INTERVIEW WITH: Dan V. Coleman  
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We start the interview in mid-conversation- talking about cooking for one and ability to drive. 

DC: This one eye is almost blind.  
MH: Are you able to drive?  
DC: I drive around here, and I go to Tropic once in a while because that is where I bank now. They closed the Wells Fargo here.  
MH: I heard they are coming back- State Bank will take it over.  
DC: Yes, this spring. Then I will not have to travel. And State Bank will stay. Since I moved here in late 80s, Well Fargo was the fourth bank here.  
MH: So let’s start off our interview more formally please. Today is January 16th. Thank you for your patience while I got this set up. May we start off with having you introduce yourself with your full name, date of birth and where you were born?  
DC: Dan V. Coleman, December the 25th, 1934. I was born here in Escalante. With the help of a midwife, her name was Susan Heaps.  
MH: She delivered a lot of babies over here.  
DC: She did back in those days.  
MH: Tell me a little bit about the family you were born into Dan.  
DC: We had fourteen kids in the family, 13 siblings. Parley and Ester Peterson were my parents’ names. Both came from Teasdale, born and raised there. They migrated to Salt Gulch. They bought the ranch over there from Haskin Lyman. He did not homestead it. Haskin bought it from Ogdens. Ogdens homesteaded it. I don’t when, late 1880 or 90. They was from Denmark. They could not prove up because they could not get their citizenship, so they left. Then Haskin bought it. He was an Uncle to Truman Lyman- a brother to Francis Lyman, the dad to Truman and Ivan.
and Kirk, Dale and Lincoln. There were ten in that family. We had 14, the Coombs had 15, and Lymans had 10. When I was growing up there were five families living in Salt Gulch and there were all good sized families.

MH: It’s like a small city- but you had a many play buddies right close by.

DC: Yes, we played out in those hills right there because that is all we had to do. Learned to hunt real young with a .22. No casualties. But I did have a nephew, he was two years older than me. We were over to Boulder, a group of us, with .22s. We were shooting at some ducks at that little pond in Boulder. My nephew was standing there next to me and one of my friends was standing right behind him, putting a bullet in his gun and it went off and hit him in the back of his head and killed him. He was sixteen years old.

MH: That is pretty traumatic for kids. It stays with you.

DC: It does, he was a real nice young man.

MH: Then there was the young man who fell off a cliff by accident in Boulder.

DC: He was Darrell Moosman, a twin. There was Darrel and Darwin. They was about Frank’s age, they were up on that School House Ledge rolling rocks off that ledge. He went off with one of those rocks and went down the ledge and it killed him.

MH: Growing up in Salt Gulch- were your parents in farming and ranching?

DC: Yes, at the time all of Boulder and Salt Gulch was a whole bunch of small farms and ranches at that time. Some were bigger, but mainly small. We owned 115 acres but only farmed about 40 acres of it, farming alfalfa and small grains, wheat and oats to feed the pigs and what not. We had horses. I was probably fifteen years old, maybe older before we got our first tractor. Up until then we did all farm work with teams of horses. It was hard slow work with a team of horses. You had to rest them, so it took a long time to plow a field or cut a field of hay. You had to keep stopping ever so often and let the horses rest a while. All the farms did the same. We got one of the first tractors over in Salt Gulch. People got tractors later than we did. We never rented it out, just used it on our own place there.

MH: So the alfalfa and grains your family produced were strictly used for your purposes, for your animals?

DC: Never sold any. We lived off that little ranch. We raised all of our own meat, milk cows of course, chickens, and a big garden and an orchard. We raised just about everything we needed right there on the ranch.

MH: Would you mind going through the list of siblings?

DC: Ok, I can do that. By age, there was Bessie, Hyrum, Edna, Ada, Fern, LaFay, Leah, Frank, Barbara, Gaye, Don and I are twins, Jerry and Cloe. There were six boys and eight girls. We are down to five left.

MH: And you have a twin brother!

DC: He lives right behind me in this house right here.
MH: As you are growing up, of course, the children needed to go to school. How did that work in your family?

DC: We went to school in Boulder, a little two room school house. The first to the fourth went in one room and the fifth to the eight went in the “Big Room” we called it. We were there until the eighth grade. That is as far as the school went, the eighth grade, and that was the end of school. When I was in the eighth grade they started the bus to Escalante, so we were able to ride the bus and go to high school. My siblings, Frank, LaFay and Hyrum, all they got was an eighth grade education, they didn’t go any higher. Some of my sisters boarded over to Wayne County or over here in Escalante and got their high school education. They boarded out with families.

MH: That was fairly common in those days, to board out with a family member or do chores for board.

DC: Yes, it was, and probably for some of the other small towns too.

MH: And Dixie Hall did that, and perhaps LeFair.

DC: Dixie lived over to Boulder for quite a while. She married a CCC, Kenny Murdock, and I think they had two or three kids, then I think he just left. Left her there. Later on she married R Shakespear, and they had their own family, lived in Tropic.

MH: Yes, I was just speaking to his great (great grandnephew) who works for the Town of Tropic. He is married and lives in his grandfather’s house, Obie. Did you know Obie?

DC: Yes, I knew Obie. He and R were brothers, and Alton.

MH: And Dixie mentioned, as well as LeFair, about setting trap lines when they were kids. Did you also do that?

DC: I did a little bit, not too much. I am agin’ that now because I think it is a cruel thing, those innocent animals, I just don’t believe in it anymore. But we did then. In fact, LeFair trapped right up until almost when he died. He trapped for years and years. He was about the only one over to Boulder that kept trapping and he was good at it too, he caught a lot of animals.

MH: You told me about a couple of big things that occurred during your life in Salt Gulch, loss of a nephew, getting a tractor, taking the first bus to Escalante for high school- any other events that were major changes for you?

DC: Francis Lyman was also killed when he was real young. His widow, Hazel Lyman raised the family, ten kids by herself. Francis was shot by his neighbor, accidently. They were hunting deer and he accidently shot him. That was Max Behunin.

MH: That would be such a difficult thing to carry.

DC: It would be. Accidents do happen, sudden death that way is tough.

MH: In your household, about middle of the pack- you are watching your siblings leave.

DC: Many were gone as I was growing up, especially the sisters were gone. They got married quite young and left.
MH: What was your day like, your chores?

DC: We had to milk cows, feed the pig, and weed the garden. A lot of little things. But milking the cows, since my dad did not like to milk cows, as soon as we got old enough, we had to milk the cows.

MH: Would you say the family had a dairy economy?

DC: Well, we sold cream, fed the milk to pigs. Separated the cream, we had an old crank cream separators, sold the cream. It went on the mail truck to the cream factory in Panguitch. There was one in Panguitch for years. For a long time there was a milk route out of Boulder. We didn’t sell milk out of Salt Gulch, but there was a truck that went to Panguitch everyday with cans of milk from Boulder- all the way to their cheese factory in Panguitch. It was whole milk made into cheese or butter. There is a dugout here, out about ten miles, way back in the day they used to take their cream to that dugout on pack mules. Someone picked it up there and took it on to Panguitch. It was before my time.

MH: Did you get out of the Gulch much?

DC: I went out when we had to go to the dentist or to get school clothes. The first road out of there was over Hells Backbone- up over that Mountain to get out of Boulder and Salt Gulch. Very few cars, I remember when there were about six cars in Boulder. My dad had one of the cars. My dad got the contract to run the bus from Salt Gulch to Boulder, and to pick up the Boulder kids and take them to the little school in Boulder. He could not drive, so he hired someone to drive the bus- well, it was a station wagon. (laughter) He never did learn to drive a car. He had a hard time driving the tractor, he was born and raised with a team of horses, so he had a hard time driving a tractor, never a car.

MH: Such a change in technology. And now it can be daunting to change your TV channel.

DC: I still have problems with that. And no computer. I had a neighbor build me a desk and then I was going to get one, I got to thinking why. If I got one I would not use it. I have four kids and they all work with computers. The one over to Boulder, Shane, runs the Power Plant. There is a computer in there, but my other kids sit behind one for 8 hours a day.

MH: Running the Power Plant requires some technological skills.

DC: Yes, some, and you do learn on the job.

MH: Back to your family growing up, we talked about school, going over to Escalante. That was a world changer.

DC: Leave in the dark, get home in the dark. We didn’t get involved in sports too much because we had to take the bus home and most of the sports activity were done after school. We missed out on some of that.

MH: As far as getting basic supplies, where would you go to get those things?

DC: Usually from the stores here in Escalante. Later on when we had cars and the roads improved we would go to Richfield, several times a year. Back then the roads over the mountain were
terrible. Back then it was rocks, mud, ruts. During the winter time the roads were closed. Our ranch in Salt Gulch, the County would come to there, from there on up the roads were closed during all winter.

MH: So, that created opportunities for maybe hunting, fishing and...

DC: Reading, we did a lot of reading, anything we got our hands on. We played a lot of games, card games, monopoly.

MH: Your dad is farming, taking care of the livestock. How did that go?

DC: We probably had thirty head of cow, the Hereford and the short horn cross, between those two, for beef. The milk cows were usually the same ones, the ones that gave the most milk we would keep for milk cows. When we got up and went to school, my dad and older brothers milked the cows. When we got home in the evening, we had to milk them. They pastured some on the ranch and some on the ditches and creeks that come into Salt Gulch, eating the grass on all of those banks. So, we would turn them out in the summer time. We kept the calves at home of course, the milk cows’ calves. When you turn the milk cows out, they would graze out on the forest ground and they would always come home at night because they had their calves waiting to come home too.

MH: On the Forest, were you operating with permits then?

DC: We did for the cattle up on the mountain, up on the Boulder. We had cattle rights up there.

MH: Mom’s activities, Ester?

DC: Oh my heavens. The women had the work load. Standing over an old wood stove for hours every day cooking fruits and vegetables to can them plus the meals. It was all done over a wood stove in the middle of summer, the heat...Doing the laundry on an old Maytag that had a wringer on it, when you could get it to run. It had a gasoline motor, in the winter that thing was hard to start. That was all done in a shed to the side of the house.

MH: Today is the property and buildings still intact?

DC: Ya, they are starting to divide it up now. It has been divided up several times. We, my wife and I, bought the property from my dad. We were there for years, that is where we raised our family, in Salt Gulch. We were there for a lot of years. We ran the same operation as Dad, only thing I got the job at the Power Plant, the one that Shane has now. I worked at the Power Plant and ran the ranch too. You have to have the two jobs now, you cannot make it with a little ranch anymore. In the 40s or50s things changes. When I went to school here Escalante had 12 to13 hundred people and now it is down to about 600 because there were all these families. They were big families and then when the Second World War started it opened up all those jobs in the steel mills up around Provo. A lot of the families left here and went up there to work on those high paying jobs (war effort). They stayed and did not ever come back. There was nothing to come back to really. People gained more skills and you could find jobs up there that paid more money.

MH: Boulder has really been hanging on to their agricultural heritage.
DC: They have been hanging on to it. It a pretty neat place. Like I told my granddaughter, she just left a little while before you got here, I really wished I had bought one of the mini ranches over to Boulder, when I sold the ranch here in Escalante to Crockett Dumas. I built that home and all the shed stuff there. I sold it to Crockett and bought this lot and had this house built. I wish instead of coming here I went over to Boulder. I like Boulder, I was born and raised there. Boulder has those big old white ledges and so much water. Everything is pretty over there, green, lots and lots of pasture and meadows.

MH: When did you get married?

DC: In 1960. I had come back from my military service, I came back in ’58, and we were married in 1960. I was drafted and I was in the infantry. When I got to Korea they put me in the MPs. I was in the MPs for the thirteen months I was there, in Seoul, along the outskirts. It was the biggest city I was ever in, and now it is even bigger.

MH: You were probably one of the taller people.

DC: Yes, oh, yes. People back then were real poor. Now it is a rich country for its size, real rich. Back then people were real poor and had nothing. It was all rice.

MH: Did you ever go back or do any world travel after Seoul?

DC: No, no I just stayed right around this area. The wife and I went to New Orleans once on a trip though the Garkane Power Company. Every year they took a certain amount of their employees on a trip. We got to go on one trip. I met my wife here in Escalante, she is a Woolsey from here, Escalante, born and raised here. She was younger, I was eight years older. She was cute, a real cute girl. Later on in life she went to school with some of our kids to get a college education. When she got that she wanted to move on. She came here and taught school for four years (1988-1992) and then got a job teaching school up at American Fork, for a lot more money. She moved up there. I had the Garkane job and the farm here which I sold to Crockett. I did not go with her. We just drifted apart, she was living up there and we finally got a divorce.

We were still together when we sold the Salt Gulch place and bought the little field over here where Crockett is. We build a house and all the buildings. Later on I sold it to Crockett, and got this lot. By then I was single. We did have four children together. Tony was the oldest- he lives in Phoenix, working for UPS, started out as a mechanic and worked up through the company and is now a manager. A good company, good benefits. Then 2 daughters, one lives in St. George and one in New Harmony. They both got a college education. One is an accountant and the other works for one of the big title companies in St. George. They are both doing real well. They come over quite often. I used to go down there, but I don’t drive anymore. Too far. They like to come but they are so busy. Their families are all raised. I have nine grand kids, one that was just here was Shane’s daughter, Lindsey. She lives in Boulder, works at the Lodge during the nine months it is open and has a horse and a dog and is renting a little cabin from one of my nephews- the Gardner’s. She loves Boulder.

MH: There are a few young men from Tropic who have married people from Boulder, or are now living in Boulder. It’s a great place. The Ahlstrom boy, and Zak Chynoweth, who brings us firewood.
DC: It’s great, they like to be out in the country over there, if you like to hike or ride horses, that is the place to be.

MH: What made you decide to move over here to Escalante from Salt Gulch?

DC: I worked for Garkane for a while as one of their plant operators. Then they put it out as a contract for the labor, I got that contract. I made a lot more money as a contractor. So, we decided to sell out and move over here and partly retire. We bought thirty five acres of field, which I later sold to Crockett. I had little bunch of cattle. I could feed them during the winter time but in the summertime I had to find pasture for them. Most of the years I went to Boulder with them, I could find pasture for them there with some of my friends. The (Ray) Thompson Ranch had some pasture, the old Max Behunin ranch at the base of the Mountain. Boulder has so much water.

MH: What were some of the water sources that were available on your Salt Gulch ranch?

DC: It come up to Sand Creek and Lake Creek. The old pioneers ditched the water around some hillside up there, out of the canyons, so it would come off into Salt Gulch. They would go up in the spring of the year and put it in the ditches, come around those hillside and into Salt Gulch and then in the late fall, they would go up and turn it back down the canyon because they did not want it running down the ditches in the winter time on account of the freezing up. So they always turned it back down the canyons in the winter time.

MH: That is some wild country, it seems quite steep.

DC: Ya, the Hell’s Backbone country, big deep canyons, all through there. Up on the Mountain itself, there is a plateau, just under the rim, where there are lakes, one lake after another. McGath Lake, Black Lake, Dry Lake, Cuttyback Lake, all across that mountain just above Salt Gulch. The top of the mountain is all lakes. Yes, there was the Boulder Mountain and Thousand Lakes, they got it misnamed because the Thousand Lakes does not have any lakes on it, but the Boulder Mountain has dozens and dozens of lakes up on it.

MH: And you said your mother was from Teasdale- a neat historic town.

DC: Ester and my dad both came from Teasdale. There were several Williams in Teasdale. Everett Williams married an Escalante girl, a Barney girl. His son still lives in Teasdale and does electrical work. He is actually coming here to do some work in Frank’s old house.

I bought this lot from Melvin Alvey, from Melvin and Florence. Florence is 101 years old. There was a trailer house here which I moved off and had this house built. Melvin was the water master, a real nice smart old man. So was Florence. She was a pilot in the Second World War, used to fly over the hump, they called it. She has aged, not sure where she is living now, she came from Panguitch. Her maiden name was Prince.

(Wikipedia reference: The Hump was the name given by Allied pilots in the Second World War to the eastern end of the Himalayan Mountains over which they flew military transport aircraft from India to China to resupply the Chinese war effort of Chiang Kai-shek and the units of the United States Army Air Forces (AAF) based in China.)

MH: Were you ever the water master?
DC: Not here, but I was the president of the Pine Creek Irrigation Company for maybe ten years, when I lived there.

MH: How did it work then?

DC: Everybody had shares. Most people were pretty honest, but at the time they had the sprinkler systems in so you would counted heads, how many sprinkler heads which is how you kept track of the shares. Those were on lines, now they have the pivots. Pivots are all over the area now, and with those there is no labor.

MH: It seems like that had to change. The labor intensity of ranching/farming had to change. The equipment was just so expensive suddenly. I remember Fay Jepsen telling me that, they could not afford to buy a tractor, a thrasher.

DC: Yes, new equipment was out of reach. You couldn’t buy much with your little calf check. The calves were fifty dollars top price and most not worth that much. You didn’t have any income. People just loved the lifestyle though. Everyone had gardens, every backyard had a pig or two and a milk cow- all of these lots had a little corral, a chicken coops, pig pens and a place to put a milk cow. They could take care of themselves.

MH: Things have really changed from that. I see the shift. Although I still have a garden and put up food, I already see the generation behind me are not interested.

DC: They do not can anymore, and they don’t bake much, bake bread. They all have jobs.

MH: Yes, a can of corn can be bought for fifty cents now, and it would cost you five dollars to can your own now. (laughter)

DC: The homemade stuff is always better.

MH: Back to your Escalante Ranch...

DC: I had about 50 head of cows and raised enough hay to feed them, but I had to find someplace to pasture them. Most years I went to Boulder and there at the end it got hard to find pasture so I finally sold the cows. I was about 70 years old then. I sold the place to Crockett. He came with a whole herd of horses. Endurance horses is his deal. You couldn’t have the horses and cows together, it did not work. So I got rid of the cows. I stayed there with them, or them with me for a year or two before I built a house here with him and Sharon. it worked real well. He was gone during the week. He was a forest ranger up in Emery County. He would come home Friday nights and leave real early Monday morning and go back up to Emery County. He had quite a ways to travel, but it was during his last years. He was real close to retiring. Then he retired there.

MH: Would you mind talking with me about the Garkane Power plant and your time there?

DC: I was in the Army when they built it. They paid big wages to build it and I was in the Army and missed out on it all- to build the power plant itself and the penstock, the pipeline coming down. The penstock is five miles of that big pipe coming off that mountain. The main power plant was in Hatch at that time. It was a little diesel plant. Then they wheeled the line all the way to Boulder. They are out here now setting poles on that old original line, taking the old ones out and putting the new ones in. the old ones are starting to rot off. The old single line went all the
way to Boulder, up through the ledges, followed the road all the way to Boulder. It is gone now because once they built the power plant they brought the power right from the plant right straight into Boulder. This line here goes to Calf Creek, still on account of the park and the cabins down on the Escalante River. That is the reason they are rebuilding this line.

I don’t know if it was the was the Garkane board or their engineers that come over and seen all of that water coming out of those two Boulder creeks, especially the East Fork of the Boulder, all of that steep fall. That is when they decided to put in a hydro plant because they had the fall and they had the water- the head drops 1,400 feet, the penstock does. It is 1,400 feet and 650 lbs. of pressure to spin the turbines. There are three turbines. That makes them a lot of power for Garkane and it is cheap. My son took my place there as a contractor, and they pay him which is about the only expense they have. He hires two to help him, he has four days on and eight days off. Both the other guys work the same and are able to do other things on the side. Shane and Katie have a bunch of cattle and have a lot of fun together. They hike a lot, they ride their horses, and they have a side by side and go out.

MH: Back to Garkane Power, I don’t know much about it. It does not offer a lot of employment, but it does offer cheap energy to our area.

DC: Yes, it does, that plant there when I first started to work there in 1962, it put out half of their use, half of the Garkane use. Now it is just a drop in the bucket compared to the amount of power that is used. A lot of the power comes from down to Glen Canyon. We are on the grid and hooked into the lines coming out of Glen Canyon. They bought a bunch of power from that big coal fired plant right on the Utah Colorado boarder, which goes into the grid and goes all over.

MH: You mentioned the energy produced now by the plant is a drop in the bucket.

DC: Yes, Shane tells me that one of the units would not run the town of Boulder. When I was there the town of Boulder required hardly anything. Boulder has growed to the point, with the new homes there, that one unit puts out 1500 kilowatts, would barely run Boulder. Back when I was there, it would run Boulder, Escalante, Tropic, all these little towns through here. That little plant could run them all. All from growth. Up on that Black Ledge, there are about twelve or fifteen big new homes just in the last few years. Then there are new homes out in The Draw, and Lower Boulder has several new homes.

MH: Last year I noticed a large hemp farm out Lower Boulder.

DC: There is, the Robison Ranch sold out a year or two ago to some of the local boys, the Owens, born and raised in Boulder, went to school in Escalante and for some reason they made some money and bought that ranch in the millions. Now they have a big hemp farm going.

MH: It surprised me, but there is also a hemp growing operation in Wayne County as well.

DC: If you got the water and the soil...

MH: Speaking of soil, what was the soil like where you farmed in Salt Gulch?
It was good, good deep soil. Much better than the soil in Boulder. Boulder soil is sandy and not very deep, which is the reason it has all gone to grass. They can’t raise much crops in Boulder, it is all grass. It is close to the mountain. Boulder is over 6,000 feet. It is 57-58 thousand feet here.

MH: And what about the soil quality here in Escalante?

DC: Escalante has real good soil, a good deep soil. But they don’t have any water, which is the trouble. There is more water going through one of those units at that Boulder plant than Escalante owns. There are some reservoirs, at Wide Hollow which is their main source. The North Creek, Main Canyon, and Upper Valley all goes into the reservoir in the winter months. The streams are all really small, so it slowly fills up. Then there is the runoff in the spring if we get the snow pack. If we do not get the snowpack then the reservoir will not fill.

MH: Did you spend time learning these mountains here?

DC: I did some when I first moved here. Then the Mountain around Salt Gulch, I was around in them all the time because I ran cattle up there. When I sold the ranch I sold the cattle rights to Bill Cox years ago. Bill stayed there for a lot of years, he was the bishop for a while in Boulder. When he got older, he sold out and moved to St. George area. He was an electrical engineer down at one of the big power plants down in Arizona. Retired from there.

MH: And your schooling, did you get a chance after the Army to continue on with your schooling?

DC: No. The Army did have the GI bill but I didn’t do that. But my wife did, she went to Cedar and got a college education. She loved to go to school. She ended up with a Masters and lives in Hurricane. She is remarried finally and spends the winters in Hurricane and up to Duck Creek in the summer time.

MH: Over here you are growing hay and feeding livestock?

DC: Yes, I had fifty head of cows off and on. Plowing, seeding, plowing and rotating. There is a bit of Triticale- it is a grain and it gets real tall but does not have the protein of alfalfa. Alfalfa is by far the best hay that you can have on account of its protein. It is great because it grows fast and you get a lot out of it but it does not have the value that alfalfa does. You can plant it in the rotation. Alfalfa gets about 6 or 8 years old and it slowly dies out and you are back to just grass. Plow it up and put it into grain crops for a couple of years and back to alfalfa. It helps the soil and gets the alfalfa stand back, a good strong stand for many years.

MH: And how have you seen things or conditions change here in Escalante or have they changed?

DC: I have been in Escalante for about thirty years. Yes, things have changed, all the small ranches are gone. Dell LeFevre has the biggest ranch there now. When I was in Boulder there were seventeen members of the Cattlemen’s Association. Now there are about three or four and they don’t have an association any more. Dell has the most, then the Roundy’s, and one or two left who still have permits on the Forest. Here in Escalante it is the same thing. When I started school here there were twelve herds of sheep here, big herds of range sheep, they are all gone, been gone for years. The Flying V Ranch out here, the Sorenson’s, they own about everything. They are slowly buying up everything for sale, they own all the mountain from Hells Backbone all the way to Upper Valley is theirs and most of the desert is theirs- the cattle allotments.
MH: What do you think the reasons are for the consolidation?

DC: On a small ranch, the overhead made it so you just couldn’t make it– there wasn’t enough income. I know a few of the young guys who have little farms and ranches, all have jobs on the side. They all work for State and County Road, Garkane, South Central– all with jobs on the side. They are still hanging in there because they like it– like the Brooks boys. They have a small herd, work for the county, work for Garkane. They enjoy it.

MH: My friends, Vance and Lonni Pollock still have permits, but they had to sell off some of their herd this year because we did not get a monsoon season, no summer rains.

DC: Yes, the drought on the winter ranges -that is the biggest enemy we have is droughts. You can’t depend on Mother Nature to have a good winter range. The mountains usually always have feed on account of the rainfall and snow up there, the elevation. You just can’t depend on the winter range.

MH: There have been a few summers in the past five I can think of that the monsoon has just gone missing.

DC: I don’t know, global warming- maybe something to it.

MH: I remember the year Dell had to haul his cows to Nevada for feed.

DC: And that gets expensive. You have to haul them, then rent and the cows don’t do as good because they don’t know where the water holes are and the trails.

MH: Despite the consolidation of the allotments, you still feel there are some small operations continuing?

DC: Yes, there are a few still going because they love it.

MH: And Escalante has this historic connection to horses, horse racing in particular.

DC: When I first moved here from Salt Gulch over to Escalante, the race meet in May was the biggest event in Escalante at that time. It brought more people than any other thing they had going on. The horse racing, which was going on in Wayne County, Kanab, Panguitch, all of these towns/ There are some of these old guys here, Blake Robison, Dee Haws, Norman, Arnold Alvey had their own race horse, mares and studs and raised their own colts. A lot of race horses here. It was a big deal, all of a sudden it fizzled out, there aren’t any more left. The rodeo still goes on, my granddaughter still barrel races. Audrey, Katie’s daughter barrel races.

MH: One person I spoke with about this racing circuit was Ladell Alvey, who was from here.

DC: I went to school with Ladell, a year older than me. Ladell worked for Garkane like I did. Karen was a Jepsen from Boulder. She wasn’t born and raised there, but her family came from there. They did real well down in Kanab, they had a son, Mike, who broke his back and they got millions of dollars from that accident, and they built motels and had property.

I had horses all my life but never had race horses. The Thoroughbred, and then the Quarter horse races, they had those too. I had good saddle horses. Freeland, Ladell’s older brother still lives right over here. He is 90 years old, his mind is still alert.
12 Coleman, Dan

We had the Salt Gulch Ranch then the Escalante farm but the Garkane Power job made the living. I gave up the contract when I was 65, they put it out on bid. Bob Ott, over to Tropic bid on it. He was an engineer. There were several others. Since I was the contractor and Garkane got along good with me, so they just gave it to him.

MH: And Shane lives here. Bob would have been over qualified and would have never moved here.

DC: Garkane had their own engineer and he was kind of an “in charge” guy, so he and Bob would have clashed from the start. (Laughter)

MH: So, your brother lives right over here?

DC: Yes, Don D and Dan V, no middle name, just an initial.

MH: And twins- what an exciting time for well, your mom.

DC: When we came over here to school in the eighth grade there were three sets of twins that came over in that eight grade. There was Don and I, Lincoln and Lola Lyman, and another set of Lymans twins that moved away because of the Second World War. Lincoln and Lola they belonged to Francis and Hazel Lyman. We had Ms. Peterson

MH: Do you remember your teachers’ reaction to this situation?

DC: In Boulder, oh, yeah, Mrs. Peterson and Franklin and Jean Hansen. Jean came from Panguitch, she was a Dodds. Nathella King Woolsey. Nathella was one of the Kings from Boulder and she married a Griffin and he got killed on one of these homesteads in the Barney Griffin, he fell off a hay stack onto a pitch fork and it punctured his stomach. Back in those days there was nothing to stop the infection and he died as a young man. Later, way later on in her 70s, she married Earl Woolsey here from Escalante, after his wife had died. She was our teacher for a lot of years. My class over to Boulder had 12, some had left by the time we reached eight grade. When we did come here, our eighth grade class was the biggest class in the school on account of the Boulder kids. We had 34 in that class.

MH: Wow! Now they tell me the high school out here has 67 students, 7-12. I think it will turn back to people like your granddaughter who see the benefits of raising kids here.

DC: How long can the county afford to keep this school going, I don’t know.

MH: It is special funding called NESS (Necessarily Existent Small Schools) and other funding to keep it open. The problem for Escalante is getting high school teachers here. Where do they live?

DC: There is no place to rent. And now the rents have gone up in this little town and for the amount of wages they want to pay, and pay rent, they can’t stay, they move on. There is some housing at the elementary school, a couple of trailers and they remodeled those so there were places for teachers to live. I don’t know if there is anyone living in them.

MH: There are a few things going on in Escalante, the Pub, a few new restaurants, a few outfitters and rentals.

DC: During the summer months this little town booms with tourists. It picks up and everybody comes to hike, motels fill up.
MH: It does kind of follow the agricultural cycle, good weather, no snow- tourism.

DC: When they made this a Monument, then people wanted to come to see it.

MH: Yes, that took many years to catch on.

DC: Yes, and now the season has extended, they come earlier in the spring and stay longer in the fall. One of my classmates that was born and raised here, Alvin Coles, bought the Richfield KOA. He worked hard and was a good business manager and he sold it ten years ago and was a millionaire.

MH: Yes, our KOA provided 13-15 jobs in our area.

DC: That’s good. That is one thing we lost all our jobs when the sawmill closed down. Wages weren’t that great, but it was still jobs. When that went down, it wiped out Escalante. Every time they put in for one of the timber sales, the environmentalists came in and it delayed everything for months and months. Then there was the 2008 downturn in housing they could not sell their lumber.

MH: And there was the bug trees that got left. When I was in the industry, in Washington State, we cut bug trees, they were still harvestable, useful timber. I always was wondering what happened here, when you could see stands of bug trees and nothing going on.

DC: Years ago, I used to rent them some of my saddle horses, they was working on the bug timber, spraying them, then they quit doing it.

MH: Now there is carbon sequestration.

DC: Crockett knows a lot about that.

MH: Great, any last thoughts about Escalante/Boulder?

DC: We’re staying alive. And we have quite a few young people still having babies here. There are a few of the young men on the oil rigs- leave their families here, work two weeks and then come home for two weeks. Several of those here in town. Those kids make big money on those rigs, 100k a year. Their families have to go without them half of the time, but the paycheck makes up for it. There are a few that gets hired by the phone company, but mostly women.

MH: I think there are some new opportunities with fiber optics too. We need some teacher incentives which are available- like almost doubling educators’ wages.

DC: When my ex-wife was teaching school here she brought in about 40 thousand, when she moved up to American Fork and made 70 thousand, although she was in charge of Special Ed up there.

MH: Again, thank you so much Dan for your time, nice to meet you.

End of interview 01:24:03

Addition information regarding Dan’s father, Parley.
This is a story about your father, Parley Coleman. Parley Coleman spent all of his first years in Wayne County, in Teasdale. A little bit of background on the story: There was an old Mexican or Spaniard that had to come into the area about 1880. He would come into Salina on the railroad, the train. During the winter time he would leave his burros in Salina. He would be gone throughout the summer time and spent his time at the gold mine (on the Boulder Mountain, Wayne County), but no one could ever find it because he always left at dark and took round-about routes. He didn’t want anybody to find it. The he would come back in the fall to Salina and take his ore on the train to California and sell it. He left the burros out there with someone in Salina. He done that for several years. One year he didn’t come back, and whether he had got all the gold or whether he died, nobody knows for sure there. My dad was up on the north side of the Boulder Mountain with his dad, Sam Coleman, my granddad, they were up at a mill, a shingle mill. Made shingles from the Doug Fir. They were camped up there on Government Creek. My dad was 10 years old, so that was about 1900. He was born in 1890. He was up there with is dad, He had a milk cow up there at the camp for the milk. She about ready to calve and you know how cows will do when they are ready to calve, they wander off to be by theirselves. She wandered off so my dad jumped on their saddle horse, bareback, ten years old and went out looking for the cow. That was when he run onto that mine. He said there was a shaft there, a hole in the ground and there wasn’t any tailings left because the old Spaniard was smart enough to scatter the tailings so there wouldn’t be any mounds of dirt left. He had cut a bunch of little pine trees, spruce trees to cover over the opening. My dad picked up a rock. It was a pretty blue rock, he told me, and a pick. A miner’s pick. He got back on his horse and went back to the camp. On the way back, he was on the horse bareback, he got tired of carrying the pick so hung it in the forks of a tree. When they got back to Teasdale he had that rock in his pocket. My grandmother put it up in the cupboard and it sat there for several years. An old rock hound come through Teasdale and they were talking about the rock and she got the rock down and showed it to him. That is when he went wild. He said, “That is full of gold” That is when the rush was on.

My cousin told me a lot about it, he lived out to Richfield. He said that all of Richfield, all of Wayne County, everybody was up there looking for that. The assay, he had a copy of the original assay, came from the Salt Lake Assay Office, and it was the richest gold ever found. I was told just recently that they still have that rock in the state capital of Utah on account of its real pretty bright blue color. My dad liked the color of it and put it in his pocket.

I was talking to Rotis, my cousin when I worked with him over at the power plant for a while. That is where I got some of this story from. He said they did find some of that same ore rock on some of the water holes on the Boulder Mountain, all the way to Salina where that old Spaniard would camp, and some of the ore would fall off his packs. That is how they traced it back, some of them found a piece or two up to Donkey Reservoir and some of the other water holes all the way to Salina. They pieced it together and figured it was from his mine.

When they went back to look for the pick they found the pick. But they could never find that mine hole. My dad talked about it quite a bit, told me that story more than once and then I got some other information from Rotis. Rotis went up there with a lot of people from Richfield and
they walked grids on that mountain trying to find that. I still get calls from people who want to know what I can remember from my dad told me about that mine.

Three of my brothers and their kids have been up there looking. It had completely disappeared.

MH: We know what that mountain is made out of, all the layers. With a gold vein?

DC: It could have been just a minor vein, the Spaniard got most of it and didn’t come back. And the hole could have caved in. My dad found it when he was ten and he was about sixteen when the old rock hound came through and seen that ore. That was when the rush was on, (1906) and over the years it may have caved in and can never go back to it.

DC: Rotis went up several times. And he shared the story, so it is in the papers. Rush didn’t get on until five or six years after. 1905-1906. Rotis knew about all of Wayne County was up there and there were people in small planes flying over the area, with metal detectors hanging below the plane.

MH: It sure caused quite a stir in humans.

DC: Gold, oh, gold does that. I talked with Cliff Johnson. He was telling me about one of his uncles that spent two years on the Henry Mountains looking for the old Josephine Mine that was down there, real rich gold too. He could never find it. He claimed the Indians hid those mines because they didn’t want them found. So, they camouflaged them or filled them in.

My parents were just old pioneer people. My grandmother came straight from Sweden. I could not hardly understand her, she was raised in Sweden. She moved to Teasdale as a young women.

MH: Thank you for sharing the story.

End of interview. Time: 00:09:23