

Perry River Project

Taped at Gjoa Haven

September 2003

Lucy Nimiqtaqtuq

(English)

**Interviewer: David Pelly
Interpreter: Agnes Porter
Transcribed by: Ben Kogvik**

Q You are asked if the forms to sign are understandable. As well as being asked, you will be interviewed, do you consent to it as information is sought from you.

A Yes, I understand them as I read them.

If I'm going to be interviewed I consent to it but I will not say anything that I don't know about.

Q They want to know about yourself, where were you born and also your parents and your late husband as well. He wants to know what their names are.

A Yes, but it will be impossible for me to talk about when I was born. Here, across from Cam-2 is where I was born, at an island called Inugiaktuq, over there.

Q This is Cam - 2 over here.

A The further ones, at that island.

Q Here?

A Over here towards the mainland instead.

Q What year?

A During 1935.

Q What about your parents?

A My father was Iqaluk, my mother was Algaittuq.

Q Say them in English?

A Bob Iqaluk, Mary Algaittuq.

Q And your late husband?

A My late husband was born here near Simpson River, on an island is where he said he was born.

Q His name?

A Phillip Nimiqtaqtuq.

Q When you were born at Inugiaktuq, when you were a child living with your parents, where did you travel?

A When I was born, probably that winter I lost my father. My grandparents were from Perry River. He had a wife from the West Kitikmeot. Their adopted child, Angulalik was her husband. When I lost my father, he probably went to pick up his daughter so we started staying there. I don't recall anything then.

Q Did you remember things there?

A Yes.

Q When you were a child when you started to remember things about your life, you could tell stories about Perry River.

A We stayed at Perry River. We didn't always stay there. When it was spring time, somewhere there is a place called Iqalukpilik, at a river, we spent the spring. My step-father, my mother's next husband, usually spent the spring there. When it was becoming summer, we would go down there inland towards Garry Lake traveling on foot.

Q Why do you go towards Garry Lake?

A He hunted caribou for clothing when the hair on the skins were thin, during spring, during July, he would travel down there.

Q Do you have to always go towards Garry Lake, or could you go elsewhere?

A We could go even closer than there, down south, they spend the summer. Not every summer is spent down there. The next year between Simpson River and Iqalukpilik River. The summer is spent where there is caribou.

Q That one that is bigger towards Simpson River which is the river called Iqalukpilik River that you spend your spring at?

A It's more toward Perry River that river, perhaps it's this one?

Q This river that is straight down toward the sea?

A Where is Simpson River?

Q Here is Simpson River.

A This straight one, what is it called again can't remember. I think it's Pitok River. Pitok River is its name I think.

Q Other things related to that, do you know other things than what you told from your childhood?

- A I don't remember too much from my childhood. I try not to think too much of anything. During the winter we spent our time at Perry River, where there are buildings, while I was a child.
- Q Were there a lot of people at Perry River when you were a child?
- A Yes, there were a lot of people.
- Q When you started to remember things when you were a child, were there a lot of people at Perry River, or did the population start to rise as you became older. Which was it?
- A When I started to remember as a child, there were a lot of people there [already], those people who usually stayed there.
- Q When exactly was it that the population started decreasing?
- A After I left and got a husband, that I think the population started decreasing. Either 1951, or 1953 perhaps, my in-laws and my mother both became deceased, though I forgot which year it was.
- Q Were they together?
- A My mother was here at Perry River and my in-laws were at Simpson River, but I can't remember what year it was.
- Q When your mother and your in-laws passed away, did they have the same illness, or how did your mother die?
- A I don't know about my mother, as she passed away while I was somewhere else.
- Q Did your mother and your in-laws pass away at the same time, or almost at the same time?
- A Yes, during the same year.
- Q Did others pass away as well?
- A I don't know.
- Q When you started staying with your in-laws, when the population started slowly decreasing at Perry River, do you know what the reason was for that?
- A I don't know as we were at Cam – 2 at the time. There was no more people there. I heard that the population was decreasing there [at Perry River].

Q There were absolutely no more people there [at Perry River] when you were at Cam-2?

A I don't know.

Q Did you say there was absolutely no more people there when you were at Cam-2?

A Yes, when we came from Simpson River in 1955 to Hat Island, we traveled first to Hat Island. When we got to Hat Island, we came upon Nuqaut's family. I went to wait at Hat Island as he was going to Gjoa Haven. We came across Nukaut and his children there and he wanted us to go with them. I think Nukaut's [family] stayed at a place called Cape Geddes.

When we went there with them we also came across Piguaq's at Irving Islands, as Nukaut's took us visiting. They didn't want us to go back to Simpson River, so we didn't go back. When there was no more people at Perry River, I didn't know how it happened.

Q Is that when Agnes [Lucy's daughter] was born there?

A Yes.

Q When you started traveling to leave Simpson River were Nicholas Sikkuark and Louie Anakernerik with you?

A Yes, they were still children and stayed with us.

Q What about Anthony Maniqnaaluk [Manernaluk]?

A No, he was at Garry Lake with Father Buliard.

Q When you moved to Cam-2, and started staying at Cam-2, you heard that there were no more people at Perry River?

A I don't know.

Q When Apiana's [family] started arriving from Perry River to Gjoa Haven, have you heard what state they were in?

A Utuittuq went shopping at Perry River and lost his temper again and Angulalik murdered him and that's what I heard when there were no more people there. I don't know what year it was.

Q During 1957 Angulalik committed the murder. Soon after he murdered him, the Hudson's Bay Company took over the store. The store remained for quite some time after the Company took over

A Yes.

Q Did you see Apiana's [family]? When they arrived in Gjoa Haven, do you know what state they were in? Do you remember their clothing or any of their belongings?

A I remember them, but I never thought much about it, as I rarely went out.

Q Did you receive child benefits for your many children?

A When I got Agnes for a child, I received child benefits. At first, an amount of 6 dollars. I seem to buy a lot even when it was just that amount.

Q Did they start getting child benefits only in Gjoa Haven?

A Yes, at Perry River my step-father received child benefits, as I recall, before we lived there, but here somewhere near Tahiqyuagaqyuk Lake, he stayed there for the winter. He would go shopping from there traveling by dog team. I remember him buying tents, rifles and even cases of biscuits. And 10 gallons, of those that aren't naphtha but kerosene. Kerosene, I can't remember what they're called that. They use to fuel loud primus stoves. He would buy them in 10 gallon drums. He got child benefits from a police officer I'm told. That was the only time that they received child benefits, only once a year. That's how he would shop, that's how he got child benefits, that I can remember only once per year.

Q Was there always a policeman at Perry River?

A He came from Cambridge Bay by dog team. He [step-father] would time his shopping when it was time for the cop to make a visit.

Q Why was there a store there? Why not at another place like Tahiqyuagaqyuk Lake or Simpson River? Why was the store at either place there? Why was the store only at Perry River?

A I don't know why. I don't know what the reason was.

Q Was the store there because of lots of wildlife in the area, as the reason for people staying there?

A Probably due to a lot of animals in the area.

Q About Apiana's [family] leaving there to travel to Gjoa Haven. Have you heard about anyone else who did that as well? Has anyone else traveled to Gjoa Haven from elsewhere?

A These people went together: Apiana's, Kupluguk's, Ulikattaq's, Halluqtalik's, Mark Kirniq's [families] – all arrived here by dog team in the fall.

Q Who did you mention?

A Kupluguq, Ulikattaq, Halluqtalik, Apiana, and Mark Kirniq.

Q Did Kirniq go together with these people?

A Yes.

Q All those people that you mentioned were interviewed but you mentioned Kirniq who he never saw.

A They're still across there. Don Magaknak's older brother.

Q Why wasn't he interviewed?

A He rarely goes to public. I saw him today at the Co-op. He could tell stories about why there were no more people. Some of the people that they came with have passed away. I don't know what else to talk about.

Q Did you spend Christmas and Easter at Perry River? Can you tell a story about that?

A I remember only one time during the winter, that I recall we went there, but I rarely go to the games.

Q Can you tell a story about it?

A Yes. When they celebrated Christmas, celebrated Christ's birth, they made us play games. The men ran to an island which seemed quite far. Nuliayuk, the one across there, while he stayed with Kubluguk's, who I call not my older brother, came in first, as I remember. When he came, as soon as he came, I remember he sat on the ground breathing very heavily. That was the first time I ever saw men do a foot race running. Flour use to be in cotton sacks long ago. He won one of those with lard and baking powder.

Q Anything else?

A I remember ladies running but don't remember what they won, as I don't have a very good brain! [laughing] My mother came in first as I recall.

We younger people who weren't adults, as I remember those things, had our turn. When we first ran, I came in first and won a glass lamp-cover, as I recall. [laughing] I was ecstatic. I was really overjoyed at coming in first place that time.

Q Anything else?

A I don't remember anything else.

Q When you got a husband and moved to Simpson River, when your in-laws passed away, and you started keeping your brother-in-laws since they passed away. Could you tell about that?

A I could tell a bit about it but there will be gaps, as I don't remember the sequential orders.

Q It's fine even with gaps.

A Yes, I got a husband in 1951, in the fall, during November. While we were at Simpson River, Angutituaq, Angutittauruq and Father Buliard and my husband-to-be arrived, en route to go shopping and went to our camp, while we were at the river. There was a building and a store at an island somewhere, where is it, perhaps here. [pointing to map] My parents wintered there where the buildings are and I stayed with them all the time. During the winter, in November we were married. I alone stayed with my parents and my husband stayed with his parents all winter.

During spring, when it was becoming spring time, in May, we moved to Iqalukpilik River, not too close to the sea, at a lake with char, outside of the Iqalukpilik River. While we were there, my in-laws came. They were going to be my in-laws during November when we got married, but it wasn't until May that we actually started staying together. When we started staying together, my in-laws traveled back to their land at Simpson River in June. We stayed there for the winter. I think my father-in-law brought Father Buliard, probably in 1953, to Gjoa Haven. He went to Gjoa Haven. That was because Angutittauruq didn't know the way to Gjoa Haven, so my father-in-law went with him to Gjoa Haven. Just after he returned, he became ill, both him and his wife together were sick, and passed away.

After he passed away, we spent the summer and when winter came, we spent the winter. Then I think when it was about spring time we traveled by dog team to Father Buliard at Garry Lake.

Q By dog team?

A Yes, we traveled by dog team. We would travel and camp. There is a building at Garry Lake on an island where we stayed for a while and when we started for home, my father-in-law's late older brother, Itiguyuk, wanted to accompany us, so he went with us. I don't remember where. Oh yeah, to Piguag's, I think. We traveled to Angutituaq's when we left from down there at Father Buliard's.

After staying at Father Buliard's, my father-in-law's older brother Itiguyuk traveled with us, as he wanted to go along to Piguag. We traveled with him to Angutituaq's. We camped at Angutituaq's. We slept for two whole days without getting up. Us and my brother-in-laws and my father-in-law's brother, five of us in a tent and none

of us got up. Angutituaq had brought some stuff ahead while we slept, as we slept all day waking up only the next night.

We got up when it was night time, all together. He was home now, after traveling to bring some things ahead by dog team. We sure slept long.

When we left from there, going our separate ways, both Itiguyuk and Louie Anakernik walked ahead leading the way. They never stopped until we camped. I don't know how many times [we camped] from Garry Lake up to Simpson River. When we started packing up, Louie Anakernik and Itiguyuk, uncle and nephew, would always walk down river without ever riding.

When we traveled following them, we took a long time to catch up to them walking. Only when they stopped, we would catch up.

By the river, we started traveling close to the river when there were a lot of geese. When the geese showed up again, our elder wanted goose and wanted someone to hunt the geese. Someone caught a couple of geese and that old man, Itiguyuk, wanted them cooked while we were still on the trail. He did not get a chance to eat geese at Garry Lake.

He gathered heather while we started to pluck and when he finished collecting heather, we cooked. That was the only way we ate them, as we didn't have a stove. After we cooked them, he started eating with his eyes closed because he was overjoyed. When he was eating, he was so happy that he had his eyes closed.

After we ate there, then we started traveling to the sea. Only after we reached the sea, those two started riding along.

When we reached Angutittuaruq's, on an island – we got there from where we had eaten the geese – there was cooked seal meat when we arrived and he started eating seal, again being so grateful he ate with his eyes closed, eating the cooked meat. "The meat I used to eat is finally recognizable," is what he kept saying.

When we were at the ocean, we returned to Simpson River, when it was about to break up, [to be] with Angutittauruq's and us. Our elder there – when we got to them – he stayed at his niece's, my sister-in-law's, but when we returned to the river, he moved in with us.

We stayed at the river with him first, then before it started getting dark in July he walked back down to his land, traveling alone, with only one dog to accompany him. That's all I remember and don't know what else from there.

- Q When you lost your parents and in-laws, both Louie Anakernik and Nicholas Sikkuark were still children, and you started to look after them. You both were also very young and never experienced parenting, and yet became parents to Louie and

Nicholas. Do you remember that and can tell about it? When you started keeping Louie and Nicholas.

A When we lost our parents, we weren't keeping Louie. When we brought my brother-in-law, we started keeping him, but we kept Nicholas right from when we lost our parents. When we went to Garry Lake, we started keeping Louie. When we started keeping him, he never went anywhere else. Also Itiguyuk came along and did not stay anywhere else either. When winter came, Itiguyuk walked down there to Garry Lake. I can recall when he left. I don't remember too much when we spent the summer with Louie. When it was winter, during November, we started trapping, both my brother-in-laws would always travel with us. We'd check the traps all winter, even when it was stormy. We would always accompany our leader, my husband, and never stayed behind to wait at home. Perhaps we were afraid. I don't recall what we would have been scared of either. We never stayed behind in the iglu.

In the morning while we still slept, my husband would sew his brothers' mittens and footwear, patching up the spot that a lot fur or hair [had worn off] before waking us up, when he was ready to load up. Both my brother-in-laws and I would wake up as we were wakened up.

It was due to the fact that I couldn't sew when I just got a husband, and he would sew for me and my brother-in-laws.

Q He was a father and a mother at the same time.

A That is how we were. I don't know what else to tell about.

Q He doesn't have any more questions himself. If you want to add anything else on your own, its up to you to tell a story.

A I can tell a story about after you [Agnes] were born, regarding white society. I didn't really know about white society things at that time, though we had flour and biscuits and oatmeal while we were at Perry River. After you were born, we were at Terror Bay during the summer, when it was like it is now. Piguaq went to Twenty-Two to Cam-2, down there. I don't know what he went there for, accompanied by Nicholas. Louie stayed behind with us, as well as his wife – that's who we were. After being at Cam-2, he came home and that's what I'll tell about.

Q Terror Bay? Where is Terror Bay?

A Part of this island down there toward the north-west here instead.

Q Towards Irving Islands?

A Yes. When he arrived from there, he was given apples and oranges and bananas and pop from the workers. He told us to go eat those things. But they didn't look

appetizing at all. We didn't have any apples, but I tried having banana, but when I bit into it, it felt so mushy! When he told us to eat those things, they looked terrible to eat, for all of us in our household.

That was the first time I saw anything like that, in 1955. Now they don't look unappetizing, so I also buy them. That's what I remember. That's all there is, as I don't have anymore to tell about.

Q Thank you.

A Yes

Q That's it.