakley: *Um-hum.*

Hovis: *Yeah, did you, bring in ... did you have ... did you have [any] furniture here? Or, [were] most things built into the ...*

Gimby: *Just the furniture that we made up. Egg crates, for ... Stuff like that you know?*

Hovis: *Um-hum.*

Gimby: *That was ... it was ... kind of a ... Lookin' back over it, you know ... [it] was kind of a ... Wife comin' out of the city, and ... comin' into somethin' like this ... it's, it's, pretty ...*

Bleakley: *Pretty good.*

Gimby: *But, she ... you know, she took [to it] ... real well.*

Hovis: *Quite a shock to her, wasn't it?*

Gimby: *Hub?*

Hovis: *Quite a shock to her.*

Gimby: *It was. Yeah. ... But she enjoyed it though. That's the thing.*

Hovis: *Um-hum.*

Gimby: *But it weren't ... At first she didn't, that's for sure ...*

Hovis: *[Laughing]. [Did] she do all her shopping down at the ... the company store? Or did you order from Outside?*

Gimby: *Well, [we] did a lot from Outside. Yeah. I know it ... When she first came up here, boy ... the ... 'Twas somethin' new for her to order from the catalog.*

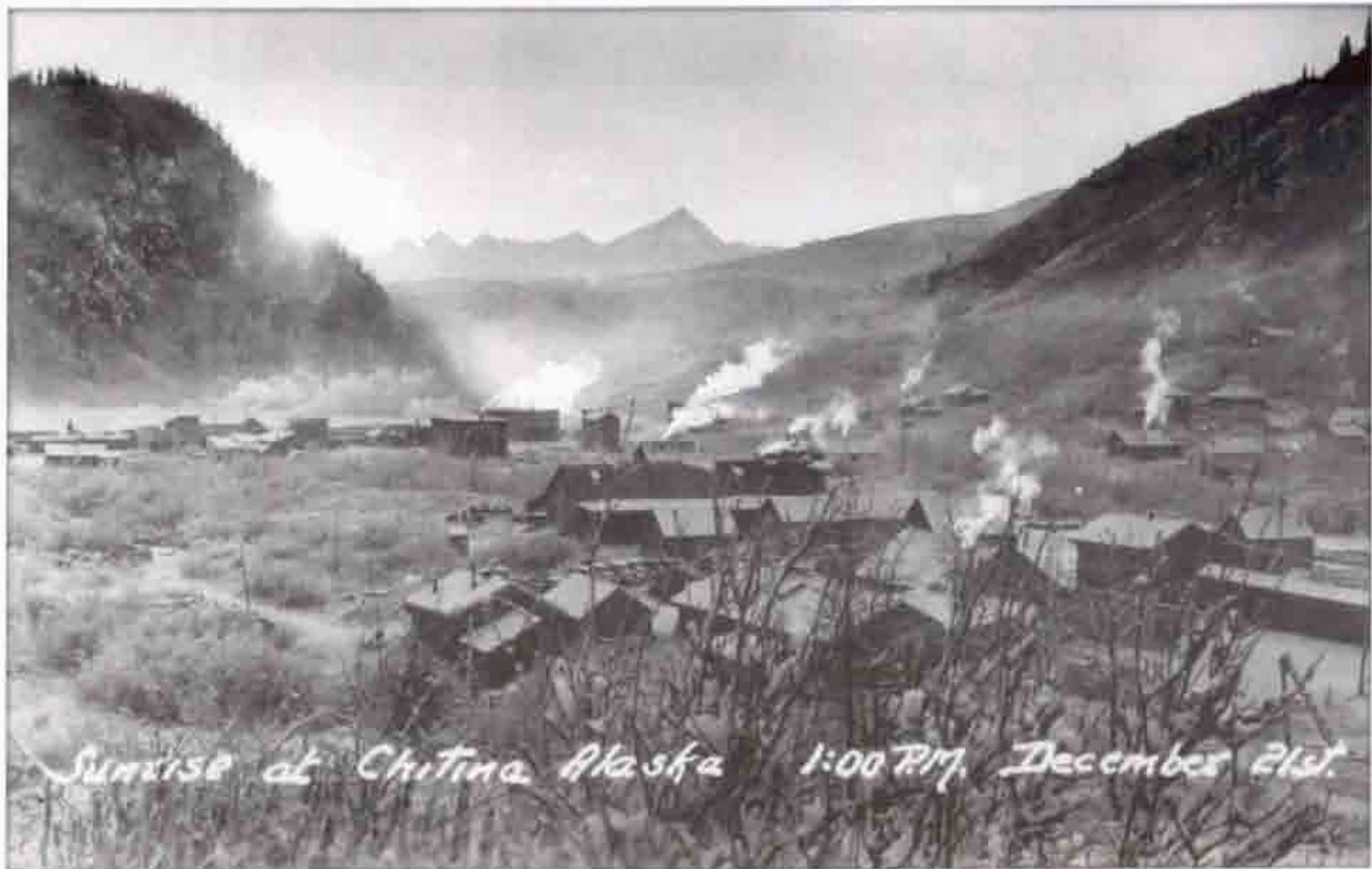
Hovis: *Um-hum.*

Gimby: *She kind ah, went ... a little overboard, but ...*

Hovis: *What, [did] you order food ...*

Gimby: *No, we bought all that here.*

Hovis: *Bought all the food here?*



*Chitina, Alaska. Photograph courtesy Anchorage Museum of History and Art.*



*“When (my wife) first came up here, boy...’Twas somethin’ new for her to order from the catalog. She kind ah, went...a little overboard, but...we bought all (our food)...down there in Chitina...we bought all our ...stuff from there...the only time in my life ever saved any money while I was up here.”*

NELSON GIMBY

Gimby: *Yeah. Yeah. And down there in Chitina, well, we bought all our ... stuff from there.*

Hovis: *Yeah, O.K. Reasonably priced?*

Gimby: *Well, not too bad. I don't know ...*

Hovis: *Saved a dollar a week?*

Gimby: *Hub?*

Hovis: *Maybe saved a dollar a week?*

Gimby: *Well, that's the only time in my life ever saved any money while I was up here. So ...*

Hovis: *Good.*

Bleakley: *Did you get around out in the ... in ... any of the mine stuff across the way ...*

Gimby: *No. No.*

Bleakley: *... Dan Creek ... tributary, or any of that?*

Gimby: *No.*

Bleakley: *No?*

[Gap in tape].

Hovis: *What was your work week like? Did you have five days a week? Seven days a week?*

Gimby: *Everyday!*

Hovis: *Everyday?*

Gimby: *Everyday!*

Hovis: *And ... eight hours [a day]? Ten hours?*

Gimby: *Eight hours.*

Hovis: *Eight hours.*

Gimby: *Right. ... Back ... on the sub[ject] [of] Nabesna ... A lot of times ... you know, when we had to shut down ... why ... we might work twelve, fourteen [hours] a day to get things workin' again.*

Hovis: *Um-hum.*

Gimby: *That was [that] the only time that ... Was [it] always just eight hours.*

Hovis: *Um-hum.*

Gimby: *Worked shift for ... Three shifts.*

Hovis: *What ... 'd you go, day shift? Afternoon shift? Night shift?*

Gimby: *Yeah.*

Hovis: *Ah ... and you'd have to rotate through that every ... time?*

Gimby: *Every month, yeah.*

Hovis: *Every month?*

Gimby: *Change every month.*

Hovis: *Um-hum. ... Short change is always a hard one isn't it?*

[Gap in tape].

Bleakley: *... was that, mid seventy's?*

Gimby: *Yeah.*

[Gap in tape].

Gimby: *How'd that go? From that ... I used to like the afternoon shift the best. And, I tried to, ah, you know ...*

Hovis: *Why was that?*

Gimby: *I don't know. Just seemed to me [laughs].*

Hovis: *I always liked it too.*

Gimby: *I don't know. Just somethin' that I liked, that's all.*

Hovis: *No bosses around. [Unintelligible].*

Gimby: *No special reason for it.*

[All laugh].

Hovis: *Yeah. O.K. Um-hum.*

Hovis: *Is this the first time you've been back to Kennecott?*

Gimby: *To Kennecott, yeah.*

Hovis: *Um-hum.*

Gimby: *I've been back to Alaska ... three different times, so ...*

Hovis: *Um-hum.*

Bleakley: *Have you ever gone back to Nabesna?*

Gimby: *No, never have.*

Bleakley: *Or, you driven by Chistochina?*

Gimby: *No. I been by it once, yeah. I was on the bus tour here ... first trip I had back to Alaska was on the bus tour. Twenty-eight days. And they went by, right by it. But ... it's changed a lot since the time I was there.*

Bleakley: *That roadhouse has been...*

Gimby: *It's run by Indians now, isn't it?*

Bleakley: *No. No. Not right at the moment. But, it's changed hands a bunch of times.*

Gimby: *Oh, I see.*

Bleakley: *And it's been ... it's been modified considerably. But, it's still in the same spot, right?*

Gimby: *Yeah, same spot, yeah, um-hum.*

Bleakley: *Yeah, that one ... it finally got placed on the National Register ... about a year ago.*

Gimby: *Oh, is that right?*

Bleakley: *Yeah. [Chistochina Roadhouse burned down in November 1999.]*

Hovis: *Well, what did you do for recreation here? Did you go skiing? Or ...*

Gimby: *Yeah. No. No. Oh, dances and ... card playin'. Stuff like that, you know? Different families got to get together. I knew a lot of the ... a lot of the married ... families.*

Hovis: *Did you ever go up to the mines?*

Gimby: *No. My wife was up there one time, though.*

Hovis: *How'd she ... she walk up, or ...*

Gimby: *Yeah. They wouldn't allow, they wouldn't allow women on, to walk ...*

Hovis: *Um-hum.*

Gimby: *Is that right?*

Bleakley: *... said they went up, they went up to the Erie [mine]. And then went through the ... the tunnel to ... to the ...*



*New Years Eve party.*

Gimby: *[But] her and Nell McCann [sp?] walked up.*

Bleakley: *Yeah! ... Nell McCann told me about that as a matter of fact. Said that ...*

Hovis: *To the Jumbo?*

Bleakley: *To the Jumbo, yeah. She said that they ... that the ... a foreman or something came down, and helped 'em up on foot, to Erie. And then*

*they went through the tunnel, and then to the lunch room actually. They were in the lunch room, actually.*

Hovis: O.K.

Gimby: *Yeah.*

Bleakley: *Yeah. She thought that was great!*

Gimby: *Is that right?*

Hovis: *She never told you about that, 'eh?*

Bleakley: [Chuckling].

Hovis: O.K. [Pause]. *That'd be quite an adventure.*

Gimby: *Yeah. Yeah.*

Hovis: *Um-hum.*

Bleakley: *It was enough to where, she remembered it all these years later.*

Hovis and Gimby: *Yeah. [Laughing].*

Hovis: *Um-hum. O.K. [Pause]. [To Bleakley] Any more questions Geoff?*

Bleakley: *No, I don't think so.*

Hovis  
[to Gimby]: *Anything else you'd like to say?*

Gimby: *No. That's 'bout all I know [Laugh].*

Hovis: *Well, I'd like to thank you very much.*

Gimby: *Well, you're welcome.*

Bleakley: *We appreciate it.*