

Southern Utah Oral History Project

The Southern Utah Oral History Project was started in July of 1998. It began with an interest in preserving the cultural history of small towns in southern Utah that border the Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument. The project was managed by Kent Powell, from the Utah Division of State History, who oversaw the collection of oral histories conducted in Boulder, Escalante, Bryce Valley, Long Valley, Kanab, the Kaibab Paiute Reservation, and Big Water, by Jay Haymond and Suzi Montgomery. Also in cooperation with the state was the Bureau of Land Management and the people of Garfield and Kane counties, with support from the Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument. The goals of the project were first to interview long-time local residents and collect information about the people and the land during the first half of the twentieth century. In addition, the interviews were to be transcribed and copies of the transcripts were to be made available to the public at the Utah State Historical Society and at local repositories. Lastly, to build a relationship with state agencies and the local communities and provide a medium for the local communities to express their interest in preserving their own history and culture in the areas that are now included in the GSENM. Thank you to everyone who took the time to care and share their memories and stories.



INTERVIEW WITH: Florence Huntington Heaton
INTERVIEWER: Suzi Montgomery
INTERVIEW NUMBER:
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PLACE OF INTERVIEW: Her home in Alton, Utah
SUBJECT OF INTERVIEW:
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SM: This is an interview with Florence Huntington Heaton. It's January 11th. We are at her home in Alton. We're talking today about her life history and her time growing up in Alton as a young girl. My name is Suzi Montgomery. Okay, to start this interview, I want you to you tell me about the family into which you were born, starting with your birth date.

FH: My birth date is February 26, 1916. I was the youngest of ten children. My mother had four children, then her first husband died and she married my father and then had six more, and I was the last.

SM: You're the youngest? Are you the only one remaining?

FH: I have one sister remaining. The rest are all gone.

SM: So tell me about growing up. Where were you born?

FH: I was born at Hatch, Utah.

SM: Tell me about Hatch and what you remember as a child.

FH: Well, times were so different then. My father worked at a lot of different jobs so he could support the family. I think, at that time, often the wage was like \$500 a year. I never thought of us as being poor, because every one else was in the same boat. My mother

was a practical nurse, but she was gone quite a lot taking care of sick people and delivering babies, and this type of thing. The doctor would come sometime in the night, we didn't have a telephone, the doctor would drive up, and in 5 minutes my mother would be out of bed and ready to go and help deliver the baby, and then she would take care of the child and the mother, and bathe them and do all of these things and take care of them for 10 days. Sometimes they would pay her \$10, but sometimes she didn't get anything. A lot of times she didn't. She told me, "I'll give you half of anything you can collect from these people who owe me." I didn't get a thing (laughs), but she usually didn't either. It was just donation work I guess.

SM: So people just weren't in a position to pay her.

FH: I guess. They just weren't able to. I don't know. She put a lot of time in anyway. She was a good woman.

SM: So what did that mean? So your father was doing many different jobs, your mother was a practical nurse away a lot, who was with the kids?

FH: Well, she was home. It was just there in town. She would go and take care of the mother, and then she would be back home. It wasn't like she was gone over night or things like this. My father worked as a sheep herder, worked at shearing time, he worked some on the highway, he trapped, hunted, he did anything he could.

SM: Tell me about trapping. I haven't heard a lot about trappers in the area. What did that consist of?

FH: He trapped coyotes, and he trapped beavers. I remember one day he took us with him on his trap line to collect what ever he had gotten and, anyway, he had caught some beavers. They are in the river and the trap is under water, and the beavers can stay under water

quite awhile, but they do have to come up for air, but if they get caught in a trap under water, then I guess that's probably what kills them. Anyway, he caught some and he had them in a wagon. There were no cars at that time, so we were with a team and wagon and we were all sitting in the back of the wagon, us kids, and he was going along and he saw something and he shot at it, but that startled the horses and the horses jumped and it sort of threw us in the air and I landed on a beaver (laughing). I remember this experience.

SM: I bet you do. You landed on a dead beaver!

FH: Right. He used to also take the skins off the beaver and I remember once he tanned one, it was beautiful and so nice and soft. Anyway he tanned one.

SM: What did he use the furs and things for?

FH: I think he gave it to my sister and I think Mother made her a coat and trimmed it with this beaver fur.

SM: Did he ever trade or barter with these skins for other...?

FH: No, he usually just sold them. There was a sale for them.

SM: So the main subsistence for the family, what would you say was, what did he do the most of? Was he mostly a sheepherder?

FH: Well, I don't know. He just did all of these things, and if one job kind of run out then, like the shearing time is only once a year, that he would work at the shearing corral. Sheep herding was pretty much year-around. With sheep, you have to stay with them. Someone had to stay with them all the time. He also worked on the road. They didn't

have the big CATS and things they have now. They did it with team and scraper, and so on, you know and so he worked on that.

SM: Do you remember that? The team and scraper?

FH: Uh-huh. We had horses. I remember, especially Old Dan and Bess, and they were as unmatched as you can imagine. One was gray and the other one was black. Bess was black, and she was a nervous little horse, and Old Dan was so slow, but they would pull the wagon or whatever. At that time there was no water system in Hatch. There was no electric power. We used kerosene lamps for light, and there was a well to get the drinking water. We had to carry it in buckets from a little over half a block away. We didn't have a shower every morning (chuckling).

SM: No. I would guess not (chuckling).

FH: Anyway, we had what they called a lizard. It was a barrel on kind of like a sleigh-runner-type thing. They would take this down to the river, fill the barrel with water, and then pull it with the horse, you know, and then they would pull it home. Of course it slopped a lot. You put a tub over the top to try to keep it all from slopping out before you got home, but anyway, this is what they used for washing and bathing and the whole bit, but (sigh) it was a different life then. In the summertime they had water in the ditch they could use for irrigating the gardens and we'd fill the barrel with the ditch water in the summertime, but in the winter time we had to haul it on this old sleigh.

SM: Right. Only in the winter did you use the sleigh?

FH: Yes.

SM: So what did the land look like? What did the landscape look like? Were there a lot of

shrubs and things?

FH: Not a lot. It's kind of an arid area. There was sage brush and trees and hills around. There was not a lot of trees. The trees were trees people had planted and, of course, the hills with the pines and cedar trees on.

SM: Did you, as women, I'm concentrating a lot on women's role back then. I know your mother was a nurse. Did you do a lot of gardening and toiling the soil?

FH: Yes. We had a garden. My father was gone quite a lot with his work, and the boys, when they got big enough, they were gone also, like herding sheep and doing whatever they could find to do, so usually that was left to the women to hoe the weeds and do the things. The men would do the plowing but then after you got the garden in, it was pretty much left to the women to take care of the garden during the summer because the men were gone.

SM: Right. Was the soil really rich and fertile?

FH: Well, it was fairly good, but the problem in this area, and not as much in Alton as in Hatch, but there's frost. It would sometimes freeze every month of the year, once in a while, and so it was a little difficult. You could raise onions, potatoes and carrots and those things that are quite hardy. We usually had corn and peas and things, but you didn't raise tomatoes and cucumbers and melons and all of those types of things, it was too cold.

SM: I suppose you did a lot of canning with those.

FH: We did. We canned- people came through selling fruit sometimes, and tomatoes and things and then mother would can them.

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SM: So, you would irrigate - there was no irrigation system, I'm assuming, in Hatch?

FH: No.

SM: So you would simply use the water from the ditch to water the garden?

FH: Yes.

SM: You would have to lug it up every time?

FH: No. You'd dig the ditch over so it would run down the rows. The water came from up above town, I mean kind of up from a higher area. Actually, the water came from the Mammoth River. They would run it around in the ditch and then people would take turns having the water come to their place. Since it had this slope on the hill and in the town also, the town was not level...

SM: It went down into the valley kind of.

FH: Uh-huh. It wasn't exactly a valley, but it would just sort of slope down the hill. It made it so there was enough pressure for the water to get down to your gardens.

SM: Was there a water Master in town? Is that how you dictated who got water when?

FH: There probably was, but when you're a kid I didn't care (Laughs). I didn't pay attention to that, but I'm sure there was. My mother... when dad was gone, I know she would take the water down on the field, I mean turn it down to the field and then go down there and water. We always used to laugh because she and her brother, her brother was my Uncle Jim, he was like she was, I guess, and really liked the water. Sometimes she'd turn her turn down onto the field, and Uncle Jim would go up and take out part of the dam and let

some of the water go to his place (laughing). She would get so annoyed. Anyway, we used to think that was quite funny!

SM: I'm still interested in how you used what was around you. It seems like a lot of these towns were super isolated and, as far as, your mother was a nurse, but did she, when it came to when you were sick or your brothers and sisters were sick, how would she cure you? What remedies would she use?

FH: I had pneumonia when I was six months old, I think, and then I had it again when I was, I think about four, and that time I had it really bad and they took me to Panguitch. We had family there, I used to call him Uncle Matt. I don't think he was a relative, but anyway, they let us stay in their home, and the doctor was in town in Panguitch, and so he would come and check me. I was there for quite a while.

SM: How did you get to Panguitch?

FH: I don't remember. I don't remember that trip. I don't know if they had cars then or not. They probably had cars someplace, but I don't remember. I guess I was too sick. I don't know how I got there, but they probably took me in a car. That would have been a long trip in a wagon.

SM: Sure. A really long trip.

FH: So I really don't know. I remember the first car I ever saw. My Uncle Jim had it. Oh, it was so wonderful! I think it was a Model-T or a Model-A. Anyway, it was a Ford. It was a ford with Eizing glass windows and...

SM: Eizing glass windows?

FH: Well that's what we called them. They were kind of like a canvas, but you'd have one section of it that would have this...we called it Eizing glass. I don't know what it was made of, but anyway, it was a little window you could look out of, but they snapped on or fastened on some way so that you could...

SM: It was like plastic wasn't it?

FH: Well, it was kind of like plastic, except plastic was not made at that time. It was really brittle so that it would have just cracked or smashed to pieces. I thought that was such a wonderful car. That's the first one I'd ever seen.

SM: How old were you when you saw your first car?

FH: I was probably, six, seven or eight.

SM: It was just amazing to you was it?

FH: Oh, yes.

SM: Back to the home remedies, do you remember any kind of, I know you did a lot from scratch, basically, do you remember making soap or butter and all those things?

FH: Yes. All of them!

SM: What do you remember about the process of home remedies, not just home remedies, but taking things from the earth and making a product out of them from scratch?

FH: We used to take the cream off the milk and churn the butter. We had a little hand crank in a glass jar, and it had a this little thing with a paddle on it, and you'd crank it around

and churn the butter with that, and mother always made her own bread. I still do.

SM: You do? Explain the process of making bread. It might seem basic to you, but we're so far gone from even making bread. You would go get the wheat from where, and how did you do that?

FH: When I was small, they had a grist mill in Glendale.

SM: A what mill?

FH: A grist mill. That's where they would grind the wheat into flour. And I remember traveling down there in a buggy and it was so far. Now it only takes a half an hour, but at that time it would take you quite a long time, so we'd have to stay over night. We also used to raise wheat, and then you would thrash the wheat, so we would haul the wheat down to Glendale, and they would run it through this mill to grind it into flour, which they would put back in sacks, and then we would haul the flour home. They had a flume, I think they called it. It was a wooden thing that the water would run down into the mill to run the machinery. I remember being out by the flume where the water was running quite swift, and someone said, "Be careful, don't fall in that or else if you do, it will take you in and grind you up too." That frightened me, and so I was afraid to go by that. I was quite small. Anyway, we'd have to stay over night, and I don't remember the camping out thing. I'm sure we just camped out somewhere outside. Then we would go back home.

SM: And you would come home with the flour?

FH: Uh-huh. At that time you didn't have the yeast that we have now. They used to have one, and I think it was called Owl Yeast, I'm really not sure, but it was a hard lump, and you'd cut a little of that off and put it in some water and dissolve it and then when you

mixed your flour, a little flour in with your water or milk, whatever you had, and you would put some of this yeast in it and that would make it rise. Then mother would let it rise a time or two and keep punching it down, and then form it into loaves and bake it. It had salt and sugar in it.

SM: What was your oven...what kind of an oven did you bake it in?

FH: It was just a wood stove with an oven. I usually make it with milk. When I make bread, I do it with milk because I think it does better, and it would probably also give you more nutrients and more things that you need.

SM: Did you have access to milk when you were young? Did you have a dairy?

FH: We had cows.

SM: You did?

FH: Well, we had two cows, and so this is another one (chuckle) of these experiences. When the men were gone, then mother or else I and my sister would milk the cows. I didn't mind milking cows, except, sometimes when we got a little older- we were teenagers, and we'd be milking the cows, and then we'd have boyfriends come. I hated having the boyfriends come and see us milking cows. This false pride thing, or something. I was always embarrassed. I don't know why.

SM: Just one of those things.

FH: Just one of those things. Right.

SM: Was it not cool to be milking cows?

FH: I guess not. I didn't think it was anyway. But we had cows and chickens and quite often a pig, and sometimes we would raise a calf or something to butcher in the fall so that we would have meat. Then dad almost always got a deer. He was a good shot, and the boys also. Sometimes he would make jerky. It was cold enough there, the meat kept quite well. You could can it also, or dry it, or whatever, but we usually had something.

SM: Did you always have enough food?

FH: Yes. I never remember going hungry. It was pretty basic food, but we did have vegetables. Sometimes we'd go to Glendale and get apples and things. They raised a lot there. We usually had fruit. Mother would can fruit, and so we had - we all grew up healthy, so we must have had a pretty good diet.

SM: So, let's talk about moving from Hatch, where all this took place, to Alton. How did you find yourself in Alton?

FH: When we were young the... can I go back a little?

SM: Absolutely.

FH: We had a school house there and we had a little room which consisted of four grades of kids, and then the big room was from there on up to the eighth grade.

SM: So two rooms.

FH: Two room school house, with four grades in each one. Then, when the kids graduated, there was no bus or anything. They didn't bus you to school anywhere, and then when I was I think, in the fourth grade, I had a sister and a brother that had graduated from the grade school and they wanted to go to high school, and so that year we moved to

Panguitch. We moved with a team and wagon, and I don't know why I was always so conscious of things. I hated being seen traveling on a wagon. Like I said, this false pride thing.

SM: You were supposed to be in a car by then? Was that the thing?

FH: Well, I guess I thought so. I don't know what I thought. Anyway, we lived in Panguitch that year while they went to high school in Panguitch. But I think before the year ended we ran out of money and so we came back, and I don't think they quite finished that year.

SM: So you were there not quite a year?

FH: Not quite a complete year.

SM: Where did you live when you were in Panguitch?

FH: We lived in the southwest part of town. I don't remember the name of the people that we got it from. I was in the fourth grade.

SM: So you were quite young?

FH: Third or fourth grade. I can't even remember which.

SM: Did you like Panguitch?

FH: I liked it. It was quite cold. I remember one day when we were walking to school, and there was all of this frost as we walked past the court house. It had pipe fences and there was this frost that was really thick on the fence. It looked so good, and I reached over

and licked it, and my tongue stuck to the fence. (Suzi laughs) Anyway, I remember that. I remember down at the school they had some giant strides, the kids go around on those, and they had two of them and I got between them, I don't know how come, but anyway somebody came around and as they flew around, they hit me and kicked me in the head and knocked me down, and I got up and somebody came around the other giant stride and kicked me in the head again. Anyway, I had two lumps on my head, and so my brothers and sisters would tease me, and they said I was a little Mormon growing horns.

SM: So, you were at Panguitch, and you went back, for lack of money, to Hatch.

FH: Yeah.

SM: Was that the end of the education for your older siblings?

FH: I think so. I was the only one who went to college.

SM: Wow.

FH: I got a scholarship.

SM: So you continued school in Hatch. What did you do for high school?

FH: I went to Panguitch, but the schoolhouse burned down when I was third year in High School.

SM: Back in Hatch?

FH: No. That was in Panguitch. It also burned down in Hatch too, (chuckling) but I was out by then. The schoolhouse burned down, I think, right at the end of my second year in

Panguitch, and so I would have been in my third year. They didn't have a school building down there and we didn't know what they were going to do, so my mother and I went to St. George, and I went to high school down there, that third year, and then I came back to Panguitch because they had held school in one of the churches, and so I came back and I graduated there, and I got a scholarship and went to St. George to the first year of college. I got a small scholarship again and went the second year, and that's as far as Dixie goes. Two years, so that was the end of my schooling.

SM: Do you feel, as a woman, you had as much chance for education as a man, or was it an anomaly for you to be able to get your education?

FH: At that time, most of the guys didn't go to school. A few did. Some of them went on, but most of them didn't. They just got jobs around.

SM: Do you feel fortunate that you had a chance?

FH: I really do. I felt that I was quite fortunate to get to go on that much. Only I wish I had gone more, but I decided to get married then.

SM: Well, that wasn't abnormal now was it? (chuckle). Well, I want to ask you about, I guess Hatch and Alton. I'm assuming that you got married and moved to Alton?

FH: We used to have parties, I mean dances. We used to have dances a lot in the little towns like this, and so they'd have a dance over at Hatch, and the people from over here would go over to the dance. Then you'd have a dance over here, and they would come over here to the dance, and they went back and forth a lot, and this is where I met Vard, at one of the dances.

SM: How far away is Hatch from here?

FH: It's about 17 miles, but we had cars by then (chuckling). We wouldn't have been going in wagons anyway.

SM: I see. So it wasn't a huge move to come to Alton?

FH: No. It wasn't very far, and I knew a lot...several of the people here because we had intermingled at the dances and things a lot, so I knew quite a few of them.

SM: So, is that what you did? A lot of your entertainment was dances?

FH: Yes. We did that when we were young, since there was no T.V. Not very many people had telephones. No cars, and so we had to make our own entertainment. We had parties, and we had a lot of them in my home. A lot of the people in town didn't want their kids doing this or that, but my dad said if they can be here and I know what they're doing, I feel better about it than if they're out someplace and I don't know, so we had lots of parties at our home.

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Begin Tape one, Side two

SM: We're going to go back and talk about riding the school bus.

FH: When we rode the school bus, and it was not like the busses that they have now, it was an old truck, and they had put a top on it. It had a back door so that you could come in, and a step that you could step up in the back. There was no heater in it, but they put a pipe that ran from the exhaust, I guess, out along the floor of it that would get hot, and if you touched it, you got burned. It had a bench along each side, and there were two windows on each side of the bus and the windows would slide open. There was not much

discipline, so we would climb up and open the window and sit in the window with our feet on the seat and with our body outside of the window. One day when were coming from school, one of the school kids was the one driving the bus and he stopped at the Bryce Canyon Junction to let off some kids that lived in that area, and when he started up, there was car (it was a man from Hatch), he saw the bus stop and thought maybe he had trouble, and so he backed up. This man didn't see very well, but he backed up; he had some kids in the rumble seat, we used to have little cars with rumble seats in.

SM: Explain the rumble seats.

FH: It was where your trunk is now. The lid would raise up like this, but they had a seat in there, and people would sit in the back, and then when nobody was in it they could close it down. It looked like a trunk but it had a seat, and we called it a rumble seat. Anyway he had some kids in the back. He backed over, and just as the driver started to drive the bus out, this man backed right in front of him, and he saw these kids in the back of this thing, and he was afraid he was going to hit him, and so he went off the bank on the side, and the bank was fairly high. Anyway, the bus tipped over. My sister was sitting in the back window of the bus, so when the bus tipped over, it came right over on top of her and the top of the bus was across her chest. I don't even remember seeing her as I came out, but when I got outside and all the kids were running around and some were crying and panicked. Anyway, then I saw that she was under there and I tried to lift the bus. It was impossible, but she'd say - she was having a hard time breathing- "help me" One of the school kids remembered seeing some surveyors down the road a little ways. She ran down and yelled at them and they came up and found a fence post someplace and pried the bus up so we could pull her out. We hoped the bus couldn't go the next day. The steering wheel was broken in half, but here it came the next morning (chuckling).

SM: What did they do to help? Was she crushed?

FH: No. She was okay. Well they pulled her out. She was turning black. She was just not getting enough oxygen. Her face was getting really dark, and she was really having a problem. I don't think she would have lasted much longer. Evidently it didn't break any bones or anything. She was okay. She's the one that is still surviving (laughing). Sometimes the bus didn't have very good brakes. I remember once when they were going there were some sheep on the road. He couldn't stop and he plowed through the sheep. Another time horses, were on the road, but no brakes. It was different from what it is now. You didn't have good brakes. You didn't have a driver that was trained to drive. Nobody had licenses. I don't think they even had licenses at that time to drive. Anyway, it was different. A different life. Different lifestyle.

SM: I want to talk about the idea of isolation. I'm wondering, being that you're out here and in a small town in a really rugged land, what you remember feeling as a child, as a young girl, or as a woman, being so isolated.

FH: I liked it. I never did ever particularly want to live in the city. It was fun to go visit, but I was always glad to get back. I didn't feel bad about living in the country.

SM: Did you depend on your neighbors? Was there a strong interdependence between families, or did you mostly hang out with your family?

FH: Quite a lot with family. Like now, the ones I visit with the most are my family. Of course, we're friendly with the other people and we visit with them when we see them, but we don't make a special trip to go visit very often.

SM: Explain the difference you used to do that, growing up, it was a big thing to visit each other.

FH: We did visit, and we visited friends. It was not just family then, when I was growing up.

It was the kids that were my age.

SM: Did your parents do a lot of visiting back then?

FH: Not really. My father wasn't there very much to visit, but my mother visited quite often because she was busy taking care of somebody.

SM: She did her visiting at work.

FH: Umm-hmm

SM: Do think there was a strong sense of community back then?

FH: I think so. There is a lot here.

SM: And do you think that exists now, the sense of community?

FH: They do here. I don't go to Hatch very often. All of my family...I don't have any family left there. I have nieces. I have relatives there, but I don't go visit, but here, this town, I have never seen a place where the...this is almost like a big family, and everybody helps everybody. Everybody keeps track of the others. You see the little kids going along the streets and somebody...I mean people will just take them in and take care of them and call their folks. It's just about like a family.

SM: You don't do a lot of visiting, yet you know everybody in town?

FH: Umm-hmm. You kind of keep track of them even though you don't visit, because...well you visit some, and you visit at church, and you visit at things that goes on in the ward. Parties, or whatever.

SM: What role did the church play in your life? Do you think that's what gave you stamina, and gave everyone stamina to work so hard survive in an area like this?

FH: I think to quite an extent. I don't know what I'd have ever done without it. I've just always been glad for it. I think that's one of the things that keeps people together and makes the community strong.

SM: Is that common faith and the chance to bond at one locale?

FH: Yeah. Everybody here...well, and they did at Hatch, I'm sure, when I was growing up, but everybody takes care of everyone else. Like some in town right now who are ill, someone takes care of the children for them. You know, take turns taking care of the children, taking in meals, helping with whatever.

SM: So it's maintained - the union between people?

FH: I think it has.

SM: What are the structures in town that have been here since you can remember? You can talk about Hatch or you can talk about Alton. How has Alton changed, lets say, since you've been here?

FH: Some of the homes have been torn down. There have been several people that have moved in and built new homes in just the last few years- I think in the last 10 years there have been more new homes and things than there have in all the years since I've been married. We had people from out on Cedar Mountain who belong to this ward who come in for church and all the activities. We had the old church that's now called the Town Hall. Anyway, it was the church, and I remember when they remodeled it and all of the

people in town helped with that, and we painted and we put the perfa-tape and you have to sand. It was easier when everybody did this. We worked on this. They put additions on, made classrooms, and a kitchen, and bathrooms and things that it hadn't had before, and did a lot of the changes, but the people did most of the work. Everybody worked on it. I was in charge of redoing an old piano that was black, and it had one leg kind of broken, kind of in bad shape. We redid it. We took all that paint off and you find beautiful wood that's underneath. I did this one, and then we did the one up there, and of course, the ladies helped. We did it and it was beautiful! One of the men fixed a new leg on it. It was the old piano they used to play for the dances on. I thought it just looked so big and awkward and everything, but after we got it done it was beautiful and then we used it in church. Everybody works, I mean, we worked on all of these things together.

SM: What about paving roads? Do you remember anything about that?

FH: No. They started paving the streets and about every year or two they'd get enough money in the budget to pave another street, and then some of the outside ones here are still not paved.

SM: I noticed a fire hydrant outside of your place. That's an interesting...

FH: It is not very many years since we got those. I can't remember which year we did that either. I would have it in my diaries or some place. Before that, we had irrigation water that came down the ditches from the reservoir up above town, and everybody would take turns having their turn with the water.

SM: What's the name of the reservoir?

FH: It's just the Alton Reservoir. Then our company, the Heaton company, built another reservoir, and it's larger, and it's on up above there farther. They decided to put a

sprinkler systems in, and when we got that in and got the lines in so we could sprinkle the fields out west of town- we've never been able to do that before because there wasn't enough water- and the fields down here. But everybody kind of wanted to hook on and so instead of using the old reservoir they turned all of the town water into our reservoir. It's a big one. Then people, they made it so they could hook on to the line and instead of having the ditches, it would take a half-hour to get the water down to your garden, and waste so much along in all these ditches you know, the evaporation and what soaks in. They did this and it made it so now you have the water piped to your gardens, which makes it better. People can sprinkle if they want to, but the water goes twice as far, or more than that. You can do a lot more with it. They had water so that you had water in your homes here when I was married. At Hatch, they didn't have it in. They didn't have it in until sometime after I was married and they finally got the water piped in there.

SM: What year were you married?

FH: 1936, but they still didn't have water in over there. They got electricity in, but, see they didn't have electricity here when I was married either. We used gas lanterns then, instead of kerosene. Vard's mother had it. She had a little generator that she could furnish electricity for her house. It was her house over here. The white one over on the corner. We lived in there for a while. After we were married, she was gone.

SM: You said the Heaton company started that large reservoir. What is that company?

FH: It was just Heaton Livestock. The four brothers worked together. Three of the brothers have died. Vard's the only one that's left, but their son's have taken over, and they still work. One of the son's didn't. He divided up some of the property and he has part of that to himself so that he works for himself. The other three still have worked together. The families have worked together with that.

SM: I see. And it's a livestock company. Explain.

FH: Well we have cattle, we used to have sheep. It got so difficult to get people to herd the sheep. With sheep you have to be with them all the time. Somebody has to. It was so difficult to do that, so they finally changed to cattle. With the cattle, at least you can put them out on the range and leave them. You don't have to be with them day and night like they would with sheep. They just worked together as a company, a corporation.

SM: So has the establishment of the Monument had any impact on that?

FH: Not a lot yet. I don't know. It makes it a little difficult sometimes. You have so many people who are so worried about the environment that they won't let you do anything or even let you travel on areas that they have always used to graze livestock, and now they don't even want you to drive on it or have anything on it. I don't know what good it is if you can't use it.

SM: So those restrictions to you seem silly and unfounded.

FH: Well, I just don't think it makes much sense, like some of the places where they have a lot of timber and you have these bugs that get in the timber and they're destroying the trees, they won't let them go in and cut those trees. So it's just a waste! I mean if they would let them cut them and when they cut they usually replant, and as they clear an area, they plant new ones so that they can come, but this other way, when they just won't let you even go in, won't let you cut, won't let you harvest that timber, it's just a big waste, besides being a fire hazard. They kill the trees and you have all these dead trees there that would burn a lot worse. It's just a waste.

SM: So you're feeling is that after all these years of working the land and understanding the land, they should be consulting you, as far as what would be the best for the land because

you've...

FH: Well I think so. On our land, on almost all the land we have, we have made so many improvements, the land is better than it was when we got it. Quite often they say, "Oh you destroy it with the cattle", but I have seen some of the land where they get the cattle off, and that land is not as good as that where the cattle have grazed.

SM: Do you think that there was any over-grazing done?

FH: Oh there was a lot, and especially when they had sheep. They had an over-population of sheep. They used too many. They had them on the same areas too long, and they did a lot of damage, but I think it depends on who owns the thing. It depends on the person, I think, rather than what you're doing, it's how you're doing.

SM: It depends on the management.

FH: I think it does. They have this thing for range management and a plaque for outstanding range management and stuff.

SM: You've got that? Oh wow.

FH: Yes. They've got that two or three times now because they do a good job.

SM: Who gives that? The BLM?

FH: Uh-huh. I think it's the BLM.

SM: A question about management...this is kind of a tough question, I'm just wondering what kind of cultural preservation, it seems that the BLM is concentrating so much on

environmental preservation. My interest is in cultural preservation of these areas.

There's been such a culture through the years, and self-sufficiency, and stories that have come out of the works, and I'm wondering what you think the community could do keep this culture going as the livestock industry is slowly diminishing, it seems. What do you think would be good in the area of Alton to preserve culture here? Can you think of anything off hand? I know you're writing your own history, partially. You started that?

FH: I don't know off-hand.

SM: Have you talked to anybody who has a lot of documents that they've kept, or accumulated pictures, or are thinking of any kind of preservation at all of culture? Do you think it's important to try to preserve what has been here all these years?

FH: I think it is. (sigh) One of the problems I have had, though, is that if I have something old, then I think, that's just old, so I throw it away. Then later I think, Oh man! Why did I do that? So, I am kind of inclined to do that. But with a lot of the things, I hate to see them destroyed. I hate to see them just thrown away if they have a meaning. Just because it's old is no reason to keep it.

SM: Can you think of anything specific?

FH: If it doesn't have a value or can't be used or can't do anything. But I was thinking, like with the school house up here. Somebody once said something about, well they ought to just tear it down. I don't think they should. Vard went to school there, and it's been there for a lot of years, but they don't hold school in it, but they could hold other things there, and they could do things. It's right there on the park. They have rest rooms in it, and they do use it. One of the kids had an Eagle project to kind of fix it up some, and I think this is good. For awhile we had an ambulance here, and a fire truck, so they fixed one part of the school house so they could park those in it. I think it's kind of good to

keep some of those things. A lot of the old things have been done away with. They didn't know what to do with the old church. I would hate to see the old church destroyed. I think they need to keep it.

SM: Even if you spend time where people like Vard went to school there, you could write a little story about going to school there, and that could be kept there on a plaque of some sort, or anything like that might be... see, that's what our job is, is to understand what people are interested in for cultural preservation. I know we talked about it at the workshop, but I'd like to get people who are interested in taking it on. I think that's a good point though, that you can't keep a lot of clutter around. Your house would be full of stuff, but on the other hand, you have to make decisions of what you want to do and then work on those small issues.

I think I've asked you most of the questions I had in mind. Is there any thing else you'd like to add, as far as Alton goes, or your memories of Alton? I guess I'd like to know, are the children planning on staying in Alton do you think, or do they have different plans?

FH: Our children? I have two of them that live here. One has a construction company and the other one, Vard has just turned over his Heaton Livestock thing because Vard isn't able to do all the work anymore. The other's are all gone. They all have their own things. One is in Atlanta, Georgia, and he has his own business there. One is in Las Vegas and he's an attorney and has his business there. We have two daughters. They are married. One lives in Cedar City and her husband teaches at the University, and the other one is in Glendale. She's closer. That's nice.

SM: What does her husband do?

FH: He worked for Kaibab for years. He's still working for Kaibab on different projects.

SM: I didn't think that was still going. Kaibab.

FH: He's still working for Kaibab, but it's on different projects. They started some kind of a mining thing. A lot of different things, and he's really a good hand at a lot of things, so they kept him on.

SM: Interesting. Do you think the little kids you see in Alton growing up, do you think that they will be able to subsist in Alton in the future?

FH: I doubt. Not unless they get something in here like a lot of the grandchildren and so on, they're branching out and they're leaving. That's one of the problems with these small places. There's no way to make a living, so they have to go somewhere else. It's kind of too bad, and yet, if everybody stayed, soon it would be like Salt Lake City (chuckling). I heard people say, I don't want people moving in. I want it to stay the way it is. It's such a wonderful place to live. It really is, to raise a family. You don't have a lot of the things that you have in other places. A lot of the bad things have not yet come here. I'm sure they're available, but the kids here seem to have been, so far, really strong in doing the things that are right and so we haven't had the problems that they have in a lot of other communities. We have a little vandalism once in a while. I think quite often it's from somebody outside, the kids that come in from someplace else. Like they've broken the windows out of the school house. You know, things like that, not really, really serious. Well I guess that's serious too, but it's not like somebody gets killed or this type of thing.

SM: Exactly. It's all relative isn't it?

FH: This really is a good place. I have a nephew who lives in Las Vegas. He said, "When I retire, I'm gonna go to Alton!" Somebody said, "Where's Alton" and he said, "That's why I'm going to Alton (laughing). Nobody knows where it is." He's not. He won't come here. He's kidding, but he thinks this is a good place.

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Florence Heaton

SM: Okay. Well, I think I'm going to turn off this tape we're at the very end of the second side so thank you very much, Florence, for sharing your story with me. I appreciate it.

FH: You're welcome.

End of Interview



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