



UNITED STATES  
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

IN REPLY REFER TO:

1. Rob Penny  
2. Aaron Asay  
Re: Jacob Hamlin

QUESTIONS FOR THE NEXT INTERVIEW:

1. How good was the range and about when did it begin to show signs of depletion.
2. What was the cause of the depletion, overgrazing or drought.
3. More on the cattle and sheep---what were the market prices at that time.
4. More about Indian incidents and some informations about Andrus and ~~Avery~~ <sup>Yett</sup>.
5. How was the timber procured---- basis of selection.
6. What was the condition of the parasites in the timber at that time.
7. Establishment of the range reserves.
8. Establishment of the National Park---- reaction of the people.
9. Early articles concerning the region---how were they received by the local public.
10. Wild game ( Deer, Elk, Antelope, Bear, Sage Hens, Bighorn Sheep, Fish.)
11. Indian names and superstitions.
12. Were the people content with their life in the isolated region.
13. Erosion
14. What about the sheep shearing in Sheep Creek.
15. Entertainment.

These are some of the questions to be asked Mr. Penny when we have the next interview.

*Interview by Mayo Rich*



*History File*

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NOTES ON AN INTERVIEW HELD WITH MR. ROB PENNY AT HIS HOME IN MONROE, UTAH, JULY 17, 1961.

GENERAL:

Mr. Penny was born in Toquerville, Utah on the 29 day of March 1870. He moved to what is known as Hillsdale, Utah when he was about 8 or 10 years old. He along with his family moved into the Paria valley when he was 14 years, about 1884.

In 1888 he married and the same year he and his father built the first saw mill on the East Fork of the Sevier River. This was an up and down saw mill and was located 3 or 4 miles below the present site of the Tropic Reservoir.

At this time he was living at Georgetown (now a ghost town). He and his father operated the saw mill and ran cattle. Later he moved to Henrieville where he lived for many years. For the past 30 years or so he has resided in Monroe, Utah.

In the early 1900's he built a saw mill on Pine Creek near Pine Lake. In 1904 he served a Mission for the LDS church, and continued his mill and cattle business upon his return.

Some of the interesting comments made by Mr. Penny about area, are as follows:

INDIANS:

He recalls that his father was a scout during the time that the settlers were having Indian Trouble. Most of the trouble seems to have come from the Navajo rather than the Piute. The Piutes were called the tame Indian. It has been reported that Mr. Penney's father was with Capt. Andrus at the time ~~Avefrett~~ was killed. Reference:

RANGE AND STOCK:

He tells of running cattle below Henrieville in the winter months and upon the plateaus in the summer. There were a good many sheep in the early days, but he emphasises the respect the sheep man had for the cattle man and vice versa. He recalls how good the feed was in the 1880's and 1890's. Many people passed through the area, and came back with stock. It was a virgin land and no stock to eat the grass. South east of the present site of Henrieville, about half way to the Colorado River, the grass was about 2 feet high and very abundant. He recalls just leaning down from his horse in late summer and gathering heads of grass seed in his hand.

PROSPECTING:

John Kitchen was known to Mr. Penny and he talks of knowing the fabled lost gold mine of Mr. Kitchen. He looked into this, and maintains that the mine was worked out.

In the early 1900's a man by the name of Messican spent the winter months Panning for gold on one of the large sand bars along the Colorado River. The local people came to know the bar as the Messican bar, and it was apparent that the man was getting



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a good supply of gold from his venture.

A man by the name of Kimball, who came into what is now Widsoe, was interested in prospecting. He and Mr. Penny decided to try their luck on the Messican Bar. It was their intention to do better than pan. A machine called an Amalgamator was brought from Denver for the operation. This machine was steam driven, and charged with Mercury. It rotated, and as the gold bearing sand was pumped through it the Mercury picked up the gold.

Mr. Penny furnished an engine and a boiler, and the equipment was freighted by wagon to the river. Ropes and cables were rigged to let the machinery down onto the river bank. Once in operation, they found an obstacle they could not surmount. There was not enough wood down by the Colorado River to keep the steam pressure up. They looked into the idea of hauling coal from a ledge at Last Chance Creek, but found the sand so deep that the teams could not pull loaded wagons through it. The venture was given up, and Mr. Penny sold his interest to Mr. Kimball. Mr. Kimball in turn sold again but nothing came of the adventure at Messican Bar after that time.

He does maintain that they did extract enough gold to know that it was there, and a lot of it, but did not have the proper equipment to do a good job of getting it in the pure state.

LEE'S FERRY:

He crossed Lee's Ferry many times. The Ferry was a flat bottomed barge made of wood. The boat had been carried down the river in a flood, and he hauled lumber from his mill down to the Ferry to build a new boat.

PEOPLE:

Bill Bryce, a son of Ebenezer Bryce, was a brother in law to Mr. Penny. Bill Bryce along with Johnny Davis ran the Church cattle for many years. He describes the Bryce's as very fine people.

BRYCE CANYON:

The main amphitheater was called Bryce Canyon at that time. He remembers that the people were impressed with the beauty, but no expectation that it would become world famous as it has today. When a boy he remembers playing in the canyons and rolling rock down the slopes. The principle trail from the Paria came up to the rim somewhere around what is now Sunrise Point.

*Interview by Mayo U. Rich*

NOTES TAKEN FROM A RECORDED INTERVIEW WITH MR. AARON ASAY,  
ATHIS HOME IN MONROE, UTAH, SUNDAY JULY 16, 1961.

GENERAL: Mr. Asay was born at Asay Town on the 26 of Dec. 1874, being now 86 years old. Asay Town was located a few hundred feet West of the present bridge where highway 89 crosses Asay Creek. His father homesteaded at the town site in 1873. Mr. Asay lived at Asay Town most of the time until he was 12 years. The family lived at Georgetown for two years or so, and when about 12 years his father purchased a home in Monroe, Utah. The family lived here during the winter months, with the children attending school, and moved back to Asay Town in the spring. There was as many as 20 families living at Asay town at times. He left this area for Wyoming in the fall of 1900.

CLIMATE: Remembers the winters as being very hard with much snow. The snow was 3 and 4 feet deep at Asay Creek. Orderville and Kanab were snowed in from the north during the winter months. In order to get the mail to these communities, a man was dragged in a canoe behind a horse. This kept enough of a trail open for a man on horse back to take the mail into the towns.

At that time Asay Creek was a much larger stream than it is today. He observed that it would swim a horse anywhere during the spring run off.

RANCHING AND FARMING:

The family ran about 50 head of horses on Duck Creek (Cedar Mountain) and Bluefly Creek (East Fork of the Sevier River). Many of the horses they used themselves, trading others to neighboring ranchers and some with the Indians.

The range at that time (particularly Duck Creek and Bluefly) was covered with grass that would reach a horse's knee's.

They did some farming, mostly raising oats, with very little wheat. The climate there was too cold for wheat to be a good crop each year. Some hay was raised in the meadows further up the creek from the townsite.

INDIANS:

The Piute Indians traded them Navajo Blankets for horses. The Piutes had received the blankets in bartering with the Navajo. He remembers that they frequently received 5 large (about the size of a quilt) blankets along with saddle blankets for one pony.

Most of the horses traded to the Indians were wild and the Indians broke them. He remembers the Piutes as fairly good hands with horses, but with few saddles, usually riding bareback. They seemed to use most of their horses for riding, although they ate some.

There seemed to be no great troubles between the whites and the Piutes at that time. The Indian did little farming in this section, migrating from higher to lower elevations with the seasons. Some had guns and others bows and arrows. Their temporary dwellings were built from willows and limbs. Some had tepee-like homes. In the majority they were friendly with the whites and fell to the dress of the whites readily. Money in the form of gold coins was frequently loaned the Indian, but he remembers them as honest and prompt in payment.

Mr. Asay tells us that they were very superstitious. They would never camp in a narrow canyon, and always camped some

distance up a slope from a running stream water.

#### WILD GAME:

Deer were quite plentiful. plentiful. There were not very many sage chickens, but the fishing was excellent.

#### TIE CUTTING:

He remembers cutting trees on the west slopes of Bluefly for ties, which they sold to the railroad. The trees were cut in 16 foot lengths, and hewed flat on one side with broad axes. These lengths were hauled to the river bottom (Sevier) and floated down to Marysville where they were cut into and sold. The floating logs were followed on foot, to keep them from jamming, and the trip sometimes took as much as three weeks. One interesting point seemed to be that this floating could be done only during normal stream flow. During high water, the river spread out over the meadows, and when it receded the logs would be left stranded some distance from the channel.

#### MISC:

He remembers riding along the rim of Bryce Canyon, as it was called in those days., and doesn't remember that he paid any particular attention to it.

Knew Kitchen for whom Kitchen Canyon was named.

Remembers Eb. Bryce as a "Nice fellow--jolley fellow to talk to--nice to get along with."

Remembers an old road up the east fork in early days.

Does not remember the old fort at Panguitch.

Describes the area as "Nice country in those days."

He remembers large floods coming down the canyons below the rim, and remembers that there were deep washes present at that time.

One of the small cabins at the Little Ranch, Just south of Asay Creek) is one of the original buildings.

Rode a good deal with Johnny Davis.

#### PIPE SPRINGS:

His grandfather Windsor built the fort at Pipe Springs, and ran church cattle there. His father helped with the building and ran the first telegraph office there. This was just a year or so before his birth, and he was told in later years that there was a good deal of Indian trouble at that time. This trouble was primarily with the Navajo. He has heard his father tell the following story:

A group of about 30 Indians were seen approaching the fort at some distance. His grandfather was summoned and gave orders to the men to hurry and kill a beef. When the Indians arrived the beef was hanging in a tree near the fort. His grandfather talked with them and told them to help themselves to the meat. The Indians ate their fill, and left the next morning, friendly but well stuffed and supplied with beef.

## JACOB HAMBLIN:

Mr. Asay remembers Jacob Hamblin. He met him several times but does not remember him coming up this way very often. He told of the incident in Loa (Grass Valley) when two or three Indians were killed by a white man and the Indians tribe became very beligerant. Jacob Hamblin went with their chief to Salt Lake to visit Brigham Young. The Indians were demanding 100 head of horses and a considerable amount of money. The matter was, however, settled peacably.

## LEE'S FERRY:

He claims to have seen and remembers John D. Lee. (I wonder if this could be so however. Mr. Asay was born in 1874 in December, and John D. Lee was executed in March 1877. This would make Mr. Asay only 2 years and three months old at the death of John D. Lee. He more probably heard of him during his youth, because Mr. Lee was buried and had much of his family at Panguitch, Utah.

Mr. Asay made his first crossing of Lee's Ferry at the age of four years. The ferry was a flat barge type affair, with a windless on each end to pull it across the river from side to side. A small boat would be carried up stream a short distance, launched into the river coming out on the other side about where the windless was on the other side. The occupant would then wind the windless pulling the ferry across the river. The process would be reversed in recrossing.

Cattle were hauled across on the ferry which had no side boards. He remembers cattle falling over and swimming across alongside the ferry.

## RIDING:

Mr. Asay claims to have ridden horseback from either Asay Town or Cannonville to Monroe many times, a long day of course.

## HATCH TOWN:

Meltire Hatch had a ranch at what is now Hatch Town at the time he was a boy. Several families lived there and at times it was larger than Asay Town.

## AN OBSERVATION:

I have noticed in talking to Mr. Asay, Mr. Penny and other old people of the area, that they pronounce the word Paria different than we do today. They all say Piréar. When asked about it they seem to be able to shed little light on the subject. All admit that it is the same river, but have no idea where the difference in pronunciation came about.

*Interviewed by Mayo Rich*