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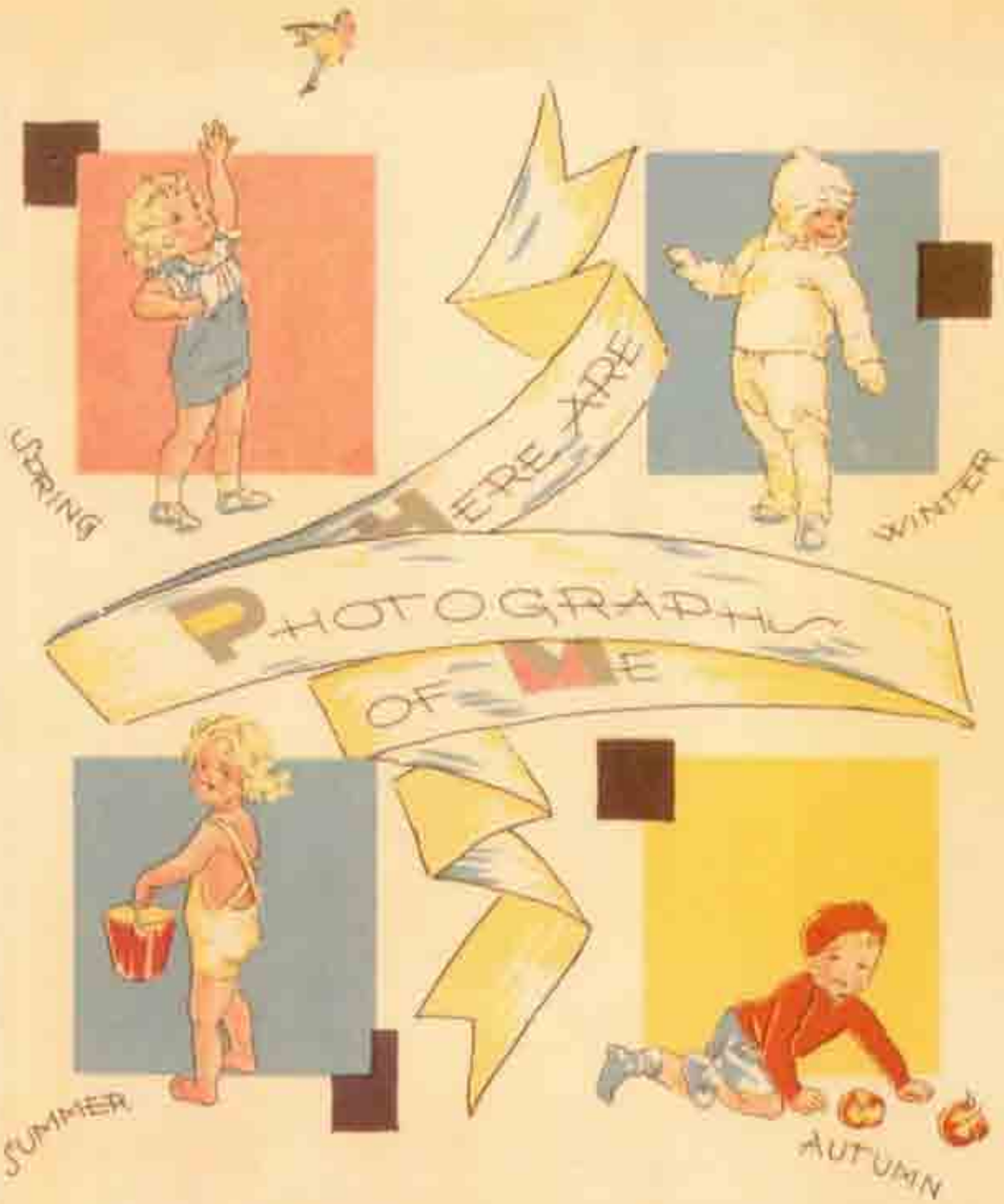
Wrangell

Kennecott Kids

INTERVIEWS WITH THE CHILDREN OF KENNECOTT

VOLUME NO. ONE

SCANNED
2/7/2012


HERE ARE
PHOTOGRAPHS
OF ME
SPRING
WINTER
SUMMER
AUTUMN

Kennecott Kids:
Interviews with the Children of Kennecott, Volume One

United States
Department of the Interior
in Alaska

Produced by the
Alaska Support Office,
National Park Service,
2001

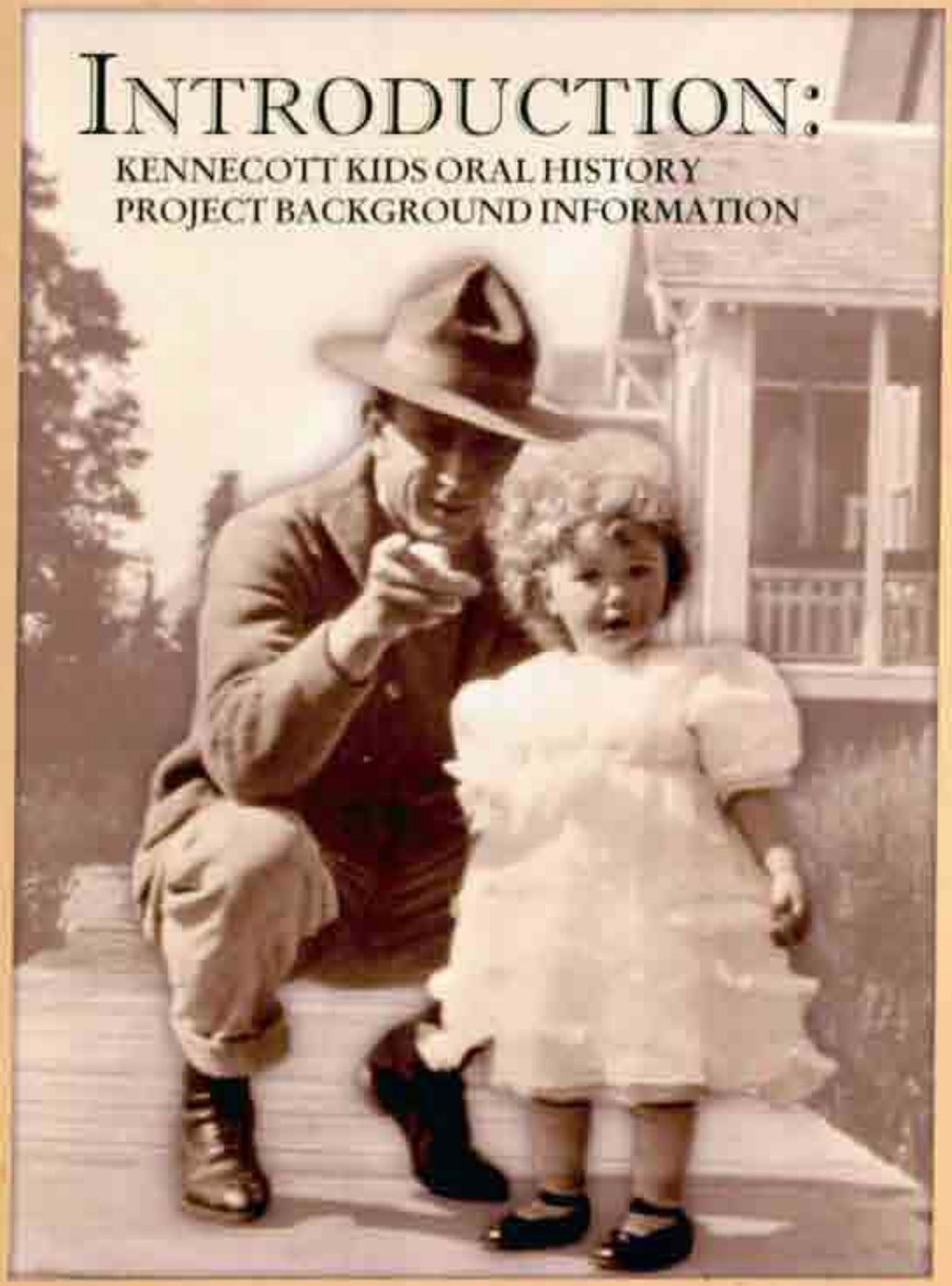
U.S. Department of the Interior
Anchorage, Alaska

"We lived way back beyond the beyond."

DEBORAH VICKERY HOUSE

INTRODUCTION:

KENNECOTT KIDS ORAL HISTORY PROJECT BACKGROUND INFORMATION



Barbara Rose Watkins and her daddy Dick.

During the weekend of June 15-17, 1990, a reunion held at Kennicott Glacier Lodge, Kennecott, Alaska, brought together many of the people who were school-age children when the Kennecott mines and mill operated during the 1920s and '30s. Inger Jensen Ricci and Eleanor Tjosevig Eidemiller, two "Kennecott Kids," developed the idea for the reunion. Rich and Jody Kirkwood, owners of the Kennicott Glacier Lodge, helped organize and host the event.

Twenty-one "kids" attended the reunion and all had a wonderful time in the ghost town which was the thriving company town of their childhood. They spoke fondly of Kennecott and the relationships they developed while growing up in the magnificent setting of the Wrangell Mountains. The "kids" hiked the glacier, thumbed through photographs, walked the town, picnicked in McCarthy, and told their stories as physical reminders prompted their memories.

The success of this initial reunion led to a network of "kids" trying to locate more of their childhood friends. In 1994, a second reunion was held at the Kennicott Glacier Lodge with 25 "kids" in attendance. Some of the original 21 "kids" couldn't make this second trip and there were at least 15 new faces in the "kids" crowd. The excitement of returning to their childhood environment had not diminished by 1994 and plans began to develop for a third reunion in 1998. Even more new faces appeared in 1998. The enthusiasm and joy expressed by the "kids" while together at Kennecott was contagious, never waning.

In cooperation with the reunion hosts, a team of historians from the Alaska Regional Office of the National Park Service conducted interviews with the Kennecott Kids. Historians Sandra Faulkner (Anderson), Logan Hovis, and Ann Kain interviewed the "kids" while Linda Cook took copy-stand pictures of the historical photographs brought to the reunion. Additional NPS staff from Wrangell St. Elias National Park and Preserve included Anne Worthington, Cultural Resource Manager, and historian Geoff Bleakley. The interviews provide the historical community with a collection of primary source material on the social history of Kennecott and McCarthy. Opportunities such as this do not occur often. The mining and industrial history of Kennecott is well-known, but through the interviews we were able to know Kennecott as a living community rather than a mining ghost town.

This publication is the result of many hours of interviews conducted over the course of the three reunions. The historic photographs are, for the most part, in the personal collections of the "kids." The NPS has since acquired the Kennecott Mines National Historic Landmark as a part of Wrangell-St. Elias National Park and Preserve.

Ann Kain,
National Park Service Historian

Dear Reader:

What a really tremendous place to bring up a family! Surrounded by nature and love, we children were doubly blessed. The simplicity, the freedom, and the peace of such an existence is beyond imagination. To live in Kennecott a lifetime would be paradise! But all good things cannot remain static, they must change, and so it is that all the wonderful memories remain and the hard times are forever forgotten.

All these memories are from dear friends of my childhood and part of my life. Each one has different memories of different experiences, different family life, different school activities. They are part of us and help us to understand how they have shaped our lives.

As pioneers, the Kennecott Kids had a very easy time of it, as everyone had electricity, and running water, except occasionally it did freeze from the water house to the homes. Each area had a water house from which several homes received water. All did have out houses, but many were in wood sheds. The staff and the upper crust did have inside facilities.

Living in Kennecott was a wonderful experience, especially for the children. They were considered very special and most particularly by the single adults. Everyone was so good to us. The freedom of living there was special. The children of the "Camp" had the run of the town and if anyone got into trouble, there was always someone around to help. Of course, they were all raised quite strictly and knew what they could and could not do. However, there was a sort of class system, as the office workers, nurses, doctors, teachers and those who were "bosses," didn't always attend the same social functions.

Inger Jensen, Debbie Vickery, Jane Vickery, and Ole Jensen.

To understand the closeness of the Kennecott Kids, it must be understood that the school was the focal point, the center of the children's life, apart from the family. There were no clubs or organized activities. The children made their own entertainment. It was true the "Company" did provide movies, a ball field in the summer, the tennis court, a handball court in the summer also. In the winter there was the ice rink, surrounded by lights and flooded now and then to repair the ice. Basketball, dancing, and other activities were held in the community hall.

In the winter we went to school in the dark and came home in the dark. There were lights all along the main street, but not on the hill, so we all carried flashlights. We left our ice skates at school, as we used them during recess, after school, and often were joined by our parents after supper. Several of us cross-country skied and often skied to one of the two stations on the tram. However, we also had our own ski trail starting at the mill, traversing several lightly treed hills, and then a long ride down to the glacier and home. Card playing was another of our entertainments during the winter. The children as well as the adults very well attended the Saturday night dances. There was usually live music, a piano, drums, horn, or whatever was available. However, records were also played and we all had our favorites. Following the dancing, refreshments were served. I shall always remember those sumptuous homemade cakes!

In the summer, there were hikes, picnics, tennis, and ball games to watch. The miners had their own team, as did both McCarthy and Kennecott. One of our favorite activities on warm days was running through the garden hose on our lawn, usually followed by real lemonade and cookies. A hike to McCarthy and back for ice cream cones was a special treat. Fall brought berry picking, currants and cranberries being our favorites. Often we shared patches with black bears, though they were much more frightened than we were.

Kennecott was surrounded by mountains, glaciers, forest, so very beautiful! It was a real wilderness experience. I'm sure we took it all for granted, but now all this beauty and peace is unforgettable.

The history of Kennecott and McCarthy Kids makes interesting and unusual reading. It was a wonderful and different world. All of us living there, attending school, living normal family lives became dear friends. The excitement now of a reunion never diminishes. Most of those growing up in the area felt privileged to have had this tremendous experience of living in such a beautiful and pristine environment. Their lives will be forever entwined.

Inger Jensen Ricci

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JAMES B. BEANS, SR.

Interview conducted By Logan W. Hovis
National Park Service
June 16, 1990
Tape #1
Side #1

Hovis: *Good morning Mr. Beans.*

Beans: *What's that?*

Hovis: *Good morning.*

Beans: *Good morning.*

Hovis: *The tape recorder is running so everything you say will be recorded on the tape and available to other people who might be interested in using it.*

Beans: *I know.*

Hovis: *Would you tell me your full name please?*

Beans: *James B. Beans.*

Hovis: *And you live? Where is your current residence?*

Beans: *What?*

Hovis: *Where do you live now?*

Beans: *My mind is a little haywire. I can't think of the word when I want it. Mobile home.*

Hovis: *Okay.*

Beans: *In a mobile home park up in the high desert east of Los Angeles.*

Hovis: *I understand you are 94 years old.*

Beans: *What?*

Hovis: *You are 94 years old?*

Beans: *I was born October 30, 1895 in Colorado. No, at* [?] *City, Kansas.*

Hovis: *You worked at Kennecott in the 1920s?*

Beans: *Oh, it was - I don't know, when did I leave, Jim, was it in '26?* [Jim is James B. Beans, Jr.]

Beans, Jr.: *No, you left in '27. I was born in '26.*

Beans: *I was here three years.*

Hovis: *What did you do when you were here?*

Beans: *Well, I worked in the leaching plant mostly.*

Hovis: *What did you do while you worked in the leach plant?*

Beans: *Well, I can't think of the name of the thing they were doing in there, but the last year I was shift boss.*

Hovis: *What did you do as a shift boss?*

Beans: *Well, they had four or five men working under me there in the leaching plant and the manager would come down every morning to see that everything was running all right.*

Hovis: *What would you do on an average day when you were in your work? You've done work in the mornings and what would you do?*

Beans: *Well, worked eight hours, three shifts a day, an eight hour day. The only time the leaching plant shut down as I remember, was Christmas. The rest of the time we were* [?]. *In order for the shift boss to get a vacation, we had to work - well, we worked eight hours a day, we would work 16 hours, two of us and one other fellow would be off, see. So, every summer we took a two week vacation by working double shifts that way.*

Hovis: *Would be some very long days, wouldn't it.*

Beans: *Yeh. It was a nice vacation.*

Hovis: *Where would you go on your vacations?*

Beans: *Well, I had two of them and we went over to the island, we called it. The mountain over here that splits the glacier.*

Hovis: *Donoho Peak?*

Beans: *I don't remember the name of it. But we went over there and spent a week. We would kind of share an old cabin in there and we had a tent of our own. We spent the week there.*

Hovis: *Who would go with you?*

Beans: *My wife, children.*

Hovis: *Were you married when you came to Kennecott?*

Beans: *Yes.*

Hovis: *Where did you and your wife live here in the camp?*

Beans: *Before we came here?*

Hovis: *In the camp?*

Beans: *In the camp?*

Hovis: *Yes.*

Beans: *Well, we got a kind of tent house. It was [?] once and then they made a house out of it and it's right up there on the hill. I haven't found it yet because it's all overgrowth in there. Somebody said the foundation is still there, the tent had been taken down on the house.*

Hovis: *How big was the tent or the house?*

Beans: *Oh, about as big as this room and they just roll larger. One [?] was kind of divided off for a bedroom and we had a kitchen to one side and the bedroom had the big fire stove in it, about the size of a barrel. We used to keep it burning pretty well.*

Hovis: *Was it comfortable?*

Beans: *Huh?*

Hovis: *Was it a comfortable place to live?*

Beans: *Any place is comfortable if you make it that way. Used to shoot*

rabbits and my wife would tan the hides and you'd make it a big fur robe for over the bed. Jimmy there, he had, what do you call it, alongside the bed or along over the one side and she made him a robe. My daughter, she made her clothes for her. I got a lot of pictures. He's got them, he can show them to you.

Hovis: *Okay.*

Beans: *Yeh, we had a pretty good time. We got out and hiked around. There's another valley over here, we went over there one day and next morning I was coming out and we met a fellow on the road. At first he thought he had found some [?] who went wild and went over there. He had seen the fire, our fire place, and he was coming down to see if it wasn't him. He wanted to know if I had been bothered and I told him no. He found this other house over there and he had been in it, just to look it over. He was a miner, must have been a miner sitting over there.*

Hovis: *This would have been over in McCarthy Creek?*

Beans: *What?*

Hovis: *McCarthy Creek, the next valley over?*

Beans: *I don't know what's over there. We went back up to the [?] and away over that way.*

Hovis: *Was it usual for shift bosses to have their families here?*

Beans: *What?*

Hovis: *Did most of the shift bosses have their wives and family here?*

Beans: *Well, it's been 60 years ago and I can't tell you much about it. They*

were good fellows, I know that. That's about all I remember about them. We didn't have too much intercourse here. We kind of kept to ourselves. We had a picture show, if I remember right, once a week and a dance about once a month. It's all gone away now, but they was all down there below the shack. The yard men - go through the yard and then you go up [?] *they spent most of their* [?] *keeping that skating rink open so we could skate. They used to have games there and we skated. He's got some pictures of my wife and me skating out there. And I had a pair of skis. The road run up to our house, back up the hill here where the woods - and went up in September and brought it down for us in the winter so we would have it in the winter. I used to go to the top and try to get down. It was about half a* [?] *long, and I never made the* [?] *without going over. I had a spill or two. That was on my skis.*

Hovis: *Did you work seven days a week? And you still found time to go skiing?*

Beans: *Yeh, we had to work, we only worked eight hours, and then we had the rest of the day to kill. And we figured we had to find something amusing, you know,* [?] *a friend down skating or something like that.*

Hovis: *Who would you go skating with, people from the work in the mill or with* [?]*?*

Beans: *Yeh, it was all mill, there was nobody from the mines here. In fact, the guys in the mines, they used to let them come down on the cables and then someone got hurt coming down and they wouldn't let them ride the cables down anymore and they spent their off time up there.*

Hovis: *How did he get hurt riding the cable down?*

Beans: *I don't know. I don't remember. I just remember there was an accident that they kept anybody from the mine coming down on the cable after that. He got tangled up some way, I don't remember just how.*

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

Beans: *Never but once. [?] boss of the mine up there, I went up there. I walked up there and the boss took me down in the mine and showed me around. I been around - my father worked at the coal order - he was - in Kansas, the coal mines. And he looked after the mills. They only had - the mills, you know the kind of cars they had and he would [?] did all kind of work, took care of the mill. When they wanted a car pulled out of a tip over, why, he would go up across there and pull the car out of the tip over. Coal mining is altogether different from here though. In the coal mines you take a shaft down to the bay. The bay is about a 30 degree angle like that and then they've got a tunnel under and car tunnels up all along and put [?]. The miner would shovel the coal into this bay and the coal would roll down to the place at the bottom where they would load the cars. And this one they were running up here was altogether different. They showed me - brought up - they have a turn on the cars like they do in the coal mine but instead of running a tunnel or that they just cave it all in. The little while I went up there it must have been 50 or 60 feet high and that much across and the miners would mine the side and they closed all old areas. Ore was all rolled down to the bottom where they would load it and haul it out. So they had to haul it up to the shaft and the shaft would take it up and dump it in the car and it came down the cable, the car that came down the hill. It's about three miles I think up there, the cable was from the main mine to the pail head.*

Hovis: *Have you worked in the mines all your life?*

Beans: *Oh, I've done everything. The last 20 years of my work I worked in a cement plant. I was working in a plant in Richmond, northern Richmond, and they went on strike. I had worked there about six months and I never got much involved in it but my father was.*

He was working at this coal mine, there were mostly [?] that worked there. They were all strong union men and they called a - he didn't belong to the union. He was the only man that didn't belong and they called a strike because Dad couldn't join the union. And after about three or four days the manager of the mine told him to go ahead and join. But during that time, my uncle run the country store right across from the school yard and I'd go up and [?] until the school bell rang because as soon as I got on the yard, all the people in there would begin to call, "scab, scab" and so I got [?]. In fact, I worked at several places where they'd break a strike. [?] I'd work at loading ships (inaudible) they threw rocks at us and everything else [?] loading the ships.

Hovis: *Was there ever any trouble with the union here at Kennecott when you were here?*

Beans: *Well, I don't know [?] I don't think they had a union here. I don't remember anything about a union anyway.*

Hovis: *Was this a good place to work?*

Beans: *Very good place at the mill here. They treated us wonderfully well. But the people in the mine didn't get down here as easy and in the winter they was all penned up there. They would come out of the mine and stayed at the bunkhouse, it was almost like being in prison. Somebody told me that part of the bunkhouse was over the glacier up there, I don't know.*

Hovis: *It is.*

Beans: *I know that every spring why there would be 50 or 60 of them that quit and then they'd send these - they'd hire men in Los Angeles and all down there and send a bunch of them up. There was about 40 of them come up in our bunch. I was working in a coal mine down there then and I was tired of that. The coal mine down there worked in the winter and in*

the summer, why, it was kind of a hit or miss job. In the summer I'd get a job [?] roads or something like that. But it was getting near spring and I was getting tired of the coal mine and you got to have a job right along. I got to talking to one of the men, he told me he had hired out to come up here to Alaska. [?] and came up before he got here. There was about 40 in the bunch I came in.

Hovis: *Did Kennecott have a hiring hall down in Los Angeles?*

Beans: *Well, not a hiring hall. They had this office [?]. I went in and signed up to come up here. I started out as a laborer. I only worked half a day as a laborer. The boss - he run their - I don't remember too much about it but they had some kind of a power plant - you drug this stuff out, waste stuff that they didn't want to get it out of the way and dumped it all over where the glacier is. And I run that for a while.*

Beans, Jr.: *Dad, you came up from Seattle, not from Los Angeles.*

Beans: *Oh, yeh. I've been telling you about Los Angeles, but it was really Seattle. That's where [?]. My memory is kind of - after 90 years, why, it comes and it goes. I can't even give my home address every once in a while. I have to wait and fool around with it. It doesn't come to mind.*

Hovis: *Does walking around Kennecott jog your memory? Does it bring back any special memories or anything particularly interesting to you?*

Beans: *About wore me out. I'm living in the high desert now. In the winter it's all cold and we have all kinds of wind and snow and everything and I live in the house and the only walk I had that winter was down to the mail box and back. They have a bunch of mail boxes up in the middle of the - what do I want to say?*

Beans, Jr.: *The mobile home court.*

Beans: *Oh, the mobile home court, yeh. There are about 50 houses there. I bought one and I've lived there by myself for two years and a half. And so my physical health is pretty badly shot right now. I took this trip down to McCarthy and it pretty near wore me out.*

Hovis: *When you worked here, did you ever go down to McCarthy?*

Beans: *The three years I was here I was never in McCarthy.*

Hovis: *Amazing. You would buy everything through the company store that you needed?*

Beans: *Everything. Any furniture you wanted, they'd sell you and when you left they'd buy back at 20 percent discount. Didn't need much furniture in that little house. Our groceries and everything like that we bought there.*

Hovis: *Did you do a lot in your little house to make it comfortable, did you build anything there?*

Beans: *No, we didn't do anything. It was comfortable. We had kind of a* [?] *as long as we kept a stove.*

Hovis: *Did Kennecott provide the fire wood for you?*

Beans: *Well, it provided. I expect they charged us for it. I can't tell you that, I don't remember about that. But we had to haul the wood* [?]. *They brought it down in the summer and I think we paid for it all right, they charged us a fair rate. In the three years I was here I saved about $3,000. My wife was away from home with her folks and* [?]. *I planned to quit and go back down to the states and we were six months planning our trip and by the time we planned the trip I lost interest and wanted to stay, but she wanted to go home, so we went* [?].

Hovis: *Your wife had two children while you lived here. Is that correct?*

Beans: *Well, see, Jimmy was born here and Neona was about three years and a half, four years old I reckon*

when we left. Isn't that about right, Jim?

Beans,Jr.: *Well, Neona was born in Seattle, six months before Mom came up here. And we left when I was six months old, so she was two years old when we left. We left in July of '27 and you got up here about the same time in '25.*

Hovis: *Did your wife come with you and your daughter when you first came up, or did they follow later?*

Beans: *No, they came about a month and a half later. I came up here in May and* [?] *well, I don't know, it was about a month and a half. I rented this* [?], *it was the only house left and I managed to get in it and she came up here.*

Hovis: *You said you managed to save approximately $3,000. Did the company act as a bank for you, or did you have that just as cash hidden in the...?*

Beans: *Well, I don't remember too much. Our savings we sent to a savings bank in Seattle. The company didn't* [?] *or anything like that. They were very good. They had a card room here somewhere. There was always a card game going. The only hard part was you had to go down there to lose your money. As I remember, the first three or four days after pay day, why, everybody was in there gambling. (inaudible)*

Hovis: *Were you a good card player?*

Beans: *What?*

Hovis: *Were you a good card player?*

Beans: *No, I lost a little too but not too much.*

Hovis: *Was your son born in the hospital here or in the house?*

Beans: *He was born in the hospital. They had a nice hospital here for their employees. They had good doctors and good nurses and everything there. They treated us fine as far as treatment goes.*

Motor train at landing chute, Bonanza Mine, 150' level. Tom Postovich on left, Tom Ringer on right.

"Any place is comfortable if you make it that way."

JAMES B. BEANS, SR.

Hovis: *That was free of charge?*

Beans: *Pardon?*

Hovis: *Did you have to pay for using the hospital?*

Beans: *Oh, I know we must have. I don't remember. It was nothing unreasonable, I mean, they only charged reasonable rates. They treated us good.*

Hovis: *Did you enjoy working in the leach plant?*

Beans: *As much as anything. I'm kind of a hit and miss man. I've done about everything. Well, see, on the mines, machines. When I left here, I went to visit her folks and lived at, what was it. It was two miles out of Dallas. And I got the idea then of - around here, when I was here, every spring, there used to be a bunch of prospectors and they would buy their stuff and pack it in to where they was prospecting. It would take them a month to pack all the groceries and things in with them see. So they had to pack it a ways and come back and get it and it would take them a month because their food and all the stuff they needed to prospect to get into their prospect place. And when I got down there, I then, of course, got interested in planes and I got the idea of buying a plane and coming up here and getting a* [?] *passenger plane see. And there are lakes all over this country and take these prospectors to some lake a little closer to the* [?]. *So I borrowed a plane and learned to fly and took my brother-in-law and he took his lessons too and he'd fly, that was in Dallas, Texas.*

Hovis: *Did you bring your plane back up here?*

Beans: *No, we never got here. I run out of money and I had to make some money to go ahead with it so I bought a car from my father, if I remember right, and started out - oh, where was it, out - I worked about six months at a mine. I hadn't been out there but two or three weeks and before we left we*

took the plane to store it in a big garage there and my brother he got the idea of - he wasn't used to flying so he went back and put the plane together and went out and took this trip and coming back he wrecked the plane. Fell about a hundred feet and tore his plane all up and broke his nose and was in the hospital for a week or two. So that was my idea of bringing the plane up here.

Hovis: *Did you continue flying after that in other planes?*

Beans: *No, that was the amount of my flying. I went on to Los Angeles and got a job out there, out of* [?] *for a while. I got acquainted with this fellow that was running a school for welders and I had my brother send the engine out - this was a war plane, a Canadian plane - and I had him send the engine out and I traded the engine to the welding man for a course in welding. And I spent about a month or so to become a welder in his shop and weld, see. And then I got a job with East Tool Company, welding tool bins. They were the height of that door over there. I worked for East Tool for a year in Los Angeles. Then the oil business became a haywire and we had 45 welders working there and in six months the only welder left was the foreman. He was* [?]. *So that ended my welding there and I got a job welding for a - oh, what was the name of it - a company that, oh, I don't know. They make all this kind of rock. They install the rock all around the buildings and do things like that. I worked there about a year.*

Hovis: *When you worked at Kennecott, do you remember many Japanese people here?*

Beans: *Japanese? I don't think there was a Japanese in the place. I don't remember any.*

Hovis: *I am just curious, because down in the graveyard there are two Japanese people buried.*

Beans: *I don't remember any.*

Hovis: *Anything about Kennecott that really stands out in your mind that you would like to say?*

Beans: *Well, not except that I enjoyed it a lot. I liked everybody and things of that sort. A very nice - the only enjoyment that you had was hiking and things like that and skating. They had a tennis court too. We used to play tennis. The tennis court was up there* [?] *some where. I don't know, things like that* [?] *and all that sort of stuff* [?]. *There's a big jack rabbit here and we'd go out before the snows and boy, there would be rabbits everywhere. They all turn white, see. They turn white like the pelican does, or the - what kind of a bird is it that...*

Hovis: *The ptarmigan?*

Beans: *Huh?*

Hovis: *Ptarmigan?*

Beans: *Ptarmigan, yeh. And we used to hunt them. I hunted a bear a time or two but I was always kind of leery whether I found one or not. I never did happen to find one. On a vacation over at the island you could see where a big white bear had rubbed on the tree. You know, they get up and rub the tree to clean their fur or something. I was always trying to find one of those but I was half afraid to find one.*

Hovis: *What was it like walking across the glacier ice to get to the island?*

Beans: *Well, it wasn't too bad. It had a kind of a trail you had to stake a rope along* [?]. *The first time my wife come up here, I always said I'd show her the glacier. The glacier then was about, oh, I don't know, a hundred feet high right there, a regular - it was just a stream down there, see. And then this glacier up there and we climbed up on top of it and I was showing her around and I didn't know much about glaciers and I was walking ahead of her and all the stuff beneath me all gave way at once and I started falling. I threw my hands out and I broke into...*

Ladies out for an icy day of it. Kennicott Glacier.

"...I was walking ahead of her [on the glacier] *and all the stuff beneath me all gave way at once and I started falling...."*

JAMES B. BEANS, SR.

TAPE #1
SIDE #2

Beans: *I probably would if the men [?] very long.*

Hovis: *You know, you would have been dead.*

Beans: *What?*

Hovis: *You would have been down in McCarthy in about 20 years. When you left there, where did you go?*

Beans: *Well, I was telling you we went to visit her folks in Dallas. And then from there on, I already told you what happened.*

Hovis: *Did you ever think you might come back to Kennecott to work again?*

Beans: *Oh, not especially, no. I was always too busy just making a living.*

Hovis: *Was it good money here?*

Beans: *What?*

Hovis: *Did you get paid more here than in other jobs in the Lower 48?*

Beans: *Well, I don't really remember. I don't know. I know that in three years I saved about $3,000 and then I was set back in the [?] and I'm not sure [?].*

Hovis: *Unless there is anything else you'd like to say, I thank you very much. Is there anything that you might like to jog his memory?*

Beans, Jr.: *No, he's talked about most of the stuff that we talked to [?] about.*

Hovis: *Thank you very much Mr. Beans. I appreciate your time. Thank you.*

Molly O'Neill Huckins

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

Hovis: *This is Logan Hovis with the National Park Service here in Kennecott Lodge on the 27th of May, 1998 with Molly O'Neill Huckins. Did I get it right?*

Huckins: *Yes you did.*

Hovis: *And Molly is one of the Kennecott Kids. I would like you, if you would, to tell me what you know about Kennecott and McCarthy.*

Huckins: *All right. And good morning. I was born here in Kennecott, in the hospital, on April 10th, 1922. My parents lived in McCarthy, where my father had a store - a general store. My mother came up here several months before I was born to stay with the Gillespies, so I would be born in the hospital here. And shortly after I was born, my father came, picked us up, and took my mother and me back by dog sled to McCarthy. And* [unintelligible] *... April. That's right, uh-huh. And, so it was ... and of course my memories are quite limited about McCarthy because we left there when I was about six years old.*

Hovis: *Uh-huh.*

Huckins: *Now my sister, Dini; so many people up here remember her ... Dini - Geraldine O'Neill. And she was eight years older than I, so she had many more memories, of course. And so, I do remember living above the store ... the ... mercantile store, as they call it -*

J.B. O'Neill's. ... And ... I just remember a very few things ... I've never forgotten the sound of the ... I thought they were coyotes, howling, all night. That made quite an impression on me as a child. I remember when at Christmas ... we ... my mother [and I], *were ... all ... oh! ... it's so sad, because the ship went down, the Aleutian, I think. The Alaska steamboat.* [The Alaska Steamship Co. vessel U.S.S. Northwestern sank in British Columbia waters on December 10, 1927].

Hovis: *Uh-huh.*

Huckins: *And ... with all the Christmas things from the outside into this area in the winter, and all the Christmas ornaments ... she* [my mother] *had been* [expecting] *... decorations and gifts. She was very big on the holidays ... and all this community, the entire community, worked together presenting wonderful holidays - Kennecott and McCarthy. And mother was very active in these groups. So it was a sad holiday, indeed, because there were no Christmas things at all. But, we made do. Mother said, of course, 'we're all getting* [indecipherable] *too'. So, all the wonderful wives and mothers got together with sheets, colors and things, and made a wonderful Christmas anyway for all the children* [unintelligible] *... And so then ... some months later ... everything arrived from the bottom of the sea ... from the ... ship Aleutian ...* [The U.S.S. Northwestern was refloated on January 30, 1928 and towed back to Seattle].

Hovis: *It'd been salvaged?*

Huckins: *Salvaged? ... Yeah! And ... what had been salvaged ... I remember as a little child, was all water marked and had a smell of the ocean, and all. And that made quite a dismal impression. I remember my mother and father both rode horses. Actually, I was told that my mother, Geraldine O'Neill, was a pianist before she came up to Alaska with my father as a bride. She gave piano lessons,*

The U.S.S. Northwestern aground at Eagle River, north of Juneau, Alaska, July 7, 1933. Photograph courtesy Puget Sound Maritime Historical Society Collection.

"I remember...at Christmas (1927)...the (U.S.S. Northwestern)...went down...with all the Christmas things from the Outside...all the Christmas ornaments.... So it was a sad holiday, indeed.... But, we made do...all the wonderful wives and mothers got together with sheets, colors and things, and made a wonderful Christmas anyway for all the children....

...some months later ... everything arrived from the bottom of the sea ...what had been salvaged...I remember as a little child, was all water marked and had a smell of the ocean..."

MARY O'NEILL HUCKINS

and I was told that ... she ... came up to Kennecott on many occasions to give piano lessons. And it wasn't as much for the ... as for as any income, as it was just to be keeping active and busy up here in the long, long haul through the 12 months. ... And ... then I remember in ...

Hovis: *Did she ever own* [a] *piano? Did she ...*

Huckins: *Yes! Oh yes! My father, my father brought ... because he knew how she loved the music, and had a lovely voice, and loved to play; he brought up an old piano ... on ... the railroad ... to her. It was ... we had that in our apartment in Kennecott. And just yesterday, in Kennecott, someone said "well Molly-O, I think your mother's piano is down in the ... the lodge"; So I went ...*

Hovis: *Baby grand?*

Huckins: *Baby grand; So I went over to look at it; and it could have been my mother's; and som...*

Hovis: *Uh-huh.*

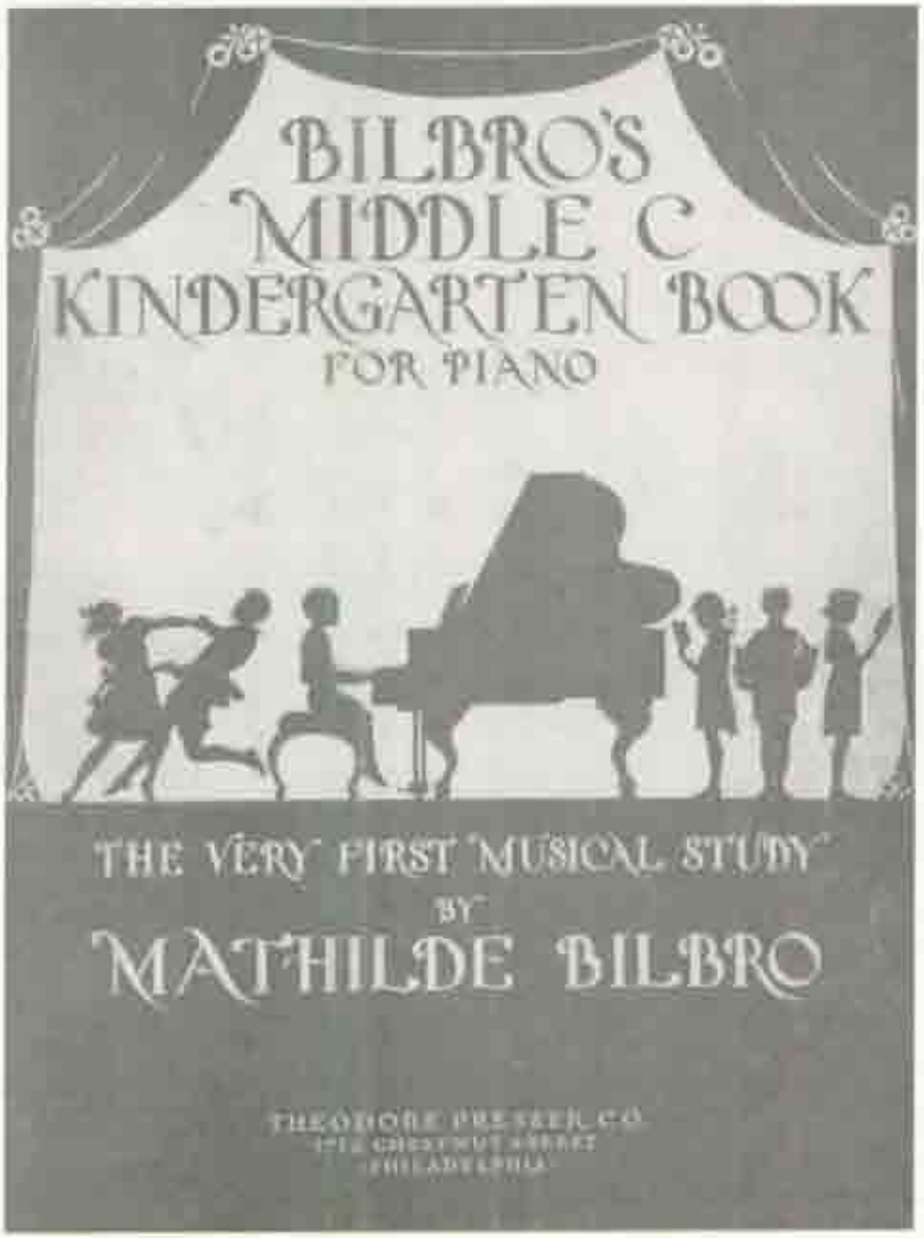
Huckins: *and as all the old timers here were saying, there weren't many ... there weren't many, pianos ... grand pianos, around up here ...*

Hovis: *I wouldn't think so.*

Huckins: *And ... so I ... remember my father saying, in later years ... we're leaving your mother's piano up there. And I thought about that and my mother ... yesterday. I opened the keyboard and thought of her, when I saw the piano ...*

Hovis: *Did you play?*

Huckins: *No! I had two very talented teachers - my mother; My mother taught my sister De... Geraldine junior ... But I decided it was too ... was stubborn ... And they were too critical. And so, [it's just] one of those stories. I'm sorry I don't play today* [laughter]. *I really am. But ... and ... My mother said, 'you'll be sorry one day'. And, very true! But they played so*



Bilbro's Middle C Kindergarten Book for Piano. Courtesy the Sande Anderson collection.

beautifully, and I ...'least listened to them. All the ... so many of the men I've talked to here ... all of our friends ... then. We played together as children; [and] they all commented on how they loved to hear my mother sing, and play the piano. And my sister too.

Hovis: *You said you had an apartment up here.*

Huckins: *Yes; over the store.*

Hovis: *Down in McCarthy?*

Huckins: *In McCarthy.*

Hovis: *Not here?*

Huckins: *No, not at Kennecott. No. I don't remember coming back, really, to Kennecott, then.*

Hovis: *O.K. ... You didn't go to school here then?*

Huckins: *No, I didn't ... Still too young. And ... so I just remember ... living in ... town ... And oh, and the sounds of all ... I remember the malamutes ...*

Hovis: *Uh-huh.*

Huckins: *And their howling. I remember as a child walking by where they were caged ... and ...* [being] *just sort of terrified of the sound and all. ... And then one time, some of them got loose. And my sister had a dog –* [a] *beautiful collie by the name of Bob. And it was the saddest day. ... My father was in the barbershop in McCarthy, and her dog was* [indecipherable word] *and they'd gotten out and attacked our beloved collie, Bob. So, I remember that of course as a small*

child. And he - my father, brought Bob home [and placed him] by the stove, where he died. ... And this ... made a huge impression [on me]. *I had a little Siberian husky,* [that was] *given to me. And I used ... we used to play dog sled with him* [Huckins and Hovis chuckle]. *At least I enjoyed it. I don't know about* [indecipherable]. *So, not big memories, but sharp memories, nonetheless.*

Hovis: *Uh-huh. Did you spend much time in the store?*

Huckins: *I really don't remember that. My mother, I think, kept me so busy ... she was very resourceful. It ... I wasn't even really aware of the store. And my ... but I do remember sitting on the walk outside the store. And my mother* [had] *sent* [chuckle] *for my clothes from the east coast, and I was all dressed up with nowhere to go ...*

Hovis: *Uh-huh.*

Huckins: *... with bows and everything. And the children - that was another thing; all the children were so beautifully dressed considering where we were - in the interior. ... And looking back on the albums, I see that there was also much pride in keeping up - dressing the children nicely.*

Hovis: *And that was in McCarthy as well as ...*

Huckins: *McCarthy as well as Kennecott. Yes. Mother spent the* [indecipherable word – may have been "summers"] *in New York* [shopping] *for her children's clothes and things. So I remember sitting there on the boardwalk and being so, so bored, with nowhere* [chuckle] *to go. But just ... just being there ... just, just. ... And we knew about the ... Oh! My mother would tell me stories about the girls.*

Hovis: *Oh yes!*

Huckins: *The girls! And they were apparently right down the street. But, my mother was a wonderful, compassionate woman, and, there was a marvelous ... um ... rapport. And mother would ... when they were sick, or ... She, she was a wonderful cook ... she'd make soups and chickens and take them* [to them] ... *It was a very won... And then, I remember, she said the undertaker, every morning dressed in black, would come by, 'n say 'good morning, Miss O'Neill - Mrs. O'Neill. And she didn't feel that was such a good omen* [Huckins and Hovis chuckle]. *But the whole community was just so, very close.*

Hovis: *Uh-huh. Even though there were some fairly strong divisions in the community, I believe - whether or not the community should be dry. But, at your age, you probably weren't aware of this.*

Huckins: *No, I was not aware of that. No. And I wasn't ... unfortunately ... didn't listen to my beautiful, wonderful father* [chuckle] *telling me all these things. And of course, now I wish I could ask so many questions of my parents.*

Hovis: *You showed me a picture, a little bit ago, of you as a small child sitting beside a prospector that your father had grubstaked. Do, do remember any of these people?*

Huckins: *Oh yes! Sam Means! 'Course, he has been brought alive over the*

years, to me, because of the picture they took of me ... when I was three years old, and all dressed up. And Sam Means, wonderful Sam Means, whom everyone in town knew and loved ...

Hovis: *Uh-huh.*

Huckins: *... and cared so much about. He worked for daddy, apparently in the store. And then he prospected. And ... everyone just adored him. And so they had ... I have this picture of Sam Means, beside me ... called "two sourdoughs" – "the two sourdoughs". And I've had that picture always, and it brings to mind lots of memories.*

Hovis: *Do you know where Sam was originally from?*

Huckins: *You know, I don't, Logan. I don't remember that .... There was such a community of bonding of this community - even with the so called ladies of the town. They stayed where they were. But the ladies, so to speak [chuckle] of McCarthy ... there was such kindness and caring. And, as I said, my mother* [would] *take baskets of food and things* [to them at times]. *Because everyone was very tolerant. And understood. You know?*

Hovis: *Did, did you ever know Margaret Harrais.*

Huckins: *Well, I was going to say. On one of my pictures, mother had written her name on the back. But, I don't really remember her. She was a school teacher. Was she ...*

Hovis: *And quite a strong Prohibitionist, as well.*

Huckins: *Strong ... Oh, really! Oh, ho! ho! ho!*

Hovis: *Yes!*

Huckins: *Well ... my mother actually was ...*

Hovis: *A very strong woman.*

Huckins: *A very strong woman. I remember, however, when I was living, either in San Francisco, or*

Seattle many years ago - before my father died. She apparently was asking about me ... remembering me as a child; And she wrote me a lovely, lovely letter, I just recall - remembering me as a little child. And it was very, very warm ... affectionate. ... And how much she loved my mother. And my mother was pretty much ... she wasn't anti-alcohol, but she just didn't really drink. And, ah ....

Hovis: *You have gard... Did you have a garden?*

Huckins: *Garden? I imagine we did. And I can remember my sister, one summer, in the spring time; and the wild flowers and wild roses; and my sister was, very much* [indecipherable word] *the excitement in the household, because, she was going to be on the float with all the native gold crowns, and all the wild roses that we ...*

Hovis: *Um-uh.*

Huckins: *... braided around the float. And they were ... All, all the work that went into it.* [soft chuckle]. *And she was named, at that ... crowned in McCarthy as Miss Alaska [Huckins and Hovis laughing]. That's the closest we ever got to any, to any beauty contest!* [chuckle]. *But, the memory of that ... is very strong ... Oh, and then we had a ... we had a camp out at Lake Baultoff.*

Hovis: *Baultoff Lakes.*

Huckins: *Baultoff. And, I can remember as a child going out there. Mother was always putting hats on me ...*

either fur hats in the winter ...

And I'd always promptly throw them off into the snow. I never had a thing about hats. And then, we'd go out there with my sun hats, and I'd throw them out. But, once [when] *we went out to Baultoff's* [was] *very vivid in my mind. The bears had been visiting during the winter. And mother'd left a jar of honey, or something* [out]. *And that made a huge impression on me as a child. Never had a fear of seeing bears, or anything, but was always just aware they there ... So, we would go ice skating there ...*

Hovis: *Um-hum.*

Huckins: *ice skating around ... and fishing ... and stuff. And, actually when my father died nineteen years ago in Seattle, he'd wanted his ashes to be scattered over Lake Baultoff. So, I was ill at the time ...* [man's voice interrupts].

Frank Morris: *You take care now.*

Huckins: *Same to you Frank. See you, I hope soon. ... So, I was ill at the time, in San Francisco, and couldn't join my sister and others. But, there was a whole long line, I was told, of little acquaintances* [indecipherable word] - *all his loving O'Neill nephews and all up here. And my sister told me when she returned to the state, that it was all misty when they were going in to Baultoff; and they thought they couldn't get in; and she had wild ... she had flowers and things to toss from the plane. And she said it was the most ... remarkable thing ... that the sun just seem ... just flooded the area. And ... the mist behind them ... and they just felt that there was something ... beautiful about that. And the other side was all in mist - they were just able to get out. But, Harold*[sp.?] *... and ... daddy would have loved that, because there were about ten of his beloved nephews, up there, in all.*

Hovis: *I have been in that camp.*

Huckins: *Have you!* [very excited].

Hovis: *There's a large cast iron wood stove left there.*

Huckins: *Oh!*

Hovis: *Most of the building is down. Several boats ... I go fishing there.*

Huckins: *You do?*

Hovis: *And, it is a very pleasant ....*

Huckins: *Is it?*

Hovis: *... pleasant peaceful place.*

Huckins: *Is it really?* [much excited]. *How 'bout out at McCarthy? Would you say ...*

Hovis: *It's the other side of the Nizina ... It's probably ten miles ...*

Huckins: *'bout ten miles out. It was a great adventure to go out there.*

Hovis: *And your father had a car, and you'd drive over?*

Huckins: *Yes! He did. I guess there weren't too many cars around at that time, but, yeah ... Something like an old Ford, or something, I suppose.*

Hovis: *Um-hum. Drive down to cross the Nizina bridge ...*

Huckins: *Oh yes.*

Hovis: *and then up the hill?*

Huckins: *Yes, it was ... My sister was much more adventurous ... being eight years, you know, ahead of me ...My father loved us daughters enormously, but I'm ... sure he always wanted to kind of have a son to introduce him to Alaskan fishing and all ... But my sister really was a marvelous companion to him, because ... I've seen many pictures where she was with her rifle ... and they're fishing ... and she was very much with him out-of-doors. My mother, my father later said, would go on all the pack trains, and on hunting trips. And you see, my mother was only 5'2" and very ... very petite. But, he said she never complained.* [Chuckle]. *I remember that so well. Never wel ... 'cause the men were* [always] *dubious about having a woman joining their party in those days ...*

Hovis: *Of course.*

Huckins: *But, she said she was the most wonderful sport, and never ... and they loved having her along.*

Hovis: *Um-hum. O.K. ... Well, let's see ... when you left here, where'd you go?*

Huckins: *Ah, to Cordova.*

Hovis: *Cordova?*

Huckins: *And I think I was about six years old.*

Hovis: *And did you stay there for very long?*

Huckins: [Takes a deep breath]. *Perhaps a year, or so! ... I was trying to reconstruct things in my mind with all the ... friends of the family ...* [that] *knew all of us, because, it's just kind of a blank. But I do recall living in Cordova, because ... Harry O'Neill ... was a brother of my father. And, my wonderful aunt Florence ... and all my twelve cousins, were there.*

Hovis: *Chuckling.*

Huckins: *And I do remember a lot, a lot of children running around the house.* [Chuckle].

Hovis: *Were you ever sick as a child?* [Did you] *have the childhood illnesses – measles, mumps ...*

Huckins: *No! I didn't! No! And ... However, when we got to Seattle, my sister ... I think it was* [indecipherable words]. *But, she was very healthy up here ... But, when ... we eventually moved to Seattle, I can remember scarlet fever, and the quarantines, and ... you know, illnesses then.*

Hovis: *Very healthy climate up here then?*

Huckins: *Oh yes! And to this day, I have an auto-immune disorder: rheumatoid arthritis. Sometimes they go two and two, but I would give anything* [chuckle] *to have the health I had when I was living up here.*

Hovis: *O.K. ... I would ... love to hear ... if you have anything else that you remember?*

Huckins: *Well, I was ...*

Hovis: *I know you were only six ...*

Huckins: *Um-hum.*

Hovis: *... and it's got to be kind of hard to recall ... but, do you remember* [anything else]*?*

Huckins: *It is hard! Very hard! ... I can remember going out ... and I think my mother, in later years, we would go out every winter ...*

Hovis: *Um-hum.*

Huckins: *And my grandfather, her father, was in Seattle. And ... he was a judge there ... and we would go out and spend time there ... and they would always make a big fuss about me ...* [I] *have a sourdough picture here from the Seattle Times. They put me in the judge's robes, and they said, "'lil' tiny sourdough". I was three years old then, and with his gavel and everything. So they made a big* [unintelligible word] *- everyone was so interested in Alaska, of course. And ... then I loved when I came back to Alaska ... the first time after all the years. I suppose I was about eight years old when we left. And my mother ... we went to Los Angeles at that time, which was quite a culture shock....*

Hovis: *Pretty good change, yes.*

Huckins: *Quite a culture shock! And the noise! The people! The traffic! The sirens!*

Hovis: *Um-hum.*

Huckins: *And then I can remember ... I apparently started school there. But I can remember always being asked, "now where were you born?"* [indecipherable word] *And I would say "Alaska!" And all the children would start to hoot and scream. Because Alaska, see, was so remote to them at that time. And they teased me* [chuckle] *mercilessly you know - the way children do. But they'd dance around me in circles at recess ... I can still remember that .... And say "Igloo, Igloo, Igloo", you know. And I'd cry, which was of course* [chuckle] *very tempting.*

Local little charmer, name unknown.

"...I have such a vivid recollection of one summertime, that there were gypsies...up around McCarthy. And I can see them to this day! And my mother telling me not to stray off, because, she said the gypsies steal children... I...recall these very colorful people...with...big ...bright clothes. And they were singing and dancing. ...And, I don't know whether...I, I'm sure it was not (just) my imagination, because it was so clear."

MARY O'NEILL HUCKINS

Hovis: *Yes, that's very cruel.*

Huckins: *Well, it was cruel, but isn't that ...*

Hovis: *Did you ever get even?*

Huckins: *No, I wasn't that kind ... No! I just cried* [laughter with Hovis]. *And then I guess, finally, I must have fit in - adjusted. But, I was a very shy child in coming from this environment ... to that. But, then we had some ... 'course, very wonderful years. But, then the, ah ... when I came back to ... Anchorage ... my father was here then ... living in Anchorage.*

Hovis: *Um-hum.*

Huckins: *And he was running ... Richmond's Restaurant ... bar, or something in Anchorage. And, I hadn't seen him in some years. He and my mother had divorced, many years before. And he wanted me to come up ... to get ... to sort of know me.*

Hovis: *Um-hum.*

Huckins: *So, it was in the spring of 1943 ... and I was to come here in April to visit my father. And his best, best friend, whom he absolutely adored, was Harold Gillam ... one of our famous bush pilots. We were very close to Harold and the family. And, so daddy ...* [and] *Harold ... Gillam was going ... had gone ... was going to* [the] *mid-west somewhere to pick up a plane for Morrison-Knudsen.*

Hovis: *Um-hum.*

Huckins: *To carry it back here, back to Alaska. And of course, then, it was war time with the Japanese. And ... Harold ... promised daddy he would stop in Seattle to pick me up – he had one extra passenger seat on the plane. And it was one young woman, and a few others I guess, from Morrison-Knudsen. So then, I was so thrilled, and I knew Harold so well. And then just ... several ... about a month before the trip was actually to ... ah, take place, my father telegraphed ... because of the housing problem. He needed*

another month, or so. So [he] *canceled the earlier trip. Well, as it turned out, I was devastated with disappointment. But then Harold did come through Seattle, and we saw him briefly, and he crashed in that plane. 'N that was his last flight.*

Hovis: *Umm.*

Huckins: *And he was considered a real hero, always, in Alaska. And I met, in Palm Springs years later* (I used to go down with my husband to hotel conventions there) *Dewey Netzdorf, who was a survivor of that plane* [crash]. *... There were a few survivors, but ... So then I came up* [to Anchorage] *... daddy said* [it was] *alright to come by ship. It was a military zone then - Alaska. And not everyone could go there. You know,* [people] *could stay up there, but* [Outsiders] *couldn't go there – any civilian. And so daddy talked around* [with] *some people ... and all ...* [and] *because he was a resident of the territory of Alaska, the military intelligence and so forth, came to me and granted me a pass to come up on the Baranof. And that thrilled me to death. I was twenty-one years old. And I got on the Baranof. And the excitement of ... I always loved the sea and voyages, 'n all. And so ... that was then a troop ship.*

Hovis: *Um-hum.*

Huckins: *I don't know how many hundreds they carried, but ...*

Hovis: *You were very popular, weren't you!*

Huckins: *Oh!* [stammering!]. *I was very ... Two of us women on board ... It was* [chuckle] *... I mean most women sigh today when they hear that ...* [deep breath] *And ... Yeah, two of us women on board. She was a young ... stenographer, I think, going to - up to Elmendorf. And, I ... always loved them. I always remember, too ... how sad ... they were ... scared to death. They were just from ... all from Louisiana.*

Hovis: *Yes.*

Huckins: *Hot climates, you know, and all that - and going out to the Aleutians. So when we disembarked in Anchorage ... I mean ... no, no – it was Seward!*

Hovis: *Seward.*

Huckins: *And Captain Ransour* [sp.?], *the skipper, remembered me – [from] when I was a little girl.*

Hovis: *Was ...* [that] *from the Alaska Steamship* [Company]?

Huckins: *From the Alaska Steam. ... And he ... adored my mother in a very nice way. But, she was, ah ... He ... told me* [that] *when I was on board ... well I spent the rest of the voyage, really, on the bridge with him* [chuckle] *... and he told me all these stories about when I was a little girl, and how when things got so rough. The seas were so rough! Mother never got sea sick. She put us children in the bath tub* [chuckling]. *We didn't get seasick. Whenever we got ... she would play the piano in the social hall to keep everyone's spirits up, because it would be rather frightening, tossing around 'n all. And ... so he would call, in the boat [indecipherable word] in other words, sing. And she would lead the singing, and it was all ... made it very happy. And, so then, one morning ... That voyage took two weeks, because* [we] *were avoiding submarines - possible submarines in Alaskan waters. We had to wait for a convoy. And I remember it was very impressive, because all the troops ... and then the Chaplain, and the Sunday service, and we were really, really, you know* [indecipherable word] *thinking of the danger that could be ahead. So, then when he sent his ...* [indecipherable word] *and we started* [a]*cross the ... Wrangell, the Narrows. And he sent his cabin boy down about five* [chuckle] *in the morning ... whatever time ...* [the] *ship was going through the Narrows. And the cabin boy said "Miss O'Neill, the Captain would like you on the bridge". And I said "well, no*

thank you!" [chuckle]. *I wanted to sleep, you know - just being twenty one. And like ... and not realizing the import of this. And telling him I'm sor... thank you; but no! And so then he came back again about ten minutes later, and said "Miss O'Neill, the Captain orders you on the bridge".* [Chuckle]. *So, with that I got ... And thank goodness Captain Ransour persisted, because it was incredible! Just incredible. And I was on the bridge, then, for really the rest of the voyage. So it was fun. So,* [then I] *came to Anchorage then in 1943.*

Hovis: *When you went out, earlier, you'd go down on the steamship. So that's where you met the Captain?*

Huckins: *Yeah!*

Hovis: *But, do you have any memories of riding the train between McCarthy and Cordova?*

Huckins: *No memories of the train!*

Hovis: *Um.*

Huckins: *No! I don't. I don't recall that at all. But, I don't know how we got to Cordova, or ...*

Hovis: *I assume as a young child you were told to stay away from the rail yards.*

Huckins: *Oh, yes! Yeah. Very ... 'n away from the dogs, and away from a lot of things.*

Hovis: *And were you a very dutiful daughter?*

Huckins: *Very!*

Hovis: *Oh you ...*

Huckins: *Oh, yeah very!* [Chuckle] *I was terrified to do anything I shouldn't* [laughter with Hovis]. *And I was not adventurous. If mother said don't do that, I didn't. But I did have a, a recollection, and I asked people coming here on the Kennecott Kids group ... 'n they said 'oh no that couldn't have been'. But, I have such a vivid recollection of one summertime, that there were gypsies ... up*

around McCarthy. And I can see them to this day! And my mother telling me not to stray off, because, she said the gypsies steal children, or something like that. Well, obviously ... But, I do recall these very colorful people. I never seen any ... and with, you know big ... bright clothes. And they were singing and dancing. And they were darker skinned ... And, I don't know whether ... I, I'm sure it was not [just] *my imagination, because it was so clear. And we were told to stay away from them. But they ... What they would have been doing at that time in McCarthy...*

Hovis: *Do you have any memories of Japanese, or Chinese, or, Ahtna Natives.*

Huckins: *Yeah, one Chinese I remember ... My little dog "Sniggy"* [sp.?], *my little Siberian Husky ... and the tailor [uncertain word]. My godfather had brought him back from Siberia to me. So Sniggy went everywhere* [chuckle] *... and, ah, apparently Sniggy, or Sniggy and I, had gone into the restaurant, or something. And all I recall is ... or* [unclear word] *probably the dog went in ... And I had a long ... rope, but he was free at the time. And all I recall* [chuckle] *is the Chinese, or an Asian ... cook with his apron on ... and a big cleaver in his hand, running after us screaming* [Hovis and Huckins laughter].

Hovis: *Um-hum!*

Huckins: *So that was; that was a reality!*

Hovis: *That made an impression ...*

Huckins: *Yeah. So I never went back* [laughter] *to the restaurant again* [chuckle]. *I remember one Christmas my father ... I think it was the Christmas when they tried to make it up to all the children, particularly because of the sinking of all the gifts and decorations. And I remember they put me to bed, saying "now Santa Claus is coming", and* [it] *did seem like the snowiest scene of course ... snow on the roof. I remember that ...*

Mrs. Marshall of Kennecott holds a pair of bear cubs.

if he were tense, and you heard the experiences he'd had ... He would stutter when he was, you know, in conversation. But we got used to [it] *... and we simply adored him. And every time we were in Seattle, Andy would come by and have dinner with us – [and] stay with us. He was so beloved, and so modest. ... I do remember one story with Andy, must have been when we were in McCarthy. ... Ah, two stories now. Ah ... he'd rescued some bear cubs.* [their] *Mother 'd been killed. And he had an old movie camera, I guess ... whatever they did in those days. But, I can still remember we were all feeding the little cubs with bottles of milk. And ... it dribbling down their fronts; and their holding the bottles. And Andy had pictures of those [cubs], which we loved. And, then, another Andy Taylor story that I recall so well, was ... and as I said, he was* [so] *modest. But my mother and father worshiped him, as a person. And ... they said, "Andy tell* [us] *a story. Tell a story".* [And he'd say]

and the dark sky, and the cold of Christmas ... And then, my father apparently ... Oh, a very elaborate thing ... that he dressed as Santa Claus, and [breathes] *with the Ho! Ho! Ho! and everything on his back. And my mother couldn't* [chuckle] *wake me up. And my poor father* [chuckle] *was out on the roof waiting for her to awaken me. I've always liked to sleep!* [Huckins chuckling]. *And, so that was ... daddy. ... But it ... made* [a] *wonderful ... They were such ... great people up here in those days. Still are of course.*

[Short pause].

Bleakley: *... Would like you to make one ... comment. That ... Andy Taylor is one of my great heroes!*

Huckins: *No!*

Huckins: *... loved Andy so ... oh! She loved Andy so! Oh! And ... same with the people in Kennecott in the Kids "bureau thing"* [Unintelligible] *and then they didn't seem to know of him. But he just ... he was ... he was so! Tell me what you remember!*

Bleakley: *Well ... I know all about ... I've done a lot of work, in the Shushanna* [Chisana] *area. And I know about his role in the Shushanna. But also, I came to Alaska originally as a climber, twenty-five years ago.*

Huckins: *Oh! You did?*

Bleakley: *And so I know of his climbing reputation ...*

Huckins: *Climbing ...*

Bleakley: *... from everywhere.*

Huckins: *He was always at our house for dinner - dear Andy. And he brought me ... the Siberian Husky. He was almost like my godfather, really! And he was such a close family friend. And I was telling people the other day, when he'd start to stutter ... mother would just say ... "now ... just you relax"* [stated very soothingly]. *And Andy 'd be alright. But, of course,*

"Oh No! No!" But in this one, he'd taken a climbing party of some eastern – some Yale students from Connecticut the year before, up climbing around. And he lost one of them, at least one of them ...

Hovis: *Um-hum.*

Huckins: *... went down. And didn't ... Andy said later, wasn't following his orders. And the boy went down* [in a crevasse]. *Was gone. And they couldn't get the body. But, the family so wanted the body [the sound on the interview tape fades to barely audible at this point] of the boy returned to Connecticut. So they pleaded with ...*

TAPE 1
SIDE 2

Huckins: *... he didn't have to take any jobs, really. Andy had so many ... much to choose ... And he thought that this was better. I remember that the boy stayed in his resting place in the glaciers. But, the family insisted. So, Andy said 'all right'. And, he felt it was a very dangerous thing to do. But, they went out ... the search party. And they finally found the body of the young man from the year before. And Andy said ... and he had an old motion picture ... of their trek across the ice and the glaciers, and everything. And he said they traveled at night, because* [so] *... the body wouldn't* [thaw]. *... They buried it in the day to prevent it from defrost*[ing] *and decomposing I guess. ... And it was a very treacherous trip, but he did it for the family. They insisted that their boy be brought back. But, other guides up there were saying that they would never do anything like that. But Andy took it on.*

Bleakley: *You have a lot of photographs of hunting parties. Was* [Andy] *guiding in any of those?*

Huckins: *Ah,* [chuckle] *he probably is, yeah. Well he was probably with us all the time. Yeah. Andy was just a member of our family, really, in McCarthy. And then when we were outside ... It was interesting*

... he had many very wealthy eastern clients.

Bleakley: *Um-huh.*

Huckins: *New York and all. And I ... it wasn't Rockefeller family ... but it sort of seemed on that scale. When Andy was ready to retire, and they ... Everyone wanted him to come and live with them ... as family. And Andy finally went ... And they said 'we will take care of you for'* [unintelligible word – probably "life"]. *And they lived on this big estate in New York.*

Bleakley: *I always wondered what happened to him.*

Huckins: *Yeah, and there ... and here Andy ... modest Andy, come by this funny suit, you know, his hat and growing stutter* [uncertain words]. *I think he was really crazy about* [chuckle] *my mother. And, but it was such a loving ... He was such a gentleman. In our family ... He didn't have any family, so he spent ... And then my cousin Pat* [Patrick] *O'Neill, one of the O'Neills ... belongs to the Explorers Club in New York. And is a very well known mining engineer. Going* [uncertain word] *around the country; around the world. And he would see ...*

Hovis: *Um-hum.*

Huckins: *And, so at any rate, though, Pat* [Patrick] *said Andy would be invited at times as a very, very* [uncertain word] *member of the Explorers Club in New York.*

Bleakley: *Um-hum.*

Huckins: *And they wanted him to come 'n talk with them ... everyone. Oh, he was a wonderful person.*

Hovis: *Did you ever meet Brad Washburn, when he was up here? He climbed with Andy a couple of times.*

Huckins: *I don't know. I may have. But I was so young.*

Bleakley: *Right.*

Huckins: *He was young then too ... yeah ... Well* [chuckle], *and perhaps so, because they brought everybody to our house for dinner ...*

Bleakley: *Yeah.*

Huckins: *And my mother was a great cook, as I have said. And, and he was a member of the family. So he brought many of his people in and out of McCarthy.*

Hovis: *And this was a friendship that lasted long after you left McCarthy?*

Huckins: *Oh yes. Yes. And, 'course we finally lost track, and Andy was old and in New York then. And mother was ... gotten to Alzheimer's then. And, sort of starting then. But, I guess daddy kept up with him, and as I said, my cousin Pat O'Neill would see him in New York.*

Bleakley: *Yeah, I've seen a ... photograph very similar to the one you have here; with him down* [in] *the crevasse and posed on ... looks like maybe the end of the Nizina Glacier, with a ... with a long ice axe ... And wearing ...* [what] *looks like that same hat.*

Huckins: *Yes, yes, probably ...* [unintelligible words, laughter] *yes.*

Bleakley: *Yeah,* [I] *may ... sometime come up with some additional Andy Taylor questions, and write you a letter.*

Huckins: *I wish my sister were still alive because of her advantage of the years, you know - remembering.*

Bleakley: *Yeah, we just created a special award for service in* [the] *Wrangell St. Elias National Park ... and we're going to call it the Andy Taylor Award, because he sort of epitomizes ...*

Huckins: *Isn't that wonderful.*

Bleakley: *A resident of the Wrangells. He did everything during his career.*

Huckins: *That makes it really ... so emotional to me. How wonderful. That dear man. And, as I said ... his modesty! I can't remember any big, brassy, braggadocio men up here at that time. They were all quietly, very courageous to me. No big deal about it, you know?*

Hovis: *Excellent.*

Huckins: *Thank you Logan. It's been a pleasure.*

Hovis: *It's been a pleasure listening to you talking.*

Nels Konnerup and William Douglass

Interview conducted by Ann Kain
and Logan W. Hovis
National Park Service
June 12, 1994
Tape #1
Side #1

Kain: *June 12, 1994. Kennicott Glacier Lodge. Interview with Nels Konnerup and William Douglass. Interviewers are Logan Hovis and Ann Kain of the NPS. Logan do you want to take the lead?*

Hovis: *Certainly. I know you - both of you have a lot of memories of the place that pertain to how you grew up here and the friendships you formed here. You made that quite evident last night. And a lot of information that is harder to get at is how the place worked. How the people that worked in the mill or in the mines worked. What they did. We have a good idea of what they did in the bunk houses, but I'm curious what they did when they were around the machinery. How they worked the machinery. You worked in the mill a little bit at certain times.*

Konnerup: *Very little in the mill but...*

Hovis: *And on the tramway?*

Konnerup: *On the tramways. And also underground at the Jumbo, Erie...*

Hovis: *I would really like to hear what you did there. In all of the places.*

Konnerup: *Bill Douglass, of course, knows very well* [the] *administrative operations that went on here, and*

his father was the preeminent manager of this whole operation from 1915 onward until 1929. I think I indicated last night that ... this was probably the most efficient mining company and administrative offices that I've ever encountered. And I've been fortunate to have seen mining operations in Montana, Utah, and Nevada and other places. They never worked quite as smoothly as they did here.

Hovis: *You worked there as a miner as well as in the other operations?*

Konnerup: *Either that or I had friends some who are and a geologist I traveled a little bit with, John Mercy. So I do have a comparative of ideas about what goes on in a mining town operations. I don't like to call this a mining camp because it was a mining town. It was a friendly sort of place. Very unusual in my opinion. And I think the good deal of it leads to Bill Douglass's father and the men he hired in the administrative positions. And that goes all the way from the foreman* [who] *worked in the mines and camps for Jerry and Paul Warner and others. People who worked in administrative levels in this lower camps or town.*

Hovis: *I've read Mr. Douglass's history about the operations. It's very useful. When you worked up at the Jumbo mines, what was your position?*

Konnerup: *Well, I happened to be able to muck, as they say, from both sides. And there was a contract operation between going from Jumbo to Erie and the crew was two miners and two muckers. And they all happened to be Finns except me. And they didn't* [have] *another Finn who could muck on both sides. I got a temporary position and that was 1934. And price of copper was going up probably because of the imminent war situation. And I think they were thinking of taking more out of the there and bringing it to the Jumbo tram area, rather than over the side of the hill down along the glacier.*

Which was a very practical solution. So that's the only experience I had underground.

Hovis: *Did you help with the drill setup?*

Konnerup: *No. Just mucking.*

Hovis: *Just mucking.*

Konnerup: *They were traditional liners - the* [type of] *pneumatic hammers* [that] *were set up. And the miners put 14 feet of steel into the face. As soon* [as] *they drew that out we went in and mucked it in the cars.*

Hovis: *Then you drill fire and muck around each shift.*

Konnerup: *Yes, the fire. We wait for dust to settle then we start mucking. That was my only experience underground except going down the stopes and looking around. Bonanza was, I think, about 3200 feet deep. The deepest shaft in the mining operation. There was a communication between the Motherlode and the Bonanza and communication between the Jumbo and Erie being developed. Then I had the good fortune to take a job riding line on the aerial tramways. Jack Morris, the foreman, the time being* (unintelligible) *job I was too young, but he decided that if I wanted it bad enough I could handle it.*

Hovis: *What would you do in that job?*

Konnerup: *Well, that was riding up and down the line watching for problems that developed in the towers and the saddles and cables. And keeping all of the gear on the line greased. It was a mean job in the winter and* [a] *beautiful job in the summer.*

Hovis: *You get quite intimately involved with the latches that hold the top cars onto the cables.*

Konnerup: *Oh, yes. Occasionally there would be an accident in that area and some buckets got away and crashed. And generally, you have a splicing job to do on the cables. And then we did the splicing in place with a platform across the*

Jumbo tramline.

main lines and pulled the cables together and spliced them. And it was generally a hurry-up job because that mill depended on the tramways and it cost a lot of money to shut that mill down. The objective was to keep as much ore on the top side as you could in case of an interruption in the tramway.

Hovis: *When you would do maintenance on the towers, would you walk up to them or would you ride the buckets and jump off?*

Konnerup: *Ride the buckets and jump off.*

Hovis: *How old were you?*

Konnerup: *Seventeen, when I started.*

Hovis: *How old were you when you finished?*

Konnerup: *I worked two years here before I left. But it was considered a little more dangerous than some jobs. There was a few people over the years in the tramway operations. I thought it was perfectly safe.*

Hovis: *You never missed a tower did you?*

Konnerup: (inaudible sentence)

Hovis: *Would you ever work in the transfer stations or the angle stations?*

Konnerup: *Yes, I worked at the angle station on the Bonanza side. Steve Buchanan and I, we worked two shifts and that again was designed to keep that mill running.*

Nels' daughter: *Tell them about the bear up at the angle station.*

Konnerup: *It was an increasing episode. Steve Betanal like to feed the bears and porcupines. They do get to be a nuisances. I didn't much like the idea, but Steve thought it was fine. He was on the day shift and I was on the night shift. Went on at 6:00. I was supposed to have dinner ready for him when he came off shift and I'd go on. And one day a little old black bear was sitting up there in the walkway between the tramway and the house. Steve*

The Erie Mine Bear.

called over and said, "get that bear off the walkway so I can get in here." I said, "no that's your problem." I left him there and he had to run my shift for about an hour and a half. The bear finally left.

Hovis: *You pay him for that?*

Konnerup: *So Steve never more fed the bear.* (Inaudible sentence).

Hovis: *I don't know if the snow is gone enough or not, but that house is still up there...*

Konnerup: *Yeh.*

Hovis: *In pretty good shape. I think there's a gentleman lives in it.*

Konnerup: *That's right. I'm not sure about station 3 on the Jumbo side, but...*

Hovis: *It's in good shape, too.*

Konnerup: *At one time, one winter I stayed riding line. I stayed very often at stations.*

Hovis: *You'd ride line on both tram systems.*

Konnerup: *Yeh.*

Konnerup: *And it full time job with seven days a week and eight hours a day and sometimes more. Station 3 house had a snow storm. I spent quite a lot of time on that line because there were several towers. It was very low and they had to shovel out from under the towers so the buckets didn't lift off the line. I remember one night we went to bed and there was a bowling blizzard up there and in the morning, when we got up, the house was completely covered, except that window that's up about four feet. We had to crawl out through there to get to the tram lines. The Jumbo line, when I was there, the Jumbo tram only worked eight hours a day.*

Hovis: *Did you have a lot of problems - I think it is* [station] *number six or seven. It's a break over about half way up from the angle/transfer station to the top. There's a lot of*

snow slides or snow guards up there now.

Konnerup: *On the Jumbo?*

Hovis: *Yes, the Jumbo.*

Konnerup: *Just above the station 3, it was a break over tower and that was a menace. We had to keep that clear and then there was a long span below it and tower on lower side was another place. The worst snowslides in that came all in* [one] *time. And the same on the Bonanza side, just outside the Bonanza breakover there was a deep canyon in there.*

Hovis: *The loading station at the top of the Jumbo, that's actually in the ground, isn't it? You go into the mountain?*

Konnerup: *Yeh. There's part of the timbered tunnel. On the Bonanza side, it was right out in the open. The wind was howling and it was mighty cold in there.*

Hovis: *I was in that station last summer. I saw two places where there was heat. I assume it was a little rescue station or the foreman shack and a little place where you had a hot plate in it you used to keep the grease warm.*

Konnerup: *Yeh.*

Hovis: *That was it, wasn't it?*

Konnerup: *That was about all the heat, now. I remember very well Jack Morris, when I was riding line behind him and when the weather got real cold he would send me up to help on the Bonanza side because those chutes would freeze up. And for some reason or another Jack thought that I could keep the tram running or something. He'd send me up there to help him open that shoot. I remember having big Scandinavian, Norwegian fellow. They called him big John Wilson. He was a huge man like this man down here who pulled the cable car across.*

Kain: *George Mason.*

Konnerup: *But he was much more muscular. And he was so darn strong that he'd take one of those handles on that chute and it was solid steel and he'd bend it. But that would keep the muck coming down. And -I guess- one of the tricks to doing that would* [be to] *cut a short stick of dynamite and put a fuse on it and shove a stick up the chute and jar it loose... That would, of course, would break the caked ore away from the chute. And we'd kept it running.*

Hovis: *Did you do that? Did you do the powder work?*

Konnerup: *Yeh. Most of the fellows were a little bit afraid of dynamite.*

Hovis: *You rode the tram. You weren't afraid of dynamite, either.*

Konnerup: *But there was a trick to it. What I would do is go up very early on and load as many cars as I could, as many buckets as I could and put them all on sides tracks. So when the chutes pull up we had a reserve to keep the tram line running, but it was a matter of pride as far as Jack Morris was concerned here. He didn't want to have any of those new people complaining, if they didn't have ore.*

Kain: *Some of the questions, I think, the two of you might be able to help us with. A lot of the other kids we've interviewed haven't had much knowledge about the jobs here or the labor disputes or anything like that. Either of you know anything about that? You, Bill, with your dad being superintendent?*

Douglass: *My dad originally came here as a foreman of the Bonanza mine. He came from Butte, Montana where he was chief safety engineer for Anaconda's mines there. He was just a few years out of Colorado School of Mines. And then he became, was promoted to the job of mine foreman. Which meant he could move from living at the Bonanza down to the lower town. And he visited the mines. And so he held the job of mine foreman*

for a period of some years. Not sure how many. Then became superintendent of mines. Which was, I think, the official title he held the whole time he was here. And as far as labor disputes were concerned. There was a major one and I'm not clear exactly when it happened, but it is my impression it was shortly after the end of World War I, about 1919. The mines were closed, the men refused to work for a period of time. I think that his promotion to superintendent came as a result of the successful and negotiation with the union. And exactly how the union got in there I don't [know] *because it was supposed to be a company that was always anti-union. I know also that a big secret at that time* [was] *that the Kennecott Copper Corporation had undercover information which was supplied to management from spies or whatever you wanted to call them, who worked in the mines. Part of the understanding of what was going on there was the fact that those people, now Nels correct me about this, was my impression that they got about $4.00 a day for their work. And they'd work full time except for change day. How did that work Nels?*

Konnerup: *They were running three shifts when the mine was going full tilt. There was a long change and a short change. Change from day shift to afternoon shift to graveyard shift. And there were two days off when you changed one of those and a half a day off when the other changed. The idea was that there was a continuation of work without interruption.*

Kain: *You know what the labor - dispute was about? Was it about - was it over wages or conditions?*

Douglass: *I'm sure, it was a combination of that. In the winter, as I understand it, the snow was so heavy there in the Jumbo and Bonanza you couldn't even come outside. The dining hall of Bonanza was underground and I have - you probably have pictures - I have pictures of the*

underground dining room. Which was what - level 500?

Konnerup: *Yeh. 500.*

Douglass: *And essentially those men lived without seeing the outside air from the first of November to, what, the end of March? Something like that - and it was cold. From their $4.00 a day or whatever it was $5.00 a day, they worked their eight hours and then the company deducted something like $30.00 a month for board and room. Wasn't that about it?*

Konnerup: *I think it was $20.00. At least it was when I was here. It was nominal.*

Douglass: *It was essentially as they were essentially captives of the company, when they got up there in the fall, snow begin to fall. You couldn't get out of there and they were - none of the people were allowed to ride the bucket, except for people like Nels. In the summertime when we went through a long change, some of the more adventurous of these people, would go to McCarthy and enjoy the various entertainment there. Most of it had to do with the drinks. The rule was no drinking in Kennicott. No liquor. And there was smuggled liquor. I don't know how much of that.*

Konnerup: *That was an interesting situation as some of the bucket chasers at the lower end would put these fellows into a bucket. Most of them were quite fearful of the trip that they hunker down in that bucket and they very often had a bottle of booze in their lap. And the bucket chaser hook them on the line and reach down and grab the bottle as it went out. I'm not guilty of that.*

Hovis: *And I assume they would take the bottle then and dispose of it?*

Konnerup: *Of course. But drinking was a serious infraction in the mine. And they dealt with it expeditiously. It was quite easy to hand a man's paycheck and tell him that the train was leaving at such and such time and that was it.*

Douglass: *The train came in Wednesday and Saturday, as I recall, except in the wintertime when the snow would interrupt. We had one* [gap of] *60 or 90 days.*

Konnerup: *Yeh. It was over six weeks, I know.*

Douglass: *They had a pool. Everybody would buy a chance for a dollar. Pick the day and time the first train arrived at the station.*

Konnerup: *They had a ribbon across the train.*

Douglass: *The men - as far as I knew - they were allowed to write letters. Some of the letters were censored. I'm not sure. But anyway, there was a telegraph line into the railroad station down below and the daily stock report came in through that telegraph station. And somehow or another* [they] *were relayed to the mine. I don't know what the system was on that. So that the man had the opportunity to invest in the stock market. And there were* [a] *few exceptional people who, they didn't have anything else to do, so they invested. And some people made a good chunk of money and got out of there.*

Konnerup: *Some of them lost it all.*

Kain: *Their $4.00 a day, plus.*

Douglass: *They also were allowed to as I say, write. Men would correspond with some of these agencies in the city who lonely women were registered with, and on more than one occasion, a women would get off a train in Kennicott asking for a man who was a miner who's been corresponding with her, who'd ask her to come here and marry him. And she was escorted to the train and sent back.*

Kain: *I would be if they actually had to escort. I'd figure she'd get off of the train and look around and go "what have I done!" and get back on the train.*

Douglass: *The life led here - where we are - for all of us, like Nels and I as kids, was so different than the people that worked up there. Working conditions underground*

were dark and they wore, half wore the carbide lanterns and [did] *a lot of blasting. There were two kinds of operations, as I understand it. Some of the miners would contract with the company to drill a hole. They got paid by the...*

Konnerup: *By the foot.*

Douglass: *By the foot or was it - I thought that they used the measurement of rods, too. And that's where the I-did-a-rod came from. That had nothing to do with the Iditarod. They got paid so much a foot that the team of two or three accomplished. I think the whole thing through to the thing you were operating on. Wasn't that a contract operation?*

Konnerup: *That was a contract operation. We got paid $14.00 a foot* [for] *the whole crew. And we* [were] *generally given 14 foot* [of] *steel.*

Douglass: *And how long did it take you to drive that 14 feet.*

Konnerup: *It was those liners that went pretty fast in the area where we were. The geological structure was primary limestone and it is pretty easy drilling. We can make a lot of feet in a day as opposed to doing work in granite or some of the harder rock.*

Douglass: *I think there was a quarrel about the company beginning to object to how much money the contractors were making. Wasn't that right?*

Konnerup: *That's right. The Finns and the Welsh miners were terrific workers, and you know I can remember well, we'd go on shifts and muck out that face and get it in the cars. And not a word spoken. Mucking on the same side, then make a sound and we'd switch sides. There was no talking and you worked straight through.*

Hovis: *That's a lot of rock to move. Did they blast on to a steel plate to make it easier?*

Konnerup: *Most of it was blasted on to a steel plate and, of course, a lot of it is a fairly good size stuff, only pick it up and put- throw it in.*

Douglass: *Terribly heavy work.*

Konnerup: *Yeah it was. When I first started on the job, I was so tired at the end of the shift I couldn't even stay awake to eat dinner. But I ate a good breakfast.*

TAPE #1
SIDE #2

Konnerup: *That* [question of union representation was] *pretty well settled long before I came up here to work in 1934 after I got out of high school. The only labor activity that I saw was some of the residual International Workers of the World, IWW. We called them "wobblies." Tried to organize again. Of course a lot of them were considered to be spies and things like that. Most of the miners didn't want to have anything to do with them and they lasted maybe two weeks if they came up there, then they were out of here.*

Kain: *What was the ethnic makeup of the miners themselves? Here you had a lot of Scandinavians in administrative ... down here in the lower camp.*

Konnerup: *Most of the miners were Scandinavians, Finns or Norwegians.*

Douglass: *Cousin Jack, the Welshman. People who'd come from mining backgrounds in the so called "Old Country." A lot of them with heavy accents and...*

Konnerup: *A lot of them couldn't sign their pay checks, just make their marks.*

Kain: *So a lot of them were Welsh and Scandinavian, very similar to the make up of the people down here?*

Douglass: *I think the composition was the same at the mine pretty much as it was down here except that the people at the mines probably were less well educated than the ones*

Left to right: Bill Douglass, Inger Jensen, Richard Osborne, Jean Douglass.

"I don't like to call this a mining camp because it was a mining 'town.' It was a friendly sort of place."

NELS KONNERUP

they'd started up there and they ended up down here.

Kain: *When I was talking to the Moore sisters* [Nan and Jeanne] *yesterday ... their father left here and went down to Chile and married a woman from Chile. Did you have people from the mines like that? Kennecott had mines in Chile, did any of those people ever come up here?*

Douglass: *No, I never hear of any.*

Konnerup: *No, we had very few Latin people here. I think probably the weather conditions were not attractive, for one thing.*

Douglass: *I think the Chile operation was later in the 20s too. Most of the composition of the mine labor force were people who came in here between 1915 and 1920.*

Kain: *Yes. They said their father was here first, and then went down there and then came back here.*

Konnerup: *Well Jim Dennis, who built the aerial tramways here, built aerial tramways all over the world and he built all of those tramways for Kennecott Copper and probably some of the other companies in Latin America too. And in those days and up through the 1920s the aerial tramway was a much more common system of transporting ore than it is now, where they use rails and drill tunnels and things like that.*

Hovis: *Did you ever have any of the cables break on you under load?*

Konnerup: *There have been breaks in the running lines, when buckets bang together. But mostly it wasn't a complete break, it was a frayed cable. We'd salvage the buckets from the ground by pulling them up to the towers and loading them on. We'd set up a platform right on the wire between the towers and pull the cable together and splice it right in place. Jack Morris and the fellow that I replaced was a steeplejack, forgot to duck one day and they were task masters of high wire acts.*

Douglass: *As Nels says, those were considered a little more dangerous, those trips down to those towers and not only the danger from the buckets and the cables that were running all the time but the snow slide danger. One man, I can't remember his name, was working on one of those breakover towers and a snow slide swept him away, I can't remember his name, 1927 I think.*

Konnerup: *Yeh. I can't remember his name either.*

Douglass: *He was not normally supposed to be there, he was sort of a sub-foreman or something and he'd gone up to check something and he'd got too... and swept him away.*

Konnerup: *That was probably on the breakover from the Jumbo station.*

Hovis: *What did you use the telephones for that are on those breakovers?*

Konnerup: *To call in to stop the tram when we were working on a tower or working on a cable. We could string a line from that telephone that was on the tower down to where we wanted to stop the bucket. Some of those couplings on the main lines, sometimes we would drop ropes over the side and slide down the ropes and pull those buckets up to the towers and then we'd load them on a platform and take them down for repairs. All of those buckets went into the machine shop for periodic repairs and - remember that little track that runs up from the far side of the mill, up to the tram house - all that equipment went up and down on that rail car.*

Douglass: *Have you ever seen the buckets? I didn't see any of them around here anywhere.*

Konnerup: *There some in the dump over here.*

Hovis: *Yes, and some of the old buckets I don't think were worth salvaging are in the scrap heap behind the machine shop. I haven't seen too many of the hangers and bells in there, though.*

Konnerup: *There's some over here. But they had a hook, like a bail on a bucket, and a latch that went onto the bucket and onto the frame. Those things ran right over the top of the crusher and you just flip the latch and turn the bucket over. When we were riding line, we, of course, didn't stop the tram except when we were working on the line, but if we were cutting off the tightening bolts on the towers or anything we would just jump on the tower and the same way we would jump on while it was going.*

Kain: *I'm surprised more people didn't get killed doing that.*

Douglass: *It wasn't all that slow either.*

Konnerup: *No, it moved fairly fast. It moved fast enough so that when you jumped off at the lower end and hit the ground you had to run a few steps before you got stopped.*

Hovis: *And you had your tools in your hand when you did it.*

Konnerup: *Either you had them over your shoulder in a sack or something.*

Douglass: *I can remember my father twice a week would go into the mine for an inspection and so on and so forth and he would sit at the bottom of that bucket and ride up there. On some days it was so cold. What, it took half an hour to get up there.*

Konnerup: *About 45 minutes.*

Kain: *If it's fifty below, that's cold.*

Konnerup: *Each of those lines was four miles long. But his father was a tremendously safety conscious man. I remember him when I was a kid. Of course he was gone when I came back and worked. He'd moved on to the states. But he always wore a hard hat and always took all of the precautions that were listed by the book. He made provisions for all the safety devices that normally would have been taken according to the Department of the Interior safety regulations.*

Hovis: *What were some of the safety devices at the time?*

Konnerup: *Hard hats were available. Most miners wouldn't wear them. They wore these caps with carbide lamps on them. And I never did see a miner who wore a mask.*

Hovis: *Fortunate here they're not drilling rock.*

Konnerup: *There were miners that got what we called "miner's consumption"* [silicosis] *from time to time and ship them down to Arizona. Very often they'd have to take a collection for the fare.*

Hovis: *Would you drill dry here, or drill wet?*

Konnerup: *Both. Nobody paid most attention to dust or asbestos or anything else. We used a lot of asbestos.*

Kain: *Yeah, we know. Now being removed.*

Konnerup: *I'd help remove it. It wouldn't bother me.*

Douglass: *It was, I would say, not having done it but I know it was an excruciatingly difficult job to be a miner there and rewards were so minor. Some of those men worked there for ten or fifteen years and never got out of that routine.*

Kain: *Do you think the conditions here were any worse than at any other mine at the time? A mine similar to this that did anything different, or was Kennecott better or worse or about the same?*

Douglass: *Copper mining is generally safer than coal mining and things like that but my impression from sixty or seventy years looking back, I can't imagine how they could get people to do what they did. A man would come here and work here for ten or fifteen years for a net of $80 a month and live under those circumstances.*

Kain: *So you think it was probably as good or better here than any other place?*

Douglass: *In Wales or Sweden.*

Bonanza dining hall, 500 feet below ground level.

"...essentially those [miners] *lived without seeing the outside air from the first of November to...the end of March. ....and it was cold. From their $4.00* [or] *$5.00 a day, they worked their eight hours and then the company deducted something like $30.00 a month for board and room. ...they were essentially captives of the company"*

William Douglass

Konnerup: *Certainly the conditions were better than they were in West Virginia or eastern state coal mines. Unfortunately - and my father was one of those that invested pretty heavily in the stock market and didn't quite make it in 1929. So we were not very well off when I went to high school. I went to work in Seattle in a coal and ice company outfit for 10 cents an hour. I eventually got a little more than that as I went through high school. I thought $4.25 a day was phenomenal and a lot of money to be making at that time and I [?] to work in excruciatingly hard. In fact I enjoyed every minute of it. In fact I couldn't wait to get out of high school. I left a week before they graduated to get back up here and go to work and I enjoyed every minute I spent here.*

Kain: *So you were here two years working here, and then you went back down to Lower 48 and went to veterinary school?*

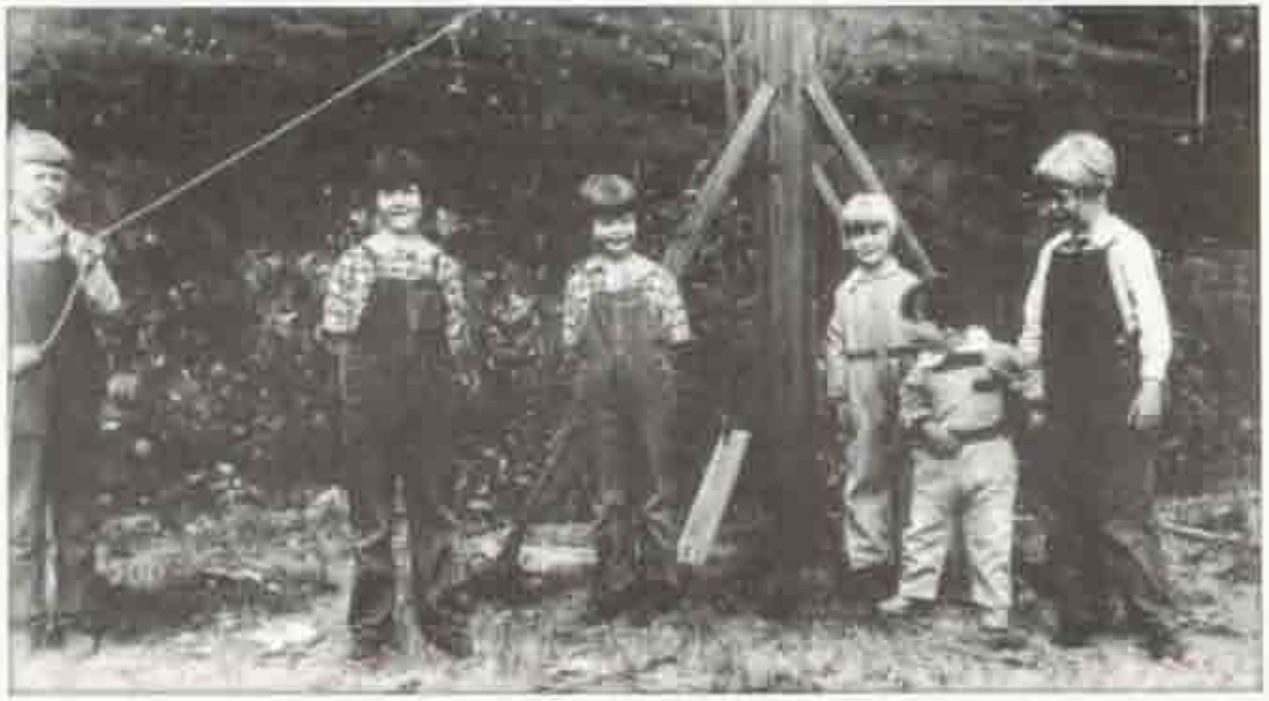
Konnerup: *Right. I made enough up here to pay my way through and my sister's [?]. I never really felt that I was abused as far as working conditions were concerned. The food was good.*

Hovis: *Did you have to bring your own blanket when you were hired on?*

Konnerup: *No.*

Hovis: *That makes this a better mine.*

Douglass: *To give you an idea of contrast. My father has, to my best recollection, his superintendents who're paid $8,000 a year when they left here. I never heard this from him, but it was my impression also that he was miffed because, maybe that was the kind of person he was, he was disappointed that the company would not make him manager. Mr. Stannard, who was manager who, I guess about 1922 or '23 to 1926, was an accountant type, he wasn't a mining engineer, he had little contact with people. That was my dad's forte to keep the ... going and he was good at it.*



Left to right: Bill Douglass, Mary Ellen Duggan, Peggy Duggan. The three children at far left may be from the Douglass family as well.

Kain: *Much more of a hands-on person than Stannard was.*

Douglass: *He got $8,000 and his house, a free house. I don't think there was any charge for that house at all. When he left here he had a contract with The Consolidated Copper Mines in Kimberly, Nevada, for $12,000 and a house and a car.*

Kain: *Wow, that's a big jump.*

Douglass: *When we left in September of '29, just before the stock market, and my father had accumulated from this stock market business that Nels is talking about, again my memory may be wrong, $500,000 in stock which he had on a 50% margin and when the stock market broke, he ended up in Nevada the summer of 1931 with $30,000 left of everything. And they closed the mine. There were 1200 or 1500 people working in that operation. Big operation. The only people left in town were a dozen or so. The price of copper by that time had gone down to less than a nickel a pound. I think it got down as low as three cents. They were mining it in Kennecott when it was 60, 70, 90 cents. He left there and he didn't have a job and he was out of work for six months.*

Konnerup: *Those were tough times. My father invested pretty heavily in the stock market and again a lot of it on the margin and it was devastating.*

Douglass: *These people - I could remember my father talking about it - pooled in three shares of Eastman Kodak and U.S. Steel. It was gold. I'm going to retire on that.*

Konnerup: *Airplane stock, it was something, then all of a sudden nothing.*

Douglass: *So any case, if you compare the $4.25* [per day] *now or what we were getting in the depression in 1933, people were being paid 8 or 10 cents an hour to work in the states for laboring jobs. So a dollar for an eight hour shift or 50-60 dollars a month was pretty good to live on.*

Konnerup: *All the farm labor was a dollar a day or less. Generally food and lodging provided but it was just common labor.*

Hovis: *You took the job more for the food and lodging than for the money.*

Konnerup: *But overall I would again say that I had opportunities to look at mines in the east coast of the United States and the Southwest and Montana and places like this and I had a very close associate that was a toxicologist for the Anaconda Copper Company in Montana. So I've had an association with mining operations here and there* [?] *and I must say this is the best operation I've ever seen. From the standpoint of wages, from the standpoint of social benefits. And I think we can attribute almost all of the social benefit program to Bill Douglass's father* [William]. *Because the other management level people were certainly not interested in the welfare of the worker who had* [?].

Konnerup: *Also the people in New York - Kennecott people - were and are as far as I know some of the hardest nosed people of all time in their approach to, that all they wanted was* [?] *ore on that boat going to Seattle.*

Kain: *Real quick, having interviewed your sister* [Yvonne Konnerup] *several years ago, just refresh my memory. You came up here where?*

Konnerup: *1923, 24. We were from Stanwood, Washington.*

Kain: *And what did your father do there?*

Konnerup: *He was an auto mechanic and a car salesman. He sold Chevrolet cars. Had his own garage.*

Kain: *And they added on a third bedroom to one of the houses just to get you here so he had a companion.*

Konnerup: *His father again authorized Chris Jensen to put that room on there.*

Kain: *To get you up here.*

Konnerup: *To make it adequate. He was a nice pops. We loved him.*

Kain: *And when you left, your dad didn't stay in mining, did he, your father?*

Konnerup: *No, he ran the store, the tail end of the store.*

Kain: *Did he stay in retail business when he went...*

Konnerup: *He tried to set up a business in Juneau, a retail store business in Juneau. It was the depression times and it didn't work out and he came out and his mother built a store in Granite Falls,* [Washington]. *She was getting quite old and he and my mother took over. And he built some apartments. He did quite well. He retired with two or three houses. He was not rich but well off.*

Kain: *And your father stayed in mining.*

Douglass: *My father stayed in mining. He went from the closed plant in Kimberly, Nevada,* [near Ely] *to a place called Downieville* [California] *where he was in joint venture with two of his college classmates. It didn't work out at all. And he was offered by Mr., what was his name - he was the automobile man - E.L. Cord, who manufactured the cord _____. He had a little mine in a place called Penryn, just outside of Auburn,* [California] *and my dad worked there for six months. His best friends from years ago was a geologist who was worldwide known and he recommended dad for a job in British Columbia. So we left Auburn in 1934 and he took over this mine in Penticton, British Columbia, just near Penticton. It was called* (Hambley?), *British Columbia, and ran that. That was*

New York-operated and owned by people who had operations in Ecuador and then, [with] the success of that plant, he was invited to go to New York and be the vice president in charge of operations for all their mines. Went to Ecuador and eastern Canada. He held that job for ten years and couldn't stand commuting from Scarsdale or to New York so he quit that job and went back to have an office in Seattle for the company and do private geological consultation. He lived in Seattle for the rest of his life and died when he was 90 years old.

Kain: *Well, I thank you both very much. It's a lot of information that we haven't been able to get from other people that grew up here because they weren't that involved in the mine. It's been real helpful.*

Douglass: *Well, Nels, particularly having worked there.*

PATRICIA "PATTY" HUSSEY BERG

Interview conducted by Logan Hovis
and Geoff Bleakley
National Park Service
May-27-98.
[With editing and clarification changes
made by Mrs. Patricia Hussey Berg
on 6-22-00 and 8-7-00].
Tape #1
Side #1

Hovis: *O.k., this is Logan Hovis with Geoff Bleakley:. We're here at the Kennicott Lodge. The Kennecott Kids reunion on the 27th of May, 1998. And we're talking, with Patty Hussey* [Berg].

Hussey: *Um-hum.* [Sounds of Patty and unknown male laughing in background].

Hovis: *Yeah! That's good! Patty ... What is your association with Kennecott?*

Hussey: *Well, we came up from Latouche ... in 1928, actually. And, left in 1931. I was in the fifth grade here, in the little two room school house.*

Hovis: *Um-hum.*

Hussey: *My father was a diesel engineer, and he worked in the power plant.*

Hovis: *O.K., ... Did ... You, you were a child here. How old were you at the time?*

Hussey: *I was nine when I came.*

Hovis: *Nine? Nine when you came. And then eleven when you left?*

Hussey: *Um-hum.*

Arthur Erickson, Vernon Hussey, Bruce Morris, Inger Jensen...After pie eating contest, 4th of July.

Hovis: *O.K. So you, you ...*

Hussey: *I was more ...*

Hovis: [uncertain word(s)].

Hussey: *No, I was twelve when I left.*

Hovis: *So, you've got some pretty good memories of this place? Pretty ... pretty firm memories of this place.*

Hussey: *Oh, I loved it. All the kids did.*

Hovis: *Um-hum.*

Bleakley: *O.K. What was so nice about it, being a kid?*

Hussey: *Oh, the freedom, I guess. Folks never seemed to worry about where we were. What we were doing.*

Hovis: *Um-hum.*

Hussey: *And, um ... oh the kids ... We all played games. And ... And in the winter time ... they, what they call the yard gang, would build an ice rink right outside the school house.*

Hovis: *Um-hum.*

Hussey: *But, it's ... what used to be the ball ... park, has receded. So it's all sloughed off.*

Hovis: *It failed during the sixty-four earthquake.*

Hussey: *It used to be a huge ... Oh, did it? Is that what happened?*

Hovis: *Yeah.*

Hussey: *Because, that's where everything seemed to take place. You know, Fourth of July races...*

Hovis: *Um-hum.*

Hussey: *... and ball games, and ... the ice rink in the winter time. And ... We had terrific snows in those days. And ... Lot of ... snowball fights, and, forts, and ... [chuckle].*

Hovis: *You pretty good at that were you?*

Hussey: *I wasn't ... I was a tomboy* [Laugh with Hovis].

Hovis: *O.K.*

Bleakley: *You would have come up the first time via the Alaska Steamship Company, and ... the train?*

Hussey: *Well ... ah ... let's see .... I suppose ... from then ... I don't, I don't remember too much about coming up, except for the ride - from Cordova. Course the Alaska Steamship Lines, that's all that used to come up here in those days.*

Hovis: *The Cordova...*

Hussey: *There was a Northland Transportation Company, too, that ... stopped in Juneau, and ...*

Hovis: *Um-hum.*

Hussey: *... the canneries on the way south, and ...*

Bleakley: *Do you have any memories of the train ride at all? Or, any, any of the rides on the Copper...*

Jane Vickery, Deb Vickery, Mary Ellen Duggan, Inger Jensen, Peggy Duggan, Patty Hussey, and Jean Presley.

Hussey: *No, no, I don't. The only thing I can remember is us three kids crying all the way to Cordova when we left here, 'cause we didn't understand why we had to leave.*

Hovis: *Um-hum. How, how did this place compare to Latouche?*

Hussey: *Well, Latouche was ... seemed to me smaller.*

Hovis: *Um-hum.*

Hussey: *But there were a lot of the same people that were, there, that were transferred up here.*

Hovis: *Um-hum. Did you have the same sense of freedom down there that you had ...*

Hussey: *Oh, yeah. Um-hum. It was, situated on a ... w... wonderful beach. Sandy beach. Matter of fact there were two beaches that were great. And, um ... in Latouche ... in the spring when the ... sa... strawberries were ripe, there was one day they would load up all the little boats of families, and we'd go out to what they called Strawberry Island ... and spend the whole day just picking strawberries and picnicking ...*

Hovis: *Make yourself sick?*

Hussey: *Well, I don't recall that! But, I know we had a lot of good strawberry jam!*

Hovis: [Laughing]. *O.K.*

Hussey: [Laughing].

Hovis: *Um-hum! Which, which house did you live in when you were here at Kennecott?*

Hussey: *Up on top of the hill here, ah ... there were three houses ...*

Hovis: *Um-hum.*

Hussey: *... in a row. And Inger Jensen lived in the first one. The Jacobsens* [sp.?] *in the second one; and the Husseys in the third one.*

Hovis: *So, how did tomboy enjoy having the ... the tea parties with, the Jensens?*

Hussey: *The tea parties? Well, I guess we did have some occasionally. I remember Inger had a little ... her father had built a little house. What would you call that? Open ...*

Hovis: *A gazebo?*

Hussey: *A ga... that's what it was. And closed with a ... wire ... Keep out the bugs and ... Spent a lot of happy hours in there playing dolls and ...*

Hovis: *How were the bugs for you poor kids around there?*

Hussey: *They were horrible! But they were ... seemed to be just a certain ... part of the summer, and then they were gone.*

Hovis: *What would you do with, to, to ... to cut down on the effects of them ... besides stay indoors, or behind screens?*

Hussey: *Oh, we wore ... ah ... what do you call them...*

Bleakley: *A head net.*

Hussey: *A head net.*

Hovis: *Couldn't chew tobacco and rub it all over yourselves?*

Bleakley: [Laughing].

Hussey: *Oh, God!*

Bleakley: [Laughing].

Hussey: *Cried ourselves to sleep lots of times, I remember that.*

Hovis: *Um-hum. ... Well ... perhaps, that's probably the most unhappy memory of this place I've heard so far.*

Hussey: [Laughing]. *Oh, the bugs were terrible!*

Hovis: [Laughing].

Bleakley: *Well, between here and McCarthy, sometimes in the summer, they're the worst mosquitoes I've ever seen in my life.*

Hussey: *They're big.*

Hovis: *Um-hum.*

Bleakley: *Yeah.*

Hussey: *They're big.*

Hovis: *And they're fast. ... Um-hum.*

[Gap in tape].

Hussey: *One time, I don't recall what the occasion would be. But, John Letendre used to tend the ... the water...*

Hovis: *Um-hum.*

Hussey: [Unintelligible word] *old dairy trail. And ... one time, once a ... during the summer, he'd cook up a great big pot of beans. And then he'd hide them in a ... under a tree, or under a stump, or something. And, we had to go hunt for the beans. And when we found them, we could eat.*

Hovis: *Ah! Somewhere up on the hillside?*

Hussey: *Oh, well, or wherever the dam is. I don't recall ... I know it was quite a walk to get there.*

Hovis: *O.K. ... Alright. ... What was it like being in, a school student here?*

Hussey: *I don't recall too much of that either, except, ah ... I was, I suppose, an average student. ... There were three in my class.*

Hovis: *Um-hum.*

Hussey: *Peggy Duggan and David, ah ... Presley, and myself. Oh, that's where I lear... really learned the appreciation of music.*

Hovis: *Um-hum.*

Hussey: *And, ah ...*

[Gap in tape].

Hussey: *... was a better student.*

Hovis: *Who was your teacher, do you remember?*

Hussey: *There was a Ruth Waters. And, a Bertha Krantz, as I recall.*

Hovis: *And they both played the piano nicely?*

Hussey: *No, they had a phonograph.*

Hovis: *Ahhh,* [unintelligible word] *that's ...*

Hussey: *And I distinctly remember, Nola - use to thrill me to death.*

Hovis: [Laughing]. *O.K.*

Hussey: [Laughing].

Hovis: *Oh, yes. Ah-huh. How off... how often could* [you] *get new, new music in here?*

Hussey: *Oh, I don't ... know.* [Unintelligible].

Hovis: *Or, was that really a concern?*

Hussey: *No. She had ... a few; And ... But, that one stands out in my mind, because I loved it.* [Sounds of people talking in background, door hinge squeaking loudly, and then the door slamming shut loudly].

Hovis: *O.K.*

Bleakley: *Did you get down to McCarthy very often?*

Hussey: *No.*

Bleakley: *Wasn't your dad* [unintelligible word] *anything ...*

Hussey: *I ... Sig Wold ... raised sled dogs down there. And he ... told me I could have a pup ... 'f, if I wanted to come get it. So, we, I talked to my mother. And she said sure. So, my brother and I walked the four miles down to ... McCarthy. And got this ... pup, and brought it home. Well, it turned out to be a six months old McKenzie River husky, and was about the size of a small horse. And mother said* [laughing] ... *No!* [continued laughing]. *So the next day we had to march it right back again.*

Bleakley: *His daughter ....*

Hussey: *That was my ...*

Hovis: *... still lives in Fairbanks – Sig Wold's daughter.*

Hussey: *Does she?*

Hovis: *Yeah.*

Hussey: *Yeah, Sig was a neat guy. And I recall, when the snow slides use to cover the railroad tracks, we'd get supplies by dog team, and there'd be ... four and five dog teams tied up in front of the store down here.*

Hovis: *Um-hum.*

[Gap in tape].

Hussey: *... great life for a kid.*

Hovis: *You had, pretty much the run of the place?*

Hussey: *Um-hum.*

Hovis: *Did you go visit your father in the powerhouse?*

Hussey: *Take his lunch ... lunch bucket.*

Hovis: *Um-hum.*

Hussey: *And then on the way home we'd stop at the bunkhouse, and ... we had Asians. I think they were Japanese. And they ... did the cooking and cleaning, and they'd fill ... a ... container with ice cream. And ...*

Hovis: *Um-hum.*

Hussey: *... they had a pickle barrel that we used to steal pickles out of.* [laughing with Bleakley and Hovis].

Bleakley: [laughing] *does sound like a nice life. Ice cream and pickles.*

Hussey: *And they had a barn down here with, 'course, horses, they used to haul things up to the mill. And about six cows, kept us in milk.*

Hovis: *Did that ... Do you know if there was more than one barn?*

Hussey: *No, there was only one barn.*

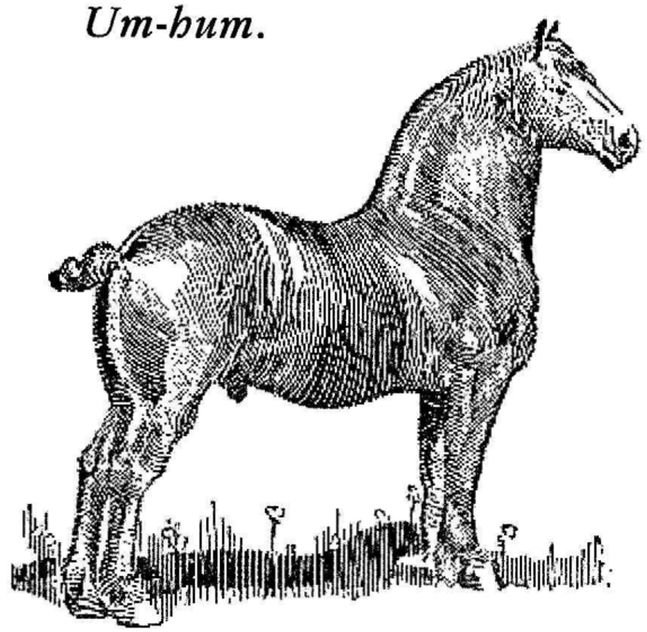
Hovis: *Just, just the one that's down there sitting in the middle of the gravel now.*

Hussey: *I'm surprised to see where it is. They must have moved it, or something.*

Hovis: *It's a most unfortunate sequence of events.*

Hussey: [Sounding disappointed] *Ahh. I used to spend half the day down in that barn, 'cause I love animals, and ...*

Hovis: *Um-hum.*



Hussey: *... got to feed them, and ...*

Hovis: *Get to ride them?*

Hussey: *No. They were these great big ... work horses, you know. You know, when they'd take supplies up to the mill, we ... get in the back and ride up ... with um, and just holler and laugh all the way up.*

Hovis: *So you could ride, they'd let you ride all the way ...*

Hussey: *They'd let us ride in the wagon.*

Hovis: *Oh, that's great!*

Hussey: *Yeah.*

Hovis: *Um-hum.*

Hussey: *Probably drove the na... driver nuts.*

Hovis: *Um-hum.*

Hussey: *It was a lot of fun.*

Hovis: *Anybody ever get hurt? Any of the kids ever get hurt?*

Hussey: *No. Not around here that I know of.*

Hovis: *O.K.*

Bleakley: *So, did your dad ... you said you ... that you'd been over to Dan Creek; did your dad ... take you over to Dan Creek?*

Hussey: *Um-um.*

Bleakley: *Did you drive over there?*

Hussey: *Yes. It was in a car, truck.*

Hovis: *Um-hum.*

Hussey: *We were all ... piled in the back.*

Bleakley: *That was about the third Nizina Bridge I think.*

Hussey: [Unintelligible].

Hovis: *Um-hum.*

Bleakley: *Yes. They went through four of um, I think, before they gave up.* [laugh].

Hussey: *Is that right? I, um ... I don't recall, except I remember these giant hoses...*

Hovis: *Um-hum.*

Hussey: *... water and, sluice boxes.*

Hovis: *Um-hum. Was this a, an outing, or was your father in business ...*

Hussey: *Yeah, it was just an outing. Um-hum.*

Hovis: *Where'd you keep the car at?*

Hussey: *He must have borrowed it, cause we didn't have a car.*

Hovis: *O.K. ... I know there were just a couple garages ...*

Hussey: *There weren't very many around here.*

Hovis: *... there were a couple of garages down there by the barn at one time, I think.*

Hussey: *Oh, were there?*

Hovis: *But, only a couple.*

Hussey: *Um-hum.*

[Gap in tape].

Hovis: *... I think, I think you could only bring them in, in part of them.*

Hussey: *Well, it was very exciting ...*

Hovis: *Oh, goodness!*

Hussey: *... to get to go on an outing like that.*

Hovis: *Um-hum. O.K. ... Um-hum. ... Did you stop for lunch at the roadhouse over at May Creek.*

Hussey: *I think they took lunches with um. ... It was durin' the depression, and, you didn't squander ...*

Hovis: *Yeah.*

Hussey: *... money.*

[Gap in tape].

Hovis: *... even when you were in the powerhouse, or walking by the mill?*

Hussey: *Well, I suppose there was! But you get so used to it, you don't hear it! It's just like the train ...*

Hovis: *Yeah.*

Hussey: *... coming in. And, um ...*

Hovis: *You cease to hear that too.*

Hussey: *Um-hum.*

Hovis: *O.K. 'Cause, I, I can't, I keep imagining every time I go to the mill that it must have been such a terrible noisy place to work. With no ...*

Hussey: *The mill was, yes.*

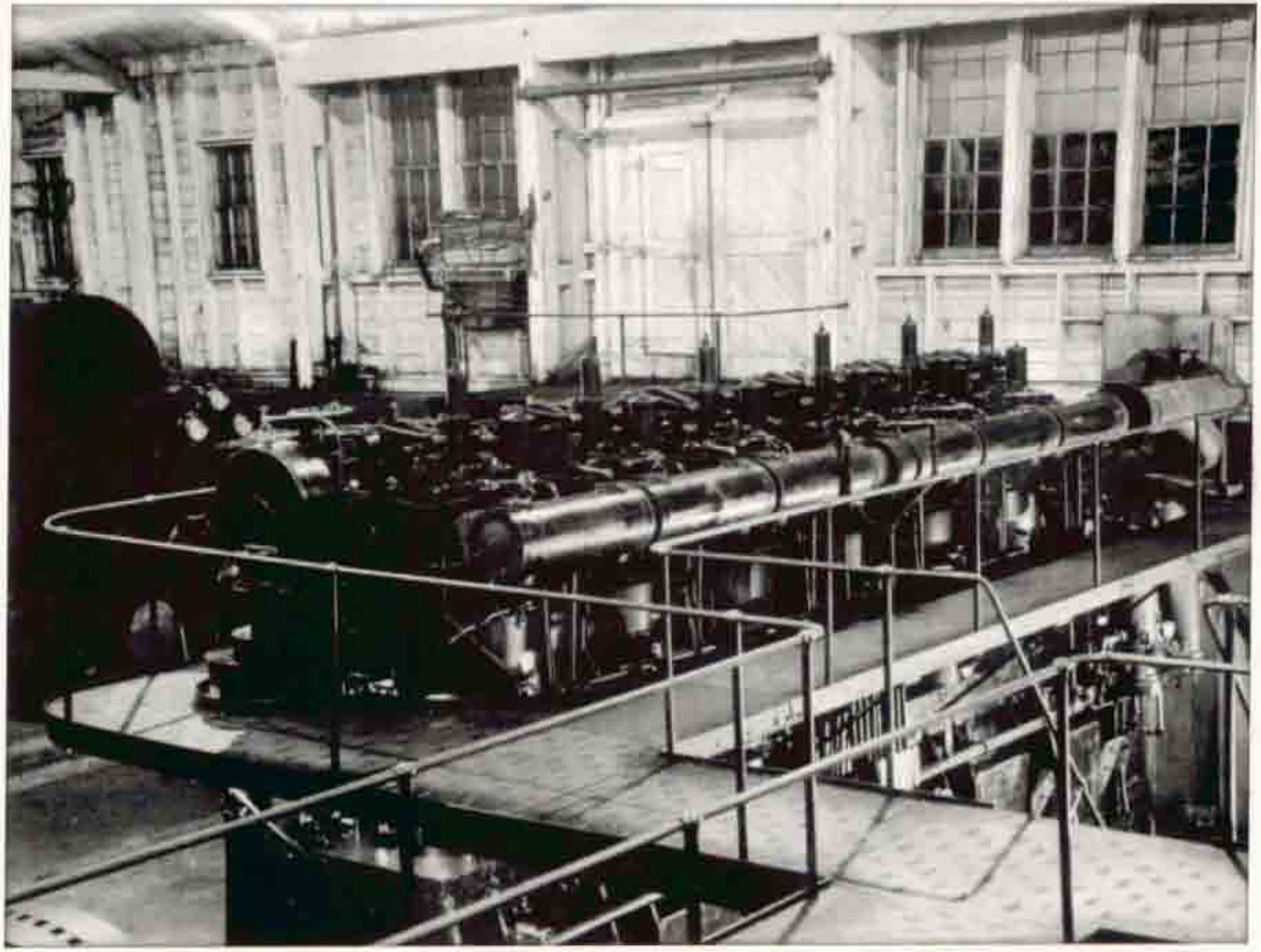
Hovis: *Um-hum.*

Hussey: *Us kids used to play in the mill.*

Hovis: *Um-hum.*

Hussey: *Running up and down those stairs from ...*

Hovis: *Had favorite hiding places in there?*



Macintosh Seymour engine, Kennecott Power House.

"Us kids used to play in the mill. Running up and down those stairs from one to the other."

PATRICIA "PATTY" HUSSEY BERG

Hussey: *... one to the other. And then there was the time that ... Mrs. Whipple and my mother, sh... they had ... one boy. And then there were three of us. Went up to ... Castle Rock Mine – the Bonanza, I guess they called it at that* [Unintelligible]. *... And spent a couple days there. Went a mile and a half under ground on the different skips ...*

Hovis: [Laughing; Noises in interview room].

Hussey: *One I never have forgotten, because, you laid down on it. And top of the ... the ca... caves, or tunnel, as you're going down, was about that far from your nose.* [laugh]. *I mean, you didn't move your head.*

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

Bleakley: *Oh, that sounds pretty exciting!*

Hussey: *Yeah. And then they're those you stood up in. And ... No, it was exciting. And wha... when, oh, we wore carbide lanterns on our heads; And when we got down to the bottom of this, I understand that ...We were told at the time, that this was the biggest ... hole, mining hole – glory hole, they called it, in the world. And, it was cold down there. And the water coming out of the sides of the cave ... was just like, billions of diamonds, from our, carbide lanterns.*

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

Hussey: *Never forgotten that.*

Bleakley: *Huh.*

Hovis: *Um-hum.*

Hussey: *But, it was fun ... being up there and getting to eat in the mess halls with the ... the men, and ...*

Bleakley: *This was the underground mess hall, the one back in the ...*

Hussey: *An... I don't recall, that. I know when the guys came down, they'd jump in a bucket, and ride down ... and would ... take the same ... route back.*

Hovis: *Did they come down very often?*

Hussey: *Um-hum.*

Hovis: *O.K.*

Hussey: *Visit McCarthy.*

Hovis: *And try and make it back to the next shift.*

Hussey: *I suppose* [hearty laugh].

Hussey: *That was a pretty rowdy town. But, as far as that ... I didn't realize, just what it was all about until I read the book. "McCarthy".*

Hovis: *O.K. Kirchhoff's book?*

Hussey: *Yes.*

Bleakley: *Yes!*

Hovis: *Um-hum.*

Hussey: *Very interesting.*

Hovis: *Good.*

Hussey: *And I, in fact I recognize some of the names in there. ... friends of my dad's and ...*

Hovis: *They organized a, a formal trip for you and your friends to go up and look ar... play around in the mines.*

Hussey: *I guess so. There was just, ah ... come to think of it, my sister was too small. She must have been staying with somebody. And there was just Bob Whipple, and my brother, and myself. And* [unintelligible] *... Yeah, most days ... things were pretty loose I guess. They were ... I'm sure some of the other kids got to do it, too. I never heard whether they ...*

Hovis: *That's the first I've heard of this. I'm very, I'm very amused by it.*

Hussey: *Um-hum.*

Hovis: *And pleased.*

Hussey: *Good. Yeah.*

Hovis: *Um-hum.*

Hussey: *But, that was quite a hike up there.*

Hovis: *You had to walk up this time?*

Hussey: *We hiked up. And we hiked back.*

Hovis: *Um-hum. Yes. It is a horrible hike up there.*

Hussey: *... Maybe ten or eleven years old.*

Hovis: *It's no fun at fifty either.*

Hussey: [Laugh with Bleakley].

Hovis: *Did it three times last year.*

Hussey: *Oh, did you?*

Hovis: *I whined [on] every one.*

Hussey: [Laughing with Hovis].

Hussey: *Yeah.*

Hovis: *You ever go up to the Jumbo Mine?*

Hussey: *Ummm. I don't recall.*

Hovis: O.K.

Hussey: *That was my one trip to the mine, to a mine.*

[Gap in tape].

Hussey: *... it surprises me here, too. In those days, there were beautiful birch trees, everywhere. Now, you don't see a birch tree.*

Hovis: *Hum. ....* [unintelligible] *... all is just alders. Yeah. And they, there were meadows. You could walk through, there was no tangle, or anything like that. And some of those kids on the hill built a two room log cabin. We never did get a roof on it. But, it's some place up there. And, I don't know where it is. ... It should still be ...*

Hovis: *Would you expect it to be above the houses up on the hill?*

Hussey: *Yeah. It was above the houses. ... It's up there somewhere.*

Hovis: O.K.

Hussey: *And not far from there, a bear had been hung ... by the neck. Black bear.*

Hovis: *Humph.*

Hussey: *And ... they left it there, till the skeleton dropped to the ground. And. I got the head. And I knocked all the teeth out of it. All the bear teeth. And, my dad purloined all those teeth and gave um to his friends, because, in those days, they wore them on the end of a ... watch chain.*

Hovis: *Um-hum.*

Hussey: *... Watch fob.*

Bleakley: *Um-hum.*

Hussey: *... would be this bear tooth.*

Hovis: *Um-hum.*

Hussey: *So, I ... didn't get away with any of um.* [Laughs].

Bleakley: *So, they hung this bear by the* [laugh] *by the neck just like it was a warning to other bears.*

Hussey: *They hung the bear. Just like it was a ... I, I can't recall ... somebody knows that story here. Because we were talking about it here the other night. 'N I can't recall who I was talking to. Maybe it was George Powell. ... He was ... he was such a little kid, I don't know that he'd remember. Maybe it was ...*

[Gap in tape]..

Hovis: *... You, you knew George when you were just a child then, huh?*

Hussey: *Yeah, he was, yeah ... he had wonderful toys. Kids all liked to play with him, because he had all these wonderful toys. And, in those days, everything was Sears and Roebuck, an' Montgomery Ward. And it was a very exciting time at Christmas, because ... our parents would get these big boxes from ... Wards, or Sears, and hide um under the bed. And then the school would put, at Christmas time, would put on the program.*

Hovis: *Um-hum.*

Hussey: *... Christmas program. There'd be a tree. And Santa Claus would*

come. And every kid ... All the miners put in maybe a dollar ... which amounted to quite a bit, when you just have a few kids, like here. And we all got wonderful gifts. An' ... things ... an' ... I was like ... I did the highland fling, I remember [laughing with Hovis] *on the stage* [continued laughing]. [deep breath] *Ahh!*

Hovis: *Um-hum. So, you kids were like, community kids ...*

Bleakley: *Community property.*

Hovis: *... Like you belonged to the whole community.*

Hussey: *Oh, yeah. And this building right down here ...*

Hovis: *Um-hum.*

Hussey: *... right here ... was the social ... There were movies on Wednesdays and Sunday nights. And men played basketball in there. And dances on Saturday nights.*

[Gap in tape].

Bleakley: *... active social life.*

Hussey: *Oh, it was!*

Hovis: *Now, would miners come down for these events?*

Hussey: *Oh, I imagine. There were a lot of men.*

Hovis: *O.K.*

Hussey: *'Course ... there were just these*

few families. And all these single guys. And ... heck I was, what ... nine, ten, eleven years old. And I danced with all these ... "fellas ". [laughs].

Hovis: *Popular.*

Hussey: *Well, my dad was a drummer ...*

Hovis: *Did you ever get over it?*

Hussey: *Ummm ... Well, after I was 'bout eighteen I did* [laugh with Hovis and Bleakley]. *I got married!* [Continued laughter].

Hovis: *O.K. ... You, you ... you say your dad was a drummer?*

Hussey: *He was drummer. Yeah, they, he had a band in Latouche. And he formed another one down here.*

Hovis: *Um-hum.*

Bleakley: *What kind of music ... did he ... did he play?*

Hussey: *Well there was a man they called, ah ... his name was Carpenter. 'N they use to call 'm needle nose. Cause he had a nose bo... a nose like Bob Hope.*

Hovis: *Um-hum.*

Hussey: *And he'd sit down, play the piano. And dad 'd strike up the drums. And, ... can't remember whether there were any horns, saxophones, or any ... Anyhow, that was our music. And ... in between they'd play phonograph records.*

Hovis: *Um-hum.*

[Gap in tape].

Hovis: *... Jitterbug? ... ah ... Fox-trot?*

Hussey: *Oh, that was a long time in the future!* [laugh]. *No, the Fox-trot ... and .... the Charleston. I did the Charleston in Latouche. But ... No, it* [was] *just Fox-trot 'n waltzes.*

Hovis: *Um-hum.*

Hussey: *And then, too, there were square dances.*

Hovis: *Um-hum.*

Hussey: *We would do square dances.*

[Gap in tape].

Bleakley: *... Just can't picture, square dances at McCarthy ... I don't know.*

Hovis: *It's a wholesome community.*

Hussey: [Laughter]. *It was!*

Bleakley: *I guess.*

Hovis: *Um-hum.*

[Gap in tape].

Bleakley: *... A new image.*

Hussey: *I see some ... pictures today. I've never been upstairs in this building* [Kennicott Glacier Lodge]. *We flew in here about twenty years ago. We drove to Chitina ... and then, Cliff and I chartered a plane and flew in. And stayed at the old ... lodge. But ... So ... And this one ... I had, just got upon the second floor ... Yesterday.* [Sounding amazed] *an' I sa... there's, there's pictures of me up there! I didn't know had.* [Pause]. [Chuckle].

Hovis: *There's a lot of stuff in there ... I've never seen ... I haven't seen all of it either. And, a lot of it's in the rooms.*

Hussey: *It's a beautiful lodge.*

Hovis: *Um-hum.*

[Gap in tape].

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

Hussey: *No, 'cept when we left here, we ...*

Hovis: *When you left here, yes.*

Hussey: *... went to Douglas – 'Cross the channel from Juneau.*

Hovis: *Um-hum.*

Hussey: *And then ...*

Bleakley: *Treadwell?*

Hussey: *Well, the ... Treadwell was down at that time. It had been all burned out. And ...*

Hovis: *Caved in. Burned out.*

Hussey: *Yeah.*

Bleakley: *Oh, that's right, yeah.*

Hussey: *And, I used to ... look at the ... eleven o'clock shift at night ... watch the miners across the bay. And they, the old A.J. Mine, mill, come ... come down the hills at the eleven o'clock change of shift at night. And they. And they, looked like a bunch of fire flies. And I use to think, someday, I'[m], going to live over 'n that big city. And, I did!* [chuckle]. *Local girl makes good!* [All laughing].

Bleakley: *The big city of Juneau!* [All laughing].

Hussey: *Well, it was! I think Douglas was two hundred people. And, agh, Juneau was big. It was like, four-thousand.*

Hovis: *Um-hum.*

Hussey: *Now it's forty* [thousand]. *I know. We don't like it much. And ... really, the people [that] live there ... The valley has just grown tremendously. And that*['s] *where we do our shopping and everything. Cause you can't park. ... There's no place to park downtown. There's ... you can't walk the streets in the summer because of the tourists.*

Bleakley: *Tourists, um-hum.*

Hussey: *We have five of those huge monstrous ships .... almost every day.*

Stella Watsjold, Inger Jensen, Yvonne Konnerup, and Patty Hussey.

"...we stopped by a lake...(It) was a lovely day. And everybody dons their bathing suits and jumps in. And (when) we get out...we have these things–leeches, all over us. Horrible things! That was the end of that for me. I...would never swim in one of these lakes around here again."

PATRICIA "PATTY" HUSSEY BERG

Bleakley: *You're livin' out in Mendenhall Valley there?*

Hussey: *No, I live in town, actually, up behind the Evergreen cemetery.*

Bleakley: *[Laugh]. And you drive to Mendenhall* [chuckle] *Valley to finish up.*

Hussey: *I drive to the Mendenhall to shop. Uh-huh!*

Bleakley: *'S kind of reverse ... reverse suburbs!* [laughing].

Hovis: *Maybe you'll have to move back to Douglas.*

Hussey: *There was no bridge at that time. That was 1935, when they built that bridge that connected the two towns. And ...*

Hovis: *Um-hum.*

Hussey: *Matter of fact, my husband ... hauled some of that rip-rap that ... that the old bridge was ...*

Bleakley: *Do you ever get down there around Thane at all?*

Hussey: *Oh, yeah. We drive down there occasionally, see what ... So that's building up like crazy all along the shore.*

Hovis: *Is it ...*

Hussey: *And, matter of fact, up the mountain too. Yes.*

[Gap in tape].

Hussey: *... Still rains and rains and rains.* [Chuckling with Hovis] *But, on any nice day like this, you forget all about the rains. We've all got web feet! But ... We have a boat, 'n ...* [uncertain word - sounds like "no"] *and the rain doesn't stop us. We're out every weekend. During the salmon season, anyhow. Which is, getting more scarce all the time.*

Bleakley: *So, once you move to Juneau ... that was it? - You stayed there the rest of your life, huh?*

Hussey: *Well, we traveled the world. But ... he's in the construction business, or we couldn't ... he builds roads. And ... for sixty years he was in the business. And ... He couldn't work in the winter time. So during those three months ...*

Bleakley: *... Work construction? ...*

Hussey: *... Work construction ...*

Bleakley: *Of course* [laughs].

Hussey: *So, in the three months in the winter, we'd just travel ... the world, and ... And then we ... During the summer, we lived out in the bush a lot, building, ah ... logging roads.*

Hovis: *Um-hum.*

Hussey: *Prince of Wales Island, and some of those places. I think he'd just, he'd just gotten an asphalt plant then.*

Bleakley: *Yeah.*

Hussey: *That was his first asphalt job.*

Bleakley: *I remember it was the biggest thing going on.*

Hussey: *Oh, it was ... a thrill for him to get that ... plant. But ...*

[Gap in tape].

Hussey: *... retired. I say retired, because ... he was just getting phone calls all the time ... and, people wanting to know this 'n that, and all the other thing[s]. So he went into consulting. And, now he's taken over the living room, and ... operates from the house.*

Hovis: *Um-hum.*

Hussey: *People would ... you know ... keeps him busy.*

Hovis: *Yeah.*

Hussey: *He'll never have that out of his system, anyhow* [chuckle].

Bleakley: *Did you ever get out when you were, living here in Kennecott, did you ever get out and see any the rest ... of the Copper River Valley ... Chitina? anywhere? ...*

Hussey: *No, not actually. No.*

Bleakley: *Ah, Strelna?*

Hussey: *There was no way ... to do it.*

Bleakley: *Yeah.* [Door slamming shut]. *The Dan Creek trip was the ... was the one trip ...*

Hussey: *The Dan Creek ... trip ... yes. And I remember ... we stopped by a lake some place. And everybody ... was a lovely day. And everybody dons their bathing suites and jumps in. And we get out, and we have these things - leeches, all over us.*

Hovis: [In a loud whisper] *Yeah!*

Bleakley: *Um-hum.*

Hussey: *That was the end of that for me. I don't ... Would never swim in one of these lakes* [laughing] *around here again.*

Bleakley: [Laughing].

Hussey: *Horrible things!* [Laughing].

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

[Gap in tape].

Hovis: *... the picnics and hikes around here were ...*

Hussey: *Oh, yeah! The Erie Trail, and ... Matter of fact, I walked out there this morning, and ... there was a time ... when there was a ... big flat area, that was just full of gopher holes.*

Hovis: *Um-hum.*

Hussey: *Those little gophers ... running around and whistling, and everything. There's none of that now. It's, its gone. It's all ... alders and ...*

Bleakley: [In loud whisper] *Yeah!*

Hussey: *Yeah. ... And, 'course, the glacier was much bigger. It's ... melted so...*

[Gap in tape].

Hussey: ...[glacier] *in Juneau was sure was receding too.*

Bleakley: *The Mendenhall?*

Hussey: *Um-hum.*

[Gap in tape].

Hovis: *... else you'd like to say*

Hussey: *No, can't think of anything. I'll probably think of something when I leave you! but ...*

Bleakley: *[Laughs].*

Hovis: *Oh, it, it ... Several times, as soon as we turn the machine off - I have to turn it back on.* [Hussey, Bleakley and Hovis laugh]. ... *But, we'll say thank you!*

Hussey: *Well ... you're welcome.*

Hovis: *And, appreciate it very much.*

James McGavock and Jean McGavock Lamb

Interview conducted by Ann Kain
National Park Service
June 17, 1990
Tape #1
Side #1

Kain: *Kennicott Glacier Lodge, Kennecott, Alaska, June 17, 1990. Oral history interview with James McGavock and Jean McGavock Lamb, brother and sister, who grew up in Kennecott, Alaska when the mill and mines were in operation. They are presently in Kennecott for the Kennecott Kids Reunion conducted at the Kennicott Glacier Lodge. The interview is being conducted by Ann Kain for the National Park Service, Alaska Regional Office.*

Kain: *How old were you when you were here at Kennecott?*

McGavock: *Well, I was probably brought here when I was just a few months old.*

Kain: *How long did you stay?*

McGavock: *I stayed until I was* [almost 13] *years old.*

Kain: *And the years?*

McGavock: *That was from 1924 till 1937.*

Kain: *You left before the mine closed.*

McGavock: *Yes.*

Kain: *The year before.*

McGavock: *Yes.*

Kain: *Where did you come here from?*

McGavock: *Well, of course, I was born in Seattle.*

Kain: *Was your father in mining there?*

McGavock: *No. He had worked at the Bremerton Navy Yard when some magnetic thing drew him to Alaska.*

Kain: *He wanted to come to Alaska so they came up here and this was an available job so . . .*

McGavock: *I suppose it sounded promising. This was probably the end of the rainbow.*

Lamb: [And] *the times were bad down below.*

Kain: *When you left here did he go into mining, stay in mining or...*

McGavock: *Yes, he tried to* [?].

Kain: *What exactly was it he did?*

Jean McGavock.

McGavock: *He was the master mechanic here.*

Kain: *Running all the machinery and...*

McGavock: *Responsible for a crew of men and responsible for keeping all of the machinery running and maintained both here at the camp and at the four mines.*

Kain: *Would he ride up on the tram to maintain the stuff up there at the mines?*

McGavock: *Oh, yes.*

Kain: *And Jean, your ages when you were here and the years you were here?*

Lamb: *Well, I think I was brought up from Seattle, where I was born, at six weeks and lived here until 1937. Probably the late spring or early summer of 1937.*

Kain: *When you came up here, it was, for your dad, the ultimate to come to Alaska. He planned to stay.*

McGavock: *Umm.*

Kain: *When you left, where did you go?*

McGavock: *We settled in Denver, Colorado because that was my father's home. That was where he was born.* [The family home was there and so was his sister.]

Kain: *Why, if Alaska was his ultimate dream, he had enough of it and decided to leave then or...*

McGavock: *There was probably, literally, nothing else in Alaska at the time.* [Mother wanted to leave.]

Kain: *Nothing else for him to do.*

Lamb: *Well, nothing to support a family. He could have gone off and placer mined on Dan Creek or done things like that in other areas but to support a larger family - and I imagine there was some pressure from my mother to get outside where hopefully she thought things were better.*

Kain: *I understand you have some patented claims.*

McGavock: *Yes.*

Kain: *Up here or on Dan Creek?*

McGavock: *No, out on Chititu, at Rex Creek.*

Kain: *At Rex Creek. So did your dad work those claims when you were here?*

McGavock: *Very little, very little. Actually, as I recall those claims, a fellow by the name of* [Chick] *Nelson gave those patented placer claims out there on the* [Cole] *Bench to my mother and George Powell's mother. But to my knowledge very little was ever done with them. I think my father was waiting for the Chititu Mining Company to complete their operations before my father began his.*

Kain: *Why did you leave here and go to Denver a year before the mine closed? Did your father see an end coming to this?*

McGavock: *Oh, yes, I'm sure he saw the end, yes.*

Kain: *Decided to get out when he had other opportunities.*

McGavock: *Well, he thought "well, I better go and start looking."*

Kain: *How was the adjustment for you kids when you went out?*

McGavock: *It was somewhat difficult going from the school here to the big schools outside. And, of course, we were isolated here. We never had any childhood diseases that children go through outside, since it's...*

Lamb: *Yes, I forgot about that.*

McGavock: *The measles, the mumps, chicken pox, whooping cough, etc.*

Kain: *Did you get all those things when you went out?*

Lamb: *We got - well, we never got the whooping cough as I recall, but we did get the measles - I don't think we got the mumps. They're harder to get. Chicken pox definitely came. I think that isolation of my*

childhood was responsible for my getting polio later on.

Kain: *How old were you when you got polio?*

Lamb: *Twenty-six.*

Kain: *Twenty-six?*

Lamb: *But I think the fact that I had not enjoyed the usual exposure, because of the isolated life we lived up here and the cold, I don't know.*

Kain: *You were more susceptible.*

Lamb: *Yes, and I didn't have the kind of immunity that maybe the children outside had. But* [?].

Kain: *That's interesting.*

McGavock: *We were so isolated here - well, we could brag that we never got a cold in the winter time. There were no viruses or anything like that, no influenza.*

Lamb: *And I think the* [nasty] *Spanish flu hit Cordova in 1918. They closed the camp, I mean they closed off the camp, they further isolated the camp.*

Kain: *I understand that during a flu epidemic they opened up what they called a detention building or a detention camp as a quarantine location so they couldn't get back into camp and bring all that in.*

Lamb: *Something like that would desolate a community.*

Kain: *Yes. That was a real controlled situation, from what I understand. So socially - you had difficulty in school adjusting to it?*

Lamb: *Well* [certainly] *to come from a one room schoolhouse to the Denver public school system was a shock.*

Kain: *But as far as - academically, were you up to snuff with everyone else?*

Lamb: *Academically I think we were behind, and it took a while to catch*

up. I think there is always a social [problem] *and some do better with it than others. Yes, I'm sure.*

Kain: *Being slightly behind academically compounded with the social...*

Lamb: *What girls wear and how they behave and how - maybe girls feel it more than boys, but I think a teenager would feel it more than someone my age.*

Kain: *Right, yes. How long did it take you to get through that do you think?*

Lamb: *I don't think it took me more than a year.*

Kain: *How about you Jim?*

McGavock: *I don't think it took more than a year.*

Kain: *So you both made the adjustment within a year's time?*

Lamb: *Yes.*

Kain: *That's an interesting thing that cropped up, you know, I've heard several people say that that was a problem, making a social adjustment when they left here, because it was an isolated community.... Did you travel around much while you were here?*

Lamb: *Well, we probably did more than others. Dad had the only privately owned automobile in camp.*

Kain: *Right.*

Lamb: *That permitted us to maybe take Sunday drives or Dad would go down to McCarthy and take Jim along* [?]. *It was strictly local and you can imagine what the road system such as it was.*

Kain: *Not a whole lot better than it is today.*

Lamb: *Well, it was better than it is today.*

Kain: *It was better than it is today?*

Lamb: *You could cross McCarthy Creek for one thing.*

Jim McGavock poses atop the first automobile in Kennecott.

Kain: *Yes.*

McGavock: *And drive out the Nizina Road and cross the Nizina River and actually get to Chititu and Dan Creek. And out of McCarthy you could drive up to Green Butte.*

Lamb: *And Baultoff Lake and do some fishing.*

McGavock: *Well,* [?].

Kain: *On the weekends you'd go out for* [?] *of fishing?*

Lamb: *Yes. Um humm.*

Kain: *Did you go camping at all over an extended period of time?*

McGavock: *No.*

Lamb: *I don't remember, except for that trip we took to Valdez, which of course was different.*

McGavock: *That wasn't what you'd call camping.*

Lamb: *No, that was in a lodge and hotel.*

Kain: *So, for the most part, your day trips you'd go out picnicking and go fishing and...*

Lamb: *Yes. Dad would go out hunting, I imagine, and be gone for [days]. No, we didn't do it.*

Kain: *Did you ever go outside, to the Lower 48?*

Lamb: *I think we probably did more than some. Do you suppose it was as often as every other year or maybe every two or three years?*

McGavock: *I just can't remember.*

Lamb: *I can remember a number of trips.*

McGavock: *I'm sure there were more trips than when we were born.*

Kain: *I see.*

Lamb: *I remember because I got seasick.*

Kain: *You don't remember how many times you went out then?*

McGavock: *I can't remember, really.*

Kain: *But you do remember going Outside on several different occasions. And where did you go when you went?*

Lamb: *We went to Seattle and Mother's family lived in* [Roslyn], *which is just a hundred miles about east of* [Seattle], *so we went down to her family.*

Kain: *What about - you went to Valdez one time, did you ever go to Cordova at all on the train?*

Lamb: *Well yes, 'cause we had to, to go to Seattle. We would have to go to Cordova.*

Kain: *Cordova was en route to the Lower Forty-eight.*

Lamb: *Was en route, um humm.*

Kain: *You didn't go to Cordova to shop or anything like that?*

Lamb: *No, I don't think - we certainly didn't. We'd go there on the way Outside or coming back.*

McGavock: *The one trip we made that you probably wouldn't call a local trip was* [when] *a man by the name of Carl Whitham was running Nabesna mine and he needed help mechanically so my father was given time off from his job here to go to Chitina where we rented a car. He took his family with him and we drove out the Richardson Highway and on to Nabesna where we spent about a week there living in a tent. Of course it had a wood floor. After he did all he could there for* [Carl Whitham] *we went to Valdez. And then back to Chitina. Of course we went by speeder on the railroad from* [Kennecott] *to Chitina.*

Lamb: *'Cause we couldn't get there by the road.*

Kain: *So the train - did you ride* [?] *I mean to just go for a day or anything like that?*

Lamb: [Spoken to her brother]. *No, but you had an adventure.*

Kain: *Did you stow away on a train?*

McGavock: *Do you want to hear that now?* [The Wild Train Ride?]

Kain: *Oh, yes.*

McGavock: [The camp had been closed down for two or three years in the early 1930s. They decided to resume operations in 1935. The Company kept a train crew at Kennecott all winter while the railroad was closed down from December to June, to move loaded ore cars to a siding near McCarthy and return some empties every two or three weeks. They would fill cars here at Kennecott in the sacking shed. They would stack the sacks up on the flat cars. When all the cars were loaded, they would take the full ones down to McCarthy and bring a few empties back. The engineer (Art Holt) seemed to think I was a nice kid and he would always beckon me to climb up in the cab while he switched the cars at Kennecott. One day he asked, "would you like to ride down to McCarthy with me tomorrow?" I said "sure". So when the time came I could hardly wait. It was a surprise to me that there were several women and children going along too, because there was limited room in the cab of a steam locomotive. There we were, we started out, going down the hill from camp. There is somewhat of a grade between Kennecott and McCarthy, and for some reason the brakes didn't work on the ore cars. Wow! Soon we were going 70 or 80 miles an hour. McCarthy just went by like a blur. There was a big long trestle at McCarthy that crossed the two forks of the Kennicott River, and we zipped across it. All the time we were plowing about two feet of snow. There is an upgrade after you get to the other side just near the Iverson farm and it slowed us down and we stopped. Backed up to the siding and dumped the ore cars, and picked up the empties and went back to McCarthy. The women were scared to death. They wouldn't ride the locomotive back with the engineer and crew. I thought the ride was kinda neat. I wasn't scared at all and they certainly gave some thought to

throwing us children off in the snow banks on the way down, but they didn't do it.]

Lamb: *The tail end of that story - he hadn't had permission to go.*

McGavock: *I didn't have permission to go. I guess I had not asked permission to go because I felt, well, I'd probably get a no.*

Kain: *So you'd rather go without permission.*

McGavock: *I tell you, of course, you know. A camp like this, why it wasn't long before that experience - everyone knew about it. Everybody learned about that through the mukluk telegraph* [?]. *Well, I certainly was chastised for not asking permission because, you know, as I recall my father's attitude was boy, you're to be seen and not heard. I can remember him one time looking at me at the dinner table up there in the cottage and saying, boy, you go down to Julius in the bunkhouse and get a haircut before you come to this dinner table again.*

Kain: *That sounds like in the early 60s with the long hair.*

McGavock: *Well, I wasn't that way, there was no long hair back in the '30s. It was just a case of if you let your short hair just get a little bit long why it didn't look very good at all to your elders.*

Kain: *That's right, you get it cut. Where did you live when you were here?*

McGavock: *We lived up on the hill. Up on the hill east of here is seven cottages, three in one group and four in the other. In the group of four, the southernmost cottage, number 19, is where we lived.*

Kain: *Number 19. Now that had indoor plumbing?*

McGavock: *Yes. That had indoor plumbing.*

Kain: *Was that the only house you lived in when you were here?*

McGavock: *No, no. In 1932, when they decided to close down pretty much and just keep a caretaker for us,*

they decided we're not even gonna pump steam up on the hill. So, we had to move down on the tracks north of the powerhouse.

Kain: *I see.*

McGavock: *So we were there - I don't remember whether it was a year or two.*

Lamb: *I have a lot of trouble remembering that period. I remember that we lived there and I think it was more than a year, but I wouldn't necessarily have had an understanding of what happened at that time. I just don't even remember the interior of the house very well, for some reason. The thing I remember about that house, like all the houses of course, [down] underneath were all these pipes, crawl space down there. There were mice. Jim and I used to go down there and catch mice with these sticks, until I got very tender about those poor little mousies meeting their demise down there. Besides, that wasn't too much fun. Enough, that's the only thing I remember about that house.*

Kain: *The first house - when you came to Kennecott you lived...*

Lamb: *We lived up on the hill.*

Kain: *You didn't live in any of the apartments here or...*

Lamb: *No, no.*

Kain: *Okay. So, there was no waiting list for houses when you got here?*

Lamb: *Well, there may have been, because I think when Mother and Dad were first married in 1922 that they spent some months living in the staff house. So they certainly didn't move into number 19 immediately upon their marriage.*

Kain: *Your parents were here before the two of you were born?*

Lamb: *Oh, yes.*

Kain: *Did they meet here?*

Jim McGavock.

"We were so isolated here...well, we could brag that we never got a cold in the winter time. There were no viruses or anything like that, no influenza."

JAMES MCGAVOCK

Lamb: *And before they were married. They met here.*

Kain: *They met here and married here.*

Lamb: *They married in Cordova, but they met here. They eloped I think.*

McGavock: [They had to go to Cordova to get married. No one in Kennecott or McCarthy could do it.]

Kain: *Did both of your parents leave, or did your mother just go out to have you children?*

Lamb: *Mother, just Mother.*

Kain: *She went out and had you* [?] *and brought you back.*

Lamb: *And brought us back.*

Kain: *I see.*

Lamb: *And Dad stayed up here. Jim and I...*

Kain: *So you didn't come up as a family.*

Lamb: *No.*

Kain: *They came up as two singles.*

Lamb: *Yes.*

Kain: *And your mother, what did she do up here?*

Lamb: *She was a registered nurse.*

Kain: *She was a nurse, and did she continue nursing after she was married?*

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

Kain: *Didn't nurse at all. Even before you children were born?*

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

Kain: *She stopped nursing as soon as they were married.*

Lamb: *Well, you see, by the time they were married - when she came back - of course, I guess I have to explain. She came up, we think in 1918, she was definitely here in 1919. She suffered some sort of an accident here from a patient with the DTs, presumably. He struck*

her in the breast and it necessitated her going outside where eventually she had surgery.

Kain: *I see.*

Lamb: *And then I don't think she came back perhaps until 1922. She was visiting with friends here and she and Dad decided to get married. Of course, they had met before.*

Kain: *You mentioned a patient with DTs, referring to alcohol?*

Lamb: *Yes.*

Kain: *Was alcohol a problem here do you think? Alcoholism?*

Lamb: *It wasn't allowed in camp, except people had private access to it, a bottle of whatever. But I'm sure it wasn't allowed at the mine. If a miner wanted* [booze], *he had to get his time off and get to McCarthy.*

McGavock: *Well, they took their time and normally what happened at the mines was on pay day why there would be poker games up there and maybe one individual or two would end up with all the money and then those who ended up with all the money went to McCarthy for wine, women and song and when it was all over, they came back and went to work. The company decided well, this is the best arrangement, you can't have these miners, these workers, going on to Chitina or Cordova or even Seattle...*

Lamb: *And never coming back.*

Kain: *Right.*

McGavock: *And never coming back or maybe it would be a long time before they did come back. Just let them go down to McCarthy and have their fling and they'll straggle back and go to work.*

Kain: *Yes, They don't have to worry about them leaving and they don't have to worry about them having the alcohol and so forth here at camp.*

McGavock: *After they've blown all their money in McCarthy on wine, women and song, why they couldn't afford to go Outside.*

Kain: *Right.*

McGavock: *There was no other alternative than to come back to work.*

Kain: *That's an interesting...*

Lamb: *There was no liquor publicly available at Kennecott.*

Kain: *Right.*

Lamb: *I'm sure there were private stocks.*

Kain: *How many other nurses were there?*

Lamb: *I'm not too sure about that, but I know when Mother came up in 1919 there would always be at least one or two other nurses in the pictures.*

McGavock: *I think generally there were three nurses.*

Kain: *And doctors?*

McGavock: *Just one doctor.*

Kain: *Just one. And did he do - was everything performed at the hospital, surgeries and everything else?*

McGavock: *Yes.*

Kain: *We already talked about childhood diseases and there pretty much were none here. What about other injuries and so forth?*

McGavock: *I fell off a ladder and broke my arm and the doctor X-rayed it and set it. Then on another occasion, one Saturday, I'd been eating one of those real nutty candy bars previously and I came down with a real belly ache. I was dragging around and kind of complaining and my mother - I think she had to have the doctor come to the house. I was kind of going down hill and well, by evening* Dr. Toohey *diagnosed it as appendicitis.* [It was evening] *by the time he decided that I had to go to the*

hospital. This was in the month of January - I remember the doctor - he made two or three trips up the hill and he was complaining. His lungs were getting frosted puffing up the hill just to check me.

Lamb: *Just to check this little kid.*

McGavock: [My father made a phone call and had the company truck] *come up and take me down* [to the hospital]. *My father didn't like the doctor. He felt the doctor drank too much and he didn't want the doctor to operate on me.*

Kain: *That's understandable.*

McGavock: *Eventually he relented, even before they could perform the operation. They only had two nurses so they had to call for another one from McCarthy who had been an RN. She had to be brought up by dog team and sometime in the wee hours of the morning they started* [operating on me].

Kain: *So you had an appendectomy.*

Nurse Ethel Lecount(?) and "Oscar" the skeleton. Other nurse unknown.

McGavock: [Yes.]

Lamb: [Inaudible].

McGavock: *When I woke up in the morning, well they even had* [the appendix] *on a stand beside the bed in a bottle of formaldehyde* [?] *a souvenir.*

Lamb: *I don't think Jim enjoyed the good health that I did, because I also remember he had his tonsils out and remember seeing you eat tons of tapioca pudding.*

Kain: *You think most of the work done in the hospital was mainly on injuries?*

Lamb: *Probably* [work related] *type injuries and things like that.*

Kain: *Now did you pay for the doctor?*

McGavock: *Oh, yes. I remember, I guess my father was charged about $300 for that appendectomy and he about went through the roof. He was going to run Doc Toohey right out of town. Why, that was just way out of line.*

Kain: *So you paid for your medical services?*

McGavock: *Yes.*

Kain: *And the doctor, did he have a set rate do you know?*

McGavock: *I have no idea just what he had, but I do know after my dad made a fuss, Doc Toohey adjusted his fee.*

Kain: *Were people ever sent out of Kennecott for medical?*

Lamb: *I wouldn't be surprised if they were. Either that or the patients, if they were able, felt that they would rather go out. In the case of my mother's going out for delivery. I don't think she had a lot of...*

Kain: *She chose to have you children Outside rather than here at Kennecott.*

McGavock: *But I'm sure there were some cases that could not be handled at this hospital. In fact, I remember someone in management being sent here back in the '30s and he*

came from Braden, Chile where Kennecott had an operation. And apparently he wasn't in too good of health and his health deteriorated after he got here. I can remember the superintendent and a manager coming up to our cottage one night and talking to my father and he said, we got to get an airplane in here and get him out. And of course, my father had a ham radio and he could talk to Chitina or Cordova. So they got [a] *pilot, Harold Gillam, to come in with his plane, the "Pilgrim" and take some seats out so they could get a stretcher in there on the floor and took this poor guy down on a flat car with a speeder to McCarthy and put him on an* [open] *truck and* [hauled him] *up to the airstrip and* [flew] *him out* [to Cordova and the next steamship for Seattle].

Kain: *What about a dentist? Was there a dentist here?*

McGavock: *A dentist here just part time, just intermittently, just once in a while. The staff house annex had a dental office where there was a dental chair, but I see the dental chair sitting down in a McCarthy saloon* [now].

Kain: *Were there any other sources of medical assistance other than the hospital? McCarthy, was there a doctor in McCarthy?*

McGavock: *No.*

Kain: *No. So did the people in McCarthy come here?*

McGavock: *Yes.*

Kain: *Okay, I think we'll call it a good stopping spot right here while this is blinking and then we'll turn it over.*

TAPE #1
SIDE #2

Kain: *We were talking a little bit about housing and so forth, did you have a garden?*

Lamb: *Yes.*

Kain: *A vegetable garden?*

Lamb: *A vegetable garden.*

Kain: *And who did the gardening?*

Lamb: [Spoken to her brother]. *Was it prepared, did somebody prepare it for us, or did Dad do it or...*

McGavock: *I don't remember.*

Lamb: *We don't remember things like that and I can't particularly remember what was grown. I do know that I have an aversion to canned vegetables. I don't like any vegetables because of my Kennecott years.*

Kain: *None at all, not even fresh?*

Lamb: *Well, I guess* [they are] *a lot more palatable of course, but there was something about all those things I* [ate] *canned that* [were] *hard on me for some reason. I suppose the produce was the one thing that I would think of as negatively, although people had gardens here and during the winter time we had to do well on canned vegetables.*

Kain: *Did you have chores that you did around the house?*

Lamb: *I'm sure we did. Mother had to keep us busy somehow. Well, I know Jim chopped wood, I remember that. Mother would keep me busy in the kitchen, cooking the usual things and learning to embroider tea towels and things like that.*

Kain: *How about your father, was he pretty involved in work at home on his days off or...*

McGavock: *He pretty well busied himself with things outside the home, I would say.* [There were no days off. Work everyday except 4th of July and Christmas.]

Kain: *Yes.*

McGavock: *His job kept him pretty well tied up. Although, he was in touch with his job just through the telephone at home, which could tie him in with the mines.*

Kain: *Because of his position as* [Master Mechanic] *he needed to be on call to make sure things continued to run.*

McGavock: *Um humm. And then he established his ham radio station, which at first transmitted with Morse code and then later on he upgraded it to voice. He did get pretty involved with that.*

Kain: *Did the two of you share a room or did they have you in different rooms?*

Lamb: *There were only two bedrooms in the upstairs of the cottages. Jim and I had the back bedroom and he had his bed against the back wall, toward the mountain, and I had mine on the front wall by the staircase and he used to make it pretty hard for me to go to sleep and* [teased me a lot].

Kain: *And what about the heat upstairs?*

Lamb: *Steam heat.*

Kain: *There was steam heat upstairs as well.*

Lamb: *Well, it was certainly warm enough, but warm air rises. I don't actually remember the radiator in the room but it must have...*

McGavock: *I can't remember whether there was just a steam radiator in the bathroom and none in the bedroom or whether they put them in the bedrooms too.*

Lamb: *And I can't remember being particularly cold, there was no dash for the kitchen stove in the morning or something like that. It was comfortable.*

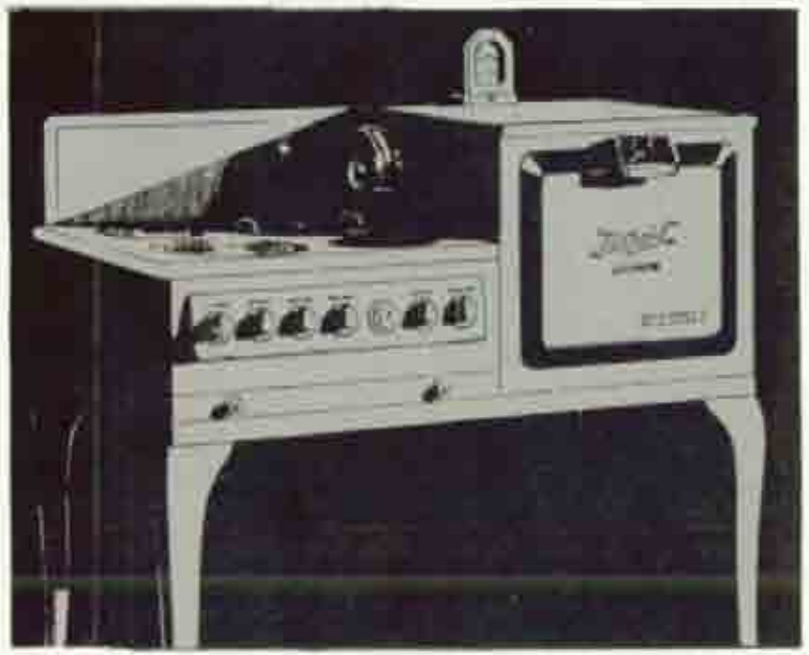
Kain: *What kind of stove for cooking?*

Lamb: *Wood stove.*

McGavock: *Probably an old* [Monarch] *wood stove.*

Kain: *And you helped your mother in the kitchen some? Did she cook differently in the summer? Did she barbecue, cook anything outside?*

McGavock: *No.*



Lamb: *I don't even remember using the word barbecue. We picnicked, you know, on these little tiny trips we took and things like that. But I don't remember her cooking differently. She was a good cook and she had access to I think quality meat* [we/she] *went to the meat market. We got good meat, well aged.* [They don't] *do it anymore.*

McGavock: *Well everyone did* [get good meat], *because it cost so much to ship everything in that they only shipped the very best meat up here.*

Kain: *Now did you pay a lot for that?*

McGavock: *I could not say.*

Lamb: *I imagine that we paid a fair amount for everything. We probably did.*

Kain: *Did you pay a tax for things?*

Lamb: *We had scrip.*

McGavock: *Um humm, what we got was scrip.*

Kain: *So on payday you traded in some of your money for scrip and then made your purchases that way.*

Lamb: *We also ate a lot of spruce hen and* [game]. *Tell her about that.*

McGavock: *Yes, in the fall we'd go out...*

Kain: *Go out hunting?*

McGavock: *...and hunt for spruce hens.*

Kain: *Did you buy everything at the store, I mean,* [?]. *What about clothing and furniture?*

McGavock: *Furniture - probably we bought very little, if anything. When it came to clothing, that pretty much was ordered from a mail order house like Sears Roebuck.*

Kain: *So clothing was pretty much ordered from outside.*

Lamb: *And of course, we had grandparents and aunts and uncles Outside and I think they kept us well supplied with gift clothing and toys. We never lacked for...*

Kain: *What about the miners? Did they have to order stuff out or did the company supply them with coveralls and cold weather* [?]?

Lamb: *No, I don't know that, but I rather suppose that if they did, they certainly paid for part of it out of their wages.*

McGavock: *I'm sure they did. The company store down here offered a number of things. They sold shoes and some clothes and I suppose it was primarily work clothes.*

Lamb: *What we children wore all summer, you know, was a pair of overalls. You know, the kind that...*

Kain: *Yes, bib overalls.*

Lamb: *Bib overalls, yes. And Mother did have a washing machine and I suppose those overalls went in the washing machine once a week.*

Kain: *Was it an electric washing machine?*

Lamb: *I'm sure it was.*

McGavock: *Yes.*

Lamb: *Was it? Was it battery?*

McGavock: *It was Savage electric washing machine.*

Kain: *A wringer, an electric wringer type or...*

Lamb: (Inaudible).

McGavock: *Yes it did and I don't recall now whether it had a wringer or not. But it was a pretty old one.*

Lamb: *But I can remember it was out there in that shed, wasn't it? That's gone now.*

McGavock: *No, they used to keep it in the back kitchen and then wheel it in the kitchen to fill it and the way it was arranged, why, the cage in it swiveled so that it would tumble vertically to wash and then you turned it and it would spin when you wanted to get to a kind of a spinning cycle.*

Kain: *But it wasn't like the old Maytags?*

Lamb: *No.*

McGavock: *No.*

Kain: *Now, where did she get it? Did she order that from somewhere, or was it...*

McGavock: *I have no idea where that came from.*

Kain: *Where did your furniture come from?*

McGavock: *I don't know.*

Lamb: *Here. Well, don't you suppose that this was probably made here? All these same tables that you find in the cottages were probably made in* [Kennecott].

McGavock: *I think that is very likely.*

Lamb: *And all those captain chairs, they're all so much alike.*

Kain: *So the clothing you would order out, food you pretty much got here or grew yourself or hunted.*

Lamb: *Yes.*

Jim McGavock.

Kain: *All the furniture was probably company owned then?*

Lamb: *Or company rented out or, not rented out so much - I heard somebody talk about the fact that they turned their furniture in when they left and got a certain percentage off of their payment back. So I'm not really sure how...*

Kain: *Then a kind of rental idea.*

Lamb: *I really don't know, that's my conjecture.*

Kain: *When you were talking about your mother working, I assume she lived in the staff house.*

Lamb: *Yes.*

Kain: *She was single and your father lived there as well.*

McGavock: *He lived in the staff house* [annex].

Lamb: *Yes.*

Kain: *Then you said something about when they married they lived in there?*

Lamb: *In the staff house.*

Kain: *In the staff house. There was some married persons' accommodations in there.*

Lamb: *Apparently there was, yes.*

Kain: *You were both pretty young when you left, so you didn't ever work here at all.*

Lamb: *No.*

Kain: *You were telling about your father being on call basically, because of his job. Do you remember any problems with labor management teams or, ah, did you talk about those things at home?*

McGavock: *He didn't talk about those kinds of things. I think if there were any labor problems, they were probably handled by someone higher in management, like the superintendent or manager.*

Kain: *What about people under him?*

McGavock: *Not any problems that I recall. I think most of the people that worked for him had mechanical experience or were good electricians and they seemed to be happy. In fact, the people who had the highest wage rate were mechanics and machinists. They made more money, as I recall, than miners did.*

Kain: *Skilled labor.*

Lamb: *Yes, yes.*

Kain: *What about school? You both attended school here.*

McGavock: *Yes.*

Kain: *One room school?*

McGavock: *It was a two room school, but while we attended, in the '30s, for the most part, they only utilized the one room.*

Lamb: *I only remember the one room.*

Kain: *What grades were you when you left?*

Lamb: *I - yes, first through third.*

McGavock: *I think I - was it the seventh or the eighth* [when we left].

Kain: *Could you have gone on if you had stayed?*

McGavock: *No. Beyond the eighth grade? No, I could not have.*

Kain: *So that would have been another consideration about it being time to pack up and move out to the Lower 48.*

Lamb: *Um humm.*

Kain: *How many kids were in the classes? Do you remember?*

McGavock: *The last several years why, it was no more than five, six or seven. In fact in my case, from the first grade through the seventh grade I was all by myself. There was no one else in the grade* [I was in].

Left to right: Ellen Hanson, Yvonne Konnerup, Chris Jensen (the carpenter), and Inger Jensen.

"(a miner)... into his cups...was laying on the (railroad) tracks, probably passed out and he got (run over) by the train and he lost both legs. Chris Jensen...the chief carpenter, always kept several coffins.... He had made them, these were not just an ordinary wooden box. ...that (miner) was buried in Kennecott cemetery. No relative could afford to have him shipped Outside for burial."

JAMES MCGAVOCK

Lamb: *And I had one class*[mate].

Kain: *How many kids all told were in the building when school was in session, do you have any idea?*

McGavock: *No more than five, six or seven. I remember one year there were only about five.*

Lamb: *For some reason I think that last year I went that there might have been eight, cause there were three Morrises, a Watsjold and* [Catherine] *Howard and Jimmy McGavock and Jean* [McGavock] and [Billy] *Humphreys. That would add up to about eight.*

McGavock: *I'm sure it was under nine or ten.*

Kain: *Just one teacher?*

Lamb: *Yes.*

Kain: *Were there any other - did you offer any education for adults?*

McGavock: *Not that I know of.*

Lamb: *It seems to me, you know, communitywise other things went on. There was a reading club and they had some kind of a library and who knows what else they might have done. We just didn't take much notice of that as children.*

Kain: *Was there quite a social life here? Was that mainly tied to the school or did the school sponsor things, picnics and so forth?*

Lamb: *I would think the school would be basically the center of - well, certainly, for people with children. I know that there was a group that played bridge, or maybe they all did. They had some library and some kind of a reading club. I suppose it depended on who was here at the time and how much interest they had for community involvement.*

Kain: *We're talking about the adults' social activities, playing bridge and reading club and what not. Were the single adults included in the group as well as just married?*

Lamb: *I imagine so, because certainly Nell McCann, who was single but she came up here, I presume was included to some extent.*

Kain: *Were there a lot of goings back and forth like you guys go over to another person's house for dinner and that type of thing?*

Lamb: *I don't remember going out to dinner so much, but I remember people coming after dinner.*

Kain: *After dinner, for the evening.*

Lamb: *Yes.*

Kain: *Just talking or playing cards or...*

Lamb: *Yes, they did that.*

Kain: *They'd come over for a visit.*

Lamb: *Um humm.*

Kain: *We already talked about what you did recreationwise. I've heard that there was a ball team that played with McCarthy.*

Lamb: *Yes.*

Kain: *Were kids included in that at all?*

Lamb: *No.*

Kain: *It was just strictly adults.*

Lamb: *Kids watched.*

Kain: *Did the women play on the team?*

McGavock: *No.*

Kain: *No?*

McGavock: *Also on the ball diamond in the winter time, the company created an ice skating rink.*

Lamb: *That was nice.*

McGavock: *There were provisions there for skating at night, artificial lighting, and they kept it cleared of snow and they'd even flood it with water to make it smooth if necessary. That was another social thing for people that liked to ice skate. There were a number of people here that were Scandinavian or Danish.*

Lamb: *They were good skaters.*

Kain: *Were there a lot of people with different ethnic backgrounds?*

McGavock: *Oh, yes.*

Kain: *I'm not referring to, you know, the American melting pot* [?] *but someone that had come immediately from Europe.*

McGavock: *Oh, yes.*

Kain: *Quite a number of them.*

Lamb: *Particularly from Scandinavia, Finland, Sweden, Norway and Switzerland.*

Kain: *And Switzerland? The Scandinavians and so forth, were they the miners, or tower workers or mill workers or...*

McGavock: *They were miners and some of them were utilized in the [yard gang and sacking shed] and in the* [?] *plant.*

Kain: *So they were just - they were scattered among the different rankings, social rankings, basically and job - white collar just as much as anybody else was, basically. What about - did the men from the mines come down and recreate with you people at all?*

McGavock: *No, no, they did not. They, as a rule, passed right through and made a beeline for McCarthy.*

Kain: *Okay, so you didn't...*

Lamb: *So we really had no contact as children.*

Kain: *Your social life here included those living here.*

Lamb: *Here.*

Kain: *The people up in the mines - you dealt with people that - or did things with people from the mill, flotation plant, hospital, power plant. There was very little contact with the miners at the mine. They just came down and passed on through and passed on through*

Jean McGavock.

going back up, huh. When you left here, did you keep in touch with other people from Kennecott?

Lamb: *Well, I've stayed in touch with - I'm sure my parents did. You know, throughout their lives, although it lessened as the years went by, but maintained contact.*

McGavock: *There was a tradition to always exchange Christmas cards and write a letter or note along with that. And if any former Kennecott person or Alaskan person knew you were living in Cucamonga why, they generally made an effort to look you up and visit with you.*

Kain: *When they were passing through.*

Lamb: *Yes.*

Kain: *Have you been up here since you left?*

McGavock: *Yes, in '83.*

Kain: *I mean aside from...*

Lamb: *Yes.*

Kain: *So '83, was that the first time you had come back?*

Lamb: *That was the first time.*

Kain: *And this is the second time back.*

Lamb: *This is Jim's second time, but it is my third.*

Kain: *Oh.*

Lamb: *I made the trip in '86.*

Kain: *Oh, you were here in '86. And how did you find it?*

Lamb: *Well, pretty much as we expected. You know, we have always been alert for Kennecott news and history and occasionally we'd see things in the National Geographic. Of course, we are ardent subscribers to the Alaska Magazine and the Alaska Geographic and I think we were prepared to see what we saw. And frankly, surprised to some extent that it is in as good condition as it is.*

Kain: *Yes, yes.*

Lamb: *It's just that we lament that they ever started to take it apart.*

Kain: *One other thing I was thinking of when you mentioned the Christmas cards. What did you do on holidays while here?*

McGavock: *Well, there were only two holidays that workers got off, and I'm sure it was without pay,* [they were the] *Fourth of July and Christmas. Now, on Christmas Eve the school always put on a play or a program in the social hall and then after that Santa Claus distributed the gifts that the company provided.*

Kain: *What kind of gifts did you get from your parents?*

Lamb: *It's hard for me to segregate it out, you know, what I got from whom. Can you remember the company gift?*

McGavock: *I really can't.*

Lamb: *Were the roller skates the company gift? Or something like that. That beautiful doll I got was from grandmother Scobie and George, but apparently, you know, gifts were given like that. It is hard for me to separate out who gave what Not much to-do was made about it. I guess we were in the reception mode.*

Kain: *What about the Fourth of July, was it a big celebration? Fireworks and...*

McGavock: *No fireworks that I ever recall. The big event was the baseball game.*

Kain: *The Fourth of July baseball game.*

Lamb: *Yes, the baseball game, and for kids the races.*

McGavock: *I don't even remember whether they had a picnic or anything like that on the Fourth of July.*

Lamb: *They don't.*

Kain: *There were races and baseball games and that's pretty much all you remember.*

Lamb: *And I don't remember if they provided food or anything. I remember a big washtub of strawberry ice cream provided for some school function. And I think I remember it because I don't recall we ate strawberry ice cream at home. We had a lot of homemade ice cream but strawberry was something different from [?]. A washtub, you know, I mean...*

Kain: *Mounds, huh?*

Lamb: *Mounds of this strawberry stuff, I never forgot it.*

Kain: *There were just you two children and your parents?*

Lamb: *Yes. And a dog.*

Kain: *And a dog. Jim mentioned heading down to the cemetery shortly, and I was wondering if you had any relatives in there.*

Lamb: *No, no.*

Kain: *Do you recall anyone dying here at Kennecott, just an acquaintance or...?*

Lamb: *I don't, but I bet Jim does.*

Kain: *What were the procedures?*

McGavock: *I really didn't know the man that well, but he did work here in camp. I believe it was in the summer time and he went to McCarthy. Workers generally walked to McCarthy and had their fun and whatever and then had to walk back. Walking back, he was into his cups and an ore train was coming down and he was laying on the tracks, probably passed out and he got [run over] by the train and he lost both legs. And the train crew notified Kennecott about the accident. When they got into McCarthy, they sent a company truck down to pick him up. He was dead. No one knew who it was until the truck got back - my electrician friend said, he jumped up on the truck and took the tarp off and it was so-and-so and he was gonna be our pitcher for the*

next baseball game. Well, they took him over to the company hospital. I knew nothing of this at the time. Generally, I had my ear to the ground and didn't miss anything, but [?] *the superintendent called my father* [at home]. *When he would leave the house, I'd either go with him or trail along behind. He informed me that I wasn't to come. So I watched him and he went down to the bunk house and got several men and walked over to the hospital and they came out carrying a stretcher, covered, and took it to the carpenter shop. I knew that Chris Jensen, who was the chief carpenter, always kept several coffins there. He had made them, these were not just an ordinary wooden box. Anyway, that worker was buried in Kennecott cemetery. No relative could afford to have him shipped Outside for burial.*

Kain: *Did they conduct a funeral service?*

Jim McGavock and dog, Ginger.

McGavock: *I don't* [know], *it was probably just a grave side service because we didn't have any clergy or church.*

Lamb: *Just visiting people coming up.*

Kain: *You had a visiting minister that would come occasionally and that's the only time there were services?*

Lamb: *Um humm.*

Kain: *You don't recall any other funeral or anything like that?*

McGavock: *No, I don't.*

Kain: *That's interesting. The two of you are just going to walk down to the cemetery just to look, huh?*

McGavock: *Just to look. I had heard that Rich* [Kirkwood] *has maintained it, you know. It's right on the edge of the glacier. I think, I'm not certain, but George Powell was at Kennecott. He is here. His father was killed here and he is either buried in the Kennecott cemetery or the McCarthy cemetery. George has never talked about it.*

Kain: *Do you know what happened to his father?*

McGavock: *Then of course his mother remarried. I believe it was an accident.*

Lamb: *I gather that it was an accident, but I don't know if it was a mine accident or a mill accident here.* [In his interview, George Powell notes that his father was killed in the mines].

Kain: *You don't know where he worked?*

McGavock: *No, I don't.*

Lamb: *He doesn't seem to talk about it.*

Kain: *Well, I think that pretty much covers what I was hoping to cover.*

Lamb: *Well, good.*

Kain: *And I appreciate your giving us the time and information and, like I said, these tapes will be made available for anyone from the UAF Archives. Thank you very much.*

MARY ELLEN DUGGAN CLARK AND MILDRED ERICKSON REIS

Interview conducted By Sandra M.Faulkner
National Park Service
June 16, 1990
Tape #1
Side #1

Faulkner: *This is Sande Faulkner, National Park Service, at Kennecott, Alaska, June 16, 1990, at Kennecott Kids Reunion, talking with Mary Ellen Duggan Clark and Mildred Erickson Reis. Mary Ellen, if I can just have you identify who you are and the date and where you were born and where you came from, that kind of information.*

Clark: *I'm Mary Ellen Duggan Clark and I was born in Goldfield, Nevada. I now live in Superior, Colorado.*

Faulkner: *What years were you at Kennecott?*

Clark: *I lived in Kennecott from 1924 to 1933. And I was six years old when I came to Kennecott so that meant I went from the first grade through ninth grade here.*

Faulkner: *Why did your family come to Kennecott?*

Clark: *My father* [Jim] *was a mining engineer and got a job in Kennecott at the mill here.*

Faulkner: *Did you live in another mining community before you came here?*

Mary Ellen Duggan, Mrs. Duggan, Peggy Duggan, and "Pola," the dog.

Clark: *Yes, we lived in Latouche for about four years before we came to Kennecott. Latouche is another mine operated by Kennecott Copper.*

Faulkner: *Where is that?*

Clark: *That is on an island and it's in Prince William Sound.*

Faulkner: *How long were you at Latouche?*

Clark: *I was there four years, I believe. Yeh. I was quite little then.*

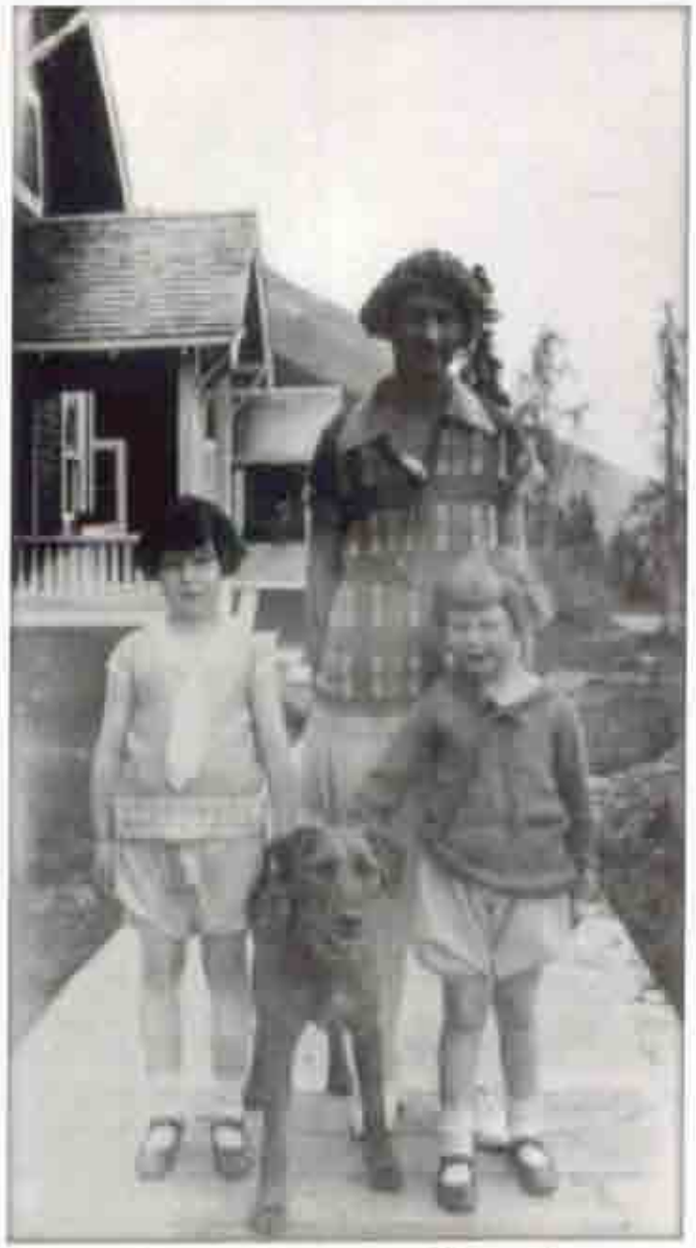
Faulkner: *Do you remember anything at all of Latouche?*

Clark: *Very little. I remember that they had boardwalks everywhere and the houses were up on stilts because they were so close to the water.*

Faulkner: *What kind of mining did they do there?*

Clark: *That was the same kind, copper.*

Faulkner: *Did your dad always work for this company?*



Mary Ellen Duggan, Mrs. Duggan, Peggy Duggan, and "Pola," the dog.

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Faulkner: *Did your dad always work for this company?*

Clark: *Well, no. He had worked for a gold mining company and I think at Latouche was the first time he'd worked for Kennecott.*

Faulkner: *Where was he from?*

Clark: *He was from Indiana but he just wanted to come west so he went to school at the University of Utah and took up mining. That's how we got located in Goldfield.*

Faulkner: *What about your mom, where was she from?*

Clark: *She was from California. She went to school in California. She went through college. She wanted to teach, and California required, even then, an additional year after college for her to teach. So she went to Goldfield, Nevada to teach there right away and she met my dad there.*

Faulkner: *He was a mining engineer then?*

Clark: *Yes, he was a mining engineer, I think in milling even then. He specialized in the milling part of it.*

Faulkner: *So they were married and had you.*

Clark: *And for a while - I guess the gold mining economy wasn't too good and he lost that job. So we went back to Indiana and stayed on his father's farm there for a few months and then a position in Alaska opened up.*

Faulkner: *Do you know where in Indiana?*

Clark: *It was around Rockville.* [My father was born in Ivesdale, Illinois. His family later bought the farm in Rockville, Indiana.]

Faulkner: *Did you have aunts and uncles there?*

Clark: *Well, I had - yeh, I had two aunts that were back there then and lots of cousins. Unfortunately, I lost touch with them* [?]. *Two first cousins on my dad's side. One of them now is in California and the other is in St. Louis, Missouri. I don't have anyone back in Indiana now.*

Faulkner: *How did you come up to Kennecott? You were at Latouche then came down.*

Clark: *Yes, we were at Latouche and took a* [steamship] *from Latouche over to Cordova and that's the way we came then. And at Cordova we got on the train and the train went from Cordova and stopped at Chitina overnight and we'd sleep in the hotel at Chitina and next day come on to Kennecott.*

Faulkner: *Did you bring all your family goods along? Do you remember packing?*

Clark: *I don't remember that, I was too small, but I'm sure they didn't bring very much. It was too expensive.*

Faulkner: *Did you have to pay your own move?*

Clark: *I don't know about that, I don't know just what the arrangement was.*

Faulkner: *Why did your dad leave Kennecott?*

Clark: *Well, the mine was closing down then. He knew it was gonna close down. I don't believe it had actually closed down. He was able to get a position at Climax, Colorado so he came out there.*

Faulkner: *Was that another mine mill situation?*

Clark: *Yes, it was milling but it was* [molybdenum]. *That was the Climax* [Molybdenum] *Company.*

Faulkner: *And how was Climax different from here?*

Clark: *Well, I think the main thing is that there were other towns around, we could get out of the actual camp, like go to Leadville* [twelve miles away] *and shop and go to a movie and things like that. It was different in that way, although at Climax they didn't have a high school there. They did have a grade school, but by that time, of course, I was almost finished high school. The last half of my senior year my sister and I went down to Leadville and boarded during the*

Sliding off roof into snow. Jean Presley, Eleanor Tjosevig, Inger Jensen, Peggy Duggan, Ingeborg Jensen, Mary Ellen Duggan.

"When we went out to play, we wore pants....we wore...maybe a couple of pairs of pants, sweaters and coats and everything we could get our hands on."

MARY ELLEN DUGGAN CLARK

week and went to Leadville High School and then we'd get a ride on Friday afternoon, usually with some miner or someone that was going up to Climax. And then Monday morning we'd have to get a ride back again.

Faulkner: *How did you travel?*

Clark: *Just by car. There was a good highway between Climax and Leadville.*

Faulkner: *When was your sister born?*

Clark: *She was born in* ['21]. *She was about two and a half years younger than I. She was born in Latouche.*

Faulkner: *Did they have a hospital at Latouche?*

Clark: *Yeh, they had a hospital.*

Faulkner: *Then you came over to Kennecott and you started school here?*

Clark: *Yes.*

Faulkner: *And what was the school like?*

Clark: *Well, it was a two room school, one teacher for each room, and on the average I'd say about 20 children overall. We felt that we got a really good education. Each teacher had to teach four grades and she reviewed the lessons of one grade and then give them an assignment, put them to working on it, and then go to the next grade and she had to keep doing that all day long, jumping from one to the other. I mentioned before that the teacher who had fifth through eighth grade was really excellent. Usually, right after lunch, she would read a little something to us from a book like the* Oregon Trail *or* A Lantern in Her Hand, *books that would give us some knowledge of history as well as a story. And on certain days she would play classical records for about 15 minutes. She'd give us a little quiz on it, just encourage us to learn the names. On Friday afternoons, after recess, we would have art and we always looked forward to that and that was fun.*

Faulkner: *Do you remember her name?*

Clark: *That was Ruth, let me think. Her maiden name was Ruth Waters when she started, she was Ruth Waters and after a few years she married Eric Danielson. I especially remember his name, because he was an assistant to my father in the mill. She did keep up teaching after she married and that was unusual for the teacher.*

Faulkner: *Where did the teacher live?*

Clark: *Well, they had a staff house and the teachers and the nurses and the office secretary lived there. There also were the single men, who were staff people lived there. They had an accountant or something like that who was single. Most of the* [staff] *men were married, but a few either were single or perhaps their families had gone back outside.*

Faulkner: *Did they share a room, kind of like two women to a room, do you remember?*

Clark: [I don't honestly remember now.]

Faulkner: *Did they eat in that building too?*

Clark: *No. They had another building which - they called it the mess hall, where they served meals for those people, for the staff, you know. And then the people in houses, if they wanted to, they could go down there and have a meal, you know, just pay for it. And some*

mothers got really tired of cooking and we could go down there, or if they were sick. My mother was in the hospital for a while and so my father took us down there to eat.

Faulkner: *What was wrong with your mother?*

Clark: *She had appendicitis and the doctor in the hospital there operated on her,* [she recovered very well].

Faulkner: *How about the house that you lived in?*

Clark: *Well, first we lived in a house up on the hill, one of the four houses in a group. We lived in one of them for, I imagine for four or five years, and then later we moved down to the house that was for the superintendent. My father was the mill superintendent and we moved down there and it's a house that isn't there now.*

Faulkner: *Was it by the hospital?*

Clark: *Yeh, it was by the hospital. It was near the manager's house and the house we lived in, that's the superintendent's house, and then the staff house. That staff house was three stories.*

Faulkner: *And single men and women staff?*

Clark: *Yeh, they'd have one floor for men and one for women.*

Faulkner: *Your father was superintendent of the mill. Did he have anyone here over him or was he boss of the whole camp?*

Clark: *No. There was the manager over him. Otherwise, he was the boss for everything that happened in the mill, the mill, the crusher, the leaching plant, the things that were related to the mill.*

Faulkner: *That was quite a job.*

Clark: *It was, I think it proved, you know, to be quite a job, a lot of responsibility.*

Faulkner: *How was it for you, to be the boss's kid?*

Clark: *Well, I don't think that he was that much of a boss, at least I didn't feel that way at the time. And so I don't feel that it made any difference. There were some class distinctions among the families, but the kids didn't worry about it.*

There were so few of us that we all played together.

Faulkner: *What did you wear to school?*

Clark: *Well, we always wore dresses, probably a wool or a heavy - some type of heavy material. But we all wore long johns, then we wore lyle*[?] *stockings over them and then heavy wool socks over them and so either felt boots or some kind of heavy boots. You know, in this weather and the cold. When we went out to play, we wore pants.*

Faulkner: *Oh, you did?*

Clark: *Yeh, we wore - oh, bundle up, maybe a couple of pairs of pants, sweaters and coats and everything we could get our hands on.*

Faulkner: *How about laundry?*

Clark: *Well, my mother generally did our own laundry. There was a laundry here. There were some times when her back bothered her, then she would send the laundry out. Like I say, there was a laundry and they would deliver. They'd come and pick it up and do it.*

Faulkner: *Did your mother ever have any household help, to help with heavy cleaning or anything like that?*

Clark: *When we lived in the superintendent's house, she did. She had a lady come in I think once a week and do the heavy cleaning.*

Faulkner: *And who would that be? Would it be someone's wife, or a single lady, or someone from McCarthy?*

Clark: *I think it was a single lady, I'm not quite sure. Someone would, you know, maybe hear about work from some other place and come up.*

Faulkner: *Were there special school pageants?*

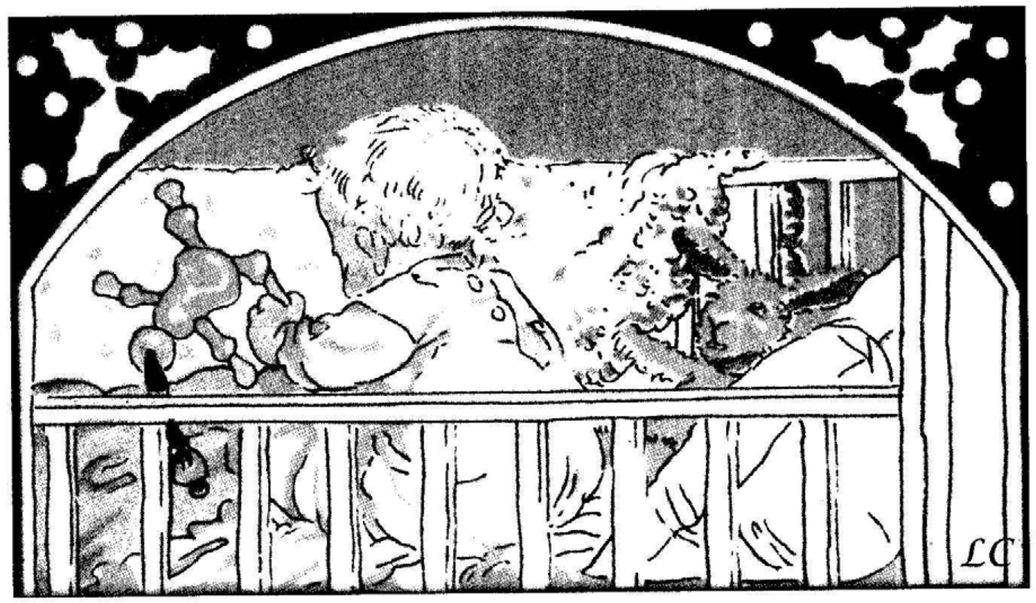
Clark: *Oh, yeh.*

Faulkner: *And programs?*

Clark: *Over special holidays we would put on a program. Sometimes we would have a program just at the school, if it was something during school hours. I remember our mothers were invited and we'd just do recitations and things like that. But plays for Christmas, and then at Easter it seems like we did something. But the biggest thing, of course, was Christmas and we practiced that for, oh, a long time. And each one of us would have some part in a skit or a play or a dance and we would get up on the stage and do our part. And after all the program was finished - and this was in the rec hall and they had a big Christmas tree and after everything was finished we'd go and sit down. They had an artificial fireplace on the stage and then Santa Claus would come through the fireplace, come out and he'd have a gift for each child and a stocking with some fruit and some candy in it. And it was, oh, I guess a big occasion.*

Faulkner: *And then would there be a family Christmas as well?*

Clark: *Yes, usually the next day the families would celebrate Christmas at home. And then they had a custom of visiting each home. Usually it was just the nuclear family [living in Kennecott]. We didn't have any other relatives near, so our family would go to the family next door and visit them, then we'd go over to the next house and just visit all around and usually have a drink or two. It was really a time where we visited and then people would come to our house and it was a time to get together.*



Faulkner: *Did you have a special party dress?*

Clark: *Oh yes. My mother usually made our clothes, not all of them, but some of them. She was an excellent seamstress.*

Faulkner: *Do you remember one specially?*

Clark: *Well, I can't remember that much about them. Usually they might have a little collar with some lace on it.*

Faulkner: *Did you wear your hair long?*

Clark: *No. I wore mine in a bob. Most of the girls wore it short. Some of them wore it long.*

Faulkner: *Do you remember in your house, did your mother - the special touches that she would do - did she paint it a different color or put up curtains, to make it her own, or would there be family pictures?*

Clark: *I think maybe family pictures. She got one painting, a Eustace Ziegler painting - he was quite a well known Alaskan artist - and it was an oil painting. That was done, she set great store by that.*

Faulkner: *Do you still have it?*

Clark: *I still have that. All the rest I think were just ordinary pictures.*

Faulkner: *Did the company provide furniture and curtains and things or did you have to?*

Clark: *I'm not sure. I don't think the company provided them. I really don't know how that was arranged. I would guess that people would buy things, you know, if someone was leaving, maybe they'd buy something from them, you know, and it would kind of get passed around because it was so expensive to bring furniture from the states. I'm just guessing, but I think that's the way we got a lot of our furniture.*

Faulkner: *Any musical instruments?*

Clark: *Well, we didn't have any. Let's see. Our friends next door had a piano. There were several people in town that had pianos.*

Cabin at Long Lake. Mr. Morgan, Aaron Erickson, Mildred Erickson, Mrs. Erickson, Mr. Fiseng(?).

"...we used to have a saying about anyone who was a little touched in the head.... 'He or she has missed too many boats.' In other words, they had been out in the bush...too long."

MILDRED ERICKSON REIS

Faulkner: *That's a big instrument to bring in here.*

Clark: *Yes, and we don't know how they even got them in there.*

Faulkner: *You mentioned your mom made most of your clothes. Did she buy the material from the company store or order it from somewhere?*

Clark: *She must have ordered it. The company store, it didn't have too much like that. They had boots and plain clothes and gloves and things like that, but I don't think they had much in the way of [women's] clothes, at least when I was there. They might have before we came, because the camp was a little bigger before we got there.*

Faulkner: *Now when you finished school - you were telling me before then you had to go away to boarding school?*

Clark: *Yeh.*

Faulkner: *Did you have to wait then for your sister to catch up?*

Clark: *Well no, I guess what they did was I stayed and took ninth grade work, even though the school wasn't providing it at that time. The eighth grade teacher knew Spanish and my father taught me geometry and I don't remember - the other teacher was able to teach enough so that I had enough credits for ninth grade. Then when we went Outside, my sister she was in ninth grade and I was in tenth, anyhow, she came out the same time I did.*

Faulkner: *And you went, you were saying, to California where your mother had relatives?*

Clark: *Yes, my mother had relatives and they looked around and found a good boarding school and we went there up until my senior year. I took half of my senior year at boarding school and then my father and mother came out and they went to Climax. So I finished school in Leadville.*

Faulkner: *How did you get to school?*

Clark: *In Leadville?*

Faulkner: *From Kennecott. Did you and your sister travel by yourselves or did your mom take you down?*

Clark: *Mom and Dad both took us down and they stayed in California for a while and took a little vacation and then went back.*

Faulkner: *Were you there year around then, or did you come back summers?*

Clark: *Well, in the summers, let's see, we went to my grandmother's home, because her home was there, and stayed with her during the summer and went back to the boarding school. It was a pleasant place and, you know, southern California. There were orange groves and horses to ride.*

Faulkner: *It must have been quite a change from Alaska then.*

Clark: *Oh, it was a definite change.*

Faulkner: *Did the kids have questions for you, about living in Alaska?*

Clark: *Well, not too much. They just seemed to take it in stride.*

Faulkner: *Do you remember if you were sick, chicken pox, measles, things like that? Did you go to the doctor here for medical things?*

Clark: *I don't remember being sick up here, or really sick. We went to the doctor for shots and vaccinations. And then we got a smallpox vaccination and a couple of other vaccinations. But what would happen, we lived here and we weren't in contact with a lot of people. When we would go out, say to California, then my sister and I would catch something like that. One time we had measles when we were visiting my grandmother. My parents were there then too, we were little. And the next time I got mumps. I don't think my sister got mumps, somehow she escaped it. That often happened. We'd come out and catch something and* [?] *because we hadn't been exposed up here.*

Faulkner: *Did you ever go down to McCarthy?*

Clark: *Well, we didn't very often. At Fourth of July usually the school had a program, of course, school was out then but the teachers worked on it before school let out and they must have had somebody to carry on. We went down there one year and they had a float and a parade. We often went down there* [on the Fourth]. *We didn't usually go. Our parents didn't want us to go by ourselves. One time we did walk all the way down the tracks and got to McCarthy, then we got a ride back home.*

Faulkner: *How would you get a ride back?*

Clark: *Well, it just happened that someone was coming out to Kennecott.*

Faulkner: *In a car?*

Clark: *In a car, yeh.*

Faulkner: *Did they have hand cars to ride on the railroad?*

Clark: *Just the railroad company did.*

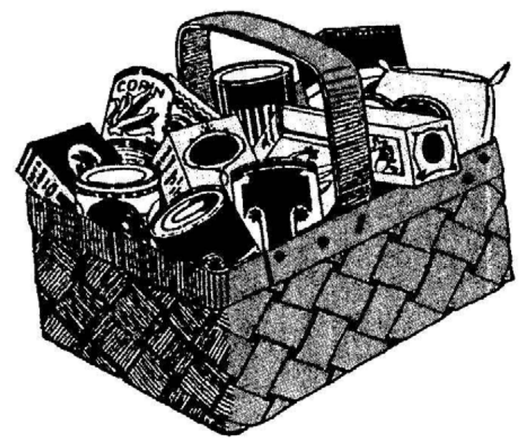
Faulkner: *What was the relationship between Kennecott and the railroad? Could you ride the railroad for free or depend on it for transporting things?*

Clark: *I don't think it was free. I imagine you had to buy a ticket. Yeh, but then we could use it anytime.*

Faulkner: *What about going out to Cordova?*

Clark: *I don't recall that we ever did. One time we went to Tonsina and we went by car. I think we went to Chitina and the highway for Valdez* [the Edgerton Highway]. *It was a lot of fun. We stayed a few days.*

Faulkner: *For a vacation?*



Clark: *Yeh.*

Faulkner: *Did you vacation at all otherwise in Alaska?*

Clark: *Not a vacation. We took little excursions, like a picnic, berry picking, something like that.*

Faulkner: *Would they be town picnics?*

Clark: *Sometimes there was a town or* [school picnic or] *sometimes just a family or a group would go. We had very few cars in Kennecott, maybe three cars that were running, because there wasn't hardly any place to go.*

Faulkner: *What about for fun?*

Clark: *Well, in the winter it was skiing, skating, sliding, things like that. Once in a while the school would have a dance, then my mother would let us go, if it were a school sponsored dance. Sometimes there was just a dance so - I don't know who sponsored it.*

Faulkner: *Was it for adults?*

Mary Ellen and Peggy Duggan.

Clark: *For adults. Well, some of the children went, older children went. We usually didn't, unless it was a school sponsored dance. And they had movies twice a week in the rec hall* [also] *and we went to movies.*

Faulkner: *The tennis courts - did you play tennis?*

Clark: *Well, my sister and I just batted the ball around a little. My parents played tennis. A lot of times in the evening they'd go out and play tennis, cause it stayed light for so long and we'd just go along and watch and chase balls and play around outside the court.*

Faulkner: *Did you do much hiking around the area?*

Clark: *Well, some. I liked hiking but as I look back on it* [we did not take really long hikes].

TAPE #1
SIDE #2

Faulkner: *Side 2, interview with Mary Ellen Duggan Clark. We were talking about going hiking.*

Clark: *Yeh, we did go hiking. Sometimes just go out in the woods and play and build brush houses and things like that.*

Faulkner: *Were there a lot of bugs?*

Clark: *Well, at times there were and I guess we put citronella on if we were going out in the woods, you know.*

Faulkner: *Well, I know one thing I did want to ask you and I didn't. Was there a public library or reading room or did the school have books?*

Clark: *There was a little library where we could go and borrow books.*

Reis: [Inaudible].[1]

Clark: *Mildred* [Erickson Reis] *knows a lot more because she was older.*

Faulkner: *Well, I'm gonna get Mildred too.*

Reis: [Inaudible].

Clark: *I didn't know how they worked that but I know they did have* [a library].

Reis: [Inaudible].

Faulkner: *Well maybe, Mildred if I could interview you by yourself on tape here. And how many kids were in school then?*

Reis: *Well, in the new school we had* [12]. *There was only 12* [?]. *Do you remember?*

Clark: *I thought there were more than that.*

Reis: *I remember when I was there, it was 12 and it was always through high school. And after that there was a group of* [?]. *There were quite a few then.*

Faulkner: *What year did you come here?*

Reis: *I was in the* [second] *grade. And that was in - I don't know what year - was it 1919? And stayed until I was through the* [first] *year of high school, then I went outside and finished school.*

Faulkner: Where did you go to school?

Reis: *I went to school in Seattle,* [Holy Names Academy].

Faulkner: *Did you have relatives there or was Seattle a place that people picked to go?*

Reis: *No, that was a boarding school and I enjoyed it very much. People say, "how about the change, was it hard," and it was not.* [No relatives, but we had friends there and the Nieding girls were there.][2]

Faulkner: *You started to say about the reading room - there was a committee or a group that....*

Reis: *Well, the ladies would take turns, or however they chose it and they'd get together and decide what books and everyone paid a fee, so much a day, for their books and they'd gather this money together and buy new ones.*

Reis: *So they had a lending library. In that same building, they had* [a dental office. And they would bring milk up there and one lady

Good Times

Mary Ellen Duggan, Yvonne Konnerup, Inger Jensen, Richard Osborne, Peggy (?), Jerome Osburn, Jean Douglass, Jane Vickery, and Miss King.

who lived there pasteurized the milk in a room there].

Faulkner: [The milk] *was blue?*

Reis: *Well that's what she said. She didn't feel it was very good compared to canned milk.* [My mother felt that the cows were cooped up too much to give good milk. It took me a while to get used to plain milk when I went to Seattle.]

Faulkner: *Cause that's what you were used to.*

Reis: *Yes.*

Faulkner: *Where would they buy that?*

Reis: [Inaudible].

Faulkner: *Oh, the company* [?]. *And we were talking about what you wore to school.*

Reis: *I wore blouses and skirts.* [Wool dresses] *and I had felt shoes and I had warm underwear* [which I hated because it made my ankles look lumpy].

Faulkner: *Would that be hot when you were sitting in school then?*

Reis: *I didn't think so. They must not have kept the school room that warm.* [We wore layers of clothing to remove at school.][3]

Clark: *On this* [?] *too.*

Reis: *That was a type of heavy coat, I wore mackinaw coats.*

Faulkner: *Did you wear pants to play?*

Reis: *I wore overalls.*

Faulkner: *Oh, really?*

Reis: [Inaudible].[4]

Faulkner: *Were they boot skates, or did they attach to your boots?*

Reis: *No, they were boots. My* [mother] *had a beautiful pair of skates and they looked so nice and my dad made them* [out of a round saw blade and attached to her boots]. [She] *was very proud of them, mine were "boughten" but were no nicer than hers.*

Faulkner: *You went to Seattle from here?*

Reis: [Inaudible].[5]

Faulkner: *Why did you leave?*

Reis: [Inaudible].

Faulkner: *Did your parents move out to Seattle?*

Reis: [Well, my dad stayed at Kennecott until 1934 then he went to Bremner Mining Co., near Chitina as a Master Mechanic and he was there - they wanted someone].[6]

Faulkner: [?] *special you remember about this.*

Clark: *When you got the letters, if you wanted to come back, why didn't you try to come back?*

Reis: *Well, I didn't know what I would have done here. I had a very happy marriage, as I said.*

Faulkner: *I know there is a cemetery here but when someone died here, were they usually sent home?*

Reis: *If they had people to send them to. But like I said, a few young men had died up in the mine and they're buried down there* [in the graveyard near camp.]

Faulkner: *Had you been back before that?*

Reis: *What?*

Faulkner: *Have you been back to Kennecott before now?*

Reis: *Yes.* [1972, 1980 and 1984.][7]

Faulkner: *Is there a connection here?*

Reis: *I don't know, but* [inaudible].

Faulkner: *Why did you decide to come back, Mary Ellen?*

Clark: *Well, it just seemed very special to me.* [I remember] *mostly happy times being here and it was really an opportunity to see some of the people I hadn't seen for such a long, long time and thought it was a wonderful thing for* [the Kennicott Glacier Lodge] *and the Park Service to do. And I* [?] *it as*

home. You know, I always looked on it really as home. Even now, even though I have lived other places.

Reis: *My mother always used to laugh* [at me when we lived in Seattle because I called Kennecott home. I still do.]

Faulkner: *When you lived here, did you think of this as a permanent place to live or did you know that it would just be temporary?*

Reis: *We knew, in my case, I knew it was coming but I just didn't want to go.* [inaudible] *I can remember the last time we left here, I was on the last of the train in the car and I had a friend who was Greek, Mike* [Kalas], *and then this day I was out in the back and Dad was waving to me and I was crying because I was leaving Dad and* [Mike] *came up and had a great big onion and a great big bandanna handkerchief and he was crying. He was making himself cry. That was kind of cute, you know.*

Faulkner: *Oh, that is.*

Reis: *There were so many nationalities, German, Italian, all kinds, because I know Dad* [got men to save stamps for my stamp collection.][8]

Faulkner: *Were most of the people working here then single men?*

Reis: *Um humm. And I was talking to my husband one time and he* [inaudible][9]

Faulkner: *Where do you live now?*

Reis: *I live on* [Whidbey] *Island,* [Washington]. [We moved into our summer home when my husband, Ray, retired in 1972.]

Faulkner: *What do you especially remember here? If you were to say, what was your favorite thing about Kennecott?*

Reis: [Inaudible].[10] *You could go to houses and people and visit them and you were welcome everywhere and everybody treated you very nicely.* [Inaudible]. *I'd go to Mrs.*

[Overguard's] *house because she made beautiful Russian rye bread and go to Mrs.* [Olsen's] *for cookies.*

Clark: *I think it was sort of a feeling of security. I don't really know why, just that things just pretty much went along from day to day and no startling changes happened. You had your friends and you knew that they were your friends. You could trust people and know that they really were your friends.*

Faulkner: *What would happen to people who caused trouble here?*

Reis: *Well, it's a private company and if they behaved* [in a way the company did not like they'd] *be fired. And if you're fired, you have to go. You have to leave.*

Faulkner: *So you didn't have to have a jail.*

Reis: *No. If you misbehaved in Cordova you'd have to go to jail there, I don't know.* [I never heard of any crimes. Men would be fired but we never knew why.]

Faulkner: *What about - we were talking before about Christmas. What about the men at the mines? Would they ever come down for Christmas pageants or did they live their own life up there separate from...*

Reis: *I don't remember them coming.*

Clark: *I don't remember them coming down either.*

Reis: *They had the day off, they had the Fourth of July and Christmas off- we had a beautiful Christmas Program everybody had to do something.*[11] *No, the men must have just made their own amusement up there. They probably had a very nice Christmas dinner for them and whatever they wanted to do.*

Faulkner: *What was your favorite meal?*

Reis: [Inaudible].

Clark: *I think mine was a T-bone steak and* [baked potato].

Reis: [My mother was Norwegian and cooked beautiful meals. I loved her cookies and she baked her own bread. I loved her cooking but refused to eat lutefisk.]

Faulkner: *Did your mom keep a garden at all - flowers or vegetables?*

Reis: *My dad did.*[12]

Faulkner: *Your dad did.*

Clark: *My mother had flowers,* [my father and mother both worked in the vegetable garden].

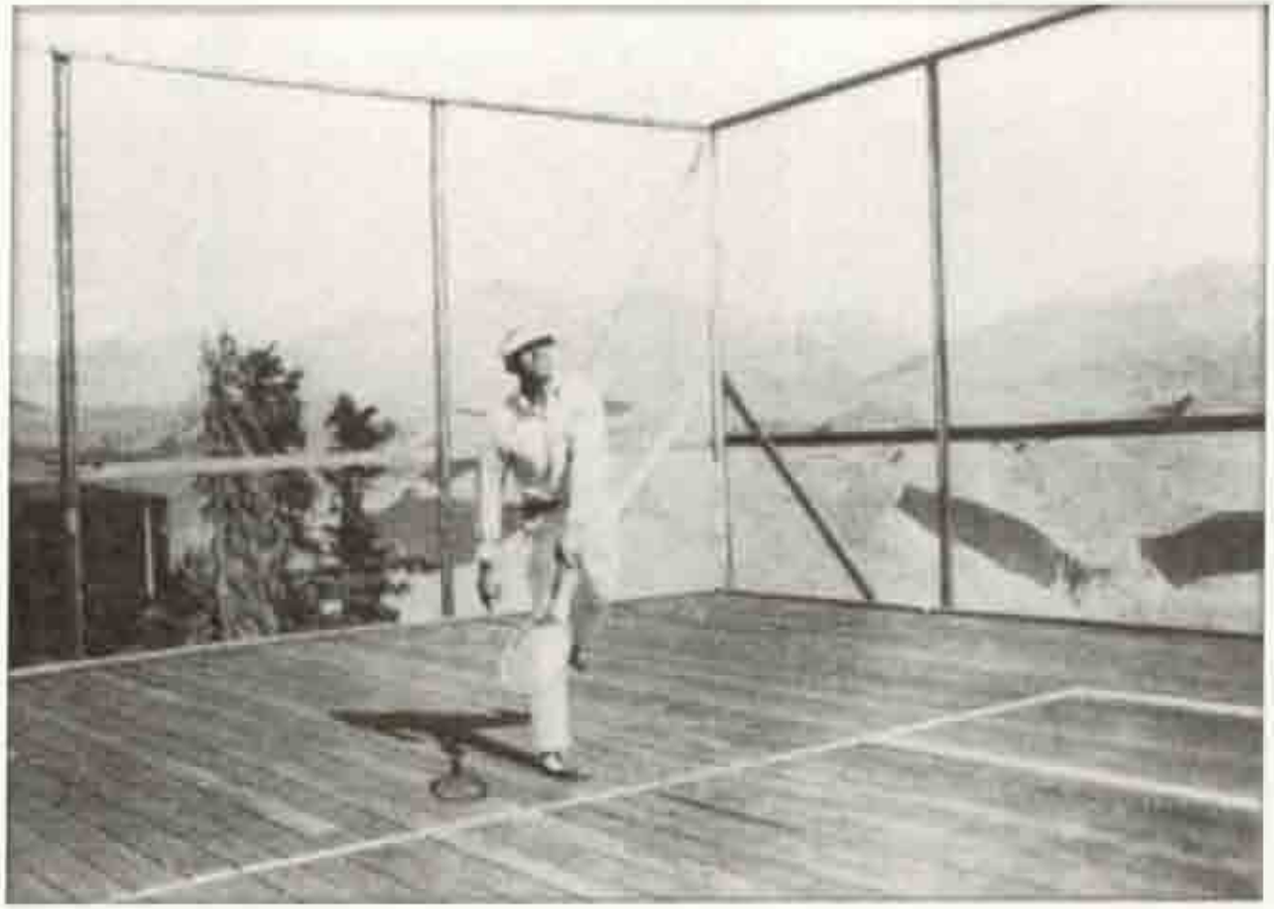
Reis: *They both worked in the garden. They loved it. When the lettuce came up* [Dad and I would eat it rolled up with a little sugar on it]. *It was so good.*

Faulkner: *Did the animals get the garden?*

Reis: *We had a fence around ours* [inaudible]. *You know they used to let the horses run* [?]. *They had a big community garden. I don't know if they had that when you were here.*[13]

Clark: *Yes,* [?] *and anyone who wanted could have a plot in that* [garden]. *I can remember a lot of times we had the school picnic out there at* [John Letendre's at First Dam] *at the end of the school year.* [John] *dug a hole in the ground and built a fire and* [put in] *hot rocks, put the bean pot in* [the hole and] *left it overnight.* [That is the way he cooked "beanhole beans".]

Faulkner: *I thank you both very much.*



Mr. Lloyd plays among the mountains.

"...my sister and I just batted the ball around a little. My parents played tennis. A lot of times in the evening they'd go out and play tennis, 'cause it stayed light for so long and we'd just go along and watch and chase balls and play around outside the court."

MARY ELLEN DUGGAN CLARK

[Information added by Mildred Reis during editing.]

[1] There was a book club, my mother belonged. They charged a few cents per book per day and at monthly meetings decided which new books to buy with the collected money. Because of the number of men in the camp it was a thriving undertaking.

[2] Additional information provided by Mildred Reis.

[3] Additional information provided by Mildred Reis.

[4] Yes, because denim is somewhat water-proof. We didn't have water-proof clothes then. The overalls were worn over my woolen clothes.

[5] I went one year to boarding school, then back to Kennecott for the summer. In the fall mother and I went to live in Seattle and I graduated from Queen Anne High School in 1930.

[6] He stayed there about a year when he got sick with a ruptured appendix. He was flown to Kennecott for an operation, He nearly did not survive because of the time it took waiting for the plane to see their distress signal. He came to Seattle and stayed with us that winter to recuperate. After that he worked at the Independence Mine in Hatcher Pass near Anchorage and mother joined him there. By this time I had finished a business course at a business school and working as a private secretary for the manager of an insurance firm in Seattle. I married in 1940. In all I worked ten years and quit to raise two children.

[7] I have been to Kennecott three times since I left. Ray and I drove up two times and one time we took the ferry to Haines and drove from there. Each time we flew in from Chitina to McCarthy.

[8] I had a large collection which I gave to my son when he was old enough to enjoy collecting.

[9] On our first visit my husband was amazed at the facilities they had for the men in the bunkhouses. Everything for their comfort and card tables and pool tables for their amusement. Ladies never went into the bunkhouses so that was the first time I had seen them too.

[10] I enjoyed the tennis court skating rink-playing our version of baseball in the summer [using only two bases as there weren't enough kids for a team]. I enjoyed the freedom of going to visit dad in the powerhouse [being told to hold my hands behind my back so I wouldn't forget and touch something and get a shock]. Walking through the sacking shed and talking to "Mike the ore sacker". I learned years later that his name was Mike Kalas.

[11] All the school children had a part in the plays and each child had a poem to recite or a skit. I was chosen to sing and nearly died of stage fright! I think all this helped me when I took music and sang solos in my church.

[12] He had a garden by the house and grew cabbages and radishes, lettuce, turnips, carrots, kale and potatoes.

[13] The hunting guides who lived in McCarthy let their horses run between hunting seasons - one time there were 18 horses in our garden. The dad made a

picket fence, the horses never returned. I believe the horses belonged to Bill Slimpert, another friend of mine. The company had a large garden just below the Bonanza tram near the mill and near National Creek. A lot of men had small gardens there.

The following information is in addition to the interview. It was provided by Mary Ellen Duggan Clark in a letter to the interviewer.

The occasion was when there was a big lay-off at Kennecott, a few years before the final shut-down. My sister and I dressed in our "good" clothes and went with my parents to the train. One by one the men who were leaving came up and shook hands with each of us as we wished them well. Many of these men had worked many years for my father and they were very close to tears. By the end of the ritual my father was choked up and close to tears also.

In the same building with the library was the dairy. The barnman would bring the milk up from the barn on a two-wheeled cart that he pushed. The milk was pasteurized and bottled and taken to the store. The bottles had a narrow neck so that we could pour off the top milk for light cream. Heavy cream was not available. When we went to the states and my sister and I first had whipped cream we didn't know what it was, and didn't like it.

In the school room a corner was set aside with shelves for reading books. When we had finished our assignments we could read. We got some new books every year, and I looked forward to their arrival. Out in the hall—the big room between the two classrooms—there were long bookshelves. They contained a set of World Book Encyclopedia and the Book of Knowledge, as well as extra textbooks and supplies.

I have always heard that Kennecott students did well, and often even excelled, when they came outside to continue their education. It has been true in my own experience. I do not wish to brag, but I made Phi Beta Kappa.

One last thing—we used to have a saying about anyone who was a little touched in the head, "wacky", "He or she has missed too many boats". In other words, they had been out in the bush or away from civilization, too long. It no longer applies, with many roads and plane routes.

ELEANOR TJOSEVIG EIDEMILLER

Interview conducted by Sandra M. Faulkner
National Park Service
June 17, 1990
Tape #1
Side #1

Faulkner: *This is Sande Faulkner, National Park Service, June 17, 1990, at Kennecott interviewing Eleanor Tjosevig Eidemiller.*

Faulkner: *Well, Eleanor, if you could just introduce yourself and give some background, where you were born and vital statistic information.*

Eidemiller: *Well, I was born in Kennecott in 1922 and lived in McCarthy until I was about nine and a half years old. Part of that time - school months I was in* [McCarthy but we also lived at the Green Butte Mine which is eleven miles from McCarthy.]

Faulkner: *I'll probably ask you things that we already talked about over the days already, but we'll go over it again for the tape. What brought your parents to Kennecott? You were born at Kennecott at the hospital and your parents lived at McCarthy?*

Eidemiller: *Yes. There was no hospital in McCarthy so everyone came to Kennecott. My father came up here in the very early nineteen hundreds but I don't know what the actual date was.* [He left Norway as a young seaman at a time when many Scandinavians were looking for a better life in America. His older brother was first a captain in New York and then on a schooner in Alaska but I don't believe Dad ever sailed again after he came ashore in Valdez. Whether he participated in the

Gold rush or not I never heard but he freighted over the glaciers and spoke about Tonsina and Copper Center quite often.] *When Kennecott started developing he moved into the McCarthy area and prospected in various areas around here.*

Faulkner: *For gold?*

Eidemiller: *For copper. I presume. At least he ended up with patented copper claims near Green Butte, which we still have and always have hopes for.*

Faulkner: *Over the years you've always had hopes for it.*

Eidemiller: *My mother was fond of saying well, it will never happen in my life but it may in your life, children. You will see that it will develop again.* [Mr. Hancock, who was a consulting mining engineer, wrote a very favorable report on it and Dad was made an offer on it but refused to sell at that time. So we've always felt that the ore is there but times are different now.]

Inger Jensen & Eleanor Tjosevig at Green Butte.

Faulkner: *Do you have claims anywhere else?*

Eidemiller: *No, we don't. Those were sold at various times during my father's lifetime.*

Faulkner: *What was his first name?*

Eidemiller: *Nils.*

Faulkner: *When did he meet your mom?*

Eidemiller: *I think it was in the summer months of 1919.*

Faulkner: *Where was that at?*

Eidemiller: *That was in McCarthy. Her father had come up here and opened a blacksmith shop and he and my father had become very good friends. Grandpa was very excited about the fact that his two daughters were coming to visit him. That was quite an adventure, you know, to come from the midwest up here.*

Faulkner: *All by themselves?*

Eidemiller: *Yes.*

Faulkner: *How old were they then, about...*

Eidemiller: [I think she was thirty-one and her sister twenty-nine.] *Before their arrival, Dad looked at a picture that Grandpa Underwood so proudly showed him and he immediately announced that Jean was the girl he was going to marry.* [And they were married in 1920.]

Faulkner: *So when she was coming up it was to visit or...*

Eidemiller: *Yes, just to visit.*

Faulkner: *And she ended up staying.*

Eidemiller: [I don't know.]

Faulkner: *They probably were married at McCarthy?*

Eidemiller: *Yes, they were.*

Faulkner: *Was there a church there?*

Eidemiller: *No, there was a Commissioner there who married them. It was probably just done in his office. Their very good friends Hilda and*

Robert Marshall, who owned the hardware store, were there with them when they got married and remained their friends ever after.

Faulkner: *Did your mom ever tell you stories about the wedding?*

Eidemiller: *No, no she didn't.*

Faulkner: *A wedding in McCarthy, what that involved.*

Eidemiller: *I don't know what all it involved* [but in their case it was a very simple wedding.]

Faulkner: *So you were born in 1922 and your dad was still blacksmith, what about your grandpa?*

Eidemiller: *Grandpa died in 1921. He drowned in Nizina River, crossing the river on horseback. They might have been going on a hunting trip. There was a string of horses and supplies going across and he was the last man and inexperienced at doing this. I heard later that he should not have been put in that position, he should have been up further in the group, but he was the last man and that contributed to the accident. So I never met him.*

Faulkner: *What about your grandmother?*

Eidemiller: *She died back east when my mother was very young.*

Faulkner: *What do you remember most about the early years at McCarthy?*

Eidemiller: *I can't say I remember anything really outstanding. We spent a lot of time at Green Butte as well.*

Faulkner: *Oh, you did?*

Eidemiller: *Yes. In fact, it ends up probably just about half and half. To start with, because of the work he needed to do on his claims and while I was too small to remember much of it, my mother and I would accompany Dad to his base camp. He had to do so much work in order to patent the claims and Mother would help in any way she could. At first he set up a tent and eventually* [built a one room cabin

in front of and attaching to the tent. The tent portion became our bedroom.] *Then later on when the Green Butte Mine closed down they hired my dad to maintain* [the buildings and roads, etc. We then lived at the mine at the bunk house nearly all the time until I was old enough for school.]

Faulkner: *Winter as well as summer?*

Eidemiller: *Winter as well as summer. It was just our own little world there and it was lovely I thought.*

Faulkner: *Where would have been your nearest neighbor?*

Eidemiller: *McCarthy, 11 miles away. We would travel down there once a week for mail and supplies.*

Faulkner: *How would you travel?*

Eidemiller: *In the summer by Dad's Model T and in winter by dog team. But I don't remember much of that. I remember some holidays there, for instance Christmas.*

Faulkner: *Oh, what would Christmas at the Green Butte be like?*

Eidemiller: [When the mine operated the ore was hauled to the railroad in McCarthy by sleigh in the winter and wagon in the summer. And when they closed the mine it was with expectations of opening up again so they left two horses in our care. Dad would prepare the charcoal foot warmers, Mom would get the heavy blankets out and when the horses were hitched to the sleigh we could go out in search of trees...one for our family and one for my dolls....the tallest trees we could find.]

Faulkner: *What did you decorate with?*

Eidemiller: [The doll's tree was completely my project so it was decorated with whatever ideas we could find for colored paper, yarn and foil we'd saved from wrappers.]

Faulkner: *What was the population of Green Butte?*

Eidemiller: *There was none.*

Faulkner: *Three of you.*

Eidemiller: *Three of us.*

Faulkner: *Just the three.*

Eidemiller: *Yes. That was all.*

Faulkner: *So you three made Christmas.*

Eidemiller: *Well, we had visitors sometimes, we had company.* [Usually it would be a single male friend of my father's who had no family to be with. And sometimes we spent the holiday in McCarthy. But I liked being at Green Butte and Dad always thought of some special way to surprise me. He was wonderful with children. One Christmas Eve he suggested that we put carrots and hay in the barn for the reindeer because he knew they would be tired when they reached us and it would surely be the best place to rest. He even left a note for Santa telling him that there was a pot of coffee on the kitchen range. Of course I was excited about this and very thrilled the next day when we checked and found that all our treats were gone. They really had rested there.]

Faulkner: *Oh, wonderful. When you started school, you moved to McCarthy to stay?*

Eidemiller: *To stay, at least for the winter. Dad still stayed at Green Butte but would come to town on the weekends and in the summer we would all be at the mine again. In the winter, Dad traveled by dog team ... a rather scroungy looking team. There were three dogs of different breeds and only one looked strong enough to be working but, they managed. Sometimes they borrowed dogs from the Watsjolds.*

Faulkner: *So, when you started going to school, what did you wear to school?*

Eidemiller: [Long stockings, dresses and boots and snow suits.]

Faulkner: *Did your mother make your clothes?*

Eidemiller: *No, we sent to Sears or Montgomery Ward, whatever. And it was really exciting to get a package, you know, to get our spring clothes. Not so much our winter clothes cause that meant being all wrapped up again. Getting the spring dresses, anklets and knee high socks, even cooler pajamas was fun.*

Faulkner: *Did you have special party dresses?*

Eidemiller: [Yes, I remember one with ruffles.] *Our parents had very nice clothes. You'd be surprised at the beautiful dresses that women wore.*

Faulkner: *Oh, really.*

Eidemiller: *Yes, lovely things. And particularly here in Kennecott because they had regular dances and things going on all the time that the ladies dressed up for.*

Faulkner: *Would they invite McCarthy families?*

Eidemiller: *No, I don't think so. We had our own hall in McCarthy, our own Christmas parties and other events. Everyone dresses up some. The women wore hats for many occasions. Well, you saw some of those pictures where they'd go on a picnic and wear a nice hat and the men were dressed in suits.*

Faulkner: *Yes, I remember that picture. So, we've talked about Christmas at Green Butte. What about Christmas at McCarthy?*

Eidemiller: *The thing I remember most about the tree is the small metal candle holders with candles that we weren't allowed to light.*

Faulkner: *Was there a school play or a community Christmas party or anything?*

Eidemiller: *I don't remember being in any school play but we all attended a big party at the community hall where the children were given gifts. There was dancing afterward and my dad would dance with me*

and I was so proud. He would play Santa Claus and come to our home when we had other children there. He had many bachelor friends who would come by, maybe have a drink with our family or stay for a meal. They usually brought gifts for me and usually candy for my mother.

Faulkner: *What about the school at McCarthy? Was that a one room school?*

Eidemiller: Yes. *I remember having a water bucket there and we each brought our own special cup from home. There were hooks to hang them on near the bucket.*

Faulkner: *Was there one teacher?*

Eidemiller: *One teacher and there were seven kids when I went to school.*

Faulkner: *What grades?*

Eidemiller: [One through eighth I think. I don't think they had to go anywhere until they started high school and then they sometimes boarded in Cordova.]

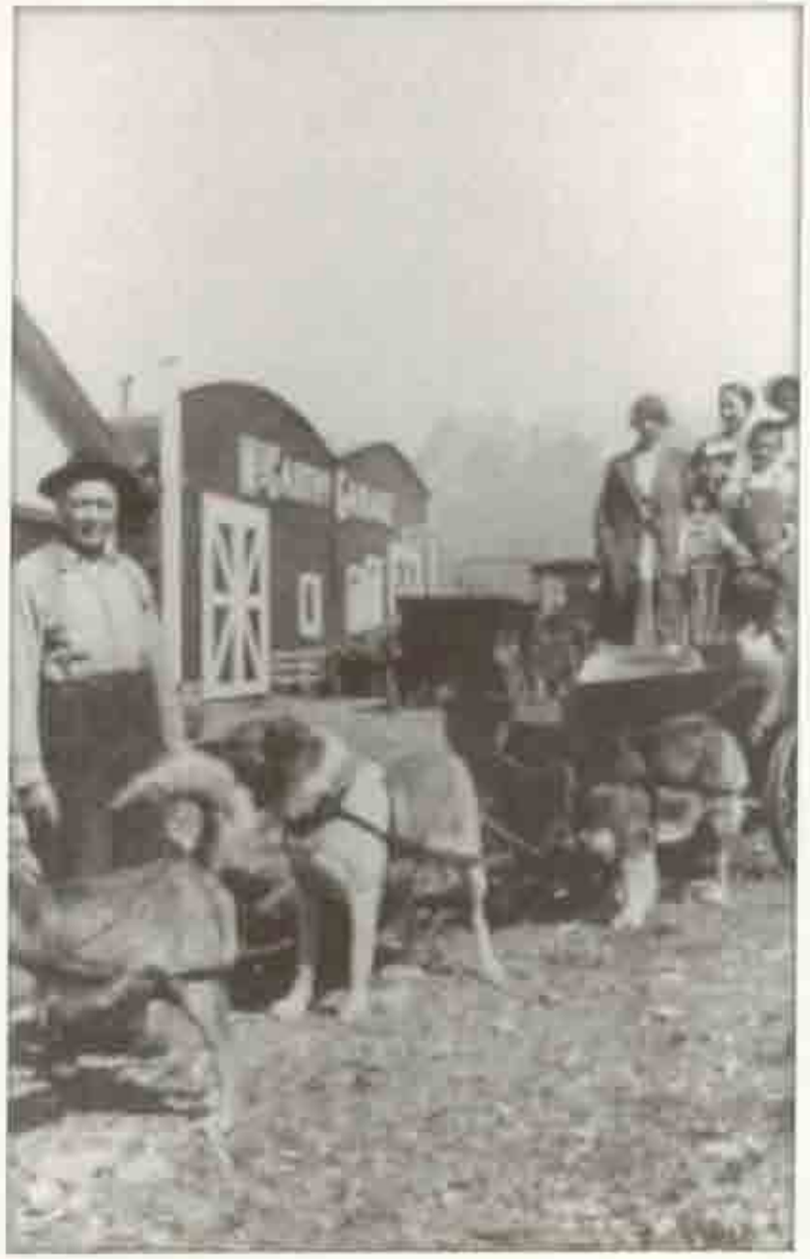
Faulkner: *Do you remember any teacher in particular?*

Eidemiller: *Well, I only had one* [and her name was Mrs. Harrias.]

Faulkner: *You came to Kennecott to school because the McCarthy school closed?*

Eidemiller: *Yes.* [It closed because the parents in three families were unhappy with Mrs. Harrais and by making other arrangements for school they eliminated all but two pupils.] *We lived right here where the lodge is in the center apartment. Dad still continued at Green Butte and he didn't come to visit us every weekend because it was a longer trip* [and Kennecott discouraged dog teams except on an emergency basis.] *John Watsjold, also from McCarthy, boarded with us, his sister and their brother, Oscar, moved to Seward with* [Mrs. Garrity and her son.]

Faulkner: *A disruptive change to you, to have to leave your house in McCarthy?*



Dog-drawn vehicle stands near the McCarthy Garage.

"My dad built me a little dog sled and I had my own dog. ...It usually happened on Sunday...I'd take a ride out Green Butte Road a ways. Often times afterward Mrs. Watsjold would think I needed warming up so she would give me and Stella 50 cents each to go buy lemon pie and hot chocolate."

ELEANOR TJOSEVIG EIDEMILLER

Eidemiller: *No, I don't think so. I had been so much alone in Green Butte and had so few playmates in McCarthy that I was very shy and hesitant around so many other children. But some of them I was already acquainted with and Inger* [Jensen] *and I were good friends already. I felt hesitant about going to a new school but I didn't mind leaving home.*

Faulkner: *What about your mother? Did she ever talk about that move?*

Eidemiller: *Not that I recall.*

Faulkner: *She didn't care one way or the other?*

Eidemiller: *Well, I'm sure she did.* [Being at home she would have seen Dad more often and our home] *was more comfortable than these small apartments. There were two bedrooms upstairs and a very narrow stairway, a small kitchen and a tiny living room.*

Faulkner: *You did individual cooking?*

Eidemiller: *Yes.*

Faulkner: *What about laundry?*

Eidemiller: *Yes, I suppose most of it went to the laundry here, unless there was something fine that she hand washed.* [My sister wasn't even a year old when we moved here so there was lots of washing for her.]

Faulkner: *Then you got to move back to McCarthy?*

Eidemiller: *Well, no. From here we - well, not directly, I'm sure we went home for a week or something like that but we left Alaska completely and moved to the states.*

Faulkner: *Where did you go?*

Eidemiller: *Seattle.*

Faulkner: *What did your dad do there?*

Eidemiller: *He retired.*

Faulkner: *He retired?*

Eidemiller: *Yes. He really had worked very hard. It was time for him to take it easy. He had high blood pressure and heart problems and they didn't have all the medications that we have today. And then she wanted more education and more opportunity for we girls, so that's why we moved.*

Faulkner: *Where was your sister* [Judy] *born?*

Eidemiller: *She was born in Kennecott too.*

Faulkner: *Do you remember it?*

Eidemiller: *Yes. I remember I was awakened early on a dark, winter morning and hustled across the street to the Watsjold home where I was to stay while Dad took Mom to the hospital. I believe he rented a taxi team and whisked her through the snow to Kennecott.*

Faulkner: *Do you have any idea how long she stayed in the hospital?*

Eidemiller: [Probably ten days or two weeks] *as she had some complications and at that time they kept women a very long time after childbirth.*

Faulkner: *Do you remember McCarthy, your home there, was it a log house, a frame house?*

Eidemiller: *It was a frame house that my father built.*

Faulkner: *It's still standing?*

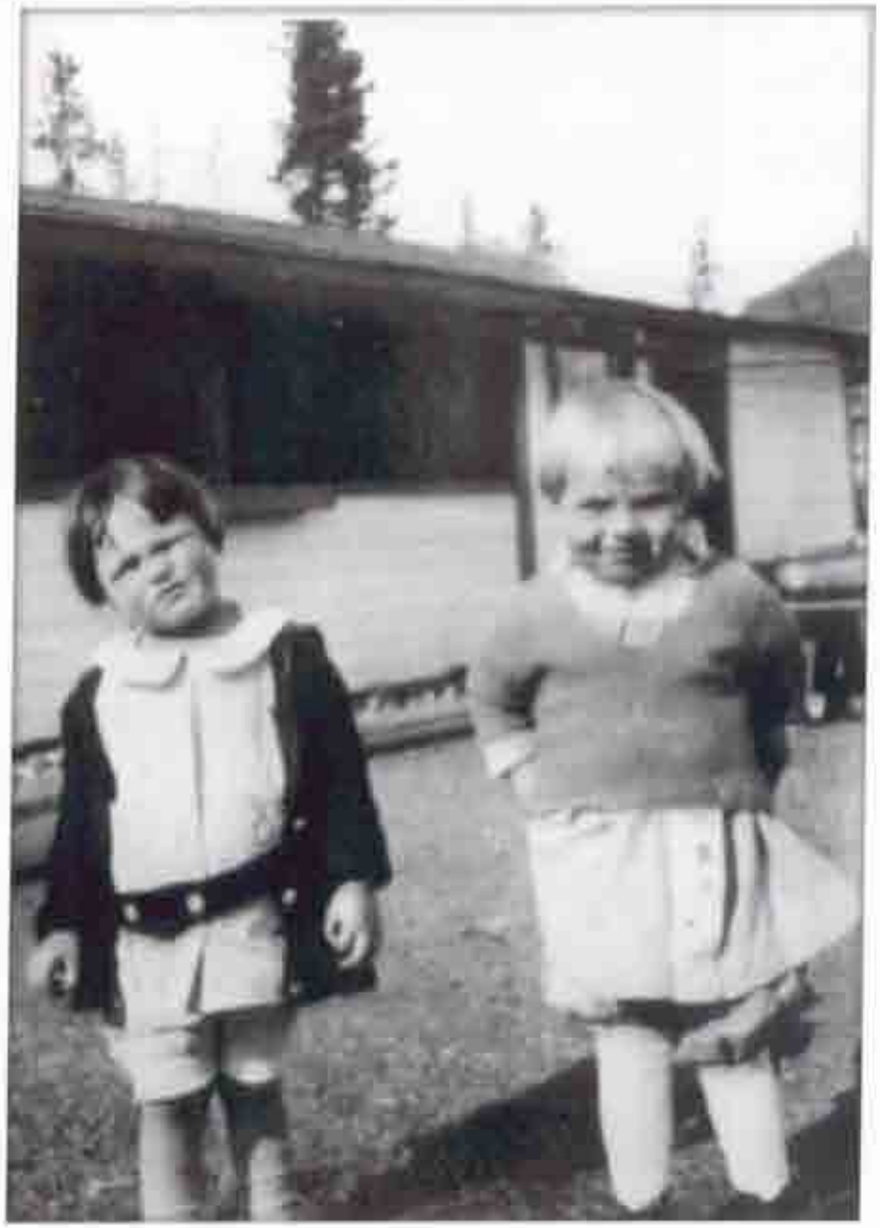
Eidemiller: *It's still standing. It's one of the more sturdy ones in McCarthy. So he did a good job. It's owned now by Nancy Simmerman and she has taken good care of it and when she talks to me she calls it "our home" which pleases me. She's letting us stay there now for a few days, after we leave Kennecott.*

Faulkner: *Has it changed much?*

Eidemiller: *Not much.* [The wallpaper, for example, is the original wallpaper. Nancy had one of the inside walls taken out so as to enlarge the kitchen. That was an improvement.]

Faulkner: *In what ways have you seen McCarthy change?*

Eidemiller: *Oh, it's nothing like it was. There were so many buildings that are no longer there and the trees have grown up so you can't even imagine there were buildings ever there. Unless you study old pictures, you can't visualize how it was. You'll see that there were not nearly the number of trees. It was much more open even in the land around town. Now it's difficult for the people to get rid of the garbage and big items they don't need or that don't work so it's just abandoned and looks very messy.* [I'm sure we had problems of that sort too but it bothers me much more now.]



Eleanor standing to left at McCarthy.

Faulkner: *Let's approach it from this way. Why did you decide to come back for the reunion?*

Eidemiller: *Well, I think I've been back seven times already so I had no trouble deciding.*

Faulkner: *So why not one more.*

Eidemiller: *Yes. I'll tell you that there is something so peaceful and warm about these mountains and it always makes me feel like I'm coming home. I feel good here and I always meet so many nice, friendly people. It is fun to come back.*

Faulkner: *If you had to - we talked about your life in the country as a great deal of love. What do you think made it so special to grow up there?*

Eidemiller: *Well, I think in both Kennecott and McCarthy kids were few and they were very special, you know. Everyone treated us well and we* [had the freedom of the outdoors. A little less so in McCarthy because there were a couple of areas where the children couldn't go. Taxi dog teams were tethered in a place beyond the houses. They were not loved and taken care of as pets so they were vicious.] *And then there was, of course, the girls on the line. I always found enough to do. My dad built me a little dog sled and I had my own dog. If I were going out on the road and he thought I could do all right, he'd let me have two dogs, but I think that was usually in Green Butte. In McCarthy I was most usually restricted to one dog. It usually happened on Sunday because he would be in town for the weekend so I'd take a ride out Green Butte Road a ways. Often times afterward Mrs. Watsjold would think I needed warming up so she would give me and Stella 50 cents each to go buy lemon pie and hot chocolate.*

Faulkner: *What was social life like?*

Eidemiller: [There were often dances in the community hall.] *My parents*

played cards often. [In the winter I remember taking the dog team and going about 3 miles to Iverson's farm for an evening of cards. Sometimes the night was so clear and bright it was almost like traveling in daylight.] *In the summer they had picnics and fishing trips up the Nikolai River. And when we were in Green Butte people from Kennecott would occasionally hike over the mountain and maybe stay all night with us. Inger* [Jensen] *would come up and spend a week.* [There were wagons and sleighs, an old truck and many odd pieces of equipment that set our imaginations working, but cowboys and Indians was probably our favorite. We visualized many a rough ride before we reached the barn.]

Faulkner: *Did you wear pants for play?*

Eidemiller: *Sometimes. Not all the time. Sometimes I think we wore very feminine things simply because life was so rugged.*

Faulkner: *Is that why you think they dressed up for (?).*

Eidemiller: *Uh huh, because they didn't want to lose all that. It was nice to be very feminine when you had the opportunity.*

Faulkner: *Do you remember your mom too maybe putting little touches in the home to make it less rugged or seeming to be less rugged?*

Eidemiller: *Oh, I think so.* [Lace curtains, print cushions, artificial flowers when fresh ones weren't available. Mother had some fine pieces of cut glass and china although our dishes were very ordinary. But other people had beautiful sets of china figurines, lamps and tablecloths. I was very impressed with the beautiful things that Mrs. Watsjold brought all the way from Norway. We made trips to Seattle and came back with nice things. I don't think they ever did much about changing the furniture but we would come home with clothes and books and records and other little things that added to our comfort and enjoyment.]

Faulkner: *Would you go out to Cordova at all?*

Eidemiller: *Not often. Most of the time we went to Cordova only when we were on our way to Seattle. People from Cordova would come up and visit us ... usually in the summer. There were two different families there whose children would come and spend a week with us. I imagine I could have stayed with them too but I was too shy to do it.*

Faulkner: *When you went Outside, would you and your mom go alone or would your dad always go?*

Eidemiller: *No, he didn't always go.*

Faulkner: *What were the trips like?*

Eidemiller: *On the ship?*

Faulkner: *Yes.*

Eidemiller: *The trip was wonderful* [except for crossing the Gulf which was always too rough for me. But that was only a few hours out of the entire trip which took five or six days. We would have a nice stateroom. There would be a little dance band, midnight buffet, shuffleboard, and cards. Everyone enjoyed the Inside Passage because it was so smooth and of course very beautiful.]

Faulkner: *Would it make stops?*

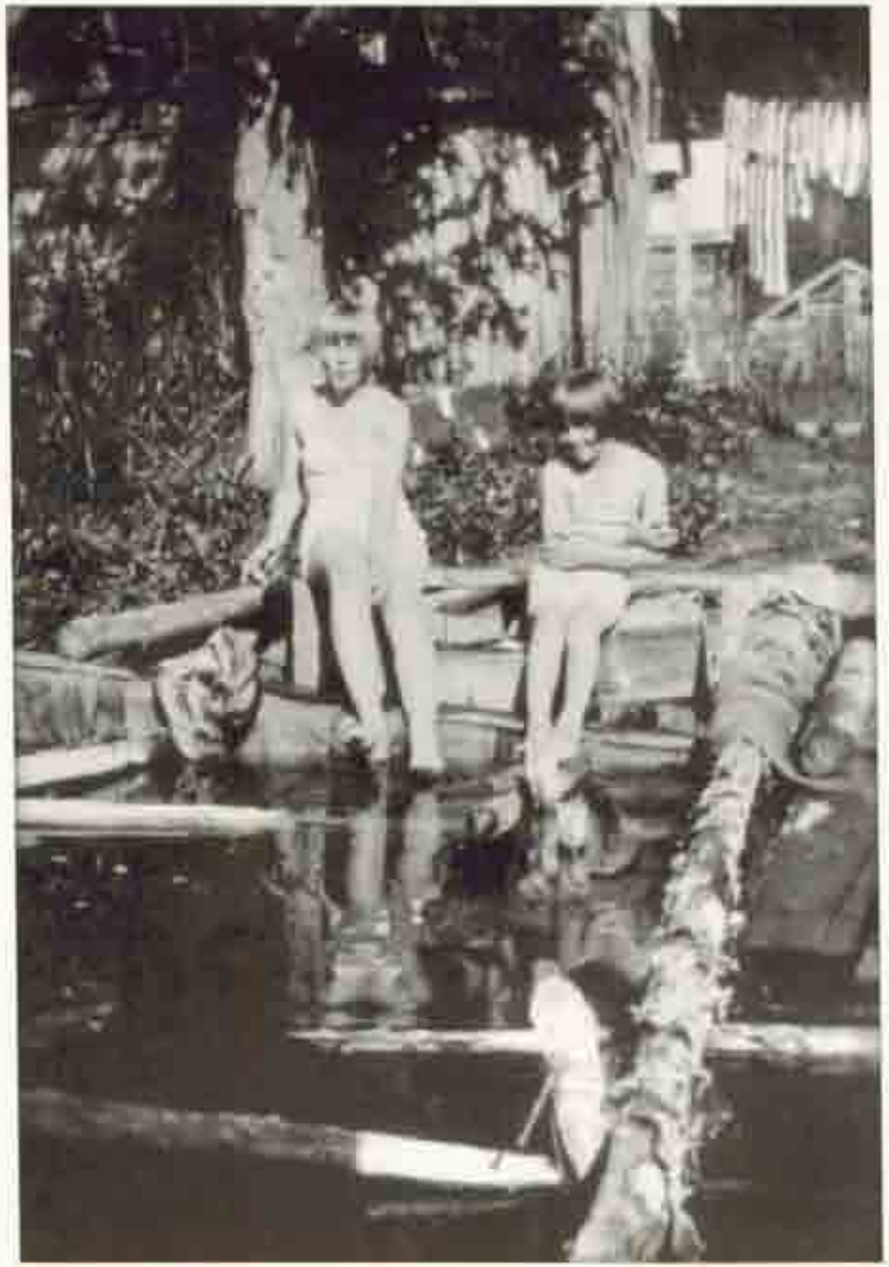
Eidemiller: *Yes. Not always the same places each time. Only once do I remember stopping at Wrangell and the Indians in their native dress were standing and sitting by the warehouse building on the dock selling their baskets and other arts.*

Faulkner: *And then you'd go to Seattle?*

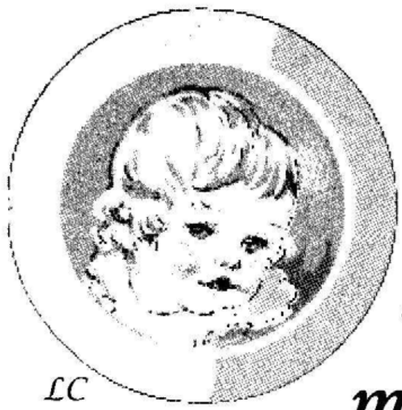
Eidemiller: *Yes.*

Faulkner: *Did your mom have family there to visit?*

Eidemiller: *No,* [but we had friends. We always rented a small apartment for a month. The two things that most impressed me were the stores and the green grass. I loved to go to the parks.]



Inger Jensen & Eleanor Tjosevig at Green Butte.



"...there is something so peaceful and warm about these mountains...it always makes me feel like I'm coming home."

ELEANOR TJOSEVIG EIDEMILLER

Faulkner: *Where was your mother's family from?*

Eidemiller: *From Illinois.*

Faulkner: *Where.*

Eidemiller: *Kewanee, which is a little bit* [west] *of Chicago.*

Faulkner: *Did you ever go back and visit them?*

Eidemiller: [Not until after we moved to Seattle. We kept in touch with them and friends there and also with Dad's family in Norway but no such long trips until later years.]

Faulkner: *Did you feel much tie to relatives, to aunts, uncles, cousins, the extended family?*

Eidemiller: *Not particularly while I was up here. Later some of us got reacquainted.*

Faulkner: *That's life, to Alaskan families anyway.*

Eidemiller: *Yes.*

Faulkner: *Do you remember, was school mandatory in McCarthy? Did kids have to go to school?*

Eidemiller: *I don't know* [but I rather think so.]

Faulkner: *You didn't know of any comments about kids...*

TAPE #1
SIDE #2

Faulkner: *We were talking about the schools being mandatory.*

Eidemiller: *All the little kids went to school. I don't think all the older ones always did. Some quit early.*

Faulkner: *You were one of the littler ones.*

Eidemiller: *Yes,* [the littlest one for all three years that I went to school there.]

Faulkner: *Was there a library or reading room in McCarthy?*

Eidemiller: *There may have been but I don't remember it* [and I think we would have used a library had there been one.]

Faulkner: *Or maybe the school?*

Eidemiller: *I can't remember the school having a library. There was a minister that came in occasionally, maybe once a month or less than that. He would have services at the schoolhouse.*

Faulkner: *Would everyone go regardless of denomination?*

Eidemiller: *I don't think so.*

Faulkner: *Well, is there anything that you'd like to say about life in McCarthy that would be important for people to remember or know?*

Eidemiller: *Well, McCarthy has such a bad reputation. You hear it now when you're interviewing people, or you read about it. They talk about the workers in Kennecott wanted to whoop it up in McCarthy and getting in trouble and then they would often lose all their money. But you don't hear much about the good people who also made up the town.*

Faulkner: *Do you feel it was almost two separate communities?*

Eidemiller: *No, but I don't like to hear about the reputation that it has, even though part of that is certainly deserved.*

Faulkner: *I guess, for example, the people from the wild side of McCarthy...*

Eidemiller: *They didn't always associate a lot with the others.*

Faulkner: *They wouldn't be likely to call on each other?*

Eidemiller: [Probably not unless there was no other way.]

Faulkner: *I suppose there was one store, right?*

Eidemiller: *There was the O'Neill store and then there was the Marshall* [store which was later purchased by the Watsjolds.]

Faulkner: *Were both of those general stores?*

Eidemiller: *Pretty much so. They call the Watsjold store the hardware store*

but it wasn't strictly hardware. It was groceries and meats as well. When the train came in with all the fresh fruit in the summer time we were sure to be there on time so we could get [grapes, cherries, watermelon, etc ... whatever good things arrived. It never lasted very long. We ate it up pretty fast and started waiting for the next shipment.]

Faulkner: *McCarthy traditionally has the big Fourth of July celebration.*

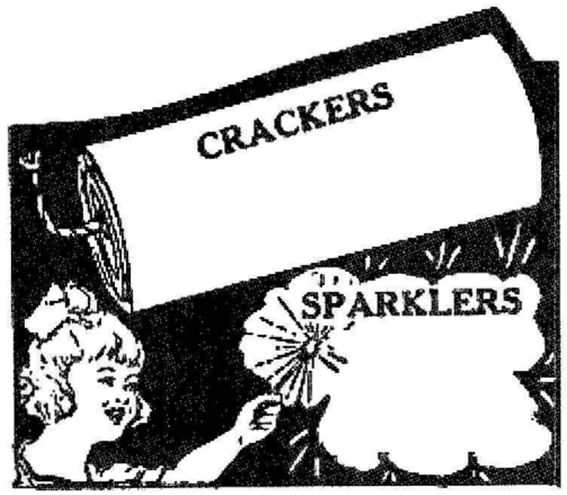
Eidemiller: *Yes.*

Faulkner: *Did they then as well?*

Eidemiller: *Oh, they did. It was wonderful. I do remember it, and all those buildings that are no longer - we called it Front Street, they had put wide streamers across the street and all the buildings decorated. We also decorated our home* [with flags and banners.] *There were sack races, potato races, fat man races, everything they could think of.* [And later on in the day the big baseball game with Kennecott.]

Faulkner: *Oh, on July fourth?*

Eidemiller: *Yes. And we would get our cap guns and our firecrackers first thing in the morning and run around trying to scare everybody.*



I remember one time we were coming in from Green Butte for the big celebration. My mother and I were dressed up, my dad was wearing a suit and hat and as we were driving along he slowed down and finally stopped beside the start of a well hidden trail. My mother was suddenly angry with him but he paid no attention, stepped out of the car and headed up the trail so nicely dressed in suit and hat. I was sworn to secrecy as he came back with booze from a still. [It

wasn't his still but he'd promised his friend to make the pickup. It was vital to McCarthy's celebration. Actually, I don't think Prohibition was ever successful there.]

Faulkner: *Do you remember your mother talking about her attitudes after living here, or your dad's, after they left? Was this home to them too?*

Eidemiller: *It was home to my dad, very definitely. I think he hated to leave in many respects. When we left, he and I stood on the observation deck of the train and I was crying. And I'm sure he was feeling sad too. I promised myself that I would be back as soon as I was able but that took a long time. My first return was in 1974. But Dad was a true Alaskan. He spent so much time here and enjoyed it, so it was home to him. I think it was just fine for my mother for quite a while, but eventually she wanted something easier, a place with more advantages, so she was happy to leave.*

Faulkner: *Did she keep a garden?*

Eidemiller: *Mostly a flower garden.* [We got some fresh vegetables from Iverson's farm.]

Faulkner: *Where was your dad's family from?*

Eidemiller: *Norway.*

Faulkner: *Was he born in Norway?*

Eidemiller: *Yes.* [A lot of people immigrated from there in the early 1900s. Norway has kept good records but those that might have shown what year he went to sea were lost in a fire.]

Faulkner: *Well, do you feel we have covered McCarthy, given McCarthy its due?*

Eidemiller: [Well, I've covered it some from my childhood point of view but there's more history there than we will ever know.]

Faulkner: *Okay, well thank you very much.*

Eidemiller: *And thank you too, Sande.*

GEORGE POWELL

Interview conducted by Logan Hovis
and Geoff Bleakley
National Park Service
May 27, 1998
Tape #1, Side #1
[With editing and clarification changes made by Powell on 6-19-00]

[Tape begins in mid-sentence with:].

Hovis: *... Logan Hovis with Geoff Bleakley here at Kennecott Alaska on the twenty seventh of May, 1998. We're here with George Powell, who is ... one of the Kennecott Kids; and George, I'd like to thank you very much for talking with us.*

Powell: *O.K.*

Hovis: *If you have anything you'd like to say to start, please do; otherwise, we'll start in with questions.*

Powell: *Oh, it's good to have you back in this reunion again, and last two ... It's ... just as good [as before].*

Hovis: *Um-hum.*

Powell: *Real nice* [uncertain word].

Hovis: *How'd you first come to be at Kennecott?*

Powell: *I was born here.*

Hovis: *Really?*

Powell: *In 1923.*

Hovis: *1923.*

Powell: *Born in Kennecott.*

Hovis: *Yeah. O.K. Born in the hospital?*

Powell: *Yeah.*

Hovis: *O.K. You're father was employed here?*

Powell: *He was a machinist.*

Hovis: *A machinist?* [And] *your mother took care of the place?*

Powell: *Um-hum.*

Hovis: *Where did your family live?*

Powell: [uncertain word] *now you mean, or?*

Hovis: *At that time.*

Powell: *Well, at that time, right here.*

Hovis: *In the apartment?*

Powell: *... Just about ... in the house right here; In the first small one.*

Hovis: *Oh! In the first small one that got moved?*

Powell: *... Big one back behind ... small one in front. Apartment house was on this end.*

Hovis: *O.K.*

Powell: *My father got killed in the mines in 1925.*

Hovis: *Um-hum.*

Powell: *No, in about 1928. My mother remarried, and we moved in to this place here, and ...*

Hovis: *Your mother remarried in Kennecott, then?*

Powell: *Yeah, um-hum. Yeah, he* [his stepfather] *worked in the mill here.* [Uncertain words] *shaker table section there.*

Hovis: *How did your father get killed in the mines? Was that ...*

Powell: *Oh, he had a mine over at Rex Creek ... the top of Rex Creek.*

Hovis: *Yeah, sure the canyon, up there.*

Bleakley: *Yeah, I know who he was.*

Powell: *He had some tunnels back in there; and he was hydraulic'in; and*

a rock came off the mountain. He couldn't bear it with the noise of the giants there; Hit him in the head.

Hovis: *Hum.*

Powell: *They hauled him into Kennecott here on a wagon and horses. And ... he died in the hospital then.*

Hovis: *That's sad ... Were you ever up to those mines?*

Powell: *Oh, yeah! My mother wanted to lease the mine to a guy named Lou Anderton in about 19... 36, 35. N' he's back in a tunnel there ... and a rock fell on him. A big boulder – eight hundred pound boulder; Trapped him in there. And ah ... and he was by himself, so he ... nobody knew it until about a week or so afterwards. And the mailman ... missed* [the] *mail a couple of times ... Found him still missing a couple of times [later]; so he had 'em checkin' around ... And they found him back there in his rock [uncertain word – sounds like "environment"]. ... And his fingers were, scratched off ... at the second joint –* [from] *tryin' to dig his way out from under that rock.*

Hovis: *Um-hum.*

Bleakley: *Is this the same Lou Anderton that was ... he worked ... in Shushanna* [Chisana] *as ah ...*

Powell: *Anderton; T-O-N; Anderton; TON, not SON.*

Bleakley: *Yeah ... [he] worked in Shushanna as a hunting guide, earler.*

Powell: *Yeah. He, was, ah a loner. Kin'a ... prospect here 'n there* [unclear word].

Hovis: *Um-hum.*

Powell: *We had to go ... left Kennecott in 1932 due to slow down in Kennecott mine operations. We came back over in '37, and had* [to] *clean up all ... the ... tents and stuff like that; The water had ... get ... been high that summer. And it washed all the sides of the tents and stuff down into the ...*

over the bank. ... We had to clean up all that stuff. Yeah.

[Gap in tape].

Powell: *... back into the mine there, and seen a rock and* [unclear words] *the ground was pretty slack* [unstable] *in there ... and, ah ...* [would] *be solid in one place, and in another place, it'd slough off and cave in ...*

Hovis: *This was ... occurred in rock, not gravel?*

Powell: *Yeah. Yeah. There was some, some gravel, and some rock...*

Hovis: *I know it were ... good, good to get under a channel, I believe.*

Powell: *Yeah.*

Hovis: *I know where this tunnel is, too. ... Been back in it myself.*

Powell: *There's two or three tunnels in there that's been put in. My dad put some of 'em in ... an' he had mostly* [done] *placer work in there.*

Hovis: *Um-hum. How old were you at the time?*

Powell: *It, ah ... he died when I was a year and a half old.*

Hovis: *O.K. But, you stayed here for a lot longer than that?*

Powell: *Yeah, we stayed here in Kennecott ...* [a few unclear words] ... [my mother] *worked the laundry down here, and worked for Birch ... taking ... ah, house keeper. ... And* [she] *worked for Douglass. ... And ...* [did] *house work* [for] ... [other] *various people around.*

Hovis: *Um-hum.*

Powell: *Laundry ... and ...*

Hovis: *O.K.*

Powell: *Kept busy, and ... The only women ... that were allowed around here, was people that worked, or were married to workers – had a reason to be here.*

Hovis: *Yes.*

Powell: *Yes. She was a widow ...* [but] *they ... had something going for her to keep* [her] *going ... those last few years.*

Hovis: *What, was it ... did she ever talk to you 'bout what it was like, 'bout what it was like to work in the laundry?*

Powell: *Who she work ...*

Hovis: *She ever talk about what it was like to work in the laundry; who she worked ... who the people were she worked with?*

Powell: *Oh, it was ... it was ... it was two people in there, besides her –* [Tom] *Mori and a Japanese guy that run the place.*

Hovis: *Um-hum.*

Powell: *And, well, I used to go down there ... She'd take me down there; and I'd wait around there while she was ... working in there.*

Hovis: *Um-hum.*

Powell: *But ... it wasn't* [unclear word] *hard work. It was, ah ... steady work, but not too hard. ... Was in the hospital linens, laundry, and the, ah ... uniforms and stuff like that.*

Hovis: *Wha... did they do the bedding out of the bunkhouses?*

Powell: *Some of it, yeah.*

Hovis: *Um-hum. So when she went to work for Douglass, or for Birch ... that was, that was ... a bit of an improvement?*

Powell: *Um-hum.*

Hovis: *She get to know them at all? Talk to ... Did she get to know Douglass and Birch? Talk about them?*

Powell: *Oh yeah. Um-hum. Yeah. She could* [still] *tell you till 1978. Ah,* [then] *her mind was off, off in the Alzheimer's; and so she* [unintelligible].

[Gap in tape].

Powell: *... she had a nice house up in there.*

Hovis: *...'s too bad it's been torn down.*

Powell: *Yeah. It had nice hardwood floors, and all that stuff.*

Hovis: *Um-hum.*

Powell: *And that one over next to the staff house, was [a] nice house there too. Don't recall who had that - who lived there, but she was involved in taking housekeeping* [and] *stuff* [like that] *in there, too.*

Hovis: *Did she continue working after she remarried?*

Powell: *Oh yeah. Um-hum. Yeah. Yeah. She worked down at the laundry then; and after ... and even after that till, about, oh ...1930. We left there in '32. She worked up till almost '32 ... down there. But ... ah, had a place round there ... housekeeping and stuff like that.*

Hovis: *You went to school there didn't you?*

Powell: *Yeah, uh-um.*

Hovis: *What was that like?*

Powell: *Oh, pretty good.*

Hovis: *Um-hum.*

Powell: *It was a small, one room school house, and one ...* [Uncertain word] *lower grades on one end, and higher grades on the other side.*

Hovis: *Um-hum.*

Powell: *I went down there, yesterday, and looked around it. Piano's still there. It was, it was, ah ... had a lot of fun. Learned ...*

George Powell.

"(my father) had a mine over at Rex Creek...the top of Rex Creek. He had some tunnels back in there; and he was hydraulic'in; and a rock came off the mountain. He couldn't hear it with the noise of the giants there; Hit him in the head. They hauled him into Kennecott here on a wagon and horses. And ... he died in the hospital then. ...he died when I was a year and a half old."

GEORGE POWELL

Hovis: *Learned a little bit?*

Powell: *Everything you need to know!* [Laughs].

Hovis: *Good!*

Powell: *Think better than today I think* [Chuckles].

Bleakley: *Was just ten or twelve students at a time?*

Powell: *Yeah ...it's ... 'bout ten. ... It wasn't very, wasn't too many ... Yeah.*

Bleakley: *Um-hum.*

Powell: *It was more like ... ah ... oh ... it was* [a] *company, company school, and they had company policies, and company ... education and all. Almost like, was almost like ...* [unintelligible word] *... they, ah ... wouldn't ... they accommodated us, but it was a ... school had strict rules and regulations ... what you learn and stuff like that.*

Hovis: *Can you remember any of those regulations?*

Powell: *No...*

Hovis: *... that might be different from what other people had?*

Powell: *No. Some other kids might ... some of the older kids might, but I was, ah ... wasn't, wasn't worried about the ... rules and regulations ... we'd ....*

Hovis: *Oh, yes, we've talked to the women who worried about the rules, and the men who really didn't* [laughter] *dare.* [Laughter].

Powell: *Rules keep your nose clean, and stuff like that. Do it ... take care of your stuff ... and, and take care of other people's stuff left out.*

Hovis: *Um-hum.*

Powell: *Everybody helped everybody else, And it was a good deal all around.*

Hovis: *O.K. You pretty much had the run of the place? Could you could go just about any place you wanted to?*

Powell: *Oh yeah; we*['d] *... go up to the mill ... go up and watch my stepfather ... his work, and, ah ... and the machine shop ... and the power plant* [unclear word]. *Nobody bothered you ... as long as you ... you did things that wouldn't upset things ...*

Hovis: *Don't stick your nose in belts ... No biggie. ... O.K.*

Powell: [Unclear word] *had me, traded me off several times when we were working ... watched the operations, and stuff like that.*

Hovis: *Any favorite parts of it? Any parts of it that you enjoyed more than others?*

Powell: *Oh ... not particularly ... it was just, oh ... it was all educational. ... Yeah there ...* [were] *hockey games 'n, ah ... and ... [unclear word – sounds like handball] they call down there ... and, ah ... and they had the, ah ... baseball diamond ... with bases out down there ... Had a black bear, used to come down there all the time, and play with the ... play with the bases* [all laugh].

Hovis: *All right* [continued laughter].

Powell: [Unclear words] *could ah put a pint of alcohol out there ... when ... bea'... bear* [chuckle] *lapped that up, and made about three laps of the bases there, and tore the bases all up a bit ... nothin' left ...'s event the bear* [laughter].

Hovis: *O.K.* ... [Unclear word – possibly "that'd"] *have been a cook out of the west bunkhouse down here then?*

Powell: *Yeah.*

Hovis: *Yeah. Um-hum. Was that, was that a Chinese cook?*

Powell: *Pardon.*

Hovis: *Chinese cook, or ... Chinese?*

Powell: *No he wouldn't been Chinese. ... Cook wasn't Chinese [unclear words]. White, white people, white man. Yeah.*

Hovis: *We're very vague on how many different groups were out here - how many Chinese, Japanese. ... Whether there were any ... natives worked here ...*

Powell: *There was a few Chinese, and, ah ... Japanese. ... Japanese run the laundry. The Chinese ...* [unclear words – sounds like "member what the, he's ah"]. *But ...* [Unclear words – sounds like "One ... time ..."] *down to Cordova, any ... one time on the train, and* [he] *talked to the section house down on the river, down there by ... oh, between Chitina and Cordova.*

Hovis: *Um-hum.*

Powell: *And there was ... a waterfall, 's real ... heavy ple... heavy river rapids there... and I asked this guy what the name* [of] *that river was. You know. And he said they called it "China Man Charlie" rapids. And I guess, he said, "What did you call it?"... "How'd you hear that?" He says ... he bought five hundred tickets on the ice pool ... and he lost it by a minute, or something like that. He committed suicide. ... Jumped in the river there.*

Hovis: [Sigh]. *Huh ... Holy ...*

Powell: *I don't know if it's true, or not, but that's ...* [what he] *told me ... Called it China Man's Rapids after that.*

Hovis: *That's a sad loser.*

Powell: *Yes* [laugh].

Hovis: *Um. Yeah.*

Powell: *Yeah, in 1932 we left ... here. They closed ... slowed the mines down quite a bit.*

Hovis: *Um-hum.*

Powell: *We went down* [the] *... Copper River on the train, and the bridges* [were] *going out. ... They salvaged most of the ties and stuff ...*

Hovis: *Um-hum.*

Powell: *... for reuse, and ...* [unclear word] *... rebuild the bridge again. What, they had two by twelve planks nailed across* [one] *from the top of the piling. And a two by four rail [put] up for a hand rail. So ... we had to get off the train there and walk across the bridge, on that ... and ... catch, catch another train on the other side ...* [at] *Chitina .*

Hovis: *Um-huh.*

Bleakley: *That must have been about the sixteenth of August 1932, cause the seventeenth ...*

Powell: *Ah?* [stated emphatically].

Bleakley: *I seen pictures of the bridge gone ... in the river.*

Powell: *I don't remember* [unclear words] *... I thought it was earlier ... June time, myself. ... It might been there that, that late* [though].

Bleakley: *'S, I've got a picture that's dated by who ever took it: August 17, 1932. ... That shows pieces of the, of the tracks and stuff in the water.*

Hovis: *Um-hum.*

Bleakley: *And the bridge gone.*

Copper River Railway Bridge at Chitina, Aug. 17, 1932. Courtesy Anchorage Museum of History and Art.

Powell: *I never seen the pic...* [unclear word] *of that* [unclear word]. *But ...*

Bleakley: *Do you have any ...*

Powell: *I would say* [unclear words] *I don't know I was wrong. Going across there ... My mother was scared stiff.*

Bleakley: *... Your mother was hysterical.*

Powell: [Laughter with Hovis and Bleakley].

Hovis: *O.K.*

Powell: *Was a good trip, but, today, I can go down through that road in a car, or something, and I can't imagine a train goin' through there.*

Hovis: *Awfully steep in spots isn't it?*

Powell: *Well, the steep places mostly had trestles.*

Hovis: *Um-hum.*

Powell: *Top there, to top them ... and there was lots of trestles ... and they ... stuck in there ... good experience.*

Hovis: *So, where, where'd you go when you left, left Kennecott?*

Powell: *Went to Anchorage.*

Hovis: *Went to Anchorage?*

Powell: *Yeah. Yeah, my stepfather got a job on the railroad over there ... He worked there until, ah ... 1940, ah ... '47, or along that. And, he went towards* [unintelligible] *probably about '48. Then he went out to Portland, Oregon. Him and my mother kind 'a split up about that time ... and he got down the ... Portland, there. And ... he, he got tangled up with some of these boxing ... underworld. He was, he was, kind of ah ... promoter ... He use to promote fights in the community hall in Kennecott. And so he got that down there, and, somebody killed him there. They don't know who it was. They found him in the river, with ...*

with, op... [unclear words- sounds like Sauvie's Island], *or some place down there.*

Hovis: *Hum.*

Powell: *That was in ... I guess ... 50... no '51 ... they found, ah ... died.*

Hovis: *He use to bring fighters in here to Kennecott?*

Powell: *Yeah. We had 'em ... they ... he was a promoter ... and the miners, and the people in shops ... had volunteers* [that would] *box you know. Stuff like that.*

Hovis: *You usually won?*

Powell: *Pardon.*

Hovis: *Did it, were there regular winners?*

Powell: *No ... they was, ah ... Every couple months ... he had ... put on an exhibition. Whatever happened be ...you'd ... you would volunteer, or ...*

Hovis: *Bare knuckle?*

Powell: *... get your head knocked off.*

Hovis: *Was it bare knuckle fighting?*

Powell: *No. They had the ... ah ...handball court, over there by the school, between that and the bunkhouse.*

Hovis: *Um-hum.*

Powell: *And he was, he was, ah ... in to handball* [unclear words]. *Had two* [unclear word].

Hovis: *How old were you when you left here?*

Powell: *Nine.*

Hovis: *Nine? You got some pretty strong memories of the, of the place.*

Powell: *I ... I've forgot, forgot so much of it by now. But ... and it's ... getting to the point that ... I can't remember a lot of the ... mmm ... small details, and stuff like that.*

Hovis: *Seem to be doing all right by me!*

Powell: *Oh* [laugh].

[Gap in tape].

Powell: *... Oh yeah, on that ... that trip down the ... to Cordova there ... Couple of times ... made three trips on the railroad I guess, but ...*

Hovis: *Um-hum.*

Powell: *That, that ... train was something else.*

Hovis: *Do you, do you have vivid memories of riding the train?*

Powell: *Oh, yeah.*

Hovis: *What, what was it like? Were the cars hot? Ah ... horse hair seats? ...*

Powell: *No. It was, it was ... they were old-fashioned cars, you know ... and they were warm, and everything* [was] *workin' on 'em .... The train picked up a Native down there in Chitina ... and, ah ... he was ill, for some reason ... But he got into Cordova ... Even hungry ... My stepfather gave him a tuna fish sandwich.*

Hovis: *Um-hum.*

Powell: *And he's ... Guy, got down into, ah ... Cordova ...* [And] *why, he just got off the train and dropped dead ... on the platform, there.*

Bleakley: *Cer... Certainly hadn't been ... Nothing to do with the tuna fish!* [All laugh].

Powell: *No. He was, he was, ah ... looked like [he was in] pretty bad shape. But, he came in our car looking for something to eat there.*

Hovis: *Yeah.*

Powell: *He was going to the doctor, or something, in Cordova, at the time ... And ... he was the first* [dead] *body I'd seen outside of a funeral, or something like ... that ...I'd seen up here.*

Hovis: *Um-hum. D' you ever have much to do with people who lived down in McCarthy?*

Hovis: *O.K.*

[Gap in tape].

Hovis: *... and he was pretty good with ... 'bout that, with some people, weren't they? Letting some people work out on their own mines in the summer ... taking them in the winter.*

Powell: *Um-hum. They had, they had a good machinist crew here then. ... They had, ah, Carl Engstrom was up there. I think you heard of him.*

Hovis: *Um-hum.*

Powell: *And ... they had, oh ... quite a bit of work ... But there was slack periods and everything ... where a guy could get off ... and do ... their ... stuff like that. If they had ... work to be done, they'd ... get a hold of them, and bring um back - get um back here.*

[Gap in tape].

Hovis: *... father down in the cemetery?*

Powell: *Yeah. It be ... he's back in the far wall. ... He ah, he ah ... [unclear word] best ground. But ah ... you know, where* [the] *chicken wire fence fell?*

Hovis: *Um-hum.*

Powell: *I was down there four years ago, 'n they had it all painted up ... white washed.*

Hovis: *Um-hum.*

Powell: *Yeah, somebody cleaned it up pretty good.*

Hovis: *That was the crew from the asbestos removal [loud noise blocks words]. The people that took out the asbestos here ...*

Powell: *Yeah.*

Hovis: *They hadn't made themselves quite as popular as they could have. So they decided to do a community service project, and go down and clean up the cemetery.*

Powell: *Well, they didn't do that, I don't think ...* [indecipherable mumbling].

Hovis: *Oh, we had to clean up after them too!*

Powell: *But, as far as I'm concerned, them asbestos people are out of their mind anyway. 'Cause it ... all people up here ... ah ... of all the people here, I don't think ... probably none of them had ever died of asbestos.*

Hovis: [Laughs].

Powell: *They worked ... they worked with it ... and lived with it ... and everything else, for ....*

Bleakley: *Yeah.*

Powell: *For years.*

Hovis: *Um-hum.*

Powell: *I think it's, it's ... an overrated hazard ... so.*

Hovis: *Probably.*

Powell: *I worked with asbestos, from the, ah ... around airplanes, for forty years ...*

Hovis: *Um-hum. Never wore a ma... a mask?*

Powell: *Insulation and stuff on the ... ah ... hydraulic lines ...* [and] *stuff, you know, and like ... it's, ah ... overrated as far as I'm concerned ... Scare at that ... scare business from running.*

Hovis: *What, what did you ... after you left Kennecott? Where did you go?*

Powell: *I went to Anchorage.*

Hovis: [Unclear words – sounds like: "what did you do there?"].

Powell: *Went to school fall of '32. Mowed lawns for several residents including* [the] *Atwoods and Larsons. Delivered papers, etc. Worked at Alaska Fish Cannery in '38 – '39. Then I went to work on the ... ah ... Eckmann's Furniture Company* [downtown?] *driving a truck ...*

Hovis: *O.K.*

Powell: *... Kid ... taught me to drive ... a model "A" ... car he had, on a golf course after school one night ... And the next day, I went down and I got a job drivin' truck ... at a ... furniture store. The guy says "you drive?" I says, "oh yeah."* [Laughter].

Powell: *Was a five speed International ... Never had a lick of trouble* [all laugh] *... didn't even have a license at the time ...*

Hovis: *Um-hum.*

Powell: *I worked there for about four years. ... Three years, I guess. ... I ... They ... well ... Before that, I worked over 't canneries down there, at ... Anchorage.*

Hovis: *Um-hum.*

Powell: *I ... Ah ... General ... Alaska General Fish Company. Delivered papers, etc. Worked at Alaska Fish Cannery in '38 – '39. ... It was, it was, good ...* [unclear words] *... no pay ... It was a dollar ... No, eighty-five cents an hour, I started ... And I got, ah ... You didn't ... Got in there 'n got something. ... Already* [uncertain word – sounds like "five"]. *But ... we had a problem with all the kids in school work*[ing] *there* [in the] *summer time. When I didn't work there, I worked over at Eckmann's Furniture Store.*

Hovis: *Were you another one of the kids, that when you left here, you got all the childhood illnesses, one right after the other?*

Powell: *No! Ah, no.*

Hovis: *Oh, the ... Several people have said that when they left here, they were really healthy when they were here. But, when they went to ... went ... left Kennecott, they got, ah ...*

Powell: *Health problems?*

Hovis: *They got ... the mumps ... chicken pox ... measles* [many talking at one time here]. *... Never got any of the childhood diseases here.*

Bottom steps: Lyle Morris, Jean Presley, Catherine Howard, and unknown child. Upper steps: John Watsjold, Bruce Morris, Frank Morris, unknown child, and teacher.

"It was...like...[a]...company school, and they had company policies, and company...education and all.

...they accommodated us, but it was a ... school (that) had strict rules and regulations ... what you learn and stuff like that.

Rules keep your nose clean..."

GEORGE POWELL

Powell: *Yeah, I got ...chicken pox. ... And got measles after going to Anchorage ... And something else. But, that's all! Nothing else. ... Nobody ... Ah ... O.K. Maybe ... ah ... special ... everybody in town had, ah ... chicken pox ... But ... there was no, ah ... well* [unclear words]. *It's just, just ... some[thing] went through. ... But, ah ...Filipinos work*[ed] *on the, ah ... on the cannery down there...*

Hovis: *Um-hum.*

Powell: *... that one guy on the weight machine. ... Ah ... case come through ... full of ... ah ... what ... thirty-eight, or forty pounds, or whatever it was. Anyhow ... ah ... we found a way to re-stack the cans in the box ... You put two extra cans in there. And the case weight checker went through the scale ... and it'd be too heavy. So he'd just ... dumped the case out. And weigh each can separately, and it was ... all worked exactly right. He ... could never get these two cans back in the case* [Powell and Hovis laughter]. *About two or three weeks later, we'd do the same thing again. And we ... was driving that guy crazy* [laughs].

Hovis: *Ah-huh ... yes.*

Powell: [Chuckling]. *You put four cans, and three, and a four, and three, and four, like that. And leave space on the end, so you can get the extra cans in.*

Hovis: *Um-hum.*

Powell: *That, that guy was real proud of his mind* [laughs].

Hovis: *Did you play any practical tricks like that when you were out here ... at Kennecott?*

Powell: *Oh ... we done a few things here ...*

Hovis: *Um-hum.*

Powell: *We were down here throwin' rocks at an outhouse one day, and ... the butcher caught us ... We didn't see 'm comin' ... So he nailed both of*

us. Took us up to the, ah, meat market here. And he was going to cut our ears off and hang us on a meat hook. Boy, you grabbed [unclear words]. *He was tellin' us all about throwing rocks and boy, he scared the livin' hell out of us.* [Laughter].

Hovis: *How long* [laughter] *before you threw rocks at an outhouse again?* [laughter].

Powell: *We didn't throw rocks no more!* [Continued laughter]. *He got our attention!*

Hovis: *Yes.*

Powell: *He got that ... he set it down there, and he had a meat cleaver, 'n* [was] *knockin' these hooks back 'n forth on a meat hook rail up there, and ...*

Hovis: *Um-hum.*

Powell: *... was going to hang us up ...*

Hovis: *You gone back in there?*

Powell: *Um-hum.*

Hovis: *Oh yeah. Yeah.*

Powell: *He set us, set us down ... and grabbed his, ah ... steel to ... sharpen his tool up, there. ... And we took off, you know!* [Laughter]. *He was laughing like hell.*

Bleakley: *I'll bet!*

Hovis: *How much did you say you'd dress out to? What'd he say you'd dress out to? How much good meat left?*

Powell: *'Bout fifty pounds* [laughter]. *Once you ... Anybody about six years old.*

Powell: *Yeah ...*

Hovis: *I'm glad to hear that.*

Powell: *Yeah. People were compassionate ... Helped everybody else.*

Hovis: *Thank you very much. O.K.* [unintelligible].

Powell: *There were ski parties, and stu*[dents] *... go up 'n down the railroad tracks.*

Hovis: *You guys ever go across to 4th of July Creek, or?*

Powell: *I probably did.*

Hovis: *Didn't like ... or anything like that?*

Powell: *Well, some of 'em might have. But, I was ... I never got to do it ... Most of the kids were older than I was ... When. ... I was ... born in '23. And, ah ... but, ah ... There was only ... four, or five ... Six ... was born within* [the] '22 *... to '24 range there.*

Hovis: *Um-hum.*

Powell: *Most of the kids were older than I* [was], *and ... any old timers ...*

Hovis: *At age nine. Age nine ... Now you were old enough to ask this question –* [Did] *you ever have any girl friend out here?*

Powell: *No.*

Hovis: *A little girl ... Puppy love thing?*

Powell: *No. No. [laughs]. [I was only] nine at the time ... Wasn't worried about girls then.*

Hovis: *It's a shame ... My son's started ... He's six ... He's still ... Startin' to worry ... He's starting to worry about it already! Scary.*

[Pause in interview conversations].

Powell: *Went to St. Louis in 1942. They sent many families out of Anchorage for safety during ... the war.*

Hovis: *Um-hum.*

Powell: *We went by Tri-motor Stinson from Anchorage down to Juneau ... And then ... boat to Seattle ... and back to St. Louis by train.*

Hovis: *That must have been ...* [A] *Tri-motor! ... Must of been quite a flight.*

Powell: *Oh yeah, it was fun. Yeah.*

Hovis: *Um-hum.*

Powell: *Yeah, it's same type goin' outside now again.* [The Alaska Aviation Heritage Museum had it out there; and they sold it in '99.]

Hovis: *Same one?*

Powell: *It's the same type.*

Hovis: *Ah ... It's the. ... That's the one they're selling.*

Powell: *It's goin' back to Indiana, some place.*

Bleakley: *It's like, the only one left! I think.*

Hovis: *Yes.*

Powell: *There's only a couple of 'em left. Yeah. .... They're lucky ... they got this one ... I think ... in a short time, it would have, ah ... crashed itself.*

Hovis: *Um-hum.*

Powell: *'Cause they ... They found some problems with it out here before it left ... that hadn't been corrected previously.*

Hovis: *Um-hum.*

Powell: *They fixed it* [and] *... they probably saved it ... from crashing.*

Hovis: *When you're ... Did they have the airstrip down at McCarthy when you were here? Or was ...*

Powell: *They had a small one down there, yeah. Yeah,* [unclear name – sounds like Bud Seltenreich] *had his plane down there; and ... him and his brothers Ted and Fred ...* [Harold] *Gillam use to come in there ... sometime*[s]. *And a few more of them.*

Hovis: *'D you know Bud?*

Powell: *Oh yeah! Over there ... Bud got me started in the airplane business about 19.. ah ... '38, '39, or something like that. ... Cleaned parts for 'm out of Merrill Field there.*

Hovis: *O.K.*

Powell: *That's back in a long time.*

Hovis: *You're a pilot, aren't you; too?*

Powell: *Pardon. I have flown, yeah. But not since about 1970 ... or ...*

[Gap in tape].

Powell: *... Bud and his brother had ... he had ... a biplane. And he used to fly back. ... Was first year Gillam came up.*

Hovis: *Um-hum.*

Powell: *Was up 'n down through here ... about 1928 ... 29 ... something like that.*

Hovis: *They were a couple characters, weren't they?*

Powell: *Yeah. In 19.. ah ... '84 ... '85 ... brother Fred* [Seltenreich] *was over on the ... in Shushanna, or some place over here; and he found, a ... a diary in an old roadhouse that ... belonged to my dad.*

Hovis: *Really!*

Powell: *He gave it to me; and, ah ... [I found] it had ah ... bunch of his, ah ... notations from mining and stuff like that.*

Hovis: *Um-hum.*

Powell: *Recipe for raisin wine.*

Hovis: *Well, you're going to be over there ...*

Powell: *Hope there's* [unclear word]. *... In mint condition! Almost.*

Hovis: *You still have it?*

Powell: *Yeah.*

Hovis: *Would you mind if I called you in Anchorage? And took a look at it some time?*

Powell: *Well, ah ... yeah, if I could it* [laughs].

Hovis: *I would, I would love to see this.*

Powell: *Note ... note book like that?*

Hovis: *Um-hum. Did it talk about what he did on the ... on the* [unintelligible].

Powell: *There's not, there's not too much information ... eh? ... 1920. .... Two, I think ... '20 ... '21 ... '23.*

Hovis: *Um-hum.*

Powell: *Year before he died.*

Hovis: *O.K.*

Powell: *But, I don't know if I can find the thing anymore. I'll look for it. See if I can find it.*

Hovis: *O.K., I'm going to make a note that you have that, because I would love to, if you do have it, I'd love to see it. I need a good recipe for raisin wine! ... Most of mine are really rotten. ... O.K.*

[Powell later found his father's note book and brought it to a meeting with Hovis at the NPS office in Anchorage on June 19, 2000. Hovis copied portions of it to be stored with the NPS Alaska Regional office curatorial collections].

[Gap in tape].

Powell: *... old roadhouse over there* [unclear words] *... Shushanna.*

Hovis: *... O.K. ... And that, and that was the diary he would have been keeping on Rex Creek, though? It found its way all the way up the Shushanna.*

Powell: *No. No. It wasn't a diary ...* [it] *was just a log book ... with all his notes* [unclear words]. *He didn't have ... didn't have much in it besides notations on his, ah ...* [bills?] *and stuff like that.*

Hovis: *Um-hum. ... Well, that's as much of the mining as being able, being able to find the gold.*

Bleakley: *Yeah. I'm still tryin' to figure out who it was that ... that made that first landing in Shushanna* [Chisana] *in '29. There was an injured ... over there, and somebody flew in from McCarthy to Shushanna, and picked em up.*

Powell: *Wasn't Bud Seltenreich, or Fred, was it?*

Bleakley: *I don't know. I haven't, ah ... Nobody's* [laugh] *ever said who it was.*

Hovis: *Was that in that, ah...*

Bleakley: *Was in McKennan's* [Robert A. McKennan's] ...

Hovis: *McKennan's study ... Diary. Yeah.*

Powell: *Well, Bud Seltenreich* [would] *probably know.*

Hovis: *Um-hum.*

Powell: *He can probably tell you. His brother ... ah, crashed an airplane over there ... about that time.*

Bleakley: *It was somebody from McCarthy, I think ... was flying around here then ... There couldn't have been that many people with airplanes here* [laughter].

Powell: *Yeah. He'd know who it was. Yeah.*

Hovis: *Well, track Bud down then and ask him.*

Powell: *Ask him, yeah. Yeah, he's got good memory. He, ah ...* [In the 6-19-00 meeting with Hovis, Powell pointed out that Bud passed away in '99].

[Gap in tape].

Powell: *... lot of things going down in McCarthy, there ... He* [Red] *... used to, ah ... have a dog team. And he'd haul miners back 'n forth from ... McCarthy to Kennecott. Be down there for a weekend ... or for over night.*

Hovis: *Um-hum. Get 'em back for [the] shift in the morning?*

Powell: *Slip 'em on to a sled and bring 'em back here, and ...* [Hovis chuckling] *Five bucks, ah* [laugh].

Hovis: *Yeah, he's told a few moonshine stories, too.*

Powell: *Um-hum. Yeah, that, ah ... Yeah, Red died a year or two ago. And he's ... he had a lot, a lot of his stories ... Like Bud, he should write that stuff down that he's got.*

Bleakley: *The problem is ... sometimes we don't know the right questions to ask.*

Hovis: *Um-hum.*

Bleakley: *You know? And then, by the time we think of the right questions, it's too late.*

Hovis: *Yeah.*

Powell: *Yeah ... It's, ah ... I wrote a lot of stuff down back in the last few years. But I can't ... I ... Just try ta...*

Hovis *Um-hum.*

Powell: *Get it down before I forget it.*

Hovis: *Well, if you would ever like to share it, we'd be a very appreciative audience.*

Powell: *Well, most is what I've ... told you so far ... Haven't, ah ... Given ... little odds and ends here 'n there about, ah ... But ... most stuff, it's, ah... What I've written down ... has ... nothin' to do with Kennecott at all. Just* [unclear words] *and Kennecott, Anchorage, and ... durin' the war, and stuff like that.*

Hovis: *Um-hum.*

Bleakley: *Well, that's all interesting stuff, too.*

Hovis: *Yeah.*

[Gap in tape].

Powell: *In 1945, I found an airplane over in China.*

Hovis: *Um-hum.*

Powell: *And ... I copied its ... name and model [number] off it ... and the engine numb... type, and ... her .... Year. Tryin' ta find information on that thing. I told a friend of mine here about it, about twenty years ago. And he's, he run across a model airplane magazine [that] had a picture of it, and plans for it. But, ah ... [the nineteen] ninety-seven ... Wings Magazine came out with* [a] *story about another* [similar] *plane. Had pictures* [and] *all the stuff like that.* [It] *was made in Canada.* [At the] *Canadian* [Carand?] *foundry.*

Hovis: *Oh, yeah.*

Powell: *And, ah ... the article said that airplane was ... was burned up in a fire; in, ah ... Canada ... Eastern Canada.*

Hovis: *There's the problem. There' s another one over in China.*

Powell: *Another one over in China. It was ... I got a ...* [unclear word – sounds like "picture"]. *Got hope ... now. Got a hold of* [the Wings] *magazine. Told 'em 'bout finding this thing over there.*

Hovis: *Um-hum.*

Powell: *I got the pot stirred up over there now ... And they got ... I was tryn' ta track down ... how that plane got there. Wasn't suppose to be out ... They only made one of 'em.*

Hovis: *Um-hum. Burned up in the fire. Was only one of 'um. Only one* [laughter].

Powell: *I got several letters back from this guy that wrote that story, and I think there's more information comin'. .... Was a beautiful little airplane!*

Hovis: O.K.

Powell: *Must have been a fighter ... an FDB-1. Was a fighter bomber. But ... the United States government got in to the act, and they couldn't sell airplanes for, ah ... too many*

Main Street, Cordova. Courtesy Landfear B. Norris Collection.

"The train picked up a Native (man) down there in Chitina ...looked (in) pretty bad shape. ...he came in our car looking for something to eat...and... My stepfather gave him a tuna fish sandwich. (The Native man) was going to the doctor...in Cordova... and (when we) got down into...Cordova...he just got off the train and dropped dead...on the platform there. ...he was the first body I'd seen outside of a funeral, (the first)...I'd seen up here."

GEORGE POWELL

Hovis: *Well, George, we'll say thank you again.*

Powell: *O.K.*

Hovis: *And I'll turn it* [the tape recorder] *off, and I'll expect you to start to start saying something else again* [all laugh].

Mildred Erickson Reis and Oscar Watsjold

Interview conducted By Al and Lynda Shaw
Kennecott, Alaska
June 15, 1990

Reis: *She told us...teacher told us we were not to speak Norwegian at home because I would have an accent. So there was no more Norwegian in our homes so I lost my accent...*[ability to speak Norwegian. My father was of Swedish descent and was raised in North Dakota. He was glad of this rule as his Norwegian wasn't that great.]

Shaw, A.: *So when you came to McCarthy you were speaking...*[bilingual]?

Reis: *Norwegian. I could speak English too but I lost the Norwegian.*

Shaw, A.: *Tell us when you first came to that one room schoolhouse.*

Reis: *It was 1919.*

Shaw, A.: *1919.*

Reis: *Yes. And I went to school there until I was in the fifth grade. And I have with me ... I have my report cards and that will tell you all ... what kind of student I was...what my deportment was ... and all the years ... when we get up there give them to you.*

Shaw, A.: *Are you the one who told us that the last class at that school was 1922?*

Reis: *No it wasn't.*

Shaw, A.: *Somebody mentioned that..*

Reis: *I didn't think it went on that long, but I don't know.*

Shaw, A.: *Somebody we talked to...maybe it was in a letter ... said the last class there was 1922. Did you ever go to the 2 room schoolhouse?*

Reis: *Yes, I went from the time I was in 5th to second high. Then my last year ... in ninth grade, I had my lessons at recess and at noon time and after school ... so I didn't conflict with the grade school.*

Shaw, A.: *How many grades were in that one room school house?*

Reis: *All of them, from the first through second year high. They had quite a time getting all the lessons in, as you can imagine, so they one year divided so some of us came in the morning, some in the afternoon. But I don't think that worked any better. All the teachers who came to Kennecott had to be able to teach High School.*

Shaw, A.: *That was still the one room school house?*

Reis: *Yes. They had a system there that when you were in the 7th grade the superintendent of the Territory ... Superintendent of Education ... would send a sealed envelope to the teacher with your tests in it ... so when I was in 7th grade I had physiology and geography and they sent that back to Juneau and I had to sit and wait and hope that I would get into eighth grade. [In eighth grade we had all other subjects tested from Juneau.] Then it would come back and I have my certificate along with me from that. And the Kennecott School was called the Blackburn School in Kennecott. That's what they called it then.*

Shaw, A.: *The last year you went to that school was 1924?*

Reis: *No, it was 1927 ...27 because I went to Holy Names Academy in Seattle* [after that].

Shaw, A.: *Did they continue to use the one-room as a school after that then?*

Reis: *No. When they got the new two-room one Mr. Nieding had just come up as the new manager and they used the one there for a ... and they had this other one built. It had been a bunkhouse before. When I first came up there we used to make these little things with wheels on them and you push around ... little scooters ... and we go in there and play but then they made it into the school. It was a beautiful school. The old schoolhouse they used for storage and stuff and also for ...* [a marque?]

Shaw, A.: *When you went to school there it was up at Kennecott. Do you think that was the same one that was down at Blackburn?*

Reis: *Well, all I know is that they had a school in Blackburn where the McCarthy children and the Kennecott children went, that was before my time. And I know about that and I know that the kids would walk from Kennecott down to Blackburn to go to that school and I remember hearing about Jimmy Dennis, whose father was in charge of all the tramways in Kennecott, that he went down to the school one day and they were carrying guns and he shot a bear. I remember that story. That's about all I know about that school.*

Reis: *But, you see, it was painted red and white, like the rest and I believe Blackburn was the railroad town. Because Mother and Dad stayed there and the Engstroms were there, they were railroad people, and there were others that worked on the railroad and Dad did for a short time. And then Pete Johnson and his wife had a road house there.*

Shaw, A.: *In McCarthy?*

Reis: *No, in Blackburn. I have pictures and I'll show you. And... that's all the people I can remember... there were some Radivans that lived there.*

Skate rink at Blackburn School.

Shaw, L.: *Martin Radivan?*

Reis: *Yes. And Martin Radivan had dogs, big sled dogs. And one of their sled dogs jumped me one time and knocked me down and my mother said it was...*[scary as the dog was vicious.] *My dad went to Martin Radivan and told him to keep the his dogs fenced or tied or he would shoot them. And from then on they wouldn't speak to us but their dogs were penned. My dad was a very quiet man but he had a temper.*

Shaw, A.: *Now that schoolhouse has a little room in it where they had a drain board.*

Reis: *I don't remember that but there was a little cloak room.*

Shaw, A.: *Yes. That cloak room still has the names of six people there.*

Reis: *Probably mine. It was Roy Kay, Frank Johnson ... Rodney Lloyd, Dolly Lloyd, the two Nieding girls, and Wilbur Lloyd, I believe, he was the older boy, Kenneth and Chester Padgett, Harold and Frank Groff, and Kenneth McDonald.*

Shaw, A.: *I forget the names but Mildred's one and Frank's one.* [Mildred Erickson and Frank Johnson].

Reis: *Yes.*

Shaw, A.: *Was there a Chester or a...?*

Reis: *Chester and Kenneth Padgett. Mr. Padgett was the electrician.*

Shaw, A.: *You were saying this morning that they only had one stove in there?*

Reis: *Yes. The bigger boys were appointed the firemen, of course, and they kept it warm because the teacher was from down in the states and she was cold, we just died of the heat. We got to play outside and we wouldn't have much of a place to play, but the train would come by when we were sitting in our desks and we always felt that we were moving and the train was standing still. It was right on the track and there was a chute, and I don't know if it is still there,*

that went down from the railroad tracks to the barn. It was just like glass because they sent the bales of hay down and we used to slide on that and we went so fast we had to hold onto the sides.

Shaw, A.: *See that schoolhouse actually has a place for two stoves but it only had one in it....*

Reis: *I don't remember that, I only remember the boys taking care of the big one in the back.*

Shaw, A.: *It wasn't enough to heat the whole place was it?*

Reis: *Well, apparently it was or at least that was why the teachers always complained, it might have been cold up there. We didn't complain, we had our long johns... There was another boy I remember now, Kenneth McDonald, who was one of the big kids and Frank and Harold Groff. That's about all I can remember, ...a lot of kids.*

Shaw, A.: *What did your dad do?*

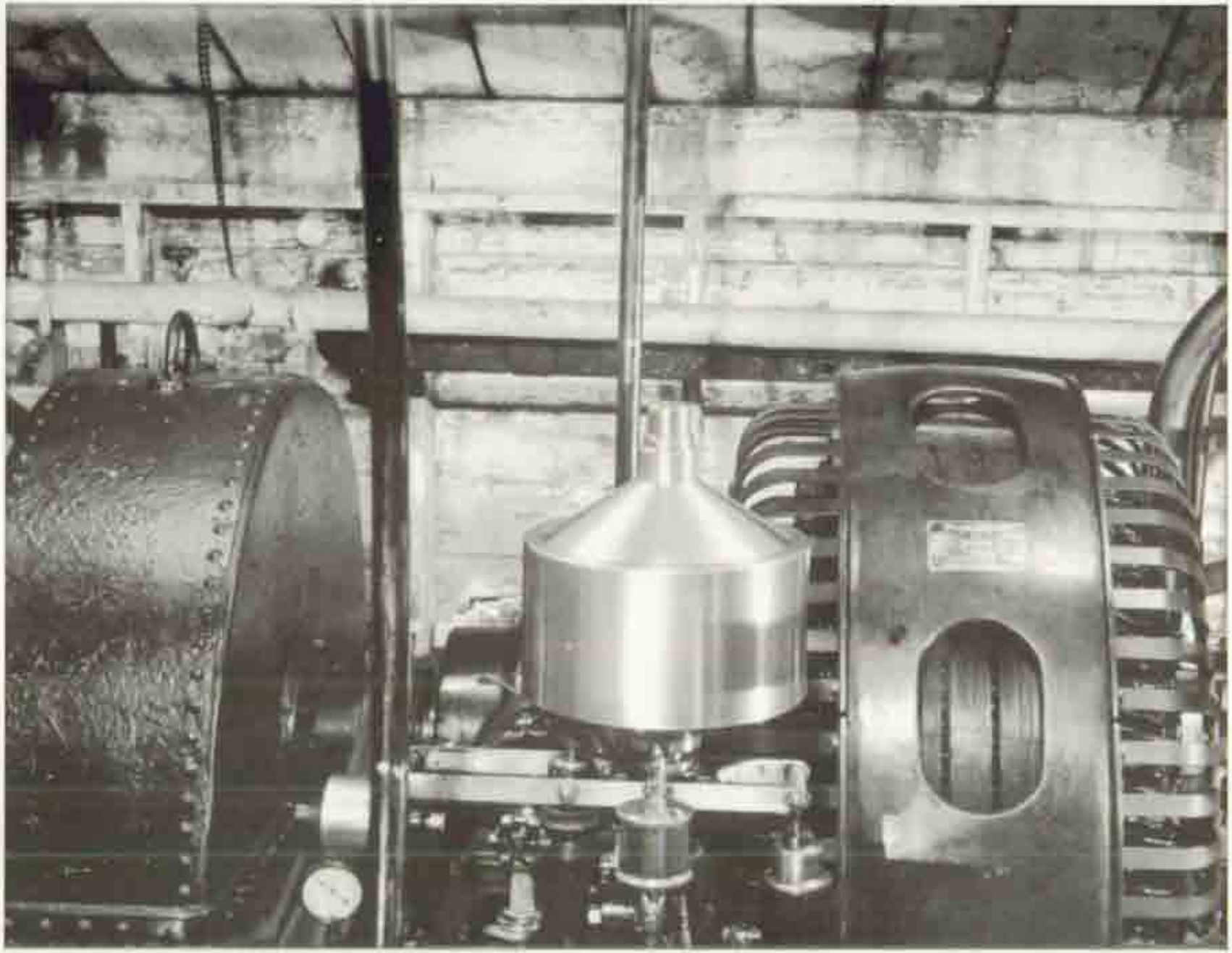
Reis: *He was the chief operator of the power house. He worked for a short time in the machine shop but then he went into the power house and he was the chief operator. Quite often went to Latouche.* [He saw to the installation of new diesels one time, probably, he acted as troubleshooter.] *I have pictures of the inside of the powerhouse.*

Shaw, A.: *Where did you live?*

Reis: *Right next to the lodge. House right next to the lodge, there are two of them alike. Ours and Olson's.*

Shaw, A.: *To the right when you face the lodge?*

Reis: *When you face the lodge it would be to your right, yes. There was a house between there and ours. Mr. Howard, Jack Howard, and Louie Vick and another man, but I can't remember the other man's name... That was before Mr. Howard was married and I believe his daughter is coming, Catherine*



Pelton wheel, Kennecott.

Hodge from back East somewhere. I don't remember where.

Shaw, A.: *When you were here have you seen the schoolhouse?*

Reis: *Yes.*

Shaw, A.: *Mr. Barrett, Lawrence Barrett - did you know him?*

Reis: *Yes, I knew him in McCarthy. His mother and mine were good friends, they used to ski together. I remember Lawrence, he was older, he was one of the big kids.*

Shaw, A.: *Well, he was the one who said that the schoolhouse was brought up from Blackburn.*

Reis: *Well, he should know. He was probably there. He went to the Blackburn School.*

Shaw, A.: *Oh, he went to the Blackburn School? See that schoolhouse really didn't have ... tell us about the bathrooms. Do you remember the bathrooms at the schoolhouse?*

Reis: *They were in the back, there was a hall or some room, well back where the teacher would be, it was in there, the bathrooms.*

Shaw, A.: *How many of them were there?*

Reis: *A boys and girls.*

Shaw, A.: *What were they, they weren't flush toilets or anything, were they?*

Reis: *No, no. They were just the old fashioned kind, a hole, one-holers.*

Shaw, A.: *Do you think they were one-holers or did they have like a potty that had to be emptied?*

Reis: *No, I think it was the old fashioned dug hole type, I think that was what it was, I can't remember anything else. That was the prominent thing up here then.*

Shaw, A.: *There's a shed on the back, with two rooms in it and a vent pipe, no holes in the corner or anything.*

Reis: *Well they probably covered it over later when they closed the school.*

[Inaudible].

Shaw, A.: *Oscar, when were you there?*

Watsjold, O.: *At where?*

Shaw, A.: *Kennecott.*

Watsjold, O.: *Oh, I was in McCarthy.*

Shaw, A.: *You were in McCarthy?*

Watsjold, O.: *Yes, we came to McCarthy in 1929. April.*

Watsjold, Nell: [Nell Watsjold, Oscar's wife has entered the conversation]. *But you went to school in Kennecott, sometime.*

Watsjold, O.: *Yes, 1934 I think, or '33. '32-'33 I went to school in Kennecott.*

Shaw, A.: *You went to school there?*

Watsjold, O.: *Yes. Well, I went to school in McCarthy first.*

Shaw, A.: *What did your parents do?*

Watsjold, O.: *They had a store in McCarthy.*

Shaw, A.: *Oh, they had the store?*

Watsjold, O.: *Yes.*

Shaw, A.: *Which one? The General store?*

Watsjold, O.: *Yes. Watsjold's Hardware. It said hardware on it, or did say hardware on it. It was a general merchandise store.*

Shaw, A.: *When did you leave McCarthy?*

Watsjold, O.: *1938 when they closed the mine.*

Shaw, A.: *When they closed the mine that was it?*

Watsjold, O.: *Yes.*

Shaw, A.: *Well, might as well hold up now til we think of other things...* [Inaudible].

Watsjold, O.: *A team, when the road was open and then when the road closed we went by dog team.*

Shaw, A.: *You had your own dog team?*

Watsjold, O.: *Oh yes.*

she hit a knot in the wood and it came back and just missed her. ...it was up by the stream.

Shaw, A.: *Maybe about 10 miles or so?*

Reis: *No it was just down from Kennecott, a mile or so.*

Shaw, A.: *Was it after...after McCarthy?*

Reis: *Yes, you go down to McCarthy and up to the property that was owned by the Kennecott Copper Corp.*

Shaw, A.: *Oh, it is up by Jeanie Miller's.*

Reis: *Yes. And there's also, somewhere near the graveyard, there's a sign that used to say "The End of Kennecott Property". Was that graveyard kept up at all?*

Shaw, A.: *A little bit.*

Reis: *Did you know a Mrs. Letendre? Mr. and Mrs. Letendre?*

Watsjold, O.: *John Letendre?*

Reis: *Yes. He was a French-Canadian. And his name was "Letendre" - French and that got a little hard to explain I guess so he just changed it to Letendre, L-E-T-E-N-D-R-E. They lived up in the canyon and when you have time I can tell you a story about them, very interesting. I read about her* [Mrs. Letendre's] *brother Charlie Hanson in the Seattle Times a number of years ago in an article by Don Duncan. Mother and I visited with her often and she told us about coming to Alaska from Sweden with her brother and he made a rich gold strike near Fairbanks.*

Watsjold, O.: *We couldn't find ...*

Reis: *Probably gone already.*

Watsjold, O.: *We could find* [a marker for] *Olaf* [in the Kennecott cemetery], *he was down there, you know, in the barn. He used to make all the, he was a blacksmith, he made all the hinges for the barn door and all that, beautiful work. When we*

were down the last time, someone had stripped all that off of it.

Shaw, A.: *He was the station master there in McCarthy in 1938. I think he had only been there three years.*

Reis: *The station master when I was there was Pugh.*

Watsjold, O.: *Pugh, Yes.*

Reis: *The kids always used to say "Clyde O. Pugh".* [We said his middle initial was "O". I think we just said that because we thought it was funny.]

Shaw, A.: *Was he the station master at Kennecott or McCarthy?*

Watsjold, O.: *Pugh? He was at McCarthy.*

Shaw, A.: *Lynda* [Shaw] *thinks that maybe Bill Herman might have been up at Kennecott. But I thought he was there where we have the museum there.*

Shaw, L.: *I thought he said he closed Kennecott, he brought the last train out.*

Reis: *He was there when I was in McCarthy and I don't remember who was at...*

Watsjold, O.: *...cars right on the railroad...six foremen.*

Shaw, A.: *Did you have to pump it* [the car] *or was it...?*

Watsjold, O.: *No, it had a little motor on it.*

Shaw, A.: *On the way out there, just before you get to Long Lake is one of those little cars, still sits there.*

Watsjold, O.: *Yes.*

Reis: *They had one, the pump kind where the track walker - to check the tracks.* [The car trackwalker used had three wheels and a space for tools. There was a lever in front that he used to make it go.]

Watsjold, O.: *So warm in the wintertime that if he turned on his flashlight he had to open the door, he'd get too hot in there.*

Reis: *A little exaggeration there.*

Watsjold, O.: *A little bit.*

Watsjold, N.: *Is this George Flower[s] you are talking about?*

Reis: *The only Negro I ever saw up there.*

Watsjold, O.: *That's the first one I've seen, coming from Norway.*

Reis: *Yes.*

Watsjold, O.: *I mean, the first one I knew.*

Watsjold, O.: *...Long Lake*

Shaw, A.: *They still knew,....about 10 or 15,000 a year* [?]

Watsjold, O.: *Two years ago we walked down there to find George Flowers' cabin. I can't remember, what's the guy's name at Long Lake?*

Watsjold, N.: *Collins.*

Watsjold, O.: *Collins. He told us his son's got that property now that George Flowers had.*

Shaw, A.: *Yes. Mr. Collins comes up every year April 15 and stays until October 15.*

Reis: *Did you ever go ice fishing down there?*

Watsjold, O.: *No.*

Reis: *We did one time and we caught these fish and I don't know what they were. We got them out on the ice and they just jumped all over the place and my mother cleaned them, they were still jumping and I wouldn't eat them. They were a type of cod I believe.*

Watsjold, O.: *I think Collins said there is lake trout in there.*

Reis: *I wouldn't have anything to do with them.*

Watsjold, N.: *Too frisky, huh?*

Reis: *Yes.*

Watsjold, O.: *Did you know the school teacher, Margaret Harrais?*

Reis: *No. The only one I knew is Mrs. Refior.*

Watsjold, O.: *Oh. She was WCTU, Women's Christian Temperance Union. Of course in those days McCarthy was wide open, all the bootleggers, the bars were running like they do now. And she always writing to Valdez complaining about the bootleggers and the bars. At that time the court system was in Valdez. Bob Reynolds, he was the U. S. Marshal, and he'd make a token raid or something once in a while, and that was it. So then they decided they couldn't get rid of her. So Mrs. Garrity and her son Gene Garrity and myself we'd leave and go to Seward and go to school. My sister Stella, brother John and Eleanor went to Kennecott School. They didn't have enough kids for school so they got rid of the school teacher, they also got rid of the school.*

Watsjold, N.: *But there was a family there that they said that couldn't afford to send their children anywhere so she taught the family free. She continued to teach.*

Watsjold, O.: *I don't know how long she was there. She ended up as U.S. Commissioner in Valdez.*

Watsjold, N.: *Are you talking about Mrs. Harrais, the school teacher in McCarthy?*

Watsjold, O.: *Yes.*

Reis: *McCarthy wasn't a nice town.*

Watsjold, O.: *Oh ... Yes.*

Reis: *My mother and dad and I had lived there so I had little friends down there. Mother would let me go down to visit my friends and stay the night, mother thought it was fine because her mother was a nice lady and they weren't all bad. She got criticized for it. So people would say little things like, "Why do they let her daughter go down to that place?". Mother felt there were nice people everywhere and you just had to behave yourself where you were. That was her way.*

Watsjold, O.: *McCarthy was a "sin" town. None of the girls got to go to McCarthy. "Off limits"...*

Young girl, name unknown.

Watsjold, O.: *Did you know Sig Wold?*

Reis: *Oh yes. I talked to him one time, he called me up in Seattle.*

Watsjold, O.: *He was glad when we came, of course he was one of two people we could talk to because he knew Norwegian. And he used to run the taxi service in McCarthy and he had a wood business, the ice business.*

Reis: *Yes. He was in Kennecott first but that wasn't enough for him and I don't know how he made all his money, but he did, he became quite wealthy, when he was in Fairbanks.*

Watsjold, O.: *Oh, yes. And he made it after he left McCarthy. He did everything. As a kid, I used to help him cut wood and haul ice, and haul the honey buckets. We haul honey buckets and dump it in McCarthy Creek and then go an' hose out the truck and then we go to the ice house and take the ice out of the icehouse and put it on the same truck and haul it and deliver it to*

the bars and the hotel. It didn't make any difference, people washed it off after they got it, they didn't know it was in the honey bucket wagon.

Watsjold, N.: *Oh, of course not!*

Reis: *Well, if you're getting on a subject like that. When I first came to McCarthy, we lived in back of where the lodge is, we had a log cabin, and nearby was a big house, as I remember it being big, the girls, the "sports" as they called them, lived there. And my mother, as I say, was quiet ... well, she came from a Norwegian home and was quite religious, and one night when daddy was working a man came to the door and asked for Diva Dale. And Mother was scared to death, Diva Dale was one of the girls. They had different names ... Shortly after that time, she had nothing to do with it, but all the girls were moved down the line, that was by McCarthy Creek, in the houses down there. Well, I was just a little kid and my dad said "You are never to go down there." I didn't know why and finally I asked my mother "why, what did they do?" and with quick thinking, my mother said "they sell white mule." You know that white mule was the drink?*

Watsjold, O.: *Yes, yes.*

Reis: *Well I'd seen men on the street and I think they were drunk and I saw them stumbling and I'd get across the street. They scared me to death. I'd never go down there. I was a big girl before I knew...*

Watsjold, N.: *They sell something besides white mule!*

Watsjold, O.: *Life down on McCarthy Creek where the line was ... there were a lot more houses than there is now...*

Reis: *Yes. Well, I've never been down there.*

Watsjold, O.: *I used to go to the post office for the girls. And they 'd give me a dollar to run all the way up to the post office, I think it was about 2*

blocks ... When Ben Jackson had the post office.

Reis: *I don't know if they were allowed up to the dances, I never saw them.*

Watsjold, O.: *Not in Kennecott.*

Reis: *I mean in McCarthy.*

Watsjold, O.: *Yes. There were some of them there.*

Watsjold, N.: *A dollar for a trip like that was a lot of money in those days, wasn't it? 1929 or...*

Reis: *Yes.*

Watsjold, O.: *In the '30s...and I got a dollar an hour when I was helping Sadie.*

Reis: *Well, that was a good wage too.*

Watsjold, N.: *Well, didn't you go down and take your baths, didn't you tell me that?*

Watsjold, O.: *Well, we didn't have a bath at the hotel and when I got so old I'd go down to Blanche Schmidt's, she was the madam, she had a bath tub, charged a dollar for baths. 'Course she was a good friend of our mother's and she tell all the girls that Oscar was off limits!*

Reis: *Kate Kennedy had a hotel up in McCarthy but I just barely remember her.*

Watsjold, O.: *Kate Kennedy and Mrs. Garrity, she was a dress maker in McCarthy, they were sisters and then I came to Seward with her. Kate Kennedy moved to Seattle.*

Watsjold, N.: *Is that the place across from McCarthy Lodge that Kate Kennedy had her hotel.*

Watsjold, O.: *No. That was Ma Johnson ... after she got married.*

Reis: *I never knew Mrs. Johnson was Ma, I don't remember her first name, of course I had to call her Mrs. because I was a child, but she had a lodge in Blackburn.*

Watsjold, O.: *Yes, but then she had a boarding house in McCarthy.*

Reis: *Yes. It was a boarding house at Blackburn. And I can tell you a story, my mother told me. I was four, I sang Norwegian, my mother sang Norwegian songs to me and she was sitting in the lobby of this little boarding house. They would take everything off the tables and the men could come in and play poker, I guess. And of course that was off limits to me but I didn't realize it. But I left my mother and went into this little room where they were playing poker. They were very nice to children, the men were, this man lifted me and asked me if I could sing and I said, "Oh, yes." So he put me up on a table and I sang the few Norwegian songs that I knew, and then they passed a saucer for money and they put it in a little bag. I ran out to my mother and said "keep this, I going to make some more." She was horrified! And she made me go to bed. That ended my singing career! But I was just tiny and this was fun. She told me that. She didn't like that for a long time then finally she realized it was kind of funny. But there were a lot of Scandinavians there and there were so many Johnsons. There was Washboard Johnson, Too Much Johnson, Silent Johnson, I can't remember any more now but Washboard was the road beside the railroad where the horses would go. They would put logs across so they could walk across and that was where he got his name.*

Shaw, A.: *Oscar, as you think about that, what was the population of McCarthy?*

Watsjold, O.: *Well, about 200 at that time, when we got there in 1929, my dad got there in 1928.*

Reis: *Somewhere I read that in its heyday it was about 500 or 600, when I was there in about, in 1916-17.*

Watsjold, O.: *Oh, yeah. Then it was a booming place. They hadn't left yet after the* [Chisana] *gold rush.*

Watsjold, O.: *'29 was the depression and 1930 they closed the mine, or '31.*

Watsjold, N.: *It was closed for how long?*

Watsjold, O.: *I think it was 2 years.*

Shaw, A.: *They closed the mines in 1938.*

Watsjold, O.: *I mean the first time.*

Shaw, A.: [Inaudible].

Watsjold, O.: *Then they quit running the railroad in the wintertime. Then when they opened up again they ran the railroad from April to October.*

Reis: *Well, my dad had left then before they closed. Came down to visit mother and I in Seattle and then he went up to the Bremner Mines.*

Watsjold, O.: *Oh, he was in Bremner?*

Reis: *Yes.*

Watsjold, O.: *...Pete Ramer?*

Reis: *Pete Ramer and he had a brother, I don't remember his first name.*

Watsjold, O.: *I don't either. I was looking forward to seeing Bertrand Crantz*[?]. *Do you remember, was he a teacher there when you were there?*

Reis: *No.*

Watsjold, O.: *He was a school teacher in McCarthy ... er in Kennecott.*

Reis: *Peyton Ramer was Pete, we always called him Pete. Used to come and see us in Seattle.*

Watsjold, O.: *Lots of bears up there. Used to be, I don't know about now.*

Shaw, L.: *Usually, they are seen every year around now. I think last year one or two bears stole somebody's lunch and swiped at somebody's*

tent. Last year I was coming out of our outhouse and one had me, he didn't have me trapped, really, but I wasn't going to move, come out of the outhouse until he left. It was too close!

Watsjold, O.: *When we went to school in the wintertime,* [if] *it got below -50 we could stay home, it was too cold. I could stay warm running behind* [Sig Wold's truck]. *Some mornings I left it was -60 in McCarthy but it was always warmer up in Kennecott because the altitude was higher.*

Reis: *And you know, the mines didn't get cold like that either, the mines were way higher* [in elevation]. *Well, I've seen it -60 and we had a door in our living room and you couldn't see the nails any other time but when it got cold the nails would show frost. And my dad said that's a good thermometer, you know.*

Watsjold, O.: *When I was chasing buckets we'd call up there and say, "What's the temperature?". And sometimes there would be thirty degrees difference between the Bonanza and the top of the mill.*

Reis: *Did you chase buckets?*

Watsjold, O.: *Yes, for over a year.*

Watsjold, N: *Oscar was the shift boss over Mayor George Sullivan.*

Watsjold, O.: *I figured it out that I walked 5,000 and some miles chasing them buckets before I got to be shift boss. Just goes round and round catch the bucket and dump it, hook it back up...*

Shaw, A.: *Oscar, did you ever stay in those bunk houses up at the mines?*

Watsjold, O.: *No, I never stayed in the upper camp, I had to be down below where the girls were. I couldn't stay up there on the top of the hill.*

Reis: *Some of those miners didn't go out of there for years.*

Watsjold, O.: *Some of those miners stayed up there for six months, then they are*

Mrs. Letendre, Ole Jensen, Inger Jensen, Ingeborg Jensen, Mrs. Anna Johnson, and Frank Johnson.

"...there were a lot of Scandinavians there and there were so many Johnsons. There was Washboard Johnson, Too Much Johnson, Silent Johnson, I can't remember any more now but washboard was the road beside the railroad where the horses would go. They would put logs across so they could walk across and that was where he got his name."

MILDRED ERICKSON REIS

going to go to Seattle, had their plane ticket and never made it out of McCarthy. In about a weeks time, back up the hill they went for another six months.

Reis: *My father said the fellows in Kennecott, some of the men, would get their paycheck and lose it in a poker game right then.*

Watsjold, O.: *Oh, yeah! Poker games in the bunk house next to the store up there ... what the heck was his name? ... Pete The Greek ... No it wasn't Pete The Greek, but anyway he won about $1500.00 that night. Didn't have a bank, always talked about going back to Greece—they said "put your money in a postal savings bond." He said "No, no, $2,000.00, $2,000.00". Next night, he lost it all.*

Reis: *My dad used to play cards in Kennecott, the men would meet in different homes and play panguingue.*

Watsjold, O.: *Oh, yeah?*

Reis: *They liked to play that.*

Watsjold, O.: *It is something like 500 Rummy.*

Shaw, A.: *...Chick Nelson?*

Reis: *I know Chick Nelson.*

Watsjold, O.: *You knew Chick?*

Reis: *Yes.*

Watsjold, O.: *...Japanese coins[?] They'd be camping with Japanese. They must be cheap ... He always seemed to come out alright.*

Reis: *The Japanese liked to play. He was a prospector. Pete Erickson.*

Watsjold, O.: *A prospector?*

Reis: *Yes. He used to work in Kennecott as a night watchmen. When summer would come, why he'd go back out* [to the creeks to prospect].

Watsjold, O.: *Was that the one they called the Swedish policeman? A big guy?*

Reis: *No, he wasn't too large. A very trim man. Wore a Van Dyke beard.*

Shaw, A.: *Other than playing poker, what other kind of entertainment did you have?*

Reis: *At Kennecott?*

Shaw, A.: *Yes.*

Reis: *We had a movie twice a week, Sundays and Wednesdays. And I got to take the tickets, if you took tickets, you got in free, otherwise you had to pay 10 cents. This was fine when I was a little girl, but when I came back up there and I was 17 and one of the young men asked me to go to the show with him. The ticket salesmen, said, "Oh, is Mildred with you, well she always pays 10 cents". I was so embarrassed, I was grown up you know.*

Shaw, A.: *What year was that that you came back?*

Reis: *1928. But I did take tickets down there, the adult fare was 35 cents. And the funny thing about it, the peculiar thing is, when you came into the hall, all the seats on the left were for the men, the other side was for the families. I don't know if there was a law, well, there wasn't any law but if a woman came and didn't know and sat on the men's side, they all whispered, "Look, she is sitting on the men's side.". Some of the men who knew the families would sit on the family side.*

Watsjold, O.: *I saw my first "talkie" in Kennecott.*

Reis: *Did you?*

Watsjold, O.: *Yes.*

Watsjold, N.: *What was it called? Do you recall?*

Watsjold, O.: *No.*

Shaw, A.: *Did you have a lot of Charlie McCarthy movies and Keystone Cops?*

Reis: *No. We had the ... news first and then we had a ... I can remember, Harold...*

Watsjold, O.: *Harold Lloyd?*

Reis: *Yes.*

Watsjold, O.: *Charlie Chaplin.*

Reis: *Charlie Chaplin and Harold Lloyd and...*

Watsjold, O.: *Tom Mix.*

Reis: *Yes and Rudolph Valentino. He was in the movie, he was in "The Sheik", I remember. That was rather a risqué movie.*

Shaw, A.: *Wasn't he a talkie, Valentino?*

Reis: *He was later but this was before that.*

Shaw, A.: [Inaudible].

Reis: *Well the stage was only put up at Christmas time, for the school children's program, and every child in school had a part in it. And I was shy and it scared me to death. I always had a part in a play and they always had me sing. So I had to get up there on the stage all alone and sing. I would look out at my father, he always had a twinkle in his eye, everything I did he thought was wonderful, but I could see in my mother's eyes that she was worried for me, she knew how hard it was. One*

time they had me start in the back and I was to sing as I went down the aisle and then up on the stage, then the others would join me. I had no accompaniment, and I worried all the time that I'd be out of key by the time I got there. But it worked out I guess. My daughter says, "You're not shy now."

Watsjold, N.: *You get less shy as you get older, don't you? I think it doesn't matter to you as much.*

TAPE #1
SIDE #2B

[Inaudible].

Watsjold, O.: *The one he is referring to is only a one dog race, 'cause he* [Gene Garrity] *only had one dog. So he used to...*

Shaw, A.: *Did you have regular sleds or what did you use?*

Watsjold, O.: *Yes. He had a snow sled. He used to deliver water after school, we used to go down to the spring in the wintertime and haul it out in gallon buckets. He had one dog and go all through town and stop at different places....and I did the same thing only I used three dogs hauling water, I delivered water to Kate Kennedy and a couple other people and to the store. Somebody came up with the idea that we should have a race between Garrity's dog and my dog. But I had a leader in my dog, he was an old dog, he wasn't very fast, so I started training one of the other dogs. I start up the hill across McCarthy Creek at the airport and come down and run through that town and down to the depot. Well that dog I was trying to run, he'd come down the hill fine and when he hit Jack O'Neill's store he'd head for home. Every time for a couple of weeks, he did that. I took some meat scraps out of the store and put it in a can down at the depot and I come down the hill and when we got to Jack O'Neill's store I jump off and I had a rope on his collar and let him pass that intersection and we went down to the depot and I'd feed him some scraps out of his*

can. And I did that every day until the day before the race, he still turned for home. Had to lead him away. So the morning of the race, it was on a Sunday, I got up early in the morning before daylight, that dog went straight on through town right...heading for that can of meat down at the depot. .... A lot of people came down from Kennecott for the race, the race was on, and the bets were on and I told my dad, "...one bet, I'm going to win this race". So we start off together, me and Garrity, but he was ahead of me coming up the hill from the old power plant, I was just waiting for my dog to head for home when we got past ... we got right to Main Street and just as he got almost through Main Street, Garrity, his dog was ahead, his dog ran into the car. He had one of his customers watch the dog when they go in there and stop. I just went on through town, right on down to the depot and fed my dog the scraps that were there and went home and won the race. Oh, we had lots of fun as kids.

Watsjold, N: *So Gene Garrity is a nephew of Kate Kennedy's?*

Watsjold, O.: *Yes.*

Shaw, A.: *Really had to make up your own entertainment, didn't you?*

Watsjold, O.: *Oh yes.*

Watsjold, N: *And didn't you have baseball games between McCarthy and Kennecott?*

Watsjold, O.: *Oh, yes.*

Reis: *Yes, there was a rivalry.*

Watsjold, O.: *They* [McCarthy] *imported a pitcher from someplace else on the 4th of July, that was the big game. We played in McCarthy, ... you had all the booze and stuff and you didn't have fun at Kennecott like you could at McCarthy. And then* [we'd] *build fires and that would keep the mosquitoes away and have a ball game.*

Watsjold, N: *Yes, who was it that imported the pitcher, was it McCarthy?*

Watsjold, O.: *McCarthy. .... like ... Snyder and some of those that knew somebody that was a good pitcher and import him from someplace.*

Shaw, A.: *So they'd bring in a "ringer" hub?*

Watsjold, O.: *Yes. 'Course, everybody knew about it. 'Cause all the people in McCarthy was older people any where from 60 to 12, I think my brother was the youngest one on the team, he was about 12, and the oldest one was about 60. All the young fellows came from Kennecott, they were younger fellows.*

Shaw, A.: *You know, the hall up at Kennecott has a basketball court painted on it, on the floor, did you have basketball games too?*

Watsjold, O.: *No. Never heard of any.*

Reis: *Not when I was there either.*

Watsjold, O.: *I guess they might have scrimmaged up there but ... We didn't have any basketball games in McCarthy, I know.*

Reis: *I don't remember any in Kennecott at all.*

Shaw, A.: *Maybe that was painted on later or something.*

Reis: *Yes. The women, for a while had a, in Kennecott, had an athletic club going and one of the men, Carl Stattel, led them in exercises and coached volleyball.*

Shaw, A.: *Didn't they have tennis courts up above?*

Reis: *Oh yes. We had the tennis courts and that is where I spent half of my life when I was up there. Take my lunch and go up there and play tennis. But we had hockey games. And one time they brought two men [to work for Kennecott], their name was Cobb, they were brothers, and they were very good hockey players for Kennecott. ...and then we kids would try to play too. I didn't have hockey skates, I had figure skates.*

Watsjold, O.: *Well they built a skating rink where the baseball field was. Right across from the school.*

Standing, left to right: Mr. Dennis, Mr. Davis, Mr. McCord, Dr. Vista, Mr. Schutze, Mr. Lommel, Mr. Bruers(?). Front row, left to right: Mr. Singers, Mr. Brunelle and Inger Jensen, Vic Vickery and Ole Jensen, Mr. Lyons, and Chris Jensen.

Reis: *I knew the man that started that, Joe Gmunder. He was a Swiss, and he said he knew how to make an ice rink and he went to the office and asked if they would let him build a rink there and they said "well if he knew how, they would give him the yard gang to help," and they made this rink. He showed them how to pack the snow down and then they used boiling water to put on because cold water would freeze before it hit the ice ... So they had this beautiful rink up there, as nice as the one in Seattle... where we had all our hockey games and, you can ask any of our friends from Kennecott who were out there all the time were kids, recess, for 15 minutes back in, you know. At night they had the lights around the rink and once a year they had a carnival. Everybody dressed in costumes, and I think one time, it was about -25 but that didn't matter. They made a three-sided building by the rink, and they brought the piano in from the hall and the .... orchestra would play. So we had music. That orchestra ... used to practice at our house. ... Five pieces...[?] We had a really nice time.*

Shaw, A.: *I know Inger* [Jensen] *said she would have liked to have went to Kennecott and raised a family there.*

Reis: *Yes, but Kennecott ... left.*

Shaw, A.: *What was your home like, electricity and flush toilets?*

Reis: *We had electricity in all of the houses but only the houses beyond the store and up on the hill* [had flush toilets], *seemed to be a pipeline there that provided it. And that's the only ones that had the bathrooms. We did not. In our house the upstairs was cold and my dad put a pipe in our living room stove and put a tank upstairs so then it was warm upstairs too and we had hot water.*

Shaw, A.: *They must have had, somewhere, sewer lines or ... some of them had hot and cold running water.*

Reis: *Yes, but that was on the other side, right up from the new bunkhouse and up beyond that to the north was where the bathrooms were.*

Shaw, A.: *They must have run that later then.*

Reis: *They might have, after I left.*

Shaw, A.: *Some of them by the one-room schoolhouse have toilets in them and had heat in them.*

Reis: *We had a nice stove. The stove was pretty, it was in our living room. When I studied, did my homework, I pulled a piano bench up and sat down on a footstool. That was my desk, I kept warm and studied there.*

Watsjold, N: *Did you know that Eleanor and her sister are going to stay in the same house they lived in McCarthy when they were kids?*

Reis: *Are they really?*

Watsjold, N: *Yes. They have permission from whoever owns it now. And she says she hasn't been back in it in all that time.*

Reis: *Her house was down by the store.*

Watsjold, O.: *Right across the street.*

Reis: *R. L. H. Marshall. Robert Lewis Henry Marshall.*

Watsjold, O.: *I can remember when Judy was ready to go to the hospital about 2:00 am ... came banging on the door. I needed some fresh dogs, I just came back from Kennecott, and Mrs. Tjosevig is about to have her baby so we went out and got some dogs, my harness and hooked up to him and got him and put her in the basket at 2:00 am, it was cold again. I don't know how cold it was but it was cold. We took them up to the hospital and it was born the next morning.*

Shaw, A.: *Take them from McCarthy to Kennecott?*

Watsjold, O.: *Yes.*

Shaw, A.: *That was a pretty active hospital.*

Watsjold, O.: *Yeah. It was the only one between here and Cordova.*

Reis: *My mother became ill in Nizina. They bundled her up on a double-ender. I don't know what time of the year it was - it must have been when it was frozen because they took her to McCarthy and they took her by train to Kennecott.*

Watsjold, N: *What is a double-ender?*

Reis: *It is a sled, there's one by your museum, there's a picture of one ... The sled has runners that go up on either end.*

Watsjold, O.: *I saw ... People used it with horses.*

Reis: *Yes. At that time, my dad took me to a little roadhouse that was up beyond Nizina and fixed up a bag, or big bandanna handkerchief ... some of my clothes in it, put a stick on that and he said, "now, you're a tramp". And then he put me on the back of his horse and we rode up to a roadhouse. He was doing this to get my mind off my mother, I think. Anyway, I didn't worry about her, I was up there, I was a tramp! I was tiny then, of course.*

Shaw, A.: *What do you remember, if anything, about the dairy.*

Reis: *Well, the dairy was in back of the private mess, in that building. I knew Mrs. Johnson, Frank Johnson's mother, ... she was Finnish. She took care of it. When the milk came from the barn she pasteurized it and put it into the bottles. That is all I know of it.*

Shaw, A.: *You said, "in back of the private mess?"*

Reis: *Yes.*

Shaw, A.: *Where was that at?*

Reis: *You know where the assay office was?*

Shaw, A.: *Yes.*

Reis: *It is right next door. It's a long building. The end of that building*

was the private mess and the staff ate there. And the upstairs of that was called the annex. That was an overflow for the men that lived in the staff house.

Watsjold, O.: *Then they built the barn because the barn...*

Reis: *No, the barn was way down there...*

Watsjold, O.: *Well, on the way to McCarthy ... down the road.*

Shaw, A.: *The barn is the one down there by the one-room schoolhouse.*

Reis: *Yes. They took the milk up to this place and my dad lived in the annex when we were in Seattle and he was up there.*

Watsjold, O.: *When they closed the mines down in '31 or '32 ... they got rid of the cows, my dad got one of the cows in McCarthy. It was my job to take care of the cow and milk it. What a chore, chasing that cow all over McCarthy. Every time you wanted to milk it was gone someplace. You didn't know where it was, it didn't hear the bell.*

Reis: *We had the cows, 5 of them in Kennecott, Louis Eldershope was the barn man. When we were little kids, Frank Johnson and I, he told us to go up and get the cows, they would be up back of the mill someplace, "you drive 'em home." Then he says, "don't let them run, you let them run, the milk will be sour." They had one silly cow that was running all the time and we were just horrified, we didn't know what to do. We were just sure ... the milk would be sour.* [Later, we realized he was just having fun with us.]

Watsjold, N: *Depends on what they eat, doesn't it?*

Reis: *I don't know. I don't know anything about it. He would let us milk the cows, he showed us how, when he was through milking, there would be a little left, because he always had cats in the hayloft upstairs. Mice would come in, and the cats would get them. So we got*

made with a friend that he could get the bull with one shot. The men who were back of the hall sawing wood ran up the logs to be out of Jerry's way if Mr. Osborn missed. I didn't witness this as my mother called me into the house. Carl Stattel got a pole to swing at Jerry but it wasn't needed.

Shaw, A.: *Did they cut down a lot of those trees on the hillside?*

Reis: *No. They were gone when I came there. Pete Brenwick in McCarthy and Mrs. Brenwick and their son, Leonard. They went down past Iverson's for the logs. They supplied Kennecott with wood for stoves.*

Shaw, A.: *Down towards Blackburn, on the way up towards McCarthy, along the old railroad bed as you head towards Kennecott, on the left there is a big rock dike like - a wall built - but it was large. Like somebody had built a rock fence. Do you know anything about that?*

Reis: *No, I don't. There was a bridge between Blackburn and the railroad.*

Watsjold, O.: *I don't remember that.*

Reis: *I remember a bridge there and whoever had the lodge there, had liquor of course, and there was all kinds of liquor bottles thrown off this bridge. That's how come I can remember it there. A little farther toward McCarthy there was a place that was all sandy and it had ditches in there, I don't know what the ditches were for. I don't think they buried their garbage in those days.*

Shaw, A.: *The big rock wall. Nobody seems to know what it was there for. It could have been stored there for the rock crusher.*

Reis: *Down by Blackburn and just a little ways off in woods there, I don't know why I was there but I was everyplace, and I found a grave, with a little picket fence around it. I've often thought, "Who was that? "Maybe some*

Clara Bussinger Gruber and daughter Eleanor.

"...the train would come by when we were sitting in our desks (at school) *and we always felt that we were moving and the train was standing still. (The school) was right on the track..."*

MILDRED ERICKSON REIS

Reis: *I used to go on the back of Mr. Iverson's horse, hold on to his suspenders.*

Watsjold, N.: *No wonder you loved it so much. Sounds like you were very pampered.*

Reis: *I was never told not to do things, I think that was it. My parents did not go for spanking children. My father, or they were both with me sometimes, he would say "you know, you need a good licking," but I never got one. But I hurt his feelings and that was enough.....*

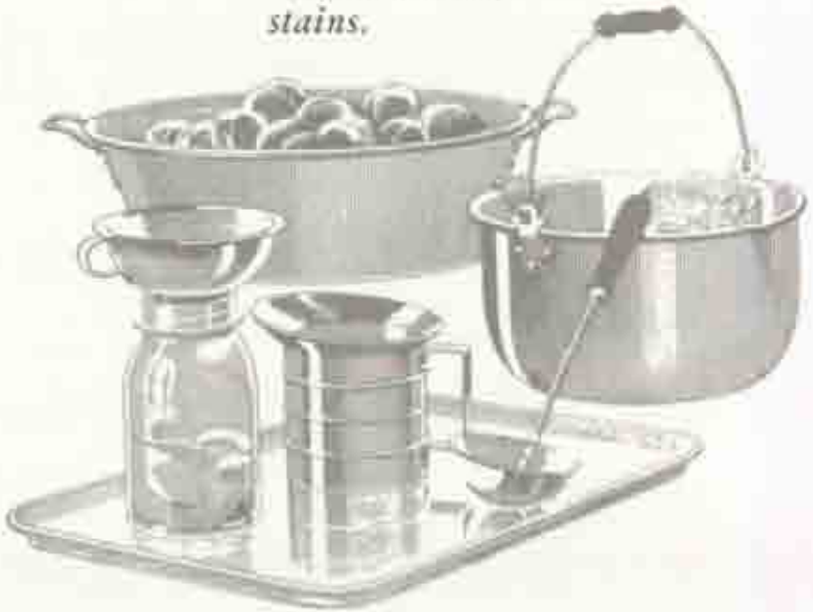
Shaw, A.: *Did you pick a lot of berries?*

Watsjold, O.: *Yep!*

Shaw, A.: *Berries and make jams...*

Watsjold, O.: *There was a big berry patch right across the Kennicott River. On the hillside up to 4th of July Pass* [9 miles west of Kennecott] *was a good raspberry patch. Just before you got to Green Butte, there was a beautiful currant patch. Bigger currants than you'd ever see....*

Reis: *There was a currant patch up by the old detention camp. Right up in there. And there was raspberries back of Iverson's farm. And strawberries in Cordova. We never ate them but they were good eating, the mossberries, they were everywhere. Remember the little black mossberries? You'd sit down anywhere and you were covered with mossberry stains.*



Watsjold, O.: *I don't know where you got blueberries but you got cranberries on the way to Kennecott along the railroad track.*

Reis: *There were blueberries beyond the mill, by the tennis court.*

Shaw, A.: *Did you do a lot of canning?*

Reis: *No. Jelly, jam, my mother made but we didn't have any big fruit to can...*

Watsjold, N.: *When we were in McCarthy and Kennecott last, people let us go into the old store building and look around. And, Oscar, there is a trap door where they used to keep their eggs and butter and everything, it was still there, you raise it up in the floor, in the main part. It was really interesting they had some kind of school going, college.* [?]

Shaw, A.: *Cold storage?*

Shaw, L.: *They do* [the school] *every year.*

Watsjold, O.: *Until the mine opened up for the second time, the railroad didn't run in the winter. So we'd get all our eggs and all our supplies in in October so we ... that place, it stayed about 40 degrees all the time, ... 40 cases of eggs down there. And they got a little ripe by February or March. Every week I had to go down there and turn the case of eggs over so the yolks were in the center on one end.*

Watsjold, N.: *When we went to McCarthy in the '70s, going into the store building there was a runner that went up the stairway, with a rug that matched, down below, that was still there, and they had brought this from Norway, Oscar's mom and dad, when they came in 1929. And it was still there and it was still in good condition at that time.*

Shaw, L.: *Do you know what ever happened to it?*

Watsjold, N.: *No, it was gone the next time we were there and there was still a hand lettered sign, vegetables or eggs or something, that said how much a pound. And it was hand written, and it was still in the store. And we would have loved to have had that but we didn't bother anything. But it was gone the next time.*

Shaw, L.: *Yes. There was a lot ... about the mid-'70s...*

Reis: *Pilfering.*

Watsjold, N.: *I think so.*

Shaw, L.: *A lot of stuff was taken out in the late '60s... We've been told that there are actually big vans sitting around just full of things stored, that people went in and took.*

Shaw, A.: *Yes. There is supposedly some one in Chitina who has a big van load of things and they want $25,000 for it.*

Watsjold, N.: *They left all their cars and furniture when they left in 1938.*

Watsjold, O.: *I left a 1917 Model T, a 1922 Chevy sedan, 1925 Model T pickup. Left them sitting there when we left.*

Shaw, A.: *Left them sitting in the center of McCarthy, huh?*

Watsjold, O.: *Yeah. Then, later on an old car collector ... and they threw them all out of there. Ever been into Alaska Sales and Service? Well, they've got a Chevy coupe sitting up there on display. That used to belong to Ben Jackson, he used to have a drug store in McCarthy. And us kids used to go there all the time. And it was thrown out of there then.*

Watsjold, N.: *And it was he,* [Ben Jackson] *who got Oscar's dad to come from Norway. Then he married Eleanor's mother later, in her later years. Ben Jackson.*

Reis: *I remember Ben Jackson.*

Watsjold, O.: *Yeah. He came up there when it started, he started his drug store and he had tents then, for the store or whatever.*

Watsjold, N.: *The old car that still sits by the store, in McCarthy, by the hardware store, is the one that Uncle Ben used to drive.*

Watsjold, O.: *No, no, no. That's the one that Bill Berry made. He took the pieces out of and made a frame out of wood, put the Model T*

Gracie with tracked automobile.

marks on it. It was sitting there last time I was up there.

Reis: *What happened to Bill Berry, I mean, after he left there?*

Watsjold, O.: *I guess he died. I don't know how he kept his feet warm because he went winter and summer in tennis shoes. Never wore shoepacs or mukluks.*

Reis: *Did you know Shorty Guinn?*

Watsjold, O.: *You betcha.*

Reis: *He had a place over by the Nizina River. He never fastened his shoepacs, they were always flopping open. He took mother and I up to Nizina one time, when we were in McCarthy, and we were going with the sled dogs, I don't know if he didn't have the sled right or what but we went down the hill like this. We didn't get hurt, there was a lot of snow on us, what a mess!...And then there was Pink Whiskers, do you remember Pink Whiskers?*

Watsjold, O.: *No.*

Reis: *He made this "white mule". He had a still somewhere, and he would come to town, and nobody locked their doors there, but when he came to town they all locked their doors, I don't know why. But anyway he had a red beard so they called him "Pink Whiskers". Then I was up there one time and talked to Molly McDonald, it was probably ... Gilmore* [Molly's married name] *... and her husband said "you know, we found the old still that Pink Whiskers had." Copper kettle ... don't know where it was...*

Watsjold, O.: *Most of them are gone now.*

Reis: *Yes. Marian died last... I don't know about Verna, but I know all of the others are gone.*

Shaw, A.: *Were these all people who were out in McCarthy?*

Reis: *Yes.*

Shaw, A.: *Where did you say that good currant patch was on the other side of the glacier?*

Watsjold, O.: *Currants, no. The currants was up towards Green Butte. You can't get to it now. Just before you got to the Green Butte lower camp.*

Watsjold, N.: *Is that the mine that Eleanor* [Tjosevig] *and her sister* [Stella] *still own?*

Watsjold, O.: *Yeah. They have their mine further up the creek. They used to live in that cabin there, Green Butte.*

Reis: *There was a place called Horse Camp when I lived there, it was up that same way. I don't know why horses - the horses would get there ... maybe it was from that lower Mother Lode.*

Watsjold, O.: *Well I guess the easy way now if you going to walk to Green Butte is to go up to Kennecott and go over the pass and down the other side.*

Shaw, A.: *Do you know Lloyd Green* [?], *out there?*

Watsjold, O.: *No.*

Shaw, A.: *Lloyd's been out there now for about thirty years. He stays in a cabin in the wintertime about 13 miles up McCarthy Creek. By the Green Butte Mine up there. He actually mines back in there. He has a little plane that's got a snowmobile engine in it.*

Watsjold, O.: *Oh! He's got one of those ultra-lights huh?*

Shaw, A.: *Yeah.*

Watsjold, N.: *Do you know somebody up there named Spearstead?*

Watsjold, O.: *John Spearstead? He's at Anchorage.*

Shaw, A.: *I think I've heard that name but I don't know.*

Reis: *...Children, in a way...I was down on the Fourth of July* [Creek, 7 miles northwest of McCarthy] *one time and Marian, my little friend down there, had a bicycle. And I knew how to ride because I had*

ridden in Kennecott. I was going down Front Street there [in McCarthy] *and of course, all the men were down from the mines and I hit a little rock or something and went sailing over the handlebars. I was so afraid I hurt the bicycle. This older gentleman came over and asked me if I was hurt, I said, "no." He said "well your bicycle is alright" and said "it's not mine, I don't have one." He said, "oh, you don't have one? You'll have one next year." I didn't pay any attention to that. The next year I got a letter from the mine with $15.00 in it. It said "this is for the freight on your bicycle" at the post office. I ran over to the post office and it was there. A beautiful big red bicycle! His name was Stephen Veach, he worked up at the mine. ... When I went to boarding school my parents sold it to somebody. The men liked to do things for the children. I remember the hardest part of that was I had to write a nice letter to thank him. That was the hardest thing, for a little kid. But I did it.*

Shaw, A.: *Do you live in Anchorage now?*

Watsjold, O.: *Seward.*

Watsjold, N.: *Since 1939.*

Shaw, A.: *From here to there, huh?*

Watsjold, O.: *Almost. First came to school there in '31, in Seward, '30-'31....Stage from Valdez to Fairbanks in the early days.*

Shaw, A.: *Horses pull the stage?*

Watsjold, O.: *Yeah, horses.*

Watsjold, N.: *This is Bill Cameron, you are talking about?*

Watsjold, O.: *Bill Cameron's dad.*

Shaw, A.: *Were there many cars in the '30s here in Alaska?*

Watsjold, O.: *Oh yeah. Not like there is now, but there was quite a few. McCarthy had quite a few and no place to go but to Kennecott and Nizina River and Dan Creek.*

Shaw, A.: *Was there bridge access to Dan Creek?*

Watsjold, O.: *Oh yeah! Across the Nizina River. Bridges there, a lot of it, not all of it, is still there.*

Shaw, A.: *One end of that bridge fell down.*

Watsjold, O.: *Probably on the far end, middle to the end. That was all pilings. We used it every July, we move the camp off the river. Used to be a camp on the Nizina River bar. We'd move the camp up to May Creek because that pothole would break on the Nizina and flood where the camp was and it would take out part of the bridge. Regular sparkler[?] every year it went out in the first part of July.*

Reis: *When I first came to Alaska and my father was going to go to Nizina to work, we had to go up in a pack train of horses and my mother and I, my mother held me in front of her in the saddle, I had a teddy bear and I tied that to the pommel of the saddle. That's the way we went to Nizina. We got to the river and there was no bridge, we had to cross by horseback. Some of it the horses had to swim. We ended up a mile down from where the crossing was. I don't remember much about it but mother has never forgotten that ride. I lost my teddy bear, I know, that was pretty sad.*

Watsjold, O.: *Well, it used to be, it was Harold Boylan, Tom Miller, and Pete Brenwick, they all had pack trains of 20-24 horses. They took off from McCarthy, and up the White River and all that took these hunting parties. Good old fashioned hunting parties, not like they have now, fly-in. You went with horses, took you three, four weeks before you got back from that hunt.*

Reis: *Bill Slimpert.*

Watsjold, O.: *Bill Slimpert, I didn't think he had his own horses. He helped. I think he was with Harold Boylan. Bill ... he had an old dog and the dog always liked to ride on the running board of the car. One day, he was*

riding from the depot up to the store and the dog was sitting on the running board. The dog fell off and went under the back wheel. He was so upset, but it didn't hurt the dog, he limped a little bit but that is all. So..one time I was going Outside and I had this one dog left and I left it with Bill...he said he'd take care of it for me and I could have it in the spring. That dog would do anything. My best leader I ever had. Next spring I come back from Seattle, he said "you can't have that dog back, that's my dog now". He got so attached to it and I said "well, okay." A couple years later, they found the dog but they didn't find him. They figured he tried to cross the river someplace but didn't make it. The dog, they found him.

Reis: *In the olden times they ... go up to hunt gold, to prospect. Maybe one would come back.....you never knew.*

Watsjold, N.: *And they didn't investigate thoroughly.*

Watsjold, O.: *When Bill Slimpert disappeared, he was alone at the time....*

Shaw, A.: *...When these guys disappeared ... they never knew what happened?*

Watsjold, O.: *... You didn't even know where they were going, these prospectors they never told you where they were going prospecting.*

Reis: *When the two prospectors would go up, and one would disappear, nobody investigated, they just took his word, the man had fallen in and if you fall in these rivers, you done. Strange things.*

Watsjold, N: *Did you go to Robert Service's cabin when you were in Dawson City?*

Reis: *Yes. There was Dawson Creek in British Columbia and Dawson City up here.*

Shaw, A.: *In the situation where somebody disappeared, was there a lot of gossip ... speculation?*

Watsjold, O.: *They didn't have helicopters to go looking for them like they have now.*

Reis: *Just like the people in airplanes that disappear, they can't find them, they don't know where they are. Later on they may find the remains by the plane, or maybe the bears had drug them away.*

Shaw, A.: *Did they have much activity with airplanes out there, 'cause they had an airport?*

Watsjold, O.: *McCarthy? Oh you betcha! Airplanes were there every day all the time. Harold Gillam was in and out of there. I learned to fly in McCarthy. I used to haul freight and stuff from McCarthy to the airport, up and down. Took the Model T or the dog team, whatever. And instead of paying me they gave me flying lessons. John Clause[?] was the one who taught me how to fly. He was flying with...Airlines, then he moved up to Deering[?].*

Shaw, A.: *Well, they sure have a nice airport out there. Nice long runway.*

Watsjold, O.: *Where, in McCarthy? Yes, but at that time they were using the one on top of the hill.*

Reis: *Yes. Sourdough Hill.*

Watsjold, O.: *They didn't have the one in McCarthy where it is now.*

Shaw, A.: *Where was it?*

Watsjold, O.: *On top of the hill, across McCarthy Creek. That's where the airport was when we lived there.*

Reis: *I went on that, the rocks were flying in all directions.*

Watsjold, O.: *They didn't start building that one in McCarthy down below until they started hijacking that ore out of Kennecott, flying it out of there. What was his name?*

Watsjold, N.: *Mud Hole.*

Watsjold, O.: *Mudhole* [Smith]. *Did you ever hear of Mudhole? He's the one*

Mrs. O'Neill, Tommy O'Neill, and James O'Neill at the McCarthy runway.

who started the lodge in McCarthy years ago. Started that lodge in McCarthy. I think he was the first one....

Shaw, A.: *Yeah. McCarthy Lodge was something else before it became a lodge, wasn't it? A store or something, a dentist?*

Reis: *You mean the regular lodge there. That was* [J.P.] *Hubrick's store, and he had a photography studio 'cause I have a picture that was taken there. Cap Hubrick. He lived across from the depot ... railroad ... he had Airedale dogs which he used to take out for bear hunting.*

Shaw, A.: *I bet his family must have a bunch of pictures.*

Watsjold, O.: *Probably. It was so many years ago, he died in the '30s. Who knows where they are now.*

Reis: *Maybe they're upstairs in the lodge where someone said the picture of my mother and I was...*

Watsjold, O.: [Inaudible].

Reis: *There was one in the lodge, I saw it there when...*[inaudible]

Shaw, A.: *Have you read the little history beside the pictures?*

Reis: *No, I haven't, but what I did do, a few years ago, a lady in Langley, she taught at the university, and she thought we should and write our lives so they would have them for our grandchildren. I joined her class. She didn't tell us how to write because it had to be in our own words. We were to remember the way they dressed and the way they did things, it would be interesting. So I took this course and had two big notebooks crammed full but I never had it typed up. So I was going to have it ready before I came up here but I didn't get around to it. My daughter-in-law called me one day and said "you want me to type up your notes?" I said "if you want to, it's quite a chore". Then she said my son would take it to where he works and they would run it off*

and make me a book out of it. So when I get that, you'll have to remember that I was a child when all this happened to me, so it won't be anything ... It's just my memories. So I hope it will be interesting.

Shaw, A.: *Particularly, if your children want those pictures...*

Reis: *Yes. I thought I'd have copies of them and put them in the book for them. I was invited by a girl that knew, this lady that lived in Cordova, her name was Mrs. Breedman. And she had been a teacher up there in the '30s, she's in her 80s now. She said "I know this lady and I know she'd love to talk to you." So I went to her house one day, we had quite a nice talk and she gave me a book of her adventures in Alaska.*

TAPE 2
SIDE A OR C [AS A CONTINUATION OF THE CAR INTERVIEW]

Reis: *This is Clarence Breedman ... Margaret Breedman. She and her husband lived and worked and were long time residents in Cordova and Chitina-later in Fairbanks.*

Shaw, A.: *So we'll have to get in touch with you to see...Getting some of that information...*

Watsjold, O.: *Yeah. ...Nelson ... Big city...*

Reis: *Oh, I remember something about that.*

Watsjold, N.: *Who did you say ... Breedman and O.A. Nelson?*

Watsjold, O.: *Yeah ... store in Kennecott...*

Reis: *Was it the Nelson that had 2 sons? And the elder one died. The younger one was a doctor. Philip was the younger one, Adrian[?] and Philip. She used to come to Kennecott to visit.*

Shaw, A.: *Between Chitina and McCarthy there seems to be some railroad roadhouses ... or I don't know if they were stops or stations ... what were those? We'll see them on the way out.*

Watsjold, O.: *I think those were section houses.*

Reis: *Yes. They served as section houses.*

Shaw, A.: *The crew would stay there?*

Watsjold, O.: *Yeah.*

Shaw, A.: *There's a number of those around. I've never known the history of them.*

Shaw, A.: [Inaudible]. *What was it for?*

Reis: *...Turning the engines around.*

Watsjold, O.: *Turn the engines around in McCarthy.*

Shaw, A.: *Was that a building they had ... turntable?*

Watsjold, O.: *Yeah. No building now, just the turntable is there.*

Shaw, A.: *The turntable is still there across from the museum.*

Reis: *They had a section house down there, they didn't have one in Kennecott...*

Shaw, A.: *How many people were up there in Kennecott?*

Reis: *600 men, I would say, and about 200-300 in Kennecott itself.* [The others were up at the mines.] *And there were thirty families.*

Shaw, A.: *That's an awful lot, isn't it?*

Reis: *It was a big place. $1,000,000.00 of ore went out every month.*

Shaw, A.: *How much?*

Reis: *Million. About nine carloads of ore went out every day, they stacked them on the flatcars ... gondolas ... they always put them on neatly. One of my friends was ... Mike the Ore Sacker. I'd go through the sacking shed at the foot of the hill and he had a crew of men there and they'd stand up on the boxcars, flatcars, and hold the sacks up to catch the crushed ore, sew up the sacks and put them on the car. That was their job. I always stopped to talk to Mike.* [He was the foreman - his full name was Mike Kallas.]

Watsjold, O.: *Weighed about 140 lbs. a sack. I helped stack them up.*

Reis: *That's a lot of weight, you must've gotten pretty strong doing that.*

Watsjold, O.: *When the mine opened up the second time they didn't run in the wintertime so we loaded all the cars they had and put it on the siding and the rest was stacked up in the yard. Several million dollars worth of ore sitting in the yard when, spring came they hauled it back out.*

Reis: *When you were there as a bucket chaser, were there three shifts then?*

Watsjold, O.: *Two. Sometimes they only worked one shift off the Jumbo Tram, two off the Bonanza, Mother Lode, whatever you want to call them.*

Reis: *The men used to ride on the trams, buckets, to go to the mines. But the women were not allowed to. They had to have permission from the office to go up there. So my mother and I went up with a nurse and her friend, one time, to Jumbo Mine. I was used to biking, I was doing fine and got part way up and I got a little faint. So they made me lay down and I passed out. Then I'd get up, be fine and go a little farther, I got to the last part, we really had to climb up, one of the engineers came up, I guess, and picked me up. I don't even remember it. I ended up at the ... Jumbo Mine. But then I was alright again. It was the altitude. Then they took us all through the mine, it was way down, I don't know how many feet they were, real deep. Beautiful in the mine. They had those little locomotives in the mine. When they would come by you'd have to push back against the siding because they would take up so much space, they were electric, on tracks. Then we went down on one of the skips, they hold nine men, 3 lay beside each other, then 3 and then 3. You couldn't sit up or you'd hit your head. Had no idea, how fast, it was just pitch black, kind of scary. Then we had our lunch with the miners in the underground*

lunchroom. It was kind of nice. They were very quiet, I guess they weren't used to women being there.

Watsjold, N.: *I suppose there is still a lot of copper there.*

Reis: *I think there is. Two young men were making something and wanted high grade ore. They were not allowed to go in the mine ... but they did, they took some dynamite. They were killed....*

INTERVIEW TAKING PLACE IN THE ONE-ROOM SCHOOLHOUSE

Shaw, A.: *Mildred, we are looking at your public school cards and it looks like you started in 2nd grade here in the one-room schoolhouse at Kennecott in 1919. Your teacher at that time was I don't see her signature on here.*

Reis: *I believe it is Mary Waddle.*

Shaw, A.: *And you were still in this one-room schoolhouse in 1920, 21.*

Reis: *Well, I went through the 4th grade when Virilda Jacobs was the teacher. This is 5th grade.*

Shaw, A.: *In 5th grade you went where?*

Reis: *To the new schoolhouse.*

Shaw, A.: *The two-room?*

Reis: *Yes.*

Shaw, A.: *That was in 1922. Here's 6th and that was 1923-24. This one has to be the 5th grade, right here, Mildred.*

Reis: *Yes.*

Shaw, A.: *1922-23.*

Reis: *That's right because I was promoted to 6th.*

Shaw, A.: *Did you go to school here, in 5th grade?*

Reis: *No.*

Shaw, A.: *So your last grade here was 1921-22?*

Schoolhouse steps. Front row, left to right: Sissy Lommell, Dick Schneeberger, Jerine Osburn, Richard Osburn, Missy Lommell, Inger Jensen Jean Douglass, Bill Douglass, Deb Vickery. Back row, left to right: Kenneth (?), Chester (?), Unknown, Frank Johnson, Jane Vickery. Back: Miss Thompson(?), Mildred Erickson, Ora D. Clark.

Reis: *Yes. Then this one is.7th grade.. And that's, I don't know her first name, A. Ulleland.*

Shaw, A.: *The last year this school was used was 1921-22?*

Reis: *Yes.*

Shaw, A.: *Then they used the two-room schoolhouse after that?*

Reis: *Yes. We moved there. This is when I was in high school. But I didn't go here. You see, I had my studies at recess, and at noon and at recess in the afternoon, and then after school. Because, that way I didn't conflict with others. This was Mrs. Harrais, and I was tested to tenth. Then I went to Seattle.*

Shaw, A.: *You were out of the school. Let me get a light here, I want to show you, I think your name is still in the closet. It is something I wanted you to come and look at.*

Reis: *I think those tests like that we had were a good thing. The school district knew what we were doing and I think that they should do them again.*

Shaw, L.: *Using the flashlight or do you want this?*

Shaw, A.: *No. Let me use a flashlight too.*

Reis: *I wonder why it's down here.*

Shaw, A.: *See that, ..Chester..*

Reis: *Yes, that's Chester and they must have had them up here with something to hang...*

Shaw, A.: *No. You can see there's holes where there were books but there were no books here when we got it.*

Reis: *Maybe that's what that was for, books.*

Shaw, A.: *Just a minute, can you read that?*

Reis: *That's Frank Johnson.*

Shaw, A.: *Frank Johnson, did you know him?*

Reis: *Yes.*

Shaw, A.: *He was in your 5th grade class, your last class here?*

Reis: *I can't remember. But who is this? Eleanor. I don't remember an Eleanor but there was one family here a very short time, it might have been one of them. Dolly Lloyd.*

Shaw, A.: *Do you know this person right here.*

Reis: *Yes, that's Mildred and Kenneth. That was one of the Padgetts.*

Shaw, A.: *Is that your name right there?*

Reis: *Yes. Must have been something we had to hang up. Were there other books here, taller ones?*

Shaw, A.: *No. Well, I don't know, these shelves were here. We haven't done anything to change these but there are book holes right there. Like somebody had taken them out.*

Reis: *Because they are down so low, it was when we were smaller. Frank Johnson was two or three years younger than I.*

Shaw, A.: *I don't know what the larger kids might have done. Those books are ones that we put in up there.*

Reis: *There were kids second year of high school here then.*

Shaw, A.: *That is her name in there.*

Shaw, L.: *Is that you in there Mildred? Was there a nail there to hang...*

Reis: *Well, we found little nail holes. There was something we hung, maybe some of our school work that the teacher wanted us to keep separate or something.*

Shaw, A.: *The last year she went to school here was in her 4th grade, that was 1921-22 and that was the last year this school was used. Then they moved into the two-room schoolhouse.*

Reis: *That* [two-room] *school was apparently a bunk house at one time, then they took everything out*

down there, and why should they when they had the facilities to put it up here and move it and have the building, which belonged to them because Blackburn was a railroad town for the railroad people who took care of the CRNWRR. So it was their building.

Shaw, A.: *How many students were in here at a time?*

Reis: *I don't remember how many were in here, but when we were in the other school it always seemed to be six in each room. So it must have been about the same. Two would move out and two little ones would move in, it just worked out that way. We always seemed to have 12 children.*

Shaw, A.: *It was all grades, wasn't it? Right up through 12th.*

Reis: *Yes. 1st through 12th. I was just looking up here at the lodge and I saw a little thing they had written in for a schoolteacher, they said "Miss Brown, you must be here by the 5th of Sept." and it said "be sure you have a certificate for Palmer Method of Writing[?]."*

Shaw, L.: *Oh is that right!*

Reis: *I thought that was kind of ... I don't know if you remember it but you held your hand stiff and worked this way, this is the way you wrote. You had to do this every day for so long. And I never did learn to write that way.*

Shaw, A.: *As you can see we put a bedroom upstairs so that helps. Lynda wanted to make sure we left it intact inside here, not build any walls or anything, divide it up.*

Reis: *You painted it white.*

Shaw, L.: *No, it was painted white, we just put some undercoat.*

Shaw, A.: *It was painted down to the blackboards.*

Reis: *I don't know what was here but the blackboards* [were] *up there. But a lot of us kids used to have to take the ... pound the erasers.*

Shaw, A.: *Somebody has the chalkboards. It would be nice if we could get them back. But we don't know who it is.*

Shaw, L.: *You were saying there was only one stove in here?*

Reis: *Yes.*

Shaw, L.: *This end or that end?*

Reis: *Right here.*

Shaw, L.: *There is a stack here.*

Shaw, A.: *Did it face that way?*

Reis: *Yes. The head row of desks were here ... stove back here. The younger ones sat here, then high school..*

Shaw, L.: *Over by the wall.*

Reis: *I think the desks were smaller.*

Shaw, A.: *So you faced the south which we call the back of the schoolhouse.*

Reis: *The teacher was always cold and the bigger boys kept this fired up.*

Shaw, L.: *What did they burn in it, wood?*

Reis: *Yes. They had coal here too, cause there is a coal bin up here, but mostly wood. We always burned wood. I think you had a choice.*

Shaw, L.: *Our stove is pretty efficient so we are kind of toasty in here. I can imagine in the winter, it wouldn't...*

Reis: *Well the big boys had to be busy.*

Schneeberger: [Gretchen Schneeberger, a local resident, enters the conversation]. *Insulation...*

Shaw, L.: *It has sawdust in the walls.*

Shaw, A.: *Yes. It has sawdust in the walls, here, which is good and bad 'cause it collects moisture and will have a tendency of freezing so you can wind up with the walls getting rotted.*

Schneeberger: *What about the floor?*

Shaw, A.: *No there is no ... when she was here, all it had ... Has the original sawdust in the walls, that's all. So at -50 I guess it was pretty cold.*

Reis: *Yes. And there was no insulation in our houses.*

Shaw, L.: *Some of them were canvas and they put...I know Bern's* [Hoffmann] *house up there was, the original part of it was a tent house. Then they built sides to it.*

Reis: *Our house was too, there are three up there of the same design. And they had no insulation. It was up from the ground about ... so ... and when you get the snow packed around it keeps the warmth in...*

Shaw, A.: *Your house was this one right up here wasn't it?*

Reis: *Yes, the Company Land Office..*

Shaw, A.: *The Company Land Office House now.*

Reis: *Does the man still own that?*

Shaw, A.: *Randolph of...yes.*

Reis: *Isn't he a dentist or something?*

Shaw, A.: *Yes ... Power and I can't remember the other.*

Shaw, L.: *....Kennecott...*

Reis: *They were staying there when my daughter was here a couple of years ago and she wanted to see the inside and they finally got a key for her and let her in. She said "it was so tiny, Mother." We had smaller houses, everywhere they were smaller. They weren't big like they are now. Thought we had plenty of room, we had five rooms!*

Shaw, L.: *I think you did ... Like you say, it is really what you are used to. It was certainly more economical to have a small place.*

Schneeberger: *How many children were there?*

Reis: *With me? I'm the only one.*

Shaw, L.: *So you had plenty of room, the three of you..*

Reis: *I had the room that faced this way so I could watch...*

Kennecott gripped in winter.

Shaw, A.: *How many years did you actually live here in Kennecott?*

Reis: *From '18, or was it '17, no '18 that I came up and I went back to Seattle, '27 then I came back up, then went back down again, then I came back up again, visiting.*

Shaw, A.: *So you were 17 years old when you went back down, did you say?*

Reis: *Yes.*

Shaw, A.: *So you were here from 1916 to 1927? What did you do, finish up the last two years at boarding school?*

Reis: *No, I went one year to boarding school and, one year here and one at boarding school, then my mother came down with me and I went to Queen Anne High School, that's where I graduated.*

Shaw, A.: *Then did you come back after that to live anymore?*

Reis: *No. We decided not to and then daddy stayed a few years and then he went to the Bremner Mines near Chitina. Pete Ramer and his brother owned it. He was there, they wanted someone to tell them what kind of machinery to buy for the mines and that was his specialty. He drove a tractor from McCarthy to the Bremner Mine, I don't know how but I remember it seemed to take a long time. 'Cause they are way up the mountain. He was there, not too long and woke up in terrible pain one morning and they tried to signal Bruce Johnson the pilot then as he flew over. They had an S.O.S. in the snow, he couldn't land on the snow because his plane was too heavily loaded. Came up here and came back and my dad had peritonitis. They took him up to the hospital and then my mother and I got a night letter and they said, "your husband is doing very well, now," and we didn't know what had happened.*

Shaw, L.: *Did they bring him up to this hospital?*

Reis: *Yes. They came from all around here. When we lived in Nizina, my*

mother became ill and they brought her up here for an operation.

Shaw, A.: *My understanding, from what you said yesterday in our conversation, that this was the only hospital between here and Cordova.*

Reis: *I don't know if ... But I don't think there was. But Dr. Gillespie was known for his expertise anyway. He was a very good orthopedic man, that isn't what he said he was, but he was, which they need in a company like this, because of their accidents and broken arms and so forth. One of the men in the machine shop, one of the head men, Carl Engstrom, everything was running with belts, and he got caught in one of the machine belts. This one spun around. I don't know how many bones were broken, Dr. Gillespie had to patch him up. It was quite a chore. He had weights on him, all over. Mr. Engstrom was in the hospital a long time but was completely cured. He was a very well liked man. Someone wrote a poem one time and they showed it on the screen when we had a movie. I can't remember the words but it was to the affect that when any machine broke down he could fix it. Each stanza ended "Carl Engstrom can fix it, God bless him." After he left Kennecott he lived in Tenakee Hot Springs until his death. When I was eleven, my mother became ill again, she had a goiter. You never hear of goiters anymore. Dr. Gillespie was going to Seattle and he said, "come along with my wife and I and I'll go to the hospital with you." So, he went in with Dr. Mason at the Virginia Mason Hospital and they operated on it. A few months later, we came back. I was a spoiled child, I think I demanded that I go too, so I did and mother had a friend in Seattle and I stayed with her while she was in the hospital. I didn't like Seattle, I didn't like those streets, I thought it was ugly. I wanted to come back.*

Shaw, L.: *You were very fortunate to grow up here.*

Reis: *I always thought so.*

Schneeberger: *Mildred, wasn't Dr. Gillespie involved in that mushing to Nome with the diphtheria serum?*

Reis: *I don't know but he may have been because there was quite a bit of that at that time. They had the different drivers, I imagine he was. He was into things anyway. He had his own horse here. A saddle pony. They had a tack room and I'd ride in the saddle. Then Mrs. O'Neill, a woman in McCarthy had a beautiful horse. I used to go down there for music lessons but then she started coming up here because she got more students. She was a wonderful pianist! She'd come up. She was a lovely woman and she had the riding habit wear.*

Shaw, A.: *The dairy barn is right here.*

Reis: *Yes. The horses had one side and the cows were on the other.*

Shaw, A.: *In the barn?*

Reis: *Yes. I remember the barn man as you called him, allowed us to milk the cows after he had milked them to take out the milk up to the cats in the loft. Had lots of cats in the loft. This was an exciting thing.*

Shaw, A.: *Believe it or not, I was raised back in Pennsylvania and had similar experiences. We'd go to the ... room and watch them milk. We'd always get milk for the cats. He'd have fun just squirting us now and then too.*

Reis: *This went on down there too as I remember. We liked to go up in the loft, there was chute for the oats and things to go down below. That was fun to watch. Mr. Eldershope was very nice to us down there.*

Shaw, A.: *Mildred, look out the window here and tell me what you see, and what are the changes in the glacier.*

Reis: *I was noticing, because you told me yesterday, seemingly the mountains are up higher for some reason and that island..Donoho*

[Peak] *... is so large. It just dawned on me the island has shrunk down.*

Shaw, A.: *The glacier, you mean.*

Reis: *Yes, glacier has shrunk down. This make the other ... seem so much larger.*

Shaw, L.: *It is no different than when you have the trains going by. We have the vehicles now...*

Reis: *Yes. That's what has happened. This was way out, because we used to walk down the road here and, I'd go with my uncle...*

Shaw, A.: *The wagon road.*

Reis: *Yes, we'd walk as far as the grave yard and pick flowers and things and the glacier was right here. So these houses up here were right out. And there were no trees out here at all, just the glacier.*

Schneeberger: *It was actual ice?*

Shaw, A.: *Was it white, or was it brown like this?*

Reis: *Brown. Moraine.*

Shaw, A.: *That is just dirt on top, it's all ice underneath.*

Reis: *We had a place on the baseball field that they kept a wheelbarrow and sacks and a shovel and you'd come down there and get ice for your ice cream. But the ice was so dirty with the little bits of sand through it, you couldn't use it for anything else. Oh, you have a patio!*

Shaw, A.: *Yes, we built that patio. We are going to put a door out the shed, off the back there. So we can get to it, so...*

Shaw, L.: *That is owned by Jim and Jean Miller.*

Shaw, A.: *Yeah. When you look out here, where did the glacier come to?*

Reis: *It seemed to come quite close because...*

Shaw, A.: *It must have come out against the road here.*

Reis: *Yes. It was quite close, there was just a little bit of space there, and it was high. It was thick like it is over there. I remember one day there was a little hole across from our house that came through and pretty soon it was a river. Then it stopped. It was one of the lakes in the glacier, when it melts in the center and breaks through.*

Shaw, A.: *Some of the older pictures I've seen show these to be pretty high mountains right here, ...glacier... but now see this is, looks like all the ice has melted out underneath that. In fact that one right there, that high one just right off the edge here, we climb up on that and take pictures here. Some of those pictures of the schoolhouse we showed you were part of that. What is interesting is how, it hasn't exactly receded, it just melted down more.*

Reis: *It is called, I think, Dan Glacier, it comes down from Wrangell, Mt. Wrangell, on one side and what's the other one?*

Shaw, A.: *It's the Root Glacier and the Kennicott Glacier.*

Reis: *...must be on this side of the...*

Shaw, A.: *Comes down from Blackburn, Mt. Blackburn, then the Root over here and they meet up here by that island you talked about.*

Reis: *We loved it up there, mother and I and dad. They had to watch me, my father never allowed me to go on the glacier, it was dangerous. But he'd take us across to the island but we'd go up to Erie Mine and walk across. Then you had to jump the crevices. I forget...it was crevasse... The tourists would come up and they would say "crevasse" and we would say "tourists!"*

Shaw, A.: *The hillsides here, when I look at some of your pictures, you don't see these trees around.*

Reis: *No. Our ... was quite high and if you ... look out at just dirt. But if we had it up above, we could look up at the mountains.*

Shaw, A.: [Inaudible].

Reis: [Inaudible].

Reis: *Mt. Porphyry has changed. Maybe the earthquake has done a lot to the glacier but you can't see it from here.*

Shaw, A.: *You can see it out the kitchen...*

Reis: *Now this one end up here was just straight across with a piece up like [a finger]. My dad always said, "I'm going to go up and knock that thing off someday". He started out one day and didn't make it. He came home and said he was sure he couldn't walk up there.*

Shaw, A.: *There was a rock up there he wanted to roll off or something?*

Reis: *Then, the next time I came up, it was after the earthquake and it was gone. Must have been large. And I notice now it is kind of rounded where that was, it was square before.*

Shaw, A.: *When was the earthquake here?*

Reis: *'64. The one in Anchorage, the big one.*

Shaw, A.: *Oh, I see.*

Reis: *But it did damage a lot up here because there was a flood from National Creek right into town, at camp. I couldn't figure out how the water would go almost to the office. But I think the earthquake wrecked the scenery around there.*

Shaw, A.: *When you were a kid here, did you have much in the way of earthquakes?*

Reis: *No. I don't remember any. I don't even remember ... well we had one little wind storm but that is the only wind I can remember. It was very calm, but it got cold ... -60. All you wanted to do then was stay by the fire.*

Shaw, A.: *The only time you went into the butcher shop you had ... hanging what?*

Ore-laden flat car, Kennecott. Courtesy Anchorage Museum of History and Art.

"About nine carloads of ore went out every day, they stacked them on the flatcars...gondolas... they always put them on neatly. One of my friends was...Mike the Ore Sacker. I'd go through the sacking shed at the foot of the hill and he had a crew of men there and they'd stand up on the boxcars, flatcars, and hold the sacks up to catch the crushed ore (about 140 lbs. a sack), sew up the sacks and put them on the car. That was their job."

MILDRED ERICKSON REIS

Reis: *The side, the full beef sides. Here was this thing, I just knew it was human, I was scared to death. It was a bear and they had skinned it.* [It was hanging with the beef.]

Schneeberger: *Mildred, do you remember the store*[?] *before, there was the remnants of the store. Is that totally gone?*

Reis: *I don't know, I haven't been up there, I think the store is still there. Last time I was here there were papers everywhere.*

Shaw, A.: *We've picked those up. We had volunteers last year* [1989] *that picked those up.*

Shaw, L.: *Not just papers, anything that could have any value that could be saved has been picked up now.*

Reis: *They had on one side all the different materials for the ladies and the sewing things, everything and they had some boats and things like that. This side, the first part, I remember, because it was candy and then it was canned goods. Very seldom much fruit or anything because they didn't have airplanes.*

Shaw, A.: *No fresh fruit?*

Shaw, L.: *Yes, the store is still there. The back half of the store, the roof was torn off in the late '50s, I believe. So that building has a problem, that is one of the critical buildings we would like to get a roof on.*

Reis: *The teamsters used two horses and a wagon to take all the supplies up to the mill. In the afternoon, they'd leave about 5:00, they'd take the horses down by the store, unhitch them. As a little girl, I used to hang around and then I'd get a ride to the barn. Great big work horses! You could just lay down on them! They would say "oh, would you like a ride?"*

Shaw, L.: *You knew the routine.*

Reis: *It was kind of fun. They were so good to children.... Magalina, that is the Norwegian spelling.*

Shaw, A.: *So your dad didn't call you Madaline, he called you Mildred instead?*

Reis: *Yes.*

Shaw, A.: *That was the compromise?*

Reis: *Yes.*

Shaw, L.: *To your knowledge, did they have any murders here?*

Reis: *Not in Kennecott, no. In McCarthy, there may have been, but I'm not sure. We heard of some - a couple of times men going up to the creeks to prospect, partners, and one would come back and the other had fallen in the river and couldn't get him. Now, they didn't know, nobody investigated. I told you this I think. That's all I know. I believe one of the girls was killed, but I don't remember because my little friend Marian took me down to a house and there were some dark stains on it. She said "that's blood". We got scared and we ran home. So I don't know, that's as far as I really know.*

Schneeberger: *Somebody was telling me that McCarthy was the rough town where all the "naughty kids" were and all the little kids in Kennecott had to have their parents go with them to McCarthy.*

Reis: *Well, my mother felt that I could be a lady no matter where I lived and I knew where I could not go and I was trusted to do as I was told. I could go down and stay with my little friend Marian and she could come up and stay with me. The ... ladies she knew made a few remarks which got back to mother but she paid no attention.*

Schneeberger: *There really was a reputation, that extended even to the children.*

Reis: *Yes, our house was here and right over here was a large ... house, and it housed the "sports" as they called them. Later on..*

Schneeberger: *What's a sport?*

Reis: *That's the name of the girls ... our house nearly burned when the part next to it burned. They came*

over, wearing their high heels and with their buckets, began a bucket brigade and poured water on the roof. Saved our house. Later on, whoever had charge of things, I don't know, they were asked to move down the line, down to McCarthy Creek.

Shaw, L.: *There were several houses there.*

Shaw, A.: *Brothels.*

Reis: *'21 or '22.*

Shaw, L.: *'20, oh was that...*

Schneeberger: *Was Kate Kennedy the madam?*

Reis: *She was not down there with the girls. She had a hotel in town and there was a saloon next and there were girls in the saloon. I always thought she was, I meant to ask Fred* [Fritz] *Seltenreich. In fact I am going to ask him. He should know because he lived down there. I think she was but she was more or less respected. I don't know...*

Shaw, A.: *Who were you going to ask?*

Reis: *Fritz Seltenreich. Fred I guess.*

Shaw, A.: *There was no alcohol allowed here at Kennecott, was there?*

Reis: *No. Although, people made wine. Home brew. But it was not allowed.*

Shaw, A.: *So they had to go to McCarthy for that?*

Reis: *Yes. For a while they were bringing up fresh figs in the store and they disappeared fast and then they didn't sell fresh figs anymore. But I never heard anything, too much about it. My dad was not too much with having liquor around. Just had a little wine now and then.*

Schneeberger: *There was the story when Prohibition was declared they had that group go down to McCarthy and load up trunks and whatever else was available and haul it back up here. Hide it under the floorboards. Dr. Gillespie and our ... were both involved in that.*

Reis: *Probably, and then there was Chris Jensen ... might have been, I won't say for sure, because he always bragged that he had some whiskey buried. Said he was seasoning it, wouldn't tell anyone where it was. I don't know if that's true or not. Such a character. Wasn't at our house but there was a lot down in McCarthy. I might as well tell you, my dad said I was never to go down the line. Didn't say why, so I had to ask my mother, "why, what did they do down there?" She said "they sell moonshine". I'd never go down there because I had seen men drunk and they would fight and everything, so I thought they must be horrible. When I grew up, it dawned on me one day.*

Shaw, A.: *There was a story in town yesterday, I didn't pick up on it all the way, that had to do with you singing when you were a little girl and they paid you for that.*

Reis: *That was in Blackburn, Mrs. Johnson had a boarding house, little lobby. They had a dining room. In the evenings she cleared the tables and they could play poker. I believe there was a bar in the back, I'm not sure. I was a tiny thing and I wondered in, my mother wasn't watching me too closely and I wondered in. Of course, they welcomed me, the men sitting around the tables. They said "can you sing" and I said "oh, yes". They put me on the table and I sang Norwegian lullabies, that is what I knew. They passed a plate and gave me some money and I came back to my mother and I said "take this, I'll go get some more". And that was the end of my singing career. I couldn't have been more than four and a half.*

Shaw, A.: *A little Shirley Temple, huh?*

Reis: *Yes. I don't know how I did it because I was shy. The men were very nice to me and a lot of Scandinavians and maybe that's why.*

Shaw, A.: *Now Gretchen, you were 2 years. old when you left here, so you picked up stories from your parents?*

Chris Jensen and son Ole.

"...then there was Chris Jensen...might have been, I won't say for sure, because he always bragged that he had some whiskey buried. Said he was seasoning it, wouldn't tell anyone where it was. I don't know if that's true or not. Such a character. ...my dad said I was never to go down the line (to McCarthy). Didn't say why, so I had to ask my mother, 'why, what did they do down there?' She said, 'they sell moonshine'."

MILDRED ERICKSON REIS

Schneeberger: *Yes. Alaskans are such a close knit group, as they'd say, whenever they came out they'd come by my parents and they spend long evenings going over all these experiences. So, I felt part of it, but not a part of it. Reminiscences of Erickson...*

Shaw, A.: *Did it seem like a rough place?*

Reis: *Here?*

Schneeberger: *Here.*

Reis: *No.*

Schneeberger: *But it seemed like...with the girls and the...*

Reis: *That was McCarthy.*

Schneeberger: *McCarthy was indisputably..*

Reis: *If you read Lone Janson's book,* ["The Coppper Spike"] *she speaks of Kennecott, says it was staid, she says town, camp. And we were, we had ladies' tea parties, we were dressed to the nines,...*

Schneeberger: *There was a class distinction too, wasn't there.*

Reis: *I didn't feel it, I was in and out of everybody's place, I didn't bother ... When you went into the show, and I don't know if this is a law or ruling, but all the families sat on the right and few of the men who were friends, and all the other men sat on the left. If one lady came in that didn't know, they would say, "oh, she's sitting over there with the men". I don't think it was the rule, it was just the thing to do. All nationalities, Polish, Russians, Swedes, Norwegians...*

Schneeberger: *A cross section. That one book up there lists all nationalities, numbers of them.*

Shaw, A.: *Were any Oriental?*

Reis: *Just Japanese, the cooks in the mess house, and the Japanese laundry man, the little house next to that, was run by the Tom Mori, who was the laundryman. And they had the laundry in back of the store. He did the laundry for*

the camp....That was the only Oriental, there was one in McCarthy, Charley Chong. At that time Chinese and Japanese did not get on together. But once in a while they'd load us into the sled, straw and blankets, go down to McCarthy to Charley Chong's and have food. I can remember he was a jolly fat man. We'd all load up and be ready to go home and he'd throw candy bars at us.

Shaw, A.: *This house next door, what do you know about that one?*

Reis: *Tom Mori stayed there. He was the laundryman. Took care of the laundry in back of the store. That was where they stayed.*

Shaw, A.: *He wasn't Japanese was he?*

Reis: *Yes.*

Shaw, A.: *Oh, he was Japanese.*

Reis: *M-o-r-i*

Shaw, A.: *Oh, M-o-r-i.*

Reis: *I don't know what age he was. He was quite an ice skater, fall down, jump up. He wasn't a young man but he seemed to be.*

Shaw, A.: *So the house right next door to us was the fellow that ran the laundry?*

Reis: *Yes. Quite a few Japanese there. They'd come to our house with the laundry, always bow, how they do. At Christmastime all of us would...they'd give us Chinese dolls, little boxes, little gifts. I had a little dog I always called Snooty. I had it on the dresser. One time I told my daughter she could have it, then I told her, "I want it back." I missed the little dog, she said "you're an Indian giver", I said, "yes".*

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?*

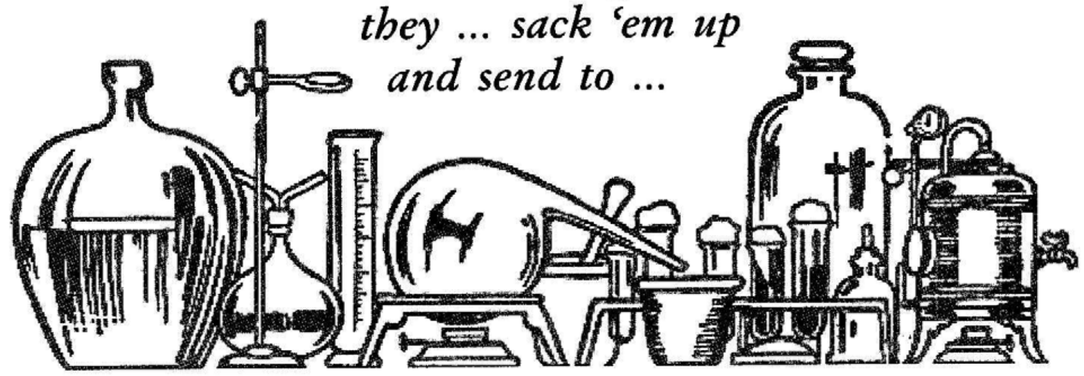
Gimby: *Just operatin' the ... the whole business. I was doin' the one end of that.*

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: *Huh?*

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: *Huh?*

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.*

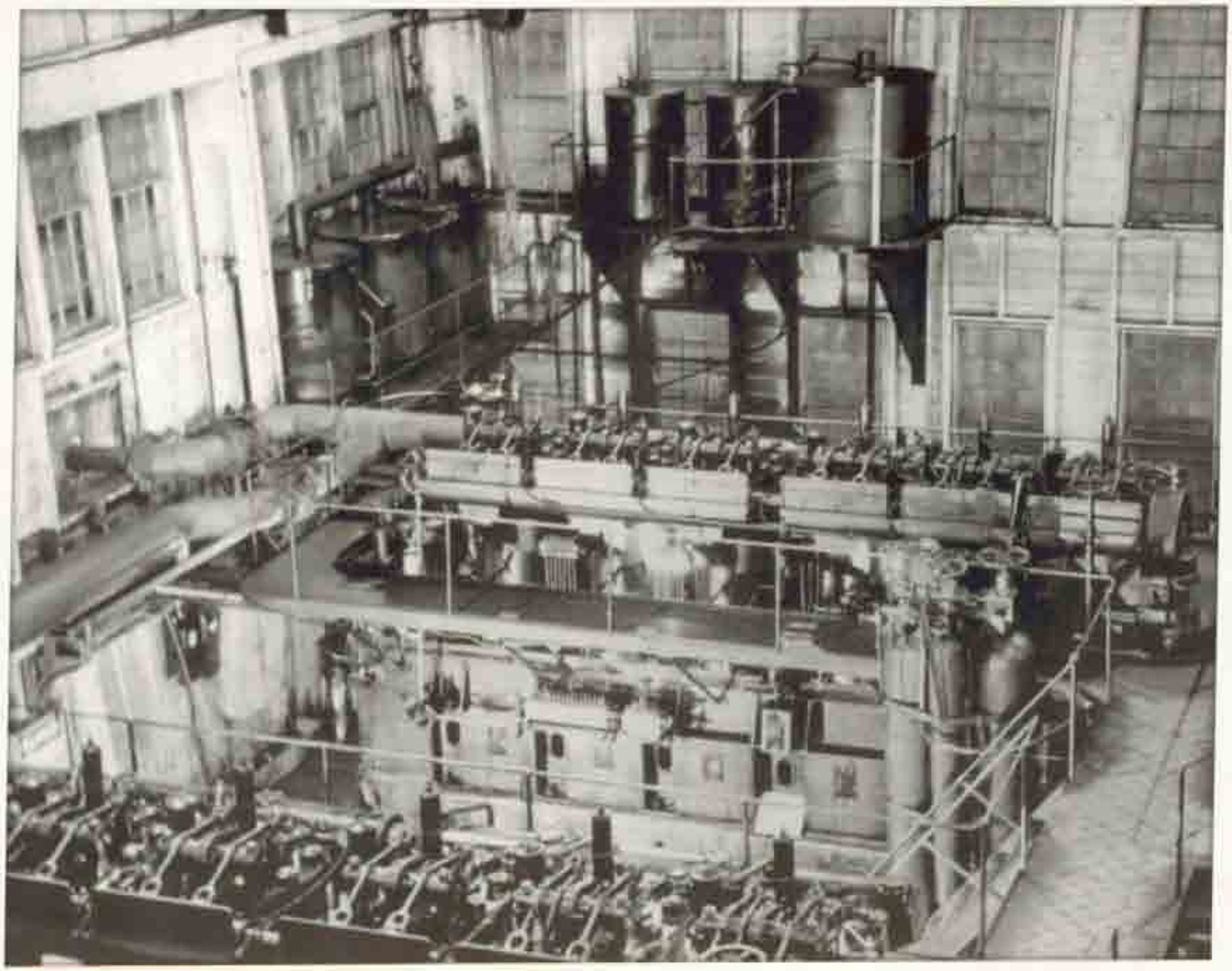
Gimby: *Well, then...*

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: *Huh?*

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: *Huh?*

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.*

BUD SELTENREICH

Interview conducted By Logan W. Hovis
National Park Service
June 16, 1990
Tape #1
Side #1

Hovis: *For the record, your name is?*

Seltenreich: *Bud Seltenreich.*

Hovis: *How old are you?*

Seltenreich: *Seventy-five.*

Hovis: *Seventy-five. Where were you born?*

Seltenreich: *The hospital here at Kennecott, 1915.*

Hovis: *1915.*

Seltenreich: *February 15.*

Hovis: *Your father, I assume, worked here at the mine?*

Seltenreich: *No. He worked in McCarthy. He done many things, he was a cook and he did cooking here and there and eventually he started his own restaurant there and had a restaurant in McCarthy for a number of years, including my mother who was a cook also. She was recognized as a professional cook. She came from Norway originally and she worked as an apprentice cook, as they used to be in the old days over there, for some of the rich people and she traveled across in the winter and worked with those people that were down there vacationing or enjoying the winter weather, rather than in Norway. They came to the United States when she was a very young*

girl and met my father in Seattle. She was working for the railroad and he was also working for the railroad as a cook on the dining cars.

Hovis: *Which railroad was that?*

Seltenreich: *I think that was the Northwestern. Ran from - I think it ran from Minnesota across the northern part of the states to Seattle.*

Hovis: *How did your parents come to McCarthy?*

Seltenreich: *Well in 1913 - I think they came about 1912 or 1913. The railroad had just opened. They had a Shushanna* [Chisana] *Stampede. You may have heard about it.*

Hovis: *Yes, I have.*

Seltenreich: *And that's what brought them up. And of course McCarthy was the - Shushanna junction was the title. That's where the* [plate?] *and all the stuff going to Shushanna came in, through McCarthy, and was taken over by pack horses and* [?] *and horses in winter sleighs and pack horses in the summer. They opened up the mining camps over in Shushanna. So it was kind of a second gold rush like the Klondike and it didn't pan out as rich as the Klondike, but it was a little rich and as the Kennecott mine was going, there was lots of mines going, and the* [Banquet?] *mine out there on* [?] *river and the Chititu mine and the Green Butte mine up McCarthy Creek and Motherlode mine* [?] *down there in McCarthy* [?] *Motherlode mine and all those activities. So they stayed and they operated their laundry for a while and* [?] *as well as opened their own restaurant in a few years. So they always worked in and around McCarthy. And so did I as a young fellow and so did my brothers, two brothers, Fred and Ted. You met Fred, he's here.*

Hovis: *Um humm.*

Seltenreich: *That's about the extent of my activity. I stayed in McCarthy and went to school in McCarthy. I didn't leave McCarthy until I was 18, and then only temporarily cause I was working for Gillam Airlines where I finished in Copper Center at that time and [?] lines and I went to work for them as a mechanic. I worked for them for a number of years, off and on. I worked with the Road Commission in the summer as a heavy duty equipment operator, tractors and graders and that sort of thing and gravel trucks, graveling road and that sort of thing. Part of that time I had worked in the McCarthy Garage. You may have seen some photographs of that there in the McCarthy Garage. I kind of grew up in that garage and that's where I got my mechanical experience in that. And so I was well qualified to work when I was 16, 17 years old, driving and operating heavy duty equipment. And so I did that in the summer and I worked on the airplanes in the winter, because there was no other work in the winter except here at the mine. So I decided the airplane business would be good because it provided year around work. And I didn't enjoy that working in the summer and making that money to live on in the winter and come back to zero next spring. You get no place, you're just going in a circle [?]. So that's why I took up the airplane business because that was a coming industry in Alaska. It was replacing the dog team and the horses and the transportation of past years as well as [?]. So that way I got into the aviation business and I've been in it ever since. It started about 1930. My two brothers and I bought an airplane in 1930 from the Swallow Airplane Company in Wichita and had it sent to Valdez. And we went down there to Valdez and put it together with some help of some aviation people that were there. There was a couple of other people around Valdez that were pilots and had airplanes and were qualified to do that sort of work and then we had*

one of them fly it back to McCarthy. So we had one of the first airplanes based in McCarthy at that time.

Hovis: *Where was the landing strip at that time?*

Seltenreich: *It was up on the hill there across McCarthy Creek and up on that bench up on top. That's still there, in fact, I use it. I have a hangar up there that I keep my equipment in. I've got some equipment up there, a* [?] *and a tractor and some stuff like that to use out on the homestead. See, my folks had a homestead out on the Nizina, nine miles out of town, and they farmed that also as a commercial venture for several years back in the '20s.*

Hovis: *What did they raise?*

Seltenreich: *They raised hay for the horses and potatoes and vegetables of all kinds. They had chickens, so we had eggs to sell to the miners and we had cows and we had milk and we raised a few kids for a toy. So it was an on-going proposition. We raised fruit, strawberries and stuff like that and made our living doing that for a while. And then in later years, as I say, they had a restaurant in McCarthy* [?].

Hovis: *Did they sell directly to the company or to the individual* [?].

Seltenreich: *They sold mostly to individuals, because the company here at the mine had their own dairy here and they shipped most of their stuff in, so they had an on-going contract with Seattle to supply their stuff. They couldn't just cut that off and buy separately. So it didn't have a very good market here at the mine as such, but the people around McCarthy - you know, there was quite a few people in that area, plus the gold mines out in the Nizina area and that sort of thing. They never had a market for those things* [?].

Hovis: *Did you ever get directly involved in mining, either placer mining or up here or* [?]?

Seltenreich: *I worked one summer at the* [Banquet?] *mine. They were putting in a new pipeline and I worked on job as a compressor operator, running the compressors for the hard rock jackhammers and stuff like that. I did that for one summer. But as I said, I worked construction jobs. Any place they had machines working they needed somebody to run the machines who could maintain and handle them at the same time, which was a first in those days, because they didn't have shocks and gloves as available. They had to do it out in the field, wherever it would break down, that's where you fixed it.*

Hovis: *What was the source of power to run the compressors?*

Seltenreich: *Oh, gasoline engines.*

Hovis: *Up on Dan Creek I've seen a compressor that's hooked up to a punt and wheel.*

Seltenreich: *Yeh. They had electric power, - they had a hydroelectric plant up there at Dan Creek, a good one. It supplied the camp with electricity and so forth. But up on the site and off the valley where we were putting in the pipeline, they didn't have any electricity there. We handled it with gasoline engines. So that's how I got kind of started in this aviation business was through my work with heavy duty equipment in the machine shops and various places* [?] *shops and* [?] *shops around McCarthy.* (inaudible) *so I converted that into the aviation business and worked for Gillam Airlines for a few years as a mechanic on their airplanes and then moved to Anchorage in '36. My brother Fred, he and I, had a shop there in Anchorage at Merrill Field, airplane shop, for a year or two. Then I worked for Star Airlines for a year or so. That's now Alaska Airlines. Then I went south to go to the university at night school and took up engineering, aeronautical engineering. I worked down at Ryan Aircraft factory in San Diego as a welding inspector on the contract assemblies in '38 or '39,*

somewhere in there, '39 yeh. They were just getting a lot of contracts in to build subassemblies for the military airplanes that were being built by Douglas Air, Lockheed and Consolidated, so there was a lot of subassemblies being built by them, welded assemblies. I was an expert welder, so it didn't take long for them to hire me. I was inspector for a short time and pretty soon I was a super - inspector of the welding department. Spent a year at that, got tired of that monotonous factory work, couldn't stand that, came back to Alaska. Flew a Tri-Motor Ford, I had my pilot's license, flew a time motor ford as copilot out of Anchorage doing trading at the mining camps over on the [?] *one summer. Then that fall I went to work for Pan American Airlines as a* [?] *in Fairbanks. They had their main maintenance base, an Alaska Division in Fairbanks, at that time. We had about 80 mechanics working. They would work three shifts, open 24 hours a day in the maintenance department. They had six to eight airplanes based there and multi-engined airplanes, Lockheed 10s as those guys define them. They operated a scheduled service between Fairbanks, Nome and Bethel and Fairbanks, Whitehorse and Juneau.*

Hovis: *Um hmm.*

Seltenreich: *At that time Pan American was still running their big boats and they would run one of their boats* [from] *Seattle to Juneau and then the Lockheed 10s would pick up the passengers and take them to Whitehorse and Fairbanks. And then in later years, a year or so later, they cut out the boats and they started running Lockheed* [?] *direct from Seattle to Juneau from Whitehorse to Fairbanks. But we still had the main maintenance base in Fairbanks.*

Hovis: *When you first brought your airplane in here to McCarthy, was the business as lucrative as you thought it might have been?*

Inger Jensen, in sailor uniform, poses with Aaron Erickson, John Letendre, and Jack Howard. The airplane is perhaps the "Spirit of Valdez."

"I took up the airplane business because that was a coming industry in Alaska. It was replacing the dog team and the horses and the transportation of past years..."

BUD SELTENREICH

Seltenreich: *We didn't bring it in for business, we brought it in for our own education and to learn to fly. We got our flying experience with that airplane. My brother, Ted the older one, he had taken lessons from Gillam who had been flying here since about '29. He used to come in here with an [?]. My brother would take a lesson from him when he had an overnight stay. So he got his license and he used the airplane just for that purpose. We didn't plan to use it commercially, but really that time of an airplane it could be used too successfully. Got some good pictures of it in my album right here, of the airplane. Then I went to Fairbanks with Pan American. I was there about a year as a mechanic for them and then they needed a chief mechanic down in Juneau at the overnight base there and I went down there for a year and did that and then came back to Fairbanks. They were moving some of their people down to San Francisco. So they moved the supervisory people down there and they put me in charge of the Fairbanks base. I was the chief mechanic at the Alaska Division of Pan American Airlines for about eight years in Fairbanks. While I was doing that, I started my own flying business. I started a flying school and a charter business and I was gonna do that just as a kind of a hobby. Something to keep me busy during the week-ends, because I only worked five days a week at Pan American. I was used to working seven days a week, ten hours a day [?] working five days a week. I wanted something else to do and I did it more as a hobby than a business. But it got such a demand for the services that I eventually ended up with seventeen airplanes and I was still working for Pan American. Then Pan American was gonna move their main maintenance base to Seattle and I said, well, I can't go, I'm too busy. So I quit Pan American and ran my business in Fairbanks. I was making twice as much money running my flying service as a hobby than I was working for Pan American. But I was getting tired of working*

sixteen hours a day and so I quit and I sold my business to my brother, Fred, and the chief pilot I had, a fellow by the name of Morey Evans. He's still around the country. He's retired now, of course, he lives in Anchorage. [?] *successful for a number of years. In the meantime, I took a year off and just did nothing and figured out what I should do. I was still pretty young - I was still in my early thirties. So I said, well, I guess I better not retire, the money isn't gonna last long enough. So I applied for a job at* [?] *as an instructor. I thought I'd do that for a few years just to, you know, just for the fun of it. So I was a scheduled airline inspector for a few years. And I thought - well, nothing else came up that interested me and I stayed in that for a few years and another few years and pretty soon I got to the point of no return. I couldn't quit that and start some place else and build up an adequate retirement and all that sort of thing. So I got stuck with it, I got to the point of no return, so I stayed there for 32 years as an inspector. Jim Barrow's department, now is a chief* [?] *as a chief in Washington of the entire United States* [?]. *And that's about my career and that is, it was pretty busy and varied and I still have my pilot's license. I still* [?] *an airplane for my own amusement and pleasure and I still do some aviation* [?]. *More than I want to, I can't get enough time for myself. But I always have a chance to change that. Maybe someday I'll retire and stay retired.*

Hovis: *Did you come back to McCarthy frequently while you were flying around while outside and what have you?*

Seltenreich: *Oh, yes. I used to come back and check once a year at least and spend a week or so with a friend. I have lots of friends up here that are still living here and I used to come up and visit. Then, of course, we still have our homestead out there, 320 acres over there on the Nizina. My brother and I built a little airport*

on it so we could fly in there and land there. And, of course, there is a road out there to McCarthy and you can drive out there, not very good any more but it [?] but we still drive it.

Hovis: *Are there still buildings on the homestead?*

Seltenreich: *No, the buildings all fell down and we haven't built any new ones, but other people have [?]. We subdivided some of it and sold off about ten acres here and there. It's real nice, there's one real nice building on it that's owned by a fellow by the name of Hanna. A log cabin, with a large upstairs, with a living room, fireplace, kitchen, a den for his trophies and his - there is kind of a hobby shop inside it and his guns and his equipment to work on the reloading equipment and all that sort of stuff. Plus, he's got a big garage built there for his equipment and shop [?]. There is another fellow building out there who's got a pretty nice place too. He hasn't got it finished yet [?] Bay. So I have enough to keep me busy just playing around with my own stuff and that's what I would like to be doing, working towards that end, so when I get old I can just [?].*

Hovis: *You said, before we turned the tape recorder on, that you worked for a little bit up here at Kennecott.*

Seltenreich: *Yeh, I worked in the laundry one summer for a few months, mangling the sheets. I was a sheet mangler. I mean the mangling of the big sheets that they had in the hospital there. I used to run them through the Mangle and fold them and package them.*

Hovis: *Who was your boss in the laundry?*

Seltenreich: *A fellow by the name of Morris* [Tom Mori]. *That's all I know him by. He was a Jap. They had Japanese cooks here and Japanese owned the laundry. I don't like to use the slang word for publication, but they called him [?] the Jap.*

An Asian worker seated far left.

Hovis: *When you were talking to him, would you call him that?*

Seltenreich: *Well, I probably did I imagine so. He was a fine person. A pleasant person to work for, had a good sense of humor. He was not old, a rather young fellow.*

Hovis: *Were there a lot of Japanese here?*

Seltenreich: *All the cooks were in the bunkhouses, not the bunkhouses, what do you call them - anyway, eating places. Yeh, they had several big, right down here at this place, they had a mess hall. yeh, big mess hall.*

Hovis: *I've noticed that there are two Japanese graves down in the cemetery.*

Seltenreich: *Is that so?*

Hovis: *And one of them has - I haven't been down there for a while but I think it's the largest monument down there.*

Seltenreich: *Oh, yeh. I haven't been down there to see that. I don't know what ever happened to Mori, whether he stayed here and died here or whether he left here when the camp closed down. See, I left here around '33, '32, '34. I was in and out but I left here permanently in '35, more or less.*

Hovis: *Was McCarthy still quite the blooming town in '35?*

Seltenreich: *Oh, yes. Yeh, it was.*

Hovis: *How quickly did it wind down after the mine closed?*

Seltenreich: *Well, about five years. It was still pretty active for five years after that. But the war is what closed it down. When the war came along, the mines all shut down, the placer mines. They couldn't get equipment or supplies anymore because everything was required to go to the war effort and nothing for mining, non-strategic materials, which gold was not considered strategic as far as the war effort goes. This mine, of course, was*

going during World War I and it was very important for the war effort in World War I. So that's about the extent of my activity here at McCarthy.

Hovis: *Was there a doctor in McCarthy or did everybody in town come up here to use the hospital?*

Seltenreich: *No, they used the hospital here in Kennecott.*

Hovis: *The people from McCarthy would be charged for the services?*

Seltenreich: *Yes, that's right. I spent a couple of months up here. I had a ruptured appendix back in 1925 and that was a pretty serious business in those days, because they didn't have penicillin. You know what penicillin is.*

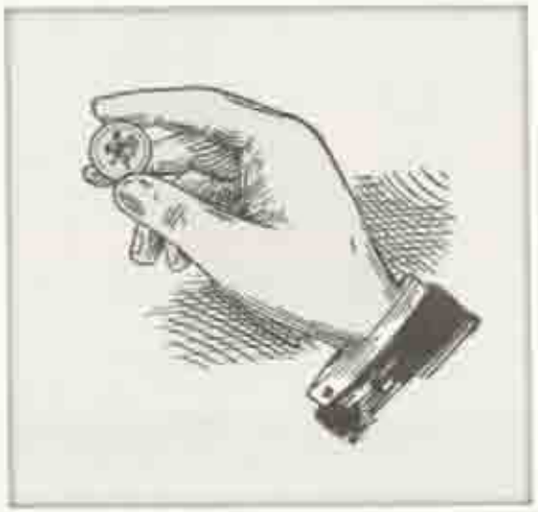
Hovis: *Yes.*

Seltenreich: *And when you get an infection like you get from a ruptured appendix, which is peritonitis, it is a very difficult proposition to cure. The doctor here was very resourceful. He finally developed a plan - it wasn't looking too good and he had to operate again. He took all my intestines out, put them in a dish pan in mercurochrome and then threw them back in and, you know, it worked. Probably it took about six months, I had drain tubes in my stomach and I was a couple of months in the hospital and for about six months after that I had to come up to Kennecott about every three or four days and have the drain tubes changed.*

Hovis: *Um humm.*

Seltenreich: *Used to ride the train up and down. I got pretty well acquainted with the engineers. Even against the laws and the rules they had in the train, they let me ride in the engine and knock the engines. That was lots of fun, running the big steam engine. So I had a pretty interesting life, it wasn't boring at all. There was always something to do and always kept me busy. Like - well, when I was in McCarthy as a kid - Not, you know, going to school in the*

younger years [?] 12 years old I was in jobs. I had a water business. In the winter they didn't have any water so I had a little Chevrolet that I made into a pickup, you know, I converted it into a pickup and I used to haul water to the various businesses and fill their holding tanks, 10 cents a bucket or 12 buckets for a dollar, five gallon cans. It made a little jingle in my pocket all the time. I always had a jingle in my pocket.



Hovis: *Where would you get the water?*

Seltenreich: *Out of the creek, just drive down to the creek and fill the buckets. There were creeks down there between McCarthy and the railroad [?] some clear water creeks that were not contaminated. I supplied water to the restaurants and the hotel and some of the private residents that didn't want to carry their own water up from the creek. Kept me pretty busy, plus chopping kindling for the girls down on the line so they could start their fires in the morning. And they always tipped good, you know, they were good tippers. When I was fifteen my brothers and I had enough money to buy an airplane.*

Hovis: *How were the girls treated there? You mentioned the girls down the line.*

Seltenreich: *Oh, they were treated very respectfully. They weren't invited uptown too much, to associate with the regular people, but they would come up once in a while if they didn't make too big a habit of it. They would run very respected.*

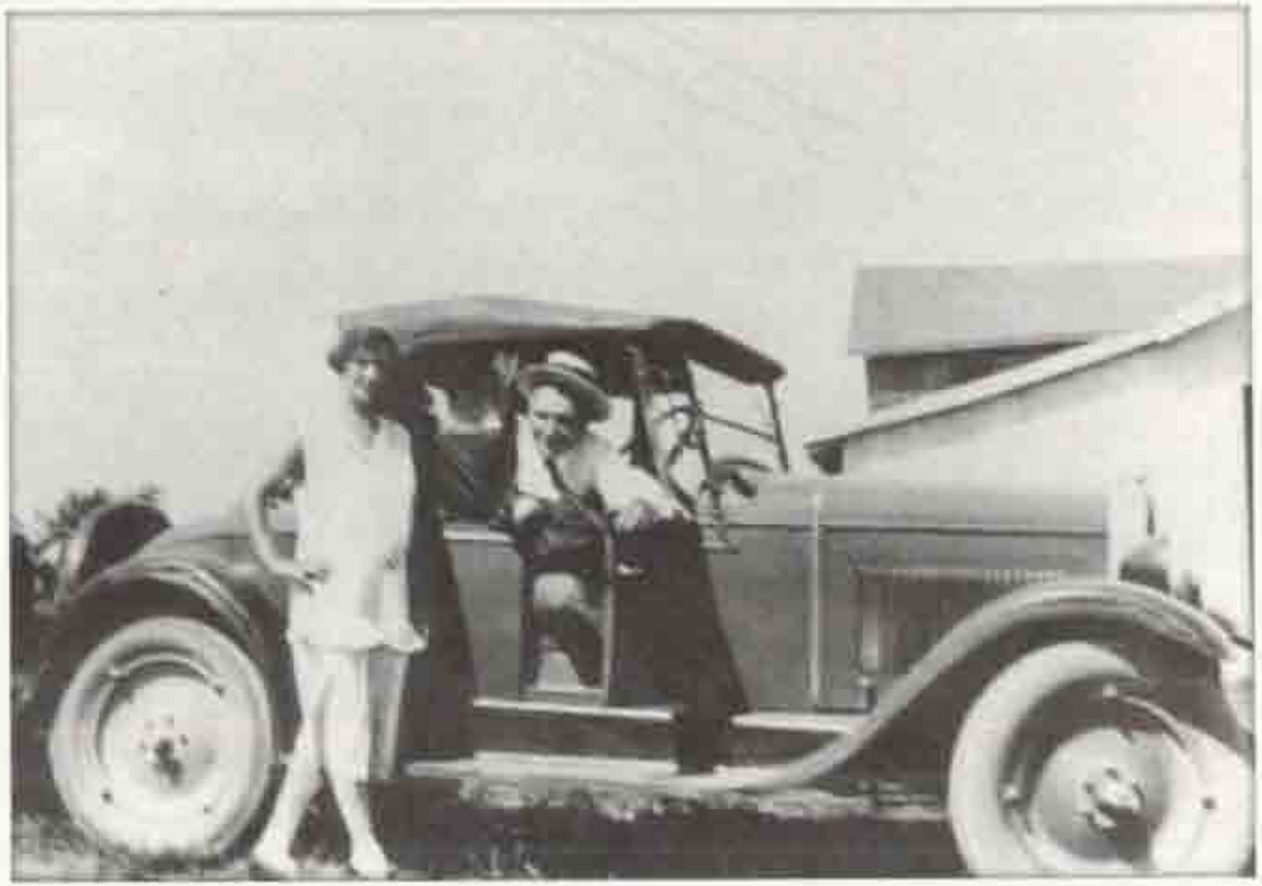
The doctor from Kennecott would go down there, of course, and check them up physically. I don't recall how often, whether it was twice a month or once a month. They kept them in good shape. But you see, up here where they had just only a few of the administrative people had their wives and families, the rest of the people up here were all single. So they had to go down to McCarthy and have their recreation (inaudible) prejudiced so against, you know. They had a few drinks and had a beer or whiskey or whatever they wanted, moonshine as they called it in those days, Prohibition days. There was a lot of work [?]. People got busy, we cut a lot of wood and sawed a lot of wood and delivered a lot of wood with trucks. My brother and I, Fred, we did a lot of that. My brother, Ted, he worked in the grocery store most of the time. He used to work for [?] Company in the grocery store. So we all worked all the time, you know, from the time we was 12, 13 years old we had jobs of one kind or another and was able to make pretty good money around there. There was lots of money around there. We didn't have a depression is what I'm trying to say [?] during the depression days. We had it pretty good, you know, and everything was up-to-date, [?] had every convenience [?] and we didn't suffer at all. In fact, the matter is I think we had better conditions in McCarthy in those days than I had since I left McCarthy.

Hovis: *Did anybody in McCarthy make the moonshine?*

Seltenreich: *Oh, yes. They didn't make it right in town, there was various places out of town. They had little camps out of town where they made the moonshine.*

Hovis: *Was there any law enforcement officers in McCarthy?*

Seltenreich: *Yeh, we had a jail there and there was a marshal there. He didn't pay too much attention to that. That was part of the game. The*



Ellen and Axel Hanson.

"(Reverend Bingle) would come up from Cordova about once a month or so and give a sermon. He had a church there in Cordova and he would come up and talk to us and try to save us sinners a little bit. He did a pretty good job of it. I didn't turn out too bad, I didn't get in jail ever..."

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only ones that paid attention to it - they had - in those days during Prohibition days, they had Prohibition agents and they would travel around and make a nuisance of themselves. But you see, it wasn't very easy for them to get here because they had to come on the train. When they came around the corner, there's a corner down there this side of Long Lake, where they come around the corner you could see the train coming and the engineers would puff out the black smoke, meaning they had some questionable people on board - that they might want to clear out the town and haul all the stuff out and pass it out of town. Toss out the liquor. I remember - I used to drive a truck. I was only 12 or 13 years old but used to drive a little pickup truck, hauling wood and that sort of thing, you know. So apparently someone says - they seen me hauling stuff. I think he thought I was hauling stuff out of town to hide it from the Prohibition agency. So a Prohibition agent stopped the car. [?] *I don't know what they were trying to find out what I was doing. I didn't give them any satisfaction, I was pretty tight mouthed, I didn't do a lot of talking about my activities hauling booze out of town.*

Hovis: *Did you ever go up to the Motherlode mine or the Green Butte mine when it was running?*

Seltenreich: *I've been there a couple of times just for a visit with a friend, an associate of the fact. Johnny Barrett was one of the owners, you know, he discovered the Green Butte mine. His son is here in town, did you see him?*

Hovis: *Not yet. I've not talked to him yet.*

Seltenreich: [?] *he went to school here also. Yeh, I was a pretty good friend of Johnny Barrett, because we were kind of in business together. He was kind of an entrepreneur. He was into everything. He sold life insurance, he had the water system in town and he sold lots and he did this, that and the other thing. Plus, he was one of the*

administrators and managers of Green Butte mine.

Hovis: *Everybody, it sounds like, had more than one job.*

Seltenreich: *Oh, yeh. It was a busy place. So anyway, he had a water system there. He had a couple of water tanks up on stilts, high above anything else in town. And he had what you call a round down in the creek, he had a couple of them down there pumping into those tanks. When he was up at the mine trying to do his business up there, well, then it was my job to see that those rounds didn't stop working. As I say, I was kind of in the water business with him in the summer, and they didn't run in the winter because they'd freeze up and then* [?] *pipes ran underground. They were just underground enough...*

TAPE #1
SIDE #2

Seltenreich: [?] *There is a good road up there. That was one of the better roads around here, was that road up to the Green Butte Motherlode mine. They built a fine road up there.*

Hovis: *The Motherlode Company built that road?*

Seltenreich: *Well, I'm not sure they built it. I think the Motherlode probably did most of the building of the road but the Green Butte mine was probably involved too, because they had trucks to haul their ore out with and so did the Motherlode, with big White trucks - not a white color but made by the White Motor Company. They hauled the ore out of the Motherlode mine so they used the road in combination. The only time I went up there was just for recreation, something to do, you know. Ride up with somebody or drive up with somebody.*

Hovis: *I'm curious. You talked about the girls in McCarthy and the bootleg liquor and what have you. Were there any preachers in McCarthy?*

Seltenreich: *No, no there wasn't. One would come up from Cordova about once a month or so and give a sermon. Reverend Bingle. I remember his name. He had a church there in Cordova and he would come up and talk to us and try to save us sinners a little bit. He did a pretty good job of it. I didn't turn out too bad, I didn't get in jail ever* [?].

Hovis: *That's a certain mark of distinction.*

Seltenreich: *So he had some success, I would say. Reverend Bingle, was a nice guy.*

Hovis: *Would he come up to the mine as well?*

Seltenreich: *I don't know if he did or not. Probably did, I'm sure he did, yeh, very likely did. He probably come up here and held services, I'm sure. So we got a little religion along the way, enough to keep us out of jail I should say. Oh, yeh, in addition to the other jobs I had, I used to drive taxi. We had lots of taxi cabs. We had lots of cars in McCarthy, mostly used for businesses, there was very few personal cars. I had one, I had a 1922 Chevrolet, I guess it was. He couldn't keep it running, he was continually stripping it and he got so mad at the car he says, I'll give you this car. He give it to me. It was a 1922 Chevrolet touring car and he had the rear end stripped out of it. So I had enough money and I sent down to Seattle and I bought a complete unit.* [?] *rear end and the whole works. It cost me a hundred and some dollars. That was a lot of money in those days, I guess.*

Hovis: *It would be.*

Seltenreich: *Sent it up, put that in there and that car served me well, I never had any trouble with it. But the Chevrolets were bad cars. They had the* [?] *clutch and they suck in that clutch and the car would jump about a foot, you know, unless you was very clever with it, you could do it right and I had my trouble doing it but it didn't take me long to learn how to handle that. They*

Horseless carriage, Sheldon Auto Stage Company.

had jumped that thing around so much - you see, the other guy jumped it around so much he stripped the gears out of it.

Hovis: *You used it as a taxi cab as well as...*

Seltenreich: *No, I used it just for hauling water. I made a pickup out of it and used it for my water business. But I did drive taxi for some of the other outfits that had the taxi service at the McCarthy Garage. There were two outfits in there. Fred did the same thing. He drove for one of those outfits and I did for the other. We used to get $5.00 for a trip to Kennecott, whether it was one person or a full load. And the driver - I'd get $2.00 and the owner would get three. And I did it with dog teams in the winter. There's a picture in my album in there about the dog team coming up the track here in the winter because the road wouldn't stay open. So when it was closed we went by dog team and I'd come up the railroad track because there wasn't any trains - one a day [?] so we didn't get in trouble with the railroad. Sometimes only one in a couple of days, so we used the railroad track quite a bit and nobody objected to it. Running the dog teams up that was a much better way than coming up the road in the winter.*

Hovis: *When you were driving the taxi, who were your main customers, the miners?*

Seltenreich: *The miners, yeh. Yeh, they'd come down and get drunk and all kicked out of shape and had to get back to work.*

Hovis: *Would you take them all the way up to the mines up on the ridge?*

Seltenreich: *No, just as far as the camp, as far as it could go. You couldn't get up there. You couldn't get any further than the store down there. I'd let them out at the store.*

Hovis: *Would you ever do any business at the store up there?*

Seltenreich: *Oh, yes. I used to buy things there. It was cheaper up here.*

They didn't object to that, they'd sell to everybody.

Hovis: *And you didn't have to use the scrip?*

Seltenreich: *No, they took cash. We used to come out here for the movies quite a bit. We used to have movies in McCarthy years ago when the pipeline was running here. That shut down in 1918, Motherlode pipeline. Then we didn't have any movies anymore down here so we had to come up here to the movies and see Tom Mix and Rin Tin Tin and Reginald* [?] *and all those old time movies.*

Hovis: *Was there usually a good crowd for the movies?*

Seltenreich: *Oh yeh, a full house most of the time, not from McCarthy but from the camp here. But we'd come up.*

Hovis: *Anything else you would like to say, particularly in relationship to McCarthy and Kennecott?*

Seltenreich: *No, I can't really tell you much more about it than that, other than it was an interesting thing. We wasn't bored, didn't have any trouble with having to smoke pot or shoot cocaine or anything like that to keep entertained. Even though McCarthy was* [?] *as a gambling, bootlegging, whorehouse town, it never dawned on me to follow that* [?]. [?] *in running a respectable business most of my life, I had no interest in it. I had seen that other and* [?] *and I knew there was money in it, but I wasn't interested in money so much as I was interested in doing what I like to do.*

Hovis: *Did you know many of the people that are here at this reunion when you were a child?*

Seltenreich: *Oh yes, quite a number of them. Quite a number that I hadn't seen since they left here and I left here. I haven't seen them since that time. Didn't even know where they lived, didn't even know they were around yet.*

Hovis: *Do any of them stand out particularly in your memory? Any of them that perhaps you worked with?*

Seltenreich: *Oh yeh, Oscar. Oscar Watsjold, the big fellow here that had the store. They came over from Norway and they went to school in McCarthy and they couldn't speak English at that time. They learned English and went to school at the same time. Watsjold and I worked together at the road commission camp, building the road from the Nizina over the Chitina River. So we had quite a bit of associations together and [?]. Of course I've seen him a number of times since because he's been living in Seward and he had a brother, John, that lived in Anchorage. He still has a brother, John, that lives in Anchorage I should say.*

Nizina River Bridge.

Hovis: *When you were working for the road commission on the Nizina road, did you have anything to do with building the bridge?*

Seltenreich: *No, that was built in 1924 and I was a little young for working [?], except we did have some business with them, my folks did, from the viewpoint that when they put those concrete piers in, they had trouble finding enough gravel and sand that was pure enough to make substantial concrete. All that stuff down in the river has got too much mica in it and that weakens the concrete. So up there on the homestead, right next to the house where they lived, there was a bank there of sand and it was pure sand. So they came out there with their wagons and they hauled the sand from there down to the camp where they were putting the piers in for the spans that went across the river. So I had business with them in that regard and my dad worked for them running the steam bars for the power grinder. So he worked on there and I used to go down there and get a good meal once in a while. I was always welcome down there. They had a nice camp down there. It was only a mile walk from where we lived up there on the homestead down to where they camped.*

Hovis: *Where was the camp? On which side of the river?*

Seltenreich: *It was on this side, on the McCarthy side. It was right down - are you familiar with - you see that building built out of planks that's down there?*

Hovis: *Yes.*

Seltenreich: *That's ours. We built that. My dad built that off planks that came off of the first bridge that was put in the Nizina upriver from that bridge. They put in a bridge there that lasted one season and the river washed it out and those planks were scattered from here to breakfast all over the [?] and they took the horses down and drug them up and built that building out of them.*

Hovis: *Was the earlier bridge closer to May Creek?*

Seltenreich: *Yeh. It was practically directly across from May Creek. It was across from where that road goes down to the river. It was an old*

wagon road they used to use to freight on years ago. They would cross the river down there by a place called Shorty Grimm's homestead. It was upriver from our homestead. That's where the bridge went across, just above his place that bridge went across. It was all piling and, of course, when high water came that was the end of it.

Hovis: *Was there a road house at May Creek at that time?*

Seltenreich: *Yeh.*

Hovis: *Did you know the people there?*

Seltenreich: *Yeh. Jenny Brown took care of that road house. Tess Murray married Jenny Brown. Tess Holmes. I don't know what her maiden name was. I remember her by Mrs. Brown at first, then she married Murray and then it was Mrs. Murray and then after Murray died she married Walter Holmes. So I knew her ever since - well, I guess since I've been* [?].

Hovis: *Where was the road house? Anywhere near where Al Gagnon has his place?*

Seltenreich: *Yeh. Just upstream from Al Gagnon's place. Practically on the same level. Well just - the road from the airport run down to his place, down to that - no, it was further down -* [?] *a fellow there - Walter Holmes had his place - yeh, I guess Gagnon bought Walter Holmes' place there. But the road house was farther down the bit. It was on that same bit but it was farther down towards the river. They had a fine road house down there. A nice building.*

Hovis: *A log building?*

Seltenreich: *Yeh, I think it was log. I'm sure it must have been log.*

Hovis: *Two stories?*

Seltenreich: *Two story, yeh. Rooms upstairs, had a horse barn. You know, in those days every place had a horse barn, because everybody had*

horses. You had to have a place for the horses to stay. I've been there quite a few times.

Hovis: *Perhaps you can help me with a few other little bits of information on the May Creek area. Was the mail cabin always where it is now, down there on the - I guess it's the east end of the runway, or the south end?*

Seltenreich: *Oh no, there was no runway. That runway was built in - Oscar and Leonard Brenwick, two kids I went to school with, Leonard died since - they were working for the road commission, that's after I left, it must have been in '39, '37, they built that runway. There was no mail boxes of any kind in those days. They didn't have mail boxes. I don't know what they* [?]. *So the road house there and the one at Spruce Point and then it went over the summit to the White River, the next road house is. They had them about every 20 miles.*

Hovis: *Was there a road house on Peavine Bar going up the Chitistone?*

Seltenreich: *No. The only thing that was on Peavine Bar - let's see, when the Bremner Mining Company started freighting - you should talk to Fred about that, he freighted in there with the tractors in I think as late as '37, '38 maybe, over that road that crossed from Nizina to the Chitina and then to the Jiggs Bar. Jiggs Bar, that's where it was. I think they crossed at Jiggs Bar, yeh, they did. They crossed down there and then went up the other side after* [?].

Hovis: *Did you ever go up to Chititu camp and Nizina up on Chititu Creek?*

Seltenreich: *Yeh. I've been to Chititu. I was pretty good friends with Charlie Kramer, the guy that owned it. Used to go out and visit him once in a while, maybe once in the summer, couple of times during the summer. Cause I'd be driving out there hauling freight. I did that too. I ran, you know, the*

Model-T trucks. I used to drive one out there. The guy that had the Golden Hotel [in McCarthy], *he had a taxi/truck service. I used to drive his Model-T truck and once in a while I'd make a trip out there with some of the freight. We didn't go right up to Chititu at that time, we stopped short of there and they came down with the horses. They always used horses to come down and pick up their freight. Sometimes I would ride up on the horses just to have lunch with them. If there was a free meal around I'd want to get in on it.*

Hovis: *Did you know, I think it was George Powell's father? And he mined up there on Rex Creek?*

Seltenreich: *Yeh. But I'm not sure what creek he mined on, whether it was Rex Creek or - I guess it was Rex Creek. I guess where he had his mine. He got killed in a cave-in there. Yeh, I knew him, he had a blacksmith shop. He had that blacksmith shop down there right across the street from the Motherlode power house. And, of course, I got involved in that too. At least he would let me turn the crank at the forge* [?] *horseshoes* [?]. [?] *in the blacksmith shop. I used to work in that blacksmith shop on and off doing little chores for myself. He had equipment there that I could use, drill presses and things like that for drilling holes. I didn't do much horse shoeing but I got involved* [?] *and I know how to do it anyway. Got involved that much.*

Hovis: *How about Shushanna* [Chisina], *were you up there any?*

Seltenreich: *No, never went to Shushanna, other than later years I've gone in there quite a bit off and on. I went over to the* [?] *when Steve Bremner and his brother were staking the ground out, I walked over there with them one time. Went down to Long Lake on the section speeder and then I went down to the river - a fellow by the name of Bill Berry, he was a pretty good friend of mine that ran boats. And he had a boat in there that*

would cross the river, the Chitina River. We took the boat across and then walked up to the Bremner mine, it was staked, and I helped them stake some claims up there at the site of the Bremner mine.

Hovis: *Staking up on the mountainside must have been touchy business.*

Seltenreich: *Naw, it wasn't. It wasn't very steep there. We piled up monuments, put up rocks for monuments and stuff. I was up there about four or five days with them one time. And then I learned later - then I said, "what the hell ever happened to my Chevrolet car?" "Well," someone said, "they sent it over to the Bremner." They had taken it over there. And then in one of my Chevrolets - I had two Chevrolets, actually, I had two Chevrolets and I rebuilt the engine on one of them. I made a super, super engine out of it. I put aluminum alloy pistons in it and spent the winter working on it. I says, what the hell ever happened to my Chevrolet engine. Well, someone says they're running the tram with it over at the Bremner mine, that's the last we've seen of it. So I guess that's what happened to my Chevrolet car, my Chevrolet engine, it ended up over at the Bremner mine.*

Hovis: *There's an old Chevrolet up at Calamity Gulch too. Up off* [?].

Seltenreich: *Oh, I bet that - see, my brother, Ted, my older brother, him and a fellow by the name of* [Clock?] *put in a hydraulic system up there, up on Calamity. That was after I left here. I'd been gone a long time and that was '38 maybe '39 they was doing that. And I bet that's my Chevy. Is there a whole car up there?*

Hovis: *Whole car up there.*

Seltenreich: *Is it a pickup?*

Hovis: *It's a pickup and its got cleats on the back tires.*

Seltenreich: *Well, they might have put those on it to get up there. But that's my*

Chevrolet pickup. That's where my other pickup went. I think that was a 1919 model. It was a 490 instead of a Superior. One of them was a Superior. That was a deluxe model that had a California top on it. One of those that was a touring car that was converted to a sedan by putting side windows, permanent side windows in that inside curtains. And then that 490 model, that was a cheap model. That other is the pickup I had. It was an older model than the car I had. That's where they went to. I'll be darned.

Hovis: *There's quite a bit of* [?] *up there.*

Seltenreich: *Well, I thought if I went up there I'd have a car to run around in. So anyway, they mined one season. It took them three years to get that setup going up there and they must have put in quite a bit of equipment up there. 'Cause they got it all built up and they mined one season and I think they took out - I figure probably about a couple of hundred dollars. They cleaned up a couple hundred dollars. So then my brother* [Ted] *came over to Fairbanks. I was in Fairbanks at that time and that was in the '40s, probably 1940 I guess. He drove a Model-A over there that he had here. I don't know if it was a Model-A pickup or a Model-A car, I can't remember what it was. Then he went to work as a mechanic for Pan American. 'Cause I was a superintendent so it wasn't hard for him to get a job.*

Hovis: *That would help, yes.*

Seltenreich: *So he got a job as a mechanic for Pan American. And Fred worked for Pan American too, for a year, until he got in a row with the superintendent and said the hell with you and left. I was telling about Ted was working in there* (inaudible). *I told him about Ted* [?] *for the girls on the line so they could (inaudible) and all that sort of thing* (inaudible). *Well anyway, Ted worked for Pan American, my older brother, and then he worked as a mechanic and then he was substituting as a plug mechanic. We used to put plug mechanics on*

the airplanes to Nome because they didn't have any maintenance people based at Nome. So he was on there as a temporary plug mechanic. That was in '42, wasn't it? Was it '42? They were coming out of Nome in a white out condition and they ran into the top of a mountain and he got killed on that flight. Everybody got killed on that. It was a Pilgrim, they was flying a Pilgrim [?]. *What was I starting to say?*

Hovis: *We were talking about Chititu, but* [?].

Seltenreich: (Inaudible) *he said that Chevrolet pickup of mine was up there.*

Seltenreich,F: [Fred Seltenreich, Bud's brother, joins the conversation]. *I thought it was over* [?].

Seltenreich: *Well, they was using* [?] *too.*

Seltenreich,F: [?] *been there because they had it up on the hill there and* [?].

Seltenreich: *They said the engine was, they used it on the tram.*

Seltenreich,F: *Yeh, we put the engine and used it on the tram from the - where the tram come down.*

Seltenreich: *Oh, you did.*

Seltenreich,F: *Yeh, and then run over to the miller. It was about a couple thousand feet.*

Seltenreich: [?] *used my engine?*

Seltenreich,F: *I didn't use it. You got to get a hold of Lee Kramer or - but you got to leave this world before you see them.*

Seltenreich: *Well, I'll take it up with them later.*

Seltenreich,F: *Yeh, when you get up there. But you're not going up there, you're going down that way with the rest of the people.* [inaudible] *just like the other day, some guy was talking to me an I says oh, yeh, I'm a well* [?]. *he said, how deep do you go and I said well, the well is 73 feet deep with 30 feet of dry* [?] *and 30 feet of clay and they hit another gravel bunch and was down there about 30 to 40 feet in*

Seltenreich,F: *It's the pickup.*

Seltenreich: *That's the pickup I used to haul water with.*

Seltenreich,F: *And I don't know* [?] *engine. Any Model-T engine, if they had another Model-T engine.*

Seltenreich: *Oh, sure. There were several around.*

Seltenreich,F: *About the only thing I'm missing on that* [?].

Seltenreich: *I'd love to give you that back if you want it.*

Seltenreich,F: *I think what's his name claims it, Edwards.*

Seltenreich: *Edwards? What has he ever got up there?*

Seltenreich,F: *He said he restaked it when it ran out and no* [?] *was on it. I understand that he owns it. In fact,* [?] *sent his boy up there* [?].

Seltenreich: *Oh, I see. Oh, is that so.*

Seltenreich,F: *But nowadays, of course, I don't think* [?] *is doing anything.* [?] *signing the papers down in the* [?].

Hovis: *I think that's what is happening.*

Seltenreich,F: *Unless you catch him at it, how are you gonna prove it? You have to catch him to prove it. But anyway, that's a long walk up there* [?].

Seltenreich: *They haul it down from there by helicopter, probably.*

Seltenreich,F: *I been trying to talk Joe into* [?] *he can't get away anymore. When he had lots of time to get away he didn't have the helicopter and now he's got the helicopter and he can't in no way have time to use it. And he is going to fly over the Bremner one day and take a look at that junk there too.*

Seltenreich: *Well, who owns that Bremner stuff?*

Seltenreich,F: *Some guy with BLM claims he owns it.*

Seltenreich: *Does the Park Service own it?*

Hovis: *No.*

Seltenreich,F: *I was in Chitina one time and the guy from BLM come in there and hired Art Knutson to fly over in the Super Cub and I talked to him and he said that he owned it, he had stock in it - and some way he went through the courts and got it and he owns it.*

Seltenreich: *Oh, yeh. You've got stock in it too.*

Seltenreich,F: *My wife thought she married a very wealthy man cause I had a suitcase full of beautiful stocks certificates. I had this for three or four years and she said well, what are you going to do with all that stock in the suitcase? And I said well, it's worthless. Oh, I thought you were wealthy, she says. So she burned it and I could have made money by selling it.* (inaudible) *my mother had some of it too, and I don't know what happened to that.*

Seltenreich: *I think I have 13 shares or something. Stock certificates.*

Hovis: *That is something.*

Seltenreich: *Where are you based?*

Hovis: *I'm based in Anchorage.*

Seltenreich: *Oh, are you? Oh, I see.*

Seltenreich,F: *You're with the Park Service?*

Hovis: *Yes, I am.*

Seltenreich,F: *Been with it long?*

Hovis: *I've worked for them during the summers for the last five years then decided* [?] *to keep me on in the winter now. I'm not a permanent employee, I'm a seasonal.*

Seltenreich,F: *Is that machine on there?*

Hovis: *Yes it is.*

Seltenreich: *At one time in your life you made an honest living, huh?*

Hovis: *For 15 years I worked in the mines.*

Seltenreich: *Where?*

Hovis: *In British Columbia.*

NAN MOORE HENDERSON AND JEANNE MOORE ELLIOTT

Interview conducted by Ann Kain
National Park Service
June 11, 1994
Tape #1
Side #1

Kain: *My name is Ann Kain. I work for the National Park Service. This is June 11, 1994 at Kennicott Glacier Lodge. I'm interviewing Nan Moore Henderson and Jeanne Moore Elliott. And as I did with the two sisters in 1990, we will probably have a hard time figuring out who is talking. Basically, we're just asking some general questions and recollections that you had growing up children in Kennecott. And just some of the basic identifying information.*

Kain: *When did you come to Kennecott?*

Henderson: *We were born here.*

Kain: *You were both born here? And where did your parents come here from?*

Elliott: *Our dad came from Tennessee and our mother was born in Chile. There was a Kennecott Copper Mine in Chile.*

Kain: *I see.*

Elliott: *And Kennecott Corporation from Alaska sent him to Chile. He was down there for a few years. They were married in 1929 and returned to Alaska, where they had three children.*

Kain: *So, he was working for Kennecott up here in Alaska. And was sent down to Chile and married your mother. Was she working for*

Kennecott down there? No. This is real interesting because most of the people - a lot of the people here, their mothers came here as nurses. And married. And after they married, of course, they couldn't work as a nurse anymore. So they - but they stayed here. So it is kind of interesting when having someone going down to Kennecott mines in Chile. How did he meet your mother?

Elliott: [Mama worked in a club called "El Teniente Club" which was a club for Americans (who were connected with the Kennecott Corp). She worked as a hostess and daddy would come in and eat, play cards, swim and they were married within six months.]

Kain: *So he met her there?*

Elliott: *She was so young. She was like 18 or something. I think they married when she was 19.*

Henderson: *Daddy was ten years older than mother. So he would have been 28. In the neighborhood of 28, 29.*

Mrs. Moore with little ones, Nan (left) and Jean.

And they married in Santiago, Chile.

Kain: *In Santiago.*

Henderson: *And then they got on the boat to come on up. For their honeymoon, I guess, so to speak, in Kennecott.*

Kain: *What was your father's - Oh, I'm sorry.*

Elliott: *They came to California.*

Henderson: *California?*

Elliott: *Right landed in California and then from there took the bus to Washington. And then he left her in Washington for a few months to learn how to play the piano, speak English, and swim.*

Kain: *And swim.*

Elliott: *He came on to Kennecott.*

Kain: *Why swim?*

Elliott: *I don't know. She got kind of homesick for him and she was over there a few months. I think she was supposed to be there a several months, but she was only there several weeks. I'm sure. And so he sent for her and she came on.*

Kain: *What was his job here at Kennecott?*

Elliott: *He was a mining engineer. I think before the mine closed, he was being groomed to work his way on up to superintendent, but in the meantime the mine closed down. So that never came to pass for him.*

Kain: *I see. And the ages of you children are- Jeanne you're the oldest?*

Elliott: *Yes. I was born in 1930.*

Henderson: *I was born in 1932. '32, and then Jim. Yeh, Jimmy. He was born in 1934 in McCarthy.*

Kain: *Oh, he was born in McCarthy. At home, I'm assuming.* [Since] *there's no hospital there.*

Henderson: *Home.*

Kain: *And when you left Kennecott, where did you go?*

Elliott: *Tennessee.*

Kain: *And what did your father do in Tennessee?*

Elliott: *He stayed on here another year to help close down the mines. We left July 1, 1937. And he stayed on here almost another year to close down the mines. And so we returned to Tennessee, that was his hometown. He wanted us to go to school and get a good education. So in Tennessee, he never was really - I think his spirit was broken after he left Alaska. He just could never seem to hold on to anything. He worked for a while selling insurance, he worked for a while at a bakery. He worked for a while...*

Henderson: *Bomar Electric.*

Elliott: *And a plastics company and everything. He just kind of - you know - never could. I think his spirit was broken. I told my sister, when you come up here and go back to Tennessee, you'll see - I think - what I mean. Because last year I was fortunate enough to come back for the first time since 1937. My daughter brought me back up here. And I said I understand now why daddy was the way he was. He never could...*

Kain: *He didn't go back into mining or anything even remotely ...*

Elliott: *No. No. Nothing remotely even related to it.*

Kain: *That's interesting.*

Elliott: *It is interesting because he held a big position in Chile. He had like a thousand men working under him.*

Kain: *Yeh, as a mining engineer, he was one of the prominent people in a mine situation.*

Elliott: *I think his spirit was broken.*

Kain: *Did you ever travel back to Chile?*

Elliott: *No.*

Kain: *To see your mother's parents.*

Henderson: *No, but mother did.*

Kain: *She did?*

Henderson: *After daddy passed away in 1963.*

Elliott: *4. She went* [to Chile] *in '64.*

Henderson: *Oh, yeh. She went in '64. And she surprised us, we didn't think she would do it. But she did. And when she went to get her passport to go back to Chile, they discovered that she was not an American citizen.*

Kain: *Oh, wow! All those years.*

Elliott: *All those years paying taxes, voting.*

Kain: *We are talking thirty to thirty-five years.*

Henderson: *Yeh, right. She you had to go through the process to become a citizen to get her passport to go on to Chile then.* [Elliot] *just kind of kept it hush, hush, because she had paid taxes. See she thought when she married daddy she automatically became an American citizen. That law had expired about a year. Surprise, Surprise. But she got her picture on the front page as one of the oldest.*

Kain: *Aliens. Oh, boy.*

Henderson: *She is 85 years old, now. And in good health.*

Kain: *So was that the only time that she went back to Chile.*

Henderson: *Yes.*

Kain: *I mean after that it would have been easy. I mean she had a passport.*

Elliott: *She didn't want to come this trip. We had asked her to come. She doesn't really want to go back to Chile. I think the thought of traveling ... being in an airplane so long or all that. She is just content to be home working in her garden. And she lives alone. So, yeh.*

Kain: *Well, that's interesting. I know you said your brother is an architect.*

Elliott: *Yes.*

Kain: *And what professions did you two do? Your occupation now or formerly or..?*

Henderson: *In the beginning, I was in insurance and I became an agent in casualty, not life. And I stayed in that for quite a while and had one son. And he's in California, now, in the cartoon business.*

Kain: *In the cartoon business.*

Henderson: *He never grew up. And he's married. But I'm sort of retired now, but I do craft shows.*

Kain: *What kind of crafts?*

Henderson: *I make jewelry and hats and vests. And pretty things. It really keeps me happy.*

Kain: *And Jeanne what about you?*

Elliott: *Well, I got married and had two children. And when they were a certain age, I went back to work for doctors. I work as a receptionist. And worked for doctors for a number of years. And then I went to work as sort of - I guess you would call it a caterer at church. We did wedding receptions and ladies luncheons and things like that. I loved to be around ... I would come up here and work for him* (Rich Kirkwood) *for free, if he let me live in a house in the summertime. I'd just do it.*

Kain: *He probably would, too.*

Henderson: *You want to sign that.*

Elliott: *And I'm retired now.*

Kain: *Have you either of you kept in touch with any of the people you knew here?*

Elliott: *Not until last year.*

Kain: *And who contacted you or who did you contact?*

Elliott: *We picked up the WSEN, I did. And...*

Kain: *Wrangell-Saint Elias* [Mountain] *News, right.*

Elliott: *Picked it up here and...*

Kain: *Oh, when you came up?*

Elliott: *Yes.*

Henderson: *Because she stayed here.*

Elliott: *Yeh. We stayed here. And through that I've made some contacts. She asked me to write my remembrances.* [Bonnie Kenyon at WSEN]

Kain: *I read them.*

Elliott: *O.K.*

Kain: *In it* [In the WSEN].

Elliott: *And Jean McGavock read them and she got me and Inger* [Jensen] *wrote me. And I found out that Jim Busey, who used to be the schoolteacher. I wondered if he was my school teacher. I went through the first grade up here. He wasn't, but we contacted each other.*

Henderson: *And Jeanne's babysitter is on this trip.*

Elliott: *She wrote a letter to WSEN, saying that she had babysat for me.*

Kain: *Who was this?*

Elliott: *Konnerup.*

Kain: *Oh, Yvonne. Yeh, yeh. I interviewed her in '90 during the reunion.*

Elliott: *Is that right?*

Kain: *Yeh. Wonderful woman.*

Elliott: *She was in the van, when we were coming up. Still babysitting me.*

Kain: *Still babysitting you. Taking care of you all the way out here.*

Henderson: *Had her in her lap the whole way out here!*

Kain: *That was probably an uncomfortable ride for her. Well, that's neat how that happened. I think in '90, there was a lot of kids*

they didn't know where they were. Inger knew where a lot of them were and was able to contact quite a few. But there is a few that got left out.

Henderson: *After we left here there was no more contact with anybody. I thought Kennecott was inaccessible. It was a ghost town as far ... I would go to the library and would read up on books. I read about it in the newspaper about the murders that they had up here. Where they killed half of a town.*

Kain: *In '83.*

Elliott: *And it said maybe like - killed half of a town. They killed six people. There were eleven or twelve living in McCarthy. Then I thought, Oh my goodness those people have dog sleds. There's no way of getting to get there. Part of me has always been up here and I've always thought the only way I'd get to see Alaska again is on a cruise. And that's not what I wanted. I wanted to come back here. So a Delta customer - my*

daughter works for Delta Airlines. A Delta customer, one day happened to say, "We visited the neatest lodge in Kennecott. It's only open during the summer. You have to make your reservations about three years in advance." And so they happened - they said "Mama let's go back." And I said "Let's go." She said, "The only problem is that you will have to cross the river in a little tram where you pull yourself across on a cable." And I said, "That doesn't bother me." So if it hadn't been for that customer mentioning that to my daughter this would have never happened for us. And we came up last year. I knew we could do it. And when I got back, I told my brother and sister. I said, "While we are still healthy we've got to go. Before they put the footbridge in, we've got to go."

Kain: *Oh, yeh. You got to experience that tram. So you didn't come last year? It was you, Jeanne and your daughter?*

Henderson: *No.*

Elliott: *Yes. And my son-in-law and grandson.*

Kain: *It was probably quite a trip for all of you.*

Elliott: *It was absolutely when I stepped off that van down there. There was people lining the railing because they knew somebody was coming back that was born up here. And we stepped out of that van down there and it was just like that, a flashback. Me and my daughter started crying and the people that were standing up here at the railing started crying. 'Cause they were so happy.*

Henderson: *It's really emotional to come back here. It is and walk up to the house that you were born in. I mean - the house looked so small, because I was 5 years old when I left it. The railroad tracks seem closer to the house than I thought. I remember playing on the train in the winter. It was stuck out in front because it couldn't go anywhere. And we would take our dollies and our dishes and play house out*

there. One time we thought, "well that's not enough." We will go get some of mom's stuff and put it on the flatbed. And we had the nicest time, but it was too much trouble to take it back in every night. Next morning, gone. The train was gone.

Henderson: *The train was gone. The dishes were gone. The dollies were gone. And mama's stuff was gone.*

Kain: *And mom was mad.*

Henderson: *Mama was very angry.*

Kain: *I can understand that. Well that was in '90, when we did this. The Vickery sisters, Jane and Debbie. It was the first time they had been back. Everybody- just about all the other kids had been back. That was the first time they had come back because they thought it was inaccessible. They thought you couldn't come back. And they had never been back and they were just thrilled to be here.*

Elliott: *Oh, I just can't tell you. Hey, when we were flying over, the minute I saw those mountain peaks I was there at the airplane window going "OH!" There is something in my heart. Those wildflowers growing up the side of the mountain, it is just so a part of my spirit.*

Kain: *That you really didn't know that it was there until you saw it.*

Henderson: *Chill bumps. I could have walked forever this morning. We walked for over four hours and I can't do that at home, but up here I was walking, wanting to go forever.*

Elliott: *Breathing such good air.*

Kain: *Where did you live when you were up here? Which house?*

Elliott: *Very early on, we lived right down here next to the recreation building.*

Kain: *O.K.*

Elliott: *But we lived at the very end house going north on the left.*

Kain: *On the bottom?*

Elliott: *Yes, on the bottom.*

Kain: *By the power plant there?*

Henderson: *Yes, the power plant, four houses, one on the end.*

Kain: *So for the most part you lived there the whole time you were there? Steam heat?*

Henderson: *Yep.*

Kain: *Indoor plumbing?*

Elliott: *I think mother said we did have it. We had an outhouse, but I think at one point we might of had* [it] *in that little room in the back. I think we may of had.*

Henderson: *And we had ledges that we [put our] food on to keep cold. It was outside the window.*

Elliott: *It was a box.*

Henderson: *A box.*

Elliott: *Uh huh. You would raise the window and get something out.*

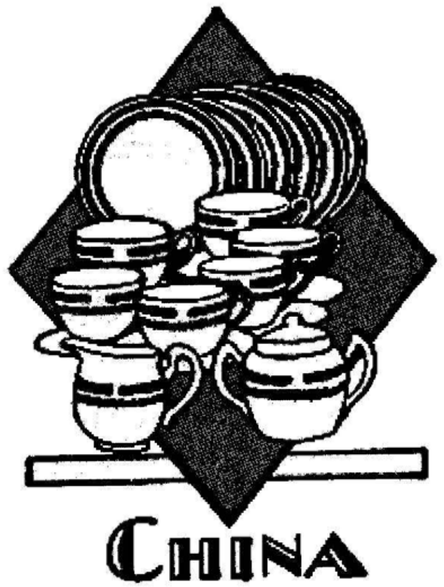
Henderson: *A box outside.*

Elliott: *No, you'd reach something and get it out of the box and put the window sill back down. That was our freezer.*

Henderson: *God's freezer.*

Kain: *Yeh.*

Elliott: *And we'd pick berries and had a garden. For a real short time, right beside the house she grew lettuce, radishes, things that were quick growing like that. They sent to Seattle for china and crystal and*



silver and Christmas presents. I often said, "mamma what are you doing with china and crystal in a little mining town?" But they'd have good times. She had a beaded dress that she wore up here, that must have weighed 30 pounds when she would go to some of these dances down here.

Henderson: *It was unbelievable. And they'd leave us at home and whoever happened to be coming by our house on the way to the dance hall would check and see if we were okay. The door's wide open.*

Kain: *They would check as they* [headed] *back home, too.*

Elliott: *That was a time that is absolutely unbelievable. But you know what? The spirit is still here. It's just quiet, as other people pass through.*

Kain: *Were there two bedrooms in the house? It was probably two.*

Elliott: *It was one bedroom and a little small room. I'm sure.*

Kain: *So you girls shared a room and your parents in a larger room?*

Henderson: *Where did Jimmy sleep?*

Elliott: *I'm not sure. He might - I don't know. There was a kitchen and sort of a larger living room. Their bedroom was up front.* [Nan and I shared a little room in the back of the house, slept in the same bed. Our brother slept in the room with Mom and Dad. We think they made a place for us in behind the kitchen. Yeh, maybe. He was just little, but except he was a big, old, fat baby. He was a huge baby. I have some funny pictures.]

Elliott: *There is a picture upstairs you oughta see in somebody else's album of Jim and me.*

Kain: *He was born in McCarthy?*

Elliott: *Yes, in the Snider house.*

Kain: *Why was he - was it because the hospital here had closed by then?*

Elliott: *Well you know temporarily in 1934. During that time maybe a little bit before that time, the mines slowed.. down. And because daddy was middle shot - I'm sure they wanted to keep him employed so they sent him to McCarthy to work down there.*

Henderson: *In a store. O'Neill General Store.*

Elliott: *And I think he worked in a store - I'm not sure. And during that time our brother was born.*

Kain: *O.K. So the whole family was living down there?*

Elliott: *Yes, and a Doctor Harry delivered him.*

Henderson: *Did Doctor Toohey deliver us?*

Elliott: *Doctor Toohey delivered you and Doctor Turner delivered me.*

Henderson: *It was down when Jim was being born that I got lost in the snow down there.*

Elliott: *Yeh. Three years old.*

Kain: *You got lost in the snow there?*

Henderson: *I remember it distinctly, I was gone - I was trying to follow daddy and he was going into the* [railroad station.] *And he didn't know I was following him. So he closed the door and went about his business. And I was completely lost, three years old. And I wandered off someplace and mother missed me and so the neighbors started looking for me and Lem Hayes came out of his cafe. And talked to his dog, he said, "Let's go find that little baby." And I remember the dog found me.*

Kain: *Yeh, wandering around in the snow.*

Henderson: *No, I was stuck.*

Kain: *You were stuck.*

Henderson: *I had one leg down in the snow and the snow was clear up to here and one leg up here and I had figured out at three years old that if I put this leg down and tried to get out I would really be stuck.*

Kain: *Yeh.*

Henderson: *So I just stayed there like this and the doggy found me. But I do have vivid memories.*

Kain: *I know that my kids would have a terrible time walking in the snow when they were little. Snow is too deep and their legs are just not long enough. So...*

Henderson: *I remember the snow used to squeak up here because it was so dry. And we could ski. Somehow we could ski and we had those tennis rackets that you'd put on your feet.*

Elliott: *No, snowshoes.*

Kain: *Snowshoes. They look like tennis rackets.*

Henderson: *And I remember trying to walk in those awkward things. She remembers ice skating in school.*

Elliott: *Yeh. We used to ice skate at recess in the evening hours. But I ran away from home once, when we lived up there at the end and I stopped by the store and picked up a box of Ritz crackers. I think that's in my remembrances. And went to that building that used to be the dairy building. There is sort of like a bridge that comes out. I don't know what that is called and I sat under there and I don't know if I finally ate up all of the Ritz crackers and decided to go home or somebody finally found me. But I remember running away.*

Kain: *Running away.*

Henderson: *Yeh. We used to send our brother, when he was three years old, down from that fourth house* [we used to live there] *with daddy's lunch. And he was three years old, we'd give him a flashlight and tell him to go on and take this to daddy. And he would shine the flashlight up in the air and take the little lunch pail and walk to that fourth house down to the* [acid] *plant or somewhere in there. Never worry about him and then he'd come back.*

Kain: *Yeh, I think it was on his questionnaire he wrote, "what is your role in the community." And he said, "taking my dad's lunch box to him."*

Henderson: *What a precious little thing. He's so cute.*

Kain: *You had mentioned in your house there you had a box outside the window for a freezer and you had steam heat and so forth. What about cooking? What did you cook on?*

Elliott: *Let's see. I wonder if they would have cooked on a wood stove. I can't really quite remember that.*

Kain: *Most people here - that's what they talked about.*

Elliott: *A wood stove. I'm sure that's probably what it was.*

Kain: *How about doing laundry? Do you remember that?*

Elliott: *I don't remember the little things like that. I kind of remember about how one time I caught a squirrel and I was gonna play with him and he bit me and I went and threw him down in the outhouse.*

Kain: *I don't think I would want to be the next person using that outhouse with that squirrel in there.*

Elliott: *But they sat high.*

Kain: *They were on stilts.*

Henderson: *Why were they on stilts?*

Kain: *I guess probably because they are built basically over the tailings piles. It is a slope down, so they just put the outhouse on the end of a boardwalk.*

Henderson: *I've seen pictures of it and I just couldn't believe my eyes.*

Elliott: *You know when you're born into things like that you just take so much like the long days, short winters - I mean the dark winters and things like that. We just didn't know any different.*

Henderson: *Well we didn't know any different so badly that when they found out - who would tease us and tell us that - we would see runaway trains in Seattle which were streetcars. We would see colored people. We, I thought colored people would be green and pink and blue and yellow. I was disappointed when they were all the same color. And dry "hot" ice. They said Jeanne was going to see hot ice. She didn't know what that was until we first saw dry ice.*

Kain: *Dry ice, Yeh. Which is hot if you touch it.*

Elliott: *Yeh. But it is just the fact that we had parties. You know like everybody else has told you. And we all played together and I remember going in the bathhouse and warming up a little bit and it would always smell so good. It was steamy. And Christmas was fun. We thought Sam Means was Santa Claus. Santa Claus always brought the Christmas tree at our house. It was never put up before hand. It was put up on Christmas Eve. But daddy cut it. He went out and sent to Sears or somewhere for icicles and presents. And Sam Means would bring an old sack on Christmas Eve with oranges and apples and nuts. And visit with us. And we - really thought he was Santa Claus. You know everybody was really friendly with everybody else. They just - I think mamma said that sometimes at these parties, one of the ladies used to like to dance with daddy. She* [mom] *got a little bit jealous about that, but other than that everything was . .*

Kain: *Kind of like one big family.*

Elliott: *Yeh, family.*

Kain: *Close knit family that - you know.*

Elliott: *And that's what it was.*

Kain: *You remember buying anything down at the store down here?*

Elliott: *I remember looking in the window at a* [little] *doll. She's just about this tall. Got my picture made with her. She's just a little tiny doll. And*

I wanted this doll so bad. And I got her for Christmas. She was in the store window. I remember going to the store with mother and I can't remember what we bought. Mama remembers buying everything under the sun- - First Class! at the store. The head of lettuce ($.60), *dozen oranges* ($1.60), *dried beans, meat, clothes, yarn, toys, candy, nails, everything was first class! We used to buy a lot of cod liver oil there. You know that was our vitamin. Have you ever tasted any of that stuff?*

Kain: *Oh, yeh.*

Henderson: *It's nasty.*

Kain: *Yeh, it's pretty bad.*

Elliott: *We used to have to take that. I remember buying that. But as far as buying groceries, mamma and daddy - I guess took care of that. I would accompany them and I remembered that when we got back home the wind was so cold and I would try to walk behind her so you could knock the wind off of me. And so I just don't know what we used to buy at the grocery store.*

Kain: *You could go down there and buy candy or that's what some of the other kids remember doing.*

Elliott: *Ritz crackers.*

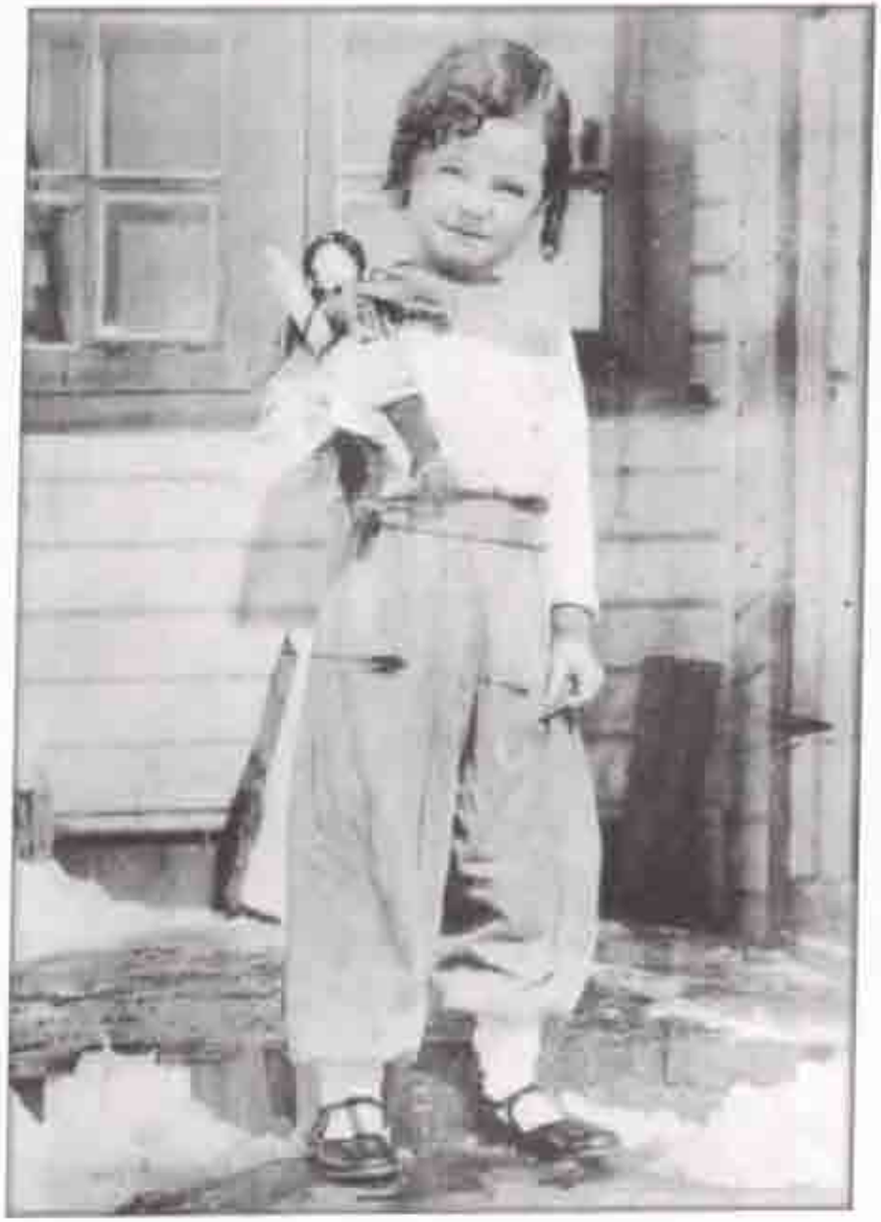
Kain: *Yeh, Ritz crackers from when you ran away.*

Henderson: *I remember that daddy worked in there one time.*

Elliott: *Yeh. He used to work in the company stores.*

Henderson: *And mother used to knit to keep herself busy. Once she learned to knit she never quit. And she used to knit our little dresses and then she thought it would be cute to wear underpants to match. And we would wear those underpants...*

Kain: *Knit underpants.*



"Alaska Squint." Jeanne with dollie at John Letendre's.

Henderson: *Let me tell you they were heavy and they itched.*

Elliott: *And they always fell off of us.*

Henderson: *So one day we were walking home from school and we backed ourselves up into the general store. You know how it kind of goes in like that?*

Kain: *Yeh, in the doorway.*

Henderson: *We got there and said, let's take these things off. And daddy saw what was happening out front and came out and stopped us before we got our underpants off of us. But we were getting rid of those things in a hurry.*

Kain: *After that did you start ordering them from Sears or something?*

Henderson: *No. I don't remember, but I can distinctly remember those horrible ... she used to knit her caps and little three piece suits when she was up here. She made a lot of mittens and coats.*

Kain: *Did she sew as well, though?*

Henderson: *Yeh. She had a sewing machine and we had to leave it behind. One of those old treadle machines.*

Elliott: *They were married in Chile and their wedding pictures were supposed to be shipped up here. And the album never made it. So the gentleman in McCarthy, that makes those* [photographs]. *What's his name?*

Kain: [J.P.] *Hubrick.*

Elliott: *Told her, "Put your wedding dress back on, I'll make a picture of you." So we have it - we have it with us. And it is one of those tinted pictures. And he has hung up a little scenery behind it. Have you seen it?*

Kain: *No, I haven't seen it.*

Elliott: *But you can see the chair that he has got it propped on and you can see a few little boxes over here. Precious. You know Nan said, "Let's get that taken out" and have mamma's picture up." I said, "That's part of the ..."*

Kain: *Part of the story.*

Elliott: *Wouldn't take anything for it.*

Kain: *When you left did - you mention that you had to leave the sewing machine and so forth- did you leave everything else?*

Henderson: *We could only take just a few things and I think it was mostly clothes. She took china, crystal, or silver.*

Kain: *Yeh, the expensive things like that. But furniture?*

Elliott: *We left all that.*

Kain: *Now did the furniture belong to you?*

Elliott: *Probably not. It probably belonged to the mine, the company.*

Henderson: *Where did the sewing machine come from?*

Henderson: [It was already at the house.]

Kain: *Did either of you have childhood diseases while you were here. Chicken pox?*

Henderson: [We had our tonsils removed] *when we got away from here. I don't think we did.*

Elliott: *I don't remember this, but I had my tonsils taken out at the Kennecott Hospital when I was two years old.*

Kain: *That was something that we didn't think about in our questions in the '90 reunion, but it came out. That none of the kids had the childhood diseases, unless they were outside visiting and got it.*

Elliott: *What about that cold weather did it?*

Kain: *The what?*

Elliott: *The cold kept all those germs out.*

Kain: *Well, that and it is a very isolated community. And they had a detention camp down the tracks here. Anybody coming in had to stay quarantined for awhile before they could come into camp just to keep that from happening. But the majority of the kids got childhood diseases as adults. And that's a rugged time to have it. And a lot of them did.*

Elliott: *I had the measles when I was about thirty years old. I thought I was going to die.*

Henderson: *We had the mumps when we were older, too. We didn't have it* [as children]. *That's right, we didn't! That's so interesting.*

Kain: *Interesting things come up in these interviews. That you didn't even think about.*

TAPE #1
SIDE #2

Elliott: *It's a strange feeling to see Jean McGavock or Lyle Morris and know that I played with them when we were little children and here we are mature adults. And I feel like I'm meeting a new person and yet there is something deep*

inside that connects us, that we remember. Actually I feel like I'm meeting a - you know just like a stranger.

Kain: *Mainly because you haven't* [kept in touch]. *You left and there was no contact.*

Elliott: *Yeh, fifty-seven years...chopped off right then. But yet we played together and had such good times together when we were young.*

Kain: *That's what's fun in these reunions because they can kick off memories that - things that you had forgotten about or vice versa.*

Elliott: *It's a little different than high school reunions. Don't you think?*

Henderson: *Yeh, it's not the same at all.*

Elliott: *Because it was cut off, it was sliced off at a certain point in time and then picked up many years later.*

Henderson: *But we never forgot it.*

Elliott: *Never.*

Henderson: *And we always yearn to go back or hold somebody that ...*

Kain: *Yeh, to relive it.*

Henderson: *We would read anything we could get our hands on about Kennecott.*

Elliott: *Or Alaska.*

Henderson: *Any Alaska.*

Elliott: *If ever there was something on the travel channel or something on T.V. about Alaska we would always call each other and let each other know. I guess I have always said I had a split personality - part of me is in Alaska and part of me is in Tennessee. That part in Alaska will never leave. Once you have been here I don't think it will ever go away.*

Kain: *If it's been here this long I don't think it's gonna leave you now. You were talking about having your tonsils out after you left. You remember ever going into the hospital for anything?*

Elliott: *No, I remember going in the hospital to see somebody. He was walking along, probably from McCarthy to Kennecott, it's in my remembrance, and he pulled his boot off and his toe was stuck in his boot. That's a lovely story, right? But it really happened.*

Henderson: *I remember hearing daddy tell that story, but I don't remember it.*

Elliott: *I remember it. I remember going to visit him. He had his leg all up in a contraption and ... And what happened to that - you know whoever it was. And I guess daddy was trying to make a point about - don't let your feet get too cold or something.*

Kain: *Yeh, frostbite got him.*

Elliott: *So I can remember being in the hospital to visit him, but I don't remember even being...*

Kain: *Needing to go in yourself.*

Henderson: *I don't even remember when Jimmy was born. They must* [have] *sent me out.*

Elliott: *I do. We had to stay outside all day. We had to stay outside the house. I remember at some point in time after Jim was born. I don't know that day, that week, that month, sometime. I must have asked mother, where do babies come from? And in her description...*

Kain: *The age old question.*

Elliott: *In her description to me, I took it to mean a little rock.*

Kain: *A little rock?*

Elliott: *Yeh, right. Maybe in her translation from Spanish to English instead of a little seed, she misinterpreted-interpreted it and it came out rock. So I went out and got a little rock and I remember taking it in to the china cabinet and everyday I would go by and look at that little rock to see if it had grown a little bit. And for the longest time. And I didn't know until I got out of high school that it was any different.*

Kain: *So your mom - she did apparently learn English. Did she learn it in Seattle or her own?*

Henderson: *Yeh, on her own.*

Kain: *Once she just - after that few weeks she said, "forget it" and came up here and just picked it up as she...*

Elliott: *The dictionary, right. We didn't get to learn Spanish very much because we were busy - everybody trying to teach her English.*

Henderson: *And she would take - like to fix supper one night, she would read a recipe and then she would get the dictionary and the cookbook and go to the store. And describe it to the man at the store and come back with it all and fix it. And that's how she got what she needed to cook with. Bless her heart. That's doing it the hard way.*

Kain: *Oh, yeah. Definitely.*

Henderson: *She did it and never complained about it.*

Mrs. Moore with baby Jeanne.

Kain: *Do you remember being* [aware] *that your mother was Chilean? or Spanish-speaking? Do you remember any other ethnic groups here, of people that...*

Elliott: *I don't remember. I remember that there was Chinese in McCarthy.*

Henderson: *We didn't think of them as different, though did we?*

Elliott: *No. And there was George Flowers, the black man.*

Henderson: *One black man.*

Elliott: *But I never ever - I don't guess I even noticed that.*

Kain: *Yeh.*

Henderson: *And until we got away did we know that Inger* [Jensen] *must be Swedish.*

Elliott: *Right. We just never paid any attention then to anything.*

Kain: *Well, seems a lot of the people here were Norwegian - Scandinavian.*

Elliott: *Yes.*

Kain: *You know there was a big contingent.*

Henderson: *Scandinavian. Eskimo dogs then. It was just people I guess so.*

Kain: *Right, right.*

Elliott: *We were really quite - you know.*

Kain: *Oh, yeh. You mentioned the dances and so forth that your mom had a fancy dress. What other social activities do you remember?*

Henderson: *I remember that they had people in to eat dinner at home. And we couldn't join them. We would either eat first and be in another room.*

Elliott: *If they had - if the Catholic priest came through, they would have him at their house and have the service there. There was a few Catholics here. And I remember the Christmas parties down here at the recreation hall, where we would get gifts from Santa Claus.*

[They used to invite folks over for dinner a lot. The Richardsons; John Letendre, Joe Melloy, and the nurses - - they would serve roast beef, mashed potatoes - used to bake sourdough bread, lemon pies - - make homemade ice cream - -]

Kain: *Right.*

Elliott: *And I remember that my brother and sister and I used to make sawdust pies.*

Henderson: *I don't remember birthdays. Do you remember celebrating birthdays up here?*

Elliott: *No.*

Henderson: *I don't either. Wonder if we did? I don't know. I don't remember birthday parties and birthday cake.*

Elliott: *We don't have birthday pictures and stuff.*

Kain: *What about the movies?*

Elliott: *No, I don't remember the movies.*

Henderson: *I heard that they had them, but I don't even remember where they had them.*

Elliott: *Down here in the recreation hall.*

Kain: *In the recreation hall.*

Elliott: *Nan and I used to love to go down to the dump. And pick up old dishes.*

Kain: *Old dishes.*

Henderson: *I still love flea markets.*

Elliott: *That's where that comes from. And pots and make mud pies. You know how mud pies sound when you stir them up in a tin.*

Kain: *Yeh.*

Elliott: *I love it to this day.*

Kain: *There must be something about the dumps here in Kennicott. My children - when we were here about six or seven years ago - they* [were] *delighted. They found a rope and they were rapelling down*

the tailings pile here into the end of the cans and just looking through all that stuff.

Elliott: *Did they find anything?*

Kain: *There was a tea kettle that someone had been shooting at - it had a bunch of holes in it. Every time I was looking for them I knew where they were. They had rapelled down that tailings pile.*

Elliott: *I know. Hey, that's a good ways down. Did the earthquake do that?*

Kain: *I don't think so. I think it is just all sloughed off. I don't know.*

Elliott: *Yeh, because I think second base from the ball field out near the school was way down beside the marker that they have for second base. It was way down the side. And I thought somebody said that the earthquake dropped it about 30 feet back in there.*

Kain: *That could be. I don't know. I'm not...*

Elliott: *I know the glacier is way down.*

Kain: *Yeh. And a lot of that could be the glacier receding and everything just sloughing off, too.*

Elliott: *Anyhow it is still just as beautiful. It is more grown up, of course. It is absolutely a sight for sore eyes as far as I'm concerned. And it is for my sister too.*

Henderson: *I remember that everything was red, maroon, and white. That stuck real vividly in my mind.*

Kain: *Yeh. That's still trying to be those colors.*

Henderson: *Yeh, and that really jogs your memory, when you see all of that. You just can't realize that you were here once.*

Kain: *Yeh, definitely. You were talking about the ball field - you know second base being, disappearing. What other activities did you do? You went ice skating during recess?*

Elliott: *Right.*

Kain: *Did you participate in ball games or...*

Henderson: *I didn't.*

Elliott: *I don't remember doing that. I don't remember swinging or - I just remember ice skating and going to school.*

Kain: *How about the tennis courts?*

Henderson: *We used to chase red tennis balls for daddy and Dr. Toohey. But never played.*

Elliott: *I don't remember doing that. I just remember being at the tennis court. I don't remember ever. . .*

Henderson: *I remember that it was wooden. That's about all. And the red tennis balls. And they had to shovel the snow up into the corners all the time to play. But it was kind of like golf. You go to play whether it was snow on the tennis court or not. We were going to play. But I never played.*

Kain: *How about the 4th of July activities?*

Elliott: *I don't remember anything.*

Henderson: *I don't remember a thing about that.*

Kain: *None of those.*

Henderson: *Was there a parade and stuff?*

Kain: *Everybody usually went to McCarthy. You always had the big - they had parades down there and races and they had the McCarthy/ Kennecott baseball game.*

Elliott: *I don't remember anything.*

Henderson: *Did the train go from here to McCarthy?*

Elliott: *Yeh, that's the road we came up on.*

Henderson: *That was the railroad track.*

Elliott: *Yeh, that's the railroad track.*

Kain: *So, your parents had people over for dinner and did they invite any of the single people over for dinner? People in the staff house?*

Elliott: *I don't know. I'm sure they did. You know...*

Henderson: *It couldn't have been a very large group because the house was so small.*

Elliott: *Yeh, and they were always going up to John Letendre's house. We had a lot of pictures when we were going up there.*

Kain: *Yeh.*

Elliott: *And...*

Henderson: *And that's hard to get to, too. Isn't it?*

Elliott: *Well, it probably wasn't then. Of course, it's so grown up now.*

Henderson: *That bridge. Did you have to cross that bridge?*

Elliott: *Yes, uh huh. But it is different now, sister, the landscape where it had the flood washing down.*

Kain: *The National creek is flooded quite a bit down there. Wiped - out a lot of things that were there. There was another road up there running along the side of the creek, which you can't get. It is nonexistent now.*

Henderson: [Gee, I don't know what else they did.]

Elliott: *I don't know either. They used to go down to the recreation hall.*

Henderson: *Daddy was in the mines during the week, though?*

Elliott: *He was gone a lot during the week and come home on the weekend. He'd tried to fix mama a radio. He'd try to take a wire way back there on the glacier and erect a pole or something and receive radio station and stuff. We had one of those radios shaped like this and...*

Kain: *Did it succeed?*

Elliott: *I think it did. I think she said they were able to get something. It probably wasn't real clear. But she was able to get a little something. So she had no idea when she was marrying him. I said, "mama, did you realize when you married him how far away you were going from your mom and dad?" She said, "well, I knew I was going to another country," but she said she didn't know where. Boy she went from one pole to the other.*

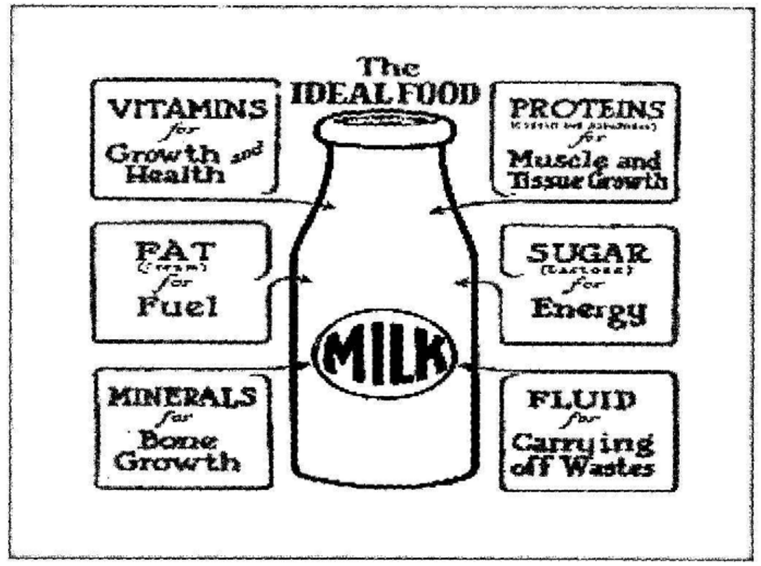
Kain: *Yeh, yeh. From Chile, Santiago - no less, way down.*

Henderson: *So it ... May as well have taken her to Prudhoe Bay. Bless her heart. She weathered it though. And she came out fine. This is something we used to drink. This is powdered milk and I found this at the flea market. It is Klim.*

Kain: *Klim powdered milk.*

Henderson: *And it's milk spelled backwards. And it was nasty tasting. Put it with water and get a eggbeater and mix it up. And never really mixed real good.*

Elliott: *But we thought it tasted O.K.* [They used to make the best homemade ice cream out of that KLIM - Mama mixed it up with a beater the night before, - and when we drank it the next day, it tasted just fine to all of us.]



Henderson: *We didn't know real milk.*

Kain: *Yeh, until you had real milk that's when you realize it.*

Elliott: *Yeh, when we were here I think the dairy was nonexistent.*

Kain: *It was in - earlier on that it was quite.*

Henderson: *Yeh, why did they quit?*

Elliott: *I have no - maybe it was here and she just didn't know - remember it. Mama is having a little bit of a hard time remembering a few things. And sometimes I jog her memory about stuff. And sometimes she jogs my memory about stuff.*

Kain: *I know they used to have a creamery where they would take the cream off of the milk and everything too. So, but you were here late in the mine operation and maybe it was .... See it already closed - I think when you guys - when your brother was born down in McCarthy - was probably the year it* [the mill] *was closed. They closed it for a year or two and then reopened it on minimal level and completely closed it in '36 or '38, which ever. And so that was - you were kind of here on the down side of things and they may have already* [closed the dairy]. *You may have had milk early on and then when they closed it down that one time the took the cattle out and thought, Well, let's not bring all of that back in. So. . .*

Henderson: *I don't even remember getting mail, but I think we did.*

Elliott: *Oh, yeh. There was mail, Post Office, right next door. Next to the store. And we had to pick up our own mail, I guess.*

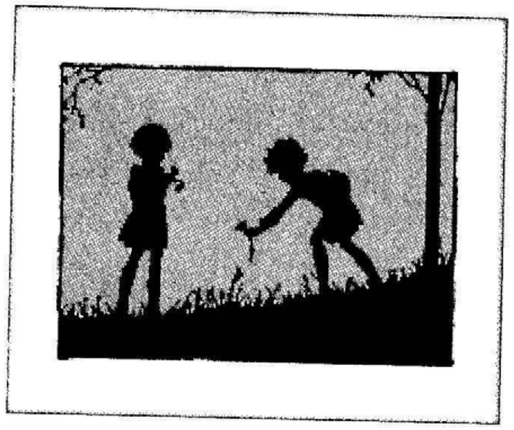
Kain: *There's still pigeon holes in there for mail.*

Elliott: *We can peek in the window and see that. We had an aunt back in Tennessee who used to send us little matching dresses. We got a lot of pictures that we had to make to show her how good we liked them.*

Henderson: *And for some strange reason we could remember the color of those dresses. All of them.*

Kain: *My mom used to dress my sister and I that way, also. And we*

Joe Meloy (left). Children, front to back: Jim and Nan Moore, Tommy O'Neill, and Jeanne Moore. Mrs. Moore fusses with baby Jim.



"It's a strange feeling to see Jean McGavock or Lyle Morris and know that I played with them when we were little children and here we are mature adults. And I feel like I'm meeting a new person and yet there is something deep inside that connects us..."

JEANNE MOORE ELLIOT

weren't twins, but we were like you guys was. I can remember some of the dresses we had, too. Of course, it wasn't 50 years ago, but approaching that.

Elliott: *You know it was just a great life. I'm sorry that my children didn't get to experience that in their lifetime and my grandchildren, because it was a really unique way of life. We had everything. The train brought up everything that you could possibly want.*

Kain: *Yeh.*

Elliott: *And I.*

Henderson: *It wouldn't satisfy people today, though what we had then.*

Kain: *No, but when you think of the time. It was like you were saying, Jeanne that it was - you had it better here than a lot of people out in the Lower 48 at that time.*

Elliott: *Exactly. Absolutely.*

Kain: *It was - I mean power, heat, electricity - like I said power, running water. There are a lot of places in the Lower 48 that didn't get that until much later. And some of the rural areas didn't even get it until the late 1950s, early '60s.*

Elliott: *We had a hospital. We had a store. We had our little garden and they participated in the community garden. And mama used to talk about making blueberry pie. She said they were never the same in the Lower 48, 'cause the blueberries up here are so much bigger. And I remember all of the wildflowers, that's what the mountains and the wildflowers - are just something I can never...*

Henderson: *Where do you think she got that turkey that she cooked one time, because she served it upside down. Don't you remember her telling that?*

Elliott: *They probably sent out for it. And had it delivered at the store.*

Kain: *Yeh, from what we've found out in some - during the 1990 reunion. A lot of I think it was at Christmas the company supplied every family with a turkey.*

Henderson: *That was it. I remember now.*

Kain: *They haul them all here on a train and every family got a turkey for Christmas and maybe Thanksgiving. I'm not sure.*

Elliott: *See things like that. You know.*

Kain: *That's what's fun about - you know, interviewing people because you can tell me a lot of things. But things that you may not remember I can know from what they told me before and maybe jog your memory and...*

Henderson: *That just did because now that fits that piece of the puzzle. Where did that turkey come from? And that's where it came from.*

Elliott: *The mine provided a lot of the ...*

Kain: *Yeh, they definitely did.*

Henderson: *Well, mama served it upside down on a platter because it just looked nicer. She said that it had its legs up in the air and everything and it looked so nice. So she turned it over to look like it was going to crawl off the plate and everybody was just giggling when she served it. She didn't know why they were laughing. She was a sweetheart.*

Kain: *So after, your mom never came back, your dad never came back, none of you ever came back up. This is the first time you have been up here, is it Nan?*

Henderson: *Right, 57 years.*

Kain: *And this is the first time Jim virtually has been here because he doesn't remember at all right.*

Henderson: *But he is loving every minute.*

Kain: *Oh, I can tell. He's really in to it.*

Elliott: *He's absorbing so much from what he is hearing on the van ride up and he's absorbing it into his system because he was so young*

when he left. We are hanging on to what we can remember.

Kain: *And he is hanging on to your memories.*

Henderson: *Yeh, exactly.*

Elliott: *It's really quite special. I told him, I said, "Maybe when we get to McCarthy or maybe if you could see those mountains a little bit. Maybe that would jog your memory just a bit." It's hard to remember I think at three years old unless you have had...*

Kain: *Something traumatic that has happened.*

Henderson: *Like me.*

Elliott: *Like me, . . . I don't really remember how old I was, but I was quite young because we were in McCarthy. And I was running with a stick - you know, in my mouth and fell down and it went down my throat.*

Kain: *I heard you say that upstairs of the awful memories.*

Elliott: *That made me remember. That's about the only thing I can remember - that and the little rock about McCarthy. And my brother being born there. And Ritz crackers.*

Kain: *And Ritz crackers, that was here. That gets to be real interesting when ... What did your children think of ...*

Elliott: *Oh, my, they loved it! And my daughter and son-in-law, we walked in* [and behind the buildings.] *They crawled around in the store and looked in some of those places. We went in the hospital and the very top floor and looked through some of those records. And, oh, they loved it. And my little grandson wants to come back. But my daughter said, "mama I feel some spirits here." And I said, "are they telling us to get out?" No. There are very... You know I always felt like my daddy's spirit is back here. And she said,*

"no, they're very cordial and friendly, you know, but just don't stay too long."

Kain: *Yeh.*

Henderson: *My son is going to come back up. Would love to come back up, but he loves his Harley. And think that he would like to - but I changed his mind for him, yesterday. I think after that long ride, I don't think he could make that.*

Kain: *So, your son is here?*

Henderson: *No, he's in California. And he is an outdoors guy. And he loves his roots. He was so thrilled that I was coming back.*

Kain: *Yeh, but he has not been here?*

Henderson: *No. But he is ready to come.*

Kain: *Well, you said after that long ride, yesterday. I thought that he was here with you when you took that ride and decided he didn't want to ride his Harley.*

Henderson: *That van ride was so long and I can't imagine doing that on a motorcycle. He would love to come up the Alcan Highway, but that's an awful long way around to here. So I don't know what he will do. He just might meet us here someday. But he would love it. And Jim has a son, who would just love to be with us right now.*

Elliott: *Yeh,* [there's] *several in the family, but we wanted to make it - this reunion the four of us. Not that they wouldn't be welcome to come, but we thought maybe this is a once in a lifetime thing.*

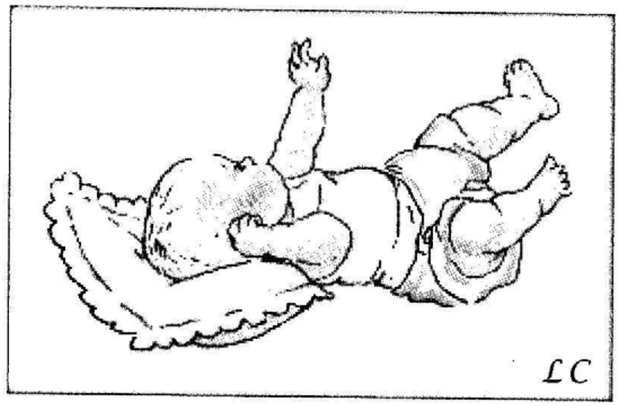
Kain: *A little something special that you just need to do.*

Elliott: *Yeh, especially since it's the reunion.*

Kain: *Well, after the last reunion, Inger* [Jensen] *... her whole family came back - I think the following year and had their own family reunion here. And ...*

Henderson: *I think that's wonderful.*

Jeanne Moore enjoying the outdoors.



"(After brother Jim was born)...we had to stay outside all day. We had to stay outside the house. I remember at some point...I asked mother, where do babies come from? And in her description...I took it to mean a little rock. ...So I went out and got a little rock and I remember taking it in to the china cabinet, and everyday I would go by and look at that little rock to see if it had grown a little bit. And for the longest time. And I didn't know until I got out of high school that it was any different."

JEANNE MOORE ELLIOT

Kain: *Yeh, they all live here in Alaska. I think they all do. Which makes it a lot easier whereas for you people trying to do something like that from Tennessee. I'm originally from Ohio, so I know trying to get there from here is not an easy task.*

Elliott: *We overnighted when we were on our way last year. We overnighted in Seattle. And that made it a lovely trip. And we rented a car. And it was not - we could go a little faster than the van. I made the trip last year and didn't have any problems with it this year and would love to come back next year. And so, I probably will. I don't know if she can make that trip down the road again, but I think I could. I know I could. I don't think you would.*

Henderson: *Well, it got a little long. I'm anxious just to get here. And the scenery is pretty, but 11 hours of the same thing.*

Kain: *You get tired of it.*

Henderson: *And I just want to be here. I want to be in McCarthy. I can't wait to get to McCarthy right now. I can't wait to see the museum.*

Elliott: *Do you think the people in McCarthy - we're part of history? They are there now and I feel like - you know walking into their privacy. And I just wonder how they really feel about us coming. I know they are going to welcome us with a barbecue...*

Kain: *Oh, they will. In '90, they were very cordial. They all came up here for story night.*

Elliott: *But you understand what I'm saying. We are invading their privacy, now. They live in a secluded area.*

Kain: *Yeh, and it is just for a weekend. If it were just - if you guys were just tourists, that would be a little different. But you are not just tourists. A part of you is here.*

Henderson: *But do they appreciate that?*

Kain: *Oh, I think so.*

Henderson: *I think it's a different breed of people.*

Kain: *Yeh, like I said if it were just tourists - that were, "Can we come in and see your house?" and stuff. Just like some of the people who own some of these houses here, now, if any of them are here I'm sure they* [would] *gladly open their homes for you to come in and look. Even if it wasn't necessarily your house, just to get...*

Elliott: *Well, Diane* [Malik?] *came down last year on the top of the mountain and it took her like 45 minutes, but she had the key to the house. So, I could get in my own house, but...*

Kain: *Is she around, now?*

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

Elliott: *She's out of town. And, but I respect and I know what they are looking for up here. And I respect them enough you don't want to infringe on them.*

Kain: *And what is here now. What McCarthy was and what Kennecott was are not what they are now.*

Elliott: *Not at all.*

Kain: *Not at all. McCarthy was a thriving community. So was Kennecott. And not to say that McCarthy isn't thriving now, but it is much smaller. It's a whole different role.*

Henderson: *Did they mind the reputation they had during the mining days?*

Kain: *Well, that was - we had a couple of people here that grew up in McCarthy the last time. And one of them* [is] *Eleanor Tjosevig; Eidemiller is her last name now. She grew up in McCarthy. And she felt that, yeh, maybe McCarthy did deserve* [its reputation] *up to a point, but there were* [also] *a lot of good people there.*

Elliott: *Oh, yeh.*

Kain: *... unfortunately the reputation overrode* [the reality] *and history makes it sound like McCarthy was*

just a town of the red light district and bars.

Elliott: *I don't remember.*

Kain: *And they had that, but that wasn't all there was to it. And that was probably a very minor part on it. A much smaller part.*

Elliott: *And they blow it all out of proportion.*

Kain: *Yeh, I think so. And the kids here used to go down there to take piano lessons and...*

Henderson: *Can you tell me why people down in Anchorage - for instance - don't know anything about Kennecott as a rule?*

Kain: *Because they don't bother to come here.*

Henderson: *But shouldn't they know that this Kennecott Copper Mine put Kennecott on the map?*

Kain: *Oh, yeh. Yeh. But there are a lot of people not interested in history. Aren't interested in - they are interested in Alaska only for its wilderness experience, or* [they] *just live in Anchorage and don't go anywhere. They are not willing to take what it takes to get over here. A lot of them. Unless you have an airplane, then they might stop by.*

Henderson: *The people - not in the museum, but in...*

Elliott: *The information center.*

Henderson: *Information centers. And our sister-in-law was beginning to doubt that there was a Kennecott. She thought that we were just pulling her leg because nobody, none of the waiters in any of the restaurants and none of the people...*

Elliott: *They're all young.*

Henderson: *Yeh, that's true. But Kennecott.*

Kain: *Don't know anything about it.*

Henderson: *I said you never heard of Kennecott Copper? No. I thought, oh I'm going to cry.*

Kain: *Well a lot of people don't know. They may have heard of Kennecott, but they don't realize that it's a copper mine or - you know.*

Henderson: *What* [made it] *the world's largest copper mine?*

Kain: *It had the highest quality. I think it may have been the largest producer at the time. I'm not sure if it* [was] *the largest producer, but it had the highest quality of copper ore.*

Henderson: *I love reading about* [it]. *But it disappointed me, other Alaskans didn't...*

Kain: *Yeh.*

Elliott: *They* [local residents] *probably like it that way. They keep a full house up here. That's all that they can handle. So, they don't want to bridge over the river where a car can drive. And I don't blame them. Bring in the masses.*

Kain: *Yeh. Yeh, keeps it private. Only people who really want to come, come. That's one thing that makes it good.*

Elliott: *I respect that.*

Henderson: *Oh, I do, too.*

Kain: *Well, thank you very much.*

Elliott: *It's been lovely. Thank you.*

Henderson: *I enjoyed it.*

Kain: *Let's just shut this off.*

Elliott: *It will be interesting tonight, won't it?*

Kain: *Yeh, hopefully we will, we have a bigger place now, tonight than we had the last time we did it.*

Elliott: *Where did you do it the last time - upstairs?*

Kain: *No, this is all new.*

Elliott: *Is it?*

Kain: *All these rooms are new, starting from probably the lobby area.* [From] *where the bathrooms* [are on] *this side of the lobby area. This is all new since '90. And so we had a much smaller room. The kitchen was also in there. The dining room was a small, L-shaped area. And we had that place packed with people. And it was real hard to hear and we tried to tape some of the stories, but it was like - you know you get laughter and rustling and so tonight. You could hear all of the stories and they were fun. So there should be some...*

Henderson: *You gonna run around with your microphone tonight?*

Kain: *I don't know what we are going to do. We talked about stationing three different ones around.*

CATHERINE HOWARD HODGES

Interview conducted Ann Kain
National Park Service
June 11, 1994
Tape #1
Side #1

Kain: *June 11, 1994. Kennecott Glacier Lodge. This is Ann Kain interviewing Catherine Howard Hodges. First of all, Catherine just some general, basic background questions. Some of the information we were wondering is where people came to Kennecott from.*

Hodges: *Well, my father came here from England. He ran away from home when he was 18 and came into Canada. And worked his way across the Northern part of the United States, working on the Great Northern Railroad- I believe it was. Although it might have been Northern Pacific - I don't remember. Anyway, then he came to Seattle and thought this would be interesting. He worked on the railroad up here, coming up to Kennecott. My mother came from Boston. She was a nurse and a very adventurous soul. She came up here to work in the hospital. And she and my father were married in 1922. And I expect she shocked her family all to death because she didn't go back and marry some Harvard man or something.*

Kain: *A lot of the nurses came up here. A lot of the people we interviewed last time, their parents - their mother were nurses and their dads worked on the railroad.*

Hodges: *Mother did her nurses training at Roosevelt Hospital in New York and apparently one of the doctors that interned there came up here*

Nurses and young man chat at entrance to Hospital.

and he wrote back and said, "This is wonderful. Come and bring your friends." So apparently there were a number of them that came from that same source.

Kain: *Your parents were married here in '22.*

Hodges: *They were married in Seattle.*

Kain: *And then came back up here? And you were born here in Kennecott.*

Hodges: *Yes. In 1924.*

Kain: *And you were here until when?*

Hodges: *1937.*

Kain: *You were here through all your elementary years and...*

Hodges: *Yes. I graduated from 8th grade and the year I graduated there were eight students in the whole school.*

Kain: *What did your father do?*

Hodges: *My father was the yard foreman. Which meant he had charge of clearing snow from the roads and keeping maintenance on buildings and pipes. Well, some of the coverings of some pipes.*

Kain: *The steam pipes. So he worked on the railroad and then got here and when he finished the railroad, then started working as a yardman.*

Hodges: *Well, that's what he ended up as I imagine, there is a space of time in between there, but he helped to build the town. And he had a little platform tent building, just south where the lodge is now up on the hill.*

Kain: *So did he work with Chris Jensen? The camp carpenter.*

Hodges: *Probably, I'm sure he must have.*

Kain: *O.K. So when they came up here, they were planning to stay.*

Hodges: *Yes. He liked it.*

Kain: *And did you have any brothers and sisters?*

Hodges: *No.*

Kain: *Just you?*

Hodges: *Just me. I had next door neighbors that did just as well. We were just talking to Frank Morris. He was one of the three that lived next door to me. I say he was the instigator and he said I was the one that got everyone in trouble. So I don't know.*

Kain: *You said your dad stayed on here as a watchman after the mine closed. And you and your mother left?*

Hodges: *We went back to Massachusetts. Mother thought I was far too much of a tomboy and I needed a little culture and a little calming down. So we went back to Massachusetts and I went to high school at the Marblehead Massachusetts High School.*

Kain: *And did you go on to some of the business school or...*

Hodges: *I went to a medical secretarial school in Boston. Mother wanted me to be a nurse like she was. I said I just can't do it. I don't have that feeling. I can't take care of people. She insisted on something medical. So I said alright, we will try medical secretarial. I had a absolutely fantastic time that year, but I didn't learn very much as far as school was concerned. But in the mean time, my father had been transferred to Waterbury, Connecticut to work at the Chase Brass and Copper Company. Which was a subsidiary of Kennecott [Copper Corporation.]*

Kain: *So your father stayed in mining when he left here?*

Hodges: *No. This was a brass manufacturing place.*

Kain: *Oh, I see.*

Hodges: *But Mr. Stannard, who was the President of Kennecott Copper Corporation, was a friend of my father's. And he found a spot for him in Chase Brass and Copper.*

Kain: *And your mother when you went outside did she continue with her nursing, then.*

Hodges: *No.*

Hodges: *Well, she - wait a minute - she did for a while after my father died, but not until then. She did private duty nursing for a while.*

Kain: *And what kind of profession did you take up?*

Hodges: *A little of this and a little of that. A little of something else. After the school in Boston, I went to Waterbury, 'cause mother said, "We miss you. Please, come home." And I hated Waterbury. Absolutely hated it. I still do. And so, well I went to New York City and went to a laboratory technique [school], which was medical, but when I got out of that I couldn't find a job. So mother says, "we miss you come home." Went back to Waterbury again for a while. But in the meantime, I decided what I wanted to do. I joined the Marine Corps. And so on my 20th birthday, I went down to the post office and signed up. Of course, mother and dad had to give me written permission.*

Kain: *This was 1944?*

Hodges: *Yes, because I wasn't yet 21. But they gave that willingly enough. So, I was in the service until 1945. I never got beyond private. So, when they started getting rid of the people that's where they started.*

Kain: *After you left here, did you keep in touch with some of the people, the kids?*

Hodges: *I kept in touch with Lyle Morris. Actually she was the only one and the last five or six years, I have been writing to Jean McGavock Lamb. But I hadn't until then. But I kept in touch with one of our teachers, Bertha Krantz, was her name when she was here. She married a man from here.*

Kain: *Bertha Kranse. K-r-a-n-s-e.*

Hodges: *K-r-a-n-t-z.*

Kain: *t-z. O.K.*

Hodges: *And she married Pete Ramer from up here.*

Kain: *I remember a Mildred Reis mentioning him.*

Hodges: *I don't know where they went. Oh, wait a minute. They went to Kodiak, I believe, when they left here. I think. But after Pete died she went back to Arizona, where she had come from. And I wrote to her there. And I visited her there once about twenty-five years ago. And I kept in touch with Nell McCann in Fairbanks.*

Kain: *She was a school teacher, right?*

Hodges: *No. She was the secretary.*

Kain: *Oh, the secretary, right. O.K. and she's still there.*

Hodges: *Yes. She's 91.*

Kain: *Talk about your experiences here ... to kind of give us an idea of what it was like living here. Some of the categories we decided to narrow down were things like food and housing and other purchases. Do you recall the food? Did you grow your own food?*

Hodges: *Some.*

Kain: *You had a garden?*

Hodges: *Actually the only thing I remember my father grew strawberries. I think he had lettuce. And he had a garden down the track, which he probably planted potatoes in. There must have been other things, but nothing really sticks in my mind particularly.*

Kain: *What about other fresh fruit, other than strawberries. Where did you obtain that?*

Hodges: *Well, if they had any in the store that's where we got them.*

Kain: *And meat, how about meat?*

Hodges: *Meat, my father was not a hunter. So whatever we had came from the butcher shop.*

Kain: *Yes, the meat house down here. He didn't hunt at all?*

Hodges: *No.*

Kain: *I know there are numerous of kids whose fathers did go out and get moose.*

Hodges: *But he wasn't a hunter. He didn't like to hunt.*

Kain: *And where did you live when you were here?*

Hodges: *Across from the power plant. There were a row of houses extending beyond and then there was another row up above near the side of the tracks.*

Kain: *So you lived up there.*

Hodges: *Well, when I was first born we lived at the very last house on the row by the - down by the power plant, beyond the power plant.*

Kain: *Down below?*

Hodges: *By the Erie trail, but then we moved up and we were in the second house. The one that's all fixed up.*

Kain: *The one that Rich Kirkwood fixed up.*

Hodges: *We lived in that one.*

Kain: *Did you go in there, today, by chance?*

Hodges: *I didn't realize that it was open.*

Kain: *I think - I thought I saw Jody Kirkwood go up there. I don't know if she went in or...*

Hodges: *They wanted me to go up the path. And I said I can't make that.*

Kain: *That's kind of a steep...*

Hodges: *They said they would help me up and I said, Well probably I can make it up, but I don't think I can get down again. I would have to sit down and slide.*

Kain: *Did you have steam heat in there or wood stove?*

Hodges: *Oh, yes.*

Kain: *You had steam heat in there.*

Hodges: *We had steam heat and we had - in fact - we were better off as far as steam heat and electricity and all that then where my husband was. He lived in Connecticut and they didn't get electricity until 1935.*

Kain: *That's something that really struck me during the last reunion that a lot of people think that living in this rugged wilderness, you don't have anything, but Kennecott back then was-*

Hodges: *Had everything.*

Kain: *More so than it does now. And more so than a lot of places in the Lower 48. So you had electricity, you had running water and steam heat.*

Hodges: *Steam heat. And hot water. We had a boiler in each bathroom. There in the house somewhere.*

Kain: *You had two bedrooms. Your mom and dad had a room and you had one.*

Hodges: *There was a dining room and a living room and a pretty good size kitchen. A wood shed and there was a hallway. At the end of it was quite large and somebody, whether it was my father or someone previously to him, had built in a whole set of shelves and mother had sewing material in there. It was like a linen closet type.*

Kain: *That was going to be one of my next questions. We've noticed on some of the upper houses, up on what they call Silk Stocking Row, now. They have under the steps, the steps have drawers in them. And Inger said that was one of her father's innovations for more storage. And the have built-in hutches in the dining room and so forth. I was just wondering what kind of improvements, if any, you made on your house.*

Hodges: *Well, as I say, I don't know if my father put that in or if it was there before. I don't know.*

Kain: *And what kind of stove did you have to cook on?*

Hodges: *Wood stove.*

Kain: *You cooked on a wood stove. And did you cook differently in different seasons. I mean in the summertime, when it was hot did you still fire up the wood stove or did you maybe cook something outside?*

Hodges: *We didn't cook outside. I imagine she must have to heat up the stove. I guess.*

Kain: *And what about the things from the company store. What did you buy?*

Hodges: *Well, let me see - all kind of can goods. There was overalls and socks and heavy shoes. Down on this side, were compacts and maybe a little bit of jewelry. Nothing very fancy, but maybe a little bit. Face powder. That sort of thing. Candy and stuff was over on this side of the entrance doors.*

Kain: *You bought a lot of your staples as far as food goes...*

Hodges: *There were yard goods like calico and that sort of thing.*

Kain: *Did your mother sew?*

Hodges: *Yes.*

Kain: *You said she had that closet with material in it. Did she make most of your clothing?*

Hodges: *Quite a bit of it. She did a lot of beautiful...*

Kain: *Embroidery.*

Hodges: *Smocking. She did a lot of smocking. It was very pretty.*

Kain: *Did you also order clothes from like Sears. And so a lot of things came from mail order?*

Hodges: *Oh, yes! And every year my grandmother would send us a box from S.S. Pierce and Co. which was fancy foods. Apricot wafers and Lord, can't think of all the things. But all sorts of fancy foods. She'd send a box up to us for Thanksgiving and I guess she probably bought it and mail it in September or sometime.*

Kain: *Yes, in order to get here in time for Christmas- Thanksgiving, I mean. Did your father's position as the yard foreman have anything to do with where he lived?*

Hodges: *No, I don't think so. I think the houses were for families. If the men that worked here had families here, why I assume they had one of the houses. I think most of them didn't have families, here anyway.*

Kain: *So they stayed in the bunk houses? But you don't feel that there is any hierarchy as to where your house was located as to what the position was in the community?*

Hodges: *I don't think so. We never felt that way anyway.*

Kain: *O.K. What about your furniture? Did you bring it in or was it furnished?*

Hodges: *Well, it was mostly homemade and yes we had an old oak desk that, well maybe some of it came from the catalogs. I don't know. But there was a lamp that was very obviously, homemade. It had a just a cross piece on the bottom and the pole and then the fancy silk shade with a fringe around it. I imagine there was other stuff like that. I had an iron bed. Mother and daddy had a, probably had an iron bed too. I don't remember. And the living room was furnished with a glass fronted bookcase. Piece of furniture, not built-in. And a Morris chair and a rocking chair. Oh, there was a built-in*

From left to right: Bruce Morris, Marvin Whipple, Mary Ellen Duggan, Deb Vickery, John Letendre, and Frank Morris (bottom left). Yvonne Konnerup's dog "Lassie" is fitted for a hat.

"(The Morrises) *lived right next door, we were a fearsome foursome....I used to sneak out my bedroom window, 'cause my bedroom window faced their house. And I'd sneak out my window and we'd go up to the tennis court....I don't know how we all lived through all the things we did."*

CATHERINE HOWARD HODGES

corner cupboard. That's right. And a sofa bed for a couch. And for a while anyway we had a piano. I don't remember that we had it the whole time, but we did have a piano for a while.

Kain: *And when you left — your dad stayed here as the watchman. So did most of the furniture and everything stayed here with him?*

Hodges: *Everything stayed. We took very little out.*

Kain: *Just personal clothing?*

Hodges: *Yes.*

Kain: *And personal mementos?*

Hodges: *Mother took some of her linen, her silver, and stuff like that. But even dishes - there were only a few things that she took with her. Gorgeous cut glass bowl. It was heavy as lead, but she managed to take that along. And that's really about all.*

Kain: *Where did your dad stay after you left?*

Hodges: *He lived in one of the two little houses that was down here.*

Kain: *Right down toward the end of the lodge?*

Hodges: *Yes, the ones that have been moved.*

Kain: *Down on the road? And what kind of heat did they...*

Hodges: *He lived in one [and Paul Wilhelm and his wife were in the other]. He was one of the men that stayed.*

Kain: *Obviously they didn't maintain the steam heat and so forth.*

Hodges: *Wood stoves.*

Kain: *Wood stoves? And no power, probably?*

Hodges: *No.*

Kain: *And he stayed for two years?*

Hodges: *Three years. And I have letters in here from him to me. That tell how some of the time was passed. And some of the things that happened and how lonesome it was up here.*

Kain: *Like I've said earlier, I think Linda Cook will be real interested in maybe photographing those for archival purposes or research purposes for us.*

Hodges: *I also got scolded long distance for my writing and my spelling.*

Kain: *He graded your letters and sent them back.*

Hodges: *Sort of.*

Kain: *Now we know that a lot of the single men lived in the bunkhouses. What about single women?*

Hodges: *They lived in the staff house.*

Kain: *In the staff house.*

Hodges: *There weren't too many of those. The nurses, secretaries, and the school teachers.*

Kain: *Secretaries and the teachers.*

Hodges: *And that was about it.*

Kain: *So there might be what, 5, 7, 10?*

Hodges: *Well, it was probably only one teacher. Well maybe early on there were two. I don't know. But-and one secretary for all I know. And maybe three or four nurses. Staff house had three floors. The first- well, there was a basement. I don't know what that was. The first floor had a kitchen and a large meeting room and a room for VIP guests. Bedroom and bath. Then the first- the floor above that was for women and the top floor was for men.*

Kain: *So they segregated the men and the women and the bottom floor was like a common area. A social area or whatever. Speaking of nurses, how were injuries handled? Did you go home and get doctored by your mom, of course she was a nurse? So you may as well have.*

Hodges: *Well, I was going to say it would depend on how serious it was. I guess. Lyle Morris and I had our tonsils out at the same time, but that was a walk-in and have it done deal. But we were there in the hospital for a week. And I think we drove them crazy because we were running up and down the halls. And we weren't any sicker than we are now. But I do remember having my appendix out and they came up to our house with a stretcher and carried me down to the hospital.*

Kain: *I think Jim McGavock had a similar...*

Hodges: *Did he?*

Kain: *Yes, Actually I think it was his tonsils.*

Hodges: *Then I got my finger hurt playing with Jim McGavock on a piece of machinery which we were told to stay off of. And I got my fingers caught. These two fingers in a cog wheel. I had on heavy deer skin mittens and it caught me in the mitten and...*

Kain: *And pulled it in.*

Hodges: *Pulled it right in.*

Kain: *Is that the result of the.*

Hodges: *That's the result of it.*

Kain: *My goodness.*

Hodges: *And never changed. It's come off several times, it's gotten infected down in here. And the doctor pulled it off once. It grows back exactly the same way.*

Kain: *Long time, you think it would.*

Hodges: *I've been waiting quite a while to see Jim McGavock.*

Kain: *See what you* (Jim) *did to my finger? It's all your fault! Do you remember any mine — injuries in the mine?*

Hodges: *No, not clearly. I'm sure they happened and I'm sure I heard about it, but they don't stand out in my mind. Not a particularly bad one. I do remember my mother*

telling about some woman riding in a dog sled. And they stopped to take pictures and I don't know what she did. She did something and the dogs turned on her. And landed on top of her and chewed her to pieces. Mother said when she got to the hospital, the only clothes she had on were her boots - her lace up boots. And she was badly hurt, but I guess she survived. But it could be dangerous.

Kain: *What about dental care? Was there any dental care, here?*

Hodges: *Dentist came up from Cordova-I think about-twice a year. If there was anything serious happened otherwise, you had to go to him.*

Kain: *If you had an abscessed tooth that you couldn't stand the pain you had to go to Cordova and have it taken care of.*

Hodges: *Or have somebody pull it.*

Kain: *Yes. Which probably happened.*

Hodges: *I'm sure it did.*

Kain: *What about an optometrist or eye exams?*

Hodges: *I don't know if one was in Cordova or not. For anything really serious-I guess you had to go all the way to Seattle. Probably.*

Kain: *Did you have to pay for medical assistance here?*

Hodges: *No.*

Kain: *So the company picked it up? It was free.*

Hodges: *It was the company hospital.*

Kain: *And what about the dentist when he did come? Was that also free?*

Hodges: *I don't know.*

Kain: *That's one of those things I was just wondering about. Was there a doctor in McCarthy?*

Hodges: *I don't think so because people came up here.*

Kain: *To use the hospital and the medical services here. And did they have to pay?*

Hodges: *I expect so. I don't know. I would imagine.*

Kain: *Yes, you would think so. Do you remember any kind of epidemics?*

Hodges: *Apparently there was a flu epidemic. It must have been 1918, when it was all over the country. Because I have a picture that my father took of a corral. And he said this was where anyone who was coming to Kennecott during the epidemic- the flu epidemic, I think- had to stay there for four or five days before they could come into the camp. And he said they only had one case in camp.*

Kain: *We have heard about that during the last reunion and they called it the detention center. Where they would detain people before they came into camp, so it wouldn't sweep through the camp. Another thing that I've found really interesting last time around during 1990- which was something we would had never thought about. But apparently most of the kids didn't get childhood diseases.*

Hodges: *Not very many.*

Kain: *Did you get it later?*

Hodges: *I got chicken pox during my Christmas vacation one year in high school.*

Kain: *That was after you left here?*

Hodges: *Yes. I got the measles. I got the measles the year we spent in Boston in grammar school. I got measles that year. Chicken pox. I get the mumps when my youngest daughter got them.*

Kain: *So you were just like most of the other kids, you got them as an adult. It's a rough time to get them, too. You never worked here. Just here as a child. Did your mom ever nurse after she married your dad? Here in Kennecott.*

Hodges: *I think on an emergency basis. If they needed someone extra, but it wasn't anything regular.*

Kain: *What did she do as far as - other than housewife?*

Hodges: *Well, what did any women do in those days? Wash, clean.*

Kain: *Yeh, but I mean, house activities- were there other things that she could have been involved in the community?*

Hodges: *Well, we had a book club. Now I don't know. Possibly that had some specific members or was everyone a member? I don't know. But they had a nice, little library. A book club they called it. And she was quite a hostess. She liked to give parties and things and go places. My father would have card games every now and then. They played a game here that I and no one else has ever heard of called "Pan". And I haven't been able to find out anything about it.*

Kain: *How it was played?*

Hodges: *No one has ever heard of it.*

Kain: *I don't remember that one coming up in 1990, but there was another card game that I- that someone mentioned. It wasn't "Pan", but it was something else. Now I can't remember right off what it was. But it was something that I've never heard of. Yes. You might want to canvas some of the kids that are here and see if any of them remember. Did your dad have a lot of employees under him?*

Hodges: *Oh yes. Quite a few. Oh it must have been several dozen. I have a book here that they wrote the men's names in and how many hours they worked.*

Kain: *Oh, that will be interesting.*

Hodges: *Where is it? There were quite a few people.*

Kain: *So, it his log book basically. Linda Cook will probably be interested in seeing that upstairs, too. Do you remember any strikes or anything*

like that? How labor management relations?

Hodges: *Not strikes here, but steam ship strikes. So we couldn't get the food in or packages or anything.*

Kain: *So it would cripple what was going on and you probably couldn't get ore out either. I mean you can ship it down to Cordova, but no further.*

Hodges: *I can remember two different times that happened, I couldn't tell what year they were, but I remember that happening twice.*

Kain: *But you don't remember any labor problems, here? But, of course, you were a child.*

Hodges: *There may have been, but they didn't amount to a whole lot. I guess.*

Kain: *You mentioned earlier that there were eight kids, when you were last in school here. Was that pretty much the norm? Or was that dwindling?*

Hodges: *That was dwindling, because when I first started there were two rooms in the school. The first four grades were in one room. The other four in the other one. But I think probably there were twenty, twenty-five or even more in the beginning, because they came from ...*

Kain: *McCarthy.*

Hodges: *McCarthy, also. And your light's blinking.*

Kain: *Well maybe I'll have to stop here for a second and flip the tape over. And then we will start in again.*

TAPE #2
SIDE #2

Kain: *Well, if you run across it Linda would be interested in seeing it. Well, I would be interested in seeing it, too actually. O.K. so if you had two rooms in the school, so you probably had two teachers most of the time?*

Oscar the skeleton poses with Ethel Lecount(?) and unknown nurse.

Hodges: *Well, yes.*

Kain: *And did Kennecott employ them?*

Hodges: *Yes.*

Kain: *And did they - where did they live?*

Hodges: *They probably lived in the staff house because they didn't encourage married teachers in those days.*

Kain: *Right.*

Hodges: *If you got married you left.*

Kain: *You left. You weren't teaching... Yes, my grandmother was a teacher back then, so I know. And was attendance mandatory?*

Hodges: *Why yes. Sure.*

Kain: *But you guys all liked it anyway, right?*

Hodges: *Well as much as anybody liked school.*

Kain: *What are some of your memories of school?*

Hodges: *Well, in the eighth grade, at least, I sat in the back row and behind me was the bookcase full of books. I think I read more Zane Grey books that year than I did school books, probably.*

Kain: *Did you read them in class?*

Hodges: *I don't remember. Well from the looks of my grades I may have.*

Kain: *And what did you do during recess?*

Hodges: *Oh, there were swings outside. There was a teeter totter. There were hanging bars. There was a merry-go-round type of thing. I don't know what the name of it was, but it had ball bearings on the top and four like rope ladders with [hand] holds in them.*

Kain: *This isn't the Maypole?*

Hodges: *Maypole. Well, yes, alright.*

Kain: *There's quite a few pictures of the kids on the Maypoles.*

Hodges: *Well, O.K. that's it then.*

Kain: *Did you get involved in the winter activities, such as playing hockey and so forth?*

Hodges: *No. I learned to skate, but I never played hockey.*

Kain: *You didn't play hockey. Sledding?*

Hodges: *Oh, yes. Yes. Yes. Plenty of that. My father-as I said- was yard foreman and he had a truck that he used to drive up to the mill, if it needed something or whatever. And the kids use to start at the top of the mill and slide down that road and around here and around that sharp corner and down to the store and across the tracks and out on to the field.*

Kain: *That would be quite a sled run.*

Hodges: *It was fantastic. But my father knew, he went out of his mind, because he never dared start the truck up the hill. If he didn't know where the kids were.*

Kain: *Right. Right. But they'd start [up at] the mill and go pass the-what?- seven houses up here. And make that sharp curve and. Wow, that is quite a run.*

Hodges: *Yep! Oh no, they didn't go back by those houses.*

Kain: *O.K. they came down the road.*

Hodges: *They came down the road where the piece of machinery is up there and in the brush right now, but it came down there.*

Kain: *But still that's quite a run.*

Hodges: *Well, we probably only did it twice at a time, because you had to turn around and walk all the way back up.*

Kain: *Yes and that's a long haul.*

Hodges: *Oh what a ride. Occasionally you'd get going so fast that you'd almost miss that sharp curve there. And it was usually banked, but quite often you'd go up on the bank.*

Maypole.

Kain: *The top edge of the bank? A few kids would have a spill on that on occasion.*

Hodges: *I don't know how we all lived through all the things we did. Honestly. Because the things we did. If I would have caught any of my kids doing anything like this I'd kill 'em.*

Kain: *They better not hear this interview then.*

Hodges: *Well they've heard all of this.*

Kain: *Now they can.*

Hodges: *I don't care what they do now. They're old enough.*

Kain: *In your family, you said there were just your mother and your father and you. So did you help your mother with the housework and your father with wood cutting chores or...?*

Hodges: *Not very much. I guess I helped do the dishes some. I may have helped mother in the kitchen cooking, but I never cared a lot for cooking. I still don't. And...*

Kain: *So did you tend to do your outside chores?*

Hodges: *I like to shovel, I love to shovel snow. I still like to. Not suppose to, but I still like to. And, I don't know. I don't think I did very much other than that. I had to keep my own room clean.*

Kain: *And wash dishes. What about doing laundry?*

Hodges: *Well mother had a washing machine. It was an old round Savage and you'd hook it up to the sink, but it had a tendency to walk across the floor.*

Kain: *And then you'd hang the clothes out to dry? What did you do in the wintertime?*

Hodges: *Well we had a wood shed and I expect they were hung up there. And we had a rack, probably in the bathroom and hung small things.*

Kain: *They would dry in the heat in the house? What about-you said your dad had a little bit of a garden, what about any livestock?*

Hodges: *No. He didn't have any.*

Kain: *No chickens? No...*

Hodges: *No. No.*

Kain: *How about pets? Dogs, cats.*

Hodges: *We had cats. We never had any dogs. I don't know why. We had a canary that came out of the mine.*

Kain: *Fortunately he lived long enough to come out of the mine.*

Hodges: *We had him for quite a while. That's about all the pets we had. We had several different cats, at different times, but we never had a dog.*

Kain: *Do you - I was thinking - I noticed here on my notes. We were wondering about religious services? Were there any religious services offered?*

Hodges: *Not on a permanent basis from the - I think it was about once a month. Somebody would come up from Cordova. At one time it would be an Episcopal minister and some other time it would be a Baptist and another time it would be a Presbyterian.*

Kain: *Yes, try to cover all of the denominations and a rotating basis.*

Hodges: *It was always somebody different. As far a I can remember, at least in my era anyway- there were only one or two Catholic families. So that was rather seldom, that he might get here once to every other place.*

Kain: *The rest of them, it was mainly Protestant. I see. Where did they...*

Hodges: *I don't know what the Japanese did. If they had their own religion, I had no idea whether they got together between themselves or what.*

Kain: *And where were these services held?*

Hodges: *I was gonna say in the schoolhouse, but that doesn't sound big enough.*

Kain: *Maybe the recreation hall?*

Hodges: *Maybe. We had Sunday School in the schoolhouse. I guess the parents, various parents, taught that.*

Kain: *Speaking of religious services, do you remember any funerals here?*

Hodges: *No.*

Kain: *No. So you don't know what they did as far as a funeral service?*

Hodges: *I know there were some, but I don't know what they did.*

Kain: *How about traveling? Did you travel at all when you were here?*

Hodges: *No. I assume my father must have had vacations, but if we went anywhere it was only Cordova, perhaps.*

Kain: *Did you ever go to Long Lake or ...?*

Hodges: *Yes. Sometimes. I used to go with the Morris family out to a lake. It wasn't Long Lake. It was out on the other side of McCarthy.*

Kain: *Baultoff Lake?*

Hodges: *Yes. That's right.*

Kain: *A lot of the kids mentioned going out there, fishing and picnicking and. And you didn't have a car.*

Hodges: *No.*

Kain: *There were a couple of cars in town, here.*

Hodges: *Yes. Jack Morris had one.*

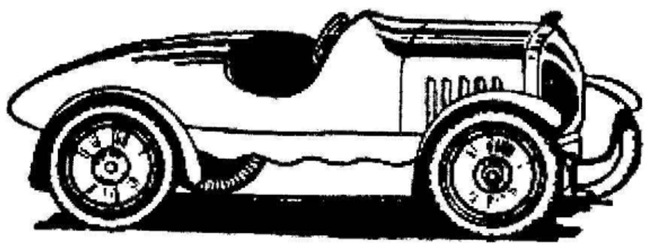
Kain: *That's how you got to Baultoff Lake.*

Hodges: *He'd put the four kids in the back and when we started somebody would be sitting on somebody else's lap. And by the time you bounced yourself out there, everybody would be sitting on the seat.*

Kain: *All squished together. Yes. I find it*

A little pixie takes a car ride.

Sport Bodies



"Jack Morris had one (of the) couple of cars in town... He'd put the four kids in the back and when we started somebody would be sitting on somebody else's lap. And by the time you bounced yourself out there (to Baultoff Lake), everybody would be sitting on the seat... (All squished together)."

MARY O'NEILL HUCKINS

really interesting that you could get around this area a lot more then, than you can now, because there are no bridges now and whatnot. So you did a lot of things with the Morrises?

Hodges: *Yes. They lived right next door, we were a fearsome foursome.*

Kain: *Fearsome foursome. O.K. Did your family usually go on picnics or were you usually with the Morrises in doing those things?*

Hodges: *Well we went on some, but not very many. I don't know if mother wasn't the picnic type or what. We'd go on community picnics sometimes, but I don't remember more than once or twice just with us going.*

Kain: *But you tagged along with the Morrises.*

Hodges: *I used to sneak out my bedroom window, 'cause my bedroom window faced their house. And I'd sneak out my window and we'd go up to the tennis court.*

Kain: *Did you play tennis?*

Hodges: *I played at it.*

Kain: *Yes. I tried that last year with my daughter. I have never really been able to play it. Boy that's a challenge. We just about ran each other ragged. She couldn't play either. Well speaking of going with the Morrises and family picnics and so forth. What other social activities do you remember with families and otherwise?*

Hodges: *Well, there would always be a Christmas play that the children put on or Christmas program. I should say. It wasn't always a play. And they'd have a party at Christmastime where some of the men - the older men that probably had families - outside somewhere, who missed their children and their families would buy toys for the kids.*

Kain: *So a lot of the - well, not single, but the men here with no families were also participating. What about men from the mine? Did they come down for stuff like that?*

Hodges: *Yes. Sometimes.*

Kain: *What other kind of activities other than the Christmas pageant or program?*

Hodges: *Usually had a 4th of July picnic and we'd go to McCarthy for the 4th of July baseball game.*

Kain: *How did you get to McCarthy? Did you walk?*

Hodges: *Oh, walk or go in the car or there was a little speeder car out here too. That was one of these things that you worked by hand or - well I don't remember, but...*

Kain: *It held about six people or something like that?*

Hodges: *Probably.*

Kain: *I remember seeing pictures of it. Did you go any farther then McCarthy on the speeder? A lot of people went to Chitina and so forth.*

Hodges: *No. Not on the speeder.*

Kain: *So you never went outside?*

Hodges: *No.*

Kain: *Just here around here.*

Hodges: *In fact I had never been to Anchorage until 20 years ago.*

Kain: *Oh, really. You mentioned that your dad would have people over - men over to play cards. Did women get together for...?*

Hodges: *Yes. They had bridge games.*

Kain: *Bridge games.*

Hodges: *And socials. I don't know. Maybe they had sewing circles. I don't remember that mother was in one of those, but then again she might have been.*

Kain: *So there were some women activities and men activities and then family activities together and...*

Hodges: *They had dances down here and they had costume parties and things like that.*

Kain: *Plenty of things to keep everybody*

busy?

Hodges: *Oh, yes.*

Kain: *And what about movies?*

Hodges: *They had movies for a while. That was only a once in a while thing. I remember seeing a Charlie Chaplin movie down here. The one where he cooked his boot tops and ate them.*

Kain: *And did men from the mines come down to go to the movie or...?*

Hodges: *Not often. It was quite, they could come down during the summertime by walking, but in the winter I doubt very much if they ever came down. I don't know.*

Kain: *So usually all the activities involved just the people at the lower camp?*

Hodges: *In the lower camp. Yes. For the main part.*

Kain: *Something that also came up at 1990 reunion was that at the theater the single men sat on one side and the families sat on another.*

Hodges: *Yes, you're right. I've forgotten that.*

Kain: *Yes, we thought it was- the thing being that you came up here from the lower 48 and just because you're living in a wilderness, the social mores were still observed very strongly. Well, I guess we have talked about recreation, sports, and so forth, and the pageants and the dances. Apparently, you enjoyed your time here.*

Hodges: *Oh, definitely. Yes. I think even while your living it most people wouldn't think of it- you know this is life.*

Kain: *Yes. This is just where I live. Yes.*

Hodges: *Later you think oh, how wonderful it was. But I think I enjoyed it even then.*

Kain: *And where do you live now?*

Hodges: *Connecticut.*

Kain: *The same ol' place?*

Hodges: *Just outside of Waterbury. I still hate Waterbury.*

Kain: *Well, at least you're outside of it. And you've lived there on and off pretty much since leaving here?*

Hodges: *Yes.*

Kain: *Well, Catherine I appreciate your time and your information.*

GEORGE SULLIVAN

Interview conducted by Logan W. Hovis
National Park Service
Kennecott, Alaska
June 16, 1990
Tape #1
Side #1

Hovis: *Just for the record, your name?*

Sullivan: *George Sullivan.*

Hovis: *Your age?*

Sullivan: *I'm 68 years old.*

Hovis: *And you were born?*

Sullivan: *In Portland, Oregon.*

Hovis: *Portland, Oregon. How did you come to Alaska, George?*

Sullivan: *I came back when I was six weeks old. My family was at Valdez. My mother had gone out because her mother was not well in Portland and there was no doctor in Valdez at that time and she was about eight months along and she took the steamship out. It took about five and a half days to get to Seattle and then the train on down to Portland.*

Hovis: *You have family in Portland?*

Sullivan: *No, I don't have. My grandmother was there at the time, back in 1922 and, as I say, I came back. I was about six or seven weeks old. We came back up on the boat. I don't hardly remember the trip.*

Hovis: *Oh, I wouldn't wonder at it. You mentioned earlier that you worked here at Kennecott when you were a young man.*

Sullivan: *Yeh, I was 15 years old, came up here in 1937 and worked for the summer up in the tram. It was an interesting job but you worked 10*

hours a day, seven days a week. Needless to say, when I went back home in the fall, back to Valdez, I was in pretty good shape.

Hovis: *When you say you worked at the tram, there are several places along there, you worked at the top of the mill building?*

Sullivan: *I worked at the top of the mill building, yeh. We had ore buckets come one every 52 seconds and there were about 750 pounds of ore in each bucket and you caught it as it came in and practically ran over to the grizzly and you dumped it down the grizzly and that was the process starting into the mill for grinding up the copper. I was telling someone earlier today that on a day like today, when it was wet, the great big mallet there - I don't know, the thing must have weighed about eight pounds - and you had to pound the bucket about three or four times with that big mallet because the ore was being held in there towards the bottom, about a third of it would be there, and you had to pound that loose and then you took it over and put it back on a cable and send it out, that was one end of the building, you had to run back and by then another bucket was there. So you did that all day long.*

Hovis: *Were the buckets unhooked from the traction cable automatically?*

Sullivan: *Yes, when they came off, they came on to a rail. You took them across on the rail, then when you took them back on again you had to insert them into the cable in order to get them going back up. It wasn't much of a trick but you had to kind of catch on to the idea. I had a little trouble at first but I guess everybody did. In fact, I remember one day the fellow who was shift foreman for me was Oscar Watsjold, he's here today too, and he - when you went to tip the bucket, you would take the latch off it and you'd give it a little bit of a swing to the left and then a heavy one to the right to dump it. Well, about the third day I was there, I lost control of it to the left*

and it dumped all the ore on to the floor of the deck and not down the grizzly on the right hand side where it should have gone and of course he had to come out of the foreman shack and I had to then take the bucket back out again because you had to keep the tram going. He was shoveling it down the grizzly and cursing and mumbling at me under his breath all that time. Yeh, I remember another day I was working there that it was a wet day like today and I stumbled and fell down into the grizzly and the grizzly had great big huge teeth that took this ore and ground it up as it started down the process. I just happened to catch - if I'd gone in there, of course it would have chewed me up in just a few seconds - but I happened to catch the edge of the grizzly timbers and was hanging there, and of course by this time the buckets were starting to come in and nobody was stopping them and this Oscar came running out and well, he couldn't see me, you know. Of course, he didn't know where I'd gone and the buckets were everywhere and I'm trying to pull myself up off - this heavy metal is wet and slippery and finally got back up and of course he was mad, but he was kind of scared for me and I was scared to death. That was quite a thrill.

Hovis: *Did he just put you right back to work?*

Sullivan: *Yeh, oh yeh. That was your fault. I had stumbled on my own. In fact, I remember you just didn't get any time off at all. He'd come out, you know, if you had to go to the bathroom real bad. We went to work at 7:00 in the morning. We worked till noon, then we had a half hour break for lunch and we were back to work at 12:30 and worked till 5:30 and you'd get maybe one 10 minute break to go to the bathroom during the day and that was it. Then you'd go down after work and - I stayed in the upper bunkhouse there, I roomed with another fellow and by the time you had dinner and everything, get ready for bed, cause you were up about 5:30 in*

the morning, and get going again. But every day, you know, you were doing that so...

Hovis: *Was the food good?*

Sullivan: *It was good, yeh. It was a good camp here, a good camp. I remember one thing that always sticks in my mind. I knew some of the miners, they had been around Valdez. Valdez had a lot of hard rock gold mines and some of those fellows were up there working. I can remember seeing miners come out of Erie or Jumbo, those were the names of the mines. They'd go down to the lower bunkhouse, they used to have some poker games there. And I've seen guys go in there - cause I would see them when they'd come in. I'd catch them - they'd come down on a low bucket, about half full, and they'd ride down. They'd go in there and they'd maybe play poker for three or four days straight, day and night, lose everything they had. They maybe were up at the mine for 12 or 14 months, hadn't even been down to this camp, lose all their money gambling and turn right around and go back to the mine. It was a pretty short and expensive holiday. And some of them that didn't do that would go to McCarthy and stay there five or six days and spend all their money in McCarthy on the girls and a little boozing and maybe they were heading outside. They'd never even get to Chitina, they'd never even get to Cordova, you know. But they made big money, the miners did. They worked by contract up there. They'd make 10 or 12 dollars a day, which back in the '30s was a lot of money. So they'd come out of there - they'd been up there a year, you know, and they'd be rolling in pretty good dough.*

Hovis: *And cabin fever or snake eater or whatever you want to call it.*

Sullivan: *Right, right.*

Hovis: *Were miners normally in the lower camp here?*

Two men riding the buckets.

Fig.1

"I can remember seeing miners come out of Erie or Jumbo (mines). ...they'd come down on a low bucket, about half full, and they'd ride down (to the lower bunkhouse). They'd go in there and they'd maybe play poker for three or four days straight, day and night, lose everything they had. They maybe were up at the mine for 12 or 14 months, hadn't even been down to this camp, lose all their money gambling and turn right around and go back to the mine. It was a pretty short and expensive holiday."

GEORGE SULLIVAN

Sullivan: *No, they were all up in the mines and, you know, they would come down. Like on the Fourth of July they'd have a big celebration, have baseball games, races and all those kinds of things would take place. They participated in that and, you know, they could come down every six months and go to McCarthy or go on into Cordova, go on outside if they wanted to. They'd catch the boat out of Cordova for Seattle and they were down there in five days and spend a couple of weeks and back up here.*

Hovis: *How did you get your job here?*

Sullivan: *My brother-in-law was the timekeeper here in the office and he and my sister had been here for a couple of years, working and I was looking for a job for the summer and he wrote and said he was sure he could get me on up here. I was talking to a fellow last night named Frank Morris and Frank is about three years older than I am. I said to him last night, "Why didn't you work at the mine." He said, "I wasn't old enough," and I said, "well you're older than me," and he said, "I never knew this." He said, "there was a lot of talk around camp because you were working here." I said, "what do you mean?" He said, "well you were so young." I was about 180 pounds* [then], *I'm heavier than that now, but I was in pretty good shape for that age. "But," he* [Frank Morris] *said, "the comments were that well, you look husky enough. If you can handle a job they let you go ahead and do it." And evidently I did. I never knew that I was part of the gossip of the community till last night after 53 years. It was tough work but it was good for you.*

Hovis: *Was there any sort of social life that was around the camp?*

Sullivan: *Oh, there was. They played cards and pool and that kind of thing. I played a little bit of baseball but really didn't have much time to do anything. The fellow I roomed with - his dad used to be the head of the mine, a fellow by the name of Presley - David was here*

working for the summer. He was gonna go to the University of Washington that fall and he was on the opposite shift from me. He'd come in about 2:30 - 3:00 in the morning and invariably we, you know, in the same room, he'd wake me up and then we'd sit there and talk and then I'd fall back to sleep and then when I was suppose to be up at 5:30 I'd have a hard time doing it. But, you know, by the time you finish working and cleaned up and ate and maybe read a little bit or wrote a letter or something and walked down to the store - they had the store down here and you bought everything - you'd buy a $10.00 or $20.00 book of scrip which was used to make purchases at the store. They didn't take cash. At the end of the month they would deduct from your paycheck the amount of scrip books you bought.. And you used scrip if you wanted to buy candy, cigarettes, whatever you wanted to buy, some pop or ice cream. I'd walk down there, you know, occasionally after dinner. But it just seemed like the time went so fast. You were no sooner in bed and you're back up chasing buckets again.

Hovis: *How long did you do it for?*

Sullivan: *For the summer. I was there for three or four months I guess, from late May until the first part of September.*

Hovis: *Was there any sort of physical examination?*

Sullivan: *No, none at all, none at all. Well, that's odd too that you ask that, because I don't recall taking one although there was a doctor and a hospital and nurses and everything. But, of course needless to say, there was no child labor and that's true. I don't recall taking one.*

Hovis: *Did you ever go into the hospital* [?].

Sullivan: *No, no, not at all. No, the only goof up I ever had was this Presley coming in like he did in the morning - he had been here nine*

or ten days working and this one morning I had fallen back to sleep again. I didn't wake up and the night shift foreman came in the room and said what's the matter, can't you take it. And, you know, I woke right up and said what are you talking about, he said - they thought I'd petered out. I said oh God, I just didn't wake up. I ran all the way up to the top, no breakfast or anything, you know, and went right to work and, of course, Oscar was shift foreman and he was grumbling at me all day long cause he had to catch the buckets till I showed up.

Hovis: *Okay. While you were catching the buckets, what did Oscar normally do?*

Sullivan: *Just kind of kept track up and down the line, made sure the cable was in good shape. This Morris' father, Jack Morris, and his uncle, Dan Morris, were in charge of all the cable and the trams and everything and I went up a couple of times and worked out of the mine, up by the Jumbo mine, and we were supposed to go down and do a bunch of splicing one day and I'm not a real great fan of heights and it was a rainy day like today was, with pouring down rain, and we waited and waited. In fact, we overnighted at the mine up there, stayed there and then the next day it was still pouring down rain and Jack said oh, the hell with it, you go on back down and chase buckets again and I was very relieved. This splicing you know, you can go up there a couple thousand feet and you're just hanging on to a bucket that swings and sways. So, I was kind of glad to return to lower camp.*

Hovis: *I've walked the Jumbo tram line and I think I know what you mean.*

Sullivan: *You know what I'm talking about. People riding down used to take copper and throw it down trying to hit the rabbits. There used to be a lot of rabbits down there.*

Sanford Sjogren drilling at the Bonanza mine.

Hovis: *What was it like staying up at the mine for those couple of days?*

Sullivan: *It was all right, yeh. In fact, I saw two or three guys I knew, Egan Petrokoff and Johnny, oh gosh, what was Johnny's last name. There were several of them that were old Valdez hard rock miners. There is a lot of gold mining out of Valdez. There were a couple of - Mike Sullivan was the mine superintendent, but he was no relation. But he knew my dad, who was Harvey Sullivan. My dad was a U.S. Marshal for the whole Third Division. In those days, that was the only kind of the law up here. It was territorial days and there weren't any state police or anything like that.*

Hovis: *That was a question that occurred to me too. Was there any sort of police force or company police to handle small crimes or anything in the camp?*

Sullivan: *No. They had a Commissioner at McCarthy and they had a Marshal at Chitina, a Deputy Marshal. In fact, my uncle, Howard Conrad, was at Chitina for a while. He was mostly in Latouche as a Marshal. There weren't any right in the mining area that I know of.*

Hovis: *Do you remember any occasions when you might have been in need for one?*

Sullivan: *No. Very little drinking took place in properties here. You know, they might have a drink in their own cottage and that type of thing but they'd go to McCarthy to do their partying and everything. They probably had a special deputy in McCarthy, I don't remember, I wasn't drinking or anything in those days. I know they had a Commissioner there, a fellow name of Chamberlain was Commissioner there for a long time, Alan Chamberlain.*

Hovis: *How much did they pay you, do you remember?*

Sullivan: *Somebody asked me that last night and I don't remember the hourly wage, but it seemed like it was*

probably around 70 cents. I remember my checks would be about, well, they could be anywhere from about 108 to about 112 dollars for the month. But see, they took room and board out of that and then they took what little purchases I made at the store out of that. So, I could have been making, I don't know, 130 to 135 a month.

Hovis: *So, basically you worked and slept and talked to a few people and that was it.*

Sullivan: *Yeh. Well, my sister and brother-in-law were here. I'd go up to see them and then Ida and Rubin Johnson were here. I knew them and the Morrises, Jack Morris and Frank. So, you know, I'd go by and my two nieces were here. They were just one and three years old. So I'd visit with them and I'd go down to the rec hall or go down and shoot a little pool and played a little baseball. But the time just seemed to fly really. Well, you know, if you got off at 5:30 - by the time you washed up and - by the time you got down there it would be 6:00, washed up, it was 6:30, you went and ate, you know, it was probably 7:30 or a quarter to eight. Well, you're gonna be getting up at 5:30 in the morning - you're probably in bed by 9:30 or 10:00. But I was still building muscles in those days, you know, at that age I was - eight hours of sleep I needed.*

Hovis: *Did you ever work in any other mines after you left here?*

Sullivan: *Well, I worked down out - well, out of Valdez I did in '39. I got on Gold Stream and that was just this side of Cliff Mine in Valdez. I worked down there with Roy Dieringer and Jack Cook. It was a badly misnomered stream, Gold Stream, because there was no gold in it. We got some colors and worked our tails off but - Gold Creek was what they called it rather than Gold Stream.*

Hovis: *What did you do there?*

Sullivan: *Ran a cat, a little cat, a little cleat track we had down there, oh, just did everything that you do around a place like that.*

Hovis: *It was a placer operation?*

Sullivan: *Yeh. Jack Cook had mined up in the Rough and Tough Mines. His father had hard rock mines around there and Jack had worked out at Platinum down in Goodnews Bay and also worked up around Fairbanks but he was a very experienced miner and he always felt that gold very likely could have leaked out of and come down Gold Creek into the water. And we got down to bedrock and everything, but boy, there wasn't any gold, well, there was a little bit of gold. I don't think - I got about 120 a month and I guess he maybe took the same out for himself and paid for the expenses and if he had, after the season, 500 dollars, he had a lot of money. I don't think he even had that amount. It was too bad because they were really hopeful that they would find something. I had an uncle that mined up out of Nome in the - well, my dad and four of the brothers came up in the gold rush. They came up through the Chilkoot and all that and they had mined all over Alaska and then this one, uncle Joe Sullivan, went up out of Bluff, out of Nome and went in there in February and did it for several years, took great big blocks of ice out of the bay and then they drag lined stiff legged the dirt from there to the shore and worked it, the Bluff River had run all this gold down in there and he just became very wealthy. He and his son and their family worked it. Sullivan and Crabtree was the name of the company and it did very, very well. My wife's family, of course, she was raised in Fairbanks, out on Fairbanks Creek. They were all miners. In fact, our nephew, John Cook, still mines up on Fairbanks Creek. Earl Beistline, former Dean of Mines at the University of Alaska, he'd take people out to Cook's place 'cause he thought that was a good example of mining. He put in all the right ponds and did all the*

right things, you know, that's required these days.

Hovis: *When you were here, would you describe Kennecott as a happy place to work?*

Sullivan: *Oh, yeh. Well, you know, I worked with the Road Commission in their camps, also on the start of the Alcan Highway and was down in the Aleutians in World War II, as I mentioned. You know, most places are a happy camp and I've noticed though, sometimes a guy will come in that's just trouble and pretty soon he's complaining about the food and then a few guys will say the food isn't any good or something like that [?] and really the food is good. The people here they worked hard, you know, hard working people and they didn't have time to worry and complain if it was a company operation. But I think they treat their employees very fair and provide year around work for them. Those that worked in the offices or had positions, it was an excellent job for them. They had their cottages and their families. Those that didn't, you know, they'd get leave to leave when they wanted to and they always seemed to be welcome back if they were halfway decent workers. Didn't want any trouble makers around. Of course, you know, there were a lot of people in those days who were happy to have a job, things weren't too good and you like to eat. You get up there quite a bit you say?*

Hovis: *I do.*

Sullivan: *I heard you talking to Oscar about the fishing [?]. Are you going to try another lake?*

Hovis: *Did you ever get a chance to get out on the glacier?*

Sullivan: *Did yes, uh huh. I went out there one Sunday evening. In fact, it was just a beautiful night. Several of us hiked up on the river and I was just saying that one of the things I really noticed was the fact that the glacier has receded. Well, I haven't been in there in 53 years and I was talking to someone*

Hand drill from the Kennecott Mine, courtesy of Anchorage Museum of History and Art

"The people here they worked hard, you know, hard working people, and they didn't have time to worry and complain..."

GEORGE SULLIVAN

that's in the group here and he hadn't been here for 15 years and they really noticed it. Fifty-three years, it just seems like it's just impossible. It was the same thing in Valdez. You know, the Valdez glacier used to come right, I think, fairly close to town, you know, maybe about a mile and a half away and now you can't even see the thing. It's gone up back around the arm there in Valdez.

Hovis: *I guess about the only thing I have to ask is if there is anything you would like to say about Kennecott.*

Sullivan: *All I know is it's fine to be back and I'm surprised some portions of it have deteriorated badly but other portions haven't, which surprised me, except that, you know, it's 53 years and some vandalism, of course, has taken place and deterioration just from the weather that takes place. When they built this place - you look at the mill and the timbers and everything and the way they put them in and the strong supports. They built it to stay and last and it certainly has for a long time. The same thing in Latouche though. Of course, they built the properties in Latouche and they built them the same way. The cabins are all gone there, they tore those down. I have a picture of Latouche at home - a big long one, like this, and it shows all the houses all the way across the water there. They had houses around the arm there, beautiful setting, right on the Latouche Bay. But they built good camps. Of course they invested heavily, they made good money and it was a great thing for the, you know, they owned the steamship company and they had a back haul of salmon and copper and a front haul of passengers and, of course, groceries and clothing and everything that we brought north, building materials and all those things that had to come north.*

Hovis: *And you moved in on the railroad when you came in, I presume.*

Sullivan: *Yes, I took the boat from Valdez to Cordova and had to wait about two*

days for the train. I stayed with a family in Cordova, the Lydick family and got the train and came on up. It was quite an experience.

Hovis: *Would you come back here again?*

Sullivan: *I don't know, I really don't. I may. I've been going to come up here for a long time and, of course, the opportunity arose and it seemed like a great idea to come back here.*

Hovis: *Did you keep in touch with any people who worked here before?*

Sullivan: *Oscar Watsjold occasionally and Frank Morris about the same - oh, and Phil Holdsworth. But I've gotten some names of people. In fact, about three months ago I was going through a few old pictures. I lost a lot when our home burned up in Nenana. We lived there years ago. I was a Federal Marshal there back in the forties and early fifties and we lost a lot of pictures but I saw one - there was a girl here, her name was Mary Ellen Duggan. Her dad was in charge of the mill and stuff and so we had the Duggan family, the Presley family and the Sullivan family all in our yard in Valdez. I saw this picture about three years ago and I'm gonna see if I can't get some pictures made. She gave me Jean Presley's address so I'll send her one and I'm gonna send Mary Ellen one to her and her sister, Jean. It has her mother and dad and everything in it, you know. So at least - and it's been nice to talk to a lot of people and former employees. 'Course I see them occasionally.*

Hovis: *I thank you very much.*

Sullivan: *You're welcome.*

Hovis: *These tapes we make will be deposited in the University of Alaska, Fairbanks for access by the public. Any photographs that people brought we will be making copies of them and I believe the local museum - I'm not sure of this, but I think the local museum will get copies of the photographs.*

Sullivan: *Yeh, they said this morning that probably they will not be able to do it now but they could write back up for it and get their* [?].

Hovis: *Oh, that's good.*

Sullivan: *Yeh, there is a lot of memories going on around here. See, I don't know so many of the pictures that they have down there because these kids that grew up here, of course, they all went to school together and they all remember one another. Well, I was just here for the summer, you know. Some of them remember my brother-in-law and my sister. In fact, the Jensen girl* [Inger Jensen Ricci], *she remembered me, she said, when I worked here that summer. Evidently they were talking about me from what I heard.*

Hovis: *Maybe you were a strapping young lad and a possible eligible bachelor.*

Sullivan: *Well, not at 15 I don't think.*

Hovis: *That may be the cause for the gossiping - oh, he's too young.*

Sullivan: *He's too young. That's right. Yeh, in fact in the bathroom there's a sign in there about Cremal*[?] *for your hair, and the ad is in '38 and in '38 I had as much hair as you have. I was sitting on the john this morning and I was thinking I should have used that Cremal in '38. It shows a bald headed guy, you know, if I had used it in '38 I might still have a good head of hair.*

Hovis: *There is one for Wildroot down in the lower bathroom that makes the same claim.*

Sullivan: *Oh, does it?*

Hovis: *Okay. In the bunkhouses. I'm sorry to say thank you and then come up with another question, but what you said just sparked it. In the bunkhouses, do you remember* [?].

Sullivan: [?] *In fact, I was trying to remember the size of the room. Like the store, I would have swore was twice the size it is and the bunkhouse there too. But it*

seemed to me that - in fact, I probably will walk up there before I leave just to - if I can get in there.

Hovis: *You can.*

Sullivan: *Oh, you can, the upper bunkhouse?*

Hovis: *The upper* [?].

Sullivan: *Yeh, that's where I stayed.*

Hovis: *The bottom floor is covered with silt and gravel.*

Sullivan: *Jim Haroway is a good friend of mine and owns most of this property with Tony Oney and Mike Darling. They are also buddies of Jim Baldauf. I had open heart surgery in '80 and Baldauf, who is a cardiologist - he's also my wife's cardiologist. But the room I would guess - I know there was two beds in it. But it seemed to me it was about this size. Well, you've been in there. Was the room this size?*

Hovis: *About half this size.*

Sullivan: *I'll never forget - I hadn't been in my home in Valdez, oh gosh, for years. You know, we had moved from our home and moved downtown. My mother and dad bought a store and then we had an apartment up above, where we lived. Then I left and I was gone for a long time and then I drove truck out of there. I never went by the house and I went in it after the earthquake and I couldn't believe my room. I would have swore it was - well, my room was probably two thirds the size of this room. I would have swore it was twice the size it was, twice the size of this one, you know.*

Hovis: *You were half the size* [?].

Sullivan: *That's true. But you know, there was a closet in there and a chest of drawers and I pulled it open and pulled the drawer all the way out for some reason and way stuck in the back was a slip in my dad's handwriting signed by H. P. Sullivan and, God, I thought - he'd been dead since '36. He died when I was 14. I just couldn't*

green card situation in those days or not. I think they just came in and went to work and after they spent a little time, you know, they...

Hovis: *What were the citizenship requirements?*

Sullivan: *You applied after one year and I think after two years you went in and took a test and if you passed it then you were eligible* [?].

Hovis: *Several years ago I walked down to the cemetery here and there are several Japanese buried there. Do you remember working with* [?]*?*

Sullivan: *No. I remember a Walt* [?]. *There was a Walter Ing and Frank ... Minano maybe ... and a bunch of them were up here and some worked in the laundry, some worked in the kitchen. I don't remember any working in the mine or in the mill or on the tram. Of course, a lot of those people came up and they worked in the cannery, Filipinos and Chinese, Japanese* [?].

Hovis: *I guess there weren't any* [?].

Sullivan: *Not here, no.*

Hovis: *Okay. Thank you very much.*

Sullivan: *You bet.*

DEBORAH VICKERY HOUSE AND JANE VICKERY WILSON

Interview conducted by Ann Kain
National Park Service
June 16, 1990
Tape #1
Side #1

Kain: *This is side one of the taped interview with Deborah Vickery House and Jane Vickery Wilson, June 16, 1990 at Kennecott, Alaska. These two women grew up in Kennecott when the mill and mines were in operation. They are presently in Kennecott once again for the Kennecott Kids Reunion hosted by the Kennicott Glacier Lodge. The interview is being conducted by Ann Kain of the National Park Service, Alaska Regional Office.*

Kain: *This is Jane Vickery Wilson. What was your age when you were in Kennecott and the years you were here?*

Wilson: *I came to Kennecott in 1918, I was three, and we lived here until 1931 when I was 16.*

Kain: *Where were you born?*

Wilson: *I was born in Juneau. I came directly from Juneau to Kennecott.*

Kain: *And what brought you here?*

Wilson: *My father decided when we lived in Juneau that he wasn't content with his work there and he applied for a position in Kennecott and within a short time he came to Kennecott to work as a cost accountant in the office in Kennecott in the town. He took care of - well, cost accounting how much* [per ton] *it cost to mine the ore.*

Kain: *And you haven't been back here since you left?*

Wilson: *No.*

Kain: *This is your first time back here?*

Wilson: *This is our first time and we are thrilled to pieces.*

Kain: *Your family came up here so your dad could work at the mine?*

Wilson: *He came first and we came shortly after.*

Kain: *How long was he here by himself?*

Wilson: *I don't know. I doubt that it was more than a month or two.*

Kain: *Where did you live when you were here?*

Wilson: *We first lived down like across from the power plant. There were four or five houses up there and I think we lived there, oh, not more than three years, because my mother wanted to get up higher, have more view, you know. I think*

Jane Vickery in Harold Glad's sailor uniform.

she thought it would be better for us as small children to be away from the railroad tracks and up on the hill. So we were able to get a house up there. I can remember my mother walking up to see it and I was with her and I thought we'd never get there. That was the longest walk. It wasn't very far, but it seemed like it to me.

Kain: *When you left here where did you go?*

Wilson: *When we left Kennecott?*

Kain: *When you left Kennecott.*

Wilson: *We went to Seattle. My grandmother lived there and I had to finish high school and then on to college.*

Kain: *You have remained there since?*

Wilson: *Yes. Well, two years after I finished at the university I went back to Juneau and I was able to get employment there through a friend of mine, Jim* [Dennis], *who had worked in Kennecott for years. He was the one that did a lot of the planning of the mill when it was built, he was very knowledgeable about that. He knew somebody that needed a girl in the office and* [he took me down to this man's office] *and I got a job in Juneau. So I stayed in Alaska.*

Kain: *How long were you there?*

Wilson: *For about two and a half years. And I married during that time and then we both came Outside. I hadn't met my husband's family and he hadn't met anybody but my sister who came up for the wedding and he hadn't met my parents so we came out. Four days after we got there the war started so we just stayed.*

Kain: *And your sister, Debby Vickery House.*

House: *And on the phone they get us mixed up sometimes. Our voices sound more alike on the telephone.*

Kain: *That is what I was wondering on this tape, if you were going to come out sounding pretty much alike. What was your age when you came to Kennecott?*

House: *I was a year, a little over a year.*

Kain: *How long were you here?*

House: *Until 1931 and I was 15 when we left.*

Kain: *You all went together when you left?*

House: *Yes. Right.*

Kain: *Did you attend high school and college elsewhere?*

House: *I finished high school in Seattle. I found it extremely difficult to make the transition from here, the small Kennecott, to a large high school in the city. We had some friends. We lived quite a ways from the school and we would have to* [take the bus]. *After we came to the school for a year and were going back for the second year, this girl that we'd met said, "well I met you last year but you looked so unhappy I thought it would be the kindest thing to leave you alone". She didn't talk to us all that first year but the second year, though, she spoke.*

Kain: *That's interesting.*

House: *Yes.* [It was hard.] *Just going from one room to another. Would you get there in time before the bell rang?*

Kain: *That was something you didn't have to contend with here.*

House: *No, no. We did not.* [I asked] *a boy in the hall one day where the history room was. He said "you asked me that yesterday", and I said "yes, but I can't remember". It was so difficult [answering] roll call. And my name being Deborah, my mother had insisted that* [I correct] *them and that made it even worse. Not only did I have to answer "here" to roll call but also* [correct the pronunciation]. *It was almost impossible.*

Kain: *Almost terrifying.*

House: *Yes, it was. It was just terrifying.*

Kain: *Did your father continue in mining when he left here?*

House: *Well, when he left here he retired. He did off and on work for some people in Seattle, but he was retired. But he didn't come out when we did. He stayed in Kennecott. He stayed there until it closed. And then he stayed on as watchman for a while, so that he was one of the very last people to move out. And when he flew out, he...*(inaudible). *No, he flew from McCarthy to someplace because he said...*

Wilson: *Oh, I didn't know that.*

House: [He said] *that the pilot hit the wind and he said I thought we were going down and he said I was busy looking 'cause I was trying to find the place where he was trying to land, and all he was calling out is that there was a bear down there.*

Kain: *You went on to college?*

House: *Yes. I went up to Western Washington University and then taught school. So then I taught school for thirty years.*

Kain: *For thirty years - in Washington?*

House: *Yes. And I think that this* [experience] *that I've had* [helped] *when a child would come in the room and would be so shy and could hardly answer roll call. There was no one that understood it better than I.*

Kain: *You were an elementary teacher?*

House: *Yes.*

Kain: *What grade?*

House: *First and second.*

Kain: *Did you travel much around the area?*

Wilson: *Well, we didn't have a car in those days.*

Kain: *A few people have spoken about camping trips, going to Long Lake and...*

Wilson: *Oh, we went to Long Lake.*

House: *Oh, when we were here.*

Kain: *Yes, that's what I meant.*

House: *Yes, we went to Long Lake and lived in a little cabin and fished in the* [creek]. [George Flowers] *cooked fish like no one else. He put it all in the frying pan and cooked it and then turned it all over like it was one big fish cake. It was marvelous, you could eat the whole thing.*

Wilson: *He cleaned them of course and the bones were* [still in the fish], *it was beautiful.*

Kain: *Did you go anywhere else other than Long Lake or was that your main vacation?*

House: *That was our main...*

Kain: *...vacation spot.*

Wilson: *Yes, yes. That was the only place we would go to stay overnight and we had to take every bit of food that we were going to eat except for the fish that we caught.*

Kain: *How did you get there?*

House: *On the train.*

Kain: *On the train?*

Wilson: *And then stop right in front of the house where we were gonna stay, this log cabin, and the train engineer knew where to stop the train, you know, and he would give us time to get off and get our luggage and all the groceries Mother had packed. Bless her heart, she went to a lot of work to get ready to go.*

Kain: *I can understand that. So the railroad was, aside from supplying the community,* [provided transportation] *as well.*

Wilson: *Yes.*

Kain: *Was a big deal - I know a lot of times the bridges went out, so you didn't have the train for a while. Did supplies run short?*

Wilson: *Well, yes they could run short on some things, but there was always plenty to eat. I think butter one time went down sort of low but I don't think we were ever without anything. Maybe eggs or something like that.*

House: *We talk about having frozen food, you know, and that it's modern. Of course here, the meat was brought in frozen, the turkeys came in frozen and* [kept in the butcher shop freezer]. *So there were always lots of provisions.*

Kain: *Was there excitement when the bridge was repaired and the train came in?*

Wilson: *Oh, yes. Everybody went down to see the train.*

Kain: *Everybody was at the depot?*

House: *Yes, downtown.*

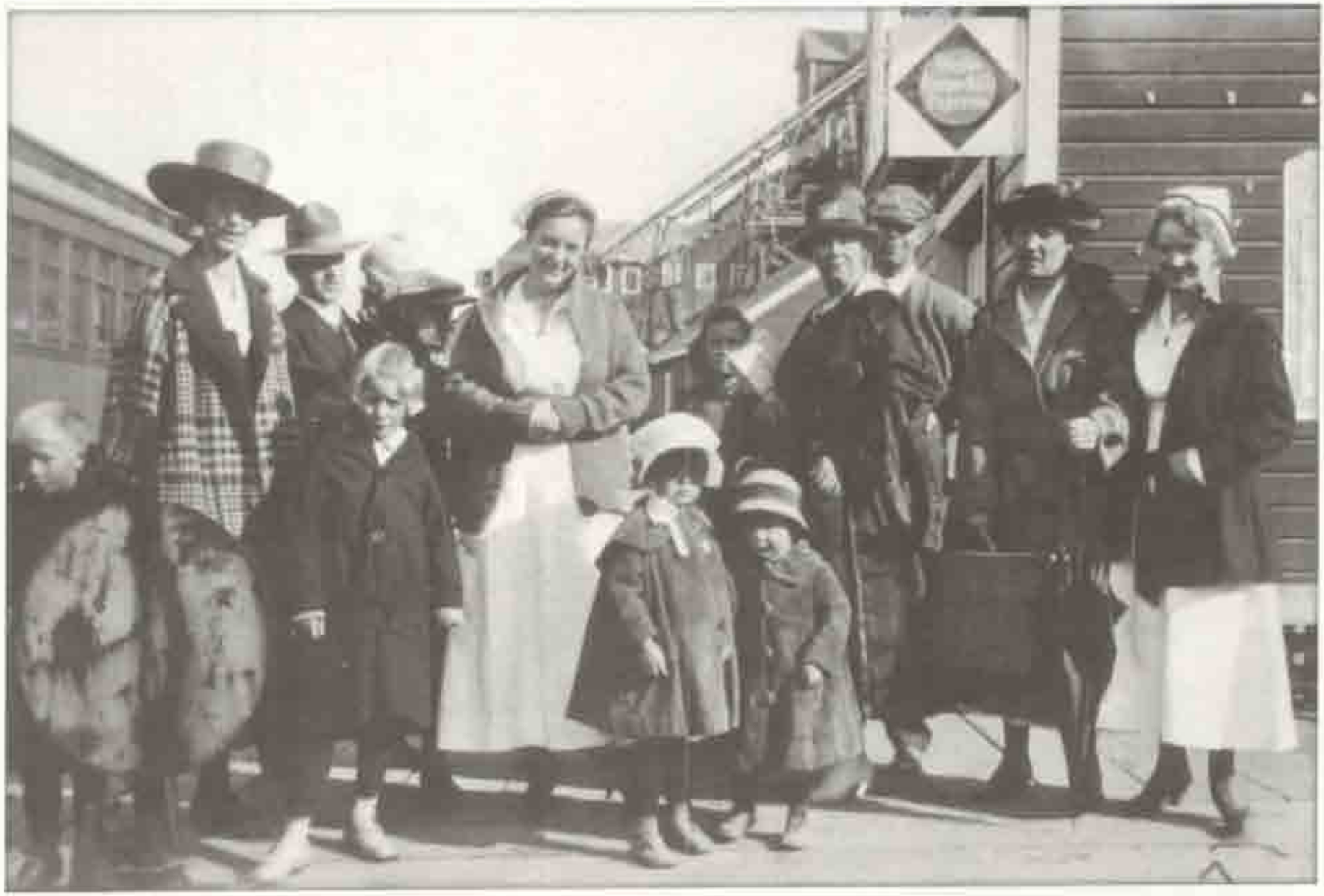
Wilson: *Once I think we were six weeks without a train and my mother went six weeks without hearing from her mother, you know, and that's a long time when you're used to a letter every week.*

Kain: *The train also brought in all the mail?*

House: *All the mail, you see.*

Kain: *The total link with the outside world was the train?*

Wilson: *Yes, they had telegraph but that was the only communication. We could have gotten a message to her if it was life and death. Of course we used the Sears and Roebuck catalog a lot. We either ordered from Sears and Roebuck or mother wrote to* [Frederick and Nelson] *in Seattle. It was* [one] *or the other. And there was a Montgomery Ward in Portland. But if something came in - the main reason that those were the ones we dealt with was because they would exchange if a mistake was made. If the shoes didn't fit, they took*



Saying goodbye to the Walkers at the railroad tracks. Girls in bonnets: Jane and Debbie Vickery. Blonde girl: Catherine Dennis. Nurse, far right: Jean McGavock (nee Scobie).

them back. It was just heart rendering if your new shoes came and they were too small.

Wilson: *And had to go back, because it took a week for the order to go in, a week for them to set the order up, a week for them to come back. Well, then they weren't right so* [it meant another three weeks.]

Kain: *So most of your things, a lot of your clothing implements and cooking things that you'd buy, was most of it mail order from Sears or Montgomery Ward, or did you buy it here at the store?*

House: *They didn't have everything.*

Wilson: *We bought* [shoe pacs - felt shoes - and canvas shoes for summer here.] *And bib overalls that we wore all summer and we had to have long pants because of the mosquitoes. Our mother sewed so she made a lot of our clothes and I think we were some of the best dressed because for each season it was different.*

Kain: *How did she buy the material? Was that available at the store or did she order that as well?*

Wilson: *Some material,* [such as] *cottons were available.*

House: *But somebody had an old coat.*

Wilson: *An overcoat they weren't going to use and I can remember they gave it to my mother and she made me and Debbie some ski pants. Well, it was wonderful. We never had real ski pants before. And that was* [super].

House: *She ripped the sleeves and sponged them off and brushed them and turned them so that the inside was out so there was no fading. It was beautifully done. My coat was brown and Jane's was a sort of green.*

Wilson: *They were beautiful. And then she always made us our jackets you know, our outside jackets for winter, plenty warm. And we always sent out and had good mittens to wear, two or three pairs,*

inside mittens and heavy ones on the outside. I never got cold outside; I could go skiing at 36 below and I wasn't cold. That's below zero. Not below freezing, below zero.

Kain: *We were talking about buying things and your life here. You lived in two different houses then?*

Wilson: *A short time in that first one. You know, one of the houses we were in three years in a row* (inaudible).

House: *I was about 11 when we moved from the little house at the* [end of the three up on the hill.]

Wilson: *And then I remember the day we moved - and remember we found the chocolate. (Inaudible) my father liked chocolates and he would buy them at the store* (inaudible) *and they put them in a little sack and he came home and put them in the back cupboards because they weren't for us. And the day we moved we were looking through the cupboards and way back in the corner was this sack, and we brought it out and there were all these nice [chocolates]. Well I thought that they would be rotten, which shows you a lot about (?). So we ate them. I think there was one left when we decided that maybe we ought to put it back. Then I told Mother, I said* (inaudible). *That's not why I ate it though, he wouldn't have put them there if he'd known we were going to find them because he used to put them out on the back step and he'd say well,* (inaudible) *wonderful memories.*

Kain: *Now these houses up here. The first one you lived in was smaller than the second one?*

Wilson: *Yes.*

Kain: *But they both had two bedrooms, or three?*

Wilson: *Well, in the first one* [the upstairs] *was just all one great big room and that was an attic. And my mother and dad had some kind of a screen that they could put across, you know.*

House: *They put the bed backwards so the high head of the bed made a partition.*

Wilson: *Well, because we'd go to bed first and we'd be sound asleep until it was time to get up in the morning.*

House: *My bed was next to the window at the end of the building. And it was a window that opened out and in the winter the snow would blow and fall in.* [It would come in and fall on the floor. And it never melted.]

Kain: *It would stay right there.*

House: *It was cold enough because my bed was right there and I would see snow coming in and I would think it was lovely and it was a long time before I realized that the snow should have melted.*

Kain: *So the heating upstairs...*

Wilson: *Well, there wasn't any.*

Kain: *There was no heat. It was just ...*

Wilson: *The heat radiated up from downstairs.*

Kain: *Through the stairwell. There was no way to shut off the stairwell though, right?*

Wilson: [There was a door] *downstairs. But maybe it would be shut and maybe it wouldn't because they didn't want the downstairs to get that cold. We had plenty of blankets and just kept warm.*

Kain: *At night did you leave the stairwell door open so heat could come up?*

Wilson: *I don't know. I don't remember that. Of course they wouldn't keep a roaring fire going all night, you know, they wouldn't want to have* [our house catch fire.]

House: *They would bank it.*

Wilson: *Bank it, you know, but it would die down.*

Kain: *You were heating with wood?*

Wilson: *With wood.*

Kain: *In these other houses did you heat with steam?*

Wilson: *Steam heat from the power house.*

Kain: *So the second house you lived in was heated with steam.*

Wilson: *Yes. It was warm.*

Kain: *Was it warm upstairs as well?*

House: *Yes.*

Wilson: *Well, we had a bathroom up there and it was warm it seems like, but our door was closed and we could open the window and it was cool.*

Kain: *For some reason I just always thought that those houses up there were...*

Wilson: *Somebody said the Silk Stocking row or something.*

Kain: *Yes. Well that's what they call it. That's how they...*

Wilson: *(?)*

Kain: *Were those there for upper management people?*

Wilson: *Well, they were all office people.*

Kain: *They were all office people that were up there?*

Wilson: *Yes.* [McGavocks lived there, Mr. McGavock] *was head of the power house, I mean you know, key personnel.* (Inaudible). *There were several families, of course, that lived in their own house.*

House: *But somebody had always lived in our house.*

Kain: *And then they'd be next in line - you'd been here so long you were eligible - was it dependent on how many children you had?*

House: *I think it was dependent a lot upon the need, and Jane and I were growing up and they thought we would need a room and the bathroom would be nice.*

Kain: *So dependent on need more so than - I don't know if you want to call it social status or whatever.*

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

Kain: *A family was a family, it didn't make any difference.*

Wilson: *No. We'd been there a long time, you know.*

Kain: *If you needed the space, you got the first available house?*

Wilson: (inaudible) *The company was very good to all the families all the time and they gave turkeys at Christmas time to every family.*

House: *To every family.*

Wilson: *Every family had a turkey at no cost.*

Kain: *What about power? Did you have electricity?*

Wilson and House: [We had electricity as did all the families.]

Kain: *It was all up to the (?).*

Wilson: (Inaudible) *there were light posts and we had one out by the point. I remember looking out the back window out towards the* [point] *and there was a light out there and it was just beautiful seeing that snow and the light on it and the moon shining on it* [the snow].

House: *The very fact that this was in the '20s made electric lights unusual.*

Kain: *In a place like this.*

House: *We lived way back beyond the beyond. It's just remarkable to think about.*

Kain: *I've noticed that the second house you lived in - there is a walkway immediately behind, probably enclosed, which led to the shed.*

Wilson: *No, not really.* (Inaudible).

Kain: *It wasn't? Well, it's close enough they could.*

Wilson: *Yes.*

Kain: *Were those just wood storage areas?*

Wilson: *Well, we had a wood shed but then we also had a passage like but we had a cache. It was attached to the house.*

Kain: *So you went out the door into this other building?*

Wilson: [You went] *two or three steps up to part of the outhouse.*

Kain: *So you used that as well as indoor plumbing?*

Wilson: *No* [that house had no out of the house facility, just the bathroom upstairs..]

Kain: *The house down here?*

Wilson: *The one down here. We carried water from the water house, I remember, for a long time.*

House: *Did they ever put water into the kitchen sink?*

Wilson: *Daddy did.*

Kain: *In the first house?*

Wilson: *In the first house. Daddy put that tank there where you came up the stairs...*

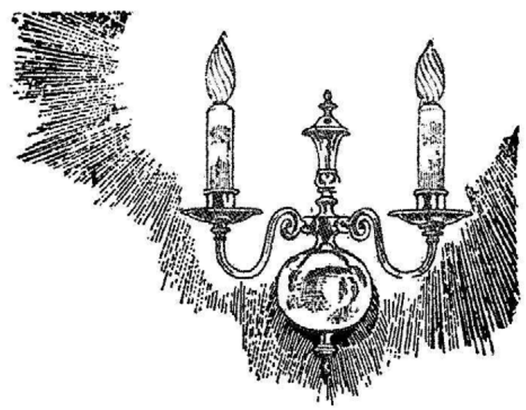
House: *There was an aerial pipe that went across.*

Wilson: *Yes, and we had a pipe - he and another fellow they attached the pipe down there to the "water house," we called it, and brought it up and* [the pipe] *came to this big tank that Daddy had gotten* [from wherever they were stored.]

Kain: *A holding tank?*

Wilson: *Yes, a holding tank, 50 gallons or something like that. He'd fill it up every week or so, however often it took to fill the tank. So we had running water in the sink. Then my mother would have to heat what she needed on the stove. But that was a lot better than carrying two buckets of water in the morning and then two buckets at night. Then when we washed clothes, it took more water.*

Electric lights glow at midnight, Kennecott.



"I remember looking out the back window...and there was an (electric) light out there and it was just beautiful seeing that snow and the light on it and the moon shining..."

JANE VICKERY WILSON

Kain: *And how did you wash the clothes? In the sink with a scrub board?*

Wilson: *A scrub board with a tub. He* [Dad] *always used to help Mother because he had to get the water and lift it in. It was our job to hang out the clothes before we went to school so you can see they were up at five to get the wash done.*

Kain: *So what did you..?*

Wilson: *They did the washing the night before, before they went to bed. Mother used to hang them up at first, but then you and I had to help after we grew bigger. And the clothes would freeze dry* (inaudible).

Kain: *Knocked the ice off of them and..?*

Wilson: [We'd] *maybe have a line or two and hang them in the kitchen and they'd dry.*

Kain: *The shed behind the first house originally had the pit toilet and the wood* [for the] *stove in there?*

Wilson: *Yes.*

Kain: *Now the shed behind the second group of houses. Was the shed for storage since the houses there had indoor plumbing?*

House: *It took an hour in the wood stove to get the wood burning. To get the...*

Kain: *The stove working.*

House: *Yes, the stove right, and chop the wood, you know, and keep it going in the stove.*

(Inaudible).

Kain: *You bought most of your food, all your food, down at the store. Somewhat earlier today, when we were touring, you were saying that when your father got paid, you came down and got a scrip book. You would use a basic scrip book because it was company owned?*

Wilson: *Yes.*

Kain: *As you recall, and I realize you two were fairly young then, but do you know if the prices were - were they* [reasonable]?

House: *A candy bar was five cents. Every Saturday we would go to the store and get it, (?) maybe and go down to the store in the morning and buy a candy bar. Something very special that we liked, take it home and wait until after lunch. Then we'd all get together and eat our candy bars.* [Three or four friends would come.]

Kain: *So you think that food prices were moderate and not excessive.*

Wilson: *Forty-five cents a pound for T-bone steak. Way back then. Forty-five cents a pound, so that wasn't bad.*

Kain: *The rate you were getting what would be comparative prices, although there was no competitors.*

House: *Yes. I think...*

House: *Well, wages weren't high and everybody paid rent and so they were very good about the food. I think most of us got the food (?). And the store was well supplied. In the summer time sometimes they would have cherries and sometimes they would have a watermelon. We rode the* [wagon] *to distribute the merchandise around from the* [camp up] *to the mill for the mill. They would use a team of horses and wagon and we would ride on the wagon. And we were riding on there one day when they were delivering groceries on the hill. They delivered the groceries once a week. I think they usually ordered sugar and flour and this time in the* [McGavock's] *box was this huge watermelon and we were wondering what were the* [McGavocks] *doing with a watermelon. So we got up around the turn, we walked that road...to the woods and Lon Morgan stopped the horses, took the watermelon out of the* [McGavock's] *box, took it back in the woods and left it and got back*

in. We said, "Oh, old Mr. [McGavock] *is going to be mad". When we came back - all the kids on the hill rode that day, it was a nice day, he stopped and brought the watermelon out and we all ate it. It wasn't for* [McGavocks] *after all.*

Kain: *He just brought it for you kids.*

Wilson: *Yes.*

Kain: *Oh, that's great. So you got all your food at the store. But you did mention that you paid rent.*

Wilson: *Yes.*

Kain: *That wasn't included with the wage?*

Wilson: *I don't think it was very much, twenty dollars, it wasn't more than that, I'm sure. I have that figure in mind, I don't know if that's right.*

House: *I wouldn't say because I don't know.*

Kain: *So it was a minimal amount.*

Wilson and House: *Yes. It was.*

Kain: *A little more about the housing. Did you improve the house at all when you lived in it?*

Wilson: *We kept it up.*

Kain: *You kept it up. You didn't make any improvements as far as adding more cupboards or anything like that?*

Wilson: *No.*

House: *Nothing like that.*

Wilson: *Mother had bookcases made.*

House: *Well, yes, down at the* [carpenter shop].

Kain: *But they weren't probably the kind that were built in.*

Wilson: *No, no. Well, we left them there, of course, when we left.*

TAPE #1
SIDE #2

Kain: *We were talking about food and your purchases and your housing. Most of the other houses had indoor plumbing and most of them were two bedrooms and a living room and a kitchen.*

Wilson: *Yes, except for the superintendent and the assistant superintendent. I think they might have had three bedrooms, or four maybe even. 'Cause the Douglasses...*

House: *They added on.*

Wilson: *They had a big* [family].

House: *They had a big family.*

Wilson: *Yes. And then* [?] *have been in there too. The rest of them I think were all the same but Yvonne Konnerup said that there is an extra bedroom for their house because they had a boy and two girls, you see. So they needed the three bedrooms. The boy was old enough, you know, and the girls where they needed three bedrooms.*

Kain: *So if they wanted - like in her house if they added a bedroom, did the company pay for that and add it or was that up to them?*

Wilson: *It would for them, because Mrs.* [Konnerup] *didn't want to come up until they added a bedroom and they did.*

Kain: *Another thing I was wondering about was that you talked about getting food at the company store, you ordered most of your clothing through Sears or Montgomery Ward. What about furniture?*

Wilson: *It passed around.*

Kain: *Okay. So if somebody left, they didn't take their furniture with them.*

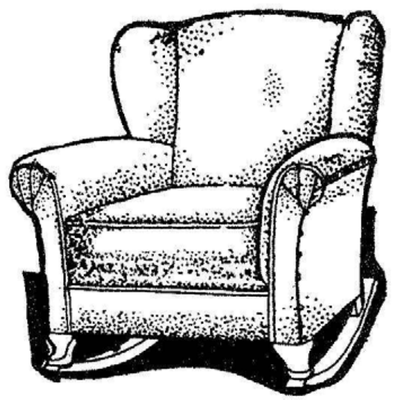
Wilson: *No, no, it just passed around.*

Kain: *They just gave it to someone or did you buy it from them?*

Wilson: *(?) or whatever arrangements could be made.*

House: *If they had something special that they had shipped in then they could take it with them if they wanted to, you know.*

Kain: *The furniture - it was here when you got here, so the company owned the furniture.*



Wilson: *Yes. Our house was* [furnished]. *I don't know, but I'm sure they must have built the homes and furnished them and then brought in people or the first people that came brought it, I don't know which way it worked, but it all stayed.*

House: *And it all moved around.*

Kain: *From house to house.*

House: *People were good. Somebody uses a table a while and it might stay in that house for a while and somebody else needed it sometime and it might go to someone else.*

Wilson: *When we left, we just left the piano. We bought one from a family in McCarthy. When they left we bought their piano and it was sent up first to the little house and then when we moved over to the other house.*

Kain: *That's something I was going to ask, if you bought much of anything in McCarthy or Cordova.*

Wilson: *No. Well, this of course is secondhand (?).*

Kain: *But you didn't buy food or clothing in Cordova or in McCarthy either one?*

Wilson: *No. We didn't get there, you know, to buy it. McCarthy was just far enough away so that it wasn't handy for us to go. It was just too far.*

Kain: *I've gotten the impression that McCarthy was not a place that (?).*

House: *No, no.*

Wilson: *We went on the Fourth of July. Some friends would take us and there would be races for all the kids. And when we were, oh, 13 or 14 we came home with most of the prizes.*

Kain: *I see.*

House: [It was great] *because we really, Jane and I, never had any money. But to come home with this money.* [Harold Glad, who took us to McCarthy], *was so pleased. Jane had a dollar more than I did and we were walking up the hill and he said, "well, we can't have that", so he gave me a dollar* [so we would have the same amount]. *I remember I was so proud of you and I was pleased to come up with a dollar* [to make it even.]

Wilson: *We walked in - and seven dollars then was a fortune.*

Kain: *Yes. So you, for the most part, didn't go to Cordova or McCarthy?*

House: *No.* [Inger Jensen] *went to McCarthy because her mother was* [Danish and there were Scandinavians in McCarthy.]

Kain: *One other thing about the housing. I was talking to you earlier and Jane said something about a staff* [house] *which had been torn down. How was that set up? Was it for single employees?*

Wilson: *For single women like the nurses. There were three nurses for the hospital, one at a time. One on duty for eight hours and then the other one and then the other one. They would stay there, and the secretary to the superintendent, a women secretary. She would live there and the teachers when they were here, the two teachers. So that would make six women and they had the upper floor. And that was for the women and then the first floor was for the - well, the first - where the rooms were, the other floor, was for the men, the*

Front, left to right: Jean Scobie, Mrs. Gillespie, and Mrs. Hill and Alice (seated). Nurse standing at far right is unknown. Back row, left to right: Doctor Hill and Doctor Gillespie.

lower floor. And that would be men that worked in the office that were - like an engineer, a mining engineer and...

Kain: *As opposed to the laborers in the mill that lived in the bunkhouse.*

Wilson: *Yes. That lived in the bunkhouse. And they lived in the staff house. So that was very nice for them. the lower floor had a sitting room sort of and they could meet there and socialize there.*

Kain: *Several people have mentioned having met a spouse here or their parents met here or whatever.*

House: *They did. Yes.*

Kain: *What happened when two people who had single accommodations, got married and all the houses were full? Where did these people live?*

House: *There weren't too many.* [Sometimes there] *was a house available. And there was always the annex above the hospital. There was a sort of apartment arrangement and they used it mostly for, not really traveling salesmen, but visitors that would come in and stay a week. The dentist would come and stay a week and he'd live at the annex, or* [visiting] *engineers, etc.*

Kain: *I see, and was* [the lodge] *here also used as a visitor apartment building as well?*

House: *No, families lived there.*

Wilson: *Well, just couples, no children. I don't think children ever lived there. Did they?*

House: *I don't know, unless they were just tiny babies.*

Kain: *So couples, until they had children that needed space.*

Wilson: *Everybody kept an eye on the houses and if they wanted one - this was more or less a holding spot - then if some place came up they* [took it].

Kain: *I see. You were talking about the nurses living upstairs. There were three nurses on the staff. How many doctors?*

Wilson: *One doctor.*

Kain: *Just one doctor.*

Wilson: *And he would every once in a while go up to the mine. Go up in a bucket to them and take care of any little things that might be bothering any of the miners, you see, so they wouldn't have to come down all the time. They could (?) they could keep working and might have questions, you know.*

Kain: *He did all kinds of surgery as well?*

House: *Yes, everything.*

Kain: *So, nobody was shipped out of here for medical treatment for the most part?*

Wilson: *No, not shipped out. They might go out, like my mother had a goiter operation and she had a cousin in Seattle that was a doctor. You couldn't go to the hospital for ten days in those days, you know. You did everything in your home. We were too little then and my dad had to work and he worked six days* [and take] *his turn to be in the office* [on Sunday morning]. *So, we went out so my grandmother could take care of us.*

Kain: *So, if anyone went out for medical treatment, it was by choice.*

Wilson: *Yes. If we'd been older we could have stayed in our home.*

House: *Jane broke her elbow and broke her wrist, being such an active one - they did well by her.*

Wilson: *They certainly did.*

Kain: *Another thing I found out today that I was surprised at, that there was a quarantine building.*

House: *The detention center, yes.*

Kain: *I wasn't aware of that. And they would quarantine people if they had something and would probably spread it around?*

Wilson: *During an epidemic, you see.*

Kain: *I've heard mention of flu, did they do it with chicken pox or smallpox or...*

House: *We never had anything like that.*

Wilson: *We brought chicken pox in. We didn't even know we were going to have them.*

House: *Not chicken pox.*

Wilson: *I had the mumps when we came back from down below, from Seattle, and I had it on one side. I got it on the other side when our son was in kindergarten and I was sick too. Did we have the chicken pox after we came back?*

House: *I thought we brought the chicken pox back and you got the mumps later.*

Wilson: *I don't know where I got the mumps, maybe that's right then.*

House: *The first time we came, Mother brought us and we were tiny, I was a year and we brought whooping cough and then the next time we came back after Mother's goiter operation, we were only out when we were small, we brought the chicken pox because Jane broke out with a spot on her back on the boat and the man, whoever Mother talked to, said just keep her clothes on and don't say anything or you will be put off at the next port. So we made it home. Well, then I got it.*

Wilson: *Then Mother kept us home and none of the other kids got it.*

House: *Nobody got it.*

Wilson: *We didn't spread it. But it shows you that we lived a life where we weren't exposed* [to childhood diseases] *at any time.*

Kain: *I'm wondering, if things like your chicken pox and mumps, since*

Deb Vickery.

they are so much worse to get it when you're older, I would think that some of the parents would want to expose their children.

Wilson: *Well, they didn't know it was so much worse when they were older. We got the measles when we were older and I was in college. My last week and, oh, I missed all the tests and Debbie happened to be going that year. I was a sophomore and Debbie was a freshman. She spent one year there and then she went to Western and she had to go and tell all my teachers why I missed the tests, you know. Some of them I didn't need to take but some of them the grade depended a lot on that test and then I took the test* [in the fall] *and I passed.*

House: *Well, then I went up to Western Washington and I got the other kind of measles. It was just one of those things, wherever we went if there was anything going - we had it all, but a little late.*

Kain: *When you did have to go to the hospital, like you were telling me*

you split your head open, did your parents have to pay for that or was that included in with the job?

Wilson: *I don't think they ever had to pay.*

Kain: *Free medical.*

Wilson: *Yes.*

Kain: *What about injuries among the miners, do you remember?*

Wilson: *They were taken care of.*

Kain: *Were there a lot of injuries?*

House: *There was somebody it seems to me in the hospital most of the time.*

Wilson: *There was always somebody in there.*

House: *They would come in from McCarthy and people would come in all along the railroad line because the Kennecott hospital furnished help for everyone.*

Kain: *It was the only one in the area?*

House: *Yes. And I don't know, they might have paid a token.*

Kain: *So it served Kennecott and the...*

Wilson and House: *Yes, yes.*

Kain: *What about Cordova?*

House: *No, they had their own.*

Wilson: *The ministers would get free transportation on the railroad so there were services every three months or so. It was one of the highlights because it was one of the things the train brought in.*

Kain: *The train again being the focal point of the camp.*

Wilson: *Yes. It was the lifeline.*

Kain: *But the only source of medical help was the hospital.*

Wilson: *Yes. The hospital. They had a very good doctor.*

Kain: *And it served a large area.*

Wilson: *Um humm.*

Kain: *What about a dentist? Was there a dentist?*

Wilson: *Yes. He would come every three months or something and stay for a week or ten days or something. Maybe for two weeks. And people that had toothaches or something or had a problem - they realized they had a problem, would go to the dentist or if they thought they needed to have a check. Yeh, just a check, you know. And that dentist office is down under the hospital around near where the private mess for the staff people could have their meals in the private mess. And along that line, there was a (?) off room and the dentist had his equipment, the chair and all of (?).*

Kain: *And you didn't pay for that either, the company brought him in?*

Wilson: *I don't know. My dad might have had to pay for when they had some work done, but it wasn't that much. I can't remember if Daddy paid.*

Kain: *So, were there any epidemics? You guys had mentioned the flu.*

House: *Well, that was at the end of the second world war they had that.*

Wilson: *First world war.*

House: *First world war, yes. They had that terrible flu and that's when they built the detention center.*

Wilson: *Otherwise, we didn't have anything going around at Kennecott. We never talked about it, you know.* [Inger] *had gotten real sick with something.*

House: *She had pneumonia.*

Wilson: *Is that it?*

House: *Yes.* [She] *was there in the hospital for quite a while. And then the doctor advised Mrs. Jensen to take her out in the summer to California or some place where it's warm, so she could get lots of sun.*

Wilson: *And I think part of the winter she was there too, to keep her away from the cold weather and she did, oh, several months. Six months or so.*

House: *We were talking - she was coming in on the train and Jane and I were talking about we weren't gonna ask her what it was like. If she* [wanted to talk], *we just weren't going to ask. We were going to be real quiet. She didn't want to talk about it. We kept asking her.*

Wilson: *She didn't care a thing about outside, she was back.* (Inaudible).

Kain: *So, you were only out the one time, when your mother went out for surgery, in the whole time you were here, you only left* [once]*?*

House: *Yes, and when we were small and* [had gone Outside] *I had got the flu when we were there and Mother thought I had lost my hearing. I can remember being very ill. But I survived.*

Kain: *I'm glad you did.*

House: *So am I.*

Kain: *Now, your father - you said he worked sometimes six and a half days a week.*

Wilson: *Yes, yes.*

Kain: *The half day he didn't work at the office, what did he do?*

House: *Well, when he wasn't working, he was working in the garden at home in the summer time. We had our own garden.*

Kain: *So you had your own vegetable garden.*

House: *And when we lived in one of the three houses, we had chickens. He and Mr. Jensen,* [Inger's] *father, built a chicken house over the steam pipe, you know, that kept the cold water from freezing. They built the chicken house over it to give the chickens some heat from the hot water in the pipe and so we had fresh eggs. And that was really nice.*

Kain: *When he wasn't working there, he spent a lot of time doing things around the house.*

Wilson: *Around the house and around the yard.*

Kain: *What about your mother now, was she strictly a homemaker?*

Wilson: *She had to do everything herself, you know. We didn't have a carpet sweeper. She had to sweep the floor (?) and wash and iron.*

Kain: *But she held no other job outside the home.*

Wilson: *No, no. I don't think any of the wives did, no, no. I was talking to (?) and they were wondering if living here for so much of our lives that we missed something, were there things that we didn't have that everybody else had and I can't think of any. And as far as meals and so on, I think - when you talk about what Mother did, she varied the food and she saw to it that we had experience with everything so when we went out some place we would know.*

House: *Yes, what was expected.*

Wilson: *And we learned to cook. I used to make Spanish cake and Debbie and Mother made doughnuts and cinnamon rolls and I would wax the floor or wash the windows, the things I liked doing better.*

Wilson: *So it worked out just fine.*

Kain: *Do you remember your father coming home with any problems? I know at one point there was a walkout here in the mine. Do you remember any labor problems or complaints?*

Wilson: *I don't remember any.*

House: *Mother and Daddy never discussed the job...*

Kain: *In front of you.*

Wilson: *No, no.*

House: *And Jane and I didn't know.*

Kain: *About the workings of the mine and camp?*

House: *Not the problems.*

Wilson: *Not the problems. The good things we heard, if something good happened.*

House: *We visited the mines before we left.*

Kain: *Oh, you did?*

House: *We walked up and went through the tunnels and down the* [incline on the car to Jumbo, Bonanza, and Erie].

Kain: *You got over to* [Erie] *too?*

House: *Yes, we got to* [Erie] *too.*

Kain: *Just the two of you or was there a whole group of people?*

Wilson: *We went with another couple. A couple* [that were our neighbors], *took us as his wife wanted to see the mines. And we were* [old enough and good hikers] *then so they took us.*

Wilson: [Navarre Konnerup] *was going to leave that fall so they took her too. We didn't leave till the next year. So,* [Navarre went too].

House: *Our greatest disappointment was that we didn't ride the bucket.*

Kain: *You had to walk up there.*

House: *Yes.*

House: *But it really came round in a circle though when we could* [cross the river on the tram].

Kain: *Yes, after all these years you finally got to ride the tram, the next best thing to the bucket.*

Wilson: *Sure.*

Kain: *You've both been in school here. One room schoolhouse?*

Wilson: *Yes.*

Kain: *Did you have a number of teachers over time, or was it just one?*

Wilson: *Often it would be a new teacher every year. They'd go out and stay for* [the summer], *they'd come and stay for a year and then leave. But Miss* [Clark] *stayed what, two years?*

House: *Did she? I didn't think she stayed.*

Wilson: *She stayed over one summer and didn't go out because...*

House: *I'd forgotten that.*

Wilson: *And Ruth Danielson, she stayed.*

House: (Inaudible).

Wilson: *Yes, she was one that stayed, yes. But often they would just come and go.*

Kain: *My grandmother could only teach when she was single. Was that true here?*

Wilson: *Yes, that was true.*

Kain: *When a teacher married then she didn't teach.*

Wilson: *She didn't teach. But one - we needed another teacher the second half of the year when I was in the seventh grade - we were all in one room. Well, it got to be too much. They had so many children that moved in and it just made too many for her. So we needed another teacher the last part of the year and Mrs. [Olson] took over. So we had her for half a year and her husband worked here. But that was an emergency. It would be hard to get a teacher in the middle of the year and so she took over.*

House: *Our mother taught us, so that we could stay an extra year. She taught you...*

Wilson: *...geometry in my second year.*

House: *And when I was in my first year of high school here, she taught me Latin and* [algebra].

Wilson: (Inaudible).

House: *Yes.*

Wilson: *But we were fortunate, otherwise, we would have had to leave a year early or even two years.*

Kain: *Did the school go up to the eighth grade or...*

Wilson: *Yes. And for a while you could get two years of high school and that's what we stuck with.*

Kain: *Two years of high school, meaning ninth and tenth?*

Wilson: *Yes.*

Kain: *So you didn't have to leave, most of the time, until after tenth grade?*

Wilson: *I think families were urged to, because it was hard to get teachers that would teach that high. But they were willing, the ones...*

House: *Especially when Mother could help us.*

Wilson: *And Mother helped us at home.*

Kain: *Was the teacher employed by Kennecott?*

Wilson: *Yes. On the stairway there is a notice about hiring teachers.*

Kain: *When you did leave, were you well prepared? You were worried about being to class on time. You had a good enough background to...*

Wilson: *We fit in academically with no problem.* [The male teacher, Jim Busey was] *real sweet, very well educated.*

Kain: *I think Logan is going to interview him.*

Wilson: *Yes, yes.*

Kain: *What about adult education? Were there any...*

Wilson: *The teachers taught the English language and science. Men would*

Jerine Osborne, George Flowers (the lone African-American associated with Kennecott), Richard Osborne, and Inger Jensen. Flowers plays guitar at his Long Lake cabin.

"...we went to Long Lake and lived in a little cabin and fished in the (creek). [George Flowers] cooked fish like no one else. He put it all in the frying pan and cooked it and then turned it all over like it was one big fish cake. It was marvelous, you could eat the whole thing."

DEBORAH VICKERY HOUSE

come and they'd have night classes. The teachers enjoyed it. The men worked so hard and were so appreciative and they learned so quickly and then they became American citizens while they were here.

Kain: *Would there have been a group of aliens or...*

House: *I think there would be three or four, maybe. And the next winter it would be just during school time and I don't know how many weeks the course was but maybe as long as they needed, or whatever. And I'm sure the teachers got paid for it but I doubt if (?) was offered to the men.*

Kain: *Did the teacher ever go to the mines and do that same thing?*

House: *No. They weren't allowed to ride the buckets.*

[Inaudible].

Kain: *So adult education, the English language, was that the only one?*

Wilson: *I think so* (inaudible). *Mostly they wanted the English language so they could become citizens.*

Kain: *Foreign people that wanted to become citizens. So, basically that was only really offered to those working in the mill, those living here.*

Wilson: *Well, the men from the mine would come down, I think.*

Kain: *They'd come down at night?*

Wilson: *If the class was offered two nights a week...*

Kain: *They could do that?*

Wilson: *And then I think they'd come down sometimes for the movies.*

House: *Didn't they have movies up at the mine?*

Wilson: *Yes, but I think they could come down whenever they wanted to.*

Kain: *If they were off their shift, they could...*

Wilson: *They could come down. I think they'd come down to the store. All they had to do was get on the buckets and go back. But I think it broke their time off.*

Kain: *So they had the opportunity to take the adult education class?*

Wilson: *Yes, and that was a long time ago, so that was good.*

Kain: *We've covered some of these topics in other questions.... You mentioned having your own chores to do, everybody pitched in around the house?*

House: *Yes, we had. When we got older.*

Kain: *You helped with the laundry?*

House: *Yes.* (Inaudible).

Kain: *And the shopping?*

Wilson: *Yes, we could. And we learned to make our own beds and, you know, things like that.*

House: *I think all the children helped.*

Deborah Vickery House gave the following additional information which she felt would be of interest:

In talking about our mother, Besse Blanchard Vickery, we didn't mention that she started the library in Kennecott, would hold a meeting, open to all, where new books would be discussed and ordered. She prepared well for those meetings. A week or two beforehand she would order a New York Sunday Times and a Seattle Sunday Times; from them she would take the Book Review section. As a result Kennecott Library had all of the most recent books. Men who worked in the mill as well as those who worked around camp used the library. It was a going concern. To finance the library a fee was asked from those who wanted to borrow books. It worked very well.

When visitors came to Kennecott my father often invited them to dinner. I learned early to watch their faces as they entered our small red and white company house. Their faces always reflected surprise as they stepped into our living room. They didn't expect to see a piano or walls lined with bookcases. On entering the dining room their amazement was complete when they saw a table set with a damask table cloth, sterling silver, and Haviland china. Such beauty as this was unusual in remote spots like Kennecott.

INGER JENSEN RICCI

Interview conducted by Ann Kain
National Park Service
June 21, 1990
Tape #1, Side #1

Kain: *Inger, what year did you move to Kennecott and what age were you?*

Ricci: *I was born there in 1918 at the hospital.*

Kain: *How long did you stay?*

Ricci: *I was there until 1932 and then I went to high school in Seattle for four years and Dad would come down and spend the winters with me and Mother would stay with me. And then I went back until - oh, I was up here about eight months and then went back to business college for a year and then came up and got married in Cordova in '38. And then they called up and needed someone for typing in the office in Kennecott. So they flew me up there in November and I was there through the day before Christmas, to type.*

Kain: *So you grew up there and then went out to school and came back and worked there?*

Ricci: *Yes, I was the only one that did. And we had always talked about this, 'cause we never expected the mine to close and we were all going to come back* [?].

Kain: *How did your parents end up at Kennecott?*

Ricci: *Well, from there they went to Cordova first and then they went to Kodiak. Being a carpenter, he never had any problem getting work.*

Kain: *Your father was the master carpenter?*

Ricci: *Yes, at Kennecott. And then they went to Kodiak and then to Seward where I was living after I left Cordova.*

Kain: *Where did they come to Kennecott from?*

Ricci: *From Denmark.*

Kain: *Straight from Denmark?*

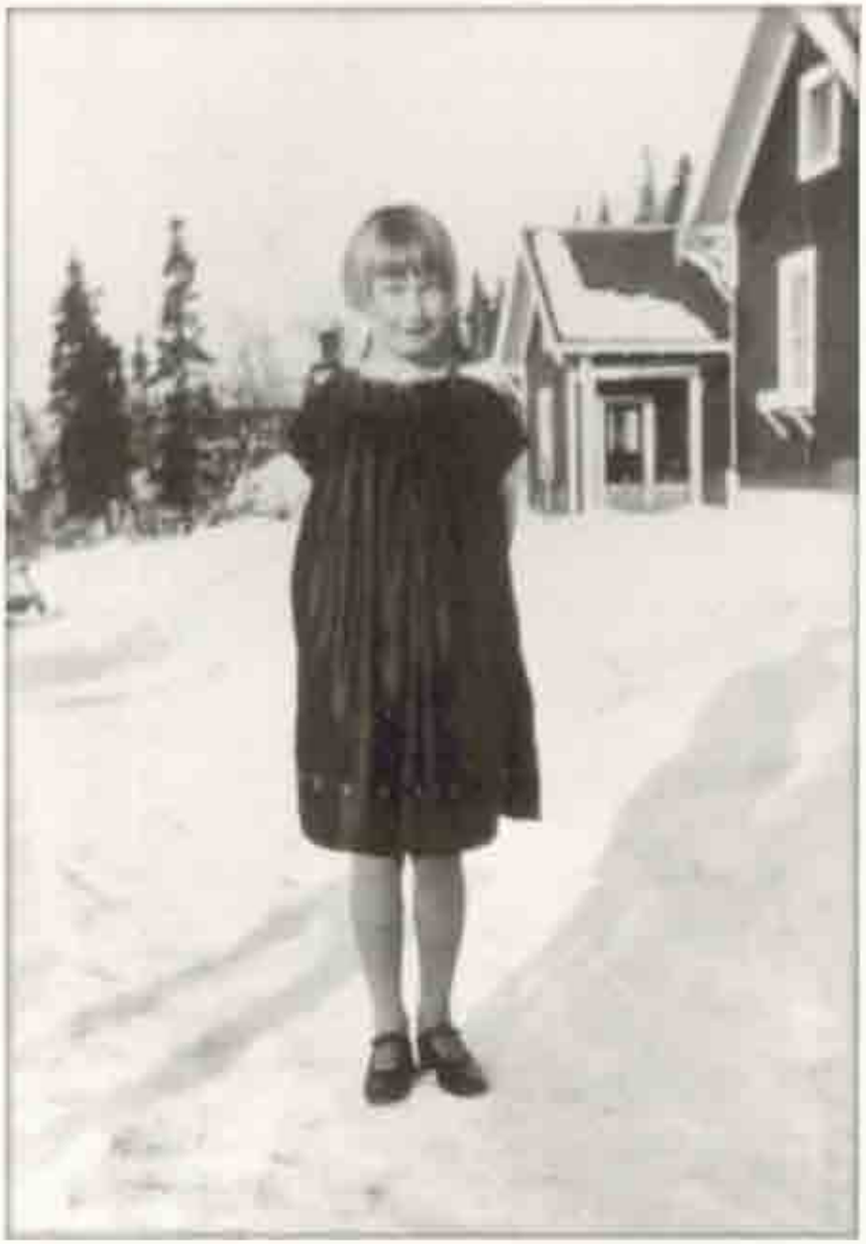
Ricci: *Yes, um humm. Dad first and then Mother a few years later came over.*

Kain: *Was he involved as a carpenter at a mine in Denmark?*

Ricci: *No. He was - I figure he must have been about 21 when he came there* [northwest coast of the U.S.]. *I'm trying to figure out* [?].

Kain: *Why did he decide to go there?*

Ricci: *Well, what he did, he ran away from home and I have no idea how old he was at the time. But he went on a Danish merchant ship and then he jumped ship in Seattle and came to Alaska* [?]. *And I don't know what year it was but he had a picture of the first oil well, which is in Katalla in 1901. But then he also had pictures of when Mother and he got married in 1915 and they were pictures from Chilkat where we were going, close to Katalla, and it says honeymoon cabin,*



Inger Jensen.

Chilkat. So, in between 1901 and '15, I have no idea if he was in Kennecott or Chilkat or Katalla or where.

Kain: *He ran away and came over here - did he run away with your mother? Or did he go back and get her?*

Ricci: *No. He went back and courted her and then in 1915 she came over. And they were first cousins, which back in those days, in Europe at least,* [?] *they married* [?].

Kain: *And they went to Kennecott and there you began a long line of involvement in Kennecott.*

Ricci: *Yes.*

Kain: *You said you had left and gone out to school and come back and so forth. Did your parents remain in Kennecott the whole time you were out?*

Ricci: *No, Mother was with me and Dad came down in the winters.*

Kain: *When did he actually leave Kennecott and stop working?*

Ricci: *It was in the fall of '38. Because when they called me - I hadn't been married very long and I didn't want to go up then, but Mother had broken her arm and I was using that as my excuse. I had to stay with Mother, cause she was in Cordova then. So Dad says, no, I'll quit and I'll come down there and take care of her and you go up, you go type. So that's when I came.*

Kain: *Then you were there until Kennecott closed?*

Ricci: *Yes, the day before Christmas.*

Kain: *That must have been interesting.*

Ricci: *Yes, that was interesting.*

Kain: *When you were living in Cordova and you came up, you just came up on the train?*

Ricci: *No, that was winter. They flew me in.*

Kain: *The train wasn't running?*

Ricci: *Well no, it had shut down the eleventh of November. Which just happened to be my birthday, which I thought was kind of interesting.*

Kain: *Where did you live when you lived at Kennecott as a family?*

Ricci: *We lived up on the hill where the three houses are that they now call Silk Stocking Row. I had never heard that designation until recent years.*

Kain: *What did they call it then?*

Ricci: *The upper row, yes, houses on the hill.*

Kain: *I wondered about the Silk Stocking designation, when it was...*

Ricci: *Yes, I don't know when that came up.*

Kain: *I've seen it on maps.*

Ricci: *Yes, and you see it on the layout of the Great Alaska Kennicott Mine Company, the Silk Stocking* [?]. *They must have been the ones to name it so they could designate where it was.*

Kain: *And of those three - none of those have indoor plumbing?*

Ricci: *No. No indoor plumbing. There was running water in those, but no plumbing.*

Kain: *And heat?*

Ricci: *We used the stoves.*

Kain: *So there was no heat in those houses either?*

Ricci: *No.*

Kain: *You had wood stoves for heating as well as for cooking?*

Ricci: *Right.*

Kain: *I believe there are sheds out behind those.*

Ricci: *Yes, and the outhouses were in the sheds. At least ours was. I don't know - I think that all three were, yes.*

Kain: *I think so. What was the bigger section of the shed for?*

Ricci: *Well, for storage or for wood.*

Kain: *What were some of your chores around the household?*

Ricci: *Oh, well, being such a tomboy, I wanted everything outdoors. I kind of helped*

Dad with the wood a lot. You know, cutting all the wood for winter. Of course, Mother insisted that I do help in the house. I didn't like that part very much. I'd much rather be outdoors.

Kain: *But you did help with the cooking and cleaning when that was required?*

Ricci: *Yes.*

Kain: *You wanted to stick to outside chores. You were an only child?*

Ricci: *Yes. I had a brother who was a year older than I. And we went to Denmark when I was four and he contacted what I understand was tuberculosis of the throat. Now I'm not sure of that, but he passed away before we came back and we were only there three months. So it went very fast.*

Kain: *Yes. Those houses up there have two bedrooms, so you had your own room?*

Ricci: *Yes.*

Kain: *Better than a lot of people had at Kennecott.*

Ricci: *Right, I know that.*

Kain: *All doubled up...*

Ricci: *We had a nice cozy little house.*

Kain: *Did you live in that house the whole time you were there?*

Ricci: *Yes, except the first year that I was born and that was in one that was down below, just above Shaw's, and it's almost falling down.*

Kain: *Down on the lower road past the mill?*

Ricci: *No, no, right - you know where Shaws are?*

Kain: *Oh, yes.*

Ricci: *And the first schoolhouse. Well, it was right up above that.*

Kain: *O.K.*

Ricci: *There were three houses and we had the middle one and it is just about down.*

Kain: *On the same level as the lodge.*

Ingeborg Jensen and Lucille Konnerup at Angle Station.

Ricci: *Yes.*

Kain: *You walk straight out from what is now the lodge?*

Ricci: *Yes.*

Kain: *You had electricity?*

Ricci: *Yes, oh yes.*

Kain: *What about - your dad being a carpenter, what about improvements on the house?*

Ricci: *Well, we didn't have any more improvements than anybody else. He built a lot of those.*

Kain: *He built a lot of the houses?*

Ricci: *Yes. And one of the things up there that we always think is different, he had drawers in the stairway going upstairs. And it was a closet underneath so that was quite, you know, quite the thing* [?] *storage. And all the drawers upstairs were in the walls.*

Kain: *Was it just your house that had the drawers in the stairs?*

Ricci: *No, all those three there. In fact, probably the other four did too.*

Kain: *So it was of his design?*

Ricci: *Yes, that was the last group of houses that he built.*

Kain: *When you bought food, did you get all of your food from the company store?*

Ricci: *Yes. And we used scrip. You came across that, I'm sure.*

Kain: *Scrip, yes.*

Ricci: *We didn't use money hardly at all. We'd take that scrip down to the butcher shop and to the store.*

Kain: *You didn't get any food out of Cordova or McCarthy?*

Ricci: *No. But I read in a couple of places that they got a lot of the fresh stuff from Long Lake. There was a fellow down there that raised horses and had a big garden.*

Kain: *What about clothing?*

Ricci: *They usually used Sears and Roebuck catalog. But they did have a little down there, but not that much. Sears and, you know, Monkey Ward. That was the big thing, when we got our catalogs.*

Kain: *Dreamed about it and...?*

Ricci: *Yes. That was a lot of fun.*

Kain: *Most of the families were able to live in the single family unit?*

Ricci: *Yes.*

Kain: *There were several people that lived in the - what is now the lodge, they were of apartments?*

Ricci: *Yes, those were families too. That's where Eleanor Tjosevig lived.*

Kain: *Were you living up where you did because of - apparently not the size of your family, since you were one of the smaller ones - your father's level of work?*

Ricci: *I really don't think so. I think once those houses were built and this other little house was pretty small and he just put in and asked if he could get one of those.*

Kain: *So whenever it was available, your name basically went on a list and you were in need, you got the next available one?*

Ricci: *That's the way I think it was, because - now, I came up and got married in September and not knowing we were gonna close, we had already put in for the third house on there, and that was where we were going to live.*

Kain: *So it didn't have to do with your status on the work force?*

Ricci: *No, not at all, because my husband was just chasing buckets up there in the mill.*

Kain: *What about the furniture?*

Ricci: *You know, we talked about that and I think the places were furnished, but nobody can really remember if they were furnished. But they must have been. I can't see* [?].

Kain: *From the people I talked to, it seemed the furniture was there when they got there.*

Ricci: *Yes.*

Kain: *And it stayed there when they left.*

Ricci: *That's right.*

Kain: *They thought maybe they rented it.*

Ricci: *I don't know about that.*

Kain: *Or at least it was company owned and you just used it.*

Ricci: *Or it came with the house. The rent, that included it.*

Kain: *What about single people, single men and women? Where did they live?*

Ricci: *Well, they stayed where they - like the doctors and the office workers and such, they lived in the staff house. But if they were just yard workers and so forth, why they lived in the bunkhouse.*

Kain: *But if you were a single female, you lived in the staff house?*

Ricci: *That's right.*

Kain: *On the floor strictly for females?*

Ricci: *Yes, the nurses and the teachers.*

Kain: *The clerical staff as well, the women typists and so forth?*

Ricci: *Yes.*

Kain: *How about health? How were you? Were you healthy when you were growing up?*

Ricci: *No, not really. I had pneumonia and I was there - I found the bill when we were sorting papers - I was there for seventeen and a half days in the hospital and it cost $58.*

Kain: *Fifty-eight dollars. So that answers my next question as to whether you had to pay for health care.*

Ricci: *Yes, someone said that they saw a list of theirs that we paid $2.50 a month for health care. Now, I wouldn't remember that but it's possible that we all did pay a certain amount for what* [?]. *I don't know. And then when I was ten, I was still so sickly that we went to Seattle and had my tonsils out and they told them to take me to a warm climate and we were in California for three months. But*

when I came back I just didn't look like the same person, I had put on so much weight. I was so skinny up until the operation.

Kain: *What about childhood diseases? Did you have any childhood diseases while you were there?*

Ricci: *No, we didn't get them up there because, you know, we were so secluded up there. But when we went back out then I had chicken pox and I had measles.*

Kain: *When you were older?*

Ricci: *Yes, when I went to Seattle.*

Kain: *What was the hospital staff? How many nurses and doctors?*

Ricci: *Oh, I'm not sure. There was never more than one doctor and maybe two to three nurses, I would think. I saw one picture in my book that had two nurses in it.*

Kain: *What about dental?*

Ricci: *Yes, we had a dentist. His office was in the same building as the private mess.*

Inger Jensen rides horseback atop Uncle Axel Hanson.

Kain: *Was he there all the time?*

Ricci: *Yes.*

Kain: *Did he bring his family or was it just him?*

Ricci: *Yes, he had a family.* [?]

Kain: *Do you remember any type of mine accident that happened or mill accident that happened?*

Ricci: *No, I don't. I probably wouldn't have noticed or heard that much about it.*

Kain: *Was the hospital pretty full, you know, on a daily basis?*

Ricci: *I have no idea, being just a kid.*

Kain: *Well, we understand that. You said you had to go to Seattle to have your tonsils taken out, but you could have had them taken out there at Kennecott.*

Ricci: *Yes. Probably could have.*

Kain: *Why did your mom choose to take you out?*

Ricci: *Well, I don't really know why she did it, because Dad was* [?].

Kain: *Was that the only hospital in the area?*

Ricci: *Yes.*

Kain: *No doctor in McCarthy or?*

Ricci: *Not in McCarthy. There was in Cordova.*

Kain: *In Cordova?*

Ricci: *Yes.*

Kain: *Was there a hospital in Cordova?*

Ricci: *Yes.*

Kain: *Kennecott hospital - did it supply medical assistance to the outlying areas, not just company people?*

Ricci: *Yes - anyone in the area.*

Kain: *We were talking about childhood diseases and that kind of pushes me into the school subject. When you were in school, how many children were in your class?*

Ricci: *Well, there was probably 20 in the schoolhouse and there were three of us that started first grade and went - in seventh grade one of them left, but we got one more in eighth grade. As I remember, there were never more than three in a class at any time.*

Kain: *At any time?*

Ricci: *Yes.*

Kain: *But 20 pretty much all the time?*

Ricci: *Yes, with the two rooms. One up to the sixth grade and - first to fifth and then sixth, seventh and eighth in the other. A big room and a little room.*

Kain: *So there must have been two teachers?*

Ricci: *Yes.*

Kain: *Female teachers and were they single?*

Ricci: *Yes, at least for the moment. It didn't last too long if they were single, however.*

Kain: *The same thing with the nurses?*

Ricci: *Yes.*

Kain: *Now, when they married, did they continue teaching?*

Ricci: *No, they weren't supposed to teach. There was one exception, however, that I know of. But that was in latter years. And so they'd have to get another teacher in the middle of the year if they were married in the middle of the year. But I only remember that once.*

Kain: *What about the nurses, could they continue to nurse?*

Ricci: *No, they had to quit.*

Kain: *What about women clerical staff, if they married?*

Ricci: *I don't think they could work there either, because I remember Nell McCann - she was one of those that had a lot of the addresses for the reunion - she lived in the apartment house.*

Kain: *So, if you were a married woman you could not hold down a job?*

Ricci: *Right.*

Kain: *That's interesting. I hadn't run across that information yet - I mean, I knew teachers didn't teach if they were married but I didn't realize that was true of other professions. Back to the school. You all had to attend school?*

Ricci: *Oh, yes, unless there was no school then we didn't have to go.*

Kain: *Do you remember any particular kids that were bullies or that were problems in the school at all?*

Ricci: *I remember one boy who was kind of a problem, but maybe it was just because he and I didn't get along. I don't really know if he was a problem at school.*

Kain: *Do you think that it was a fairly typical school, other than the fact that it was a smaller school than most? What about adult education, classes for miners and mill workers?*

Ricci: *As I remember it, when my aunt came over from Denmark, I wasn't very old, and they had night school here for those who wanted to become citizens. Dad might have gone there too, because after all, he did jump ship in Seattle and* [?] *and he may have done the same thing. But she went to that night school and became a citizen.*

Kain: *What about English as a foreign language?*

Ricci: *Yes, I suppose they must have had English - at that night school they must have had a* [?].

Kain: *I was wondering, because there seemed to be a lot of people from different ethnic backgrounds that came up to Kennecott from Europe. Do you think there was a particularly large group of one particular ethnic background?*

Ricci: *Well, it seems to me that there were more Scandinavians and Germans than I remember of any others. But there were others.*

Kain: *Do you have any idea why a lot of Scandinavians would have been in mining?*

Ricci: *Well, in the first place, the climate was a lot like Norway. Of course, Mother was*

so homesick because it's so flat in Denmark and here she was surrounded with these mountains and she said she was so hemmed in and no ocean. It was like, you know.

Kain: *You think maybe the climate was a draw for a lot of those people?*

Ricci: *Yes, I think so.*

Kain: *Were there many Orientals? In a lot of other mining towns in the Lower 48 that I'm familiar with, there were a lot of Oriental workers.*

Ricci: *Yes, we did have some up here. They had the laundry, which I guess was Japanese, because my aunt worked there. And I think they were Japanese that were cooking in the private mess until they got someone else. Mildred Erickson, her uncle, cooked there for a while.*

Kain: *What about miners being Oriental, do you know?*

Ricci: *I don't think there were very many up there. I don't know what I did with that sheet. I ran across a sheet that had all the nationalities in 1921 that were working up there. It was really interesting how many of each kind there were.*

Kain: *You remember mostly the Oriental being involved in domestic type of thing - the laundry, the cleaning, the cooking.*

Ricci: *They may have had - those that were cleaning at the bunkhouse could have been too.*

Kain: *You had mentioned Japanese cooking and you mentioned a - what do you call it, a general mess or a...*

Ricci: *A private mess, for those who lived in the staff house.*

Kain: *A private mess.*

Ricci: *The people that lived in the staff house and the - like the teachers and the nurses and so forth, all* [?].

Kain: *Was that in the staff house or was it in a separate...?*

Ricci: *That was in the building next to the hospital - on the right side of the hospital.*

Kain: *Front of one bunkhouse?*

Ricci: *Yes, that's the one.*

Kain: *As I recall, it had kind of a common sitting room in the front of it.*

Ricci: *Yes.*

Kain: *The private mess was back behind it. Was anybody else living in that building?*

Ricci: *That was the same building that had the library and the dentist office. And at one time I think the creamery, where they put the milk in the bottles. It was either in that building or in the bunkhouse in the back of that building.*

Kain: *It was a creamery there then?*

Ricci: *I guess that's what you'd call it. All they did was bring the milk up there and put it in bottles.*

Kain: *They'd store it a little while?*

Ricci: *Yes. Well, until they could take it around to people, you know,* [?].

Kain: *Going back to ethnic groups and the working - your father being the master carpenter - did he have any problems that you're aware of as far as labor?*

Ricci: *I wasn't aware of any. I remember that he had a Norwegian that worked for him* (inaudible). *That's the only one that I actually remember working for Dad.*

Kain: *You don't remember any labor problems?*

Ricci: *Well, there probably were but the kids, they don't notice those things.*

Kain: *He didn't come home and talk about it?*

Ricci: *Well, if he did, it was way over my head.*

Kain: *Now, your mother - did she, being a married woman she wasn't allowed to actually work, did she do any other things within the town, other than housewife type things?*

Ricci: *Well, when she first came, apparently they were up at Angle Station, which is one of the stations on the way up to the mine and she did some cooking up there. And she had chickens, because I*

Left to right: Louis Vic, Mrs. Johnson, Mrs. Jensen, and Inger Jensen.

can picture her feeding the chickens up there. And she used to go down to town on her skis - both Dad and Mother skied - and then ride the tram back up. And for a long time she was the only woman that ever rode that. But Frank Morris said after, later years, that others did that.

Kain: *But it was a long time coming to allow women to ride the tram cars?*

Ricci: *Yes. But they weren't gonna let her have to ski back up there.*

Kain: *That would be kind of difficult. You mentioned that you went out to Seattle for surgery and then you went to Denmark. Do you remember any other travelling that you did?*

Ricci: *No, that's it.*

Kain: *Those were for specific reasons.*

Ricci: *Yes.*

Kain: *Seattle for surgery and...*

Ricci: *Denmark for family, to visit them.*

Kain: *Did you only go to Denmark the one time?*

Ricci: *Yes.*

Kain: *Did you go out on family picnics and things like that?*

Ricci: *Oh, yes. We used to go down to Long Lake and to Strelna also. Strelna had real nice cabins to rent and he had horses to ride and that was fun.*

Kain: *How did you get there?*

Ricci: *Well, we either went on the train or by the Speeder. I don't know if you have heard people mention the Speeder.*

Kain: *Yes.*

Ricci: *That's usually the way we went. And then occasionally, I had some good friends in Cordova and I used to go down and spend two weeks in the summer with them and they let me ride the caboose to go down there and I loved that. Sit up high and look out the window.*

Kain: *So you went out and stayed in Cordova friends. Your parents didn't go along?*

Ricci: *No, no. Our friends in Cordova, they had two little girls.*

Kain: *They'd bring you down to play.*

Ricci: *Yes, and they were from Denmark. They were my parents' good friends.*

Kain: *Oh, I see. We were talking about your mother and you helping around the house. Did you have a garden?*

Ricci: *Yes, Dad had the garden and I did help in the garden some too.*

Kain: *That was outside and you liked being outside.*

Ricci: *Yes. He was a great gardener. He had a root house where we kept the vegetables all winter.*

Kain: *So some of the vegetables were kept?*

Ricci: *Oh, yes, the potatoes and cabbages and carrots.*

Kain: *It was a pretty good size garden to grow potatoes and...*

Ricci: *Oh, yes. And he also had chickens and rabbits. They built the chicken house over the steam line so there was plenty of heat there.*

Kain: *It's still there.*

Ricci: *Yes.*

Kain: *The building is still there.*

Ricci: *So is the rabbit hutch.*

Kain: *The chicken wire is still on them.*

Ricci: *And Deb and Jane Vickery's father was involved in that too, in the chickens.*

Kain: [Inaudible.]

Ricci: *Yes. That's when they lived in the third house. Then they moved over to the last one of the four houses, so they were a little further away. But he was a great gardener too.*

Kain: *What about religious services?*

Ricci: *We had an itinerant minister that came by, maybe only once a month. One of them was situated in Cordova and the*

other one was, apparently, over out of Seward, I think. 'Cause later on he became the Alaska Railroad minister and would go up and down the railroad and hold services.

Kain: *Did you have any religious services when he wasn't there?*

Ricci: *We had Sunday school and some of the mothers got together and had Sunday school. There would be a pretty good turnout in the schoolhouse.*

Kain: *So it was on Sundays when the minister wasn't there.*

Ricci: *Yes, that's right.*

Kain: *Well, you were there probably longer than most.*

Ricci: *Yes.*

Kain: *You consider Kennecott your home?*

Ricci: *Oh, definitely.*

Kain: *You felt your family* [?].

Ricci: *Um humm.*

Kain: *The social life. Did the families socialize with any of the single people working there?*

Ricci: *Oh, yes. They had the community dances down in the community hall a lot. In fact, it was almost every Saturday. And when they had their dances at the staff house it was a little different, because everybody wasn't invited to that.*

Kain: *But the ones down at the community hall were for the whole camp - now, did that include the miners up in the mines?*

Ricci: *If they wanted, but they never came down for that. If they came down, they went to McCarthy.*

Kain: *They just came down and grabbed the train and went to McCarthy and then just came back through?*

Ricci: *Yes. There was also a taxi service out of McCarthy.*

Kain: *The people that you knew and did things with - were they people who worked at the mill, and lived right there in that vicinity where you were living, on*

a lower level of the hill? Did you frequently have the single people over for dinner?

Ricci: *Oh, yes.*

Kain: *What about other families?*

Ricci: *Yes.*

Kain: *Did the families go back and forth for dinner?*

Ricci: *Yes, um humm.*

Kain: *What about other social activities?*

Ricci: *Well, we used to play a lot of cards and we'd visit back and forth when we went to school. And then, of course, we had the library and Mother used to be involved in that and she would be down at the library taking care of it. And I kind of inherited it after I got bigger.* [?]

Kain: *You helped with the library when you were a little older, checking out the books there?*

Ricci: *They had a pretty good selection up there.*

Kain: *Did they?*

Ricci: *And when they closed it, why, they kind of divided them up. I still have a few of the books* [?].

Kain: *It will be interesting to hang on to them and see what happens. Did you have a lot of children's books?*

Ricci: *They had a pretty good, yes, well I don't think the public library had too many children's books, but the school had a pretty good school library.*

Kain: *What happened to all those books?*

Ricci: *I imagine that they were divided up or* [?].

Kain: *What other kind of socializing - you mentioned the dance. How often did they have a dance?*

Ricci: *Well, sometimes - as I say, in the winter they probably had it every week. Or maybe not that often, but I know that everybody came and the children came and danced and then afterwards they had coffee and cake. I can always remember all those delicious cakes that*

the women brought. Then they also had some basketball games down there. And then in summer, they had baseball games, McCarthy versus Kennecott, or the miners had a team also and they would come down, especially on the Fourth of July and play baseball. And they practiced a lot and in the evenings in summer we'd go down there and watch them practice.

Kain: *Social gatherings, like those dances, it was for the whole family or just the adults?*

Ricci: *Really more, including the whole family.*

Kain: *Everybody was invited?*

Ricci: *Yes.*

Kain: *You mentioned the baseball games and playing against McCarthy. How did the people in Kennecott see McCarthy?*

Ricci: *Well, they didn't let their children go down there alone. They thought it was sort of an evil town, but there were a lot of good families that lived down there besides the line. And all the bars are mostly down there too.*

Kain: *There was no alcohol allowed at Kennecott?*

Ricci: *No.*

Kain: *None bought or sold?*

Ricci: *Not supposed to be. There were home brews in places. And currant wine - my dad made wonderful currant wine.*

Tape #1
Side #2

Kain: *Did you go to McCarthy very often?*

Ricci: *Not too often. In the summer we would hike down there. Our mothers would usually go with us. In McCarthy we'd go in the drugstore and get ice cream cones, whereas you can't do that in Kennecott, so that was our treat to go down there. And then we'd walk back again, so it was a good hike.*

Kain: *You were about ready for another ice cream cone when you got back to Kennecott. What did the people, other than running the bars in McCarthy, what did they do?*

Baby Ole Jensen.

Ricci: *Well, of course, there was O'Neill's store, which was an all around store, just like Watsjold's store was.*

Kain: *So Watsjold's ran a store there as well.*

Ricci: *Yes.*

Kain: *There were a couple of people running stores.*

Ricci: *Yes. And there was the drugstore before that burned down and the ice cream parlor. I think there was a barbershop. And then of course, where the lodge is in McCarthy, Hubricks lived there and he was a photographer. And then the dormitory across the way belonged to who we called Ma Johnson and she took in boarders.*

Kain: *McCarthy was a sizable town then?*

Ricci: *Yes, yes, it was.*

Kain: *Did it pretty much fold when Kennecott closed up?*

Ricci: *Yes. But there were more people that stayed there. In Kennecott there was no one except one family who stayed as caretakers, a German family.*

Kain: *How long did they stay?*

Ricci: *I think a couple of years. They were good friends of Mother and Dad. But then after that, there was no one watching* [?].

Kain: *Why did they leave them there - was there a possibility of coming back in and reopening?*

Ricci: *Yes. 'Cause we all thought that we would reopen.*

Kain: *Then after a few years they decided that wasn't going to happen?*

Ricci: *Yes.*

Kain: *And they sold it.*

Ricci: *Yes, and they sold a lot of the buildings.*

Kain: *Did they sell the buildings soon after closing?*

Ricci: *No. I don't remember when the Great Kennicott Land Company opened, but it was owned by several different people around here. I imagine* [inaudible].

Kain: *So they formed a company and bought the buildings from the Kennecott Copper Corporation?*

Ricci: *Apparently. And then there was a group that had tried mining and that's when they took down the superintendent's house and the manager's house and the staff house, because they were mining on the side there.*

Kain: *Which is now in the creek. The creek was coming right into the office as well.*

Ricci: *Right.*

Kain: *And that was?*

Ricci: *I'm not sure what year it was. It's a shame that those buildings - those would have been nice buildings, especially the superintendent's and manager's houses.*

Kain: *I would imagine. They just tore those down.*

Ricci: *As I read in that "Ghosts of Kennecott" and didn't realize that Steven Birch - it says that he had that superintendent's house built as his honeymoon cottage* [inaudible].

Kain: *So when Kennecott closed, that pretty much took care of McCarthy, but a few people remained there. You don't have any idea how long Kennecott was left just sitting there with nobody taking care of it and still being owned by Kennecott Copper Corporation.*

Ricci: *No, I don't remember just how long it was.*

Kain: *And you left because it was closing.*

Ricci: *Oh, yes.*

Kain: *Did your father retire - then you left and went to Seward?*

Ricci: *Yes, after - we lived in Cordova one winter and then went to Seward because my husband had gone to high school in Seward and knew a lot of people.*

Kain: *Did your father retire and go there with you?*

Ricci: *No, he went to Kodiak. Did some work in construction there [?].*

Kain: *Did you work when you went to Seward?*

Ricci: *No, I was in the family way and after the children started school - we [my husband and I] had a grocery store by then and I was working in the grocery store part time.*

Kain: *He was running the grocery store?*

Ricci: *Yes. And meat market.*

Kain: *When did you come to Anchorage and how long have you been here?*

Ricci: *About 22 years.*

Kain: *That's quite a while. One thing we briefly talked about before we began the tape was socialization once you left Kennecott. You said you left there and went to school in Seattle, going from a school of 20 kids to a building of 2,500. What kind of problems did you find there with that?*

Ricci: *Well, I was just so shy that I was afraid to do anything except the very essentials. Like I would have loved to play basketball and that sort of thing, but I was to shy to enter into those things. After the first year, I did. When I walked to school, if I saw someone coming along the street, I'd cross the street so I didn't have to pass him. It was really difficult.*

Kain: *Yes, I bet. Did you make any friends in that first year?*

Ricci: *Oh, yes, definitely.*

Kain: *You did have a few people that you knew?*

Ricci: *Just sat around in the home room, you know. Oh, yes. There were two of them. I was quite tall at that time, not now but at that time, and there were two other girls that were a little taller than I am they both played basketball, so I got involved with them. Also, children from Kennecott who left before me all went to the same high school, so there was moral support.*

Kain: *Did you play any other sports other than basketball?*

Ricci: *We played hockey in the summer, but I was all for ice hockey and this, of course, was field hockey. It wasn't the same. When I went back for my fiftieth high school reunion, one of those two tall girls was there, so I got to see her.*

Kain: *When you got out of high school then, you went on to...?*

Ricci: *Business college, also in Seattle, but I went home in June and back in February.*

Kain: *To business college?*

Ricci: *Yes.*

Kain: *That was also in Seattle?*

Ricci: *Yes.*

Kain: *And you were there a year, two years?*

Ricci: *A year, then worked till September in Seattle.*

Kain: *And then you came back up to Alaska.*

Ricci: *Yes.*

Kain: *When you left here to go to school, did you ever come back and visit during that time you were outside in school?*

Ricci: *No. So you see, there is four years that I don't know anything about what really went on in Kennecott, who was going to school or anything.*

Kain: *But you came back up and lived in Cordova, or did you go straight back to Kennecott?*

Ricci: *No, I went back to Kennecott for just a little while.*

Kain: *Not in Cordova? And I imagine that you were quite sad when the mine closed.*

Ricci: *Definitely. That's where I was raised with my family and planned on raising my own family there.*

Kain: *Yes, that would be hard ... did you keep in contact with most of the people from Kennecott when you left?*

Ricci: *Yes, a lot of my girlfriends I did. And a few years ago we had a luncheon reunion in Seattle and there were seven of us that came. Two from up here and others from the Seattle area.*

Kain: *So over the years you've kept in touch with those people.*

Ricci: *Yes, at Christmas time anyway.*

Kain: *And you've been back to Kennecott a number of times since they've closed.*

Ricci: *Oh, yes.*

Kain: *Did you take your children over there and say, see there's...*

Ricci: *No, two of my children have never been there. The other one has an airplane and he's been in a couple of times. And because this reunion is so exciting, why, we are talking about a family reunion next year up there and getting those who haven't seen it up there. I don't know if we'll do that, but it could be fun.*

Kain: *Yes, I bet. The two that haven't been there, where do they live?*

Ricci: *They all live here in Anchorage.*

Kain: *They live here in Anchorage but haven't been up there?*

Ricci: *We never could get together on it, because they're working and, of course, I'm retired but I can go any time, but they can't.*

Kain: *Well, I think that pretty much covers what I wanted to cover with you and I think we could probably turn off the tape. Thank you very much.*

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Written Responses:

Brownie camera give-away day. Children crowd the steps of the staff house with free cameras.

A number of "Kennecott Kids" who did not attend the 1990 reunion have expressed interest in participating in the oral history project. This set of interview questions was prepared to allow those interested to participate through the mail. The goal of the entire process remains the same; to acquire the most complete set of information concerning the social history of Kennecott.

KENNECOTT KIDS ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

I. GENERAL INFORMATION

1. NAME:
   Wesley O. Bloom

2. CURRENT AGE:
   Born July 11, 1907

3. DATE AND PLACE OF BIRTH:
   Osage City, Kansas

4. CURRENT ADDRESS:
   2615 Squaw Valley Way
   Sacramento, CA 95826
   TELEPHONE #: (916) 366-9201

5. WHAT YEARS DID YOU LIVE IN KENNECOTT AND WHAT WAS YOUR AGE AT THE TIME?

1935-36-37 age 28-30

6. WHERE DID YOU LIVE BEFORE MOVING TO KENNECOTT?
Concrete, Washington

7. WHERE DID YOU GO UPON LEAVING KENNECOTT?
Detroit, Michigan

8. WHAT ASPECTS OF THE MINES OR TOWN ARE YOU MOST FAMILIAR WITH?
Electrical, mill, and powerhouse

RECOLLECTIONS of an ELECTRICIAN at KENNECOTT

By Wesley O. Bloom

I was born in Kansas in 1907, moving to Concrete, Washington during World War I in 1917. After graduating from high school I attended the National Electrical School in Los Angeles, California in 1926 and 1927. I then worked 7 years as motor tender, sub-station operator, lineman, and maintenance electrician for the Superior Portland Cement Company in Concrete, Washington (100 miles north of Seattle). It was the largest cement plant on the Pacific Coast and had a capacity of 7,000 barrels (28,000 sacks, 4 sacks in a barrel) a day. Being the only cement plant in the Northwest, it got all the orders for cement to Alaska. So when I came to Alaska, all the concrete I saw, I knew the cement had come from the Superior Portland Cement Plant where I worked. As it was built in 1900, before I was born. (It was closed and torn down in 1948).

During part of the "Great Depression," the plant would run a couple months and shut down for several months. (That was the time of the 6 hour day and 30 hour week.) Being single I would take this time to find work in the logging camps, if any were running and electrical work if possible. In 1934 the Washington Pulp and Paper Co. were building an addition to their mill in Port Angeles, Washington, and I worked there for several months. I had some large cable to pull and was given 2 extra electricians to help on the installation. We finished a little before quitting time and one of the men helping me was Bill Beech. He told me about working in the copper mines in Peru and Kennecott. I was interested but thought no more about it. About three months later I got a call from the cement plant office (as I was working there again) to answer a long distance call from Port Angeles. It was Bill Beech, he told me that Kennecott Copper was going to reopen after a long shutdown and they wanted him to return and bring another electrician with him. He was having trouble finding one that would leave and go to Alaska. So he went to the Electrical Superintendent at the Paper Mill. He said, "I know just the man you want and I have his name

in the office, and that I had worked at the cement plant in Concrete." So Bill called me telling me about the job, paying $5 a day, 7 days a week and that it worked the year around. He said that if I would accept, to meet him at Pier 2 in Seattle Tuesday morning. This was Friday, I was so delighted at this opportunity to get away from the dirty cement plant. Being single I had no problem getting ready to go. So I quit my job, after being told all the work in Alaska was seasonal, and a promise of my job back, if they were operating. (The Superintendent wrote me 6 months later wanting me to come back and promised 2 1/2 years steady work as they had gotten the contract to furnish all the cement for the Coulee Dam, I wrote back saying I was staying at Kennecott.)

I met Bill at Pier 2, Tuesday morning and we got on the S.S. Yukon heading North after waving goodbye to some friends on the pier who had come to see me off. Also going to Alaska were several other miners, millmen, nurses, and a doctor. This was in May 1935.

I had been in Los Angeles (not working) for 2 months. It was warm, trees were budding and leaves were coming out, so I decided summer was coming and went back to Washington. I got a job at a logging camp setting chokers on the side of a mountain in a foot of snow. O why did I leave L.A. so soon? About 6 weeks later, it was getting warmer, the trees were budding, and I thought summer was about here. This was nearly the first of May. When we got to Kennecott, snow was all over and yet it was winter all over again. In June the trees began to bud, and the leaves began to come out, the weather got warmer, but now I'm in Alaska. So after three attempts to get into summer I succeeded.

I enjoyed the trip, my first on Salt water, when we got to Cordova I was surprised to see several men in the middle of the main intersection talking for over an hour, no cars, no traffic. This was Alaska, not Los Angeles or Seattle. I noticed no concrete was used for building foundations, they were all made of lumber. Lumber was available and cement had to be shipped in from Seattle.

We got on the Copper River and Northwestern Train and headed farther north. We stopped at Abercrombie Canyon and saw what a real river in Alaska was like, and what a surprise to see the Million Dollar Bridge, but I couldn't appreciate how it was built and set into place until after reading "The End of the Iron Trail" by Rex Beech. The Childs and Miles Glaciers were awe inspiring.

It was some time before the mill, mines and tram were operating and I enjoyed every bit of it, working and looking. We had two days off a year, the Fourth of July and Christmas. We had a baseball team and the Kennecott office put up $200 for the winner

between Kennecott and McCarthy, everyone attended that could. The Kennecott baseball field was on the tailing dump behind the West Bunkhouse, this made a good flat area for ball games, ice rink, recreation etc. A good hit would send the ball over the side of the tailing dump behind third base and go another 200 feet down toward the bottom of the glacier. Kennecott lost each time as McCarthy would fly a pitcher in from Cordova and collect the $200.

I really enjoyed riding in a bucket on the trams to the mines, getting on and off at various towers checking the telephones and lines while the tram was running. In the winter I would take my skis with me and get off at the angle station on the Bonanza tram line and have about three mile run coming in at the mill. I often did this alone, but one time as I was coming down the side of the mountain between the Bonanza Tram and the Jumbo Tram, my skis disappeared, I came to a stop and the snow came up to my hips. I looked above and the whole mountain of snow had slipped leaving a break in the snow about 30 feet wide on the hillside where I had skied across a few seconds before. I don't know what caused the slide to stop because it could have been an avalanche and gone another 1000 feet down to the glacier and I would have been there yet.

There were two 10,000 volt power lines from the transformer building by the power plant at the mill to the Bonanza Mine also feeding power to the Angle Station on the Bonanza Tram line. There were no power lines along the Jumbo Tram as the power went through the mine under ground to the Jumbo Camp. there was no way to get from the mill to the mines in the winter except by riding a bucket on the tram, because of deep snow, steep mountains, and danger of slides. If one power line was out of service the other would carry the load. However if both lines were out of service, which did happen, the trams would still operate by gravity. The loaded buckets (about 700 pounds each) going down being much heavier than the empty buckets going back up to the mines made it possible to go back and forth to the mines using the manual brakes to keep the speed of the tram normal not tending to overspeed, till the power lines were repaired. The power lines followed the top of the ridges where possible so snow slides would not take them down into the canyons. If the weather was too severe we would wait a day or two until the storm abated. Then go with our snowshoes to the broken lines, put on the lineman's climbers and make the repairs. When the power was on the 50 horsepower electric motors that controlled the tram would not ordinarily pull the cables but acted as a brake, so no manual brake was used unless power was lost. While the motor acted as a brake to hold the tram at normal speed, it actually generated power and the electric meters were connected in reverse to show how much power was generated while the tram was

in operation. It would average about 10,000 kilowatts a month.

One time they couldn't start the upper half of the Bonanza Tram, one place the tram line was 400 feet over the bottom of the canyon below. Evidently a Williwaw hit the tram line and as it was a long span between these towers it threw one traveling line with an empty bucket over the other stationary line causing a knot in the cable when it pulled into the tower and stopped the upper half of the Bonanza Tram line. It was something that couldn't happen but it did. Fortunately it happened in the summer and no snow was on the ground.

Another time on the Jumbo Tram where the tram line and the buckets came within 15 feet over the ground. A man was coming down from the mine and for some reason the bucket he was riding in came off the stationary lime and dropped down into about 5 feet of snow and for some other reason unlatched itself from the traveling cable, leaving the bucket and the man all by themselves. The tram continued to run normally but the one bucket with the man in it was missing. Whenever a man got into a bucket, the operator would call up or down depending on which way he was going, so the next operator would watch for the bucket with the man in it and they would slow the tram so the man could get out safely. When this bucket didn't arrive, they immediately sent men out with an extra pair of snowshoes to find him before he froze. All went well and he got back O.K. He was still in the bucket as the snow was too deep for him to get out but he said he was getting scared.

One April Fools' Day, Steve Gutano was working at the Angle Station on the Bonanza Tram, and he got an old hat and coat and some weeds from under the station and made it look like a man, then he poured water on "him" so the next morning he was frozen solid. So Steve set "him" in a bucket going down and called the "Bucket Chaser" at the mill saying a man was coming down. They always called ahead when a man was coming down so the "Bucket Chaser" would be watching for him and slow the tram so he could get off safely. When the Bucket Chaser saw him coming (Steve had purposely set him high in the bucket) he said, "Get your head down." The "man" did not move and the Bucket Chaser hollered again "Get your head down" just then his head hit the trip. Well, anyway the bucket automatically came off the line like it was supposed to do, but the Bucket Chaser thought he had killed a man. He sure was happy when he saw it was a dummy, but he was pretty mad at Steve. Jack Morris, Tram Foreman, always used young fellows as Bucket Chasers and Jack and I were up there to watch the reaction. I felt bad for the Bucket Chaser because he was so scared, but this was April first.

The power plant at the mill along side of the glacier had five alternators. One 1,000 kilowatt steam turbine drive, one 500 kilowatt steam turbine drive, one 250 kilowatt Pelton water wheel drive used in summer when water was available, and two 500 kilowatt driven by two 600 horsepower McIntosh-Seymour diesel engines, for a total output of 2,750 kilowatts. There were four oil fired steam boilers to operate the steam turbines and furnish steam heat throughout the entire camp into every building and the homes that were furnished to the married families living there. An oil storage tank located on the hill above the power plant held enough oil to operate Kennecott all winter. This was one of the largest, if not the largest, power plant in Alaska at that time. At 30 degrees below zero the steam plant was a nice place to work.

The two 10,000 volt power lines that went from the mill to the Bonanza mine were about 20 feet apart. When they were first built they dug a hole, set the pole and poured concrete in the hole and about 18 inches above the surface for added strength. This must have been done about 1910 and evidently didn't work out too well, as all the original poles had rotted off at the base. So all of the poles set in the concrete bases had to be replaced by other ones set in new holes. How they mixed the concrete and poured it around each pole from the mill to Bonanza I still don't know, but I believe someone said they could get all the help they wanted from Seattle for 35 cents an hour. So maybe they used a lot of Swedes. Those concrete stumps will stand there forever.

After we got to Kennecott, it didn't take me long to find out that the Swedes were called "Squareheads." I hear that there were a lot of them when they built the mill years before. As all of my grandparents were born in Sweden, I didn't say much until I found out most of the miners were from Finland, and everyone seemed to like them even if they did a lot of fighting in McCarthy. So when someone asked me what nationality I was, I told them I was a Finlander and got along fine. Anyone that knew me up there thought I was a Finn.

There was another 10,000 volt power line that went from the transformer building by the power house along the Kennicott Glacier to the Root Glacier, then up a very steep ridge to the entrance of the Erie Mine. All of the poles had rotted off at the base going up the ridge and the poles and lines were laying on the rocky ridge, and we had to restore power back to the Erie Mine. I looked over the situation and as it was to be used temporarily, decided to dig out the rotted base of the poles and use the same hole as they were not set in concrete and use what remained of the old pole as they were in fairly good condition, with cross arm wire and insulators still attached. After getting the line rebuilt, the wires didn't clear the ridge more than 15 feet in places. But that would be high enough for

the bears, goats, and porcupines to cross under, nothing else would be up there. It was so steep I would not let some of the helpers come up. One fellow dropped a digging bar and it slid about 800 feet to the glacier. It is still there.

One day I was up on a pole putting tie wires on an insulator and directly across Root Glacier, high on Donoho Peak, a snow avalanche started from the top and cascaded all the way down to the bottom and out on the glacier. Then another and another. I hung my arms across the cross arm and saw a most awesome sight that you could probably see only in Alaska. I learned then how rocks got in the glaciers and what started moraines. The avalanches would "bounce" from one side of the gully to the other taking rocks with it, getting bigger and bigger until it splattered out on the glacier. There were 7 or 8 avalanches that came down. This was in June and probably does that only once a year when the weather was just right for the snow to start to slide. My helpers and I had the choice location for that most beautiful sight; I still wish I had had a camera that day. Every year the "Pothole" would break at the end of the Kennicott Glacier at McCarthy. I never saw it break, but got down there as fast as I could—quite a sight, too.

There were two other electricians that stayed at the mines, so most of my work was at the mill and on the lines. In the mine they had electric motors that pushed the ore cars back and forth and for any major repair needed, the parts would be put in a bucket and sent to the shops at the mill for repair.

The mines were 4,000 feet higher than the mill and it wasn't unusual for the temperature from December to February to be 30 degrees below zero at the mill and 10 degrees above at the mines. Sometimes it would be much colder at the mines, but being higher they would get winds changing temperature; however, the mill on the side of the glacier at the bottom of the valley would stay cold all the time until a wind would come and stir up the air and maybe get 10 or 20 degrees warmer. There was a thermometer located on the outside wall of our bunkhouse. I read it at 6 a.m. one morning in January, it was 30 degrees below zero. Then I moved it and put it on the outside south (warm side???) wall of the electric shop in the direct sunlight and at noon it was exactly the same 30 degrees below zero. Absolutely no heat in the sun, only brightness. At the mill on the side of the glacier sometimes the temperature would stay 30 degrees below zero three weeks at a time, night and day, between December and February. The yard crew made up a nice skating rink on the recreation field in October and we had a lot of nice skating until it got to 10 degrees below zero or the snow piled up faster than we could keep it off.

The Company kept a train crew at Kennecott all winter while the railroad was closed down from December to June. They were to move loaded cars to a siding near McCarthy and return some empties every 3 or 4 weeks. One time a group of ladies, children, and men got permission to ride the train to McCarthy for an outing. Art Holt was the engineer and for some reason the brakes would not operate. Some said the train was going 70 or 80 miles an hour when it rounded the curve as it passed McCarthy. They considered throwing some of the children off into the snow banks. However, the train did not leave the tracks and came to a stop at the bottom of the grade where it started to go up a hill. I asked Jimmie McGavock if he was glad when the train came to a stop and he said, "yes, and everyone began to smoke Chesterfields."

Elmer Hedstrom, one of the operators in the power house, wanted to quit and go to Anchorage for Christmas. In no way would he fly in an airplane. Finally, he did agree to come back with Harold Gillam if he could take the last train to Cordova in December. So that was agreed on. He was on Gillam's plane leaving Anchorage with a shipment of light bulbs and other material for Kennecott after Christmas. Fog and clouds closed in and Gillam tried to get out and finally had to make a forced landing in shallow water near Anchorage. Fortunately, they were not injured, but had to climb on top of the wings until they were rescued. And we never saw Elmer again.

I went into the west bunkhouse one afternoon and turned on the short wave radio in the recreation room. A plane had been forced down on the beach on Admiralty Island. He was calling and calling Juneau but getting no answer. So I went to the power house where the master mechanic Jim McGavock was and told him what I had heard. He had a Collins transmitter and receiver at his home, so we rushed back to his house. Jim got on the air right away and they were still calling and calling Juneau. He answered and the pilot of the plane that was down could hear and talk loud and clear with Jim. Then Jim called Juneau and got them immediately. They were unable to hear the pilot that was stranded on the beach, but they could hear Jim loud and clear. They dispatched a boat to the plane and Jim had saved the day in another emergency situation.

I used to check all the electric motors on Sundays, starting at the top of the mill and working down. Jimmie McGavock was about 11 years old, and he would always meet me there and would carry the oil can and follow me all through the mill. He never failed to be there with me every Sunday in the summer.

Jim McGavock, the master mechanic, got into trouble with Richelson, the general superintendent, and he and his family had to leave Kennecott. I liked Jim and told Richelson that if Jim was leaving,

I was too. So after nearly two and a half years, I left Kennecott in August 1937. Telling my friends I was going to New York to see the Statue of Liberty, Radio City, the Empire State Building, and stand on 49th and Broadway. Then I left by train for Cordova. I was there for two days enjoying fresh razor clams before leaving for Seattle.

There are many other recollections of social activities, short and long days, Northern Lights, and howling winds that I still remember.

P.S. I have written that there were two 10,000 volt power lines going to the Bonanza Mine, but only one went all the way. The other turned and went to furnish lights and power for the house and tram motor at Station 2, half-way up to the Jumbo Mine. The line from Station 2 to the Jumbo Mine had been abandoned some years before.

There were about 160 employees at the mill and mines when I was there. Here are a few of the names I recall:

Rich Richelson Superintendent
Jim Duggan Office
Bill Lloyd Office
Al Humpheries Store
Joe Wilson Store
George Burch Office
Charlie Hooks Post Office
Dr. Toohey Doctor
Ed Chivers Commissary
Bill Tolnen Office
Eric Danielson Mill
Reuben Johnson Mill
Fred Hoff Assay Office
Jim McGavock Master Mechanic
Carl Engstrom Shop
Fred Panitchek Shop
Al Dolan Shop
Don Oliver Power House
Gene Oliver Power House
Leo Higley Power House
Pat McCann Pipefitter
Bill Beech Electrician
Hank Gantenbein Electrician
Wes Bloom Electrician
Al Nikolous Timekeeper
Hans Hjelle Mines
Paul Warner Mines
Chris Jensen Carpenter
Louis Wick Mill
Frank Shilkis Mill
Carl Grahm Mill
Jim Moore Mill
Ralph Snyder Mill
Sam Segar Mines
Jack Morris Tram
Steve Gutano Tram
Ed Carlson Tram
Art Holt Railroad

Frank Spadero Railroad
Jack Howard Mill
Nels Gimby Mill
Ken Farley Mill
Sol Brososky Mill
Chick Nelson Mill
Bill Slimpert Mill
George Todd Mill
Paul Wilhelm Mill
Palmer Kulvik Mill
Bill Frame Truck driver
Julius Fless Barber
Jack Conway Watchman
John Heyser Mill
Helen Roemer Nurse
Ida Savage Nurse
Rhea Stevens Nurse
Mickey Hoff Nurse
Helen McCool Nurse
Rusty McDonald Nurse
Nell McCann Office
Esther Ohman Teacher

CHILDREN
Catherine Howard
Frank Morris
Bruce Morris
Lyle Morris
Jimmie McGavock
Jean McGavock
Bill Humpheries
Inger Jensen

KENNECOTT RECOLLECTIONS
of
Jean Elizabeth (McGavock) Lamb

Setting the Stage

The earliest memories of my life are of Kennecott, Alaska, where I lived most of my first 9 years. Both my brother James Robert and I were born "Outside" in Seattle, Washington, as our mother preferred and/or felt it necessary to have her deliveries at Seattle General Hospital where she had trained to be a Registered Nurse. Thus it was that our "coming into the country" at the age of a few months or weeks came about with a week's travel up the Inside Passage to Cordova via the Alaska Steamship Company's ships and the CR&NWRR cars to Kennecott itself.

My father, James McGavock, was the son of Irish immigrants who had settled in Denver, Colorado, in the early 1880's. Dad, born there in 1883, traveled the country coast to coast in the early 1900's seeking work out of the combination of economic necessity and the spirit of adventure. He had no academic degrees. For that matter he had not even graduated

from high school as we know it. But he was a talented machinist with an innovative bent in matters electrical. August of 1909 found him aboard the S.S. Ohio bound for Cordova, Alaska. The journey North was interrupted when the Ohio struck rocks in Canadian waters - in Finlayson Channel off Milbanke Sound - and sunk. My father and several others were forced to swim the half mile to land and were fortunate to escape with their lives. When he finally arrived in Cordova, he found work related to the building of The Copper River & Northwestern Railroad. He worked the winter of 1909-1910 on the building of The Million Dollar Bridge at Mile 49. He remained in the Copper River basin during the ensuing years either prospecting or working at various mining properties such as those of the Great Northern Development Company both on the Kotsina and at Copper Mountain where he lost his only living brother John in a disastrous avalanche. He has also written of helping to drive tunnels on Elliott Creek, Iron Mountain, on the Kuskulana at Archie MacDougall's "promotion," on the Chickosana [Chokosna], etc. Although I am unsure of the actual date he came to Kennecott, it may well have been circa 1917 or 1918. He served as Master Mechanic for the whole Kennecott operation until we left Alaska in 1937, a year before the final closure.

My mother, Jean Black (Scobie) McGavock, was the daughter of Scottish immigrants who had settled in Roslyn, Washington, in the late 1880's. She was born and raised there, leaving home to enter nursing training in Seattle, graduating in 1911. She came north to work as a nurse in the Kennecott Hospital in 1918 and met my father during her Kennecott stay. In 1919 she returned to Seattle for medical attention following injuries received while "on duty." She returned to Kennecott in 1922 to visit friends and married my father at that time. They married in Cordova at St. George's Episcopal Church rectory (by the Reverend Eustace P. Ziegler) September 14, 1922, honeymooned in Strelna and set up a housekeeping of sorts in the Kennecott Staff House until such time as other housing became available. Ultimately, this union was blessed with the birth of my brother James Robert in 1924 and me in 1928. There were no other children.

The "Younger Sibling" Syndrome

Playmates seemed few and far between in my Kennecott years. I did have doting parents: a father, who by virtue of being able to walk to his job, was usually home for three meals a day; a mother whose complete focus was her house-wifely duties and the nurture and continuing good health of her children. And, of course, I had a built in playmate in my brother Jim who was four years older than I. He may have spent years adjusting to the fact that, upon arrival, I was not twins and that the one of me was female. That, plus the age gap, probably left

something to be desired from his point of view.

So, for me, there were many hours of being entertained in the kitchen with baking adventures, the rolling of cookie dough and the beating of cake batter...ad more than a few hours in the living room pricking fingers learning to embroider tea towels. I even learned to knit and purl with the knitting needles. I had a beautiful doll named "Rosemary" who was given to me one Christmas by my Grandmother Scobie and Uncle George. She was my pride and joy, and I have her yet, tucked away in an old trunk, her wig of human hair thoroughly matted by many years of zealous tender loving care. I think she came with another treasure, a lovely wicker doll carriage. These two gifts were bestowed upon me at the annual Christmas party given by the company at the recreation hall. Mother tells the story of how I was carried home by my father, up the hill in the chill December night, refusing to relinquish my grip on the buggie handle. Then there were the summertime tea parties outside on the grass where my little tea table was set with refreshments for my toys: my various dolls, toy dogs, bunnies and bears. Occasional playmates through the years, depending upon when they lived in camp, were Marvel Whipple and later, Mary Jean Moore and Billy Larsen. My only classmate for my three years at the Kennecott School was Billy Humphreys who lived north of the mill down by the railroad tracks.

So my brother Jim was often "stuck" with his little sister who usually didn't quite fit in with his free time plans. I did my best to keep up, playing "Road Commission" with Jim's cars and trucks, building roads in the bank under the spruce tree behind the clothes line and wood shed; trying to tag along on his forays down the hill; feeling disgruntled when he managed to give me the slip and left out when I wasn't allowed in his tree house. Funny...that I should remember the tree house, but I can still remember climbing a tree down beyond the fire house there on the hill where I could spot the train chugging up the grade from McCarthy. It sticks in my mind that either Dad or Jim whacked a few boards up in that tree so that I could have a tree house of my own. I suppose it got me out of Jim's hair.

The House on the Hill

We lived up on the hill on what is now called "Silk Stocking Row" in the southernmost of the four cottages on the north end. It bore the number "19" and, like all the others of its sort, was cranberry red with white trim, two stories with a covered front porch facing west.

In the living room I remember a Morris chair where Dad would sit in the evenings, and I would snuggle

up on his lap for him to read me favorite stories. He would always ask me if I had eaten all my vegetables at dinner, and I would answer that yes, I had tried to, even though I might have left a few. In truth, I hated canned vegetables an did my best to dispatch them elsewhere, sight unseen. And, of course, canned vegetables are what we had all winter long.

Well, back to the chairs...there must have been others. However, I can't recall a sofa. But we did have a beautiful player piano at which Jim and I spent many a happy hour pumping the pedals through all the various musical rolls we had in our collection. Dad loved music but didn't play any instrument, however Mother had studies piano for a good many years and put her music education to good use.

Dad always had a radio in the living room. Pictures through the years show a change in sets. I don't remember listening much, but I knew we got radio reception from some very far away places.

At the north end of the living room was a glassed in bookcase set into the staircase. And there was a steam radiator standing at the north wall near the bottom of the stair. Mother told the story of how I tumbled down the stairs when I was 2 or 3 and burned my wrist badly on that radiator. The scar is still apparent today.

Behind the living room was the dining room where we had a round oak pedestal dining table with captain's chairs. This was the site of family dinners. Mother was a good, albeit basic sort of cook and an excellent baker. My father favored a basic "meat and potatoes" sort of fare, and was fond of standing rib roast of beef, medium rare. I can remember the table set with Mother's Syracuse china and, on occasion, her sterling flatware. I also remember sneaking spoonfuls of canned peas onto some channel in the underworkings of that table just to get them off my plate. Somehow, they were supposed to get into the pedestal...and maybe then, to the floor. (And we did have a dog...)

The kitchen was to the north of the living room. I remember it with lots of cupboards, the topmast of which housed the Syracuse china which was left behind when we moved outside in 1937. There was a wood fired cook stove over which Mother presided and for which Dad and, eventually, my brother Jim chopped the wood. There was also a small kitchen table where Jim and I would sit for our bedtime snack of dry cereal. I've never forgotten that he stuffed me with things like extra portions of Grape Nuts just so he could get more box tops for his prizes. Off the kitchen was a small pantry or back kitchen and rear entry into the back shed.

Our upstairs was reached by the staircase which had a landing with a window at the turn. On the sill

there, Mother kept house plants which would shake and rattle in their saucers when the earthquake tremors came.

Upstairs there were two bedrooms with a bathroom between at the top of the stairs. The front bedroom was Mother and Dad's and faced west towards the glacier. I have always remembered the view from their window.

Besides the sink, the bathroom had an indoor flush toilet and a bathtub with claw and ball feet. I remember Mother telling the story of how my brother Jim got his head stuck beneath the tub when he was a toddler and what a fuss "the rescue" was. The bathroom window faced south along the slopes of Porphyry Mountain.

The back bedroom was shared by Jim and me. The window faced the woods to the east on Porphyry Mountain and was protected on bright summer nights with a dark green shade. Jim's bed was son the outside wall, while mine was on the inside with an overhead bookcase which held the family collection of The Bobbsey Twins among other things. More than once the books fell down on me in my bed. Jim needed excitement, I guess, and, perhaps, I egged him on. There were built-in drawers and closets under the eaves of both bedrooms, and the latter space provided lots of play opportunities on cold winter days.

My father had the only privately owned automobile in camp, so there had to be a place to park it. The garage was to the south of the house and set back a little. It housed the 1924 Buick touring car which was put up on blocks through the late fall, winter and spring months when the few roads of the area were impassable. On the south side, near the Buick, was a work bench under which our dog Ginger had his box with its dogbed for the really cold winter nights. An ell off the back of the garage was the radio room where Dad, a HAM radio operator, indulged in his hobby on many an evening. The radio room was generally "off limits" to me. There was too much dangerous electrical equipment. It wasn't a place to play.

The Other House

There was another house where we lived for a short time during the Depression when the mines were closed and the camp was partially shut down. This was a house down on the railroad tracks just to the north of the power plant and west of the tracks. I thought it was the first house from the power plant, but Jim thinks it was the second. I remember very little about the house except for its crawl space under the house where the steam lines came in. This was a very hospitable area for mice, and my mother wasn't about to accommodate them. I think Jim and I must have spend many a winter evening

down there trying to catch mice with sticks. Then, I got to feeling tender about the poor little mice. Somehow, I can't imagine Mother, with all her anti-septic notions, being very happy about us being down there with the mice either. At any rate, that's what we did that winter.

Pictures show that these houses didn't have indoor toilets, just outhouses out at the end of a back walk. But I don't remember our using an outhouse in the time we lived there.

Living there, we were right on the edge of the lateral moraine of the Kennicott Glacier, and I remember lots of days when I played alone down in the rocks making "rooms" and play space with what rocks I could lift. What an eerie landscape it must have been, but I never thought so. It was just my world.

Dad's Office

My father's office was on the south end of the lower level of the power house, and, occasionally, there was some reason for me to visit him there. Such a visit for a 7 or 8 year old would be unthinkable in a modern facility of comparable size, but I do remember walking by the big boilers and the generator turbines while carefully negotiating the steel walkways and stairways around the diesel engines. I'm sure Dad was never far away.

Our dog Ginger loved to go to work with Dad and could often be found snoozing on a warm spot on the floor in the kneehole of Dad's desk.

The power plant and the machine shop are the only big industrial buildings that I can remember having the freedom of entering. The mill and the leaching plant were certainly "off limits" to me. Of course, the bunkhouses were forbidden, and I was too young to have the opportunity to go up to the mines.

Where We Played

What freedom we had when compared with the restrictions placed on today's urban/suburban children! We had the run of the camp - within reason - although, by virtue of my age and sex, I didn't get so far afield as my brother.

The board side walk up on the hill was probably my first playground. The boards must have worked moderately well for kiddy cars, tricycles and baby buggies, but they would have been useless for roller skates. But even this experience was arranged by the company, and we skated on the wood floors of the Recreation Hall.

We did have the tennis courts north of the mill. I remember going there, but can't recall my having a

tennis racket. I imagine the court was intended for employees rather than the children.

Ice skating came easier...and earlier. The baseball field was boarded and flooded with both water and lights for wintertime skating. Most of us "Kids" skated on ice long before we skated on wheels. The ice skates went to school with us and we exited the schoolhouse doors to the rink outside to skate after school. There were some adults in camp who skated well. I would try to imitate their arabesques but not with any great success, I might add. But I did manage to stay upright most of the time.

One winter, when we had a heavier snowfall than usual, Jim and I were allowed to jump off the shed roof into a high snowbank below. For other snow play, we skied and snowshoed, sometimes on the glacier. And I can remember sledding down the hills in dish pans. On occasion, our dog Ginger was pressed into service with the dogsled and harness. Ginger, for all his malamute bloodlines, didn't like to work that much and would often go slinking away when we rang the harness bells.

What We Wore

Relatives living "outside" indulged us with toys, books, and the latest fashions for school and dress up clothing, but - by and large - our playtime was spent in old fashioned, practical overalls, washed no more than once a week in Mother's Savage washing machine.

Winter found us bundled up more with bulky wool snow suits, shoepacs, scratchy winter underwear, and the long lisle stockings which must have been partly wool. I hated the stockings so and could hardly wait for those warmer spring days when, on my way to school and relieved of cumbersome snow suits, I could sneak down the hill path behind the fire house, undo the garter fasteners and roll those stockings down below the knee. Such wicked freedom! I can remember yet how good it felt. Of course, Mother was sure I would catch cold.

Other Vignettes

I remember a visit to the Iverson farm out of McCarthy. It seemed like another world. For some reason I recall Mrs. Iverson's butter! And I remember how scared I was of the bull out in the pasture.

And the mud in the springtime when the snow turned the wagon road to ooze. But it was exciting to see winter leave.

School celebrations at the school, which was only using one room by the time I went to school. I

remember the cooks from the bunkhouse delivering a big wash tub full of strawberry ice cream. Strawberry was special. It was so pink! I think we usually had vanilla or chocolate ice cream when we had it at home.

And the berry picking in the fall. I remember the tin buckets with their bail handles and Him showing me how to swing the can 360 degrees without dumping the berries. I don't suppose it did the berries much good.

And I remember when Jim and I took piano lessons with "Deanie" O'Neill from McCarthy. We got through at least 2 books of John M. Williams Piano Studies before we left Kennecott in 1937, and, along the way, probably thought of all sorts of reasons not to practice. Ginger helped. We used to put squares of Hershey's chocolate on the keys when mother wasn't around, so the dog could play the piano, too. The state of the keys must have been a dead give-away.

Our dog Ginger, best friend and partner in crime, licker of plates and ice cream bowls and slurper of castaway peas. He was a malamute-springer spaniel mix who looked like the former but had shorter legs. While he made a fine camp dog, he did have a lot of trouble learning to respect the porcupine. Dad had a special pair of needle-nosed pliers which we called the porcupine pliers. Certainly, one of my memories is seeing Dad with Ginger clamped between his knees plucking out the quills. Poor dog! He was a loving companion for all of our family. The most difficult thing about leaving Kennecott for Jim and me was leaving Ginger behind. Our friends, the Don Olivers, took him for that last year at Kennecott, and they eventually brought him outside.

Home made ice cream frozen with the glacier ice which was delivered to our ice box. This was a favorite dessert served often. For us in our time it was made with evaporated milk. In earlier years cows had been kept at Kennecott, but they had proved tubercular, and thereafter, milk was either powdered or canned.

Winter time stars, black velvet skies and hard crunch of footsteps on sub-zero snows. Going to school in the dark and coming home in the dark were all part of our everyday wintertime lives. It was such a wonder to us when we spent our first Christmas outside in 1937 and went swimming at a beach near San Diego. Imagine!

The 1924 Buick

My father was intrigued with any mechanical innovations and modes of transportation, so it only figured that he would find a way to own and house

what I believe was the only privately owned automobile in camp, one I remember as the 1924 Buick touring car. It was a big old thing with spoke wheels and chains on the rear tires, isinglass curtains at the windows, a cloth top and, in a gun case slung over the back of the front seat, was Dad's 10-06 bear gun...just in case we needed it.

Of course, all of this must have been operated at great expense and considerable inconvenience, but it gave us Sunday afternoon mobility to explore was few "roads" there were to be driven and a chance to see the country. Now this was before the age of the jeep, but the old Buick performed admirably on the rough roads filled with potholes and permafrost ooze bridged with corduroy, its high frame taking the fording of creeks all in its stride.

Now, where did we go? I can remember driving to McCarthy and on to Green Butte, once even going to the Mother Lode. But usually we took the road from McCarthy out to the Nizina River where we may or may not have been able to cross over to the other side, depending upon whether or not the bridge had been washed out with the annual floods. Crossing the bridge was always exciting and a bit scary. I remember times, after the washouts, when we walked don the big beams set on the pilings before they were bridged with decking. I held Dad's hand tight. I can still see the silty water rushing down below. At low water, I remember crossing the far channels, carried on Dad's back, but I can't recall how we got back up on what was left of the bridge...a ladder, I guess. I had lots of faith in my father's firm footing at the time, but I wouldn't want to do that again today.

If we could drive to the other side, we went on to visit the Murie's at their roadhouse on May Creek. One of my earliest recollections is of Mrs. Murie who gave me a string of pink beads to wear when I was about 3.

And sometimes we went fishing at Baultoff Lake. I seem to remember hours in rowboat...swatting mosquitoes mostly...trying not to rock the boat or fall in. One time, our dog Ginger, a malamute-springer spaniel combination pup who had been left at home chained up, got loose and followed us down the road and across the river all the way to the lake. He didn't think he should miss the fishing. Poor dog! He must have been footsore.

And sometimes we picnicked at Sam Means' cabin somewhere out near the mouth of Chititu Creek. Sam took a picture of one of our gatherings where we and the Richelsons were all huddled around a smoky fire eating our beans.

But, perhaps, the most vivid memory is of the narrow shelf road cut into the shale on the near approach to the Nizina River bridge spans. Mother

was a rather nervous passenger, and Dad knew just how "to push her buttons." If the bridge was "out," Dad had to turn the car around on that narrow shelf...and it was a fair drop to the water churning down below. So Mother would shout, "Jim, stop the car! We're not going to drown in this river!" He would stop, and she would grab her children, my brother Jim in one hand and me in the other, to exit the car in fear and trepidation, knowing that he was surely going over the side. This must have happened again and again. It was a sort of ritual.

My First Airplane Ride

Dad was very interested in airplanes, and he struck up a friendship with the late Harold Gillam when he first began flying in the Copper River Basin. Eventually, he invested some money in Gillam's business. I took my first airplane ride with this noted bush pilot perhaps in 1932 when I was about 4. I believe that Mother and Jim and I had returned from a trip to Seattle at a time in the winter after heavy snowfall and the train was not running. The only way home from Cordova was for us to fly. Unfortunately, I had become sick on board ship and, in the course of the flight up the river, managed to throw up all over Gillams' cozy down quilt which had thoughtfully been provided to keep us warm in flight.

And Other Modes of Travel

Jim and I became fairly sophisticated travelers in those early years when we ran the gamut from showshoes, skis and dog sleds to the rails of the Copper River & Northwestern Railway, the ships of the Alaska Steamship Company and the planes of Harold Gillam.

Mother made a trip outside every few years, so we became accustomed to the experience of traveling on the CR&NWRR to Cordova with an overnight stop in Chitina and lunches in section houses along the way. Cordova meant a stay at the old Windsor Hotel before boarding the ship for Seattle. Alas, I was a poor sailor, for the Gulf of Alaska came all too soon and stayed too long. But I usually recovered for the Inside Passage. That meant games on deck, admonitions from the stewards to keep us from falling overboard, bunk beds in the cabin, fancy meals where I was served pasteurized milk to drink. That was something we didn't have in Kennecott by the time we were growing up. The milk was totally foreign to me, and I didn't like it. Mother would "doctor" it up a bit with a little vanilla extract and sugar, so that I would drink it down. And there was always a fancy costume party the last night out. I've never forgotten how exotic it seemed to be able to choose from a whole rack of costumes.

Like all children, we took all this for granted, never realizing what a wonderful and different life we had led in these years before World War II when Alaska was still a territory of the United States. In early June of 1937, Mother and Jim and I boarded the train for our last trip to Cordova and "Outside," leaving the Kennecott scene of our childhoods behind. We left with only our personal possessions, and because of high shipping costs, even many of these were left behind. My father followed us in the fall of the year, thus ending our life in Kennecott. Mother and Dad were never able to return, even in later years, to visit what has become a national relic. But Jim and I are drawn by that powerful call of the north county to return again and again to visit that site or our childhood where, for us, something seems still unfinished.

RECOLLECTIONS of a KENNECOTT KID

By James R. (Jimmy) McGavock

The earliest memories of my life are of Kennecott, Alaska, where I lived most of my first 13 years. Both my sister Jean and I were born "outside" in Seattle, Washington. We were taken north after we were a few months old to live at Kennecott.

My father, James McGavock, was the son of Irish immigrants who had settled in Denver, Colorado in the early 1880s. Dad was born there in 1883. He attended parochial schools, as long as his parents could afford it. He left home seeking work and adventure in the early 1900s. Although he had not graduated from high school, he became a talented machinist and electrician. He worked with the large engineering companies all over the west, building mills and smelters and mining for gold, silver and lead. He was also employed for several years building battle ships at the Brooklyn, New York, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, and Bremerton, Washington navy yards. While working at the navy yard at Bremerton around 1909 the "Alaska Mining Fever" had taken hold of him.

He decided to go north, to Cordova, Alaska. The following is an account of the trip in my father's own words. I left Seattle on the 24th of August, 1909 on the S.S. Ohio. The ship was loaded to capacity with all kinds of freight, including 3 head of horses, many cows, some goats and sheep in the lower hold. The 2nd class as well as the first class cabins held all kinds of people: soldiers, miners, missionaries, and construction workers. On the second day out of Seattle we ran into a heavy snowstorm about midnight, crossing Queen Charlotte Sound. The sea was very rough and the pilot could not see any distance ahead but kept going under a slow bell. Every one was having a jolly time on the ship, dancing, singing and having refreshments. We hit a rock and punched a big hole in the bottom of the

ship. Well the water came I so fast, they could not pump it out, and the poor horses began to scream, al the passengers ran out on deck, and the captain began to send out for Roman candles for help and tried to steer the ship to shallow water. The life boats were swung out and filled up with people, by this time the ship began to lay on its side and it was impossible to lower the boats on the high side, as the water got higher it flooded the fires in he boiler room, and all the lights went out. It was difficult to get people off, after waiting a long time and hoping for a life boat, we could feel the ship sinking fast. A lot of us jumped off and started to swim. It was dark and still snowing, but we could hear the waves breaking on the rocks, so we swam there and by good luck, landed there OK cold wet and hungry and no chance to start a fire, as it was still snowing and blowing. Morning came and we found the rest of the passengers about a mile down the coast. The captain and the purser got together and started to count noses, and we found that five passengers and crew were lost, and four stowaways, so nine in all lost their lives because the pilot was not very careful. A fishing boat picked us up and took us to a large saw mill. We were fed, given dry clothes and a place to sleep, and believe it or not I did not get up for 36 hours. Then the doctor woke me up to see if I had internal injuries, found out I was OK just tired.

My father continued north to Cordova and worked on the construction of the Million Dollar Bridge (the winter of 1909 - 1910) at Mile 49 on the Copper River & Northwestern Railroad. He continued to work and prospect in the Copper River region for the next 5 or 6 years. He was working for Great Northern Development Company at Copper Mountain, when his only brother, who had followed him to Alaska, was killed in an avalanche at Copper Mountain in December of 1912. Although I am unsure of the exact date he came to Kennecott, it was probably circa 1917 or 1918. He was an excellent machinist, welder and electrician, and was promoted to master mechanic at Kennecott.

My mother, Jean Scobie McGavock, was the daughter of Scottish immigrants who settled in Roslyn, she entered nursing training at Seattle General Hospital. She graduated in 1911. In 1918 she came north to work in the Kennecott Hospital, and met my father. They were married in Cordova, Alaska in 1922. I was born in 1924, and my sister Jean was born in 1928.

We lived upon the hill at Kennecott, on what is now called "Silk Stocking Row" in the southernmost of the four cottages on the north end. Our house bore the number "19". The floor plans of the four cottages were identical, with the exception of our cottage, where the floor plan was inverted, the staircase being on the north, rather than the south side of the house. These four cottages featured indoor plumbing and steam heat. Every cottage in

camp was furnished with electricity, our house even had a crank type wall telephone. My father's ring was a short and a long and a short.

Dad built a metal building to garage his automobile, a 1924 Buick touring sedan. He was also a "Ham" radio operator, transmitting and receiving using Morse code "C.W.," later upgrading to voice transmission. His transmitter had a remarkable range. I can recall his transmitting and receiving to Southeastern Alaska and to a Coast Guard cutter far out in the Gulf of Alaska, as well as to Chitina and Cordova.

The power plant alongside the glacier had five alternators. One 1000 kilowatt steam turbine drive, one 500 kilowatt steam turbine drive, one 250 kilowatt Pelton water wheel drive used in the summer when abundant water was available and two 500 kilowatt alternators driven by two 600 horse power McIntosh-Seymour 6 cylinder diesel engines. These engines were very large, the cylinder bore was so big, a man could be lowered inside after the pistons were removed.

The depression of the early 1930s changed our life style somewhat. My father had to take a cut in salary of $100 a month. We had to move from the house on the hill, to another one north of the power house. The company did not feel they could afford to pump steam to the cottages on the hill. A challenge for my father was to find a way to cut the operating cost of one of the diesel engines, which produced electricity for the camp and mines. All that was necessary to produce electric power was one engine.

My father experimented and found this 6 cylinder diesel engine would operate with no more than 3 cylinders removed, this cut the consumption of diesel fuel in half. The power plant was a large building, which also housed four large vertical boilers which produce steam. There was an oil storage tank located on the hill above the power plant with the capacity to operate the power plant all winter.

Kennecott was a self-contained community. We had electricity, steam heat in most cottages, indoor plumbing and telephones. We also had a school, hospital, library, social hall, tennis court, baseball diamond and ice skating rink in the winter. The two room schoolhouse was just south of the west bunkhouse. I attended and progressed from the 1st grade through the 7th grade, most years I was the only one in my grade. There were a few kids in camp near my age to play with.

There was a class distinction in camp. Children were counseled by parents not to hang around or enter the two bunkhouses, where they could be exposed to the hardened life and manners of the

single laborers. Some of us boys ignored that. The upper class consisted of the manager and the superintendent. They lived in very nice homes, even equipped with electric ranges in the kitchens. The manager's home was a large two story frame house with a big rock fireplace. It was built especially for Stephen Birch, the founder of Kennecott Copper Corporation. Single teachers, nurses, engineers, and clerical workers were housed in the staff house and the staff annex, which had a private mess or dining room. There was a nice furnished apartment over the hospital for the doctor if he was a family man. The middle class consisted mostly of families, whose menfolk worked at technical jobs or were foremen of various facilities around camp. All houses of the upper class and some houses of the middle class had indoor plumbing and steam heat. The lower class included single men who did all kinds of jobs and lived in the bunkhouses, which had indoor plumbing and steam heat. There were both white collar and blue collar workers in the middle and lower class. The single men in the bunkhouses had a reading room, pool room, and a card room for recreation.

The staff people liked kids. I was treated fine, I pretty much had the run of the camp, with my father on staff as master mechanic. I would visit the tram house, mill, flotation and leaching plants, as well as the power plant and machine shops. I had a special friend who was an operator in the power plant, Leo Higley. He would let me blow the whistle at noon. He taught me how to read the dials on the big electrical switchboard, and how to start small steam pumps, prior to starting the big steam turbines. Another special friend was an electrician, Wes Bloom. I went around with him and helped oil all the electric motors, from the tram house all the way down through the mill and flotation plants every Sunday. The noises were quite deafening in the tram house, where the ore was dumped from the tram buckets into two big Buchanan jaw crushers. The mill below the tram house was also quite noisy with disk crushers, a Traylor roller mill, vibrating screens, conveyor belt, Hancock jigs, a steel ball mill and the 39 concentration tables. There was the smell of chemicals in the flotation and leaching plants. The power house was noisy and smelled of oil and steam from the diesel engines, steam pumps, turbines, and boilers.

My activities in the summer included trips with my father to McCarthy and Green Butte, Dan Creek, Chititu Creek, and Baultoff Lake. We skied and tobogganed on the glacier in the winter. We could also ice skate on the rink by the school. The only special school activity I can remember was a special Christmas Program. Each year under the direction of our teacher we kids put on a Christmas program in the social hall. The company gave us kids nice Christmas presents. One year we received roller

skates and we skated in the social hall. I also recall seeing silent motion pictures in the social hall.

Orientals were employed at the bunkhouses to cook, serve meals and clean. There was one Japanese fellow, we called "Jimmy the Bed Bug Chaser". We boys could always beg some candy from him at the bunkhouse next to the company store. He spoke very little English, and had Japanese newspapers in his room. The Orientals also operated a laundry at Kennecott, which provided services for the staff house, hospital, staff house annex and dining room, the bunkhouses and even some private cottages.

Some Happenings and Experiences at Camp

The company store and post office was a focal or central place that everyone in camp came to and as children we went there often. There was a storage room for canned goods, a candy storeroom and tobacco storeroom., where there was as much snoose as smoking tobacco. The store stocked dry goods and machinery parts for the mill and mine. One room in the store contained the C.R. & N.W. RR telephone. This single telephone line paralleled the railroad all the way down to Cordova.

I remember running up to the company store at noon one day. A big German shepherd dog took off after me and bit me on the rump. The man who owned the dog worked at the company store. He was aware of what happened but made little of it. I ran home bawling, interrupting my father's lunch. I dropped my pants, my parents were not happy with what they saw. Father took me down to the Superintendent's cottage. I was told to drop my pants again for show and tell. Father informed the Superintendent that if the dog wasn't out of camp by sundown, he would shoot it. I then went to the hospital for stitches. The man who owned the dog was very cool toward us after that.

One Saturday in the month of January, I experienced a real bad bellyache. The doctor was called to come up to our house. After three trips up the hill, he decided I had a bad appendix and his lungs were getting frosted hiking up the hill from the hospital. My father made a phone call and had a company truck come up to the house and take me down to the hospital. Father didn't like the doctor. He felt the doctor drank too much and didn't want him to operate. Eventually father relented, but before they could perform the operation, they had to call for a third nurse from McCarthy who had been an R.N. She had to be brought up by dog team and sometime in the wee hours of the morning they operated on me. When I woke up, my gangrene appendix was in a bottle of formaldehyde by my bed. I had many visitors and laughed so hard I burst my stitches. I was in the hospital for two weeks.

One summer during the depression my mother and sister made a trip outside, thus father and I were bachelors. There was mechanical trouble at the Bonanza Mine, which required him to go to the mine and stay a few days. He didn't want to leave me alone but I was not allowed to ride the tram, so we walked up to the mine. We stayed in a bunkhouse at the Bonanza Mine. The next day the mine foreman (Bob Sullivan) took us inside the mine. We rode the Bonanza skip down several hundred feet. You had to lay down in the skip car to ride in it. We got off the skip and walked through a long tunnel and came out the other side of the mountain at the Jumbo Mine. We returned to Bonanza the way we came and when my father had finished his work we walked back down the mountain to Kennecott.

I was climbing a ladder to retrieve something from the roof of the superintendent's house one day when the ladder slipped and down I fell. I knew something was wrong with my right arm, but I walked home. Dad took me to the hospital, an x-ray showed I had a broken arm. The doctor set my fractured arm and put it in a cast. Later he sent my father bill for $250. Dad was so mad, he almost an the doctor out of camp until he adjusted the bill.

During the years I was growing up at camp, I remember a couple of "badger fights". The organizers would spread the word around camp, that they had gotten a "badger" from Seattle. They would have the head carpenter build a box to hold the badger. The box had a door that could be pulled open with a rope. the box was built with two compartments, one for a rabbit and one for a badger. The organizers always picked a newcomer or "cheechako" to referee the fight. The cheechako was dressed up with shin guards, boots, parka and given a hockey stick to keep the badger and dog fighting and away from the audience of men, women and children. The recreation hall was full of people, almost everyone in camp and half of McCarthy came to watch and bet on the badger fight. The organizers would take bets on whether the dog or badger would win. Just as the fight was to start, the superintendent would storm in and say "No badger fighting and gambling will be tolerated. Everyone get out.". A terrible argument would erupt between the organizers and the super. Then half of the crowd would jeer the super. Finally the organizers would grab the superintendent, rush him out of the recreation hall and throw him in a snow bank. Then the badger fight would start. The cheechako and any people who were not in the "know" were excited and scared. The dog was turned loose and ran up to the box and nearly tore it up barking and smelling the badger. Then a lot of men surrounded the box making a circle about 20 feet in diameter. The cheechako with the hockey club was instructed to keep the badger away from getting him or any of the men, women and children.

He was given the rope to pull open the door so the badger could come out. The dog was frantically barking and everyone was getting him more excited. When the time came, the cheechako with the hockey stick was to give the rope a good pull and the fight would be on, but he had to have the hockey stick over his head so he could protect himself from the badger and the dog. When he pulled the door open, on the end of the rope, tied to its handle was a white "commode" (like they had in every house under the bed before they had bathrooms). "AND NO BADGER." You can imagine all the laughter and embarrassment as the "fight" ended with the dog smelling the commode and wondering what became of the rabbit. The crowd broke up early and everyone went home or continued the party elsewhere. The superintendent even slipped in the back door to watch the fight. Of course the super was in consort with the organizers to make his orders and the argument more authentic. It was one form of entertainment and good clean fun at Kennecott in those days.

Troubles on the Trail between McCarthy and Kennecott

One of my schoolmates at the Kennecott school was John Watsjold. He lived in McCarthy, but had to go to school at Kennecott at that time. He would walk up or mush his dog team in the winter. I would accompany him part of the way back to McCarthy to keep him company after school. One afternoon after school I helped John harness up the dogs and we headed down the tracks for McCarthy. I was riding in the sled and John was mushing. About a mile below camp we came upon a miner laying on the trail. He was obviously on his way back to camp after a good time in McCarthy. He was unconscious and "into his cups". We loaded him on the sled and John took him to the Kennecott hospital. I had to walk back alone, but thought nothing of it. It was below zero and dark. The miner was not even wearing mittens - he lost several fingers on each hand from frost bite.

One summer day an ore train left Kennecott for Cordova. At Blackburn, just north of McCarthy, a Kennecott worker was laying across the tracks "into his cups", passed out. The train could not stop before it ran over him. He lost both legs. A train crew could make a telephone call anywhere along the railroad on the single strand line. The train crew called Kennecott, and the company truck was sent down to pick him up. He was dead on arrival at the Kennecott hospital from shock and loss of blood. Early in the evening my father received a phone call from the superintendent. I figured something was up, and tried to tag along with Dad when he left the house. He said no. I ran over to the brow of the hill to watch. Dad went down to one of the bunkhouses and got four men. They walked to the hospital, shortly after they came out of the hospital with a

body on a stretcher and carried it to the carpenter shop, where coffins were stored. There was no such thing as embalming in those days. The man was buried in the Kennecott cemetery, on the wagon road to McCarthy, because next of kin could not afford to have the remains shipped outside. A wagon road paralleled the railroad right of way to McCarthy, in some places it was right on the edge of the glacier.

Another time some Kennecott workers were returning from McCarthy "feeling no pain" on the wagon road in a closed sedan. Just before you got to "Suicide Point", south of the cemetery, there was a hill. The car stalled on the hill, rolled backwards down the hill and over an embankment about eight feet down to the very edge of the glacier. the men were not seriously injured. I suppose due to the fact that they were feeling no pain and were not thrown out of the closed car. I remember visiting the wreck site with my father who proclaimed, "there was nothing wrong with the brakes on that car after the wreck".

A special friend was Art Holt, a locomotive engineer on the Copper River & Northwestern Railroad. when he brought a train to Kennecott, he would always beckon me to come up into the cab of the locomotive to ride while hey switched cars around. This friendship led to "the wild train ride from Kennecott to McCarthy" , a story I have told many times.

The Wild Train Ride

The camp had been closed down for two or three years in the early 1930s. They decided to resume operations in 1935. The company kept a train crew at Kennecott all winter while the railroad was closed down from December to June, to move loaded ore cars to a siding near McCarthy and return some empties every two or three weeks. They would fill cars here at Kennecott in the sacking shed. They would stack the sacks up on the flat cars. When all the cars were loaded, they would take the full ones down to McCarthy and bring a few empties back. The engineer (Art Holt) seemed to think I was a nice kid and he would always beckon me to climb up in the cab while he switched the cars at Kennecott. One day he asked, "Would you like to ride down to McCarthy with me tomorrow?". I said, "Sure." So when the time came I could hardly wait. It was a surprise to me that there were several women and children going along too, because there was limited room in the cab of a steam locomotive. There we were, we started out going down he hill from the camp. There is somewhat of a grade between Kennecott and McCarthy, and for some reason the brakes didn't work on the ore cars. Wow! Soon we were going 70 or 80 miles an hour. McCarthy went by like a blur. There was a big, long trestle at McCarthy that crossed the two forks of the Kennecott River, and we zipped across it. All the time we were plowing about two feet of snow. There

is an upgrade after you get to the other side, just near the Iverson farm and it slowed us down and we stopped. Then we backed up to the siding, dumped the ore cars, and picked up the empties and went back to McCarthy. The women were scared to death. They wouldn't ride the locomotive back with the engineer and crew. I thought the ride was kinda neat. I wasn't scared at all and they certainly gave some thought to throwing us children off in the snow banks on the way down, but they didn't do it. When we got back to camp, word of the wild train ride soon spread over the mukluk telegraph. I had not asked my parents for permission to go. I was grounded at home for some time.

The Final Years at Kennecott

In 1931 copper prices hit bottom, five cents a pound. The Kennecott mines were closed down through 1934. The last general manager, Bevan Presley, left Kennecott. The mill superintendent E.J. Duggan, who had helped design the leaching plant, was appointed general superintendent. The Kennecott mines reopened in 1935, but these were the years of decline, depression and temporary recovery. One compromise was to close down the operation of the railroad during the winter. We moved back up on the hill here we previously had lived. Throughout the winter the company stored the concentrates and high grade ore next to the railroad right of way or at sidings near McCarthy. When spring arrived, over 56,000 sacks of copper concentrates were stacked at camp awaiting shipment to Cordova. Exploratory work resumed at the mines, but no new ore showings were located. The eventual closing of the mines was obvious to the management staff at Kennecott.

Superintendent Duggan left Kennecott to accept the position of mill superintendent at Climax Molybdenum Corporation in Colorado. Walter A. Richelsen, a petty, narrow-minded mining engineer, who had been at Kennecott for many years, was appointed acting superintendent for the last few years. He had no experience in management, supervision or the guidance and overseeing of employees. There was a lot of friction, disharmony and antagonism between my father and Mr. Richelsen on company policies and management decisions. My father and Mr. Richelsen had a big argument about replacing the traveling cable on the Bonanza tram, from the tram house to the angle station and back. This cable was one inch in diameter 16,000 feet long. Rich felt used cable was adequate, my father insisted on new cable. Rich had to OK the order it was so big. My father prevailed and new cable it was.

By 1937, management had reached the decision to close down late in 1938. Tailings from the ammonia leaching plant were dumped between the glacier and the leaching plant by drag line. These tailings

averaged 4 to 6% copper. My father sent a telegraph to Kennecott corporate headquarters in New York, suggesting that these tailings could be run back through the mill, flotation and leaching plants, making some profit for the company. When Mr. Richelsen learned my father had "gone over his head", he displayed a violent outburst of anger , followed by a frenzied rage. His first action was ordering the tailings sluiced down into the Kennecott River. Next, he summarily discharged my father as master mechanic at Kennecott. So that was the end for my father, he had to move my mother, (my sister) Jean and I to Seattle. This occurred in May or June of 1937. My father, who had been at Kennecott for as long a period of time as anyone, left Kennecott forever, two months later. We left virtually all of our household goods in the cottage on the hill at Kennecott.

The mines closed late in the fall of 1938. Equipment of salvageable value, mostly from the power plant and machine shop, was removed and shipped out before the abandonment of the railroad operations. The last train left Kennecott for Cordova November 11, 1938.

NOVEMBER 1991
KENNECOTT KIDS ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

I. GENERAL INFORMATION

1. NAME:
Jean Presley Bowles

2. CURRENT AGE:
69

3. DATE AND PLACE OF BIRTH:
November 14, 1922 Latouche, Alaska

4. WHAT IS YOUR FAMILIES NATIONAL ORIGIN?
Mother and father American, grandparents Danish and English

5. WHAT OCCUPATIONS HAVE YOU BEEN INVOLVED IN MOST OF YOUR LIFE?
Book publishing, New York City, New York

6. IMMEDIATE FAMILY NAMES:
FATHER Bevan Presley
MOTHER Margaret Thaanum Presley
SISTERS none
BROTHER David Bevan Presley
OTHERS LIVING WITH YOU WHILE IN KENNECOTT:

7. WHERE DID YOU LIVE BEFORE MOVING TO KENNECOTT?
Latouche, Alaska

8. WHAT OCCUPATION WAS YOUR FAMILY

INVOLVED IN BEFORE MOVING TO KENNECOTT?
My father was superintendent of the Kennecott mines on Latouche Island. He was a mining engineer. He had known Alaska since his teens; he worked on boats out of Seattle, prospected, and helped build Hinchenbrook Lighthouse (summer work before graduating university).

9. WHY DID YOU/YOUR FAMILY MOVE TO KENNECOTT AND HOW WAS THE MOVE MADE?
My father was made manager/superintendent of Kennecott. Of course, our move was made via Alaska Steamship Co. and the Copper River and Northwestern Railroad!

10. WHAT YEARS DID YOU LIVE IN KENNECOTT AND WHAT WAS YOUR AGE AT THE TIME?
From (summer, I think) 1929 to spring 1932, ages seven through ten (when we left).

11. WHAT ROLE DID YOU PLAY IN THE KENNECOTT COMMUNITY?
"one of the gang"

A. WHAT WAS YOUR FATHER'S ROLE/ OCCUPATION?
Manager/superintendent, mining engineer. My parents hiked, skied, vegetable gardened, took pictures, developed, and printed them, played bridge, and read a lot.

B. WHAT WAS YOUR MOTHER'S ROLE/ OCCUPATION?
Housewife and mother

12. WHY DID YOU LEAVE KENNECOTT?
My father was made head of Alaska Steamship Co. (in addition to the mines).

13. WHERE DID YOUR FAMILY GO UPON LEAVING KENNECOTT?
Seattle, Washington

14. WHAT OCCUPATION DID YOUR FAMILY BECOME INVOLVED IN AFTER LEAVING KENNECOTT?
My father died in 1932; my mother died in 1933.

15. WHO, FROM KENNECOTT, HAVE YOU KEPT IN TOUCH WITH OVER THE YEARS?
Inger Jensen Ricci, Nell Nicklas McCann (she was my father's secretary), Robert Mooney family, Vickery family, Duggan family.

16. DID YOU ENCOUNTER PEOPLE YOU KNEW FROM KENNECOTT AT OTHER MINING TOWNS OR MINES? IF YES, WHO AND WHERE?

II. HOUSING

1. WHERE DID YOU LIVE WHILE IN KENNECOTT?
The big white square house straight up the hill from the office, beside National Creek Falls; it was destroyed by the people who acquired surface mineral rights in the late '50s-early '60s. The assistant superintendent/manager's house was also destroyed.

2. LIVING ACCOMMODATIONS
   A. PLEASE DESCRIBE YOUR HOUSE IN SUCH A WAY AS TO COVER THE NUMBER AND TYPES OF ROOMS, FLOOR AND WALL COVERINGS, SOURCE OF HEAT, POWER OR LIGHT, PLUMBING, HOUSING COSTS, ETC. (anything you recall will be helpful).
   Downstairs: Living room with stone fireplace with hygrade copper insets (carved); dining room; kitchen; "back porch"—laundry tubs, machine. Also big guest bedroom and complete bath—this was for important company guests, VIPs from Kennecott Copper Co.

   Upstairs: Long hall with four bedrooms and large bathroom.

   Attic: Accessible by ladder through trap door in hallway (hot and dusty up there, a few old things, trunks, etc.)

   B. WHAT HOUSEHOLD ITEMS DID YOU BRING WITH YOU AND WHICH ONES DID YOU ACQUIRE AT KENNECOTT?
   I believe my family owned only a few special furniture pieces—occasional table, desk, etc., plus our own linens, silver, pictures, books, china, pots and pans. (The super's house was also expected to put up overnight VIP visitors, and I imagine that is why the company provided its furniture, etc.—and also since mine managers/superintendents changed more often than other jobs.)

   C. WHAT ITEMS DID YOU TAKE WITH YOU WHEN YOU LEFT KENNECOTT?
   All our personal stuff.

D. DID THE COMPANY PAY FOR YOU TO MOVE TO OR FROM KENNECOTT?
Yes, I assume so.

3. WHAT TYPES OF ACCOMMODATIONS WERE AVAILABLE FOR SINGLE MEN AND WOMEN?
Others can tell of this. I know I loved visiting the staff house—the men and women who lived there seemed such a fine lot, free and energetic and fun—and they were very good to us children, going skiing, on hikes and picnics, etc.

III. DAILY LIFE

1. WAS YOUR FAMILY A "TYPICAL" FAMILY IN KENNECOTT?
We were all employed by the same company and lived in a company town. We were to that extent one family and we depended otherwise on each other in many ways.

2. HOW WAS THE HOUSEHOLD WORK DIVIDED AMONG FAMILY MEMBERS?
We did a lot together— the dishes, helping clean our rooms, getting wood, shoveling snow, helping in the vegetable garden.

3. WHAT CHORES WERE YOUR RESPONSIBILITY?
I loved going to the store, and my father fastened a sturdy wooden box to a sled to pull our stuff back up the hill.

4. IF YOUR FAMILY MAINTAINED A GARDEN, WHAT WAS GROWN AND HOW WAS IT PRESERVED?
My father had a large vegetable garden on the hillside above National Creek. Turnips were memorable! We pulled them, washed them in the creek, and ate them raw! He also grew beets, radishes, lettuce.

5. WHAT TYPE OF COOKING STOVE WAS USED?
Electric

6. WHAT TYPES OF ITEMS WERE AVAILABLE AT THE COMPANY STORE, INCLUDING FOOD AND CLOTHING?
Depending on who was the buyer in the states for the Company (I learned this later). The stock for "Christmas Shopping" could include costume jewelry, dress shirts and neckties, fancy suspenders, a big variety of toys, decorative pillows. Everyday things such as boots and slickers, tools, shovels, mosquito netting, flashlights, knives, shoelaces, handkerchiefs. Every Saturday my brother

and I spent five cents of our ten cent allowance for a candy bar. It was very hard to choose!

7. WHAT ITEMS WERE NOT AVAILABLE IN KENNECOTT?
Books, phonograph records

8. HOW DID YOU OBTAIN THESE UNAVAILABLE ITEMS?
Ordered from the states (Seattle mostly) or sent by relatives. Of course we ordered things from the Sears-Roebuck catalog. I remember we bought shoes in Cordova when we were going through.

9. IN WHAT WAY WAS THE RAILROAD IMPORTANT TO YOUR LIFE AS A RESIDENT OF KENNECOTT?
Our vital link! Mail, visitors, via "speeder" visits to Long Lake, Iverson's farm, etc.

IV. HEALTH

1. WHICH DOCTORS AND NURSES DO YOU REMEMBER FROM KENNECOTT?
Dr. Wilson (his son, J.W.), nurses "Mickey" and Anne Ball (married Charlie Hooks)

2. HOW OFTEN AND FOR WHAT DID YOU AND YOUR FAMILY USE THE HOSPITAL?
In winter, we had "sunlamp" sessions—once a week, I think. It was the vogue everywhere, I believe, to take the "good" rays!

3. WHICH CHILDHOOD DISEASES DID YOU HAVE AND DID YOU HAVE THEM WHILE LIVING IN KENNECOTT?
We had whooping cough. Apparently we had it already when we started off for the states (a business trip for my father) in 1930 I think. Diagnosed in Seattle, my brother and I were quarantined there, and when we returned to Kennecott, we could not return to school for another week. I remember my brother and I built a lean-to on the hill and retired there every day with sandwiches and books, and pretended we were in Africa of all places!

As a footnote—we had stopped to visit an Indian school near Juneau on the trip south. David and I played with the kids there that day and apparently exposed them to whooping cough, for later on many got the disease. (It can be very serious and there was no vaccination then.) I remember being very scared that someone would die. None did, but I think the Department of the Interior must have been very concerned, too.

V. WORK AND LABOR

1. DID YOU EVER WORK FOR KENNECOTT COPPER CORPORATION AND IF SO, WHAT JOBS DID YOU HOLD?
No. My brother David did, however. He was a "bucket chaser" in the summer of 1937 (see George Sullivan's recollections). He joined the CIO-United Mine and Smelter workers. He lived in the big bunkhouse near the store, along the railroad tracks.

2. PLEASE DESCRIBE ANY JOB AT KENNECOTT WITH WHICH YOU ARE AT ALL FAMILIAR, CONSIDERING DUTIES, PROCESSES, MACHINERY, AND WAGES.
My father really supervised all mine activities. He visited one of the mines once a week and wrote reports; I believe he outlined the work (Jumbo, Bonanza, Mother Lode, Erie) regularly. Of course he was in touch with New York HQ, often by telegram (mail was, of course, slow). He also visited the Latouche operation.

3. WERE YOU EVER AWARE OF ANY LABOR/MANAGEMENT DISPUTES? PLEASE DESCRIBE.
No, not in the mines. Somehow we knew, though, about rumors of organizing the railroad men. After all, the railroad had been built as a private enterprise, but the U.S. owned at least half of it on the basis of the "checkerboard" pattern of awarding federal land for railway systems. The railroad unions were strong in the Lower 48.

4. WERE YOU AWARE OF CERTAIN NATIONALITIES OR ETHNIC GROUPS PREDOMINATING IN SPECIFIC JOBS? WHICH JOBS?
It seems to me that the miners were most often Scandinavian, Slavic, Finnish, Russian, etc.

VI. SCHOOL

1. WHAT YEARS AND GRADES DID YOU ATTEND KENNECOTT SCHOOL?
Years: 1929-1932
Grades: 2, 3, 4

2. PLEASE DESCRIBE YOUR SCHOOL EXPERIENCE, NOTING AVERAGE CLASS SIZE, NUMBER OF TEACHERS, AND OTHER PERTINENT INFORMATION. DO YOU REMEMBER ANY TEACHER IN PARTICULAR?
The whole was two rooms and my "class" was three people, mostly. The teachers I remember were: Leslie Brown, Ruth Waters,

and Bertha Kranz. I liked them all—I thought they were so smart! During third grade we had pen pals in Arizona and exchanged letters on our ways of life! I don't know who inspired this, but it was great fun.

3. DID YOU FEEL EDUCATIONALLY PREPARED UPON LEAVING KENNECOTT SCHOOL, WHY OR WHY NOT?
Yes. In fact, because of the two room schoolhouse background, we were "ahead" of children in the states. The grade school in Seattle wanted to skip my brother one grade, but my parents wisely declined this.

4. WHAT TYPES OF ADULT EDUCATION WERE PROVIDED?
I don't know—maybe first aid?

VI. SOCIAL LIFE AND RECREATION

1. WHAT TYPES OF SOCIAL ACTIVITIES DID YOU ENGAGE IN WHILE AT KENNECOTT? (dances, parties, etc.)
All ages went to dances (monthly?) and movies (silents, Saturday nights). The parents played bridge (in our house or others). We had others in for dinner occasionally. We made candy, did jigsaw puzzles. The Christmas program and tree and presents were memorable. The miners were very generous—a fund was got up for the presents—I often asked if they weren't "lonesome" for their families. (My impression was that they were saving up to go home—someone must have indicated this to me, probably my parents—although it sounds very "idealistic." On the other hand, we were not "protected" from other real-life happenings: the garage man going slightly nuts (cabin fever?) and being packed on the train to be sent to a hospital in the states—I remember seeing this event. And a suicide in McCarthy, a man I liked a lot, he chopped the tires on his truck, ranting and raving (they said), and then shot himself in view of his wife and kids. Of course we heard about fights in the bunkhouse and drunkenness and brawls in McCarthy.

2. WERE THESE ACTIVITIES PRIVATE, COMPANY OR SCHOOL SPONSORED?
The company must have provided the silent movies and contributed to the Christmas event, but I am not sure.

3. WITH WHOM DID YOUR FAMILY SOCIALIZE (examples: mine workers, mill workers, administrative staff members, families with children in your age group, single people, married couples with no children)?

My parents did things with other couples—or as families—(sledding, skiing) hikes, skating, tennis with groups, singles, kids, etc.

4. HOW DID SINGLE MEN AND WOMEN FIT INTO THE SOCIAL ORGANIZATION?
Every way, I remember. I got the impression they all enjoyed their lives in Kennecott.

5. WHAT TYPES OF RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES WERE AVAILABLE TO THE RESIDENTS OF KENNECOTT?
Skating rink, tennis courts, community hall (games?), dances, movies, baseball games.

VII. OTHER INFORMATION

1. DID YOU TRAVEL AT ALL WHILE LIVING IN KENNECOTT?
Yes, we visited the relatives in Seattle when my father was obliged to go there for business.

A. DID YOU TRAVEL LOCALLY, HOW OFTEN, FOR WHAT PURPOSE AND WHAT WAS THE METHOD OF TRAVEL?
We also took a trip on the Richardson Highway (Tonsina, Copper Center, on down to Valdez) with 2 automobiles and two drivers—our family and the Duggan family. It was summer and we fished and hiked etc. We stayed in Valdez and visited friends.

B. DID YOU MAKE TRIPS TO THE CONTINENTAL U.S. HOW OFTEN, FOR WHAT PURPOSE AND WHAT WAS THE METHOD OF TRAVEL?
As above—to Seattle (Alaska Steamship Co.) every other year, I think.

2. WHAT WAS THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN KENNECOTT AND MCCARTHY?
Company Town (camp) and "wide open, free town" Federal law was in McCarthy—U.S. marshal and a jail! Also, "free" women, ice cream cones and sodas, roadhouses, prospectors, explorers!

JEAN PRESLEY BOWLES

Preface to Answers

I have always referred to Kennecott as "camp"— as in "mining camp." It is strange to hear it referred to as a "town." To me, McCarthy was a town.

In more realistic terms (and as it actually was) Kennecott was a "company town"—the difference

being that anyone could choose to live in McCarthy, but not anyone could live in Kennecott. People were employed by Kennecott, the Company. There were no jobs or housing for people not connected with the Kennecott Copper Corporation.

In some ways, and especially for the children growing up in Kennecott, it was like being in a big family. We, the children, could not get lost! It was pretty certain that everyone else in Camp knew who we were and knew our names, who are parents were, and where we lived. Because we were not a large number (20 to 30) we tended to do things together—all ages, both sexes, according to interest, in big groups or small. Occasionally, there were feuds, teasing, jealousies, "fights."

Our activities were mainly outdoors whatever the season, and there was never a great emphasis on toys or "things." We had sleds and skates, balls, flashlights, jack knives and hatchets, skis, snowshoes. We made up some of our games. Pony Express, Cowboys and Indians. We built log cabins and lean-tos and brush teepees. The games were close to real life. We also played baseball, built snow forts, and had mighty battles, made snow tunnels, went exploring on hikes to the Glacier and up the mountains, and had trap lines. We greatly admired, of which there were only two, I think, in Kennecott. We knew the wildlife around us: various birds, ptarmigan, coyotes, and possum, etc. We went berry picking down the railroad tracks and were on the lookout for bears (running rapidly the other way if we thought we heard them in the bushes!).

I liked meeting the trains in summer, although I remember thinking it odd that people wanted to take the trip to Kennecott and look around Camp at how we "lived."

I did not feel deprived of anything—though dreaming of the bright goods in the Sears Roebuck catalog. I did not think our lives were "hard" because of either weather or work, although I did feel sorry for the men who worked down in the mines, that work was hard and noisy and dangerous. I thought my life was wonderful and fun. I think we all loved school—I know I did. I thought our teachers were bright and lively. I thought we always knew all the news—my parents didn't seem to gossip, but would I know! My father did tell us about the mines and how things worked—he loved his work and conveyed his great interest in it, and in the rugged country as well. Both my mother and father told us about life outside Kennecott, when they were growing up in Seattle, and we visited there ourselves. That always made me glad to return—I felt safe in Kennecott and it was my home.

I found it exciting to visit—even just 200 miles away in Cordova. I remember thinking I wished Kennecott also had salt water and docks and fishing

boats! I had loved that part of life living on Latouche Island where I was born. In Cordova, I realized people did a lot of different things other than mining—there was a real newspaper, and different types of stores (not just one), and a movie house that even showed "talkies." There were a lot more children, a bigger school. But I did not want to live there. There were even restaurants in Cordova—the owner-cook of the Chinese restaurant was a friend of my mother. He had cooked at the University of Washington. She was very fond of him. In summer he cooked for the railroad repair crews (parked on a siding with caboose, dining and sleeping cars), and I remember stopping by in a speeder when he gave us a sack full of his huge sugar cookies.

We knew that we were special in Alaska—at least I did—that we were a territory under the federal government. We were remarkably patriotic—I don't think anyone could have had a more typically noisy and happy Fourth of July celebration—flags, costumes, cap pistols, a ball game, 3-legged and potato-sack races, ice cream, and pie eating contests.

When I went to register for my first vote, I was 21 and seeking my fortune in New York City (1944). I turned in my application form and the woman at the desk looked up and said "naturalization papers?" I was astonished and laughed, but then recovered and replied "I was purchased in 1868; Alaska is a territory." The registrars were embarrassed, but nevertheless one went off to call City Hall, since they could not find a qualification in the voting law. The woman came back with smiling apologies, happily accepted, and I was signed up. It was not until Statehood, of course, that citizens living in Alaska could vote there, although they were paying income taxes. Like all the others before them, it was "taxation without representation."

I celebrated when Statehood came by taking my first journey back to Alaska, including a trip to Kennecott where the mill was still fully standing in all its red glory. I returned with my husband on another trip in 1984 and it still felt like "going home."

Jean Bowles
November 1991

ROY'S KODAK PARTY

This information concerning the photograph was from Nell Nicklas McCann—in a visit to her in Fairbanks in 1984.

Roy Omura was "houseboy" at the staff house in Kennecott. (Houseboy was a name applied to Japanese or Filipino servants on the Pacific Coast in the '20s and '30s.) Roy did the chores—cleaning

and tidying, I suppose—and perhaps he also waited table at the staff dining room, which was in a separate building.

Roy was also interested in photography. In 1930 there was a promotion by the Kodak Company for their film, and the Company gave away their Brownie cameras to kids all over the U.S. The Brownie was a snappy brown, simple box camera, with grainy-textured covering to simulate leather. Somehow, we all got cameras, apparently through Roy, and he gave up a party to celebrate!

You can see that we all got dressed up on a summer's day, and Roy took this picture of us on the steps of the staff house. We had lemonade and cookies.

Jean Bowles
November 1991

KENNECOTT KIDS ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

I. GENERAL INFORMATION

1. NAME:
William D. Douglass

2. CURRENT AGE:
73

3. DATE AND PLACE OF BIRTH:
December 17, 1917 Kennecott, Alaska

4. WHAT IS YOUR FAMILIES NATIONAL ORIGIN?
Father Scotch/English, Mother born in Ireland

5. WHAT OCCUPATIONS HAVE YOU BEEN INVOLVED IN MOST OF YOUR LIFE?
Lawyer since 1942

6. IMMEDIATE FAMILY NAMES:
FATHER William Crawford Douglass
MOTHER Mabel Dixon Douglass
SISTERS Jean, Sheila, and Nancy Douglass
BROTHERS half brother James Douglass never lived in Alaska
OTHERS LIVING WITH YOU WHILE IN KENNECOTT: Loretta Hallett, a nurse friend of my mother who acted as our nanny

7. WHERE DID YOU LIVE BEFORE MOVING TO KENNECOTT?
Born there

8. WHAT OCCUPATION WAS YOUR FAMILY INVOLVED IN BEFORE MOVING TO KENNECOTT?
Mining in Butte, Montana

9. WHY DID YOU/YOUR FAMILY MOVE TO KENNECOTT AND HOW WAS THE MOVE MADE?
My father was offered the job of mine foreman

10. WHAT YEARS DID YOU LIVE IN KENNECOTT AND WHAT WAS YOUR AGE AT THE TIME? December 1917 until September 1929

11. WHAT ROLE DID YOU PLAY IN THE KENNECOTT COMMUNITY?
That of a child going to school

A. WHAT WAS YOUR FATHER'S ROLE/ OCCUPATION?
Mine foreman, then superintendent of all operations. Mining engineer graduate of the Colorado School of Mines, Golden, Colorado, 1911.

B. WHAT WAS YOUR MOTHER'S ROLE/ OCCUPATION?
Housewife. Former registered nurse in Butte, Montana for the Anaconda Corporation.

12. WHY DID YOU LEAVE KENNECOTT?
September 1929

13. WHERE DID YOUR FAMILY GO UPON LEAVING KENNECOTT?
Seattle, then La Jolla, CA and San Diego, CA, ultimately Kimberley, Nevada

14. WHAT OCCUPATION DID YOUR FAMILY BECOME INVOLVED IN AFTER LEAVING KENNECOTT?
Copper mining in Kimberley, Nevada

12. WHO, FROM KENNECOTT, HAVE YOU KEPT IN TOUCH WITH OVER THE YEARS?
No one

13. DID YOU ENCOUNTER PEOPLE YOU KNEW FROM KENNECOTT AT OTHER MINING TOWNS OR MINES?
No

IF YES, WHO AND WHERE?

II. HOUSING

1. WHERE DID YOU LIVE WHILE IN KENNECOTT?
In the house next door to the staff house along side and below the mill and about 150 feet from the canyon. I understand it has burned down.

2. LIVING ACCOMMODATIONS:

A. PLEASE DESCRIBE YOUR HOUSE IN SUCH A WAY AS TO COVER THE NUMBER AND TYPES OF ROOMS, FLOOR AND WALL COVERINGS, SOURCE OF HEAT, POWER OR LIGHT, PLUMBING, HOUSING COSTS, ETC. (anything you recall will be helpful).
Steam heat, four bedrooms, two baths, kitchen, dining room, living room, carpets—all free to my father as part of his salary. One of the two houses that had steam heat, running toilets inside, and other so-called luxuries. Most of the other family houses were equipped with outside toilets and only a few had steam heat which, with the offices, hospital, bunk houses, store, and school, were connected to the central steam plant. The steam plant was powered by diesel engines and a steam turbine which generated the electricity. The working men paid $25-30 per month for room and board in the bunk houses, as I recall.

B. WHAT HOUSEHOLD ITEMS DID YOU BRING WITH YOU AND WHICH ONES DID YOU ACQUIRE AT KENNECOTT?
Don't know—I believe the house was furnished by the company and we bought new furniture when we arrived in Nevada.

C. WHAT ITEMS DID YOU TAKE WITH YOU WHEN YOU LEFT KENNECOTT?
Everything in the way of [furniture furnishings?], appliances

D. DID THE COMPANY PAY TO MOVE YOU TO OR FROM KENNECOTT?
Don't know

3. WHAT TYPES OF ACCOMMODATIONS WERE AVAILABLE FOR SINGLE MEN AND WOMEN?
Bunk house for blue collar, staff house for white collar.

III. DAILY LIFE

1. WAS YOUR FAMILY A "TYPICAL" FAMILY IN KENNECOTT?
IN WHAT WAYS?
Yes, except my father was the Boss.

2. HOW WAS THE HOUSEHOLD WORK DIVIDED AMONG FAMILY MEMBERS?
Somewhat, see #3

3. WHAT CHORES WERE YOUR RESPONSIBILITY?
Garbage, feeding animals, picking up room, making my bed.

4. IF YOUR FAMILY MAINTAINED A GARDEN, WHAT WAS GROWN AND HOW WAS IT PRESERVED?
Rhubarb, lettuce, radishes, potatoes.

5. WHAT TYPE OF COOKING STOVE WAS USED?
Electric

6. WHAT TYPES OF ITEMS WERE AVAILABLE AT THE COMPANY STORE, INCLUDING FOOD AND CLOTHING?
Fresh fruit, canned goods, fresh vegetables (most of the time). Dry goods, socks, shoes, work clothes.

7. WHAT ITEMS WERE NOT AVAILABLE IN KENNECOTT?
Children's clothing, sporting goods, women's ware, suits

A. HOW DID YOU OBTAIN THESE UNAVAILABLE ITEMS?
Mail order and catalogs—L.L. Bean, shopping services

8. IN WHAT WAY WAS THE RAILROAD IMPORTANT TO YOUR LIFE AS A RESIDENT OF KENNECOTT?
It was an event every Wednesday and weekend when the train arrived. In summer lots of tourists toured the facilities. All our contact with the outside world.

IV. HEALTH

1. WHICH DOCTORS AND NURSES DO YOU REMEMBER FROM KENNECOTT?
Doctors Gillespie, Peterson. No nurses remembered.

2. HOW OFTEN AND FOR WHAT DID YOU AND YOUR FAMILY USE THE HOSPITAL?
Birth of children, father's appendicitis operation, cuts, bruises, insect bites.

3. WHICH CHILDHOOD DISEASES DID YOU HAVE AND DID YOU HAVE THEM WHILE LIVING IN KENNECOTT?
Colds mostly—no contagious diseases because of [Detention?] House and no contact with tourists.

4. HOW WERE MAJOR AND MINOR ILLNESSES AND INJURIES HANDLED?
In the hospital just like now.

5. OTHER THAN KENNECOTT, WHAT HEALTH PROFESSIONALS WERE AVAILABLE IN THE REGION, INCLUDING MCCARTHY, CHITINA, CORDOVA AND VALDEZ?
None that I recall

6. DID PEOPLE FROM THESE OTHER TOWNS COME TO KENNECOTT FOR MEDICAL TREATMENT AND DID PEOPLE FROM KENNECOTT GO ELSEWHERE FOR TREATMENT?
I don't recall any outsiders getting treatment.

V. WORK AND LABOR

1. DID YOU EVER WORK FOR KENNECOTT COPPER CORPORATION AND IF SO, WHAT JOBS DID YOU HOLD?
No

2. PLEASE DESCRIBE ANY JOB AT KENNECOTT WITH WHICH YOU WERE AT ALL FAMILIAR, CONSIDERING DUTIES, PROCESSES, MACHINERY, AND WAGES.
Miners were paid about four dollars per day—some did contract work and earned more. My father ultimately paid $800 per month, plus free house, utilities, etc. He left Kennecott for a three year contract in Kimberley, Nevada for $30,000 plus a company car and free housing in a five bedroom house which was built to his specifications by the company, Consolidated Copper Mines. The mine closed in 1930, he was paid off the balance of his contract in cash in 1931, and we left for California.

3. WERE YOU EVER AWARE OF ANY LABOR/MANAGEMENT DISPUTES? PLEASE DESCRIBE.
There were several serious strikes in the early 1920s and my father was instrumental in their settlement.

4. WERE YOU AWARE OF CERTAIN NATIONALITIES OR ETHNIC GROUPS PREDOMINATING IN SPECIFIC JOBS? WHICH JOBS?
Lots of Swedes, other Scandinavian people, "Cousin Jacks" (Welshmen).

VI. SCHOOL

1. WHAT YEARS AND GRADES DID YOU ATTEND KENNECOTT SCHOOL?
First through seventh (just started).

2. PLEASE DESCRIBE YOUR SCHOOL EXPERIENCE NOTING AVERAGE CLASS

SIZE, NUMBER OF TEACHERS AND OTHER PERTINENT INFORMATION. DO YOU REMEMBER ANY TEACHER IN PARTICULAR?
Only child in my class, then in fifth grade joined by Sonny (Nels) Konnerup, so there were two in fifth and sixth grade. Two teachers for the entire school—two rooms with cloak room (where we kept our skates) and rest rooms in between. School ran from nine to twelve with a 15 minute recess, then one to three thirty with recess. Skating during recess and after school in winter, and almost every night under lights after dinner.

3. DID YOU FEEL EDUCATIONALLY PREPARED UPON LEAVING KENNECOTT SCHOOL, WHY OR WHY NOT?
Yes—good teaching by our one on one leaders, tough lessons and report cards, gold and silver stars for outstanding achievement.

4. WHAT TYPES OF ADULT EDUCATION WERE PROVIDED?
Regular grade school, nothing beyond eighth grade. I think the only adult education was by mail order.

VI. SOCIAL LIFE AND RECREATION

1. WHAT TYPES OF SOCIAL ACTIVITIES DID YOU ENGAGE IN WHILE AT KENNECOTT? (dances, parties, etc.)
School program at Christmas, baseball games in summer, skating in winter, including hockey games between intra-mural teams, hunting, fishing, and horseback riding.

2. WERE THESE ACTIVITIES PRIVATE, COMPANY OR SCHOOL SPONSORED?
Private and company sponsored.

3. WITH WHOM DID YOUR FAMILY SOCIALIZE (examples: mine workers, mill workers, administrative staff members, families with children in your age group, single people, married couples with no children)?
The other twenty families in town and their children, staff members, doctors, nurses, teachers. None of the mine workers were considered acceptable for the children to socialize with. There were some exceptions, like John Letendre mentioned in my earlier report who helped us learn trapping.

4. HOW DID SINGLE MEN AND WOMEN FIT INTO THE SOCIAL ORGANIZATION?
There weren't many and I don't believe it was easy for them.

5. WHAT TYPES OF RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES WERE AVAILABLE TO THE RESIDENTS OF KENNECOTT?
Movies Wednesday and Saturday nights, lending library, see #1.
A big item to Loretta and my mother was picking the local berries, especially currant and raspberry, in July\August and making jellies and jam for storage and use in winter. When we left in 1929 one of the items we took with us were several hundred jars of these. We had to be wary of the local bears when we picked because they, too, loved to eat these berries.

VII. OTHER INFORMATION

1. DID YOU TRAVEL AT ALL WHILE LIVING IN KENNECOTT?
To Strelna on summer vacations. United States in 1922, 1924, and 1927—three months each to Seattle and then to New York to visit grandparents.

   A. DID YOU TRAVEL LOCALLY, HOW OFTEN, FOR WHAT PURPOSE AND WHAT WAS THE METHOD OF TRAVEL?
   To McCarthy for Fourth of July celebration with floats. To various lakes and rivers for fishing and picnics.

   B. DID YOU MAKE TRIPS TO THE CONTINENTAL U.S. HOW OFTEN, FOR WHAT PURPOSE AND WHAT WAS THE METHOD OF TRAVEL?
   See 1A

2. WHAT WAS THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN KENNECOTT AND MCCARTHY?
Distant—except for use of dog sleds and entertainment of males when they could get there for the prostitutes, drinking, etc. No booze in Kennecott store. Our music teacher came from McCarthy where her husband Jack O'Neil ran the hardware store.

3. IS THERE ANY TOPIC OMITTED ABOVE THAT YOU WOULD LIKE TO ADDRESS?
See my earlier report dated 3/25/76. Dark almost 24 hours in mid-winter; light almost 24 hours in summer. Mosquitoes terrible after snow melted until late July. All open areas control burned after snow melted and it dried out as a fire precaution about June every year. Huge glacier lake formed every spring between railroad and edge of glacier in "pot hole," approximately one-half mile long and one-quarter mile wide—as melting continued, one day the blockage would collapse and lake would disappear in a few days causing flood waters below.

Many of the men (who could afford it) invested in the stock market (daily telegraph provided stock quotations) and occasionally someone would hit a big winner and leave Kennecott to spend his suddenly acquired wealth.

My father had accumulated approximately $250,000 in Blue Ribbon stock in 1929 and, due to the Depression starting with Black Friday September/October 1929, saw his small fortune dwindle to about $50,000 in 1931 when we left Nevada—still a lot of money in those times.

Once or twice I recall mail order brides showing up on the train to seek out a lonely miner who had written them as a result of magazine ads. They were immediately exported by the Company on the return train. Several winters the railroad was covered by snowslides and we had no train for two or three months. A lottery was run for guessing the time and date of the first train in. We ran low on perishable foods and there was no mail.

The Company maintained a closed-line telephone system between offices and plant. My father's house had a bell ringing instrument—one long ring and two short rings were his call. Twice a week he would put on heavy clothing and ride the bucket tramway to the mines—approximately 30 minutes/5,000 feet in the open over canyons several thousand feet deep—for his inspection of operations, discussions with the miners and their foreman. He always wore a coat and necktie to the office or on these trips.

It was terribly cold at times in the winter, sometimes as low as 30 degrees below zero and we were not allowed outside even to go to school. Normally in winter about zero to ten below zero. Snow 4-5 feet deep in the town.

We had a dog (Australian shepherd) named Joe and a large gray cat who lived inside companionably and were house trained. Occasionally, a sled dog or two would escape from its tethered post in McCarthy and invade Kennecott. Everyone was ordered indoors and the men got out their rifles because these big dogs were considered extremely dangerous to man and beast.

KENNECOTT KIDS ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

I. GENERAL INFORMATION

1. NAME:
Sheila Douglass Ristine

2. CURRENT AGE:
68

3. DATE AND PLACE OF BIRTH:
August 18, 1922 Kennecott, Alaska

4. WHAT IS YOUR FAMILIES NATIONAL ORIGIN?
Father of Scotch descent and mother Irish.

5. WHAT OCCUPATIONS HAVE YOU BEEN INVOLVED IN MOST OF YOUR LIFE?
Retailing

6. IMMEDIATE FAMILY NAMES:
FATHER William Crawford Douglass
MOTHER Mabel Dixon Douglass
SISTERS Jean Douglass Girard and Nancy Douglass Clobber
BROTHERS William Dixon Douglass
OTHERS LIVING WITH YOU WHILE IN KENNECOTT: Retta Hallet

7. WHERE DID YOU LIVE BEFORE MOVING TO KENNECOTT?
I was born in Kennecott.

8. WHAT OCCUPATION WAS YOUR FAMILY INVOLVED IN BEFORE MOVING TO KENNECOTT?
Father was a mining engineer. Mother was a registered nurse.

9. WHY DID YOU/YOUR FAMILY MOVE TO KENNECOTT AND HOW WAS THE MOVE MADE?
Father was hired by Kennecott Copper Corp.

10. WHAT YEARS DID YOU LIVE IN KENNECOTT AND WHAT WAS YOUR AGE AT THE TIME?
From birth until about 7 - 1922-1929

11. WHAT ROLE DID YOU PLAY IN THE KENNECOTT COMMUNITY?
Small child

A. WHAT WAS YOUR FATHER'S ROLE/ OCCUPATION?
I believe he was a Shift Boss when he went there and then became Assistant Manager

B. WHAT WAS YOUR MOTHER'S ROLE/ OCCUPATION?
Housewife-homemaker

12. WHY DID YOU LEAVE KENNECOTT?
Father took another job with a copper company.

13. WHERE DID YOUR FAMILY GO UPON LEAVING KENNECOTT?
Kimberley, Nevada

14. WHAT OCCUPATION DID YOUR FAMILY BECOME INVOLVED IN AFTER LEAVING KENNECOTT?
Remained in mining engineering, although switched to gold from copper.

12. WHO, FROM KENNECOTT, HAVE YOU KEPT IN TOUCH WITH OVER THE YEARS?
I have kept in touch with no one. My father (now deceased) and my stepmother have exchanged Christmas cards and notes with Emily Peterson, wife of one of the Kennecott doctors, for many years. They also kept in touch with others but I have not heard of others in recent years.

13. DID YOU ENCOUNTER PEOPLE YOU KNEW FROM KENNECOTT AT OTHER MINING TOWNS OR MINES?
I do not remember any.

IF YES, WHO AND WHERE?

II. HOUSING

1. WHERE DID YOU LIVE WHILE IN KENNECOTT?
In one of the staff cottages fairly near to the canyon and to the hospital, as I recall.

2. LIVING ACCOMMODATIONS:

A. PLEASE DESCRIBE YOUR HOUSE IN SUCH A WAY AS TO COVER THE NUMBER AND TYPES OF ROOMS, FLOOR AND WALL COVERINGS, SOURCE OF HEAT, POWER OR LIGHT, PLUMBING, HOUSING COSTS, ETC. (anything you recall will be helpful). I do not remember much about our house except that it was one story I think and kind of rambling. And I think it was white with green trim.

B. WHAT HOUSEHOLD ITEMS DID YOU BRING WITH YOU AND WHICH ONES DID YOU ACQUIRE AT KENNECOTT?
I do not know.

C. WHAT ITEMS DID YOU TAKE WITH YOU WHEN YOU LEFT KENNECOTT?
I do not remember.

D. DID THE COMPANY PAY TO MOVEYOU TO OR FROM KENNECOTT?
I do not know.

3. WHAT TYPES OF ACCOMMODATIONS WERE AVAILABLE FOR SINGLE MEN AND WOMEN?
There were bunkhouses for the men. I think the only woman would have been the school teacher and I do not know where she lived.

III. DAILY LIFE

1. WAS YOUR FAMILY A "TYPICAL" FAMILY IN KENNECOTT? IN WHAT WAYS?
I do not know.

2. HOW WAS THE HOUSEHOLD WORK DIVIDED AMONG FAMILY MEMBERS?
I do not remember.

3. WHAT CHORES WERE YOUR RESPONSIBILITY?
I do not remember any.

4. IF YOUR FAMILY MAINTAINED A GARDEN, WHAT WAS GROWN AND HOW WAS IT PRESERVED?
I do not remember.

5. WHAT TYPE OF COOKING STOVE WAS USED?
I do not know.

6. WHAT TYPES OF ITEMS WERE AVAILABLE AT THE COMPANY STORE, INCLUDING FOOD AND CLOTHING?
I do not remember about food. I believe most of our clothing came from Seattle, and I think they probably just had very basic work clothing needs. They must have had appliances because one year when the ship bringing our Christmas presents sank Jean received a waffle iron for Christmas which would have had to come from there.

7. WHAT ITEMS WERE NOT AVAILABLE IN KENNECOTT?
Some of our clothing came form the Personal Shopper at Bests in Seattle. Mother would draw pictures of our feet so they would be able to know the size. I also think perhaps we got our "shoe pacs" from LL. Bean. We had animal skin parkas (we always called them "Parkeys") and I don't know where we got them, but locally I believe.

A. HOW DID YOU OBTAIN THESE UNAVAILABLE ITEMS?
see above

DUTIES, PROCESSES, MACHINERY, AND WAGES.
Not any

3. WERE YOU EVER AWARE OF ANY LABOR/MANAGEMENT DISPUTES? PLEASE DESCRIBE.
No

4. WERE YOU AWARE OF CERTAIN NATIONALITIES OR ETHNIC GROUPS PREDOMINATING IN SPECIFIC JOBS? WHICH JOBS?
All of the cooks in the bunkhouse mess halls were Chinese.

VI. SCHOOL

1. WHAT YEARS AND GRADES DID YOU ATTEND KENNECOTT SCHOOL?
First, I guess.

2. PLEASE DESCRIBE YOUR SCHOOL EXPERIENCE NOTING AVERAGE CLASS SIZE, NUMBER OF TEACHERS AND OTHER PERTINENT INFORMATION. DO YOU REMEMBER ANY TEACHER IN PARTICULAR?
I don't remember.

3. DID YOU FEEL EDUCATIONALLY PREPARED UPON LEAVING KENNECOTT SCHOOL, WHY OR WHY NOT?
I don't remember.

4. WHAT TYPES OF ADULT EDUCATION WERE PROVIDED?
I don't know—would imagine none.

VI. SOCIAL LIFE AND RECREATION

1. WHAT TYPES OF SOCIAL ACTIVITIES DID YOU ENGAGE IN WHILE AT KENNECOTT? (dances, parties, etc.)
I remember hockey games.

2. WERE THESE ACTIVITIES PRIVATE, COMPANY OR SCHOOL SPONSORED?
I don't know.

3. WITH WHOM DID YOUR FAMILY SOCIALIZE (examples: mine workers, mill workers, administrative staff members, families with children in your age group, single people, married couples with no children)?
I don't remember, but I imagine administrative staff members.

4. HOW DID SINGLE MEN AND WOMEN FIT INTO THE SOCIAL ORGANIZATION?

I remember vaguely that the school teachers were always young single women and that they used to get married frequently to the many available men. There were very few single women. I do not remember much about the single men, but I believe that they lived in bunkhouses at the different mines and were not around the town much.

5. WHAT TYPES OF RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES WERE AVAILABLE TO THE RESIDENTS OF KENNECOTT?
Hockey in the winter. We used to have picnics in summer and used to go to Lake Iliamna [sic] swimming. There may have been dances, etc—I don't really remember. We all skated—I remember learning on "double runners" and I believe the rink was lighted so we could skate and have hockey in the evenings. There was a Christmas party for the children, I think—with Santa Clause (played by a gentleman named Jack Conway according to my older sister and brother). I think that might have been a company party. Dad was a hunter - wild sheep, goats, and bear. I believe he shot the 12th largest wild sheep in the world according to someone's (?) record. We had two sheep heads and a goat head which ended up in the Ely Hotel in Nevada. We also had a black bear rug complete with head, teeth, etc. Bill and Jean were taught to shoot when they were very young and both of them had 22's. Rhetta Hallet went to McCarthy every Wednesday for a piano lesson. I think she went on horseback. We always had "McCarthy Salad" on Wednesdays (shredded cabbage and apples). My mother did not like to cook, whereas Rhetta loved to. They made lots of wild current jelly, however; I remember the dripping jelly bags and that the jelly served for company had to be completely clear and sparkly. Rhetta was a registered nurse also—she and my mother had been in training together. She came to Kennecott to be with my mother when Bill was born and was with us, except for a brief period, until she died in Nevada. I believe she became engaged after she came to Kennecott and her fiancee was killed in a rock slide in one of the mines.

VII. OTHER INFORMATION

1. DID YOU TRAVEL AT ALL WHILE LIVING IN KENNECOTT?
I think we went to Seattle once - on leave or furlough - we had a cottage on Lake Washington in Medina.

   A. DID YOU TRAVEL LOCALLY, HOW OFTEN, FOR WHAT PURPOSE AND WHAT WAS THE METHOD OF TRAVEL?

Not often. By "speeder" mentioned above to get to McCarthy, I think. I don't remember how we got to Lake Iliamna, for instance.

B. DID YOU MAKE TRIPS TO THE CONTINENTAL U.S. HOW OFTEN, FOR WHAT PURPOSE AND WHAT WAS THE METHOD OF TRAVEL?
I think to Seattle once on leave. By "speeder" to McCarthy, then by train to Cordova (I think) and by steamer to Seattle.

2. WHAT WAS THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN KENNECOTT AND MCCARTHY?
I don't know

3. IS THERE ANY TOPIC OMITTED ABOVE THAT YOU WOULD LIKE TO ADDRESS?
I remember that there were dog teams chained at certain places. When people brought dogs up from the States they were frequently killed by the malamutes and huskies.

INTERVIEW with CHUCK HERBERT, 1992

Chuck Herbert worked at the Jumbo Mine at Kennecott during the summer of 1929. He was a student at the University of Alaska, Fairbanks and along with fellow student Fred Beeler he hiked and hitch-hiked from Fairbanks to Kennecott looking for summer employment in the underground mines. They had written to Kennecott asking for work but the letter was not answered so they went without any promise of employment.

They were the only Americans at the Jumbo Mine so the camp boss had a tough time finding a place for them in the bunkhouse. All bunks were assigned by nationality and there was no American section. To solve the problem he assigned them bunks between the Greeks and the Italians. There were other Americans at the other mines and many of the people working at the town of Kennecott were Americans.

The Yugoslavians were the best liked group in the camp. The Finns were disliked and not trusted. No other nationalities associated with the Finns and they were said to always carry knives. There was a story of a skip operator who deliberately dropped a loaded skip into the shaft on top of a crew killing them all. All of the victims were Finns. There was very little language problem even though there were a variety of nationalities represented. Most of the workers could speak two or three languages and all were surprisingly well read.

The cooks were all Japanese. The leader of the camp was known as the Bull Cook. If you needed something the Bull Cook could usually get it for you. The Bull Cook also controlled the gambling that took place in the camp.

Gambling was prevalent in all of the camps. There were professional gamblers who made the rounds of the camps then disappeared for a few months to go to other mines in the Lower 48. The games were honest but the professionals were "clever" and had the knack of counting cards and keeping the odds in their favor. If one of the workers won a lot of money gambling he would always leave and usually would not come back. There were no families at the mines but many of the men were married.

The crew leaders were mostly all Irish with the exception of one Greek who was well liked and was a very popular leader. Bosses were called "shifters." Dynamite handlers were called "nippers." One of the hazards was to drill into a live stick of dynamite. The nipper was responsible for counting the shots to prevent this.

Many of the men at the mines stayed there for several years without ever leaving the mines. The work was physically strenuous, but there was plenty of help and the working conditions were considered to be very good. Jobs were rotated and employees were well treated. McCarthy was the place where workers went to have fun. There was no alcohol in the camps or in the mill town. There was only one locomotive in the underground workings. It is probably still underground somewhere. All of the bunkhouses were on the surface. The shaft between the Jumbo and Erie mines was punched through just prior to Herbert's time at the mine. Prior to that the ore was trammed to the haul road that followed the edge of the Kennecott Glacier and hauled on wagons to the mill. Once the shaft was opened the ore was hauled underground to the Jumbo adit and trammed directly to the mill. The Erie mine was not profitable but the change in tramming helped cut some of the cost.

In addition to the copper there was a considerable amount of silver extracted at the smelter. There was very little gold taken out and Herbert does not believe that there is much gold in that area because of the type of mineral formation. He also does not believe that there is very much additional copper in the ground around Kennecott. He worked some on the Green's Creek Mine [Green Butte?] while he was there. Kennecott was operating the Mother Lode Mine when he was there.

SIDE 2 (D) 6-17-90 STORY NIGHT

JANE VICKERY WILSON:

I was probably 12 years old, something like that. My mother said one day, "I think, to my sister and me, I think we better go for a walk, down by the garbage pile, and then walk up the trail and see if we can't find a creek where we can have a picnic some night," my father, mother, my sister and I. So we walked up a ways, maybe 3/4 of a mile or something like that, up the trail. There was a tree across the trail that had fallen down. It was sort of high on the side and my mother ... so we decided to get down and go under the tree. While she (mother) was down getting under the tree, my sister, Debbie and I were looking on the bank there and we saw a bear, right there, it was real close! "Oh Mother, there's a bear, there's a bear!" She thought it was just a big brown dog, he had followed us. She hadn't seen it, so she had to back out and look, and sure enough it was a bear! We knew it was a bear! So she said we better go back home. So my sister, being the youngest, she (Mother) said, "Debbie, you run home and get Daddy cause he'll want to see the bear." So Debbie started running down the trail and I walked with my mother. So we walked along and every once in a while my mother would stop and look, and he was following us. Back about 16 feet or so behind us, but he kept following us. Every time we'd turn around and look, he was coming. There were some rocks so I decided if that bear attacks, I'm going down fighting so I picked up as big a rock as I could hold in my hand and kept on going. Pretty soon we got down to where the trail met the road. Where the old garbage dump was, where the road came up from the store and went up around, so the horses could bring the wagon up from town... By the time we got to the road, there was my dad and Debbie and Inger, and Inger's dog named Pola. When Pola saw the bear, or smelled it, she started to bark and the bear turned around and went shooting back into the woods. But I think that bear was so curious seeing and smelling human beings because he had never been that close people that he just wanted to follow along and see how it was. My mother, being very sensible, she didn't get excited. I suppose she was scared but I didn't know it and I thought, well I'm prepared, Debbie will be safe and that was important! So we got back fine and dandy and Inger got to see the bear too. We never thought about Pola scaring the bear. I think mother thought daddy's got to know what happened. Our name was Vickery, he was called Vic, and Vic's got to know what happened to us if something happened to us, but nothing did. So that was a good story! Absolutely true!

FRED SELTENREICH:

Story pertinent to the occasion! ...River in a boat down at Chitina. Five people went in the river and they never found their bodies. Silt weights you down and you sink and you can't find them. After a couple of months they found one of the bodies floating down there so they took it down to Cordova and laid it out on a slab, course they had the clothes off, no identification. So they called in the people to come and see who it was. A man, woman and daughter went in and she said it looked like her husband and daughter said "yes, that's daddy". Just about the time they were making funeral arrangements, they were ready to walk out and the his mouth flopped open and there was a gold tooth. The woman said "well, that's not my husband" and the daughter said "that's not my dad". The coroner came up, slapped him on the chin and said "if you'd have kept your mouth shut you'd have had a decent funeral"!

MILDRED ERICKSON REIS:

I don't know if I can ever top that! Mine is about a lady I think most of you knew, Annie Latendre. His name was Latondre, to begin with, French Canadian. But my story is about Annie. ... They went up to the Fairbanks area to look for gold. Charles made a big strike of gold...they were going down to San Francisco...One night she was in her room, second floor, in a hotel,....she grabbed her coat and slippers, ran out the door and she was out in the street. People were just crazy, screaming...there was a woman running down the street stark naked, screaming. A man came by, had a big coat and threw it at her, she put it on, she never stopped running, she never stopped screaming. After that they finally got...

[Can't hear enough to finish the story.]

OSCAR WATSJOLD:

....We had a school teacher in McCarthy, Margaret Harrais, she was W.C.T.U....At that time the bars...She was always writing to Valdez to the court system, complaining, wanting something done about all these things going on in McCarthy. There was a U. S. Marshal down there, Bob Reynolds (?)...In 1931,...So, the families got together and the only way we could get rid of the school teacher was to get rid of the kids....and myself, we went to Seward to go to school. Eleanor, my sister and my brother came to Kennecott. That only left 2 more kids down there, so they couldn't have a school so they got rid of the teacher. McCarthy never had a school after that...

YVONNE KONNERUP LAHTI:

...This is another one, Inger's dad...He used to go around...my dad would get us all together and...take us around on Halloween. We usually ended up at the house on the hill up here, Chris (Jensen) and Inger's house. Every year, this is the one I remember,...[Inaudible].

BUD SELTENREICH:

I used to run a dog team between...haul the drunken miners back. Take the dog team, hook it up and go down, pick them up, roll 'em in the sled, put 'em in a sleeping bag and head up the trail with 'em....Had seven dogs, they weren't very big dogs. I ran all the way to Kennecott, got a lot of good physical exercise doing that, kept me in pretty good physical condition. Once in a while I'd run into problems with those big guys in the sled and...the sled would tip over. There I was, these guys would go to sleep in the sled, they'd be wrapped up, I'd try to get them out of the sled, roll them out of the sled. Get the sled turned back upright and try to keep the dogs from running away with the sled and me standing there. It was a good experience, even made a little money doing it. They paid me $5.00 for the trip and I got $2.00 and the person who owned the dog team, which was Henry Olson who had the Golden Hotel, he got $3.00. So made a little profit, had a little fun and did a little work and learned a lot...Drunken miners!

GEORGE SULLIVAN:

I worked here the summer of '37(?) when I was 16. I grew up in Valdez and had a job up here chasing buckets. Oscar Watsjold was my shift boss. I remember a couple of incidents that happened up there and one was, you had about 750 lbs. of ore in buckets and you'd tip it down into the grizzly. One time it tipped the other way, and all the ore fell out on the floor. Oscar came out, in his good natured way (laughter!) and said a lot of things to me in Norwegian. ... Another time when it was wet you had to pound the buckets to get the rest of the ore out each time you dumped them. There was this big mallet there and I slipped and went down the grizzly and there was...that I grabbed hold of right at the last second,... so Oscar came out because the buckets were piling up and he couldn't figure out where the hell I'd gone. He brought a bucket over to dump it and I'm trying to crawl out of the grizzly. He was madder than hell because the buckets were lining up and it was his job to make sure that didn't happen. One other thing I remember, that probably is why I never became too much of a gambler; I used to watch some of the miners come down and play cards in the lower bunkhouse, I stayed in the upper bunkhouse. I saw a couple times where they'd come and play cards for three or four days and nights, around the clock. They would have been up to the mine for probably, 10-12 months. They ...made about $10.-$12. a day which was a lot

of money then. They'd lose all their money and go right back to the mine, wouldn't even go to McCarthy. Never would have believed that that happened if I hadn't seen it myself. 'Course some of them only went as far as McCarthy, never made it to Chitina. It was a great camp here though. I only worked here June, July and August, in September I took the train down to Cordova and then back up to Valdez where I went back to school. It was a really great summer.

ELEANOR TJOSEVIG EIDEMILLER:

We spent a lot of time in Green Butte because my dad took care of the Green Butte area when everything closed down. They did expect to open again so that is why they kept him to take care of the horses, and maintain the road, which lots of times kept him pretty busy. I remember one time after the river had a rampage of some kind, he had to hire additional men to come and help him. They set up a camp and had a cook. The cook was pretty fond of me and my family. He wanted to do something special. He made a big ceremony of us coming down to...to have cake, this was made especially for me. It was a three layer cake, covered with pink frosting that looked just delicious. He cut us great big pieces ...and it was made with bacon grease!

JEAN McGAVOCK LAMB:

My father came up in 1909. Times were bad down below, a series of depressions and I'm sure he was...He had been looking for work probably for several years. He worked in the east and came out on the west coast and eventually worked in the Bremerton Navy Yard. Finally, the need for money and the call of the north came and he signed up to come north on the S.S. Ohio.

This was in August of 1909. They got up in the ...Channel out of Milbanke Sound and ran aground. They had livestock aboard, cows, horses, mules and what not; chickens...Michael Heney was also on board this particular ship which went down. Some of them had to swim. The lifeboats tipped and...my father was among those, along with Heney, who had to hit the water. So, I guess they had to spend a cold night on the beach before they were found and picked up. Dad decided he was still coming north, somehow he got himself off to Cordova where he went to work with the CRNWRR. Worked till that winter on the building of the million dollar bridge. Sometime later, he began prospecting, when it wasn't so cold. He worked for Great Northern Development Co. in copper workings on top of the mountain. Someplace along the trail from the Kuskulana Bridge, they don't even call it Copper Mountain anymore, I'm not sure exactly where it is. Those workings were all wiped out in an avalanche one night in 1912, in December

and my father had to dig his brother, Dick, out of the avalanche, dead. That was kind of a blow, but dad took him home and buried him and came back north. Sometime between 1914-1919, we're not sure when, he came to Kennecott and worked here for the power plant and whatever as the master mechanic. Here, he married my mother, who had come north as a registered nurse in 1919, to work in the hospital. So they had a romance and were eventually married in Cordova in 1922. We were off and running. Produced my brother Jim, over there, in 1924 and me in 1928 so Jim would have company to bedevil in our bedroom in the house on the hill. But that's how they arrived! And I think my fondest, well, I have a lot of fond recollections, but I was on the young side and they are not as well formulated, nor as exciting as some of these other people you've heard. But I do like to tell the story about some of our summer drives. Dad had the only privately owned automobile in camp. So this gave us some mobility on these wonderful Alaskan Highways! We would drive down to McCarthy and sometimes out to Green Butte. If the Nizina River bridge was intact, we drove across it and went on to May Creek or fished in Baultoff Lake. Sometimes, the bridge was out and dad would turn the car around there on the shale bluff before you come down to the bridge. He was a tease and my mother was a nervous passenger. He would turn around — there she would scream "Jim! Stop the car! I've got to get out!" She'd grab Jim in one hand and me in the other and out the door we'd go...

DEBBIE VICKERY HOUSE:

... Story about...in the summer we rode with him...Every Wednesday the groceries would be taken up the road and around through the woods to the houses on the hill. Well, this Wednesday...in the McGavock's grocery box was the largest, most beautiful watermelon you ever saw. We eyed it all the way up... when we reached the top he stopped. He took the watermelon out of McGavock's box and put it in the brush! No matter how much we told him he would be in trouble, he wouldn't put it back. He said "I can do anything I want". Well that didn't ease us much. Finally we came to McGavock's house...delivered the boxes. So the box went into the McGavock's with no watermelon. It was a beautiful day and every kid on the hill decided to ride on the wagon. The wagon turned around and started back down. We were still...We stopped at the turn of the road and Lon Morgan(?) got out of the wagon, went back in the brush and brought out the watermelon. ....He cut the watermelon up and we all had big pieces like this, that we all heard about and had seen in pictures but never tasted....

JAMES B. BEANS, JR.:

I don't have any memories really of the time that I was here since I left when I was six months, so my memories are rather vague. However, there is one thing that happened that I am personally

involved in that I could say something about. And I have a memory from right now. Somebody was saying about the old wagon trail and how ... they were and somebody said well maybe they were better than the roads now, my personal experience is, they are and still are! Bernie was taking us down to the BBQ that was held down in McCarthy last night and he seems to be the exploring type, so we were going down the main road and suddenly he stops and backs up, pulls off the side and he says "this is the old wagon road". He was telling about how they used to use it for the wagons to go up and the other road was for a railroad track. He said, "this one's better than the road and he speeded up and we beat both of the people that were ahead of us going down! So, you are right, the old ones were better than the new ones! Someone also was talking about the gambling going on night after night. Well when my father started up here, which was in the spring or summer of 1925, Mrs. Lamb was talking about how there was depression down there. Well there was depression in that day too, still. He was coming up here to get a job and my understanding was that after everything was paid for the steamship and his passage up here that he had $10.00. By the time he got up here, in fact before he got up here, all that money was gone in the poker games. So once he got off the boat and he didn't have any money and nothing paid for so he went into a restaurant, told them he had a job at Kennecott but didn't have any money and they said "fine go eat, you can send us the money" and he did and on the way up the train stopped someplace for a while and he told them "I'd like to have a haircut but I don't have any money but I have a job at Kennecott" so they said "fine, we'll give you a haircut". He got the impression that there were pretty nice people up here in Alaska. And our impression coming up here now is that they are still very nice people. One other thing, after he was here about six months, he sent for my mother and she got here. He wanted to take her out and show her the glacier. He thought that was a wonderful thing. In other places and times they had done much hiking. He took her out on the glacier and was so impressed with showing off his...he forgot some of the basics and fell through a crevasse. Luckily his reactions were very fast and...reached out, it was a very narrow crevasse, so his arms stopped him. My mother and he were able to get himself out. The crevasse was sixty or seventy feet deep! So if hadn't been so fast with his reactions, I may not have been here! I went up this afternoon, walked through the hospital which somebody told me was one of the 2 best hospitals in Alaska. My impression—it is a little dirty there these days! They were supposed to have good doctors. My own personal and my one actual experience with Alaska is that when I was born my name was James B. Beans. My father told the doctor he wanted a middle initial because he didn't like his middle name and he wanted me to be a Jr. So he told the doctor that was what my name was. The doctor told

him that he couldn't do that, that you can't have an initial for a name and there had to be a name there. My father was stubborn and said "no, I just want an initial, it will be James B. Beans". Doctor said "you can't"; dad said "you could"; he said "you couldn't" ; dad said "you could". Finally, the doctor shrugged his shoulders "all right, all right, I'll put it down that way". When I was 12 years old, for some reason I needed to have a birth certificate. So we sent away for it. I found out that my name was James Bernard Beans. I never knew where the Bernard came from, however, if you look at the birth certificate, it is signed by B. E. something or other, and I bet this B. stood for Bernard.

JUDY TJOSEVIG GROTJAHN:

I was 18 months old when we went out to Seattle. My dad had come up to Alaska from Norway in 1900. Mother was raised in Illinois, graduated as a nurse. Her father came up, I'm not quite sure what the date was, and started a blacksmith's shop. He was drowned crossing the river in 1901. In between times, my mother had come up to visit him. Before she first came up, the man who turned out to be my father saw a picture of her and said "that's the woman I'm going to marry" and he did!

INGER JENSEN RICCI:

I thought I'd tell you how my dad got here. He came from Denmark on a Danish merchant marine ship of some kind. He ran away from home. He was on this ship in Seattle and he jumped ship and came to Alaska. He was an adventurous person, apparently. I think it was around 1901. From my pictures, lately, I've been finding out that he has in Katalla in the early days also. I'm just not sure when. We are going there in a week to take a look around, I have pictures from over there. He was here as a carpenter, he did a lot of the building. I have many pictures of him...and I don't know if he was ... here or in Katalla. I know he had some claims but I haven't been able to find out where they were. I have pictures but nobody knows where they are. 1915 he had gone back to Denmark and courted my mother, who was his first cousin, which they did back in those days. She came over in 1915 from Denmark, all by herself. She had a big sign on her that told her name and where she was going. Came by boat, then all across the country and he met her in Seattle. They were married in Seattle and came on up. Now whether they went to Katalla first because this cabin says "honeymoon cabin" and I don't know if they went there or if they went to Kennecott. When she did come up here she was at angle station three or angle station for at least a year or two. She had chickens up there; I have pictures of her feeding the chickens. She used to ski down

to the store and then she would ride back up in the buckets. Frank [Morris] says there have been women since that rode that tram but she was the first woman to ride the tramway. And looking at those buckets now I don't think I'd have done it. My brother came along in 1917 and then I came along in '18. When I was four and he was five, we went to Denmark. Over there he contracted some kind of TB and he died before we came back. We were over there about three months. When I came back, I couldn't speak any English as some of those who went to school will testify! The teacher said, "No more talking Danish in the home, we want you to not have an accent" I wish to this day, I had an.... [remainder not recorded]

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EXCEPT WHERE NOTED, ALL ILLUSTRATIONS WERE REPRODUCED FROM *LIVELY ADVERTISING CUTS OF THE TWENTIES AND THIRTIES*, DOVER PUBLICATIONS, INC., NEW YORK, NEW YORK, 1990. EDITORS: LESLIE CABARGA & MARCIE McKINNON.

SPECIAL THANKS GOES TO DEBRA MINGEAUD, GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE, SEATTLE, WASHINGTON.

FRONT COVER ART BY ANGELIKA LYNCH, GECKO GRAPHICS.
FRONT COVER PHOTOGRAPHS: (LEFT), JEAN McGAVOCK, "KENNECOTT RAGAMUFFIN," AND JANE AND DEBBIE VICKERY (RIGHT).

BACK COVER PHOTOGRAPH: INGER JENSEN.

DESIGN AND LAYOUT BY ARCHGRAPHICS.

At the chicken house (left to right): Peggy Duggan, Inger Jensen, Mary Ellen Duggan, Jane Vickery, and 'Pola' the dog. Little person partially hidden by can is unknown.

...and so it is all the wonderful memories remain and the hard times are forever forgotten...

Inger Jensen Ricci