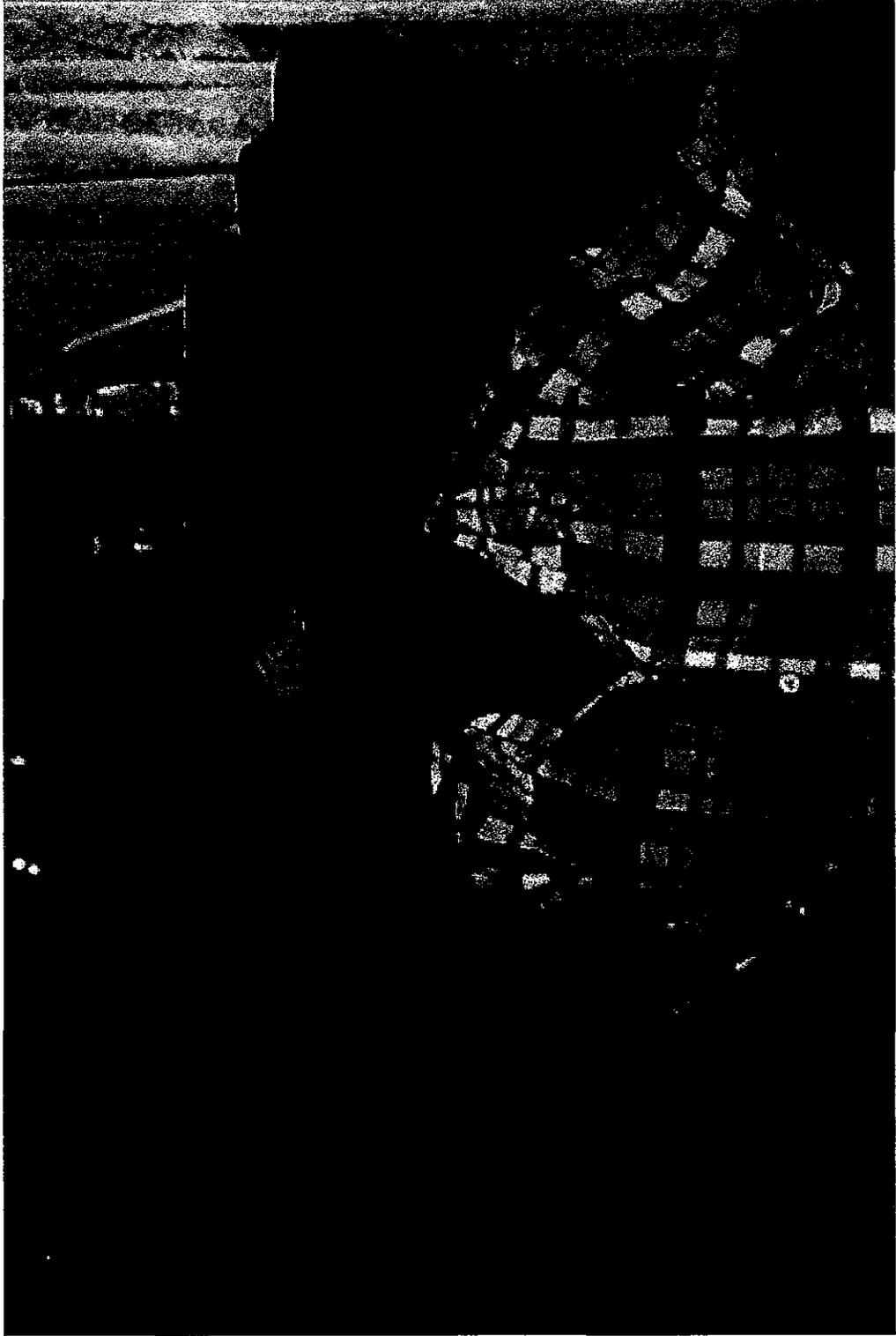


Lanard JOHNSON
KANE 1999

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: Lanard Johnson
INTERVIEWER: Jay Haymond/ Suzi Montgomery
VIDEO: Suzi Montgomery
INTERVIEW NUMBER: One of one
DATE OF INTERVIEW: September 21, 1999
PLACE OF INTERVIEW: His home in Orderville
SUBJECT OF INTERVIEW: His life and experiences as Kane County sheriff
TRANSCRIBER: Vectra Solutions/LA
DATE: March 19, 2000

JH: Tell me about where you were born. We were talking a little bit earlier about some of your early places of residence. Tell us about that?

LJ: I was born at Moccasin, Arizona, 28th of February 1920. It was a little small community, probably eight to ten families on the Arizona Strip country. And we lived there in a little two room house for several years, and then we went to Lee's Ferry, somewhere around 1925, '26, I imagine, we went down into Lee's Ferry and my father was a joint venture of running the ferry and we done our farming and went to school there in the old rock house, it's now over where they launch their boats into the Colorado. And from Lee's Ferry we went out to what was then known as Short Crick, Colorado City today, and lived there and I graduated from grade school, then we moved back into Moccasin, Arizona. We maintained our home there at Moccasin all this time and I moved back into, had five brothers and we went to school at Fredonia. I graduated from high school in Fredonia. At that point I went into Phoenix. Went to Arizona State Teacher's College for a short period of time and then later joined the service. Graduated as a fighter pilot out of Luke Field in 1943 and my service at that time was in Florida. I was an instructor pilot and fighter pilot for the Air Force and I got out of the service, joined the National Guard's Air Force, and went back into the Korean War and I flew two tours of duty in the Korean War as an observation pilot, what they call a spotter pilot for the artillery and infantry and what have you.

JH: What kind of aircraft were you flying?

LJ: I flew the P-40, P-51 Mustang, and then in the Korean War I flew the L-19 Observation

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Plane.

JH: Is that a wide wing single engine?

LJ: It's a single engine, two-seater, tandem two-seater.

JH: When you got out of the service, this would be what? '55?

LJ: Well, I stayed back in the Guard.

JH: I see.

LJ: I stayed in for somewhere around twenty-three years. In the meantime I'd foolishly run for Sheriff of the County and I was in the guard at the time I was in the Sheriff's deal, so I couldn't maintain all my good credits for retirement, but I was twenty-three years of military service. Flying all this time that I was in the service, and I came out as a Captain, out of the Guard.

JH: So then what did you do?

LJ: Well I was still Sheriff of Kane County for sixteen years and after that I went into the construction business.

JH: Building construction?

LJ: Building construction. Followed these power plants and worked in that. In the meantime I maintained a little ranch operation and a farm. I kept that and I still have my farm. That's one hundred acres of ground and I farm about twenty-two acres of it.

JH: When you think of yourself, do you think of yourself as a farmer or a Sheriff?

LJ: Well, right now, kind of a farmer, I guess. Back in the time I was Sheriff I thought I was doing a pretty good job as Sheriff. Of course my entire time at the present is my farming and home life, you know.

JH: Sure. I'm very interested in your experience in Korea, but for the sake of this project I'm going to pass over that, if you'll forgive me, and ask you about your experience as Sheriff and ask permission to come back some time and talk about your serious service in the military. I think that's pretty important.

LJ: All right. All right.

JH: But let's take this, indications are that you thought a lot about your community and you even sacrificed some of your status or standing with the military when you gave up that standing to become Sheriff, is that a true reflection of your feelings?

LJ: Well my first priority was- I was the only, out of the Sheriff's Department, I was the Sheriff's Department for most of that time. I had one deputy part of the time, but I handled bank robberies, burglaries, stuff of this nature and then later on during my "sheriffing" they started the construction at the Glen Canyon Dam and at that time there was twenty-eight hundred people working on the dam and six to seven hundred of them lived in Glen Canyon City, all construction workers out of New York City, and they brought every known vice imaginable out of New York, and here I was a lone Sheriff trying to handle that and the rest of the county on a budget of not over \$12,000 a year. Sometimes I'd go up to \$15,000, but that was the maximum budget that I had to operate on and at that time I run the jail, took care of all the fire calls within the county, maintained the grounds for the courthouse. These

people don't know what work is. (Laughter)

JH: Huh. Did you do all of this, or did you have any hired help to do such things as ground maintenance and that sort of thing?

LJ: I done it all. Occasionally with prisoner work, you know. But I'd have a decent prisoner and he'd get out and mow the grounds and take care of things this way, but basically I done it.

JH: Well let's characterize the town and the county a bit. This is before the dam construction and such development. Tell us a bit about that. Would you say it fit the rural Utah community?

LJ: Well let's go back to what caused me to run for Sheriff, maybe. I had just recently come out of the Korean War and was living here in Orderville and we had a murder in Kane County. Wilson murder. He was shot out in the hills just beyond Kanab out in the cedar trees. We found his body and I happened to be one they chose to be on the jury to try this individual and we found the individual not guilty, but it wasn't anything due to my own personal feelings on the matter. It was just bad law enforcement and I'd had a little background in the military and I felt I could do a little better job than what was being done, and Kanab City was a small community of ranch hands and a few tourists coming through- definitely didn't have bus tours or anything, but it was a pretty small place. The County Clerk had been County Clerk for thirty-six years, so it was just one of those towns that hadn't grown up hardly. We was in an isolated area, the little two lane road from here clear into Richfield, and we had one highway patrolman and myself was the law enforcement during that time and he of course assisted me with the jail work and everything else, we was good friends and we used to go out on searches, and of course in the search work I had the access of a National Guard aircraft and we used that continuous. I recall one time in House Rock Valley, they called us and said that a plane had been gone for twenty some odd days out of the camp that was in Marble Canyon, and wondered if we would get into the search. They felt that, well the

family called from back east, so we went down and busted into their trailer and found where they'd made notes of the activities and they had an aircraft and they says "we'll check the leaguenight formation". That was their last entry. Well I wasn't very smart in the ways of the world, I didn't even know what leaguenight was, and of course it was coal formation, so I knew what a coal formation was and we started our search and somewhere after about twenty some odd days of searching with aircraft from here to Moab and all through the country, and again, we had this highway patrolman and myself was doing the search work, so you can imagine what the county was doing. And while we was on this search, we got a call from an individual, an attorney out of Panguitch and says, "My old shepherder says I understand you're on this search for an aircraft and there's something unusual down on the mesa there at the Kaiparowits Plateau", or they called it Smokey Mountain at that time, that was the name that it went by. He said they can follow three sets of tracks; two wheels and a center wheel, down this road and just disappears and I says, "Well we'd like to check that out." So we got 4- wheel drives and at that time they was pretty hard to come by in this county, but we went down and got their own 4- wheel drive out of Marble Canyon and crawled in it and went out and wandered around the country there for three days and just along towards evening, we spotted a black marking over on the cliffs of Last Chance Canyon and I had three fellows with me and I says, "Well, why don't you fellows take the vehicle and go around, it's several miles around to the head of the canyon and back in and I'll cut down into the bottom and see if I can get up the them." So I got in there just about dark.

JH: So you were pretty sure that this was it?

LJ: I was pretty sure we had the plane and I got in there at dark and here was two fellows, still sittin' in a little Piper plane and one of them had his arm up like this, burnt to a crisp, just charred and half of the plane had burned. There must have been an awful wind, the back half; the individual in the back seat was pretty well in tact. The front man had burnt completely. So that was the kind of work we done. We done it all pretty well without posse

members, we just organized men and went into it.

JH: Well working in Marble Canyon from Kanab as the County seat, that didn't present any jurisdictional problems?

LJ: Well we was crossed-deputized into Coconino County and we worked very closely together. For instance, we had the Mansione case was tried in Flagstaff and the decision was made that made this Mansione case and it was on criminal's rights. Well how that come about was partly because we got a call out of House Rock Valley that a man had just been beat to a crisp, and didn't know whether he would survive and they said that the people come towards Kanab, so we went down to Fredonia and we decided we'd set up a road block at Fredonia and I didn't like the road block, I didn't like the way they had it out to where they could see us five miles, so I got in my car, an unmarked car, I never drove a marked Sheriff's car, and I drove out and it was getting dark at this time, drove out over the hill and I had a café operator they called "Peaches", Mr. Baird out of Kanab with me and we come over this rise and there was two Black men, which was very strange for this country two colored people walking up the road swinging a flashlight, carrying a carry-all flashlight. I said, "Peaches, I believe that's them." So we swung our car around and had them put their hands up and I told Peaches, I says now, "You keep them covered and I'll go search them." We went over and I spread them out and searched them, handcuffed the one I thought would be the roughest one, first. He kept hollering "peace". I said drop him if he makes a move, we was taking guns off of them at this time, off of both of them. We got them both cuffed, back into the Fredonia jail, that was their jurisdiction, we had assisted; we had made the arrest. Well when we got into court in Flagstaff to try them, incidentally, they got twenty years, both of them, but they challenged on my authority to make the arrest and that same Judge that handled that was the one that made the Mansione decision, so we worked very close on mostly anything from Southern Utah.

I got a call out of St. George. They says a fellow had walked into our station down here at the Port of Entry and says two men stole his car and he says, it doesn't sound right, but would you set up a road block? We're blocking traffic all ways, trying to find him, this was about three in the morning. I happened to be coming out of Kanab on a matter and I was sitting down here at the Mt. Carmel Junction, I see them come through the junction, and so I pulled in behind them and of course they immediately spotted trouble when they seen lights come on and follow them and so they tried to outrun me and I stayed with them and then they slowed down to twenty mile an hour and about Three Lakes they almost stopped and I just stayed behind them another two or three hundred feet. In the meantime I was trying to get radio contact with St. George and at certain spots I could get into them and I finally got them and had them alert the Highway Patrol, and then they took off again. I pulled them over in Kanab and they was in the stolen car. That's the way we worked, we didn't have a lot of help, we done it all on our own.

Another time to show you how the Sheriff's Office worked, had another fellow here call me and says I'm not able to sleep and I can see somebody in this store down here, there's a store just down the street from me here, they're going in and out of the store and I says, "Well keep them in your sights and I'll jump in my outfit. I'll park my outfit back here and I'll go down and see what's going on." So it didn't take me long to get dressed and down there and I pulled in behind them the car took off, but the big fellow just come out of the store and I told my wife to call the store manager so I left here and I was in the process of trying cuff him, but my handcuffs wouldn't go around him. He was a big Negro. My handcuffs wouldn't make his wrists, so I was taking my belt off and wrapping it around and strapped him up and I put him in the front seat with me and had this store keeper get in the back seat and I says we'll catch that other fellow. And so up at Glendale we met the guy coming back down the road, so I says, I believe I can shoot his tire out on that fellow, so between here and Mt. Carmel, I emptied a couple of pistols, I was right on him, trying to shoot a tire, damn near shot my front wheel off! I didn't want to hit the car (laughter) I wanted to disable him.

He went through that Mt. Carmel station sideways and down the road he went and by that time I had contact with St. George, told them to put up a road block and as we went into the park I told them cancel the road block because I'm going to gather him up before he ever gets there, he's traveling 80-90 miles an hour down these switch backs.

JH: Through the tunnel?

LJ: Well he hadn't made the tunnel, sure as dickens, I come around a turn and there he was down off in the bar pit. I went down there, there was a little 16-year-old kid, one eye hanging out and he was still all right. I was able to get the Highway Patrol to meet me at some point between here and Kanab and they took him in and put him in jail and I come back and went to bed. You can imagine the law enforcement doing things of this nature in this day and age. Course we had a different situation too. They've got to be a little careful of how they handle criminals. We could handle them a little rougher sometimes, but we put the black fellow in the state penitentiary and the kid got probation.

JH: The Miranda decision to insist that every alleged criminal be read their rights- was that a provision in the law when you were Sheriff?

LJ: That come in while I was Sheriff.

JH: How did you feel about that? How did you deal with it?

LJ: Well, it was kind awkward because you had to tell the fellow not to talk almost and there was no attorney between here and Richfield. We didn't have a County Attorney. Our County Attorney wasn't a legal practicing attorney, he was just an individual that run for office and he had no law experience at all. So it made it real awkward for us to tell him he had the right to an attorney and this and that, but we usually got around this pretty good, we treated them

nice and fed them good and before long they waived their right to an attorney and didn't have to go to court an awful lot. We had one of the most wonderful District Attorneys- Ken Chamberlain, out of Richfield, and was successful in getting most of our cases on plea. Like for instance, a woman out of Glendale, she was living in Kanab, called and said her husband hadn't gotten back, been gone for three days, so I went up and this pickup was in the driveway and the only thing that gave it a bad outlook was his hat was in his pickup and so I started searching and the woman told me, she says, "Well he was running with a fellow by the name of Steve Ray and Steve Ray and him was going out and check their traps." They was hunting coyotes and trapping for coyotes, so they went into Arizona and I got this Steve Ray and we went into Arizona and he and I drove the area for two days, I guess, and I kept going back to him. Things just weren't ringing true and this man hadn't showed up, so I went back to him and he wouldn't admit anything and his wife come to me and she says I've got his gun and it's got a broken handle, gun butt. It's up in my closet. I says well there's something out of order on this story he's giving me. So I picked him up again out of the café and took him over to the little Sheriff's office that we had and finally he admitted that he'd killed this man, so I says, "Well take me to where he's at." He says, "I'll take you." So we went out there and sure as the dickens, he'd killed him and in the process of killing him, he'd handled him just like he would a calf. He'd pulled his pants down and castrated a man while he was alive and you could see blood marks and what have you, a pretty brutal murder. Well I doubt if I'd ever been successful in this day and age of what I'd done to get that man convicted, but in those days he made a guilty plea and we put him in the state pen.

JH: That sounds like a towering rage on the part of the perpetrator. What was the matter? Did he say? Why did he...

LJ: He never would admit and even after I went to keep him in the pen, we had the privilege in those days of going up to the parole hearings and he never would admit, but I've got my personal opinion, but I wouldn't want to be held to it. Should I go ahead and say what I,

(you can cut that out can't you?)

JH: Right.

LJ: Okay, this Steve Ray had a little 13-year-old daughter and it appears that maybe this local boy, Anderson, might have been a little bit over-friendly with her and they got into an argument.

JH: That's a sad story.

LJ: Yeah. Had another one you might be interested in. Highway patrolman come running down the road and I was up here on the farm. "Hey, he says, I've found a dead man up here in a car." I says, "Yeah, let's shut my farm down for a few minutes and go up and see what's going on." We went up there and sure as the dickens, there was a man that later we identified, 13-rounds pumped into him with a small caliber gun. And the only thing, it was in what we called now, Hathaway Park, because it was Hathaway that later was convicted on it, but anyway, we had nothing to go on, except this individual, I called this individual's parents, Fuller, I believe it was out of Salt Lake City. I called his son-in-law and he says, "Well I wonder if there is anything in the car that's gone?" I says, "Well I don't know, what did he have?" He says, "Well he had a gun", so he gave me permission and I searched the car and we found a .22 rifle. So then we still didn't have much, so I called every law enforcement up and down the road and told them what we had and what we'd developed, that some individual had apparently pulled in there with him and shot him and pulled out and left no telltale tracks at all on it. But anyway, we happened to have a highway patrolman out of somewhere around Junction. He says, "Well the last two days the only individual I've seen is a gentleman coming down the road that had stopped in Marysvale and stole a blanket and they had me stop him down here and I've got all the information on him if it's worth anything to you." And it was during that period time, and we had nothing else to go on, so I traced him through and the trooper said he was going to get a permit down in Fredonia,

Arizona to take his car on through. He was just on a Utah permit, so we got that and then I decided, well on a hunch, I'll put a broadcast out into Arizona on this individual and about twenty-four hours after I had I put the broadcast out for this car, the Sheriff's Office out of Phoenix called me and says I think we might have your man. We spotted this car and we put it under surveillance and we see this individual come back to the car and when he realized that he was under surveillance, why he run, but we've got him locked up down here.

End of Tape One, Side One

Begin Tape One, Side Two

SM: Why did he have to get a permit from Utah to Arizona? I don't get that.

LJ: He had a Utah permit only. He had just bought a little second hand car and he only had a temporary permit so he had to have something to go on and he was being honest, see? He didn't try driving on through, he stopped and used, we later found that he had some of the blood money off of this Fuller, and bought the permit and anyway when they called, I told them what the situation was and they interviewed him and he admitted the murder up here, so I drove down and brought him back into Utah and we put him in the state pen.

JH: When you transport a prisoner like that, do you take people with you so that there's a little protection? In other words, put him in the front seat with you and somebody in the back seat so that he doesn't have any funny work?

LJ: Well a lot of them I handle myself because we just didn't have the manpower and the only other law enforcement officer in the early stage of it was a highway patrolman, who had to stay in the area, so a lot of the times I went myself. But that brings to light, in transporting one of these, I was transporting him alone up to the state pen, no I wasn't going up to the state pen, I was going up to the mental hospital to get an evaluation on him and I stopped

somewhere around Manti. We went in and was eating there and I'd let one handcuff, I had him belted down, and I let one handcuff loose so he could eat with me and we was sitting there eating, here come a truck driver in and he says, "Say, Leonard, what happened to that dirty son of a gun that done that murder down there in Kane County?" (Laughter) I says, "Well this is the guy we suspect of doing it, we haven't convicted him, but this is who we suspect." That guy didn't even finish his meal (laughter) he took off down the road in his truck and left. But I transported them back and forth and a lot of the times alone. One time I was leaving before daylight over there, so I got the county agent to come in and help me cuff a guy up that had been pretty rough, and then I chained him up and put him in the front seat with me and I done my traveling that way.

JH: Thinking back in your family life, that is the life with the family where you grew up. I can hear coming through you talk, courage, a sense of confidence and a belief in yourself that is uncommon. Can you trace where that came from?

LJ: Well, I think more than anything, I had to prove myself. In the first place, we grew up with nothing. The old man went on two church missions and then in later life he took on another woman and my mother died and it pretty well solved this problem. But we was, I kind of felt a little bit inferior, you know, around society because our family didn't have very much. My first automobile was in 1937 and at that time I was in Phoenix trying to go to school and make it, but I thought, well, I'd like to join the Air Force, but I don't know whether I got the background to make pilot, but I'm willing to try. And I recall one test we had in navigation, I failed the test. We graded our own paper, so I called the instructor and I says, "You got me graded wrong, I failed this particular number." He looked at the score and says, "Naw, you made it all right." And so he let me on through and I was a successful and a good pilot. I was a good fighter pilot. But I had to prove that I could do something.

JH: But the willingness to risk that bespeaks in my way of thinking, it bespeaks a sense of

courage and a sense of belief in yourself that comes from a good solid family training, I think.

LJ: Well, we had some wonderful people, yes, my uncles and my aunts and my mother and my father was a well-educated man in the sense of those days, you know. He wasn't a college professor, but he was well educated in the ways of life. He grew up here in Kane County and along in his early life they trailed a herd of Kanab to Montana. You can imagine what trailing a herd of cattle there would be. They settled somewhere up in Montana and his father says, "Now don't ever part with this property." Well they did. They parted with that property and they came back down to Lee's Ferry. That property is oil fields now. It has made millions. I would have been a wealthy man if the old man had listened. (Laughter) Yeah.

JH: (Laughter) Let's change the focus of our discussion a little bit and ask about the coming of Glen Canyon City. You said earlier that the people who populated that new town worked on the dam site, dam construction, bridge, etc., were all kinds of people. Would you care to elaborate on that?

LJ: Yes, I can tell you how Glen Canyon City come about there. That was a section of ground that belonged to a fellow by the name of Swapp out of Kanab, and he sold it to a developer out of Salt Lake City and this developer went down and put a little water line, or a little water system in and started selling lots and he named it Glen Canyon City and until the dam started it had nobody living there. There was an old windmill down in the Wahweap, and then people come and started getting on to these lots and squatting and a person out of Provo come down and put a café in and it gradually developed into about fifteen hundred people. And of course after the dam was constructed, there was various people still owned these lots and they kind of maintained them for their boats and the like and about that time Alex Joseph, it was after the dam was constructed, Alex Joseph came in. And he settled up in

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what was called Cottonwood, that's this side of Glen Canyon City and east of Paria, and the BLM, he had at that time thirteen some odd women, and the BLM run him off, told him he had to get off of public ground and he moved over into Glen Canyon City and when he come into there, that was about the time that I had got out of the Sheriff's Office and I had a house there at Glen Canyon City and was working at the dam and that's the way quite a few of us commuted, and had trailers and houses out there, it was a little too far to travel from here out to work, and so I watched Alex Joseph move in. He happened to move in, I sold him a home, I had two homes, I sold him a home one hundred feet from mine, which was all right. People wondered why I done it, but he had some very intelligent women. One of his wives, an Allred, is the daughter of the Allred that got murdered up in the state penitentiary.

JH: Oh yeah.

LJ: And one of his wives was a daughter of a District Judge out of Montana, I forget which one it is, Joanie, I think it was they called her. And they was very polite and very well educated individuals and Alex was just kind of a shyster, and he showed up with a helicopter along about this time, a military helicopter and while I was working there I could see a lot of law enforcement coming around, so I run them down, what's your trouble? Says, "Well we've got the US Marshall and this helicopter is hot." I says, "Why don't you go talk to him?" "Oh no, we're not going to go down there." I says, "Do you want me to talk to him?" "No, no." But they was all around the area, you could see the unmarked cars, you knew what they was doing, you know. And I was getting a little nervous; they might shoot me instead of Alex. But Alex wasn't a bad individual. He was a seminary teacher to start with in life, then he got warped-out in this polygamy and I don't know whether it was polygamy or whether it was just nice young looking girls that he was looking at, but he showed up later on with a twin engine aircraft and he was really living. Made quite a kingdom of Glen Canyon City. I had no regrets of being friendly with them, they was good people. And this attorney that you're going to interview, she is an intelligent person. I could tell you a little story or two on

her but I better not. (Laughter)

JH: We're going out, what? Thursday and Friday. We'll be interviewing, I think she goes by Eli Joseph now. And I understand that she was the County Attorney for a while.

LJ: She wasn't the County Attorney, she was, I think what she was, was the appointed Defense Attorney for the criminal activity for the county, and she got herself into just a little difficulty with the law board because one of her clients lost some money and they accused her of this, but I don't know whether she did or not, but she's an excellent person. She's a very intelligent person.

JH: Let's drop back a little bit and talk about law enforcement in the county during the period when you were Sheriff and that construction camp was going full sway? The dam and its construction and subsequent existence, transformed the county somewhat. Am I right in saying that?

LJ: Very much. They had no road into the dam from the south. We did have a road, a dirt road, a little gravel road that we'd pioneered in from this side and we at the time was in hopes that Page would be settled in Utah and it would have been or at least on the north side of the Colorado here, but we had a fellow in the legislature up here, Watson, you remember Watson. He traded with Arizona some votes for the Dutch John village to get to Utah instead of Wyoming and it went to Arizona.

JH: (Laughter) A little bit of politics there.

LJ: A little politics, but anyway, the access was still from the north and in order to get to Page, I flew in there in a National Guard plane, I'd fly and land on a little roadway they had made there for tent housing and at that time they had two policemen with the Bureau of

Reclamation, Morrison and Slatter, out of Boulder City, as their enforcement there, and so they pretty well took care of the south side. In order to get to the south side, we had a footbridge, swinging footbridge we walked across and you can imagine the drinking and carousing that went on. Every known vice in the world followed this New York group, and they all settled in Utah here- in Kanab or Glen Canyon City. So I devoted most of my time out that way trying to keep things in line a little bit and we made a lot of arrests. And handled a lot of rough people, but we was successful in keeping the rougher element outside of our Kanab element, or youngsters. If they wanted to drink all night, they could drink all night, we didn't adhere to the Utah laws of liquor too much. (Laughter) We didn't try because there wasn't manpower enough to stop it.

JH: There's a funny story and I think that's about all that it is. A Roland writer tells the story about the Roll-A-Way Saloon down towards Fredonia, where the Kanab cowboys would go down there and drink and they women didn't like it, and so they got themselves elected in Kanab and in the county and went down and they guy built the saloon so that he could roll his saloon across the border into Arizona and escape the jurisdiction of this all-female political machine.

LJ: Well, that's a kind of story. The saloon was about one hundred feet into Arizona and they would, they would go down there and do their drinking. They didn't all have cars, some of them had to ride horses back, you know, and writers kind of built up the story, but at that time there was a complete city gathering of women to run the city. And whether it was that that caused it or not, that sounds like a real good story to me. (Laughter)

JH: (Laughter)

LJ: I know this trooper, he was quite a drinker, and he had a cousin that we was continually arresting and they was down there one night and this guy bet that he could drink a pint of

whiskey without stopping. And he did. He drank that pint of whiskey, but three days later they was trying to bring him out of it, (Laughter) he was still laying there, yeah. (Laughter) wonder it didn't kill him. Yeah. I gotta tell you a story about this trooper. He's dead now and he won't mind me telling it. We used to go down there and we could pretty well tell what kind of a problem we was going to have back in Utah by watching this Buckskin Tavern that used to have maybe one hundred cars around it. They'd go until one o'clock and then they filter back into Kane County and especially a holiday or something, we would try to be up and we didn't make a lot of arrests, but we'd pull them over and change drivers or haul somebody in, we wasn't nasty about their driving, but anyway we pulled up to this tavern and a fellow walked out of the tavern, come up and put his hands on the door of this little "skunk" car, Ford, you know, the white and black Ford they had, and says, "Merrill, he says, I'm going to whip your fanny." And they didn't like one another anyway, and old Merrill stepped out and he says, "Well, have at her." And Merrill was in uniform and this guy was about half drunk. I says, "No, no, there's not going to be any fighting here, if you want to fight let's get over here under this cedar tree out of the way of the public and if you two guys want to fight, fine." So we went over there and he made a swing at Merrill and Merrill caught him right in the eye with his fist and knocked him out and this fellow that was murdered, this Anderson as I told you about that was murdered over here, he was with this guy and he was going to whip me and we was still kind of sparring around trying to keep him calmed down and we took him to the hospital and shortly after that he called the Highway Patrol superintendent and told him a story that Merrill had went down in to Arizona and whipped this guy. So they came down to investigate. (Laughter) Luckily we won out, you know, they knew the background of him and he later shot himself. He was a mental.

The old Kane County's got a lot of history. I could just keep on telling you stories about my, I was sixteen years as Sheriff. During that time I had a nice young fellow, Norm Cram, was a deputy for about four years of it and the rest of it I handled. He's a nice fellow. Yeah.

SM: I'd like to hear some stories about living in this area as a boy. What was it like? What was your day like living there? Pretty isolated wasn't it.

LJ: I can remember the first day I arrived in Lee's Ferry. I pulled in there and there was a fellow by the name of Elmer Johnson, had a family there. A fellow by the name of Spencer, he'd be my cousin, and we pulled in there in an old pickup and it was a Model T. The reason I can remember is because in climbing the Kaibab from both sides, we had to back up the hills. They used to say that the reverse gear was more powerful than the low gear on them because the pedals was the thing that made it go into low and reverse, and then it clicked into high and you didn't have to hold the pedal down, you just had the gas lever. But anyway, we pulled into there in this old Model T and here come this young kid out with a fish, and I'd never seen a fish in my life. Slimy son of a gun, and it just bugged me to death (laughter), you know, I was a backward kid, no shoes and we moved in there and that's when we moved into the little log cabin that sits down there at Lee's Ferry, if you're going down there, you'll see it. Have you been down there?

SM: Uh huh. Yeah. And I'm thinking it's the same cabin, although now it's changed. Is it still standing today?

LJ: Still stands there to this day. The other cabins were put in there other than that, but this little log cabin; in fact I had a brother die in this cabin. There was six of us and he's buried there at the cemetery and we used to walk to school and we'd have to wade across the Paria River, wintertime and all, there's no bridge, and then walk over and go to school. I remember one school teacher we had was a Wilkinson, a very well educated man and he's got a son just retired from the teaching profession down in Dixie. But I think (inaudible) Wilkinson was his name. And we'd go out every year and get him at Kane Beds, that's where he lived, and take him down so he could see the property we had. He didn't have a car. We'd haul him down there and then he'd live in a little tent or just wherever he could live, and we didn't

have apartments or anything. I don't recall just where he did live. But we farmed. We'd raise our garden, but lived mostly in the summertime on what we could raise. Wintertime we'd go to Flagstaff and get one hundred pounds of beans and a few things of this nature, and fishing. I later learned to fish there.

SM: Why did they choose Lee's Ferry to settle?

LJ: Pardon?

SM: Why do you think your father chose to come back to Lee's Ferry to settle there? He left Montana and came back to Lee's Ferry, why Lee's Ferry?

LJ: They just had a love for the Ferry, House Rock Valley and the like. All the boys, in fact one of the brothers died down there. Loner, he was there, they found him dead. After being dead for three days, they found him. But they all wanted to come back to Lee's Ferry. They like it. My father was on the first expedition that went up and located the location for the dam. At that time they didn't go up river. They didn't have anything that could get them up river. They walked up over the hill and back down in. But we lived there in Lee's Ferry on and off for quite some time and I enjoyed it very much. The dedication of the first Marble Canyon Bridge, I walked from Lee's Ferry out there to that dedication without shoes, barefooted, you know, cactus and stuff. I've been down there recently and how we ever got through the cactus, I don't know. (Laughter) Yeah.

SM: (Laughter) That's amazing.

JH: Tell us what the climate was like. I mean from being down there in the summertime, it's quite hot.

LJ: Pretty warm. The winters weren't bad, but I think most of my winters, we spent some winters there, two or three, but most of my winters we'd come back into Moccasin. But some of the winters, when we had this school teacher down there, why we would stay down there. The one thing I will say for my parents, they insisted that I go to school every year. Whether it was the best school in the world, I don't know, but sometimes this little eight to ten students with one teacher is just about as good as the bigger classes, you know, especially if you've got the right teacher.

JH: Do you remember other students helping you with your schoolwork?

LJ: Elmer had a daughter that helped me quite a bit. I had trouble with math and she would help me quite a bit. Her name is Lola. I don't know where she is now. Whether she's at Short Crick or, they moved into Short Crick, Elmer's family, or Colorado City. But we didn't have any tutoring and my mother's education was a little at Beaver when they had the academy out there, she attended that and she was pretty well versed. Mostly our whole outlook on life was just a matter of survival during those times. We didn't particularly care whether we got an education. We was just trying to survive. Here we was a family of five kids and no income. In fact I can remember the old man, we was living in Moccasin, going on his second mission. He worked about two weeks and chopped wood for us. Took off for the mission and we was two years surviving there on our own there on the ranch, you know, and if we hadn't had some real nice uncles and aunts we wouldn't have made it. And they didn't have much money either. It was just a livestock operation. But, no, I can't say enough good about Lee's Ferry. I enjoyed it.

SM: Was there a community there?

LJ: No there wasn't. There was only two or three families. There was a Spencer family, Elmer

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Johnson's family and ours at the start. They were up to twenty-eight when the bridge was dedicated and the traffic started to coming in a little more all the time and gradually developed out. House Rock Valley was good stop. The Nelson family run that little station down at the bottom of House Rock and the buffalo was down there in the valley. Looking back on it now, I don't know how we made it.

SM: Was there enough food on the table?

LJ: Not always. Nope. That's the reason I'm so small. (Laughter)

JH: (Laughter) We're so grateful for your time and sharing your experiences with us. We enjoyed it. Thank you.

LJ: Okay.

End of Tape One, Side Two

End of Interview

