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Wrangell-
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KENNECOTT KIDS

ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

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PROJECT

Edited
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June 1991

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BACKGROUND INFORMATION

During the weekend of June 15-17, 1990, a reunion was held at Kennicott Glacier Lodge, Kennecott, Alaska. The "Kennecott Kids Reunion" brought together many of the people who were school-age children when the mines and mill operated and a few who worked for the Kennecott Copper Corporation during the 1920s and '30s. Inger Jensen Ricci and Eleanor Tjosevig Eidemiller, two "Kennecott Kids," organized the reunion with Rich and Jody Kirkwood, owners of the Kennecott Glacier Lodge.

The Kennecott Mines are a National Historic Landmark administered by the National Park service for the Secretary of the Interior. 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. Under the direction of Regional Historian Kate Lidfors, historians Sandra Faulkner, Logan Hovis, and Ann Kain interviewed the "kids" while Linda Cook took copy-stand pictures of the historical photographs brought to the reunion. 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. The photographs, now housed at the McCarthy Museum, also provide valuable information for research.

Twenty-one "kids" attended the reunion, twelve of whom were interviewed. Several others were reached by mail and participated using a "mail out" interview.

<u>Note</u>: Information found in brackets ([]) indicates information changed or added by the informant during the editing process.

Regarding the spelling of "Kennecott"-the town is usually spelled "Kennicott" and the mines and company are spelled "Kennecott." For consistency and preference of the informants the spelling used in the interview project is "Kennecott."

Inconsistencies appear in the spelling of individuals' names and place names. Spelling is based on the information provided by those interviewed.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Kennecott Kids Oral History Project would not have been possible without the Kennecott Kids Reunion in June 1990. Rich and Jody Kirkwood, owners of the Kennicott Glacier Lodge; Inger Jensen Ricci and Eleanor Tjosevig Eidemiller, two of the Kennecott Kids; George Mason, who handled the public relations; and Kennecott residents, Al and Lynda Shaw were responsible for organizing and hosting the weekend reunion at Kennecott. They provided food, lodging, and planned activities as well as plenty of free time for the "kids" to reminisce. The populace of McCarthy also participated by hosting a riverside picnic and joining the reunion for storytelling.

Bernd Hoffman of the McCarthy Museum helped with copy-stand photography. Al and Lynda Shaw, also provided cassette tapes of interviews which they conducted during the reunion.

National Park Service staff from the Alaska Regional Office under the direction of Regional Historian Kate Lidfors provided professional expertise for the project. Historian Sandra Faulkner, field coordinator during the reunion, set the standards and tone for the interviews, which put the informants at ease. Logan Hovis' experience and expertise in the field of mining history was extremely helpful during interviews and discussions of the mining process. Linda Cook's knowledge and skill in copy-stand photography created a visual dimension of the historical information obtained during the interviews and discussions. The tapes were transcribed by Mary Ann Roddy. Wrangell-St. Elias National Park and Preserve staff members, especially Jim Hanna, were very helpful in providing logistical support.

Last but not least, the Kennecott Kids. They are a wonderful, energetic and interesting group of people, willing to share their experiences and memories to help Alaskans understand their heritage.

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INTERVIEW WITH

JAMES B. BEANS, SR.

JUNE 16, 1990 KENNECOTT, ALASKA

Interview Conducted By

Logan Hovis

National Park Service

Alaska Regional Office

Anchorage, Alaska

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(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 at work?

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: Yeah. 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: Donaho 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: Yeah, 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: Yeah, 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 who worked in the mill or with (?)?

Beans: Yeah, 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 coals 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 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, yeah. 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, yeah. 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.

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 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, yeah. 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 day 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...

(tape 1, side 2)

Beans: I probably would if the men (?) very long.

Hovis: You know, you would have been dead.

Beans: What?

Hovis: 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.

(end of interview)

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INTERVIEW WITH

MARY ELLEN DUGGAN CLARK

AND

MILDRED ERICKSON REIS

JUNE 16, 1990 KENNECOTT, ALASKA

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(tape 1, side 1)

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.

Faulkner: 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 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?

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, [at the entrance to the 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?

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 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 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.

Reis:[1]

Faulkner: Did they eat in that building too?

Reis:[2]

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].

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[1] There was one person to a room in the staff house-two teachers, two nurses, one and sometimes two secretaries. The first floor was a recreation area, second floor for men only, third floor for women-nicknamed "no man's land". (Information added by Mildred Reis during editing.)

[2] The "private mess" was in the building called the "annex" and was for the staff. There were extra rooms for the staff (men) when the staff house was full. My father lived there when my mother and I were "outside". The buildings' first floor also housed the dental office, book club, and room where one of the ladies of the camp pasteurized the milk. (Information added by Mildred Reis during editing.)

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' 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 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.

Reis:[3]

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.

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?

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[3] Eustace P. Ziegler was a Episcopalian minister in Cordova for many years before moving to Seattle. He was well known in Alaska and the "States". I have one of his early paintings. (Information add by Mildred Reis during editing.)

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 and 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 small pox 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 Egerton 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?

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)[4]

Clark: Mildred [Erickson Reis] knows a lot more because she was older.

Faulkner: Well, I'm gonna get Mildred too.

Reis: (inaudible)

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[4] 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. (Information add by Mildred Reis during editing.)

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.

(inaudible)

Faulkner: 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. (?)[5]

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

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[5] I went to McCarthy school one year, to the old one-room school in Kennecott second, third and fourth. Then fifth through ninth grade in the two room school. There were only twelve children when I went there, six per room, after five left there were more because so many young children started school. I went to Seattle in 1927 to Holy Names Academy. Mrs. Nieding, the camp's General Manager's wife was leaving too, to take her daughters to Seattle to go to private day school. The Nieding girls were my "Best friends" all through my years at Kennecott, so she saw me "settled" and they came often to see me on "visitor days". (Information added by Mildred Reis during editing.)

it hard and it was not. [No relatives, but we had friends there and the Nieding girls were there.]

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.

So they had a lending library. In that same building, they had [a dental office. And they would bring the milk up there and one lady who lived there pasteurized the milk in a room there].

(Inaudible)

Faulkner: It 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.]

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)[6] ...skates.

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)[7].

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] (inaudible).[8]

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[6] Yes, because denim is somewhat water-proof. We didn't have water-proof clothes then. The overalls were worn over my woolen clothes. (Information added by Mildred Reis during editing.)

[7] 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. (Information added by Mildred Reis during editing.)

[8] 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's 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

Faulkner: (?) special you remember about this.

Reis: (inaudible)

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.][9]

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.

1940. In all I worked ten years and quit to raise two children. (Information added by Mildred Reis during editing.)

[9] 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. (Information added by Mildred Reis during editing)

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 car of the train 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.][10]

Faulkner: Were most of the people working here then single men?

Reis: Um huh. And I was talking to my husband one time and he (inaudible)[11]

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?

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[10] I had a large collection which I gave to my son when he was old enough to enjoy collecting. (Information added by Mildred Reis during editing.)

[11] 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.

Reis: (inaudible)[12] 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.

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[12] 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

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.[13] 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 "lute fisk".]

Faulkner: Did your mom keep a garden at all - flowers or vegetables?

Reis: My dad did.[14]

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

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[13] 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. (Information added by Mildred Reis during editing.)

[14] He had a garden by the house and grew cabbages and radishes, lettuce, turnips, carrots, kale and potatoes. (Information added by Mildred Reis during editing.)

big community garden. I don't know if they had that when you were here.[15]

Clark: Yes, (?) and anyone who wanted could have a plot in that [garden].

(inaudible)

Faulkner: Now where did she live?

(inaudible)

Clark: 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] left it over night. [That is the way he cooked "beanhole beans".]

Faulkner: I thank you both very much.

(end of interview)

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[15] The hunting guides who lived in McCarthy let their horses run between hunting seasons-one time there were 18 horses in our garden. My 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. (Information added by Mildred Reis during editing.)

The following information is in addition to the interview. It was provided by Mary Ellen Duggan Clark in a letter to the interviewer.

[This particular story goes along with the xeroxed picture provided by Ms. Clark. The photograph is located in the McCarthy Museum.]

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.

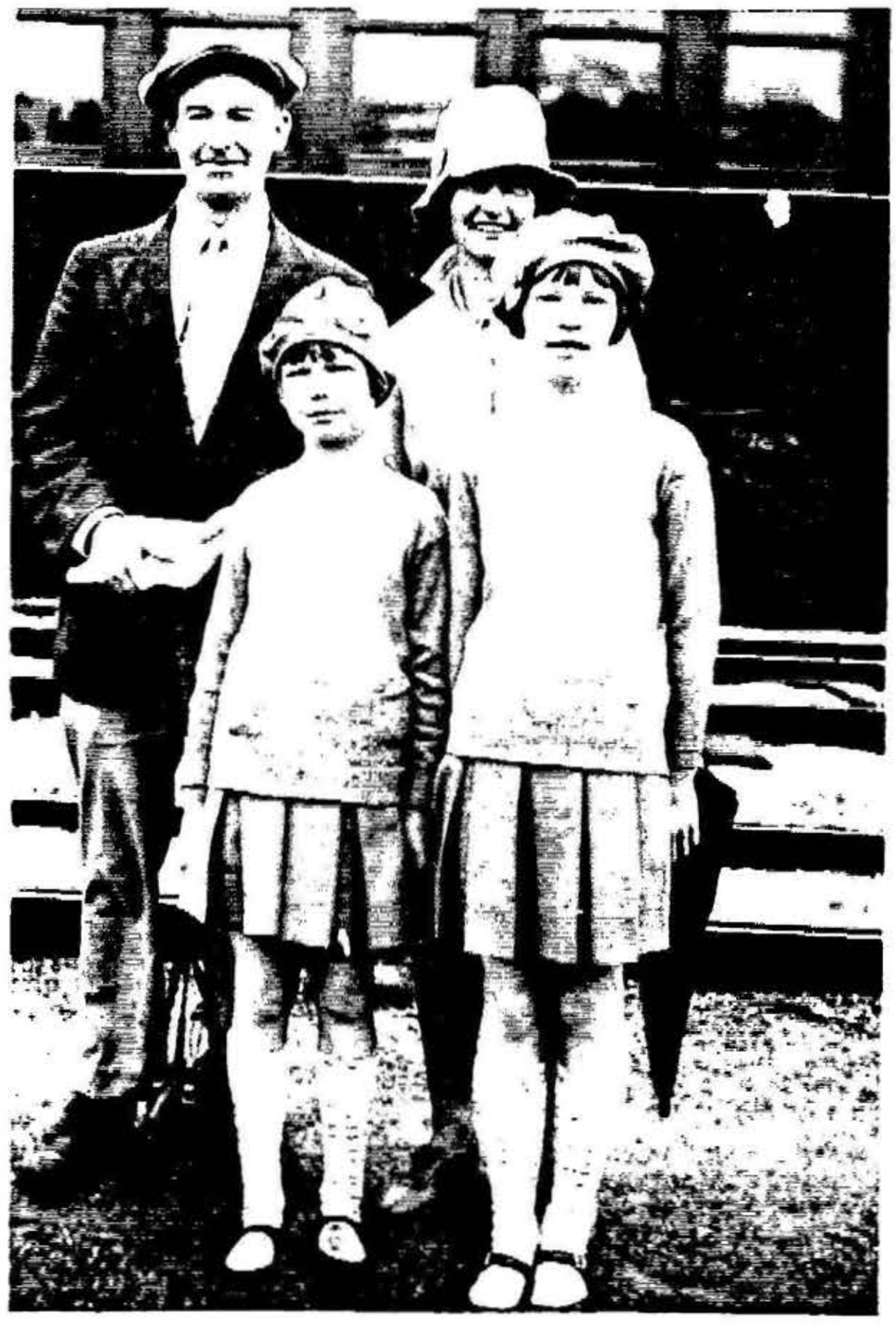
[Other additional information.]

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.



RAILROAD PLATFORM

KENNECOTT, ALASKA

Donated By:
Mary Ellen Duggan Clark

Location of Original:
McCarthy Museum
McCarthy, Alaska

KENNECOTT KIDS ORAL HISTORY PROJECT
MAIL OUT INTERVIEW

WILLIAM D. DOUGLASS

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ATTORNEY AT LAW

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KENNECOTT KIDS ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

I. GENERAL INFORMATION

1. NAME: William D. Douglass

2. CURRENT AGE: 73

3. DATE AND PLACE OF BIRTH: 12-17-17 Kennecott

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 "

SISTERS Jean Douglass, Sheila Douglass, Nancy Douglass

BROTHERS 1/2 BROTHER JAMES Douglas (never lived in Alas

OTHERS LIVING WITH YOU WHILE IN KENNECOTT:
LORETTA HALLETT
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 Job of Mine Foreman ~~Superintendant~~

10. WHAT YEARS DID YOU LIVE IN KENNECOTT AND WHAT WAS YOUR AGE AT THE TIME?

Dec 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 Superintendant of all operations - Mining Engineer graduate of Colorado School of Mines Golden Colorado 1911

B. WHAT WAS YOUR MOTHER'S ROLE/OCCUPATION?

Housewife / former Registered Nurse in Butte Montana for Anaconda Corp.

12. WHY DID YOU LEAVE KENNECOTT?

Sept 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?

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 approx 250,000 in Blue Ribbon stock in 1929 and, due to the depression starting with Black Friday Sept/oct 1929 saw this small fortune dwindle to about 50,000 in 1931 when we left Nevada - still alot of $ in those times

Once or twice I recall mail order brides show up on the train to seek out the 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 snowslide and we had no trains for 2-3 months. A lottery was run for guessing the time + date of the 1st train in. We ate low on perishable foods and there was no mail.

II. HOUSING

1. WHERE DID YOU LIVE WHILE IN KENNECOTT?

House next door to STAFF House along side and below the Mill and about 150' from 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, 4 bedrooms, 2 baths, Kitchen, dining room, living room, carpets, all free to ~~the~~ my father as part of his salary.
One of the 2 homes that had steam heat, running toilet inside and other so-called luxury features
Most of the other family homes were equiped with outside toilets and ~~[illegible]~~ only a few had steam heat like ours which (with the offices, hospital, Bunk Houses, store, school were connected to the Central Steam plant which was powered by diesel engines and a steam turbine which generated the electricity
The working men paid $25-30 per month for room & 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, believe 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 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 Houses for Blue Collar
Staff House for White Collar

The Company maintained a closed line telephone system between offices and plant. My father's house had a Bell ringing instrument 1 long ring and 2 short rings were his call

Twice a week he would put on heavy clothing and ride the Bucket tramway to the mines approx 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° below zero and we were not allowed outside even to go to school. Normally in winter about Zero to 10° below zero. Snow 4-5 feet deep in the town

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
Pick up Room make bed

4. IF YOUR FAMILY MAINTAINED A GARDEN, WHAT WAS GROWN AND HOW WAS IT PRESERVED?

Rhubard, 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, Shoppers 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. Also our contact with the outside world

IV. HEALTH

1. WHICH DOCTORS AND NURSES DO YOU REMEMBER FROM KENNECOTT?

Doctors Gillespie, Peterson
No nurses recalled

2. HOW OFTEN AND FOR WHAT DID YOU AND YOUR FAMILY USE THE HOSPITAL?

Birth of children
Father's appendecitus 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 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?

N/O

2. PLEASE DESCRIBE ANY JOB AT KENNECOTT WITH WHICH YOU WERE AT ALL FAMILIAR, CONSIDERING DUTIES, PROCESSES, MACHINERY, AND WAGES.

Miners paid about 4.00 per day - some did contract work and earned more
My father ultimately was paid $800 month plus free house, utilities etc. and left Kennecott for a 3 year contract in Kimberley Nevada for $36,000 plus a company car and free housing in a 5 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 1920's and my father was instrumental in 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?

1st through 7th (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 5th grade joined by Sonny (Nels) Konnerud so there were 2 in 5th and 6th grade
2 teachers for entire school — 2 rooms with Cloa Room (where our skates were kept) and Rest Rooms in between.
School 9 to 12 with 15 minute recess midway
the 1–3:30 or so with recess
Skating during recess and after school in winter
" 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 1 on 1 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 the 8th grade
Only adult education was by mail order, I think.

VI. SOCIAL LIFE AND RECREATION

1. WHAT TYPES OF SOCIAL ACTIVITIES DID YOU ENGAGE IN WHILE AT KENNECOTT? (dances, parties, etc.)

School program at Xmas
Baseball games in summer
Skating in winter including hockey games between intra-mural teams
Hunting, fishing, 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 20 families in town & their children
staff members, doctors, nurses, teachers
None of the mine workers were considered acceptable for the children to socialize with — some exceptions ie John Letender 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 Wed + Sunday Night
lending library
see #1

A big item to Loretta and my mother was picking the local berries, especially currant and rosberry, in July/August and making jellies and jams 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.
We had a dog (australian shepherd) named Joe and a large gray cat who lived inside companiably and were house trained.
Occasionally, 1 or 2 sled dogs would escape from the 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 + beast

VII. OTHER INFORMATION

1. DID YOU TRAVEL AT ALL WHILE LIVING IN KENNECOTT?

To STRELNA in summer vacations
United States 1922, 1924 and 1927 - 3 months each
to Seattle and then to New York City to visit Grandparents

A. DID YOU TRAVEL LOCALLY, HOW OFTEN, FOR WHAT PURPOSE AND WHAT WAS THE METHOD OF TRAVEL?

To McCarthy 4th of July Celebration with float
To various lakes, rivers for fishings 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 - 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 " " " in Summer
Mosquitos Terrible after snow melted until late July
All open areas contrail burned after snow melted and it dried out as a fire procaution about June every year
Huge glacier lake formed every Spring between Railroad and edge of glacier in "POT HOLE" approximately 1/2 mile long and 1/4 mile wide - As melting continued 1 day The blockage would collapse and holce would ... two days causing flood waters to

KENNECOTT KIDS ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

INTERVIEW WITH

ELEANOR TJOSEVIG EIDEMILLER

JUNE 17, 1990 KENNECOTT, ALASKA

Interview Conducted By

Sandra M. Faulkner

National Park Service

Alaska Regional Office

Anchorage, Alaska

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(tape 1, side 1)

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.]

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 the Nazina 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 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 week-ends 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. Harrais.]

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?

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 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 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 building 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 its 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.]

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 Nicholi 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 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 table cloths. I was very impressed with the beautiful things that Mrs. Watsjold brought all the way from Norway. We made trips to Seattle and come 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.]

Faulkner: Where was your mother's family from?

Eidemiller: From Illinois.

Faulkner: Where.

Eidemiller: Kewanee, which is a little bit south 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'Neale 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.

(end of interview)

KENNECOTT KIDS ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

INTERVIEW WITH

DEBORAH VICKERY HOUSE

AND

JANE VICKERY WILSON

JUNE 16, 1990 KENNECOTT, ALASKA

Interview conducted by

Ann Kain

National Park Service

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(tape 1, side 1)

This is side one of the tape of the 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 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.

Wilson: (inaudible)

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: First and second?

House: Yes.

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 any where 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 [Fredrick 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 them back. It was just heart rendering if your new shoes came and they were too small.

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 mosquitos. 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, 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 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.

Wilson and House: (inaudible)

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 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.

Kain: And how did you wash the clothes? In the sink with a scrub board?

Wilson: A scrub board with a tub. He 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...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 [McGavock's] doing with a watermelon. So we got up around the turn, we walked that road...to the woods and Lawn 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 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 (?).

Wilson: (inaudible)

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 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 travelling 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 small pox 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 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 test, 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.

Wilson: 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.

[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. But it really came round in a circle though when we could [cross the river on the tram]. [A tram is currently used to cross the Kennecott River to get to McCarthy]

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 [at Kennicott Glacier Lodge] 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. (?) just fine.

Kain: You had all the variety that you needed.

Wilson: Yes, yes.

Kain: Was it any better than the other kids?

House: Well, it took me - the adjustment, socially, took me until I was a senior. And then when I was a senior, I got all As. So I made it. But it took me until then.

Kain: Mainly for the social adjustment though.

House: I had trouble with it because I wouldn't ask them.

Kain: But you, as far as preparatory...

House: Yes.

Kain: You don't know if you were better prepared than the kids that had attended there prior?

House: Better than some and...

Wilson: But we fit right in. As far as English and things like that we could do [the work].

Kain: Now, were you required to go to school then?

House: Yes, everybody had to go.

Kain: Everybody had to go to school. Were there any little boys that didn't go to school or skipped school or - it would be real hard to skip school here, wouldn't it?

Wilson: Everybody liked it.

House: Oh, yes. Kids got along just fine

Kain: It was part of the social thing, to go to school?

House: Yes. I was talking to [Frank] Morris today, and he was in lower grades when we were bigger kids, you know, and he said he was afraid of these older girls cause he was afraid we might put him down or tease him or something, so he (?).

Wilson: Have you talked to [Frank]?

Kain: He was here last night and, yes, he had a lot to say last night.

Wilson: He's 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 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.

Kain: In a place like this I think...

Wilson: And then we cooked and [of course had] to do the dishes and things like that.

House: When we could handle the hot water. My dad was very safety conscious. When you're little you don't mess around with hot water.

Kain: Or fire and stove.

Wilson: Absolutely.

Kain: He regularly took care of them.

House: Uh huh.

Kain: From a lot of things that I talked to you about earlier, you liked it here.

Wilson: You are right. We loved it. I knew at the time, I loved it.

House: You say we knew it was [good] but we also knew that there would be a day when we would leave. So we knew we had to enjoy it.

Kain: Were you sad to leave?

Wilson: Oh, yes. It wasn't easy.

House: Oh, it was a terrible time to leave Daddy. He went with us to Cordova though. He saw us off on the boat and I can remember how Mother had tears in her eyes. I'd never seen my mother cry, you know, until she waved goodby to Daddy. She was just that sad.

Wilson: It was sad for Daddy too.

(end of interview)

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. They 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.

KENNECOTT KIDS ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

INTERVIEW WITH

YVONNE KONNERUP LAHTI

JUNE 17, 1990 KENNECOTT, ALASKA

Interview Conducted By

Ann Kain

National Park Service

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(tape 1, side 1)

Kennicott Glacier Lodge, Kennecott, Alaska, June 17, 1990. Oral history interview with Yvonne Konnerup Lahti. She was raised in Kennecott during the time when the mill and mines were in operation. Presently, she is in Kennecott for the Kennecott Kids Reunion, hosted by the Kennicott Glacier Lodge. The interview is being conducted by Ann Kain for the National Park Service, Alaska Regional Office.

Kain: We are curious as to the age you were when you were in Kennecott, when you came and so forth.

Lahti: It must have been when I was six years old and we stayed for six years, till I finished the sixth grade in 1931 (?) when children were ready for high school.

Kain: What did your father do?

Lahti: Well, when my father first came up, he was straw boss of the yard gang for about a year, year and a half, and then got into the store and then he worked in the store.

Kain: Was he clerking or working with...?

Lahti: Clerking and...

Kain: Helping run the store in fact?

Lahti: Yes, helping run the store, yes.

Kain: Did he come from a mining background?

Lahti: No, no. Frank Iverson down here had the (?) in McCarthy and my father's garage business had gone under in 1923 when they had a recession. So he had written down and said they were hiring up here. And Dad couldn't get something he wanted down there so Dad decided he wanted to come up and try it.

Kain: He was an auto mechanic?

Lahti: Yes, he was just a general worker at anything, a jack of all trades, really. But his folks had run a grocery store and they had also run a lumber mill and they worked in the woods (?). Well, so anyway, he came up the first year and then Bill Douglass found out that he had a son the same age as Billy Douglass and there were no other boys Billy's age up here so he was after Dad to bring the family up. Mother wasn't very keen about coming up and found out there were two bedrooms in the

house up here so she was just adamant, she just couldn't possibly do it, she had two girls and a boy and she had to have three bedrooms. So (?) bedroom on the (?) house up there so cut off the kitchen I think and made a small bedroom (?). There were three bedrooms in that one.

Kain: So the two girls could be in one and the boy be in one and the parents could be in one.

Lahti: Uh huh.

Kain: Where did you come up from?

Lahti: We came up from - well the years Mom was - the year Dad was in Alaska (?) Mother and my aunt went to the Bellingham Normal School, cause Mother had been a teacher when she met Dad. So we came from Bellingham and went down to Seattle and then up. Our tickets were all bought through the office up here, or were ordered through the office up here and delivered to us. So, we came up without any excess baggage, which just about astounded the station master here but they didn't charge us for any excess baggage (?) all been ordered through the office (?).

Kain: Mr. Douglass wanted a playmate for his son pretty bad, huh?

Lahti: Yes, (?) so we were up here six years.

Kain: You left in '25, is that what you said?

Lahti: No, we came in '25.

Kain: You came in '25, right.

Lahti: And we left in '31.

Kain: Where did you go to when you left?

Lahti: We went back to Seattle. We sent my sister out alone for her first year of high school and then my brother was ready for high school so then it wasn't feasible (?). So we went out (?).

Kain: How long did your dad stay here?

Lahti: Well, he stayed here three or four years and then he went to Juneau for a couple of years and then he came back and worked for a year before it closed in '37.

Kain: You were all down in Seattle.

Lahti: Yes, we were all down in Seattle.

Kain: Did you see him during that time? Was he able to get off to come down?

Lahti: No. Well, we saw him when he went to Juneau, before he went back again, a few times, but that was all.

Kain: Did he stay until the mine closed then?

Lahti: No, I don't think he was here when the mine closed. I think he left the year before the mine close.

Kain: He joined you all in Seattle then?

Lahti: Yes. And then they took over Grandma Clamitt's store in Klamath Falls because she was getting too old to (?).

Kain: So he continued store work once he went back.

Lahti: Yes.

Kain: When you were up here, you mentioned living in the house down here on the same level as the lodge and they added a third bedroom.

Lahti: Um humm (?) is that south?

Kain: Yes.

Lahti: (inaudible)

Kain: The house. On the same level as the lodge here.

Lahti: Yes.

Kain: One of our questions has been, whether you made any improvements on the house. Well, apparently, there were some with the adding on to the house.

Lahti: Yes. And then Dad fixed the porch. First he screened in the porch and we had a swinging couch on it, you know. He built that for us and the couch. He was very handy. And then there were two other (?) in the house (?) then enclosed it with the windows (?). And then he built wood flower boxes across the porch there then the porch out and down the side and then we had a large garden. (?) added on to the woodshed (?).

Kain: So when he came, he intended to stay?

Lahti: Well, yeh, um humm, once he came up here. (?) would stay, because it was the middle of the depression, you see, so there was nothing to go out for.

Kain: If you had a job you better stay where you're at.

Lahti: Yeh. If you had a job you stayed where you were.

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

Lahti: Yes. After we got up here, about six months I guess it was, Dad took the job in the store. The person left and they put Dad in the store. When you come up here, unless you were hired down there to come up for a specific job, you just came up and applied for a job, you were usually put in the yard then until they found a niche for you, if you fit into a niche, you know. That sort of thing with the store manager and he was put in...

Kain: In charge of that.

Lahti: Of the store so then we were on staff so then we could have moved to the (?) housing. But he went down and looked at it (?) how wonderful to have a bathroom and never have to go out that long stretch through the woodshed to the privy. Mother said (?) two bedroom.

Kain: She preferred the three bedrooms to indoor plumbing, huh?

Lahti: Yes.

Kain: How were these houses heated then?

Lahti: Oh, just a...

Kain: A wood stove?

Lahti: A pot belly...

Kain: Wood stove.

Lahti: Wood stove, yes, and then a wood range in the kitchen.

Kain: Since your father became staff then you had the opportunity to move to another house. The housing had to do with the social status or where you fell into the work force.

Lahti: We felt that there was quite a difference when we came in. I don't know, people that were here whether they noticed it and I don't know whether other people noticed it but we noticed especially there was quite a difference between staff people and non-staff people. We felt that way. If it actually was (?).

Kain: When you were with those other families, did you do things with different social categories or different labor groups?

Lahti: Well, to some extent, uh huh.

Kain: So it didn't reach necessarily beyond the housing and so forth? You still socialized with those people.

Lahti: Yes, but there was some (?). I understand there was a little bit of discrimination whether you're Danish or Norwegian.

Kain: Really.

Lahti: Whether you're Danish or Norwegian, Norwegian or whether you're Danish or Yiddish.

Kain: Right.

Lahti: We felt that there was, but then after we were on staff (?).

Kain: A lot of time you socialized with other staff?

Lahti: Oh, yeh, oh, yeh.

Kain: Rather than the laborers and the mill workers?

Lahti: Oh, yeh. Yeh, I don't think there was really too much, just a little bit (?) on staff. You know, I mean little things.

Kain: You had electricity then in your house?

Lahti: Oh, yes. We all had electricity.

Kain: But did a lot of wood cutting? Were you involved in wood cutting?

Lahti: Um humm.

Kain: A lot, huh.

Lahti: I still cut a lot of wood. I heat my place by wood.

Kain: Oh, you do?

Lahti: Yes, um humm.

Kain: Well, where are you at now?

Lahti: (inaudible)

Kain: You heat with wood then.

Lahti: Yeh, um humm. Yeh, I have a big house that I - especially the upstairs cause I have oil (?).

Kain: Yes.

Lahti: (?) cut it up and I stack it and I (?) and I haul it in.

Kain: That's interesting. So you got your start with wood heat here, huh?

Lahti: I've enjoyed it (?) better than housework.

Kain: Did you help your mother with the housework?

Lahti: Oh, yeh. We had to help with the housework, but my sister is very efficient (?). You know, it had to be done (?).

Kain: But you didn't like that kind of work anyway.

Lahti: I didn't like that so I could get out of doing the dishes by cutting the wood. And I didn't like dusting (?). And the year my sister went outside I had to take over and help with the washing (?) the stove and the carpets (?) and we had to wring out the sheets and hang them out. I had to hang the sheets and learn to iron all the handkerchiefs and all the sheets and pillow cases and all the shirts. We had flannel shirts - the major things, we didn't have to do the (?) or the white shirts (?) did those (?).

Kain: Did your brother help with the housework?

Lahti: Not especially I don't think with the housework, but he took care of all the wood (?).

Kain: Yeh, and the wood was a big job since you were heating with it as well as...

Lahti: Uh huh, when you're heating two stoves all the time, you know, it was a pretty big job. And then in the

summer time he had to help Dad with the sawing of the logs. They skidded the - took the logs at the grove up here and then skidded them down to our woodshed.

Kain: Oh, off the top road.

Lahti: Yeh, the top road, cause they'd come right down and that was very steep, even though (?) a flat place there, you know, (?) saw the wood in cross sections and then split it.

Kain: Did you have a garden?

Lahti: Yes, we had a garden. We had quite a nice garden. Dad always put on the lower level Dad put (?) in beds. There were carrots in one bed and lettuce in another bed and (?). (inaudible)

Kain: Did you can? Did you can them to preserve them for winter or...

Lahti: No, cause we didn't have enough (inaudible). But the cabbage was huge and they'd get a 23 pound cabbage (?). And we would get a lot of currents, berry picking, current picking. The current jelly was good. We picked some raspberries but that was mostly eating because (?) enough to can. We would get cranberries and make cranberry sauce and cranberry (inaudible).

Kain: Most of your other food was purchased at the company store?

Lahti: Um humm. Yeh. You took out - you bought so many when you paid $160 and you got your food with the $60 worth of scrip that you got for (?) and used that mostly and you could use money too but you didn't use much money you used mostly scrip.

Kain: Do you know what the purpose of the scrip was, I mean, why did they have you use that instead of the money?

Lahti: I don't even know why they had us do that instead of money, except that you had money for groceries then. And maybe they didn't want that much money floating around, if you get cash or something. I don't know why, because it was a very honest place. You could leave anything anywhere.

Kain: No crime?

Lahti: No, practically none at all.

Kain: I assume most of the food you bought was canned, what about meat, how did you store the meat?

Lahti: Well, they had the meat locker down (?) and a refrigerator (?) you know, to store them. And so you just bought your meat.

Kain: On a daily basis?

Lahti: On a, yeh, but stew meat and you got roasts and you got pork chops and you got (?). And the company furnished each family a turkey for Christmas. I don't think they did for Thanksgiving but I know they did for Christmas. They had meat down there all year long.

Kain: And you just bought it when you needed it.

Lahti: Yeh.

Kain: Rather than buying a quantity and storing it.

Lahti: Yeh, well, you had no place to store it, you see.

Kain: Right, right. That's what I was (?).

Lahti: So it was all stored (?) and that's where we ordered it (?).

Kain: What about the clothing?

Lahti: Oh, we ordered from a store in Seattle, Sears Roebuck, Montgomery Ward. And if you wanted something special (?) Company in New York. There were lots of things we used out of that company.

Kain: Now, the store down here didn't have clothing?

Lahti: No.

Kain: Did they have work clothing for the men in the mill, I mean, in the mines?

Lahti: I think they had some clothing for the men (?). I think so, I think there were mens' clothes. Cause I know they had things like, oh, I know my brother bought mother a card table and napkins and (?). I still have it. And her slip.

Kain: You bought that at the company store?

Lahti: And got that at the company store. They had things like that. And Dad had a concession from some company

for jewelry, because a lot of the single men wanted jewelry for Christmas to send out to whoever they had outside or women just around here. So they could come in and look through the catalog and tell Dad what they wanted and send out for it (?). And I think they had some clothing there for the men, you know.

Kain: Humm. What about furniture then? No furniture?

Lahti: Not that I know of. No, they didn't have any furniture in the store.

Kain: Where did you get your furniture?

Lahti: I don't know.

Kain: It was just there.

Lahti: I was six years old (?).

Kain: You had a bed to sleep on and chairs to sit on and didn't care where they came from.

Lahti: Yeh. And, you know, people probably brought things up (?) you know, and so there was extra floating around probably and just used it for the - I don't know.

Kain: Did you ever buy anything, clothing, or food, or furniture, or anything in McCarthy or Cordova?

Lahti: (inaudible)

Kain: Were you able to go out somewhere? I mean, did you go like down to Long Lake? I've heard a number of people were going.

Lahti: Yeh. Well, Mrs. Jensen took me down with her to Long Lake one year. She usually went down (?) cause she had her people there and everything, you know. Cause she had lived here so long, you know, and of course we didn't know (?) took us down.

Kain: Did your family go at all?

Lahti: No, no.

Kain: You never went with them or didn't go on camping trips or?

Lahti: Well, we did a lot of picnicking.

Kain: Just up by the mines or?

Lahti: Fisher Tree or this way or down by the springs and that sort of thing.

Kain: Was there a day off for (?).

Lahti: (inaudible)

Kain: Did you ever go outside of Alaska when you were here the whole time?

Lahti: No, that would cost money and we didn't have money. We had scrip. We used scrip, you know. (inaudible)

Kain: So you did a little bit of day excursions here and there (?).

Lahti: Yeh. And we would go down to McCarthy for the ball games (inaudible).

Kain: Well, I just know that some of the other kids I talked with talked about going camping over a week-end or for a few days, not a vacation as such but and I just wondered (?).

Lahti: (?) we would, you know, like we'd do something like one time we walked over - the staff (?) to Green Butte (?) and Dad and Chris (Jensen) hired a car to come and get us (?).

Kain: A few of the people - it was kind of interesting - they were saying they had no childhood diseases. Do you recall having any when you were here?

Lahti: Well, I had the flu. I know Mel had the flu one Christmas. Chris went along with the horse and sled and jingle bells and delivered the Christmas presents that year. (inaudible)

Kain: I've heard that he dressed up as Santa Claus.

Lahti: Well, yeh, at the hall, but one year everyone was sick with the flu (?) trade a cigar for (?) were about the only ones unaffected by the flu (?) Chris went around with a horse and sled (?) hearing the bells outside.

Kain: So was there no Christmas celebration that year because everybody was sick?

Lahti: No, no, everybody was sick. (?) and I had colds and had my tonsils out up here the year we went out to Seattle because I could have them out here (?).

Kain: You had to pay for treatment though, a small amount for having them out.

Lahti: Yeh, a small bit for having my tonsils out, you know.

Kain: It would have cost you a lot more in Seattle had you had it done there than it would have here.

Lahti: Yeh, to have it done up here and (?) other than colds and flu.

Kain: No chicken pox or measles?

Lahti: No, we didn't have any of (?).

Kain: Did you get them later?

Lahti: Yeh. Well, I had the chicken pox before I went up, when I was a child, and I got the measles down in Seattle.

Kain: So you had them, but you had them when you were older.

Lahti: Yeh, yeh. As soon as we got down there we started school and (?) got the measles and then I got the measles and then I got (?) and was sick all year.

Kain: Other than having your tonsillectomy, did you use the hospital much at all, your family?

Lahti: Oh, yeh. We used the hospital for anything that happened to us. Like there was a (?) creek there and one time there was about a foot and a half or so of nice fresh snow and Mel and I started rolling down, you know, that first - I wasn't side ways but you know how the (?) and I went over that bank. Of course the stream was frozen over but there were large boulders sticking out of it and I managed to hit it and broke my collarbone. So it hurt, so I went to the hospital and the doctor said it was just the collarbone and he strapped me up and sent me home with a note telling that I had fallen in the creek and broken my collarbone. And then another time I was playing handball with my brother and I went like this and I got splinters under my fingernails and that was intolerable. I cried at the hospital. Anything that happened to you, you didn't bother to go home.

Kain: Because you knew they were just going to pack you up and take you to the hospital anyway.

Lahti: Yes, you just went over to the hospital and got treatment there. You know, they were all just minor scrapes and if you get a real bad, bad scrapes well you went to the hospital (?) rather than running home. It's closer to the playground than going home. It was there and we used it.

Kain: Were the same doctors there the whole time you were up here?

Lahti: Oh, no. Dr. Gillespie was here the first year and I think it was Dr. Turner, who was a real good doctor, and then Dr. Peterson was here. I don't know if it was Mrs. Turner or Mrs. Peterson that gave us the piano lessons. But anyway, one of them. Then, because I was so nearsighted - she didn't know what was wrong with me but I was scared of everything - and I couldn't see (inaudible).

(tape 1, side 2)

Kain: We were talking - just to open this side of the tape - we were talking about health and you were mentioning your problem with nearsightedness. Did they discover that here and could you get glasses here?

Lahti: Well see, I started out this size and I was sitting right up next to the board. Then I got to be a second grader and all the first graders were sitting up next to the board in the front of the room and I was sitting in the back of the room and all of a sudden nothing was coming out right, you know. The teacher was getting concerned because I was the second one she (?) you'd better have her eyes checked. And it's funny, mother was a teacher, that she wouldn't have picked it up because of all the years that I had as a child. But she didn't. Anyway, they picked it up in second grade and I couldn't see the big E on the chart.

Kain: Boy, that is nearsighted.

Lahti: And so - yeh, I couldn't tell a (?). You know they didn't have the facilities here to deal with me. And I had those little round, little round, (?) glasses with the black rim around them (?).

Kain: Did you have to go somewhere else to get them or did they write a prescription and send off?

Lahti: No, they sent for them. He used the lens that he had here. He had a box, you know, and they had just the doctor not the eye doctor, and got them just as close

as he could and sent a prescription out. But I didn't realize until I was outside that there were that many stars in the sky. I was aware of only the bright stars in the sky that I saw.

Kain: That is nearsighted. What about a dentist?

Lahti: Oh, that was (?) occasional, once a year or something like that. (?) cavities. I don't know, my sister and I seemed to have cavities all (inaudible). And then when we went out we had to have most of it all done over again.

Kain: Oh, really.

Lahti: Yes. Cause I can remember I had saved a hundred dollars when I left here of extra savings (inaudible). So I had this hundred dollars and they were going through this depression in Seattle. In junior high school and in high school there wasn't enough money to pay for my extra pair of glasses, cause I had to have my glasses changed every six months. My eyes were so bad. Because of that there wasn't enough money for Dad to pay for that (?). There isn't enough money to pay for the dentist. One or the other of us was constantly going to the dentist. But the dentist would come up here once a year and took care of them...

Kain: And stayed until everybody in camp was taken care of?

Lahti: Yeh, uh huh. And I don't think he was probably too good a dentist. I don't know. He was a different dentist most every time.

Kain: The company, I assume, brought him up.

Lahti: I suppose.

Kain: What about other medical assistance? Were there doctors in McCarthy or nurses or anything like that?

Lahti: No.

Kain: No?

Lahti: No. You know, if there's a bad accident on the train, you stay in Chitina (?) and if there is a bad accident -one of the Indians in Chitina had a child and he was hurt very badly. I don't remember (?) anyway, he was ...(?) but he didn't have a wife, whether she was dead or what ever, he had a five-year-old little girl and my mother said, well now, we should get all you kids

together and get some dolls, cause she had to stay at the hospital too. He was staying at the hospital and she had to stay at the hospital too. And get some clothes, each one of you contribute some clothes for this little girl. I can remember picking this big, dear (?) doll that I had gotten for Christmas the year before, because I couldn't give up my other two dolls from the past two years. So most of the accidents...

Kain: Even if you weren't connected with the company, didn't work for the company, you could still use the hospital, use the hospital facilities?

Lahti: Yes, uh huh, until they could arrange some kind of transportation outside or something. You know, (?) out. I don't know who paid for it or anything like that.

Kain: Could the people in McCarthy, could they come up here and buy things at the store?

Lahti: No, I don't think so. They had their own store.

Kain: Just for medical assistance, because it was the only available in the area?

Lahti: Yeh, yeh. It was just (?) company is company. As I understood it, if a miner, somebody from the bunkhouse, was fired on Wednesday and your boss got mad and said this is it, you've had it, he had to go down and stay in McCarthy until Saturday until the train came.

Kain: He couldn't even stay here in the bunkhouse until...

Lahti: I don't think so. That's the way I understood it. I don't know how true that is, but that was my impression.

Kain: That's what we're after, your impressions. Now, your dad worked in the store. Did your mother work outside the home at all?

Lahti: Oh, no.

Kain: Not at all. You are the youngest, right?

Lahti: Yes.

Kain: How much older was your brother than you?

Lahti: Three, and my sister was four.

Kain: And they never worked here at all?

Lahti: Well, yes. My brother did back in - I think he graduated in '35 - '35, '36, '37, and then came out in '37 because we started college together. I graduated in '37.

Kain: So he came back up here.

Lahti: He came back up here and he worked at the (?) and Morris hoister on the tram.

Kain: And his name was?

Lahti: He was Mel Konnerup.

Kain: Mel.

Lahti: He was known as Connie for some years.

Kain: But when he was living here with the family, he didn't work, he was too young?

Lahti: There was always something he could do for somebody, that he'd get paid for.

Kain: Odd jobs type of thing?

Lahti: Yes, but nobody worked, none of the children worked. And as far as I know, none of the mothers worked at anything. Somebody that was a nurse might fill in if, you know, that had been a nurse, might fill in for a month till we got a new nurse or somebody that had been a teacher might fill in if teachers got married and couldn't keep up (?).

Kain: Well, that's interesting. If she got married, then she was married so she couldn't teach, but a mother who was married could come in and fill in the rest of the year?

Lahti: Yeh, I think so. Or maybe she could teach, I don't know, but they didn't hire married (?).

Kain: Yes, I'm aware of that.

Lahti: They didn't approve of married teachers. I don't think that they would have approved of bringing up one in the office.

Kain: Who was married?

Lahti: Who was married.

Kain: Same with nurses.

Lahti: Yes.

Kain: So they wanted all the...

Lahti: All the nurses - when I was there, all the nurses and all the school teachers and all the secretaries were single.

Kain: That's interesting. When they married they didn't work anymore.

Lahti: I don't think so.

Kain: Did your dad talk about work much at all when he came home? Problems that were coming up or?

Lahti: I don't know.

Kain: None that you remember.

Lahti: None that I especially remember. He enjoyed his work I think. It seemed to me he did. Dad was a very social person, a very likeable person. He was the manager of the baseball team (inaudible). And he built - in order to earn some extra money, he was the janitor there at the school and he also ran the projection machine for the movies.

Kain: Oh, I see.

Lahti: Yeh, that brought in a little extra. And he was into everything. He helped organize the dances (inaudible). He was the one that instigated things like the Badger Game (?). And he and Chris were pretty much - they had a costume party (?) something crazy (?) Dad in a barrel.

Kain: So he was kind of the social director of the camp, huh?

Lahti: Yeh, he was into a lot of the activity there.

Kain: He and Chris Jensen?

Lahti: Yeh, and he and Chris - when the snow got deep enough to really slide down the hill, which was usually around Halloween time, he would let us chain our (?) in a chair down the hill. You know, from then on, not until next year when the first...

Kain: Not allowed to do that again, huh?

Lahti: Uh huh. To put a chain - because you know, you spin out.

Kain: Right.

Lahti: (inaudible)

Kain: While we are on the subject of recreation and social life down here - I assume you were quite involved in social activities, since your father helped organize a lot of them?

Lahti: Yeh, um humm. Yeh, I was chief reader at the library (?) and we went to the dances and sat around the stove (?) in that choir and sat around the stove. When you get to be about ten, well Miss (?) had a dance (?) and she always had a dance.

Kain: How often did you have dances?

Lahti: Oh, I think at least once a month.

Kain: Really?

Lahti: Um humm. And then we went skating at night, every Friday and Saturday night we'd have lights (?) and put up light poles so we (?) on Friday and Saturday nights (?) played the music (?) and the people that knew how showed us how to dance (inaudible).

Kain: Did you play hockey?

Lahti: Yeh. I had a couple of (?) it was always cold (inaudible).

Kain: Yeh, they're good for that aren't they. There were tennis courts. Did you play much or?

Lahti: Well, (?) played quite a bit and I was a little bit older and, you know, and wasn't into the caribou or trapping and you know, the kids (inaudible). But she had a piano and she had her poetry. She wrote beautiful poetry (?). And she played tennis pretty well and she skated beautifully (inaudible). And she was a good skier.

Kain: What about the more sedentary activities, such as a library or?

Lahti: We had a library and Mother and Mrs. Jensen ran it mostly. We had good books, you know, Call of the Wild and they (inaudible). But they got hold of a lot of

childrens' books (?) and all those Huckleberry Finn and all those books. And we read (?) an awful lot. And there was an English couple here and they used to come down and she played the piano and he'd play the mandolin and we'd sing, everybody except me because I couldn't sing (?). The company usually did that again. (?) and I had paper dolls. We made our own paper dolls (?) paper dolls and, you know, clothes (?). We also made family paper dolls out of catalogs and cut out the children and the mother and the father and the umpteen younger children. And then we'd take jacks (inaudible).

Kain: You talked about the English couple coming down. Did you socialize a lot with other families in the evenings?

Lahti: I don't remember too much, just - I can't remember their names now - the English couple came down once a week. And then of course most Sundays we always had John McKenzie from the waterworks during the war. He was a guide in one of the parks up here in the summer time took people up for the dall sheep and then in the summer time he worked here in the yard then. And we had them - they would stay for dinner because they (?).

Kain: So you did socialize some with the single people?

Lahti: Oh yeh, um humm. And then you could walk down the tracks for exercise or something and stop in for coffee and cinnamon toast or whatever. And some of the courting couples, you know, walked down the tracks and stopped in the evenings for cinnamon toast and cocoa (?).

Kain: (?) for the evening?

Lahti: (?) for the evening.

Kain: Do you feel your family was pretty typical of the families that were there?

Lahti: Yeh, I think we were. I think other children here and all the families here were family oriented and children oriented and we had a wonderful...

Kain: ...wonderful time. You liked living here I take it?

Lahti: Oh, we did.

Kain: Were you sad to leave when you had to leave?

Lahti: Yeh, I was sad to leave. I had a hard time adjusting, you know, (?) and then Seattle through high school.

Kain: I've heard that from several other people, that they had a real hard time with social adjustment.

Lahti: Finding a niche in the social structure.

Kain: How did you feel? Did you feel academically you were prepared, you were equal with those other kids?

Lahti: Yeh, they told me they were all set to skip me,, you know, 7A, 7B. You know we had split at that time in Seattle. And they were all set for skipping me a half grade and then I came down with mastoid ears and they didn't know if it was going to be mastoid or what it was going to be and I was out two or three weeks in November and December and didn't come back until the fifth of January. (?) taught me at home but I, you know, so I didn't get skipped a grade but they were all set to do it. I still got all As. (?) I was well prepared, I thought.

Kain: How long do you think it took you to get through the social adjustment?

Lahti: Well, it took me forever, a long time. I'm still getting over it.

Kain: You still have it.

Lahti: Still have it. No, in the ninth grade I started having girlfriends that I wanted to have. Before that I had girlfriends that I didn't especially want, but I had to have somebody.

Kain: Right.

Lahti: Then in ninth grade - then as a sophomore it sort of eased up a little bit and I got by all right, but I never was a social butterfly.

Kain: Three or four years before you could fit in reasonably.

Lahti: Um humm. Before I found a group of girls that I really wanted to fit in with.

Kain: Right.

Lahti: Yeh, that was three or four years before I found a group that - the kind of person that I felt comfortable with.

Kain: And probably because of that you felt even more homesick to come back here.

Lahti: Yeh. Um humm. And I couldn't - you see, I couldn't be just a plain girl to them because there were so much outdoor things here that a seventh grade girl wouldn't be interested in down there (?) because I was still interested in climbing trees (?) and that sort of thing, you know.

Kain: Yeh, very much a tomboy type.

Lahti: Yeh, um humm.

Kain: So it took a lot of the people - a lot of the girls here were that way.

Lahti: Yeh.

Kain: They weren't necessarily tomboys, but that's what everybody played, and you all played that.

Lahti: Yeh, we all played that, we played an awful lot of active stuff, even though the weather was very cold. People nowadays, those people down there, they stay in. We were out doing things. And of course, when I went out, you see, I was 12 when I went out, most of these kids went out when they were 13/14 to high school. I started out in junior high school.

Kain: You went on to college (?).

Lahti: Oh, yeh.

Kain: And what did you major in?

Lahti: Teaching.

Kain: In junior high or high school or elementary?

Lahti: Elementary.

Kain: Elementary.

Lahti: Yeh.

Kain: So you taught?

Lahti: Oh, I've taught all my life

Kain: (inaudible)

Lahti: Yes, um humm.

Kain: All different grades or?

Lahti: Well, no, I've always taught in elementary school and then...

Kain: Well, I meant, mostly first grade or mostly...

Lahti: Mostly first and second grades.

Kain: First and second.

Lahti: Uh huh. And then when I (?) to get my masters, we went (?) his doctorate. I worked on my masters and then I started having kids (?) so I didn't finish it there. And then when I flew back to Washington (?). I had to back to (?) when I went out they would give you a six year certificate and you had to...

Kain: ...renew it, yeh.

Lahti: So I had to go back to keep that test renewed. So finally I took my masters at Western [Washington]. I got my masters in reading, which was real nice because then I could teach (?) and I could go to a certain school (inaudible).

Kain: I assume you're retired?

Lahti: Oh, yeh.

Kain: Yeh? How long have you been retired?

Lahti: Nine years.

Kain: Nine years? Another one of the gals I was talking to had trouble with the social adjustment when she left here and became an elementary teacher and she felt that she was much more sympathetic to the children, much more understanding because of what she had gone through, when she would have a student that came that was very shy or whatever. Do you feel that was true for you as well, as a teacher?

Lahti: Well, I don't know. Probably it did, probably because - yeh, I - it bothered me when I had children that didn't fit in and couldn't adjust and sit there and I think that is probably because I had the same adjustment too.

Kain: You knew exactly how they were feeling.

Lahti: Yeh, yeh.

Kain: Did you, as a teacher, did you ever wish that you would be teaching in a school such as Kennecott?

Lahti: (?) it's certainly funny, in Bellingham when Daddy was first up there I was substituting and there was this - they had two small schools, Marietta School on one end of town and Geneva on the other end. There were, you know, just two or three school houses and they had first, second and third, fourth, and fifth, sixth you know, and down like this and you had a whole bunch of kids and it was just sort of a little country school, you know, within the school system. And anyhow, I went out there to substitute and the teacher just kept getting worse and worse. She was having (?) problems so she didn't want to finish the year. So then of course, I always thought, oh, it's so hard for substitutes and here I am substituting and I thought, oh, I'll finished the year for her, you know. And I had the kids at home, you know, and didn't want to do it full time but every time I substituted I'd end up doing that. But then I started teaching and I taught two more years out there at that little country school. It was fun and it had the feeling of this, you know, and I fit into it real well and I really enjoyed it, I think the most of my teaching, you know. It was just a fun time of my teaching, you know.

Kain: How many times have you been back here? This is not your first time back here is it?.

Lahti: Yeh, about five years ago, I can't remember, about four or five years ago. (?) and Charlie were coming in (?) so I flew up (?) Anchorage.

Kain: And you've kept in touch with your friends all these years?

Lahti: Yeh, I think all of us have pretty much kept in - most of the kids, the majority of us kept in touch with Inger.

Kain: She would be the binding force of the whole group.

Lahti: Yeh, she (?). Yeh, if you wanted to know anything about anybody else, you know, you write (?).

Kain: You kept tabs on each other over the years.

Lahti: (?) and I were always best friends and, you know, so we always...

Kain: Kept that relationship going?

Lahti: Yeh, that relationship going all these years.

Kain: That's interesting. Well, I think that pretty much does it and I appreciate you giving me the time and the information.

Lahti: (inaudible)

Kain: I think there was probably quite a bit, thank you very much.

(end of interview)

KENNECOTT KIDS ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

INTERVIEW WITH

JAMES MCGAVOCK

AND

JEAN MCGAVOCK LAMB

JUNE 17, 1990 KENNECOTT, ALASKA

Interview Conducted By

Ann Kain

National Park Service

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(tape 1, side 1)

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 stay in mining or...

McGavock: Yes, he tried to (?).

Kain: What exactly was it he did?

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 age 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: 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 years 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.

McGavock: (inaudible)

Kain: Well, that's (?).

Lamb: 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.

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 ever 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 enroute 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 Whittam 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 Whittam] 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: No, but you had an adventure.

Kain: Did you stowaway on a train?

McGavock: No, no. That was (?).

Lamb: (inaudible)

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 Dec. 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 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. 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. Strangely 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: 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?

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: 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: 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 [the doctor] 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.

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 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: 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.] He...

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, because it cost so much to ship everything in that they only shipped the very best meat up here.

Kain: 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 out side 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.

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 live in there?

Lamb: In the staff house.

Kain: 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].

Lamb: And I had one class[mate].

Kain: How many kids 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 they 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 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 going 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 and job - white collar just as much as anybody else. 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 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 Kookoomongo 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 ta-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: Jim mentioned heading down to the cemetery shortly, and I was wondering if you had any relatives buried 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 the Kennecott cemetery. No relative could afford to have him shipped outside for burial.

Kain: Did they conduct a funeral service?

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.

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.

(end of interview)

KENNECOTT RECOLLECTIONS

OF

Jean Elizabeth (McGavock) Lamb

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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 force 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 propecting 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 distastrous 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 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 a 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 Eurstace 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...and more than a few hours in the living room pricking the 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 and 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 music rolls we had in our collection. Dad loved music but didn't play any instrument, however Mother had studied piano for a good many years and put her music education to good use.

Dad always had a radio in the livingroom. 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 livingroom 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 livingroom 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 spoonsfull 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 dining room. I remember it with lots of cupboards, the topmost 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 <u>his</u> 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 on 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 excitment, 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 accomodate them. I think Jim and I must have spent 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-sceptic 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 forebidden, 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 travel 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 kiddie 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 court 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 that 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 malemute 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 Iversen farm out of McCarthy. It seemed like another world. For some reason I recall Mrs. Iversen'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 the 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 made it at home.

And the berry picking in the fall. I remember the tin buckets with their bail handles and Jim 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 malemute - 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 the hard crunch of 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 30-06 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 what 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 on 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 on the big beams set on the pilings before they were bridged with decking. I held Dad's hand <u>tight</u>. 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 at May Creek. On 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 a rowboat..swatting mosquitos mostly...trying not to rock the boat or fall in. One time, our dog Ginger, a malemute-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 Chittitu Creek. Sam took a picture of one of our gatherings where we and the Richelsons were all huddled around a smokey 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 Gillam's 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 snowshoes, 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. The trip 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 country to return again and again to visit that site of our childhood where, for us, something seems still unfinished.

KENNECOTT KIDS ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

INTERVIEW WITH

MILDRED ERICKSON REIS

AND

OSCAR WATSJOLD

JUNE 15, 1990 KENNECOTT, ALASKA

Interview Conducted By

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NOTE: This interview, conducted by Al and Lynda Shaw, is in three parts. The first part, involving Mildred Erickson Reis and Oscar Watsjold, takes place in a car traveling from Anchorage to Kennecott on the way to the Kennecott Kids Reunion. Part two takes place in the one room school house in Kennecott with Mildred Erickson Reis as the main informant. Part three was recorded during an evening of story telling and includes several stories as told by different "kids."

(tape 1, side 1)

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 I'll 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 year 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.

Reis: 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.

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 morgue?]

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.

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.

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 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 is one and Frank is one.

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 shoot, 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 power house.

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 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, N.: 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.

Reis: When I lived there, the management said there were to be no dog sleds in Kennecott so no dog sleds were allowed up here.

Shaw, A.: Yes, we've got a sign that says "No Dog Sleds Beyond This Point".

Reis: Yes, that was by the old detention camp, was about the end of company property.

Shaw, A.: There was a detention camp?

Reis: Yes, for the people who, during the flu epidemic in 1918. They had four tents down there.

Watsjold, O.: Well, when I went to school down there, we had a doghouse sitting out on the edge of the baseball field by the glacier there, we unhitch the dog, go to school and when school was out we'd go back to McCarthy.

Reis: Yes. Well they didn't allow it then and no one could have a big dog, that was when Mr. Nieding was there. They probably changed it then.

Shaw, A.: Mildred, where was the detention camp?

Reis: They were tents. When my dad went up there to work he had to stay there, I don't know the incubation time of the flu, but that's where he stayed for a few weeks. Then after that Mother and I came up to Kennecott, we didn't have to stay there.

Shaw, A.: Was that before you got to Kennecott, that they had those tents?

Reis: Yes. You couldn't come into Kennecott unless you stayed there. They did not want any flu there so, that's the way it was.

Shaw, A.: What else did they use it for, strictly that?

Reis: After that we used it for target practice when we took our guns down there. They were only wood part way up and then frame covered with canvas. [My mother was an excellent marksman. We were shooting one evening when] 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 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 Olaf, 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 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 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 track walker 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, 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 guys 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 Harrias?

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. Marshall, 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 [Tjosevig] 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"...

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 ice house 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 your 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 Schmidts, 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 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 Reamer?

Reis: Pete Reamer 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: Payton Reamer 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, it got below -50 we could stay home, it was too cold. I could stay warm running behind. 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. 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 5000 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 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 loose 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 you money in a postal savings bond." He said "No, no, $2000.00, $2000.00". 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. 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." 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. 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 talky 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 Charley 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.: Charley Chaplan.

Reis: Charley Chaplan 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 risque movie.

Shaw, A.: Wasn't he a talky, 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 childrens' 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 2 B)

(Inaudible)

Watsjold, O.: The one he is referring to is only a one dog race, cause, he 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 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 build fires and that would keep the mosquitos 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" huh?

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 the 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.

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 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, 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 [Tjosevig] and her sister are going to stay in the same house they lived in 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 [Tjosevig] 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 Nazina. 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 Nazina 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 Finish. 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 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 to feed the little cats upstairs with the milk that was left there.

Watsjold, N.: When we were last in McCarthy and Kennecott, the museum in McCarthy had all kinds of pictures of Oscar's dad, and he died in the '30s, and there were pictures of them with that cow. And we have never had those pictures, we have no idea where they got them. We asked and they said they would make copies but they never did.

Shaw, L.: You'll have to show me the pictures because I know Bern ...the negatives.

Watsjold, N.: He was there, I can't remember his last name.

Shaw, L.: Hoffman

Shaw, A.: There are a lot of them at the university too.

Watsjold, N.: They are wonderful pictures. His dad in his butchers apron and Oscar was there milking the cow and we had never seen them before.

Shaw, L.: We'll have to ask him again. This would be a good opportunity.

Reis: They had a big, mean Holstein bull up there, named Jerry. Every summer for reasons that I didn't understand, Mr. Iverson took that bull down to his farm. This one time, I knew that Jerry was gone and we were playing hide-and-seek in the barn so I ran and hid in his stall and Jerry was there and I was face to face with Jerry. I was just petrified! If he'd bellowed, I'd have died. And if he moved I'd have been crushed because he was immense. I ran out of the barn and I ran home, I was so scared! Holsteins are kind of mean and he was horrible. Mr. Osborn, later, was to shoot Jerry, as he had become unmanageable. He stood on a box with his gun ready. When Jerry came running out of the barn he killed him with one shot. He collected a $100.00 bet he had 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 woman or child who died years before." There was no marking on it but there was a cross. There was a lady across the track in McCarthy, Mrs. Roberts, she had a beautiful garden. We stop there a visit with her, she was an older lady, she just died up there. And she lived there. I suppose that house is gone, I didn't see it. Unless it was taken down for the airport.

Shaw, A.: There was the old wagon road too. Was that used quite a bit? Down by the Kennecott cemetery.

Reis: Yes. That was how the cars came up from McCarthy. It wasn't too good a road. They had belts from the machine shop which they lay in the ruts of the road and filled them with tailings and that's what we rode down on. That's where I went down when I had my bicycle and I rode down to McCarthy for music lessons. It was used all the time. When Mr. Iverson took the big bull down, they passed a rope through the ring in his nose, one man ahead and one man behind and they led the bull down to...then they would cut up around the glacier because he couldn't go over the trestle, there was a road there.

Shaw, A.: ...think about how the glacier has shrunk in size. Oscar, you've probably been out there, have you been out there lately, to Kennecott? When was the last time you were there?

Watsjold, O.: Year before last.

Shaw, A.: What did you think about the glacier from the time you were in camp?

Watsjold, O.: Oh, its gone way back from what it used to be. Especially around McCarthy. Cause the Kennecott River, when that pothole washed out the bridge all you did was just go up a little ways and go around on the glacier and get down on the other side. Now, it's quite a walk to get up on the glacier. When the water was too high we'd go across on the glacier....

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 Kennecott River on the hillside up to 4th July Pass 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 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 whatever 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 someone 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, 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 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 shoe paks or mukluks.

Reis: Did you know Shorty Guinn?

Watsjold, O.: You betcha.

Reis: He had a place over by the Nazina River. He never fastened his shoe paks, they were always flopping open. He took Mother and I up to Nazina 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...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. Mariam 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 and her sister 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 how 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 thats 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 one time and Mariam, 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 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, "its 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 Nazina River and Dan Creek.

Shaw, A.: Was there bridge access to Dan Creek?

Watsjold, O.: Oh yeah! Across the Nazina 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 Nazina River bar. We'd move the camp up to May Creek because that pothole would break on the Nazina 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 Nazina 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 Nazina. 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, ok". 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 Services 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 Gillum 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 Dearing(?).

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.: Dartow(?)

Watsjold, O.: Dartow. Did you ever hear of Dartow? He's the one 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 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, its 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. 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 Kalas.]

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 $ 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 hiking, I was doing fine and got partway 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?

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 Miss Hardis, 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 hooks but there were no hooks here when we got it.

Reis: Maybe that's what that was for, hooks.

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 you name right there?

Reis: Yes. Must have been something we had to hang up. Were there other hooks 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 hook 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 hooks 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 school was apparently a bunk house at one time, then they took everything out of it and it was bare and we used to make these scooters out of boxes and little wheels and we would run around in there and play with those. They moved us out of course and made it into the school.

Reis: ...Lamp...(?)

Shaw, A.: You wanted to get on the train?

Reis: No. We just didn't want to study.

Shaw, L.: You can see where they were screwed into the floor here.

Reis: Then they ripped it up...

Shaw, L.: Right, these, when they were glued together they looked like this.

Shaw, A.: Mildred, when you went to first grade, which school did you go to, the one down at Blackburn?

Reis: No, I went to the one in McCarthy. It's not there anymore but it was--where the lodge is, you go straight ahead and, I thought it was a hill when I

was little but when I was there again it was not a hill. There's a little space there and it was there, someone tore it down. Someone said it burned down and someone else said it was torn down for the lumber. So I don't know what happened.

Shaw, A.: Can you shed any light on, supposedly this school was down at Blackburn and they brought it up here.

Reis: I'm quite sure it must have been because Jim Dennis, Jr. and the different ones used to walk down and Jimmy carried a gun and one day he came home with a bear.... I feel they just moved it up here because Blackburn was going down, the was nothing there. I know the McCarthy kids went there too, they put the two together.

Shaw, A.: My understanding is they built one in McCarthy and moved this one up here.

Reis: I'm sure, because remembering the stories of the kids walking 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 everyday 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 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:[1] 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 Bernd's [Hoffman] 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?

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[1] Gretchen Schneeberger is another "Kennecott Kid" present during this discussion.

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...

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 yrs. old when you went back down, did you say?

Reis: Yes.

Shaw, A.: So you were here from 1916-1927? 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 Raymer 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 Nazina, 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 Tanakee 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'Neil, 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 shoot 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..Donohoe.. 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 makes 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 Kennecott 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. The 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. Parphery 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... hangin what?

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 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.

Reis: 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 Mariam 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 Mariam 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 highheels 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 the 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 lullabys, 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 yrs. old when you left here, so you picked up stories from your parents?

Schneeberger: Yes. Alaskans are such a close knit group, as they 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 Arthur Erickson...

Schneeberger: 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 Jensen's book, 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 Orientals?

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 and Indian giver", I said, "yes."

SIDE 2 (D) 6-17-90 STORY NIGHT

Only a few of the stories which were recorded on tape could be transcribed due to background noise or the tape recorder being too far away from the speaker.

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 to 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, 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 you 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, ...[earthquake]...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...

THE LAST PART OF THE STORY IS INAUDIBLE

OSCAR WATSJOLD:
....We had a school teacher in McCarthy, Margaret Harrias, 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. Marshall down there, Bob Reynolds (?)...In 1931,...So, the families got together and the only way we could get 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,...CAN'T HEAR THE REST.

(?) SPEAKER:

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 loose 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 Bremmerton 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 Milbanks 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 [Copper River & Northwestern Railroad]. Worked that til winter on the building of the million dollar

bridge [out of Cordova]. 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 Nazina 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 him out. The crevasse was sixty or seventy feet deep! So if he 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 GROTJOHN:

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 was 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 four 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 accent....

KENNECOTT KIDS ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

INTERVIEW WITH

INGER JENSEN RICCI

JUNE 21, 1990 ANCHORAGE, ALASKA

Interview Conducted By

Ann Kain

National Park Service

Alaska Regional Office

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(tape 1, side 1)

The following is an interview with Inger Jensen Ricci in Anchorage, Alaska June 21, 1990. The interview is part of the Kennecott Kids Oral History Project. Inger was born and grew up in Kennecott and later came back to Kennecott as an adult to work for a short time shortly before the mine closed. The last time she lived in Kennecott was in 1938 and was on the last flight out. The interview is being conducted by Ann Kain, National Park Service, Alaska Regional Office.

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 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, 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 Kennecott 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: Okay.

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.

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 anymore 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 ask 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 stay 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 their's 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.

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 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 suppose 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 Nel McCan - 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 Oriental. 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 things, 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 have a 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 with 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 cabbage 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 childrens' books?

Ricci: They had a pretty good, yes, well I don't think the public library had too many childrens' 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 suppose 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?

Ricci: Well, of course, there was O'Neale'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 barber shop. And then of course, where the lodge is in McCarthy, Huberts 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 Kennecott 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 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 too 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 any way.

Kain: And you've been back to Kennicott 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.

(end of interview)

KENNECOTT KIDS ORAL HISTORY PROJECT
MAIL OUT INTERVIEW

SHEILA DOUGLASS RISTINE

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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 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 Colbert

   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 noone. My father(now deceased) and my stepmother have exchanged Christmas Cards & 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 it was one storey 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 MOVE YOU 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 Xmas presents sank Jean received a waffle iron for Xmas which would have had to come from there.

7. **WHAT ITEMS WERE NOT AVAILABLE IN KENNECOTT?**

Some of our clothing came from the Personal Shopper at Bests in Seattle. Mother would draw pictures of our feet so they would be able to know size. I also think perhaps we got our "shoepacs" from L.L. 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

8. **IN WHAT WAY WAS THE RAILROAD IMPORTANT TO YOUR LIFE AS A RESIDENT OF KENNECOTT?**

There was only the boat from Seattle to Alaska and then the train to get any supplies. I don't know how far the train came up but they used "speeders" on the tracks to go to McCarthy. They were Ford (either model A or T) autos with the tires off them which ran on the tracks.

None of us had ever been in an automobile when we moved to Seattle.

IV. HEALTH

1. WHICH DOCTORS AND NURSES DO YOU REMEMBER FROM KENNECOTT?

   Dr. Peterson and his wife Emily

2. HOW OFTEN AND FOR WHAT DID YOU AND YOUR FAMILY USE THE HOSPITAL?

   I don't remember

3. WHICH CHILDHOOD DISEASES DID YOU HAVE AND DID YOU HAVE THEM WHILE LIVING IN KENNECOTT?

   I do not think we had any since after we moved "outside" all four of us got them all

4. HOW WERE MAJOR AND MINOR ILLNESSES AND INJURIES HANDLED?

   I don't remember

5. OTHER THAN KENNECOTT, WHAT HEALTH PROFESSIONALS WERE AVAILABLE IN THE REGION, INCLUDING MCCARTHY, CHITINA, CORDOVA AND VALDEZ?

   I don't remember

6. DID PEOPLE FROM THESE OTHER TOWNS COME TO KENNECOTT FOR MEDICAL TREATMENT AND DID PEOPLE FROM KENNECOTT GO ELSEWHERE FOR TREATMENT?

   I think that for anything serious people went to Seattle and I remember the name Virginia Mason from way back

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.

   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 Ileamna 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 Claus (played by a gentleman named Jack Conway according to my older sister and brother). I think that might have been a Company Party.

My brother Bill had a trap line and I remember a straggly ermine skin which he had around for many years.

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.

Retta 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 & apples). My mother did not like to cook while Retta loved to. However they made lots of wild currant jelly - I remember the dripping jelly bags and that the jelly served for company had to be completely clear and sparkly.

Retta 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 rockside 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 Illeamna 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?**

No

I remember that there were dog teams chained at certain places. And when people brought dogs up from the States they were frequently killed by the malamutes and huskies.

KENNECOTT KIDS ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

INTERVIEW WITH

BUD SELTENREICH

JUNE 16, 1990 KENNECOTT, ALASKA

Interview Conducted By

Logan Hovis

National Park Service

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Logan Hovis interviewing Bud Seltenreich. Toward the end of the interview Bud's brother Fred joined in the discussion.

(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 travelled 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 hanger 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 there stuff in, so they had a 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 contract 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 Time 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 in 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 multiengined 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 humm.

Seltenreich: At that time Pan American was still running their big boats and they would run one of their boats to 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?

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. 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.

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 Morey, 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, nonstrategic 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 through 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 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)

(?) 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 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.

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 pit. It was on that same pit 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 roadhouse there and the one at Spruce Point and then it went over the summit to the White River, the next roadhouse is. They had them about every 20 miles.

Hovis: Was there a roadhouse on Peavine Bar going up the Chitastone?

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, 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, 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 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: 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 that gravel." "Well," he says, "how deep is the gravel?" And I said, "it goes clear to hell if there is such a place." "It's there all right," he says.

Seltenreich: So anyway, that's where my pickup is, up there on Calamity. How was that torn out of there?

Seltenreich,F: Well, I thought that - see (?) engine, the only one in the world.

Seltenreich: Yeh, right.

Seltenreich,F: And the transmission, somebody told me they took it out there to run their drag line, you know, they have a (?) at Calamity Gulch.

Seltenreich: At Calamity?

Hovis: Yeh, I've seen that engine out there.

Seltenreich,F: Well, the transmission, I don't know what engine they used. It's a three speed transmission, same as the standard transmission but it went on an old Model-T, an old Model-T. It had bands, you know. So I have a complete engine with everything - maybe (?) the transmission (?).

Seltenreich: I don't know (?) give it to me, it's yours anyway.

Seltenreich,F: I got the engine down in Gary Green's place, It was an old Model-T with a three speed transmission, a regular (?) transmission but got the old bands to it.

Hovis: There is a gasoline motor mounted on the winch out there. It's a three dumb winch.

Seltenreich,F: And they had a transmission on the back of the engine?

Seltenreich: Well, of course if they used a Chevrolet engine that (?) you know.

Seltenreich,F: No, they didn't use that. The Chevrolet car is in one piece. They didn't touch that.

Hovis: The car is just sitting there rotting away.

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.

Seltenreich: Oh, I see.
(end of tape and interview)

KENNECOTT KIDS ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

INTERVIEW WITH

GEORGE SULLIVAN

JUNE 16, 1990 KENNECOTT, ALASKA

Interview Conducted By

Logan Hovis

National Park Service

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(tape 1, side 1)

Logan Hovis, June 16, 1990, interviewing George Sullivan.

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 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 whatever you want to call it.

Sullivan: Right, right.

Hovis: Were miners normally in the lower camp here?

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, but," he said - I was about 180 pounds, I'm heavier than that now but I was in pretty good shape for that age - "but," he 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 an 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.

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 cle-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 half way 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 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 Daring. 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 believe it. It almost felt ghost like. And then the people - after the earthquake they were gonna burn all the places there and so we got two chests of drawers,

a china cabinet and a big oak table from our old house. The chest of drawers we use, the dining room table I've never gotten fixed yet but I did the china cabinet. The china cabinet, when my folks first had it, didn't have a nail in it, everything was wooden pegs. I gave that to my daughter. I had it fixed up at a furniture store in Anchorage and gave it to her.

Hovis: Well, you say your father died when you were 14. Was there a real financial need for you to be working up here?

Sullivan: Oh, there was, yeh. My mother, the next year she came down with cancer. She died when I was 17. I had two older sisters but they got married. I was kind of on my own when I was 17. But with the store, you know, times were tough and the store didn't do well.

Hovis: Did you send your money home?

Sullivan: Oh yeh.

Hovis: Did your mother give you an allowance?

Sullivan: Oh, yeh. Oh, yeh. She was very nice to me, but things were so tough. I'd work in the store after school. In those days people would come in and they'd charge everything and you'd haul out their purchases and sacks of sugar to them and cases of canned milk and all that stuff. We delivered all the groceries, in the wintertime with a sled to their residences.

Hovis: Do you remember if most people were U.S. citizens or were there a lot of people other than (?)?

Sullivan: Well, there were Irishmen, there were Swedes, there were Greeks. Most were either citizens or became citizens while they were here. That was a big thing in those days, you know, they wanted to become citizens and a lot of them did. I don't know if they had the 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.

(end of interview)