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July 10, 1970

TO: All persons interested in using this manuscript or the
tape from which it was made.

FROM: Mrs. Horace Biggs, Albuquerque, New Mexico.

Subject: Use of manuscripts and tapes.

Because of the family information that was included in these tapes when they were made, I would appreciate the opportunity of meeting EVERYONE who is searching for information in this material. I have no intention of denying to legitimate scholars the opportunity to work with these manuscripts; but I do wish to discuss every researcher's project with him BEFORE he begins work. If I am not available for consultation, any of Tom Allen's children may be contacted for permission to use these materials.

Mrs. Horace Biggs
July 10, 1970

Tape #523

Mrs. Horace Biggs
October 16, 1969
Interviewer - Daniel Tyler
Side 1

This is the first in a series of interviews between Dan Tyler and the daughters of Tom Allen, stockman on the Navajo Indian reservation from 1929 to 1950, approximately. This particular interview is the first of a number with Mrs. Horace Biggs, who lived on the Navajo Indian reservation in the area of Fort Defiance and Crownpoint and several other places before she left the reservation in 1953. The discussion in this tape deals particularly with Mrs. Biggs understanding of the chronological events of her father's life. It also deals somewhat with her own experiences, but this is saved for the later tapes... activities of which the entire family was involved in. And Mrs. Biggs commented on several aspects of Navajo life, which will be continued in succeeding tapes. This particular tape includes Mrs. Biggs comments on her father's move from Oklahoma to southern New Mexico and from there to Albuquerque and from Albuquerque to Magdalena country and eventually to the Navajo reservation. It is a good chronological survey of her father's activities before being employed by the federal government. The tape does not include what is perhaps Mrs. Biggs most vivid experience on the reservation, her work as the wife of a trader, and this will be covered in the next tape.

Q. First of all, if you could just summarize in a very rough form your own life from the beginning. You were born on the reservation, right?

A. No.

Q. No, o.k., well lets start from that. Start from where you were born, and perhaps you schooling, where you moved to, and what homes you had.... As many specific dates as possible.

A. I was born on October 3, 1928, in Chicago, Ill. Daddy had been sent to Chicago by the Bureau of.....

Q. He was doing some work with meat inspection.... ?

A. Yes, civil service appointment to Chicago as a Federal Meat Packing Inspector.... and we evidently, now I haven't got this straight, but we were only in Chicago about four months and I think I arrived early. So I was the only city girl out of the whole bunch, the whole family. And we moved to Fort Defiance when I was six months old. So my entire childhood up to the time I graduated from college was been Fort Defiance.

Q. What year did you graduate?

A. I graduated in 1949. So from 1929 to 1949 I was in Fort Defiance.

Q. Now did you live in the same place at Fort Defiance, all the time?

A. We lived in two different house,s the first house we lived in was next door to the other house we later moved into. And the second house we moved in, we must have moved in when I was probably.... I would think probably about 5 years old, and this was more of a status house. This is where the superintendent had lived and it was a beautiful house, it was a big rock home, and it had three very large bedrooms upstairs and a bath, and a big playroom. It had two bedrooms downstairs and the bathrooms were so elegant for that day and time it had been built for the superintendent of the Navajo reservation.

Q. You don't happen to know how old that house was do you?

A. Gee, I don't know, it must have been, I would guess, maybe 10 or 12 years old, when we moved in it.

Q. Was it built by the Indians themselves?

A. This I don't know either. At that time you know all the government houses were furnished by the government service. It was very well done, it was very well furnished, and the house itself was really quite lovely.

Q. Okay, from the standpoint of what we are trying to get at, your perspective, on the Navajo, was essentially from the Fort Defiance area? You obviously left that area, but your home was in Fort Defiance for this 20 year period.

A. Right. Anytime I have a dream, even today, it is always in that house. I mean thats how deep I think my roots went there.

Q. It's good to know that you graduated from college in 1949 but you didn't leave the reservation then, did you?

A. No, I graduated from college in '48 and married in '49. I went to Crownpoint to teach in '48 and '49, and thats when daddy had been setn to Crownpoint. On the assignment that he had been sent to Crownpoint. On the assignment that he had been sent to Crownpoint. Mother move to town, moved to Albuquerque that year, and I taught school at Fort Defiance, I mean at Crownpoint that year, and kept house for dad.

Q. And lived where, in Crownpoint?

- A. Well, there again, it's kind of a funny little story, when daddy was sent to Crownpoint, he was sent as superintendent. And the superintendent's house at that time you know, the government service was very, very "snooty", they were very persnickety where you lived you know, status symbols which daddy always kind of thumbed his nose at. He took the big house, we always called it the big house at the Fort Defiance, because he had a large family and he needed this.
- Q. What was the digressive, I mean what was the social eschalon? You mentioned the status symbols, this is extremely important, I think at what we are trying to get at.
- A. Yes because I don't think anything bugged daddy more than anything going.
- Q. Now what was the top echelon from the governments point of view and what was the bottom?
- A. The superintendent I supposed was the top. I don't know if that is still true today or not, whether Nahkai lives in the house at Window Rock that they built for the Superintendent. I think probably does. You were graded by the quality of house that you lived in, and the house that we lived in at Fort Defiance for many years, was the superintendent's house. And there were many people and I can remember this, because we had lived in that house five or six years. And I know that many people didn't like daddy. In the government service people, the people in the community, they just plain didn't like him. And as we go into this, of course, you will begin to see more. And I think they resented us, living in this superintendent's house. And so when Ruth and Ruby and Buford were no longer at home, daddy said he would be happy to moved back into the other house, if they fixed it up the way he wanted it. So at that time daddy proceeded to remodel the house that we had lived in before. And he really made it quite lovely. He just.... you know what a schrounger daddy always was and he ordered this and that and the other thing and remodeled the complete house, whereby it was actually when he finished it, a nicer home than what the big rock house was and the way they got him out of the big rock house was on the pretense of transferring him to Window Rock when they built Windowrock. And he said he wouldn't go, to Window Rock, this is another thing that kind of bothered the people in the community, nobody else told anybody what they would do and wouldn't do, and daddy just did. He said he wasn't going to move to Window Rock and he didn't. And I don't know how he managed all these things but he did. So they built, remodeled the smaller house which was right next door to the rock house for us. And we moved back into the other house where we lived the rest of the time, that we were at Fort Defiance.

- Q. Okay, so your father was officially a stockman at this time?
- A. Well I'm not sure, he was..... I don't think they have what they call range riders, and I think they were the stockman.
- Q. No, I think if I can approach it from the point of view of the records, it looks to me that there is a range rider on the bottom. That's what we are talking about here on the social ladder, I think. He was the man that was in really direct contact with the individual clans and hogans that existed in these districts. Above him was the stockman..... I think he got promoted from range rider to stockman..... And then I wonder what was between stockman and superintendent? Or did he report directly to the superintendent?
- A. Well, Mr. Hunter was the superintendent when daddy went to Fort Defiance. And Mr. Hunter was really the last.... they used to have a superintendent in each agency. Fort Defiance was an agency, Ship Rock was an agency, Tuba City was an agency and so on. And there was a superintendent at each agency. Then when they built Window Rock, they made one superintendent, and my earliest recollection of who the superintendent was Trotter. Daddy can tell you more about that.
- Q. I don't know too much about that.
- A. Theoretically, then, all the heads of the departments were supposed to move to Window Rock. And at this point daddy said that he wouldn't go to Window Rock.
- Q. Do you have any recollection of visiting with these people, the superintendent and his wife, was there a social chasm between the two of you?
- A. No, when John Hunter was at Fort Defiance, actually I think daddy did John Hunters job. And we shouldn't quote names here, we should strike out that John Hunters name here.....
- Q. This business of the government really is going to end up being one of our focal points. So I think your impressions of associations with government men from a social standpoint, and, then, your fathers impressions of his work with them from a business standpoint will come together quite nicely and give us a better idea of what was really going on..... because nobody knows exactly how the government policies were received and what difficulties these people, like you dad had, when they were supposed to put them into operation. We do know that a lot of the Washington language was very difficult to translate into Navajo, either in words or in ideas. But we don't really know, because we don't have enough people like your father and yourself, to tell us exactly why Washington continues to fail to understand that they couldn't make up orders beautiful of long poly-syllabic words, and then have you translate it in to operation on the reservation. In short the government doesn't know why it fails.

- A. Really, they don't know why they fail?
- Q. Really, because the whole business of government Indian policy is still a very confusing area. And nobody really knows yet, what is the best Indian policy should be today or should have been then.
- A. Well I suppose that is true, it looks so simple to me, I can't see how it can't be.
- Q. Essentially that is why we are talking, from the standpoint of the Indian Reservation Program. From the standpoint of your family's interest of course you are trying to get your father's recollections down. But I think from the standpoint of what hopefully will become useful material, your impressions will help point out to the government perhaps where it errored and where it might improve their program.
- A. Well, of course, you said it would be from a personal viewpoint, but I think we would be able to give a, of course it would be biased opinion but I was born and raised in it and it was just as natural as breathing to me.
- Q. Were you very conscious of the heavy handedness of the government officials? Do you remember a feeling of being very Navajo and anti-government?
- A. Yes. In the first place, we'll go back to what I was going to tell you about Mr. Hunter, John Hunter, who was the superintendent at that time. I think dad did a lot of Mr. Hunter's job for him. Because he drank a lot, Mr. Hunter did. And daddy and Mr. Hunter were very good friends, and I think dad covered for him a lot. I don't know that dad would give you this opinion but I am sure that this is right. Mrs. Hunter was really a social lite, and they used to have bridge parties, you know, and they were very careful that this man's wife was invited, this..... very much like the army I think is today. Anyhow, daddy was very well liked among the Navajos. From the earliest time that I can remember, he was a friend of the Navajos. And Mr. Hunter knew this, and I think Mr. Hunter leaned on daddy to be his liason between the Navajo and the government service. And Mr. Hunter wasn't a strong enough willed person to stand up only for the Navajo like dad did. So I think thats where they.....
- Q. Didn't he have a slightly different responsibility though whereas your father's job was more clear to represent the interest of the Navajo.

- A. Right, right..... And Mr. Hunter had to balance out everything, the agency and the whole.... he was a very fine man and he and daddy are very good friends, and I mean were very good friends, always.
- Q. You don't happen to remember the succession of the superintendents do you?
- A. I can remember Trotter, I can remember Frier.
- Q. Frier?
- A. He was a red headed man I believe.....
- Q. Yeah, your father has already spoken to the point about him.... I believe.....
- A. After Mr. Hunter, daddy and the superintendents were never buddies, I mean they seemed to sort of break apart at that point. At Window Rock, it seemed to dissolve into more bureaucracy than it had been before..... From my point of view, now I don't know whether it actually happened that way.
- Q. Did you actually ever sit down and talk with somebody like Hunter? Or some one of those men that were tied to the offices at Fort Defiance..... or Window Rock... Did you ever hear the other side of the picture?
- A. No, I didn't. I only heard my families side of it, and I am sure that my opinion was colored by dad. Because I know that dad suffered great frustration, and not being able to do what he thought was practical. Now I think daddy is a very practical person. And I think that being among the Navajos and loving them the way that he did. You know the Navajos are very practical people. If you can do it and easy, straightforward way, then that is the way to do it, and I think dad felt that, the Bureau of Indian Affairs was so seeded in Bureaucracy, things that were not real necessary. And I think with that, of course was his big hang-up.
- Q. We can't come to any conclusions about this but I am sure that you are aware that when there is a difference in viewpoints, there are usually two sides....
- A. Now wait a minute.... I can give you a little bit.... you asked if I had ever talk to them..... No, I didn't actually talk to them, I was too young,..... the Indian trader and the range riders. Now the range riders were very good friends of daddy, as a matter of fact, I think daddy must have had some authority over the range riders, because they used to report in to our house quite often, from all different parts of the reservation. Of course that would be because dad was involved with the livestock, and we were the range riders.....

- Q. But your father was out on the field quite a bit too.....
- A. He was.... daddy always had to travel with Chee Dodge..... Chee Dodge wouldn't go anyplace unless daddy go with him. Now I remember this quite clearly, because I went with them a few times... Whenever the officials from Washington would come and they wanted to take a trip through the reservation and they would want Chee Dodge to go with them, Chee Dodge would not go unless daddy would go with him. Now there was a point of antagonism with the superintendent. Because the superintendent felt that daddy was not on their..... not social level exactly but job level, and I think they resented the fact that Chee insisted that daddy go with him every time. But Chee trusted daddy and they always stayed together in the same hotel room. And I mean they just were buddies, I guess.
- Q. I guess what you are saying is that, the bureaucrat whether he was in Washington or came out from Washington, or whether he was in Fort Defiance or Window Rock who shuffled papers and who had to co-ordinate the process of administering the reservation..... found it very difficult to trust somebody like your father, who was so close to the Navajo and so close to the Navajo and so sympathetic with their point of view.....
- A. I don't understand it, why would that be, why didn't they capitalize on his good feeling among the Navajo?
- Q. Well of course I couldn't possibly give you an answer to that... and yet I can tell you that from the experiences I have had working with the people, that administered the Taylor Grazing Act, which was very germane to your particular situation on the reservation this problem existed all over the place, because Washington could not understand how the cattlemen and the sheepmen could administer a government program and yet this was precisely the way it was organized. It was supposed to be organized with the grass roots, and it was organized by people who know the land and the people which is the comparison we're making here. And with this comes the mistrust, and I think a certain amount of jealousy. You would agree with me?
- A. Yes, I felt jealousy from the time that I was a little girl. I felt jealousy in the schools, when I was in grade school. Very much so, because I don't know why but I always had friends among the Navajos. And we had, the government service employees children went to the public schools. And they had a boarding school there at Fort Defiance. Now, a very good friend of mine's grandfather was not a Navajo, he was an Oklahoma Indian, and he was head of the boys building, they used to call it, where the boys all lived. And another good friend of mine was head of the kitchen, she was a dear old friend of the family's, Mrs. Clara B. Lee. There is quite a story in that, her father-in-law was John B. Lee, the Mountain Men's Massacre or something like that, anyhow I spent a lot

at the boys building, with the Navajo boys. No kidding, we wore overalls, you know those blue coveralls, and then they had the Good Sheperd Mission there at Fort Defiance and this is where the orphan children lived. They were brought in from the reservation, this is an Episcopal mission. Now the orphan children went to the public schools and these were my friends. Now I don't know where the government service children were they were there..... We weren't the only white children in school.

Q. But it is interesting, an essentially small number of white people in an Indian enviornment that there was so much social consciousness among government officials.....

A. It was terribel, very much so..... When we moved to Crownpoint, mother had moved to Albuquerque. We were moving to Crownpoint. Before we moved to Crownpoint, the word was over at Crownpoint, that Tom Allen was moving to Crownpoint to be the new superintendent. At that time the principal of the school was living in the superintendent's house.... And I don't know whether he was told to move or what the situation was, but when mother and dad went over he told dad that he would move out of the house and let him have it. And dad said well that is rediculous..... There is just going to be Robbie and I here, we will live down here at this house on the corner. And there were some people in Crownpoint there that could never quite get over that, they just couldn't imagine why daddy didn't move into Crownpoint and make the superintendent of the schools move out so we could have the big house at Crownpoint.

Q. Well since we are on your dad, can you go back and give a thumbnail sketch of what you know, not necessarily what you remember, but what you know about how he got into this New Mexico country and eventually got on the Indian reservation and the more specific dates that you have that you think are right, the better.... if you'll cross check them with documents and with what other people say.....

A. Okay.... the first time daddy came to Albuquerque, he lived in Texaco, New Mexico with his mother and father and my grandfather Allen had a water wagon in Texaco, he hauled water for the town of Texaco, which is right on the New Mexico - Texas border.

Q. Now when was this?

A. Well, it must have been before 1904, because in 1904 daddy brought two race horses to Albuquerque to the State Fair, and he brought them on the railroad, he shipped them in, these race horses. And they stayed at the Mckohn Hotel, that would be interesting to check out. It was suppose to be very lovely at that time. So that was in 1904 and daddy was about 15 years old at that time.

He and a friend, a cousin or a friend, I am not clear which one brought those horses to Albuquerque that was the first time that he had actually been in Albuquerque, or this far.....

Q. Now had he come out to visit his father.....?

A. No, he lived in Texaco, N.M. with Grandma and Grandpa.

Q. Was he born there?

A. No, daddy was born in Oklahoma in the Oklahoma territory, I can't tell you where.... My grandfather and grandmother all homesteaded in the Oklahoma territory. And then I think they had a small herd of cattle, and I think they droughting out as daddy calls it I think they kept losing them with the freight.....

Q. Your grandfather homesteaded in the Oklahoma territory.... do you happen to know if he was a sooner?

A. A what?

Q. A sooner, one those who lined up in the 1890's and went rushing across the land when the signal was given.....

A. No, I don't but that would be interesting to find out....daddy would know.....

Q. Well, we will find that out.....because that would certainly be a nice beginning for this whole thing if we could start there. With a historical point there that everyone would know. It sounds as if they might have been where did they come from do you know...?

A. I haven't traced our geneology back as far as I would like to, but they came from Kentucky.... And originally.... and they sided with the South during the civil war and how they came into Oklahoma and than later into Texas, I don't know. Now I have an idea that Grandpa living in Texaco was only a child at the time, because I think their roots were in Texas, in Spur, Texas. Because Grandpa Allen and my grandfather Day knew each other for many years before, as I understand, and my grandfather Day which is my mothers father, was a rancher in Spur, Texas. So then daddy's family moved to Spur, Texas near Texaco in 1909. And at that time they worked on the Circle S Ranch, which was the Spur ranch. It must have been a very big outfit at the time. Grandpa worked there and daddy did too..... They both worked on the Spur Ranch.

Q. Where did you get this?

A. From dad, and from mother..... Long years ago mother and I wrote a lot of this down.

Q. Where did you get this?

- A. From dad, and from mother.... Long years ago, mother and I wrote a lot of this down.
- Q. When did he start at the Circle S?
- A. 1909..... And then he and momma were married in 1913.... In April of 1913.....
- Q. Where was the headquarters?... For the Circle S?
- A. Spur, Texas.....
- Q. It was right in the town?
- A. No, it must have been out from the town. Now you know that must have been quite a relationship there because mother and daddy's wedding was at this Spur ranch headquarters. They were married and they had a dance. And they danced for three days and nights. Many times I've been told this story. So I think. Both families were pretty well thought of families, pretty substantial. And my mother was suppose to been the most beautiful gal in Texas... Too bad that didn't rub off on the rest of us.....
- Q. I wouldn't say that.... Now is that at the Spur Ranch.... 1909, they were married in 1913.....
- A. Right momma was 16, and daddy was 10 years older than mom so that would make him 26 years old.... He was no kid, you know. He often tells about the fine team of horses..... I think daddy must have been quite a connisuer of horses, judging from the fact that he brought two race horses to Albuquerque when he was 15 years old.
- Q. I wonder if there would be any record of that in the newspaper?
- A. I don't know.....
- Q. You don't happen to know what he did when he got here? Did he race the horses?
- A. They raced the horses.... I asked him if they won and he said they didn't, they didn't win very much, they didn't loose very much. They net expenses I would be interested to know about this McKohns motel.... And you know that New Mexico was a territory in those days.
- Q. Well not after 1912 though.....
- A. Then in 1919.... about four years he did this.... And here again they were hit awfully hard by the drought, and daddy said that he had become very discouraged and he thought he was just going to

sell the whole mess and he was going back to Spur. So he sold all his cattle, and he took mother and....lets see.... I suppose Ruth and Ruby and maybe Buford, but I don't know....I guess they probably had three children...by that time....and they moved back to Spur Texas.... And they bought a wheat farm and he put in a crop of wheat.... and when he got ready to plow that crop of wheat, he said nothing but dust came up off the ground.... So he put mother and the children in the car and he came back to Bluewater. And at that time he bought in with a man named Stiles.

Q. S T Y L E S?

A. I don't know Dan.....

Q. Or probably it is S T I L E S

A. S T I, I think..... He bought an interest in with him.. I think it was either half or.... or just what I am not sure. He had already built up so much money, I don't know how much money, but enough to buy the wheat farm and..... I mean to buy his own herd and then to buy a wheat farm and then he said he just drove off and left the farm, whether he did or not, I don't know. But maybe he had a little working capital with that. So then in 1921, he and this Mr. Stiles took this herd of cattle from Bluewater. Mr. Stiles was at Bluewater, and they moved them across from Bluewater across Chaco canyon, they didn't go to Chaco canyon, they were up west of Chaco canyon, to Bist, north of Farmington. (south of Farmington). And again they homesteaded. And right now on the piece of land that he homesteaded, it is called the West Gallegos, there are 14 producing oil wells. That is too bad..... And then the really dropped off in about 1927. Now when the bank went broke in Gallup, you know during the depression, daddy had about 15,000 dollars on deposit. That was a lot of money in those days. And it went under with the bank.

Q. I think he told me that story when we were driving by the bank.

A. Yes.... Then in 1927 and in the Spring of 1928 he shipped seven car loads of cattle to Denver. And he didn't even get enough money to pay the freight on it. So at that point, you see, he was out. He was down for the count. And when he saw that this was going so badly, I said to him, "daddy when did you start working with the Navajos," when did you first.... how did you get to be such a friend with these Navajos. And he used Navajos some on the ranches you know.... And Bisti is right out in the middle of the reservation, and so was Bluewater at that time. And they lived right out in the middle, and the Navajos were neighbors. And I have heard mother tell me many stories about.... Momma was not as friendly with the Navajos as daddy. Momma always kind a was a little more reserved about them..... She wasn't as comfortable with the Navajo people as daddy was.

Q. Did she learn to speak Indian.....?

A. No.... she didn't.....

Q. Did your father?

A. Yes, I think he did, although he says he can't, but he certainly understood. I don't know how much of it he could speak, but he knew whenever they were talking to him, what they were talking about.

Q. Phrases and gestures were enough.....?

A. Of course daddy didn't speak fluent Navajo, like Howard Wilson and some of the Indian traders..... The only people that really spoke fluent Navajo were the Indian traders.

Q. For obvious reasons.

A. Okay, so then in 1928, he went over to Fort Defiance and he applied to the Civil Service, for a job. And then I think then he took this meat packing assignment. Because it came first.... and so here he is with quite a.....by this time he had four children, and I was on the way. So then he took this assignment in Chicago, and whenever the family speaks of this assignment in Chicago, it was a "black day", in the Allen family. We were completely misplaced people in Chicago. This was way out of our area..... The older girls when you talk to them will tell you what a dreary, horrible, miserable time that was..... because we were basically western country people.

Q. Now, what was that a years tour??

A. Well I suppose it was suppose to be, but they were not there very long. Only about 3 or 4 months, I think, no probably a little longer cause I was about 6 months old when we moved home.....I got less than a year, somewhere between 9 or 10 months I would estimate.

Q. Now right about 1928 and 29, the government put out quite a bit of information for stockman to come and help them out.... Do you happen to know whether your father's interest in working for the government came about from reading one of these brochures?

A. I don't know but that is something we can ask him..... Now he was asked..... he put on, when he came back, he was given a temporary work before he went to Chicago. He did temporary work on dureene.

Q. On dureene.... What is dureene?

- A. Oh, I am so glad you asked.... that is sphillis among horses.
- Q. Is it really....?
- A. Yeah, it is.....
- Q. Well is it the name of the disease?
- A. Yes, it is the name of the disease, Dureene.....
- Q. Well that is interesting because in the other tapes we have, I've pondered that word.... I thought it was D R A I N. Do you know how to spell this?
- A. D U R E E N E. But I am notoriously a bad speller, so don't take my spelling.....
- Q. Do you think that is the medical term?
- A. Right, I asked daddy what it was just last night..... Cause I was going back over this and said to him what does Dureene mean, he said it was Venereal disease among horses. And he evidently knew quite a bit about it. So he worked with the Indians on this, before he went to Chicago. And, then, evidently this presidential appointment, then thats what happened. While he was in Chicago, he was given a presidential appointment on the erradication of scab. That is how he came to Fort Defiance. He came to Fort Defiance on a presidential appointment on the erradication of scabs, and I think right there is where his trouble started. Because he actually was not working for the Bureau of Indian Affairs, he was on a presidential appointment, what that amounts to I am not at all sure. He was said to work directly with the Indian and I think what they forgot to do was assign him a real boss, you know. I don't think anyone really knew who his superior was.
- Q. No, this is extremely important.... I think this may be one of the reasons why other people were antagonized by him, because he really didn't fit into a civil service job.....
- A. He never fit into a civil service nick, he could have never gotten away with the things that he got away with, had he either been one of the other.
- Q. Now was he on appointment for the 25 years or so that he was there?
- A. I don't think anybody ever really figured it out.
- Q. Did the appointment have to be renewed?
- A. I don't know, we can ask him about that. I told you the story, didn't I about when he was at Crownpoint? When he was going to water that live stock out there? Now this was probably in 1948.

They were suffering from a very bad drought at Crownpoint. You see, mother felt that they were very tired of daddy at Fort Defiance cause he had done just exactly what he had pleased. But you know for a long time. No one could quite put their finger on anything to really fire him, in plain English, I think there were a lot of people who would have liked to have fired him. But they never could actually put their finger on anything concrete you know to do this, so somehow or other they came up with the idea that they would transfer him to Crownpoint, and hoping he would quit, and leave. But dad took this as quite a challenge because there was a lot of ranch land in the Crownpoint area daddy wanted to try to buy for the tribe. There is two sides to this coin. Daddy wanted to buy the land from the whiteman and sell it to the tribe and made a commission of it, and he did. I mean he sold a lot of that land. He was making a commission on it for himself. But primarily, I think his very first motivation was, he knew how important it was to the tribe, to have that land. So I mean he, did two things, he made himself a little wealthier and, at the same time, he promoted the tribe to buy the land he felt they should have. And I think if daddy is ever remembered for anything specifically, and if the smoke ever clears, where this thing can be shown, if we can ever tie this all up so this can be shown, I think dad's greatest contribution to the Navajo was seeing that he bought more land. Land adjacent to the Navajo reservation.... now in that checkerboard area around Crownpoint daddy is directly responsible for all the land that the Navajo tribe bought. I'm not saying that he did not make a commission on it because he did.

- Q. Well was he doing this extra-legally.....
- A. Sure, I think he did everything extra-legally.....
- Q. Well, we have got to remember one thing, it may be difficult to persuade you father, except for the fact that both the law itself and the working of the law, changes both in place and time, if you know what I mean, in other words, a law can be written for the whole country, but its application on the Navajo reservation might be a great deal different than its application in Washington.
- A. Well, I think what they would have loved to have hung on him here was a conflict of interest.....
- Q. Yeah, right, of course, speaking today, of the difficulty of getting people getting presidential appointments throught the Senate.... you know this is exactly the kind of thing that everybody is pulling out of... Okay, this was the next series of questions that I wanted to.....
- A. Now, wait a minute did you want me to tell you about how he got away with that watering of stock in Crownpoint. This was in 1948, daddy was superintendent, they sent him to Crownpoint hoping that he would go away, but he didn't go away, he stayed about two years

at Crownpoint, and mother came on to Albuquerque, mother had all of that that she could tolerate. She was finished, she moved, came to Albuquerque. So I stayed with dad, and I went into his office one day, and he was just white, he was so-o-o-o mad! His face was as white as his hair. And I was always a little worried for him, cause he took these things so personally. He just used to get so upset when the Navajo was stepped on. And I got the story that, he wanted to water, he wanted to haul water, to the dipping vats, and water at the local watering spots, the dipping vats were usually the local spots, in this Crownpoint area. He wanted to water, he wanted to haul water, from the wells to the local spots, and distribute water so that the sheep wouldn't die..... cause they were flat going to die, it was that dry..... And he called Window Rock and they said that they could not authorize it, they would have to go through Washington, and of course anything that goes through Washington, you know how long that sort of thing takes. So he was just lit up, just besides himself, so we went home and we had lunch. And he began to walk and he began to whistle and you could see this forming in his mind, it usually did. So he stepped to the telephone in the hall, and he called Window Rock, the garages this time and he ordered, I don't know how many dozen trucks, and he called the whatever warehouse it was and he ordered watering troughs and watering tanks and he told them to be there the next morning, that he had authority from Washington to do it. And the next morning the trucks and the troughs and the big tanks that they put on trucks rolled in, and for two weeks, three weeks, no it was longer than that, six weeks, daddy hauled water to the different locations, and the Indians would bring their sheep in and water now. He didn't permit them to water their horses..... but he did permit them to water their sheep. And some of their horses, I know that this was quite a hang-up because they thought just as much about their horses as they do their sheep. And he was primarily interested in saving those sheep. Then he came home one day just whistling and laughing and he said, you know that I finally got permission from Washington to start watering these livestock. But you see, this was the frustration that he was faced with. Had he been a typical bureau man, of Indian affairs, he wouldn't have done this. And no telling how many herds of sheep would have died.....

Q. This was in 1948?

A. Thereabouts, 1947, 48. You can check that out with the Weather and things at that time, because I was married in the Spring of 1949. So it was 1948 and 1949. Somewhere in that area '47, '48, '49, right in that area. So this is the kind of thing, this is a prime example of the kind of thing that daddy was always doing.....

Q. Do you think that we could persuade your father to tell us more of these extra-legal maneuvers?

A. I wish we could.... all the things that he did were extra-legal... When I was a child we had.... Chee Dodge used to come....of course all of us will tell you this story, he used to come and visit at our house. I mean he was just there a lot of the time. And I think that many of my opinions of Navajo folklore were formed in my mind from Chee Dodge and Howard Gorman and these men were always at our house, but we always served them drinks, daddy always drank with them in the kitchen. They always had drinks. There was no such thing as a drunken Navajo, I mean, but they drank socially like you and I would drink. And then, oh, every two weeks or so we would gather up all the liquor bottles, and take them down to the arroyo and bury them. It was illegal.... those are the impressions that are made on a child's mind.

Q. Okay, this is another series of questions that I wanted to get into, but before we branch off into that.... we got into Fort Defiance, with the presidential appointment, which I gather continues.... it is either renewed every year or he just keeps it until he gives it up and he stays, at either Fort Defiance or Crownpoint until when.....?

A. He retired in 1950, I was married in 1949, in May and dad stayed, of course you see then he was alone. Horace and I moved to White Rock, which is a trading post about 30 miles north of Crownpoint. Almost in the Bisti area where daddy and mother originally homesteaded.... And he was far too lonely.... It was just too much. I mean.... but he stayed, because at that time he was working on a ranch, and I can't tell you which ranch, that the tribe later bought. And he was waiting to get this deal finished....and he finished it. And the morning that he had finished this and he was through he simply put his suitcase in the car and drove off... He didn't tell anyone goodbye, he didn't tell him he was quitting, he didn't write a letter of resignation, he didn't do anything. He got in the car and left.

Q. Can you give me a month on that.....?

A. I can't Dan, but I can find it out for you....but you see he had been building for this for a long time.....

Q. But you are pretty sure that it was 1950?

A. Yes, I think he stayed past January of that year..... And let's check that out with him..... I'll ask which ranch it was at that time, that he was selling. I don't know whether or not it was Ed Sargents ranch or.... or just what it was..... But you see, dad was a friend of all of those ranchers..... in that part of the world. All the Indian traders. And the Indians..... The only people that he was always at odds with was the government service people. But he was always at odds with the government...

cause he didn't go by the rules....

- Q. Well the government service of course has.... taken a lot of criticism and some of it is certainly a result of the fact that it is so large and unwily like any government organization even the military service, it just cannot operate efficiently, because of its size. But I think we want to stress this with your father.... we want to try to be as impartial as we can in making judgements, because, I think there should be judgements but I think they should be as well thought out as possible because I think when you stay close to something like that....and you built up an antagonism and you don't get away from it to apraise your won point of view....you can't see why there was this conflict between the government people and somebody like your father.
- A. Well now one of the distinct impressions that I have as a child and I still feel this, and I was very astounded to hear a young woman put it into words, just last saturday, I went to a Kindergarten Association Meeting here, all day Saturday, and there was a young girl from Tohatchi, she is teaching the head start program at Tohatchi, and something was said about it; and I told her I knew where Tohatchi was and of course we started up a conversation and she said I am so frustrated, teaching there, and I said why, and she said so many of the teachers that are out there, really do not like the Navajo people. And I was just kind of crushed because I thought that maybe that feeling had gone away... I was hoping that the people that are working with the Navajos now are maybe a little more educated and a little more tolerant toward the Navajo people themselves. But the impression that I had from a child and I know that this is true, because I lived too close to Navajo people, I mean I was too good a friend to the Navajos themselves to the Navajo children, was, most of the government service people in the little community of Crownpoint, and certainly in the community of Fort Defiance, looked upon the Navajo people as really a second class citizen not even that.....
- Q. Do you know why, is there a reason for their point of view?
- A. They, well I always just chalked it up to ignorance.....I felt that they never tried to understand. I mean, they were dirty. Now I can remember them saying things like.....we'd take off, there was a graveyard up in back of the boys building, where the old soldiers had been buried from the original fort that was at Fort Defiance and some of the tombstones up there were terribly interesting you know..... We used to go always back up in there and I can remember mother saying to daddy, now you must stop Robbie from going up there, she's going to have lice and she is going to have all this business that the Navajo's have. Now this was mom. And mother was not as tolerant as I say, dad and I were. But, and then in the schools, they would put the Navajo children all together in one part of the room because they smelled a little different,

and they did..... I mean in the first place, these children from the mission, there at the Good Sheperd Mission they smelled a little like disinfectant you know..... And the Navajo children from the employees children, there were Navajo employees, people that would work in the power house, and in the garages, etc. They were Navajo parents, they were just really kind of dirty and I think they felt they were dirty, ignorant people.

- Q. Now what you are saying, is that some of the bias was based on the comparison between the cleanliness of the whites and the uncleanliness of the Navajo. Well, did you have the same feelings? Anout the Navajo's themselves being dirty?
- A. Heck no, I liked the way they smelled.....
- Q. You really didn't.... This didn't bother you.....
- A. I really didn't. Not at all.....
- Q. But they did have lice and they did smell differently?
- A. Yes they did, they didn't have water to bathe with like we do.
- Q. And when you went to a hogan did you watch where you sat and did you check yourself for lice?
- A. I never did, I never did and I always used to go to the sheep dips. Daddy had two men, ones name was John and ones name was Buck Martinez. I was talking to daddy the other night and I said, you know I don't think that momma really like me, how come I spent so much time on the truck with those men. They would freight the things to the different dips. See that was daddy's job, they started the dipping of scabies.
- Q. Freight the cans of pesticide.....
- A. Yes, and the wire and the troughs and things like that, so I went with these men a lot of the time and we would ride at sheep dips where daddy wasn't even at. I would be alone with them. And I would get down out of the truck and go eat the mutton and fried bread or whatever it was that the Indians were eating and they just accepted me I guess as one of their own, but I think I am the only one of the family that did with the exception of my brother, and Buford worked with daddy, dipping the sheep. So I was, and at the time I am saying this, I must have been, I would imagine I was eight or nine or ten.....
- Q. You don't recall in the 21 years that you were there, feeling any of the same kind of "holier than thou" attitude..... which we think is identifiable with most of the government service employees?

- A. No, I didn't, and the reason I think I didn't is, because of the really truly great Navajo men that spent so much time in our kitchen.
- Q. Was there a variation in degrees of dirt? I mean a man like Chee Dodge who was so well know, and so well respected generally, in both Navajo and white circles and they, probably J.C. Morgan and Howard Gorman, they were certainly, if we can say more classes and I think there are among the Navajo certainly upper class.... Now did they wear the same kind of clothes, did they seem to need a bath.... Did they also have lice?
- A. I don't know, I never got lice. There is a story that the Navajo louse won't live on the whiteman. I got the itch one time, scabies, but I never did get lice. Well, we got stuck on the road from Ganado to Fort Defiance, my brother and I in the snow storm and we slept in a hogan overnight. And we slept in the sheepskins, on the floor. You know you say, do I ever remember being dirty, that was the most uncomfortable night that I can remember. I don't know whether I was cold or whether I was..... but I was physically very uncomfortable. And daddy dipped us when we got home. In the bathtub. I can't remember what we had. I don't know if we had lice or scabies or just what we had.
- Q. Probably lice.....
- A. Yeah.
- Q. Well, okay, now I think it is very important for you and Jackie and what is your other sister's name?
- A. Ruth.... she is the oldest, she'll have different viewpoints than we do..... I think you will find that Ruth, well I don't know, this is something that I'll be interested to see, their viewpoints and how they come out.
- Q. I think what we will do is, put these initial tapes together and talk over what we have learned, and then how we proceed with your father.... we'll do all the ground work that we can do before we get to him, we tire him as little as possible. But what I was getting at, I think it is very important for you individually and the three of you together to decide what aspects of your fathers life you want to stress. What particular, now you mentioned the fact that you think he will be remembered for the land work that he did.....
- A. Also, the work that he did toward building up the Navajo's herds. He spent a long time and I don't know where he got the authorization, or whether he even had authorization, to buy these sheep and stallions and rams and things that he bought and brought back in here, to breed with the Indian livestock.

Q. Okay, so this would be a second factor in addition to the foresightedness of purchasing land which we know even today is a very vital part of the Navajo policy. Do you think that we ought to also work on the upbreeding of the livestock?

A. I imagine that is, I suppose that would be what he would most remembered for. But the thing that is dearest to his heart is the idea of this land now this is still dear to his heart. There is a big piece of land in Arizona, that lake in Arizona, and New Mexico. Its called the Red Lake, ranch, now a dear friend of daddy's built this ranch, as Mr. Jacobs it is the only piece of land left in this part of the country that is completely deeded. There is no Taylor-Grazing or anything there. And he wants, he wanted the tribe to buy this piece of land, so desperately because it lays right in adjacent to where the tribe should be. And he has been trying to do this for years, and when Mr. Jacobs died, he left it in his will that only daddy could be the realtor for this piece of land. Which was quite a compliment I feel to daddy, and last year a big firm here in New Mexico came to him and said there was a group of men, a syndicated group in California wanted to buy this piece of land. So daddy kind of half-heartedly went at selling this and at that time the Jacobs family decided that they wouldn't take it because it was, they were making money off of it and they would keep it. And then just a few weeks ago, another big money outfit in Texas has come in and told daddy that they would offer them \$25 an acre. So he called the Jacobs family and I think they are going to take it. It's a two million eight hundred and fifty thousand dollar deal. And daddy's not the least bit happy about selling it, irregardless of the great commission that he is going to make off of it. Because he wants the tribe to have it. This is what he has felt that the tribe should do.

Q. What is the tribe's present stand on this?

A. Well, here again, they are, they must be tied someplace if they can't purchase this land, because all the men in Window Rock, that he's talked to, the land management men and the Navajo's themselves, have wanted this piece of land, for years, but even like today, they can't get the go ahead, the permission, the money, the something to buy this land. So here even when he is 80 years old he is still frustrated by the fact that here lays this piece of land, that for years he wanted the tribe to buy. And he is the only one that can sell it, and Mr. Jacobs did this so that daddy could hold on to this for the tribe because he knows how dear to dad's heart that his is. So the only thing thats going to scratch this deal. It will sell now, is that the Jacobs family does not want to take cash for it, and the Texas people want to pay cash for it. So, isn't that a hang up to have.... \$2,850,000 cash, so tax wise neither, I don't know what.....

- Q. Yes, that is the number one problem with real estate today.
- A. But this, I really think that if daddy could sell this ranch to the Navajo tribe, I think that he would be ready to die, I think that would, he could finish it with that.
- Q. Well now, we talked last year, over about this scabies business. And from the work that I have done since then, I found out that this is really the major problem. Yes.... in livestock.....
- A. Now they had never dipped for scabs, and he started building dippings vats and about four years he had it licked. And then they continued to dip, for lice and ticks. For many years. They're not doing that now, and I don't know how long it has been since they have. And I asked him the other night, daddy should they, why did they quit, should they still be dipping. And he feels very strongly that they should periodically dip, for lice and ticks, but he licked this scab problem, in four years. And I would imagine if he went there in 1929 so he didn't get started until '30, so you might look that up and compare your dates between '30, '34, and '35.....
- Q. Well I happen to know, if my reference is correct that scabies had been eradicated, except for two small bands.....down on the southern part of the reservation, by 1938. So I think what your figures represent are, were, his district or....area that he was working at because he didn't operate over the entire....
- A. Yes he did.... He was in charge of the whole thing.....
- Q. Well it is possible that it is an earlier date than 1938.
- A. Well now maybe I've got the.... He went there in 1929, maybe it took him a few years to get it going.....
- Q. I kind of feel though that in this battle to get the Navajo to accept the dipping there is a very worthwhile story that needs to be told....
- A. Yes, now this is his baby, you see he did this. He designed the vats, and he and the bureau of Animal Industry worked together. The veterinarians here, who were some very good friends of his. That worked together, the veterinarians I think worked out the formula for the dipping formula but daddy did all of the dipping, all over the reservation. He dug the holes and did all of the work. I have many pictures that show us standing in the corrals and so forth with all these sheep...that must have been a tremendous undertaking. And they had to log all of this you know, keep records of.... as they went through the vats, everybody's own flock to look after. But I don't think daddy had an awful lot of problem with this because I think that he was so well

known among the Indians I worked with them, so that they understood that this was for their own good. There was not opposition to the dipping, was there?

- Q. Well, I can only speak from what I read. But it appears to me that the dipping and the livestock census count are somewhat tied together. Anytime that the government official, whether they were stockman or rangemen, would get the livestock together they would try to develop a method by which they could identify a person and the number of stock that they held because as I am sure you know, you were not allowed to own more than a certain number of horses, I think ten was the maximum.
- A. And this was the thing they fought. The census.
- Q. They fought the census as a matter of fact. Do you recall an Indian by the name of Black Hawk?
- A. No.
- Q. I don't remember his Navajo name but there was a story that I wanted to clarify with your father about his being so upset by the census taking that he brought a group of young Navajos out on a hill and came down to Shiprock, and they were ready for battle, this was in the 1930's.
- A. This isn't the story where they kidnap the range rider is it?
- Q. No that is another, that is a fellow by the name of Curley I think. No, that is something else. This, you ask whether or not there was opposition to the dipping. I think there was.... opposition.... I don't think there was too much question as about that. But your father as he also has told me previously and modestly was able to sit down and reason with them. Because he was a stockman. And because he could point out to them very clearly that their wool would weigh almost 60% more if they were able to get rid of the scabies.... And that the traders would pay them more, as you already pointed out this evening. The Navajo are very practical people, and in dollars and cents, it seemed like the smart thing to do. But where the difficulty arose was in the attempt to try and call out the sheep at the same time that they were dipping....and when a family brought in a certain number of ewes or lambs then the stockman also tried to identify who owned what lambs and then get rid of them.....
- A. Yes, and they never quite succeeded that, because the Navajo people very, very cagey. Have you ever been to a dipping vat.
- Q. Oh yes, I have dipped a lot.... but not on the reservation. I wanted to ask your dad, I wanted to ask you about it too, is it true that the women played a big part?

- A. The women did most of the dipping.
- Q. That is what I thought.....
- A. Yes..... I don't know what the men did..... Played around on the fence and talked and laughed. Played poker or some sort of game... We used to stand on..... oh, my it stunk!
- Q. Yes, it is a very strong smell.....
- A. And the women would gather their skirts up and tie it in a big knot up here in the front. I always worried so for the sheep.... I was always afraid that they were going to drown....and some-times they would go under.... and they would dig them back out....
- Q. Of course they lost some and I think this was another thing that created a certain amount of function because occassionally they would get some of this trong solution into their eyes or get it in a cut.... and they would die.....
- A. You could smell the dipping vat for miles you know.....but it was quite a social thing too, cause they would always have a squaw dance you know. And people would get together from miles around, when they would come into the vats to dip. And of course daddy spent a lot of time away from home doing this. And my brother went with him, he spent his summers going with him. There were several really fine men that worked on this with him. John Diblebest was a man, now I think that John was probably a range rider.....
- Q. Now this is a name that I have trouble spelling.....
- A. Oh, I have no idea how you spell it.....
- Q. I have heard your father saying it, it sounds like D I B L E B E S T...
- A. It could be, I think he is a Dutchman... I would imagine so.... He used to cook very good beans and garlic.... It wasn't enough that we had the dipping vat smell, we had to have beans and garlic. You're going to get a different story from my older sisters.... I think Jackie and I felt very close to the people....to the Navajo people. But I don't think my older sisters.... had the feeling that we do for them. For the people themselves.....
- Q. Well, as a historian, all I can tell you is that there is no real truth when it comes to reconstructing the past. You have to do the best you can. It's just like four people standing on four different corners and watching an accident. And each one has to file a report and each one will give a different opinion. Who was at fault and what happened....and the best we can do is...

that is why I want to speak with each one of you before we go any farther, because I think that this will help draw conclusions later on when we try to tie this together.....

- A. It would be interesting to know why out of the six, seven of us, why we all came away with very different opinions, why we would have thought that in a family this size that we would have all been ore or less the same. Now Bernice, my other sister, she wouldn't have a thing to do with it, she wouldn't even have a Navajo rug in her house. She wouldn't have anything to do with it, she wants to forget everything she ever knew about the reservation. I wonder if the social stigma didn't kind of get to Bernice.
- Q. Well, I don't know, but I think your father talked a little bit about that in the forms last year.... and that was the impression that I had also. Well a couple more things before we cut this off. I wanted to summarize a little bit, what you think should be stressed. You mentioned though the land purchases we mentioned the upgrading of the livestock and I think that probably you agree, that even though the dipping may have not been a problem, it was a major achievement. And your father really ought to take the credit for it.....
- A. Yes, I think the credit is definitely daddy's on that.... Because I think he organized the range riders and I think that he organized the dipping and I think he organized the whole thing.
- Q. Now what about his..... organization of the Navajo chiefs themselves, the clansmen themselves who obviously had so much control over whether or not this thing worked..... Do you think this is another area in which your father was perhaps a civil service diplomat?
- A. Yes, because I think at this time, if Mr. Hunter had left, and I don't know at what time Mr. Hunter, what year Mr. Hunter left our country, but from the time that Mr. Hunter left and the whole base of operation went into Window Rock, I think the whole program of the superintendent and the Navajo deteriorated clear down to nothing.... because I think the superintendents from that year on were government service men, boy they went straight by the book, and you can't go by the book with Navajo people or..... and I say Navajo people because that is what I know the most about.... But you have to go by the heart and by the head and you have to use the book when you can. And I think that daddy, because by this time he had built up a reputation among the Navajos that he was a stockman. I imagine this was his foot in the door, and I don't think daddy ever felt superior to the Navajos.... Now when you said we had people, like Howard Gorman and Chee Dodge and those... we had people like Buck Marinez and the truck drivers and everyone else... ate at our house.... I mean if they came at dinner time

they were invited to eat.... and if we went to their house at dinner time we were invited to eat... But I'll bet we were the only house in Fort Defiance where a Navajo was invited in to eat a meal. I think we were looked at as kind of strange people.

- Q. Well, that was probably one of the sources of criticism that came from other government service people.....
- A. I'm not exactly sure how much my mother like it..... I don't think mother liked the Navajo people. But I don't think mother loved the Navajo people like daddy and I did. And my brother also. I think she was a little bit southern, and I remember one time when my grandmother Allen was very old and came to live with us. We always had a Navajo girl that lived with us and helped mother. It wasn't like she was a hired girl at all, she was one of the family. But because we had so many children in our family and because of Gerald, our invalid sister, and we always had an Indian girl that lived with us and she slept in the same bedroom with us, I don't ever remember sharing the same bed, but we certainly did share the same bedrooms..... And there was no integration at all, she ate with us and she was just one of the family. And I remember my grandmother Allen came to the table in her wheel chair and we were all eating and she wasn't eating, and daddy said to her, "Grandma why aren't you eating?" And she said, I never eat at the table with colored folks..... And we were horrified, all of us.... And I can remember thinking, why you wretched old woman, you know. And daddy got up from the table and said, well will bring you a tray and wheeled her back to her room. I think that was one of the first times that it was driven home to me. That my own family could feel that way about it.....
- Q. In other words, then he was very close to Chee Dodge, as well as all the other people?
- A. Yeah, and he lent money to a lot of them.... he was always... his truck drivers and..... they would come to the house and he would lend them money.... and I remember one time, I don't know what the situation was, but mother, one evening said to the bunch of us, lets take a little ride out to Crystal..... so we went out and daddy wasn't home. So mother and all of us rode out to Crystal and we rode up to this hogan and we got out and visited a little bit and mother and I don't know who he was.... went on over to the other side of the hogan. I remember him saying to mother, 'yes mother, yes mother, yes mother.' He was calling my mother 'mother', and momma got back in the car and she was kind of chuckling and it turns out that daddy had lent this Indian quite a bit of money and mother went out to collect it. And he was, 'yes mother, yes mother' you know, was paying mother what daddy had lent him.. So.... I don't know, I think mother was practical and daddy was not too practical.

Q. Well, obviously the different points of view came down the family to with sisters. And some you picked up your father's point of view and some you you picked up your mother's point of view.

A. I think so.

Q. Well, I would say that that is natural. Well Robbie, I think we have made a really good start. And you have done your homework, which is terrific. If Jackie and Ruth will do this kind of thinking beforehand it will be great.

END OF TAPE