

L. ROBINSON McALLISTER  
Kanab 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, Suzi Montgomery, Marsha Holland and other volunteers. 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: Laura Robinson McAllister  
INTERVIEWER: Suzi Montgomery  
INTERVIEW NUMBER: One of one  
DATE OF INTERVIEW: April 6, 1999  
PLACE OF INTERVIEW: At home in Kanab  
SUBJECT OF INTERVIEW: Life and experiences in Kanab  
TRANSCRIBER: Vectra Solutions/SMC (Edited by M. Holland)  
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SM: Okay Laura, I understand you were born and raised in Kanab, and starting with your birthday, could you just tell me a little bit about the family into which you were born.

LM: I was born September 28, 1912. I was the ninth child in the family of nine. My father was a rancher and a farmer. My mother worked really hard; she canned, she sewed, she quilted. She was president of Relief Society, and all those things. My father was a bishop, for a while. He was out of town so much, so he couldn't do it for very long. But he had sheep and he had cattle and he farmed. And some years we'd have plenty and some years we wouldn't, you know depending on the market prices. And...okay, that's enough.

SM: No, keep going - what were you going to say?

LM: Well, what else do you what to know?

SM: Well, your father was out of town a lot you said, and was he out because he was herding sheep?

LM: Sheep and cattle.

SM: Where did he herd sheep?

LM: Out on the Arizona strip, was one place, and up near Alton, in the summertime, up in Sink Valley.

SM: So his summer grazing area was in Alton and in the winter?

LM: Say Sink Valley instead of Alton, that's the farm area.

SM: Okay. How to you spell Sink Valley, do you know?

LM: Just like it sounds.

SM: Okay. Well that's interesting. He would take sheep and cattle to graze?

LM: Well, he had sheep for a long time and then he gave up sheep and just had cattle and he farmed and raised alfalfa and hay a lot.

SM: I see.

LM: Grain. We always had a big garden. My folks used to move- that was before my day- they would move to Sink Valley farm in the summer, and home in the winter. But, that was before I was born.

SM: And home was Kanab?

LM: Home was Kanab.

SM: Where did they live here in Kanab?

LM: Right up here on the corner. That's where I was born.

SM: I see. So, about the sheep and cattle. Was it an economical decision? Was it just too hard to graze sheep, because of the grazing acts that went in 1934?

LM: Well, when that came in, my father just couldn't handle it, but my brother took over then. You know he was getting older. All that bookwork and stuff (laughter), he just couldn't handle it, so my brother took over on that. And then the cattle wouldn't take him away from home like the sheep did.

SM: That's right. So was your brother was raised herding sheep with your father? Did they go out with him all the time?

LM: Yeah, I had two brothers. Well, let's see, three brothers. My youngest brother did too, for a while. Well, they were happy as a family. Course I was raised with my sister Ethel and my brother Graydon. The rest of them were grown and gone by the time I came along so there was just the three of us that grew up together, pretty much.

SM: Oh, I see, there's quite an age discrepancy then?

LM: Well, when you tell them you have nine children, that takes quite a while. (Laughter)

SM: (Laughter) Your right, that's obvious, isn't it? So did you ever herd with your father? Or had he finished herding cattle by the time you were growing up, or herding sheep?

LM: Oh, no, but I don't remember much about that.

SM: Right, but he had cattle. What kind of cows did he have? What breed?

LM: Hereford.

SM: Hereford. And what were your duties as far as the cattle went?

LM: Nothing, I didn't have to do anything.

SM: Why was that? Was it more of a man's job?

LM: Yeah, I didn't have to do anything with that.

SM: Was that looked on as improper for a woman to be out there with a cow?

LM: Well, it wasn't necessary- anyway, for my father's women, they didn't work on the farm. I heard him make that statement. He says, "My women don't work on the farm."

SM: So what was your role growing up? What did you do for chores? What did you occupy your time with?

LM: You mean when I was little?

SM: Start when you were little, and what you remember.

LM: Oh, we had a good time. We had jacks, and jump ropes, and paper dolls cut out of the Sears catalog, and friends. We had a good neighborhood. Everybody knew everybody else and there were families around. It was kind of a standing rule as I was growing up, everybody stayed home until after lunch to get their housework and everything done, and in the afternoon we could do what we wanted to and play with each other. We had a good life. It was good. I didn't go to the farm. By the time I came along, my folks were pretty much settled here. I did some, but not a lot. I didn't ever work on the farm. I worked some in the garden at home.

SM: What did you raise, do you remember?

LM: In the garden?

SM: Describe the garden for me. What did it look like? How big was it? How many rows was it?

LM: Oh, it was big, really big. And what we didn't eat, the animals did, you know. We had just everything. I remember in the spring, you know, there was no fresh vegetables because when I was really little, the only people that could come in would be with a

wagon- a team. And so I can remember how good those first little lettuce leaves, and radishes tasted in the spring. I think how everybody now just take things like that for granted, and how wonderful. And I remember, when I was little, the people from Hurricane would bring their peaches out here to sell, in a wagon. And they'd bring them out in tubs, and then my folks would just trade a tub, and they'd take a tub of peaches - and how thrilled to see those. Cause I love peaches.

SM: Oh yeah. What did your parents trade for the peaches?

LM: I think cash. And later my dad planted a whole row of peach trees in his field and we had lots of peaches. I don't suppose Bessie told you about going up there and stealing a tub full - have a little wagon and tipping them over three or four times, before she got them home. (they both laugh)

SM: No, she didn't quite get to the peach story. (Laughter) So she would come over and take peaches from your yard, is that what she did?

LM: Yeah, she'd did it. That's what she said she did. She told it afterwards. We laughed about it. (Laughter) She's quite a character.

SM: So you've known her all your life?

LM: Yes.

SM: So, you said after twelve o'clock, you'd go play with everyone?

LM: After lunch and our dishes were done, then we could get together and plays jacks, and jump the rope, and paper dolls. I always had a kitten, and sometimes we'd dress those up in doll clothes and put in our little doll carts and things like that. And then as teenagers, we'd had to walk everywhere. Course we had a school, but everywhere we went, we walked- cold or hot.

SM: Yeah.

LM: Go to the dances. We'd have lots of dances when we were teenagers.

SM: Where were they held?

LM: In the Ward Hall. It was where the State Bank is now. I remember my dad telling about hauling the first load of lumber for the Ward Hall, from Marysvale, that's where the train ended.

SM: Yeah.

LM: And I can remember the first cars we had coming in, and how excited we all got. Then after a while they started to truck things in but they still couldn't come in the winter. The roads were just dirt and they were just too muddy. So the stores would stock up on lots of can stuff, you know . . . that's all we had, except what we canned ourselves, which was a lot. My mother, I don't know how she did it. I used to do it too though. Canned everything in bottles.

SM: You did?

LM: I think the most I ever did was fifty quarts of peaches in one day. That's the most I ever got done. (Laughter) I did a lot of that. I mean I didn't work outside of the home because I didn't have time. But I sewed and I made quilts and gardened and I cooked. I had to cook everything from scratch, and it took a while.

SM: It does take a long time to cook that way.

LM: Well, there was no other way to do it. There wasn't any short cuts then.

SM: So when you were a little girl, before noon, what were your chores? What did they consist of?

LM: Oh, it seemed like I was always cleaning the bathroom. (Laughter)

SM: Really?

LM: I'd make my bed.

SM: So did you have an indoor bathroom?

LM: I was one of the lucky ones. My sister said I was about two when they got the bathroom in the house, so I grew up in a house with a bathroom. A lot of my friends didn't.

SM: At that time, was it a flush toilet?

LM: Ahuh

SM: Really? That's surprising.

LM: But you know we didn't have a sewer system, so we were always very, very careful not to fill up the cesspool. That was a worry.

SM: I am wondering how that works, without a sewer system, there was a cesspool- do you remember how that actually worked?

LM: When it got full we had to build another one.

SM: I see.

LM: And, and then they started to build lines out from it. But when I was growing up, it was just that one place that all the waste went to, so the dishwasher got thrown out in the yard, and you know they saved it every way they could.

SM: Yeah.

LM: So not to overflow it.

SM: And how far away was the cesspool from the house?

LM: It was close . . . right close.

SM: Was it? Would it stink?

LM: No, not unless it got full.

SM: Right.

LM: It was covered well, but there was always a little worry there you know, be careful now, you don't want to fill up the cesspool.

SM: Yeah. So when you'd wash dishes and things, you know I understand that in Kanab there was always a scarcity of water. So what measures did you take to conserve water growing up?

LM: Well, we didn't have a sprinkling system, we had to flood - we had irrigation water. It would flood in the garden, and across the lawn. It seemed like most of the time we had enough to raise a garden. And when we'd empty our rinse tubs from the washer, washing we'd empty them outside and water things with them. Take care of it that way. I remember when my mother use to have- about the first washer, outside it was. I remember - my brother older than me - it was a hand one . . . back and forth, back and forth . . .

SM: A scrub board?

LM: No, this was a washer with a dolly in it and it had to be rung by hand and that was my bothers task. Oh, he hated that. I had helped some. That was the first washer my mother had.

SM: It was a step up from the scrub board though?

LM: Yeah, that was the next step up. She used to have a squaw that would come in and help her on washdays, and help her clean house.

SM: Oh, really. Do you remember her name?

LM: Old Mame, we'd called her.

SM: Old May?

LM: Mame, M-a-m-e. We called her Mame.

SM: Old Mame. Was she Paiute?

LM: Yeah, she was Paiute. They'd come around and they'd have a flour sack, and they'd come around and ask for things. I remember she'd put her hands up on the screen door in the summer time and say, "Give me bread", but my mother never turned them away without giving them something.

SM: Right. Did you have an opinion of the Southern Paiutes growing up? Were you frightened?

LM: No, I wasn't frightened. They wouldn't hurt anybody.

SM: Did you know any of the children?

LM: Not very well. My brother had a little friend that he played with. I don't know if you've ever heard of bone horses, but he had a regular ranch and he'd go out, well he and his friends would go out into the field out across the creek and get bones from animals that have died and they'd gotten dry. The joints out of those legs were there bone horses. One joint was a horse, and one was a sheep, and one was a cow.

SM: Really?

LM: And they played with those, and they had little ranches and little wagons made out of sardine cans. (laughter) Well it was very different than it is today.

SM: Yeah, you had to fabricate your own entertainment, didn't you?

LM: Yes. As we got older, sometimes in the summer we'd have bonfire parties. The whole neighborhood would play games around the bonfire in the evenings.

SM: Do you remember some of those games?

LM: Oh, "Kick the Can", and "Run My Sheepee Run". I don't remember the others, but we had others.

SM: So when you were very young I guess there were quite a few Southern Paiutes trying to survive out here along with you. Where did they end up? Do you know anything about their survival and how they managed?

LM: Well, there's still quite a lot of them on the Reservation out there.

SM: The Kaibab Reservation?

LM: Ahuh. I used to work in a store and those ladies would come in and I know they were talking about me. I used to get so annoyed, cause they would talk in Paiute about me, and look at me and laugh. I'd get so aggravated at them.

SM: They'd get a kick out of that?

LM: But most of them now speak English.

SM: Really? So there wasn't a lot of interaction? It was them and you kind of thing.

LM: Ahuh, yeah.

SM: Is it still like that?

LM: Yeah, pretty much.

SM: They keep to themselves. When was the reservation established, do you know?

LM: I don't know.

SM: So, basically as a child you did chores and played in the afternoon, and went to school?

LM: Ahuh.

SM: It's interesting- in Southern Utah and compared to a lot of other states at that time, there was more of a need to help each other, because the land was so rugged and it was so unforgiving.

LM: Everybody helped each other it seemed like. Especially if somebody got sick, then the neighbor and friends would come and move in and help take care of the person. There was no hospital and no doctor when I was little.

SM: Was the sense of community... talk about the sense of community here? It seemed that in the cattle industry, people would help each other run cattle, and herd cattle together.

LM: Well, yes they did for a while, till the Taylor Grazing Act came in and it kind of divided people up in their own districts.

SM: I see. It just seemed like a unique place for cooperation, you know? Instead of an independent ranch, there was more community ranching.

LM: No, they had their own - their own ranches.

SM: And they were just independently...

LM: I was too young to notice the inter-workings of that, how it worked. I know it was lots of hard work. There was lots of really poor people that didn't have... only just the little work they could pick up from their neighbors and what they could raise in their gardens.

SM: Sounds as if you weren't quite as poor, maybe.

LM: No, we got along pretty good. I think for a few years when they were first married they didn't have much, my parent's didn't. But, being the last one . . . (Laughter) Then, by the time I was in high school, the Depression hit and it was rough, course for everybody.

SM: Tell me what you remember about the effects of the Depression on your life particularly.

LM: Well, my older brothers and sisters went to college, both of them, and I couldn't go. I worked the first year out of high school. I worked for thirty-five dollars a month in the store, and I was the lucky one. I had friends and relatives that didn't have a-job. So, I was lucky. But we didn't ever go hungry. We had what we raised. We had plenty to eat. My mother was very frugal. She made lots of quilts and made over things. We got by pretty good.

SM: Give me a little bit more information about your mother. How would you describe her personality and her antics?

LM: Oh, she was quite tall, had brown eyes, and she was quite - I don't know how to say this - right was right and wrong was wrong, you know? There wasn't any gray area in between with her. I had aunts and uncles that were quite different then that, but she was quite strict in her beliefs.

SM: What kind of family - did she grow up in Kanab as well?

LM: Let's see, when did they move here? Her parents moved here in 1870, right at the beginning of the town. So she grew up here. She went to Salt Lake and took a course in learning how to sew and she sewed for people. She made dresses and things for other people. She was good at it.

SM: Where did she get the fabric and stuff to do that, do you know?

LM: Oh, we had a store that brought fabric in. (Laughter) I remember once, I was about four years old, and I needed some shoes. We had little brown, what they called 'scuffers' that buttoned up the side, and then there was little patent leather slippers. My mother said to my dad, "You take her down and get her a pair of scuffers, they are just to play in. Scuffers will be fine. I can remember when we got there, all the scuffers pinched. They were all too little. Whether they did or not, I said they pinched. So I went home with patent leather slippers. (they both laugh) I can remember that.

SM: You manage to get yourself some nice shoes, didn't ya?

LM: I guess people don't change much.

SM: No. That's great. She did the brunt of the work around the house, I suppose, and she laid down the law and managed to control those nine children.

LM: I guess so. (laughter) I was too far down the line to remember.

SM: Right. What would she do in times of sickness?

LM: Oh, you mean at home or other- she'd go help when there was sickness. Sometimes she'd be gone a day or two. Sometime people would die and she would have to wash and lay out the bodies themselves. She was working the Relief Society that was part of their work. She could sew- they'd have to make their own burial clothes- so she'd be gone, maybe three days at a time. Then she'd come home and be sick with a migraine for a couple of days.

SM: She had migraines?

LM: Ahuh. I guess that's what it was, a headache.

SM: So, she helped with the dead. The process of taking care of the dead.

LM: And the sick, and when there was new babies. Well, my aunt was a midwife so she was the one who took care of the new babies. Life was pretty different.

SM: Oh yeah. Well I'm interested in - say somebody got a common cold in the house. You know, you probably didn't do a whole lot, but was there any kind of regular process that your mother used to cure little things or big things. I know there was a flu epidemic which you were probably too young to remember.

LM: No, I remember it.

SM: Oh, you do? You were six years old.

LM: I remember the flu epidemic. How careful people were. I remember a small pox epidemic too.

SM: Oh, really?

LM: We all had the small pox. I wasn't sick, I only just broke out just a little bit, I was just little.

SM: You broke out in red bumps?

LM: Ahuh. But my dad was really sick and so was my oldest brother.

SM: Where they quarantined?

LM: Yeah. They had to be quarantined.

SM: How did they go about quarantining somebody?

LM: Well, they just wouldn't let anybody in or out for a certain length of time, while they were contagious.

SM: So the boys were somewhere in a room in the house, and you weren't to go in there?

LM: No, when we were in the home we could go anywhere, but we couldn't leave the home. I don't know why they did that, but I guess they tried to control it as best they could.

SM: They wouldn't quarantine part of the family from other parts of the family?

LM: No, no.

SM: So basically everyone in the family got small pox, is that how it worked?

LM: What?

SM: Did everyone in your family get small pox in one form or another?

LM: Well, no. Some of us got vaccinated and didn't have it. The first ones that come down with it were really sick. I got vaccinated, it didn't take, and then I had the small pox, but real light. Some of my family got vaccinated. Have you ever seen a small pox vaccination scar?

SM: Yeah.

LM: You have one?

SM: I should have one because I was born the last year that they did that. I don't know, I think I kind of have a little mark. I know I got the vaccination, but I didn't scar really very much. But yeah, I know exactly- that mark on everyone's shoulder. It's interesting what they are talking about right now- they have some vials of that small pox still. They are talking about getting rid of it because it is no longer a threatening disease. That's the talk right now. Should they get rid of it or should they keep it in case something crops up, you know? It's kind of dangerous to keep it, but on the other hand, you know, they maybe should keep it just in case it comes out again. Its come full circle now.

LM: Isn't that wonderful?

SM: Yeah, but we have other things so...

LM: I should say. Get rid of one thing and get another

SM: It's gotten worse. We can't figure these ones out, AIDS and things, you know. When somebody in the family had small pox, was your mother the caretaker?

LM: Ahuh. I don't remember her having it. I don't remember her being sick.

SM: What would she do? Would she keep the room dark, or would she?

LM: Yes, if it was necessary. We had an old doctor. His name was Doctor Norris. He was the only help we had. In the earliest days, he wasn't here. He came and was here a long time.

SM: He'd make house calls?

LM: Ahuh. Doctor . . . well, why can't I think of his name?

SM: Aikin?

LM: Yes. He used to make house calls.

SM: Yeah, through talking with people I've learned a little bit about doctors. Doc Aikin.

LM: You could hear him coming. He'd whistle when he came in. Everybody knew he was coming.

SM: Oh how great. So you didn't have any medical facilities, but you had two doctors that were...

LM: Well they weren't here at the same time.

SM: Oh, I see.

LM: Doctor Norris was gone when Doctor Aikin came.

SM: I see. Do you remember ever being taken of by either of the two doctors?

LM: Yeah, Doctor Norris delivered the baby for me. It was during World War II, and Doctor Aikin was gone. Doctor Norris was still here. My friends were going to Cedar or somewhere but there was somebody at the hospital that I didn't want to go to. My aunt took in people that had babies and took care of them, so I went there and had Doctor Norris.

SM: Deliver in the house?

LM: Ahuh.

SM: Childbirth must have been a different experience then now?

LM: Oh, yes.

SM: A lot more dangerous.

LM: I guess. They didn't know how to keep things sanitary and clean.

SM: Right.

LM: They did the best they could. I guess the Lord blessed them, cause they got along pretty good.

SM: I know. Yep. Well let me stop the tape for a second.

End of Side One Tape One

Begin Side Two Tape One

SM: So we are talking about medicine and what it was like back delivering babies and everything. I'm just wondering . . . I'm interested in using herbs back then to cure sickness. I'm wondering if you remember any herbs that you used, or maybe a tonic.

LM: My mother did, but I didn't. I know she used to make Brigham tea. Oh, I don't remember, but I know there were things that they'd make tea out of when people were sick. That they'd grow wild or cultivated or something.

SM: Oh yeah, like in the garden?

LM: Ahuh.

SM: So it was mostly tea?

LM: Ahuh.

SM: And you don't really remember any other process, like if you had a sore throat or a stomach ache?

LM: Rub us with mentholatum.

SM: Mentholatum? From the store? Like Vick's vapor rub- that kind of thing?

LM: Ahuh. My mother used to make what she called mustard plasters, when there was pneumonia or congestion.

SM: Oh really?

LM: Ahuh. She would make those plasters and put them on.

SM: Can you remember the process of that?

LM: No, I can't. I know they'd use some flannel cloth and rub this hot mustard on it. I don't know . . . mix it with lard, mix mustard with lard and put it on the chest of people.

SM: It would allow you to breathe better, huh?

LM: I guess it did. Anyway they did it.

SM: That's what they did. Oh, that's an interesting one, mustard plasters.

LM: She used to make lots of those.

SM: I guess you had aspirin and things like that?

LM: Yes, we had that, but my mother acted like if she took more than one it would kill her.

(Both laugh)

SM: (Laughter) So she had dealt with her headaches without aspirin-probably for her growing up there wasn't any aspirin, you know?

LM: No, there wasn't anything, I guess. I don't know.

SM: Let's talk about education for women. Moving on - you finished how many grades in school?

LM: Twelve, I finished high school. You know the year we graduated was during the Depression, right when it was at it's worst. They graduated us in April because the school board ran out of money.

SM: Really? So you were what- two months short or something?

LM: But they graduated us anyway.

SM: Right, well you'd think so, you know? Did the kids in grade ten and grade eleven- did they get to finish school?

LM: Not that year.

SM: Wow! But then they resumed probably the next year

LM: Ahuh.

SM: They managed to get the school going again?

LM: Ahuh.

SM: So, do you think most of the women finished up to grade twelve, or were you fortunate?

LM: Well, I don't think there was a lot before. There was some that did before I did. There was two or three classes. Some would go to the eighth grade, or whatever they had here, and then they'd go to Cedar or somewhere, get some more. I didn't get to go anywhere.

SM: Have you regretted that? Do you wish that you'd gotten the chance?

LM: Yes. I would have liked to have gone.

SM: To college?

LM: Ahuh.

SM: What did you do instead during the Depression? Did you start working in the store right away then?

LM: Ahuh. I got a job right out of high school.

SM: Whose store was it?

LM: Oh, let see. I worked for Mr. Nelson, and a Mr. Nielson. I guess that's all. I don't remember who else I worked for. I worked there for a long time.

SM: What was the name of the store?

LM: Kanab Equitables.

SM: Tell me a little bit about working in the store. Were you clerk in the store?

LM: Ahuh. Yes, I was.

SM: What kind of goods did the store sell?

LM: Well, it was a general store. They had groceries on one side and dried goods on the other. We had yard goods and underwear. They even sold LDS garments in there for a while.

SM: Oh really?

LM: Ahuh. Not very long till they didn't do that anymore. Oh, hardware, bits of everything. It was a general store. Just whatever.

SM: Would they go get shipments from Marysville off the train and bring it up to the general store to sell it there?

LM: Ahuh.

SM: What would people come in the store mostly for, do you know? When you picture someone opening the store door and coming in. You knew everybody in town, right? So you'd say hello, and there was a little chit chat going on, I imagine.

LM: Lots of yard goods.

SM: Like hoes and stuff? What kind of stuff? What kind of yard goods?

LM: Lots of percale, what we called it. It was a cotton cloth to make aprons and house dresses out of. They had some nicer material to make nice dresses. Oh, what else did they sell - gloves and purses. Quite a lot of stuff by the time I got there.

SM: Did you have, for women, was there like hosiery and makeup?

LM: Well there was hosiery and shoes. I don't remember . . . a little make up. I was trying to think of the name of some of it. I haven't thought about that in a long time.

SM: I'll bet.

LM: I don't remember the name. I could see the little boxes and what they looked like, the face powder. It would mostly be face powder and lotion. You know, not much.

SM: Lipstick?

LM: Yeah, some lipstick, after awhile.

SM: That was a real luxury to be able to afford something like that?

LM: Ahuh.

SM: Was there certain people in town that could definitely afford more at the store?

LM: Oh, you know, sure- like any other town.

SM: Do you remember like who it was? Who would come in and could spend more money?

LM: No, I guess I didn't pay much attention.

SM: It didn't really matter.

LM: It didn't matter to me.

SM: Yeah. Did you get a benefit from working at the store? Could you get more stuff because you worked there?

LM: I believe we did get a little discount for things I needed.

SM: So you grew up a Robinson?

LM: Ahuh.

SM: Worked at the store after high school?

LM: Ahuh.

SM: What happened after that? Did you continue working at the store and for how many years?

LM: Oh, it wasn't very long. For two or three, then I got married.

SM: Tell me about that? Tell me about meeting your husband.

LM: Oh, he was my high school sweetheart.

SM: Oh really? And his name was?

LM: Burton.

SM: Burton McAllister?

LM: Yeah. He went to Logan for a couple of years. Why in those days when you got married you just settled down, went to work, and built a home. I look back and I think, why couldn't we have seen that he could have gone on to school. I mean they do now. Why couldn't we see it then?

SM: Right. Gone on to the university.

LM: Yes, why he could have finished it. Even after we were married, we could have gone, but we thought we couldn't.

SM: Yep, that's the way it went then.

LM: That's the way it was.

SM: Yeah. So he came back from Logan. Had he done a couple of years in Logan at school?

LM: Ahuh.

SM: So he did about two years at the university and then he came back, and you both married?

LM: Ahuh.

SM: Where did you set up your first homestead?

LM: Oh, I don't know. My dad gave us part of his lot.

SM: I see.

LM: We had two rooms in his parent's house- that was down at the Heritage House. We lived there for a while for a while till after we had a baby.

SM: What did Burton do to make a living?

LM: Just anything he could find. It wasn't easy during the Depression, but we managed? But you know it wasn't so bad- all of our friends were in the same position. We had a good time together, had fun together.

SM: Seems to me that in this area you learn to live frugally anyway, you also learn to live off the land, so the Depression probably affected this area less then...

LM: I think so. Cause we always had plenty to eat. I had one friend that says she wished she could have enough shortening so she could make a cake.

SM: Really?

LM: I don't ever remember of not having things so, I could make about what I wanted to.

SM: Really? So some people were maybe...

LM: Not quite as lucky.

SM: Short of shortening, you might say.

LM: I can remember her saying that. That's a funny thing to remember.

SM: Yeah. That kind of puts it in prospective. It's a good thing to remember. So you started having kids, and Burton would do odd jobs for different people and bring in some money in from here and there?

LM: Yeah. He liked to farm, he liked cattle, and he liked horses - that kind of work.

SM: So is that how you subsided for the rest of your life? A little ranching, little of this, a little of that?

LM: Ahuh. Then he finally went to work for Kaibab, cutting timber.

SM: The sawmill?

LM: He worked on the Kaibab. That's where he was killed.

SM: Early in your life?

LM: Oh no. Our youngest child was married when he was killed.

SM: In a work-related accident?

LM: Ahuh. Yeah, it was an accident.

SM: So then you had the kids by yourself?

LM: Well, they were all grown, but the youngest boy was in college, and the youngest daughter, younger than him, was married. But I have been a widow for over thirty years.

SM: Wow! Has that been hard for you?

LM: Well, yes, but I've managed okay.

SM: You were just never ever interested in getting married again?

LM: You know I look back and wonder why, but I never have been. And I think well why wasn't I? Why have I lived all alone all these years? I just never wanted anybody else.

SM: As a widow in the community, are you a big part of the community or do you keep to yourself more?

LM: Oh, mostly church things I'm part of. Didn't have the strength it seemed like to do both. You know civic things. I didn't do a lot, some, but not a lot.

SM: So since you have been alone, what is a regular day in your life? You know you wake up – it looks like you do a lot of house cleaning, a lot of keeping house.

LM: I used to. I have help now.

SM: Do you?

LM: Ahuh. You mean how do I do now, or how did I do way back then?

SM: Well, lets start way back then and when you first started living alone.

LM: Oh.

SM: Did you keep a garden still?

LM: Yeah, I did, kept a garden, a small one for a long time. For as long as I could, cause I like to garden.

SM: Right.

LM: I look out now at my yard and I think, oh I'd love to get out and clean that up. I can't-not now. I hope to be able to do a little more.

SM: When you get over the surgery a bit better?

LM: Ahuh. Well I don't know much I'll do. My son that lives in Kaysville pays for having my lawn taken care of. The kids help me, you know. It's been a long time.

SM: Yeah. That's nice.

LM: Course Social Security helps.

SM: So you never went back to work after working at the general store?

LM: Oh, I went back to the store after he was killed and I worked there for quite a while.

SM: Oh, I see. So that's how you brought in money for the family.

LM: Well, I didn't have my family there. They were gone.

SM: I see. Right.

LM: My boy in college was just about through, and then he went into the Service.

SM: So that's how you cared for yourself then- with the money from the store?

LM: Ahuh, and some insurance from the job and then later on Social Security.

SM: Your sister Ethel worked for Parry's Lodge for quite a while. I guess everybody know that the lodge was full of the movie scene and everything. Were you ever a part of that?

LM: No, no I wasn't.

SM: Ever interested in that at all?

LM: Oh, I was interested. I used to go in and look at the pictures. I was interested in the pictures that were made here.

SM: Yeah.

LM: My husband used to work for the movies a lot.

SM: Did he

LM: Ahuh.

SM: Moving sets and things like that?

LM: No he was a wrangler. He took care of the horses.

SM: Oh, that's interesting.

LM: That's what he did. Course they were all Westerns that was made here. Horses.

SM: Did your sister get really involved with the scene that was going on there?

LM: Oh, she was just interested in what was going on. She worked hard there as a cook. That's what she did.

SM: Right. So she cooked?

LM: But she knew a lot of the people, you know, that came in. I didn't.

SM: Did you ever meet any of the stars that were here?

LM: No, unless they had some public thing that everybody could go to, I didn't.

SM: That must have changed this town a lot?

LM: It did. It was really a benefit for this town.

SM: Was it?

LM: Oh yes!

SM: So it was a positive thing?

LM: It brought in money. Years and years ago they made a movie called Buffalo Bill. You ever seen it?

SM: I've heard of it, but I haven't seen it.

LM: Oh, well I had two children in that.

SM: Oh really?

LM: Ahuh.

SM: As extras?

LM: Well, my little girl had a speaking part.

SM: Oh wow!

LM: She said, "Bye, bye Bill, and he picked her up and carried her outside, you know, a close up. She was only four.

SM: (Laughter) Oh, great. How much money did she make for something like that?

LM: I don't remember. (Laughter)

SM: You don't remember?

LM: No. It wasn't a whole lot.

SM: But they kind of employed a lot of people?

LM: Oh yeah. I worked as an extra quite a bit.

SM: Did you?

LM: Ahuh.

SM: Did you enjoy that kind of work? Was it fun?

LM: I don't know whether it was fun. I'd go out there in the hills and be in a scene every once in a while, all day. It was all right.

SM: Yeah. The glory isn't there, is it? (Laughter)

LM: Oh no. (Laughter) No.

SM: Just sort of one of the backdrops.

LM: We could watch the close ups if we wanted too, you know.

SM: So that kind of saved the town in a way?

LM: It did, it really did help the town.

SM: I noticed there are still some older women that are waitresses in there that can tell the story. I'm not sure what the name of the women in there now is, but she's older.

LM: I'll bet she could tell you some good ones. But she wasn't there personally. She's too young, but she's prepared to speak to people about it, you know.

SM: Yeah, sort of passing on the history of it?

LM: Ahuh.

SM: Right. Well is there anything else you'd like to add- something that you remember as a child or any kind of big happening in your life?

LM: No, I don't think so.

SM: So you've had a nice life?

LM: Yes, never did have much money, but we had a good time. We had lots of friends. We really enjoyed living here.

SM: Just sort of brings home that saying money doesn't bring happiness.

LM Right.

SM: People in this town have proven that.

LM: Ahuh.

SM: Well, I'm ready to end this unless you have anything you want to add.

LM: Oh I don' think so.

SM: Well thank you very much for having me over and talking to me about your life.

LM: Well, I don't know how much you could use of that.

SM: Oh, it was very good. Thank you.

End of Interview

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

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X Signature Laura R. McAllister Date April 6, 99

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