



THE UNIVERSITY OF NEW MEXICO | ALBUQUERQUE, NEW MEXICO 87106

DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY
TELEPHONE 505: 277-2841

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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 # 616
Mrs. Bill Palmer (trader)
Crownpoint, New Mexico
Interviewer - Daniel Tyler
February 16, 1969
Side 1

Trading
Changes over last 12 years on
reservation.
Relationship between traders and
Navajo council
Peyote
Government projects

Mr. and Mrs. Horace Biggs voices will be heard on this tape along with mine, Dan Tyler on February 16, 1969. I spoke with Mrs. Bill Palmer, who with her husband, run the Crownpoint Trading Post. We discussed many subjects, the major theme of which was the changes which she saw in the Indians in the reservation over the 12 year's which she has been running the Crownpoint Trading Post. The tape opens with her feelings about these changes. We discuss particularly the present interest in cattle which the Navajo have assumed. In many cases Mrs. Plamer believes that sheep have been done away with in favor of cattle. We also talked about the pawning, which is the main occupation of the Palmer Mercantile Trading Post at Crownpoint. She and her husband are no longer taking in livestock and there are very few blankets which they take in. They run their operation basically on a cash basis and for this reason provide a service of providing cash for the pawned items. She runs this kind of business both at Crownpoint and Fort Defiance. We also talked about the relationship of the trader on the reservation and the Navajo Council. Mrs. Palmer believing that the present chairman, Raymond Nahkai has been responsible for a feeling of insecurity among traders. We dealt quite extensively on the subject of peyote which has become very much of a problem in the Crownpoint area as it has at Ganado and other places on the reservation. We also looked into the attitude of the Navajo toward the Protestant churches at Crownpoint, Mrs. Palmer mentioning that seven of them existed in that small town. We talked briefly about government projects, most of which she disapproved of and the Navajo youth. The main the most successful information that I have received was the name of two informants, Vern Freeland and a Mrs. Davis. Both of whom Mrs. Plamer felt would be glad to talk to us.

.....

Q. Changes must still be coming very slowly, if they come at all?

A. NO, I think things are changing fast.....

Q. Do you?

A. Yes.

Q. That would be your perspective. Well in what way do you notice that there are changes?

A. Well for one thing they have learned to hold their own meetings and follow parliamentary procedure, but now they are learning more and more. And their meetings are amazing, they are conducted just as well as any meetings that you would go to for anything else. They are very well conducted, they are illerate people, why it is amazing how well they are conducted, Well 30 year's ago, why maybe they couldn't have done it. So two year's does seem a short time.

Mrs. Biggs; How did they conduct the chapter's 30 year's ago?

A. Well they weren't even formed 30 year's ago, yes they were, a little over 30 year's.

Q. Well how long have you been at Crownpoint?

A. We went there in '56.

Q. So you have been there around 12 year's.....

Mrs. Biggs: Yes, but you were out at.....

A. White Rock, and White Horse and I have lived on the reservation all of my life.

Q. The same thing that Robbie and I were talking about, that we have practically nothing as far as interviews or information on the Crownpoint area. We really don't know anything about it, and I was particularly interested in what history of that particular area as far back..... Wasn't you dad responsible for getting that trading post going out there at Crownpoint?

A. Yes, they had two trading posts out that way, but they were already in existance when he went up there. But he did work real hard to get the place filled up, get his people to buy more sheep and bring in more sheep into the country and helping them to be independent. And of course he died before the days of ONEO and some of these things, I don't know how he would have taken that, (would have been a shock to see these) it shocked me.....Just now like DNA, this is the lawyers that they hired, you know about them. Well we had three real nice boys as assistants to the lawyer there and his name was Cahn, these three nice boys. They are earning real good salaries and they have to to out and solicit business to be able to justify having them over there. They actually go out and solicit and the funniest thing has happened to us I might as well think that it is funny cause that is all that we are going to get out of it, just laugh.....They caught a shoplifter here the other day, so he called the police and they said, yes they would come and pick her up and Bill had to go in and sign a complaint. And then she went to DNA with it, and so they set a date for the hearing and Bill went down and he came back and he was just broken-up, he was laughing so hard he just thought it was a laugh.....Here came all the three boys with their briefcases you know and they had stacks of stuff in there and this is all over this shoplifting. And so the first thing they did was to demand that Bill drop the charges. And Bill said, well I am not about to drop charges, if I had wanted to defer charges I would have done that in the first place, I see no reason for it. And so they said, if you don't, we are going to charge you with assault and battery. And then Bill just thought that was funny, you know he said, yeah, cause he hadn't touched her. And then they decided that she couldn't be tried in that court, that they had to take it to a federal court in Gallup, which is under Mr. Schokee, Mr. Schokee is one who said that they couldn't bring the case to him that if DNA would file charges against him for assault and battery that he would turn around and countersue. But you can't take her into the District Court and we can't find anyplace to take it.

Mrs. Biggs: Typical!

Q. YOU know that is interesting because when I was talking to Pete McDonald, who I guess is the Chief of the ONEO, have you ever met him?

A. Yeah, I met him in Los Angeles.

Q. He has a pretty hard shell it seems to me. He has expressed a real interest in this oral history business, which I am not so sure.....Anyway, not Pete, but some of his

friends told me that the reason that they are not getting anymore money to continue their own oral history work is cause the DNA and the ONEO are having a real fight. And I didn't want to ask any questions because I thought that was none of my business.

A. No, they really are having a bitter fight!

Q. Well is this what you saw, they are not getting enough business, they are sort of a phoney organization?

A. They are a phoney organization, they really are! And I am trying to think of the story that Morris told, but anyway over around Tinain and Pueblo Pintado or Pueblo Alto over in that area, they have had three cases where they went into Cuba. One was shoplifting and the other was a trader had sold the pawn too soon, and I can't remember what the other was. And each time the DNA absolutely lost the case for themselves.

Q. Well are they trained lawyers, or they just have to do the job?

A. Well none of them that are, Ted Mitchell is the only one that I think is liscensed. The rest of them haven't had their exams.

Mrs. Biggs; Well aren't the Navajo going to be pretty fast to pick this up, that this is the way to get out of.....

A. Sure they are.....

Mrs. Biggs; They are going to play both things against the middle here and aren't they kind of laughing at our white man's culture of.....

A. Sure they are.

Mrs. Biggs⁴ For being so stupid, they are just standing back laughing.....

A. They are thinking let them fight each other and I think they are right for doing this while they reap the harvest. Now like take these three boys that are working for DNA Crownpoint, there is no more need of having them there than there is of well, maybe one if he was really interested could take care of everything there is. But they have three and they each have their secretary, why this is a fabulous amount of money that is being spent foolishly, they don't need this. They have got their legal aid in Window Rock and I can see a person from Legal Aid being stationed at Crownpoint, but I just can't see it. And Mitchell, Ted Mitchell, of course is fighting Mott ??? And the people suffer.....

Mrs. Biggs: Well Ted was telling us about how they tied their hands, the car dealers and so forth in Gallup not being able to go out and collect on payments. The Navajos already had.....

A. They had that pretty well picked up in the first place, except that it was still a little bit doubtful, just what they could do to pay. They know now the car dealers can't come out there, so what car dealer is going to sell, except for cash. So they are hurting the people and they are going to keep fooling around getting into this all and they are going to hurt them even more because this is the only source of petty cash that the Navajo has and they get to fooling around with that and they are really going to hurt the people.

Mrs. Biggs: Well now you deal mostly with pawn, now don't you?

A. Yes.

Mrs. Biggs: That is what your whole business is, pawn?

Q. Where are you in Fort Defiance?

A. Navajo Motel ?? We have the dry goods, but the big end of it is pawn.

Q. What kinds of things are they bringing to you.

A. Oh they would bring the kids if you would take them. I used to tell them, why anything that won't eat, I would pawn. But their beads and their belts and their bracelets and their bolo ties and.....

Q. Well now, is this run like a regular pawn shop, they get a ticket for their merchandise? And then what kinds of terms are there?

A. Six months, we hang it six months in the vault and then one month out on display. Because time means nothing to the people, but if you hang it out where they can see it, it reminds them that it is about time that they better be picking it up and then if they pay 25% on that, yeah, I think it is 25% then you hold it for 60 days longer and then if they pay 25% more on it, 25% of what is left, well you hold it 60 days longer..... Well this can go on and on and there is no reason for them to ever loose a piece of pawn.

Mrs. Biggs: Well are they changing with this pawn from what they used to in you know they used to never let a piece of pawn go dead. Are they letting the pawn go dead now occasionally?

A. Well we have gone through a phase, there for a while they just weren't valuing their pawn at all. It seems like the really good things were getting away from them. But now, the last couple of years, I have noticed that they are placing more value on their pawn again, than they did for a long time. I think they realized that they were letting themselves out of a source of income, a source of ready cash. So they are valuing their stuff more. I imagine that only about 5% of what we pawn goes dead.

Mrs. Biggs: Well then you are using the same method of pawning that you always did? Forty or fifty year's ago, this is the way that we used to do it. We would keep it and then we would hang it up for a month. That is the same method that you use.....

A. This is the same method that we always use.

Mrs. Biggs: Are the other traders using the same method or are they doing something else?

A. Some of them use 30 days, some use 60 days, some of them keep it there forever and never say a thing to them, it is just there's. But we have always gone by the book and that is what the books says, you keep it 6 months plus one month on display. And really there is not a reason for them to ever loose one piece.

Q. Do they bargain with you over the value of it?

A. Oh yes, greatly.

Q. And what do you use a say a yardstick for value, on something, say on a piece of silver?

- A. Well the only way we could do it, is think what could I sell this for?
- Q. And what do you base that on, the commercial people that come in to bring it in to Albuquerque?
- A. Well now our tourist trade or that that you could sell back to the other Navajos, we don't have enough to sell it commercially. We could, there is a market for it all right, but we don't have that much. So we just sell it through the case to the Navajos and the tourists that happen along.
- Mrs. Biggs: Don't you sort of guage it on the person too?
- A. Oh yes, because there are a lot of pawn in there that is good for nothing, and yet Old Joe is a pretty good old fellow and always takes care of his credit, and he takes care of his sheep and he really takes an interest in things. Why you could give him \$50 on a \$20 strand of beads.
- Q. But normally you don't give the full value of the things, what is it 60% or something?
- A. Oh it varies. You really have to look at the person just as hard as you can.
- Q. You have to know the person I guess? So those people that were coming in to you on Saturday, when I was out there, those were all people that were familiar to you, you knew them?
- A. Yes, yes, you were there when I was working pawn weren't you?
- Q. Yes, I wanted to stay around but I thought that it might be kind of.....
- A. Oh, we are used to it.....We are used to ONEO and the Mormon Missionaries so it doesn't make any difference. YOU could have stayed around all day....we would have thought you were just another one of them!
- Q. Just another Mormon missionary!!
- A. YOU wouldn't look like a Mormon missionary with that pipe in your mouth!
- Q. Well I wouldn't have, would I????
- Q. Are there a lot of missionaries working out there?
- A. Quite a few and Crownpoint, as little as it is has one, two three, four five, six, churches.....
- Mrs. Biggs: Now that has changed, when I went to Crownpoint, to teach school there was only one mission there, Christian Reform Mission was the only church. So I would say that religion is moving in in leaps and bounds.....Yes, and like this one preacher, he is an M.D. and he decided that he wanted to become a minister so he works the two of them together. But he won't charge.....
- Q. What if he ever gets confused about where he should take his patient?
- A. I think that he has a time or two.....

Q. If they are really extreme.....you better go to the other building tonight folks.

Mrs. Biggs: Well what do you think that the Navajos are swallowing this religion or..... it is the way I felt about religion, they just joined whatever church was handy with tongue and cheek.

A. What ever is most convenient.....

Mrs. Biggs: Yes, and which ever one is giving the most at the time.

A. Just whatever is most convenient to them. I know of one or two that I really feel are sincere and really believe.....

Mrs. Biggs: Christianity as we understand it.....

A. But out of all the people, Bill and I were talking about it the other day, we could only pick out two, out of all the Navajos, that we felt that we feel that truly dropped their old ways and taken up Christianity.....

Q. What about the Catholics?

A. Oh they are pretty strong.....

Q. Are they pretty strong!

Mrs. Biggs: They always have been pretty strong,

A. Of course they came in ahead of everybody else too.....

Mrs. Biggs: And they built schools.....

A. They built schools and hospitals and they did alot of things.....And I give the Catholics a lot of credit.

Mrs. Biggs: They wrote the alphabet too you know, the Catholics were the first ones.....

A. Catholics were the first ones. Howard was telling us about that, the long coats and the short coats. The Catholic's are the long coats. But I always felt that they took religion for what they could get out of it.

Q. It still seems to me that though there may be surface changed like the DNA coming on the scene and a few more churches in the vicinity, and approximately the same amount of rug and blanket ware and that they are bringing for pawn there still is no large basic change in Navajo outlook, though is there?

A. Now, they are going through, what we hear so much about, delinquency among the young kids, and they are regular little delinquents. But bless their hearts, why wouldn't they be. If you figure in Navajo fashion the mother has always been the head of the household so this was done for year's and year's and they have been pretty satisfactory then the white man came along and they say no the man is the head of the household and here they look to the men for that. And the men aren't ready to assume the responsibility because the mother feels that she should step back and let the father take the responsibility because this is the way the white man does it and the woman sit back and depend on the male for their final discipline and so on. And so consequently, the kids are getting no correcting at all, they aren't being corrected by the mother or

father or guided and the kids are suffering. And it is no fault of their's because the parents can't see their way clear to either, they can't go back and they can't go forward. Right now they are sort of caught in the middle.....

Mrs. Biggs: Too bad, isn't it.

A. But I think their whole social problem, that this is a lot of it.

Q. What is for the kids to do though?

A. Oh that is another sad thing, and just think of this ONEO money that they are spending on DNA and all of those swimming pools and bowling alleys and things, why.....they would be a lot better off. They have got some of the silliest things, most asinine programs in the ONEO that there ever was. I sat on the Board, sat on the ONEO Board about two year's and worked for about another two year's with Oneo.....

Q. Like what silly programs?

A. Well, teaching them their crafts for one. I think that is the silliest one that they ever got into.

Mrs. Biggs: TEaching them their crafts, what was that?

A. They were teaching their children basket weaving and this sort of thing. And then they would be able to keep, they would give them the material to make their first piece, their first article, whether it is a bracelet or a belt or.....And the people simply took their articles that they made and took them to the Trading post and sold them and they were forgotten.

Q. Well what are you going to do when this present generation stops producing the kinds of goods that they would be bringing to you to pawn or for sale? Who is going to make the silver ware and the rugs, and the baskets? I gather the children aren't learning to do it.

A. Some of the school's are going back and are teaching crafts in the schools.

Q. But that is all right, do you think?

A. They have a rug weaving project going on, and silversmithing project going on right now. And this is all right. And I didn't have any quarrel with ONEO for teaching them to do it, it was the methods that they used. This was the thing that upset me. Now why didn't they go and teach them their crafts, that is fine and dandy, but they gloomed it up with their method and it had to do with money more than anything else. That.....

Mrs. Biggs: It was another welfare program that the Navajo was sharp enough to use.....

A. Sure, and this is the way most of them have been. Now this home training program that they have, I think is a good program. They have had these trainees working on really practical things, they would go over to old grandma Tsosie's place and they would set it up and they would fix her floor and fix her windows and put in the doors for her. And they really fixed it up comfortable. And even paint and some of these things. Of course, the people had to find some material themselves so that it wasn't a give away program. And it was very practical and I was real proud of it. And of course, Crownpoint introduced it first then people turned it down and for a few months and decided that everyone had forgotten that Crownpoint introduced it and so then he introduced it and so then he introduced it and it got along real well.....

- Q. Getting back to Pete, isn't he a college graduate from one of the California colleges?
- A. I am trying to think which one.....
- Q. It is either USC or UCLA, somebody told me, I don't know.
- A. I think it is UCLA, I think that is what somebody said.
- Q. Was he appointed to that job with the benediction, the blessing, of the tribe or did he compete for the job? How did he happen to get into that?
- A. They took application and his came out on top.
- Q. Who is they now, the ONEO?
- A. The ONEO yes, well the Navajo Tribe asked for this.....And so they screened them, the advisors really screened them and when they decided on Pete they put it before the Chairman and the whole council body whether to, as to whether or not he would be chosen HE did have to compete for it. I don't think he had too much competition. Pete is sharp!!
- Q. No doubt about it.
- Mrs. Biggs: What pete is this?
- A. MacDonald, and he can be very very pleasant.
- Q. Well I tell you, I had the feeling that he wanted to be very pleasant but we had tried for two month's to get a hold of the guy and set up an appointment and you just couldn't do it, and he would never call us back. So I figured that I would take the bull by the horns and so when I was out there, I just marched into his office, mud all over my feet up to my ankles, I think it was one of those days, you know. I walked across that carpet and I saw him looking at my foot prints which must have been pretty bad behind me and I think he felt that I had, taken the wrong turn or something and we had a pleasant chat and all. But he wasn't really sure, that I was legitimate in the first place.
- A. Well really we have had a lot of people.....
- Q. Yes, a lot of people go out there I am sure, doing exactly what I did and I understand that now that there is a bill that the council is working on which will, if it is passed prevent people from coming on the reservation for the purpose of interviewing Indians without a specific passport.
- Mrs. Biggs: Is that good?
- A. Yes, it is. It would be good for us cause we don't know, now probably I would not have spent, not spent any time with Dan, if it had not been for you. Because I have answered questions and answered questions for people for the same reason, I don't know how many times. And sometimes they are legitimate and sometimes they are not.
- Q. That is the same thing that HOWard said in his own way, he didn't come right out and say that, but we went out there. Robbie and I went out there together and I have been around the Colorado Indians enough to know what the score is, and he just about said in so many words that if it hadn't of been for your dad, that.....that he wouldn't spend

any time with me either. But now he is interested, if it wasn't this darn money hang-up and I think that there is going to be way around that somehow, but he is really interested in participating, but he is tied up now. He is, I don't know whether told you this but the Rough Rock people are that he is presently taping for are trying to write children stories.....

Mrs. Biggs: Oh isn't that great!

Q. And that is why they are so interested in all of his stories, cause so much of that is easily made into marvelous history for the kids and yet it teaches them something of their own culture, legends at the same time.....

Mrs. Biggs! This is my objection.....

A.

Q. They have too many you see, we are both trying to do the same thing and now I gather that the project that the ONEO is running is just volumes of material. Have you ever seen Carl Gorman's little office up there in the trailer?

A. No.

Q. Well he has that whole trailer, that 10 wide trailer that he has.....

A. Oh, I did too, I know which one it is.....

Q. And it is just stacked with volumes of transcripts and various stages of completion and what they need now is to go through that and index and find out what they have and then start offering it to some of their people who want to come in and put it into print.....Cause it is the children who say, "why don't we have Navajo history taught in our school?" And the only reason why they aren't having it is cause it isn't there, but it hasn't been typed out, it hasn't been written.

Mrs. Biggs! It hasn't been documented properly to be able to use it, and again this is where ONEO hurts the tribe I think cause now people expect to be paid for these things And before it was a willing service, a community service. And really why should they be paid for.....

A. Well really, when I went to school out there, my first year I had what they called 'late beginners', kids 13 or 14 year's old that had never been to school. And I thought at the time, what a tragic thing that I was teaching these children to read these things and they had no concept of what I was doing because it didn't relate to anything that they knew about.

Q. Well if you look at Dick and Jane carefully you will notice that not even our own children know what is going on.....

A. Yes, but they know what a ball is, it is a red ball and this kind of things. But they should have bookds written that these children can.....Things that they understood, sheep, and thins like this, that related to what they did. We wrote our own, we wrote several stories.....

Q. Are these children in the Crownpoint area staying in school?

- A. We have a pretty high percentage of drop outs. But I think every year it is improving that we are getting fewer drop outs as time goes on.
- Q. Is there a Board or something or a counseling service which talks to the kids and tries to show them at least the alternatives to.....?
- A. Yes, the public school has their counselor and the boarding school has one. Each of the boarding schools has a good counseling staff.
- Q. Well what are they doing? What do they do if they drop out?
- A. Go back to the reservation, find a job jumping pumps or clerking in a store or find a short term job here and there. You have your hippies, a few have gone to the coast and become hippies. And these are the kids are the problem here because they just don't have anything to do. And I don't know what the answer to this is, somewhere along the way we have to find an answer.
- Q. Well it isn't the approach to try to find something that they can do, whetehr it is an industry or a business of some sort which can be developed on the reservation it seems to me from what Howard says that this business of deporting them to Kansas City and St. Louis, and Los Angeles and he mentioned a few other cities that they had big groups in, it seems to me that that works actually against what they are trying to achieve.
- A. It does!
- Q. Because they get lonesome, they obviously are round pegs in square holes and they come back.....
- A. And if they even bother to come back, and those that don't come back, don't stay in the field that they were trained for anyway, it seems like they end up in something else. But they come back and they don't fit anyplace.....
- Q. What about vocational opportunities? Vocational training schools?
- A. Oh this is being explored a little more all the time, Gallup-McKinley county is going into it this year, for the first time. And Fort Defiance School has had vocational training programs in their public schools for quite a while now. It's been about 5 years now probably since it was instigated. But, the schools are beginning to see the need for this, the public schools are.....
- Q. The other things that I worked with the School Board up in Colorado and parents up there were complaining that cause it was a rural town and it was very difficult to get money to do anything and the parents were complaining cause they felt that their children which were going to this rural school with this heavy accent of shop Industrial Arts and the kind of thing which the local teachers could teach, they something about, Where they were at a terrible disadvantage when the parents wanted to take that child and send him to the state university cause he couldn't write, couldn't spell, couldn't read very well. And yet on this, in tis situation it seem to me that the very thing that the people that they need to have is something to do.
- A. That is the trouble that they have on their hands.
- Q. No future in the livestock business?

A. Well the range will just carry you so much and that is all. And it will not begin to carry enough for a hundred thousand people. There is no way, that enough livestock can be raised.

Q. ARE you mostly sheep over in that area?

A. Yes, every year there are more Navajo getting rid of sheep and buying cattle.

Q. Breeding herds or just running steers?

A. Breeding herds.

Mrs. Biggs: Well that is a good thing isn't it.

A. Yes, I think it is.....

Q. Why is that good?

A. Well because that way they don't have to keep one child home as a sheepherder, and they are deprived of everything all the other kids get. That is the biggest, that is No. 1 and sheep and you really have to live with them, be with them constantly. Where the cattle you can turn them loose and you know just about where they are, about every day or two and see that they are where they are supposed to be. And they don't have the task that they have with the sheep.

Mrs. Biggs: What is this going to do to the wool and the weaving?

A. I don't think that you will see any Navajo turning completely to cattle, I think that they will always keep their little sheep herd. But it will be in such a fashion that they won't have to keep their herd with them. Of course they can always set out and buy wool from somebody else.

Q. How much has the tribe had to say about your operations, that isn't exactly the way I want to say that but what kind of an effect has their organization which obviously has become much more efficient in the last 30 year's effected the trading business as such.

A. They haven't improved the trading at all, in fact we don't know where we stand today. We are very insecure, and they don't seem to know where they are or what they are doing.

Q. Do they want you there?

A. Oh, we have to send in a financial statement every year along with our 1½% payment (of gross sales) for leasing the land and using our own buildings which we put up. Cause the minute you put up with a building it belongs to the tribe. And we are very insecure cause they are sort of jumping around, and you hesitate to get leases on some of the places that have had leases for years. And it is real serious business, I don't know. Our communication has sort of broken down and we are having a pretty hard job right now.

Q. Do they have a committee for traders and such?

A. Yes.

Q. Who is in charge of that?

- A. I don't know who that is now, Ned Plummer was and they have had a change and then I don't know who it is. Now they do have a trading supervisor, hired who is a white man and his name is Garden, and he is the one that we answer to, is this man Garden. Then the Bureau has a man also, who is in charge of the traders. So we bounce around between the Bureau, and between the tribe and try to fit in some how.....
- Q. Isn't the Bureau's role largely advisory though?
- A. It always has been, this year they are sort of taking a different task, I don't know what is behind it at all. Some of the stores they have, haven't even gotten their leases or their liscenses to operate this year. We always went on the year to year basis with the Bureau for our liscense to operate. But this year why they made some different demands that you couldn't come up with their specifications why you won't get it, your liscense renewed.....
- Q. So that you have to have both permission from the tribe and from the Bureau in order to operate?
- A. Yes.
- Q. Well Robbie gave me the impression that there is certainly no increase in the number of trading posts in the reservation, these dyas.....
- A. There isn't cause nobody wants to invest any money in it. Until we decide how the thing is going to go. We are all afraid.....We won't put any more money into ours until they settle down and we find out how it is going to go yet, we have a lots of plans for remodeling and enlarging. We can't afford to now cause we don't know what they are going to do.
- Q. Yes, it would be one thing if it was yours and you could recover somehow if they changed. Is this a reflection of the Nakai regime, do you think? Or just pressures from within?
- A. Well, maybe I am prejudiced but I think that it comes from Nahkai. He just isn't looking ahead.....
- Q. He is not looking back though is he?
- A. He is just not looking. He isn't looking to see the future of his people. The traders always been the people's best friend and he isn't stopping to think about that and the trader is going to want the Navajos in his area and do so that they will have more money to spend. Every trader wants his people to make money, if they don't make money, why they don't have money to spend. So why would a trader set out to break a Navajo or to cheat him and drive him away from him.....
- Q. That is pretty much a myth by now isn't it, that the trader is cheating the Indian? Isn't it? I don't think any of the Indians make.....
- A.
- Q. Well I mean the real Indians.
-
- A. Most of the Navajos still trust the trader just like they have.

Q. Well Robbie's dad and I talked a long time on this, about this whole business of the trader. Not from his families bias but from his viewpoint ranging around the reservation as a stockman. I think he probably covered as much country as anybody could have. And he pretty much documented the truth as I see it, and as you obviously see it. They were trying to persuade him to write up sort of a semi-memoir of the period of his life that he was working out there as a stockman. Gosh, it would.....

A. It would be just fabulous!

Q. It would be a wonderful thing.....

A. And besides it would sell.

Q. And not only would it sell but it would be a real contribution to any kind of history cause as far as I know no one has ever, no white man has ever written a story about what it is like to be an Indian on a reservation which I supposed is what he would have to be, at least in this thinking, he claims that he is an Indian.....That is your dad...

Mrs. Biggs: Well I don't think that you could spend as much time with him as we did and not pick up the best part, this is like the Navajos picking the best of both cultures and I think we sort of feel that way.

Q. Well actually I would think that it would be very difficult to be completely open-minded towards the white man after you had spent so much time out there.

A. Well what would you expect?

Q. Howard was also telling me that the relations that the tribe is having with Gallup are deteriorating very fast.

A. Oh, Gallup has had a hayday with the Navahos and it is just about to come to an end. Thirty or forty years is just about to come to an end.

Mrs. Biggs: I think the thing that distresses me the most is to see the Navajo taking on the worst part of the white man's culture, and the arrogance of.....

A. Yes, this they are.....Well this is what we taught them, they are just like a child they learn the worst first.....

Mrs. Biggs: Yes, I never thought about that.

Q. How many, do you have any idea how many families trade with you at Crownpoint on a fairly regular basis?

A. Probably about 300.

Mrs. Biggs: I want you to tell Dan how your daddy started out there, with his livestock and things. Did he run livestock and cattle.....Was that the way that he originally started as a.....?

A. No, it had belonged to some of the tanner's where the livestock was, and dad has his own store in Kirtland, and he decided that he didn't like the town of Kirtland. So they offered to trade him that and the land and the sheep for this store in town in Kirtland, so he grabbed it real fast. And it wasn't fenced at that time, so he fenced the whole thing and he changed from sheep to cattle, for the same reason that the Navajos are, which is much easier to handle. You make more money with sheep, but in one way you make more money, in another way you make less cause you have less overhead and

taking care of them, so you know it is more.....So that is is more economical for people to run cattle.....

Q. Do you have any idea how many cattle he was running.....?

A. At that time?

Q. At the peak.....?

A. At that time and that is about on 30 sections of ground. I don't remember exactly but it was around 30.

Mrs. Biggs: Well he used to buy a lot of cattle from the Indians too didn't he? They would sell cattle out of there for 3 days and nights worth.

A. Yes, yes they bought lots of them. But has bought quite as few, or quite as many as dad used to.

Q. buys a lot of cattle,

Mrs. Biggs: Well did the buy them on credit like I did with the sheep?

A. Yes.

Q. Well that was another thing that I wondered about your store there. Do you still buy and sell cattle, sheep? YOU can't do that can you?

A. We can, we just don't.....

Mrs. Biggs: Are you mostly on cash?

A. Yes.

Mrs. Biggs: Really!!

Q. Well some of the traders still take, livestock don't they?

A. Yes, like my brother does, and I think

Q. Where is your brother?

A. and Lake Valley, through that area, White Rock, where Riley and HOrace first were. He closed the two old stores and built one and a new one. I never did quite figure out how.

Mrs. Biggs: Well they would have to cross that wash so many times.....!!

A. They cross it all the time, somebody goes to town every day just like we used to.....

Mrs. Biggs: Cross that same wash?

A. Yes.

Mrs. Biggs: That was fun Dan, to cross that big wash.....

Q. That was the wash that your dad was telling us about I think.....

A. I don't think that he was to well acquainted with that.....Chinle he probably was.

Mrs. Biggs: That used to be lots of fun. How wide is that wash?

A. It is about $\frac{1}{4}$ miles.....

Mrs. Biggs: Quicksand all they way.

A. Yes, but when I went to the Governor and asked for a bridge crossing for

Mrs. Biggs; You mean you are going to ask the Governor for a bridge, across the wash?

A. YOu bet you!!

Mrs. Biggs: I want to come out there and cut the ribbon.

A. We have already been there more than once. That chairman from some committee Anyway the Chamber of Commerce from Grants and Gallup and Farmington along with other representatives of the three counties are forming a committee to try and get the road paved from Crownpoint to Farmington.

MRS. Biggs:

A. Yes, it has been surveyed for 3 year's or more. We had the money once and then someone stole it away from us. Took it down and put it someplace.

Mrs. Biggs: That would be the shorter route wouldn't it?

A. Yes, it would be six miles shorter from Farmington to Gallup and it would be 21 miles short from Farmington to Albuquerque than the present route that they are using. And then see they would have about 70 miles and then they would hit 66 and the four lane would end.

MRS. Biggs: Imagine that!!!

A. So we are working on that.....

MRS. Biggs: Have Ed Foreman working on it.....

A. We started to advance through that country one time, when Horace and I first started dating and it took us.....we left Crownpoint at about 4 o'clock in the afternoon and we arrived at Kirtland the next morning at about 8 o'clock.

Q. That is some real ancient history right there! (Dan, I couldn't leave that line out.... without it the last paragraph would have no meaning)

MRS. Biggs: That was one mud puddle right after the other, I will tell you.

Q. Well your road in from the highway hasn't been paved that long, has it?

A. No, it has only been down about 6 year's.....

Q. That is what I thought!!

A. Well the streets are paved, and you would never realize it, never recognize it. All the paved streets, all the street lights, oh man!

Mrs. Biggs: Street lights!

Q. What are all the people in Naval uniforms doing out there? I saw more people.....

A. They acutally aren't Naval, they are Public Health officers.....And it looks like Navy uniforms.....

Q. Yes white hats and navy blue coats.

Mrs. Biggs: They are at Fort Defiance too aren't they?

A. Yes.

Mrs. Biggs: That is where they are sending all their young doctors to get experience. Of ourse, they have been doing that for a long time too. I would like the statement of the doctors that they send out to the Navajos.

A. We had some

Q. Well now is there a welfare office out there too?

A. Yes, now the state welfare office is in Gallup, the welfare caseworker comes out almost every day of the week. Then the Bureau has their welfare office right there, and it is staffed with about 8 or 10 people. And then the tribe has their welfare office there. So we are not hurting for welfare office!!

Q. How do the people feel about the welfare?

A. They think that it is great.

Q. They take all they can get.

A. Why sure! They are in the process of learning this, they are smart. They are bleeding the government and the white man and the county and the state and whoever they can for all they can get.....And I don't blame them.

Mrs. Biggs: This has always been their philosophy!!

A. Sure, I think they are smart to do it. If we are dumb enough to hand it out why they are smart enough to take it.

Mrs. Biggs: Always their code of ethics says, the crime is not in doing this, the crime is in getting caught. It wasn't a crime to steal something if you could get away with it.....

A. We had the same thing happen to us the other day. Oh, the mother was just bawling out this little kid cause somebody caught him stealing candy. Oh, she was just bawling him out real good. That is getting caught.....

Mrs. Biggs: Sure!!

Q. Well that is very old, in their tradition, (the business of stealing?) isn't it?

A. Sure it is. They are not loosing their old ways as fast as people think they are. They are.....

Mrs. Biggs: You will find those of us who were raised amon them feel the same way.

Q. You still steal too?

Mrs. Biggs: If you can get away with it. (chuckle!!!!)

Q. How much money did you make off of me on that rug anyway?

Mrs. Biggs: I didn't make any, it made me so mad. Next time I sure will!

A. I just will never believe that the traders steals a million cause there isn't a trader smart enough.

Mrs. Biggs: That is a fact.

A. He is going to even the score and beat it you better believe it that is what he is going to do.

Mrs. Biggs: About comparing the Navajo that you trade with today, and the Navajo that you traded with when you were at White Rock, when they boys all went to war, what is the difference in the Navajo per se, the Navajo himself? I mean are they different

A. Oh, they really are in a way. Now when I stayed at White Rock during the war, why the Navajo at that time were very protective of me. They watchd to see that I was taken care of, if a stranger came in well if one of my Navajos was there, why he wouldn't leave until the stranger left. And today, I am not sure that they would do this. Of course, I haven't had the opportunity to check it out. But, the type of business that we do now, you saw us check them through the grocery line, and that is about all the contact that we get with them. except this taking of a piece of pawn. We don't have any opportunity to really get to know the people and help them, with their problems like we used to. Goodness! We used to know everybody's name from grandma right on down to baby and we belonged and what their particular problems were and what they needed and it isn't that way now, you can't get that close to the people.

Q. Is that because of the numbers or just because the way of life?

A. It is both.

Mrs. Biggs: I think this is really too bad.....I feel that this is an era that is passing that is kind of sad to me.

A. Yes, it makes me feel very sad. I really miss it.

Mrs. Biggs: Cause I know that when they used to bring their babies in and I would weigh them on the scales and cut their finger nails and..... I know that the squaws used to come in with their babies for me to cut their finger nails.

A. You don't have time to do that anymore.....

Mrs. Biggs: I know that the squaws used to bring their babies in for me to cut their finger nails, that was a big deal cause I had little scissors to cut their nails and then they wouldn't scratch themselves. And then I would weigh them.

A. You know things have changed a lot in that way, that type of trading that the people do. Now the Navajo thinking hasn't changed, but he is forced to deal and do things in a different manner, than what he has always been used to. And I don't think that they will ever change the thinking.

Mrs. Biggs: I don't either.

A. And politics is just one thing that just tickles me to death when it comes to the Navajo. He promises every politician that they met and shake hands with that..... sure my friend, I will vote for you. And when election day comes around, it doesn't make a darn bit of difference what the politician said, they will go ahead and vote for the one that they want to.....

Q. That is not much different than the whiteman, is it!!

A. And it is the same way with churches, I know one girl that has been baptized in about four churches. And I said, "well which one do you like the best?" And she said, "well it all depends on when they have their parties." That is how much christianity means to her.....

Q. Of course, we see this is in everyone of the pueblo. That is where we virtually spend most of our time and they are very open about this, I was up at Zia, last August and there was a Frenchman, I think he was, and he spoke very broken English, but he collared one of the chiefs and one of the officials and he said, tell me you people are all Catholics aren't you? He said, Oh yeah! that is what we show anyway. Of course he was obviously very much a Catholic himself, and he, the Frenchman was and he didn't understand that they would go through all the motions, but not really be converts, or that they would want to do this, it would sort of a hypocrisy you know. But every one of the pueblos is like that.....

A. And you try to tell some of these missionaries that this is the way it is and they can't see it all. They can't see it, you can't convince them. But, I have decided that this is their problem.....

Mrs. Biggs: Well if you analyze the situation then where you sit around seeing this younger generation.....

and yet they aren't changing their thinking, and they are still educating their own children in their own traditions and in their own way and I feel this is the same way with the baskets, not so much the baskets and the rugs and the jewelry. It will still be taught. Whomever it is going to be taught anyhow, just like it always has. Irregardless of whether the OEO gives Weaving Lessons and the Schools give it--I don't think that it will die.....

A. As long as we continue making money for them on these items.....Just like the rug auction, now we formed a co-op on that, and we got up to \$5,000 out of the government for that you know. And that put up a Wet House, a storage house, enough to buy rugs as the people come in and we will give them their minimum price. And then later when the rugs are really auctioned why if this rug brings old JOe \$10 more than it is sold, they get the money.....

Mrs. Biggs: Very good!!!

A. And then we hold out 10% for handling, and at the end of the year, if the auction has made any money then they will get dividends according to how many dollars worth of rugs they put through the auction, not how many dollars but how many dollars worth.

Mrs. Biggs: Well I was wondering about this auction business, I was wondering if this was cutting the trader out of his source of income.

A. I buy and sell as many rugs as I ever did. Maybe more, because the people have gone back to weaving, many of them that had completely stopped weaving, have gone back to it.

Q. Is this a family project or is it just done by the women?

A. Usually it is done by the women. I know two men weavers, that is all I know of. Well Walter Hahn and then another one, his name is I can see him, he is short and squatty. Oh did you know that your painter friend was killed?

Mrs. Biggs: Yes, Daddy had the Navajo Times and gave it to me. That is too bad, poor thing.

Q. When I was over in Ganado a couple of weeks ago Mrs. Gorman was telling me that and I think that she was very sad about it that many of the Indians over in that area had really taken up peyote. And were not really playing with it, they were really letting it break up their whole social life. And in a way, their social life was almost becoming centered around it. I wondered if you had seen much of this up around Crownpoint?

A. You see evidence of it almost everyday.

Q. In that way, the fact that the adults seem to be on it, or they seem to be spending less time with their children as a result of this?

A. No, I don't think that they were spending less time with their children, they are driving their children to it too. And much, too much money goes into it. For one thing, this is one reason that the trader doesn't like it. Cause too much money goes into it. And then it has been proven that if it has been taken long enough that it does affect the mind, and that it does affect the mind very seriously. And this is something to be real concerned with. And getting together and having these hallucination parties, is not much better than a bunch of kids getting together and having an LSD party, same thing. Now they got it from the Oklahoma Indians and back there they used it specifically in their rituals. And this is the way that it is intended to be used and if it is used like that I can see no harm in it. But they are overdoing it. And you can see an actual physical breakdown from the use of peyote.

Mr. Biggs:

A. Oh boy! they really are, it is just going to ruin them.

Q. Do these pick-ups that have the big eagle in the back window signify that they are participants in the peyote cult?

A. No, not that I know of.

Q. That is what Howard said.

A. Well he would know.....

Q. It might be just in his region.....Do you remember when we were driving out there, I don't know whetehr I didn't know it at the time, but I noticed it the last couple of trips that I made..... He said that this meant that they were officials in the society that they belonged to.

Mrs. Biggs: This is much more prevalent now than it used to be.....

Q. In other words they are advertising it. It has become a very significant thing. And he said that the kids are doing this too!

A. Oh yeah!! They are bringing it to school with them.

Mrs. Biggs: Really!!!

A. Oh yeah, they just have one old bud, they can put it in their pocket and suck on it for a while, and chew on it for a while, put it back in their pocket and the teacher is no wiser about it than.....They can think of many different ways to use the stuff.

Q. Where are they getting it from?

A. Most of it is coming out of Oklahoma. They are beginning to experiment and grow some in this area too.

Q. Now that would be against the state law, wouldn't it?

A. No.

Q. It wouldn't be?

A. Robbie's friend, John Burroughs, was for it.

Mrs. Biggs: He is no friend of mine.....

Q. The famous Governor.....

A. And we have a doctor that examined him and had been practicing in Gallup for how many years? Not Dr. Parker, you know the big fat, bald-headed.....?

Mr. Biggs: Paulsen?

A. Yes, Paulsen and he went before the Legislature and said that it was absolutely not harmful.

Mrs. Biggs: Why the silly old man, he should have known better than that!

A. Oh I wanted to cut his throat for that.....

Q. Do you know what that has in it, what the drug is, it is mescaline. It is a hallucinatory, well I say that the California hippies, but the, I am sure that the hippies every where have been fooling around with this, it supposed to be more hallucinatory than marijuana but not as much so as LSD. But it is definitely something that you can get hooked on.

A. I know that one time I was having terrible headaches, well this was when we were at Fort Defiance, and so my housekeeper one morning she brought me some medicine. And she said, all right now you are having these headaches and you can't get rid of them. And she said, okay now I want you to take this medicine tonight, when you are all ready for bed and she said, I want you to go to bed and then take it. Because if you don't you are just going to be floating around in the air, all around, and she said you won't like it. So she said, I want you to take it, and be in bed when you take it. And I always figured that it was peyote but I never did have the courage to try it.

Mrs. Biggs: YOU didn't try it?

A. That must have been one of my mofe sensible weekds, I don't know.

Mrs. Biggs: I don't believe I would have tried it either.

A. I kept it around for quite a while and never did use it.

Mrs. Biggs: Well I wonder if it would have cleared your headache or not.

A. Why I would have found out allright.

Mrs. Biggs: Maybe like a tranquilizer, you just don't give a damn.

A. I think this is what it does.

Q. I wonder why it is though, that at this stage in their history that this comes out so strong. Why should there be such a big peyote cult now?

A. Because I think that it is a social thing more than anything else.

Q. Sort of a break down in their feeling in security and they feel it a little bit and they turn to this?

A. Now, this is my feeling on it.

Mrs. Biggs: Well the white culture is doing the same thing, why are we doing it now? When we were kids we used to go out and get drunk and now they are doing all sort of crazy things. LSD and.....

Q. But in this case it doesn't come from the kids, it comes from on top.

A. Yes, that is true.

Q. So it is something that the parents.....

A. Something social.....

Q. The parents are feeling it though, where as in our society it is certainly not middle age and older people.....

A. Yes, they are teaching the children to use it, how they use it. Now what they do with all of these things, I don't know. But when they get on a peyote party, they buy corn by the can fulls, they buy half a dozen cans of corn. YOU just about know that there is a peyote party going to take place. They buy green chili and they buy corn beef or mutton. And those are the three things that they buy.

Mrs. Biggs: Well for goodness sakes!

A. And when you see a big bunch of them going through well you know that there is going to be a peyote party. And how they use it all, I haven't got any idea.

MRS. Biggs: Isn't that interesting.

Q. Do you think that it is connected in any of the groups with religion?

A. This is an original intent, yes. They do use their, they have religious ceremonies that go along with it. And a peyote pot looks like, it has 3 legs about so long and so big around and they when they make a potion, why they stir it inot this particular pot. And then there is a certain type of feathers, the Shaker or whaever they call him, works with. And I have one of those peyote bands. And-----I have never been to one of the ceremonies, so I don't know of course I.....

Q. Could you go?

A. I think that I could probably get somebody to invite me.

Q. As a participant or as an observor?

A. As an observor!

Q. That would be a really interesting experience!

Mrs. Biggs: Yes, it would be.

A. Maybe, maybe that is the reason that I have never gone.

Mr. Biggs: I think that over around Two Grey Hills they have some pretty good peyote parties

A. Yes, but they are spreading more, they are really spreading.

Mr. Biggs: But that is the first that I had really heard of then. The church and what not the business end of it of course I knew the Hahns used it there I never heard anything about the church being mentioned with it. A policeman over there told me about it.....

A. Oh, it is quite a problem.....

Q. It is associated with their own church or with one of the protestant churches?

Mr. Biggs: Well I think that it is their own church.

A. I think that it is all by itself. I guess so, that is the way you say it.

Mrs. Biggs: Well do you think that this comes down through history or it is something that has evolved just recently?

A. It comes down through history, through the, and the reason that I am so smart on this, I know a little bit about it is that Mrs. Dixon.

Mrs. Biggs: Oh yeah!

A. And she has told me quite a bit about it, and she has told me quite a bit more than the rest. And she gave me a book to read on peyote, and it was actually used as a religious thing for a long long time before the Navajos ever took it up and started messing with it. And this is her feeling that the Navajos have no degraded the feeling in such a way that it is harmful, harmful for those who continue to use it.

Mrs. Biggs: Mrs. Dixon is an Oklahoma Indian isn't she?

A. Yes, she is Caddo.

Mrs. Biggs: Well then it isn't a Navajo thing. It came to the Navajo through.....

A. It came to the Navajo through the Oklahoma Indians.....

Q. Through the Plains Indians, that is where it began. Well originally the Plains Indians I think it was about the 1890's started up what they called the Native American Church, I think!!

A. Yes.

Q. Is that what it is?

A. Yes.

Mrs. Biggs: Have you been eating peyote?

A. Well we still laugh about that, remember when you had that big Republican Woman's Convention here, and you brought the girls over? She still laughs cause this one woman asked her if she was Indian. And she said, oh I am just Caddo, and she said, "Oh, how nice." And she didn't know a Caddo from a hole in the ground you know. She said, no I am just kidding! Oh Gracious.

Q. How do you think that the tribe feels about that?

A. I think they still rule against it against the use of it. Nahkai is a peyote user.

Q. Is he?

A. Yes. I wouldn't want to be quoted on that.

Q. The liquor business as I understand is going pretty much through the same rethinking now that.....

A. They better put it out there and they better control it themselves.

Q. Yes, well now Howard said something to us about that bill being in the Legislature last fall. YOU don't know whether or not it has gone through do you?

A. It hasn't been formally presented yet.'

Q. But do you think it will be, pass?

A. I am afraid that it won't pass, and I think that it should.

Mrs. Biggs: HOWard thought it should pass.

A. Yeah, and for year's he fought and then when he finally got down and was on this committee to look into it well it really changed his thinking.

Q. Is there any place where the Indians can purchase liquor? Near you, I am trying to think what is down the highway there.

A. Thoreau ?????

Q. They can buy it there, can't they?

A. Yes, that is the closest. Now, father and I always talked about putting in a bar, we figured that the Catholics could sell it and the Mormon's could drink it, well.....

Q. YOU would have enough business right there.

Mrs. Biggs: What happened to the Baptists?

A. Well I asked that and father had a good answer for that. He said, they were going to have their own little heaven anyway so it won't hurt them. There is a great circle of Baptists here.

Q. Are you having much trouble with people bringing cheap rot-gut wine into your area?

A. No, we are not having any trouble but that is because we are in the checkerboard area where one minute you are out on federal land and the next minute you are out on tribal land and we don't have as much trouble with it as in the interior of the reservation they are having more trouble cause they are bootlegging a quart of liquor and then the Navajo hurries and tries to drink it up before he is caught. And they are having quite a bit of trouble. Now Crownpoint doesn't have too much trouble.

Mrs. Biggs: Do you still have as many drunk Indians as you used to have?

A. No, not at Crownpoint.

Q. That is interesting that there is an increase in peyote but a decrease in the use of liquor!

A. Now some people argue with me on that use of liquor, but as far as being in the store and seeing it, why there is much less especially in the use of liquor. They are learning to handle it a little better. This better educated, htey are still with the 'wino' and there will be a 'wino' no matter whether they were red, yellow, black or white. YOU would still have a certain amount of them, and I think that they are not drinking as heavy as they were. Now this is just my opinion.

Mrs. Biggs: Well the educated Navajos are turning to social drinkers just like we are?

A. Yes, it is legal now, there is no need to.

A. Of course, they can't take it on to the reservation yet.

Mrs. Biggs: They probably all have it like we all do.....

Q. What about home brew?

A. Navajo have never been much to make home brew, except out of raisins, and rice and they use a lot of sugar, yeast,.....

Mr. Biggs: It doesn't seem like Tom bought too much yeast.

A. Everytime I sell a lot of packages of raisins I have to break down and laugh!!

Mrs. Biggs: What do they do with them?

A. Well they set them fermenting.

Mr. Biggs:

A. Well whenever I think about drinking I think about drinking Mexican Oil. And if that wasn't a riot to see him. Andy would come around that corner on that horse.... Do you know what Mexican Oil is?

Q. No, I don't.

A. What is it?

Mrs. Biggs: Is it for colds.

A. NO, you take it internally and it is real good for colds. And well you were just burning for a week, I think that.....Why he would buy a bottle of Pepsi-Cola and pour out the Pepsi-Cola and put that Mexican Oil in it and.....boy you couldn't scrap me off the roof.

Mrs. Biggs: And belch, you never heard anything like it in your life! Just really returned loose.

Mr. Biggs: When I first came up here, he was taking it by the teaspoon. When I was away from there and then in the winter when I cam back you know, he would be headed up around Chaco Canyon and for a sing or for something and he had it by the bottles full. And it got to where everytime he went through there I only had one bottle left. He would drink two or three.

Mrs. Biggs: Oh he would just get so drunk. What was the alcohol content of that?

Mr. Biggs: Sixty percent.....

A. Yeah; we were looking at it the other day.

Q. Who are some of the oldtimers that are out there now that you think might be interested in what we are doing and want to talk a little bit?

A. Well I have thought and thought and thought.....

Q. How aboaut the Vicente's?

A. I think Earl would probably work with you.

Q. Earl is the younger one isn't he?

A. No, Earl is the old man.

Q. Billie, is, isn't there a Billie?

A. That is the council man's son.

Mr. Biggs: YOU wouldn't get nothing out of Billie, his mind is.....

Mrs. Biggs: It is kind of pickled isn't it?

A. Yeah, pretty well pickled by this time. There is Ned Vicente, Vern Freeland, I think that Vern would understand what you are trying to do better than most of them would. And he is, he really lives in the two worlds very well, he had adapted himself to the way of the whiteman and he has still retained his Indian dignity and belief, many of their original beliefs. Vern Freeland I think would be real good.

Q. How do you spell his last name?

A. F R E E L A N D.

Mr. Biggs: I hadn't thought of him, but I think he would be a good man.

A. I think he would be real good. I have mulled this over and mulled it over and understand that he is in community work and community service.

Mrs. Biggs: One of his children was going to school when I was still teaching up there.

A. John, I think it was.

Q. Does he have a hogan in the area, near your store.....?

A. He has a nice three-bedroom home with running water.....

Q. In Crownpoint?

A. Yes, this was one of these Home Improvements, I mean Self-Help Housing Projects. This was another thing that OEO did that, no OEO didn't do it, EPA did, but anyway the Navajo, they certified this particular spot and the Navajo in order to have his downpayment for his home, had to contribute a 1,000 hours of labor. And that was his downpayment for his land and for his home. And then the payments are very very reasonable and in 20 year's it is something like the G.I. Bill and they own their own homes. And this has been a real good thing and they really worked for this and got it done. And poor old Vern has had one stroke but he was up there working every day trying to do what he could to his new home. And I was just thrilled this is one real good program that they have. But the people weren't over anxious to take this change, they were even suspicious for some reason, I don't know why. I think they thought that they felt that they would loose everything else that they had if they did it. But Vern was one of the few to go ahead. And I think that Vern could give you as much help as anybody lese.

Q. The main thing that we would like to hear from them, is not so much their stories because it is very difficult to ask a Navajo to tell you their stories. It is difficult to phrase the question cause you feel like you are intruding no matter how you phrase it, it is private and it belongs to them. In a few cases they will want to illustrate it by telling a story. I am not telling you anything, obviously, it makes a big impression with me. When I first met HOWARD and he was all wound up to talk and he had

it on the back of his mind, that who ever was coming out from the University must be something like an anthropologist and they wanted to know stories, legends, and folklore and this type of thing. And so he went on and on about the.....

A. And you are after history more.....'

Q. Yes, because the Navajo know their own stories, but they don't have all the resources to put all the history together. What was for example the kind of thing that we want to know and as far as your own trading post was concerned. And what was it like when you were first there, was, what were the people like, what kind of problems did you have and where the Indians concerned, kind of what were the ranges like when you first started to run cows. Or why did they switch from cows to sheep, even things like their climatic changes, which have been so dramatic over the past 50 years.

A. Well I think that Vern would be a real good one for you.

Q. Well if they can get over the feeling that this isn't prying, I think we can get pretty good cooperation. We haven't had that much contact with the Navajo, again as I wrote you the Pueblo-Navajo contact is so close that we are trying to enrich the whole Indian History Program by bring the two together.....

A. Now when you first start talking to Vern, I think that you should make it plain that you are not after legends and this sort of thing. That you are after dates and facts...

Q. Well you can't really say that cause even Howard, he had a hard time, getting through to this, getting names put together. You have to be sort of trained to do that kind of thing. But if they can remember any kind of detail you can usually work it into a period of time by associating what was going on here and what was going on there.

A. Vern I think would remember more dates than.....

Mr. Biggs: Yes, I think that he would remember more dates than Howard would.

Q. Would he?

A. Yes.

Q. How old a man is he?

A. Well he is retired, so that would mean he is 65. He retired two years ago, 1967. What did he do, where did he work, what did he do? No, carpentry, and plant management at Crownpoint. He is a carpenter. And he taught shop at the old boarding school. Yes, he taught shop at the old boarding school so he is going to have a lot of dates and things and I think you will find him something different to work with.

Mrs. Biggs: Well he doesn't have this feeling of being such a high important man as Howard felt.

A. No, and he wouldn't worry about the money, like Howard does.

Q. Well, we can do something as far as compensating for the time, if the man is taking off from his job, or taking off time where he could be making money somewhere else, we can work out compensation for him.

A. Well you see he would be ideal, cause he is retired.

Q. Well technically Howard is too, he isn't working on a paid job. But he has got it in his head after making an arrangement with the Rough Rock School that \$30 a day is a fair wage for talking into a tape recorder.

Mrs. Biggs: Yes, but you must understand that Howard is way up there on the social ladder he is one of the elite.....

Q. You would think so, he certainly gave us that impression. But when I tried to drop his name to several places that I went, it certainly didn't cut any ice.

Mrs. Biggs: Dropped kind of heavy, huh?

Q. And I wasn't trying to make my own position any easier by using his name but I wanted to, these few people that I talked to, I wanted to make it clear that I had talked to few people. And some people that were somewhat knowledgeable and it didn't.....

A. Someone else that might be good for him, she of course retired in California, is Roger Davis Sr.'s wife--his widow.

Mrs. Biggs: Oh Daddy like Roger Davis. He is just as cute as he can be.

A. And Mrs. Davis had gone back to the church now and she is retired.

Mrs. Biggs: Well what do you think of Dan's chance of getting, like if he should start working with Freeland. Do you think that he might be able to get him to come, if you paid his expenses in here?

A. I think he would be thrilled to death.

Q. Who Vern?

A. Yes.

Q. Can he drive himself in?

A. Sure he has got his own car.

Q. Well what would be the best way to go about contacting him? Going out there and talking to him, or writing him a letter or what?

A. I think a letter and then following it with a personal visit and in the mean time I will try to..... have an opportunity to tell him that you are coming and that you are doing a different type of thing.

Q. Well that would be fantastic if we could get someone that was willing to come in cause the hardest part of the whole program is going so far, and then finding the people remember that you were coming out and that they forgot and that is the end of that.

A. I think that Vern will be real good, and so is she.

Q. What is her name now again? Davis?

A. Phoebe.....

Q. Phoebe Davis?

A. No Roger Davis's wife, Mrs. Roger Davis.

Mrs. Biggs: And where does she live?

A. Down at Indian wells.

Mrs. Biggs: Where is Indian Wells?

A. Between Keams and Holbrook.....Yeah that would be a heck of a piece to go and talk to her. And I don't know if she would cooperate with you once you were out there, so I would say go ahead and work with Vern.

Mrs. Biggs: What about that old man that you mentioned, that you thought--Jaime???

Mrs. Biggs: He is really very very old isn't he?

A. Yes, he is, I don't know if he.....

Mrs. Biggs: There is an Indian at Dog Path whose girl was so beautiful, you remember that we even made the wedding veil for her and so forth?

Mr. Biggs: Dick Grove (???)

Mrs. Biggs: Dick Grove, are they still there?

A. There are some around, yeah! They have got a kid, a boy that just got married, he is a real nice boy. They might be able to help.

Mrs. Biggs: And who was the old woman at White Rock that I just loved so?

Mr. Biggs:

A. Mrs. Teller.....Now let me see, she died. And he is still living, but he is a pretty old man.

A. She up to Crownpoint after they moved from White Rock one day. And Huck came in the house and he said, there id someone to see you. And I stepped out into the store and she was out in the bull pen and we both sat there and looked at each other and she came running right through the gate just hugged me and kissed me. That was the first time that I had anyone really show their affection like that. Right there in front of the whole..... You could have heard a pin drop through that whole store. Everybody just stopped what they were doing and their mouths just fell open, mine included.

Mrs. Biggs: She was a sweet old woman.

A. Well I don't know other than this man who you could try.

Q. Now Vern has been there most of his life so he would be most familiar with that area.

A. Yes, he has been there all his life.

Q. He has been there all his life!!!

A. And I think that he would be a real good one.....

- Q. Well usually you don't need more than one person, one person that is willing to talk because if you get one person who is cooperative and he is more than willing, and he says I don't know that, but so and so knows that.....
- A. You will find Vern very slow to work with since his stroke, he speaks quite slowly. He wants to be sure to be quite distinct so that he speaks quite slowly. But, there is nothing wrong with his thinking, and he talks very good English. And I think that you would really enjoy doing it.....

END OF TAPE