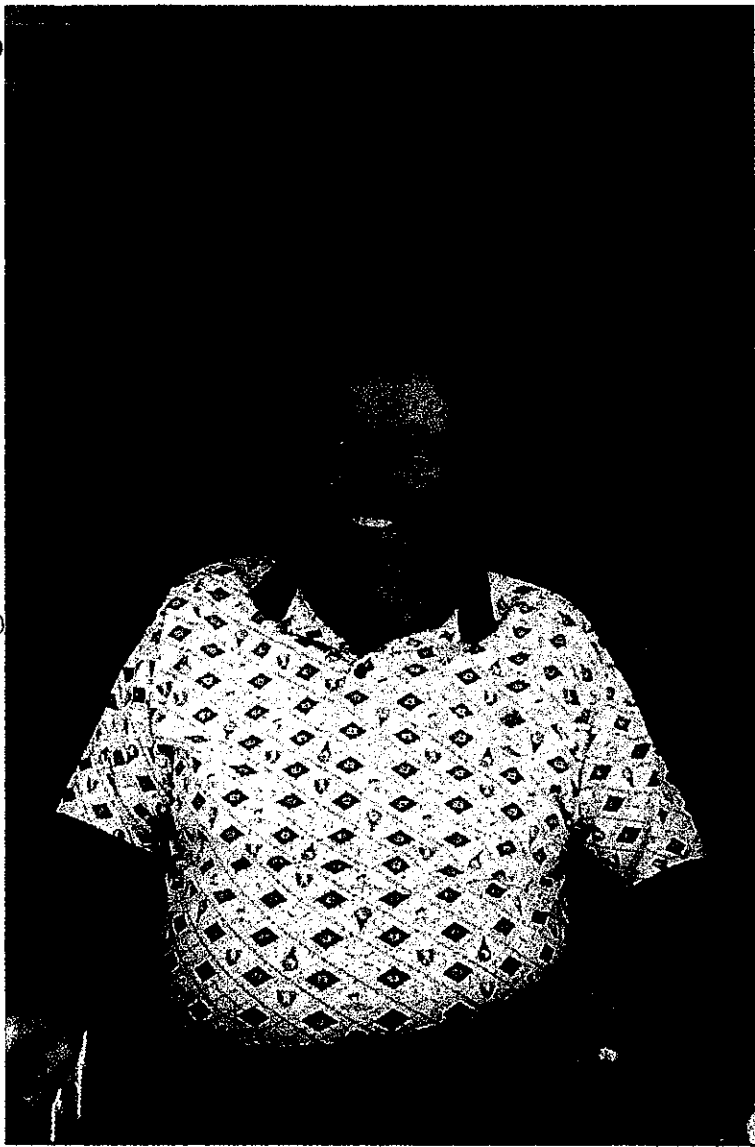


Boyle Cotnam  
2001  
Escalante





INTERVIEW WITH:	Doyle V Cottam
INTERVIEWER:	Jay Haymond
INTERVIEW NUMBER:	One of One
DATE OF INTERVIEW:	May 31, 2001
PLACE OF INTERVIEW:	His home in Escalante, Utah
SUBJECT OF INTERVIEW:	His life's work in Garfield County and around Escalante
TRANSCRIBER:	Vectra Solutions/LA, Marsha Holland
DATE:	July 29, 2001, February 25, 2003

**Tape 1, Side A**

JH: Now, for the sake of a bit of context, tell me where you were born and then a little bit about your early life; the family into which you were born.

DC: Well, I was born April 11, 1921. I just turned 80-years-old.

JH: Yeah, congratulations.

DC: And she just turned 80-years-old on the 12th of May, just a month's difference, and we didn't think we would make it.

JH: (Laughter) Good for you.

DC: I was born here in Escalante with a midwife, Susan Heaps. She was one of the midwives that came and delivered most of the children in our family. Mother and Dad had eight children and we have lost three brothers. I had a brother next to me, he was the second one born in the family and he got killed in World War II in the invasion of Valadians, South Pacific, and he never, he tried to enlist several times, my brother did, and he had a little problem, nasal problem, and they never would take him, but he persisted and persisted and they finally told him, "Well, we'll take you and then we'll operate on your nose and problems and your breathing", and they took him and he went in the Navy, but

they never did operate on him. And of course, I was an infantryman. He was in the Navy on the destroyer Escort and I went in as an infantryman and I went into the South Pacific and ended up over in Okinawa. I went over to Hawaii and they trained us in jungle training there for two or three months and then on the way over to Okinawa, we burned the motor out on the big ship we was on and we had to stop and they wouldn't let us off. We was aground. I was trying to think of the island it was on. [The]United States had just taken it from the Japs, but we stopped there. We stayed on deck about three weeks while they overhauled that motor and then we went on over into Okinawa. I've spent all my life here in Escalante, with the exception of when I filled an LDS mission to Texas for the LDS Church and then we just worked. I worked for my father mostly, or with him. He was in the sheep business, had a herd of sheep and so I spent an awful lot of time on the winter range and on the summer range helping take care of the sheep and my brother, Milan also, until he went into the service. He and I were sheep herders and we, according to the Fellows book on the history of Escalante, there was about fifty thousand head of sheep in this little valley and about ten thousand head of cattle and we spent, oh, all the winter months down on the Escalante desert with the sheep and then we moved over up through Colletts and over onto Smokey, and then we'd come back out onto our permits here in the spring. And prior to going on the mission, I got the mission call and I was over on the Smokey Mountain when they announced the Japan bombing Pearl Harbor and the beginning of World War II, but I went down on the Escalante desert with the sheep in October and I never did come home, back home. I worked for two dollars a day. That was the pay then and I went over on the Smokey, then come back on the desert and I never did come back until about the 25th of May. I just stayed there a lot of times alone for thirty days at a time and came back in time to shear the sheep. We used to have a big shearing plant out here. Thelma's grandfather owned it; John Spencer, and they used to have about twenty-five to thirty shearers out there and he owned the plant and of course local personnel that were the shearers, most of them and John, he sharpened all the blades, kept the plan running, had a little motor out there to keep the electricity going to each stall in the deal to take care of the sheep shearers.

JH: Was that one of those portable generators that they hauled around?

DC: Yeah. He had one of those and it was on the flat just west of Escalante, out there, the plant was, and they sheared fifty thousand head of sheep. They'd come in one herd at a time off of the desert and as quick as they was sheared out the next herd would move in and I worked a lot out there as a wrangler with my dad with his sheep, but they just had rigs of bags of wool that they sacked individually, they branded them with their own brand; ours was an H, and they just took the paint and branded each sack so everybody would know how much wool they had in the deal. And then my grandfather lived up here, well the post office took part of his lot after he had passed away, but he and my father would take their teams and they load, oh about eight sacks of wool on wood drags pulled by them and they'd haul that wool with the team. They'd take their grub boxes and their beds and they'd go up over the Escalante mountain here toward Widstoe and down to Antimony, where the train used to come into Marysville and it would take them about, oh, a week to ten days to make the trip. When they got up to the foot of the Escalante Mountain they had to undo one team and one wagon and leave them there and put two teams on in order to pull the mountain because right on the top of the Escalante Mountain the elevation is ten thousand feet and so when night came they found a little feed for their teams and they took their eating material and their beds, camped there, and the next night they'd go as far as they could. And then after they unloaded their wool in Marysvale, usually they had it consigned or had it arranged for sale and then the teams would go pull them from Marysvale over to Richfield, Utah and they'd buy their winter supply of food and clothing. I can remember one year they only got five cents out of their wool, the lowest price they had ever gotten and dad and them, they had a cellar in their home up here on the west side of town and they had a big tin box down in there, they could put about a ton of flour in there, they had it lined with you know, so the mice couldn't get into it. (Doorbell interruption)

JH: We're talking about the cheap price of wool and then you were talking about the storage that was available for the yearly supply.

DC: That year dad didn't buy very much, other than food supplies, a few articles of clothing and that was about all because they didn't get that much out of their wool and they went to Richfield and bought that and then made the trek back. I can remember as a kid going up on the, we call this 'Big Hill' right above the BLM Office, that big hill, I remember knowing that they would be back a certain day and me and some of my brothers and sisters would go up on the big hill and look up the canyon and wait for the teams to come home.

JH: Cheer them home. Yeah.

DC: And I remember once Dad and Granddad bought a mule. I don't know if it was this particular trip or another year, but they bought a mule and they called her Kate, "Old Kate" and they needed another mule for their sheep, herding the sheep and taking care of those and they brought that, but we as kids, oh we used to go up here, our irrigation system was a canal out of the creek up here, it came around, we used to go up here, they called it the 'Sand Gate', it's still there, part of it, and we'd go up there every time we got a chance and swim in the Sand Gate. About all the kids congregate up there, that was summer recreation. My mother, her name was Uzell Cottam, Dad's name was Victor Ellis Cottam, and in the fall up here on the Little Desert above the BLM Office, used to be a lot of pine nuts and she'd take our whole family and lunch and we'd walk up there and we'd pick up pine nuts all day long and have our lunch and then come back down home. I remember when mother in her little pine tree in her home up there had four hundred pounds of pine nuts that she had picked up. She and the kids when they went up there and Orilla Cowles, her neighbor and friend, would take her family and didn't have any automobiles then, you know, you either rode in the wagon or rode on a saddle horse.

I rode the biggest part of my time on a horse. We even, there was no hay bailers, one hay baler that belonged to Jimmy Woolsey, and I eventually bought those farms out there. I bought about, oh, eight or ten farms that used to belong to pioneer families that moved away and went to California and different places for employment and so I ended up with 355 acres out there plus some other acreage that I bought. Then after I came back from the war, Thelma, we got married during the war, Thelma and I did, and she was working in Panguitch over there with the Old Aids Program (welfare). She had been working there for a year or two and when I come back, she and I worked, well I was gone then into World War II, but when I came back from World War II, I got wounded in Okinawa, I still got a piece of shrapnel in my knee and I've been working with the VA here. They've been changing, trying to get me some help on medication and so forth and they've upped my percentage of disability a little, which has helped financially, but when I come back I worked with Dad for a while and those years were really financially bad. They had a program here and Lorne Griffin was over it and they gave the, oh, GI's \$36 a month. You had to go take the classes and work with them in this program and then I got \$36 on my first evaluation on being wounded and I don't know whether you want to hear all that or not.

JH Let it come.

DC: But anyway, I was over in Okinawa and I'll tell you just a little bit how the wound happened. It was just after the armistice was signed on the boat there and so they wanted us, over on Okinawa, there was one of the most beautiful islands that I've ever been on or around. I even liked it better than Hawaii and they had the old yellow pine like we have on the mountain up here and then they had rolling hills and they had taken rock and made a little irrigation ditch, those Okinawan people did, where they could run their water to their little gardens. They had mostly grass shack type homes and so and they had a lot of sugar cane over there, it was about as tall as I am and I looked down in one of these grass

shacks, they assigned three of us to, one guy Fanny Tank and a Flanagan from Arkansas who is a buddy of mine, they wanted us to go through these cane fields and be sure we had all the Japanese people either killed or moved out of there, you know. And then they set up a bivouac area or a place for a company, leveled it up and they issued, it was a canvas cot and a mosquito bar, that's all we had, oh a couple of GI blankets, but anyway we lived in there and I looked down at this grass shack right next to this cane field and I was ahead of my two friends there quite a little ways and I looked up and seen four Jap soldiers in this grass shack sitting down and I thought, "Well, I'll get all four of them. I'll kill all four of those guys before they get into that cane field." I emptied the old rifle, old .06 that we had and I used to be a pretty good marksman, kind of poached a little deer occasionally when I was a kid, and I missed all three of those guys. And I was so mad at myself because I missed them, so we went on up through the cane field and I come to one of these little irrigation ditches, it didn't have any water in, and I stood on the bank and it was sloped off eight or ten feet down and Flanagan, this other fellow was behind me and I stood on there quite a little while and then I walked over the embankment and as I got over, Flanagan screamed at me and I turned around. I was standing up. Normally they trained us if you had a warning like that to hit the ground, you know, and anyway I thought Flanagan was the one that shot me. He was jumping in the air and every time he'd come down he'd touch that old Army rifle off and he was shooting right in my direction and there was a Jap from here to you, me to you distance, and he was laying in that irrigation ditch and he was a little greedy. He could have killed me and just that fast, no problem at all, but he wanted to get all three of us and those two kids was coming up there and there was a lot of kids that were 18-years-old and they were the one. Anyway the Jap decided to wait until those two guys moved up and I was just a short distance over the ditch and he had some grenades on his belt and he detonated one of them and threw it right in between all three of us. And Flanagan dint get hit, but I got eighteen pieces of shrapnel in me and I looked down at my combat boot on my right leg and it was running over with blood, draining out of where it had hit me in the leg and the kid, Fanny Tank, one piece of shrapnel hit him right there and cut that big cord into, right there on his left



arm and he had no control over his fingers, but that was ten o'clock in the morning and at eleven o'clock that night they took us down to the ocean. We hadn't been in Okinawa long enough to get medical facilities set up, you know, and up on the north end of Okinawa, they set up one or two of these big Army pyramid tents and they had a chair, a dental chair, they had cots in that tent, they took us up there and so eleven o'clock that night, this doctor from Wisconsin, a young doctor, really a nice doctor, he just sat me in that chair, had a big old long needle about that long, scare you to death, you know, (laughter) and he just went along and that reminds me of this old 'MASH' deal on TV, and he just deadened everyone of those places and he cut a cross in where they were. He didn't even have an x-ray machine. He just physical examined it and he just went down in there and picked all the shrapnel out and then sewed the worst ones up and I was in, oh, in that hospital for, if I can recall, close to three months. I was in there with other wounded soldiers, you know and he wouldn't go in and take this big piece of shrapnel out of my knee 'cause he says, oh he says, "I'm worried, haven't got the medical facilities", and he says, "You'll just have to put up with the pain and the healing and everything, until, if you make it through the war and get back to the US and you can go in and..." I never did have it taken out. It bothers me. Even my pants rubbing on it is bad. But anyway, that was part of my Army experiences. I could tell you a lot of the Army, but I'm not going to do that.

JH: I wanted to maybe skip ahead to about 1952 when the sheep, I think that you said that the sheep prices or that the wool prices were so low that everybody decided that it wasn't worth being in the business. Is that a fair statement?

DC: Yes, and problems with the BLM and range. I can remember when my father and Dee Haws, they were two of the sheep men, there was a lot of conflict between the cattle and the sheep. The sixty miles from here to the Hole In The Rock down there, was all one grazing unit with sheep and cattle alike, and they had such a hassle over it and I can't remember the year, but anyway they got together, the sheep and the cattle guys got

together and had a representative representing them on the grazing rights on the Escalante desert and they divided the sheep and the cattle allotment, there was one big allotment and then later on I got into the cow business, my dad sold, he wrote me a letter over there and I got it on Okinawa and he says, "We can't find any [herders], all of the young men have gone to war and the only help we've got with the sheep is a few older guys that were up in their 60's and 70's, you know", and he says, "I've got a chance to sell my sheep to Guy Coombs in Wayne County" and so I wrote back and encouraged him to go ahead and sell because there was no help. But there was really a lot of friction and they used, when they come off from the desert, when the cattle and sheep all run together, they'd make us, the BLM would make us drive those sheep five miles a day before we could stop for the night to camp overnight on our way up to the shearing corral on the summer range and...

JH: So the decision to move out of the sheep business was really your father's, and you participated?

DC: Yeah. Especially our herd and Dad and Dee Haws was the last two sheep owners in the valley and, oh, just a matter of getting help, you know, to take care of the herds and so forth. Lots of them went out of the sheep business, a lot of them, now Thelma's father, Andrew, he finally sold his herd and his brother had a herd and his granddad had a herd, had three herds of sheep and they all sold out and went into the cow business, converted their rights into the cattle allotment.

**End of Tape One, Side One**

**Begin Tape One, Side Two**

DC: ...the ratio, if I remember correctly, was five to one. Five sheep to one cow.

JH: That's quite a reduction.

DC: Yeah, and back in Roosevelt's time when we was in this, oh not only drought on the range, but, you know, we was going through a financial situation, that's when they had the old soup houses in the whole nation, you know, and so Roosevelt had a mandatory deal that you'd reduce your sheep herd by so many percentage and you'd kill them and then you had to dress them, you couldn't let people have the meat off from them and the cows. They gave you \$20 for a cow and I think it was either \$3 or \$5 for a sheep and I helped my dad kill 300 in his percentage. We brought them in, had quite a big lot there and we just brought them in and we had to kill them and then we had to skin them and take the hides off and bale five hides in a bundle and turn them in and when you turned them in the government would pay you \$5 and \$20 for a cow. They killed hundreds of sheep and hundreds of cattle through his administration.

JH: What was the, what did they do with the carcasses?

DC: Well, we had areas here, trash places and that and we gave a lot of the carcasses, my dad didn't obey the law too well and there was people that was starving, destitute for food and all the sheep that he killed up there to his place that were good for mutton that was edible, we'd eat them, you know, and he'd give them to some of his friends. All that was eatable and the others they drug off and loaded took to some of the trash dumps around and they never buried them, they just became waste. But that was, I can remember that period of time.

JH: So what did you do when you came back?

DC: When I came back from the war?

JH: Uh huh.

DC: Well, Thelma and I was working with the FHA guy in Panguitch, or knew him, and she

was working, like I say, with the old age people. That's when they signed their homes over, you know, to go on the government allotment, get a little money to help their families live, but when I come back this guy that was over the FHA in Panguitch, he kept telling Thelma, he says, "Well Doyle ought to borrow a little money from the FHA and build you a home and buy you a farm or something like that." I can remember the most money that they would loan you to build a home was \$3,500 and so I borrowed that much and the [built our] first home. I've added this part on since then. There used to be a big window right there where porch is and that home cost me \$5,500 when I built it. I dug the basement with a team and a scraper and then I got a guy from up around Payson there. I contracted the building of that little home to him for \$5,500 and I couldn't borrow enough money and I didn't have any more money and so Thelma's dad gave me \$1,000 and Dad gave me \$1,000, so that made the \$5,500. So we built our home. And when we moved into it we had kind of a hardwood floor and we couldn't even afford any drapes or rugs. We lived in the bedroom and the kitchen. Now you can go to the FHA and borrow a quarter of a million dollars (laughter) for something or some enterprise. But I came back and worked a little, oh, I helped her dad. Her dad converted the, and I worked for him a little over, he had a ranch over above Antimony in John's Valley where the polygamists live over there and I rode with him and with her granddad. I stayed over there quite a lot and like I say, the going rate then was \$2 and dad had two or three herders hired there in that period of time and didn't have the money to pay them and they probably borrowed all the money that they could from the bank to keep operating and so the herders took horses for their pay. Had some saddle horses and they put a price on them at \$2 a day. They paid them off in some horses. But at one time Escalante was considered the most wealthy small community in the State of Utah. It was strictly because of our, oh, they came here purposely for livestock when they settled Escalante and they had all this range here and all the range from about half way from here to Boulder. We had a lot of good summer and winter range and when the BLM first started in here in Escalante, old Mr. Gault, he lived in Kanab and he was the manager of all the BLM here in Tropic and Cannonville and the whole southern part here and he had one

secretary. Now you can't even count the number they've got now. They've got so many employees up there they can't even tell how many they have got. (Laughter)

JH: (Laughter) What line of employment did you pursue after you got out of the livestock business?

DC: Well, Thelma and I went up to BYU after high school. I went about a year and a half. I spent two inter in Provo. I lived one winter with Vernile Griffin. I never did finish up there either, because of the war. Thelma didn't finish. Then they started quite a lot of construction work. The CC boys built this oil road into Boulder and before that was built they used to go up over the mountain here over Hell's Backbone and in there. They could travel light in the summer, but not in the winter and then I was a junior in high school and they recruited a lot of the young guys, gave them a job in Zions and Bryce Canyon at a dollar a day. We went there and they fed us and clothed us and they paid us a dollar a day. Then I used to come home and spend that dollar and then ask my Dad for more. (Laughter) But a lot of the young people, we had I think, four camps, let's see, four camps that I know of, CC guys and that was a period of time when they created the CC boys all over the nation and they had this one down below Escalante, you know, and they had 200 and something boys in that camp and oh, I had some saddle horses and those CC Boys wanted to learn to ride horses, you know, (laughter) and so we'd rent them a horse there for \$5 a day and got a little income that way. But Thelma and I, we got married when I came back from the war and went up to the 'Y' to school. Then we come back and I bought that little, I bought one little farm, twenty-acre farm out there. I gave \$2,500 for it and I borrowed the money to start to farm and then oh, then I borrowed enough money from FHA later on, after I'd paid my home down some and then I bought 50 head of cows over to Panguitch and went into cow business. I'd borrow a little money and buy one farm and get it paid for and I'd tell Thelma, I says, "Well, there's another farm right next to us that's for sale. I believe I'll buy that because I need the water.". She used to laugh at me, she says, "You're just kind of pulling my leg here. All you want's the land and the

water". Me and the boys have got 500 acres out here and we leased it out this year. I haven't been able to do a lot of heavy physical work, but I could go out and run the baler twenty-four hours a day and it wouldn't bother me. But we kind of got into the cow business and I finally ended up with a water permit over in John's Valley and then we bought part of her father's ranch over there. He had a big ranch and when he retired, then she only had one brother, Vernon. He and I divided the ranch up and he bought half of it and I bought half of it and I finally built my cows up until I had 570 head of cows.

JH: That's a good size herd isn't it?

DC: That was a big herd. I came out of John's Valley once, then I bought a permit over there that would take 270 cows, then owned the ranch and put the balance of them there. Mack LeFevre, worked for me. He's from Salt Gulch, over there and he and I, calves and cows and everything one time, we came, the two of us drove 1200 head of cows and calves over to the Escalante desert. And we have had some good range managers. Not all of them. I used to get so mad and go down to the station. I bought this Phillip's Station, went in with two other guys and we built that in the 1960's and then I bought those guys out and I gave all the stocks and shares I had in the corporation to my youngest boy and he still owns it. But we worked a little there and then I got, one year the water all disappeared in August. I had the most beautiful patch of silage corn out there and it just dried up and wasn't worth anything and I went down to work on Glen Canyon Dam. I worked from the bottom to the top on Glen Canyon.

JH: What work were you doing for them?

DC: Well, I was doing some welding and carpenter work. Started out as a carpenter and then I had a chance to change over to weld for a carpenter crew and I spent the rest of my time working for the carpenter's crew, you know, just welding. They had, it was a unique, the dam down here was one of the first ones in the nation that was built without any steel in

it. It was all just concrete and I welded on that until I finally quit the dam and come home. And I still hung onto a little bunch of cattle in the desert, but things have changed so dramatically. Sorensen, I believe, we only have two or three guys now that owns a permit there. This millionaire from California, he come up here and he's bought all the permits and bought lots of property. First guy that, his dad sold one piece of property on the Las Vegas Strip there for \$38 million.

JH: I'll bet he didn't pay near that for it.

DC: After working at Glen Canyon, I worked construction for a company out of Las Vegas. The fellow that I worked construction for was from Las Vegas. He had one in Las Vegas, one in Utah. Mr. Mendenhall was his name.

JH: V. C.?

DC: V. C. Do you know him?

JH: Uh huh.

DC: Oh, he's a great man. I was superintendent for him for nine years and I built projects, I built the air strip out here when I worked for him and I helped build a lot of highway up to Huntington and I spent three winters in Death Valley, California, built 38 miles down there. Oh hey, that was a wonderful place for winter time. And I really enjoyed that. Union wages then was \$5 an hour and then my brother, he, I took him up to Carson City, Nevada on a project and he stayed in the business and finally got into the construction business and he done pretty well, but that was good money those days. Five dollars an hour was good money and when Kent went to work for V.C. they was paying the operators twenty bucks an hour. (Laughter) So I spent quite a lot of time, only trouble with me, I bought a new pickup every year (laughter) and....

JH: ...that adds a little spice to your life.

DC: Yeah, a little spice to your life, yeah. That's been my weakness all my life, is automobiles. I got a Lincoln out there now that, I bought a used Lincoln from the Syretts over to the Ruby's Inn, leased it on a lease plan and he was going to turn it back. He called me one day and asked me if I was interested. I went over and drove it, so I bought it, and that was my downfall. I liked those so much I never did get out of the Lincoln.

JH: You like the Lincoln?

DC: I like the Lincoln, yeah. Well the range deal, you know the only thing that I really hated about this Escalante Grand Staircase deal, is the way they went about it. They never, the people in congress never even asked them [Utah], you know, just slipped down into Arizona and some of these buddies and everything. I never did like Clinton. I might just as well be truthful with you. I never, he done everything he could against the Army and I just, I just didn't like the man and he done some good things. The good things I could probably look over and say, well I don't know how you done that. (Laughter) But I just didn't care for him. I'm an old Republican, staunch all the way and I just couldn't sleep at night when old Gore was trying to finagle that deal to beat Bush in the election, so I'm glad that he's in there. Now I'm worried where they've changed one of the Republicans over in the Senate there. But if there's any other things that you think I ought to tell you about, I'll try and do it.

JH: Well we've pretty well covered them. You haven't commented really on the moving around much. You thought of yourself, or you've referred to yourself as an Escalante. I think of it as an exclusive club, because the people that live here have it so good some times, other times not so good, but when you come home you come home to Escalante. You haven't mentioned much about moving around.



DC: The only time that we actually moved as a family, I was helping build that highway over there towards Iron Mountain in Cedar, you know the one, the old Escalante Hotel that used to be on the corner there? I helped build that, I run a pull over there.

JH: A turner pull?

DC: Yeah.

JH: That was a long time ago.

DC: That was a long time ago. Yeah, well when I got involved with V. C. there, I learned to operate a ball, you know. I used to get up at 5:00 o'clock in the morning and go down to fire the hot plant up, get it all ready to go and then I built, I told you, 38 miles of road in Death Valley, and you know, that was really an experience. We went from Furnace Creek the first three years, went down to Bad Water, down to the lowest point in the United States, you know, and of course it's a tourist haven, you know, especially April, just thousands of people come into Furnace Creek. And V. C. always furnished me with a 55 foot trailer, a big fancy trailer and I had my own new pickup and everything when I worked for him and I went down there and then I used to be a grade foreman before he gave me this deal and I'd run all the grades through, the heavy equipment and everything, from Furnace Creek clear to Bad Water. Some of those places down there, they have some terrific floods in Death Valley sometimes in the summer, you know, and for miles back there towards Baker and some of those places, that water drains into Death Valley, they call those, they look like a fan, they look like a big fan, they come out of those canyons and they call them Illusion {alluvial} Fans and during a oh, I'm trying to think, anyway, there's a lot of people that was camping in those washes, uranium days, and those floods would drain maybe for ten miles and a lot of people, their outfits got washed away and people got killed down in Death Valley, but the thing that was intriguing to me,

some of the big cuts and fills that we made on the new alignment in the roads, I went through five separate highways. I would go take a hill there where we was going down there and I'd, when the pulls and cats would put the grade down, there'd be an oil road underneath, kind of spooky.

JH: Yeah, it would be, digging up the dead.

DC: Yeah, and there's high as five different oil roads and all they did was when it filled it up, all they done was just grade it and lay a new asphalt road over it and it kind of used to spook me a little bit. (Laughter) I thought, my gosh, I wonder how many dead people are there. And the guys that worked for me down there, they couldn't wait until 5:00 o'clock come, they had that big golf course there at Furnace Creek and a lot of them were golf guys and a lot of those guys that drove cats and pulls and graders for me, they say, "Why don't you come and play golf with us?" And I says, "After working all day to knock that ball and spend all my time chasing it?" I wasn't interested. (Laughter) And those guys would work all day just hard as, and then just head for the golf course, go down there. Run into some Riddle people that used to live in Escalante. Isaac Riddle that had the first flour mill up here in the canyon, his son was down there running the tourist complex and all them people around. Well anyway, I worked construction, oh, and I was foreman on this for UDOT on the road here for several years. I went on the...

JH: Maintenance?

DC: What?

JH: Maintenance crew?

DC: Maintenance crew. We had every thing from Widstoe, 1955 is the year they built this road up through the Upper Valley and connected these three little communities over there.

JH: My father was the contractor, I think, Whiting and Hammond?

DC: Yeah, I knew him. I worked with him quite a lot. I can remember when he built the bridge over the Henrieville Wash. He was a good guy.

JH: I think so. He's still living in Orem.

DC: Is that right?

JH: Ninety-two.

DC: Ninety-two. I didn't know what age he was, but oh, he built the road from Escalante here clear into Henrieville, you know.

**End of Tape One, Side Two**  
**End of Interview**

Addendum to Doyle Cottam's interview:

An outline of his life offered by his daughter, Karen who resides in Tropic, Utah.

1921- Born in Escalante

- Attended elementary and high school in Escalante.
- Worked herding sheep with his father as a boy.
- Worked summers of junior and senior years for CCC camps between Zion and Bryce.
- Attended BYU for 1 ½ years. Spent two winters in Provo.
- Served LDS mission in San Antonio, Texas.
- Hitchhiked to Panguitch, Utah after completing mission where Thelma Spencer took him home to Escalante.
- Married Thelma Spencer. One month later left for WWII, reporting to Camp Roberts, California.
- Returned home after war, built home, bought farms, worked for State Road (UDOT).  
Had three children, 2 boys and 1 girl.
- Left UDOT, farmed and then went to work constructing Glen Canyon Dam.
- Worked construction for V.C. Mendenhall out of Las Vegas.
- Served as Garfield County Assessor.

-Retired from farming and ranching.

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Interview Agreement and Deed of Gift

In view of the historical value of this oral history interview and my interest in Utah history,

I, Doyle Cottam  
please print or type your name

knowingly and voluntarily donate to the Utah Division of State History the audiotapes, videotapes, any transcription, as well as any and all copyrights and other rights, title and interest that might exist. I also permit the Utah Division of State History full use of this document for whatever purposes they may have. This includes the rights to use this interview on the World Wide Web.

Interview Description

\_\_\_\_\_

Date of Interview May 31/2001

Primary Subject \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Other Topics \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Number of Tapes 1

X Signature Doyle V. Cottam

X Date 1-15-03

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