

**ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW
MICHAEL HARRISON**

November 18, 1993
Fair Oaks, California



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OPEN FOR RESEARCH**



Interview Conducted by:

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Oral History Program
Bureau of Reclamation

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**ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW:
MICHAEL HARRISON**

This is Brit Allan Storey, Senior Historian of the Bureau of Reclamation, interviewing Michael Harrison in his home in Fair Oaks, California, a suburb of Sacramento, on November 18, 1993, at about 10:30 in the morning. This is tape one.

Storey: Well Mike, what I'd like to ask you to start off with is, where you were born, and raised, and educated, and how you eventually ended up at the Bureau of Reclamation.

Harrison: Well, I was born December 13, 1897, in Paterson, New Jersey. Paterson was an historic town, it was founded by Alexander Hamilton. It was the home of the anarchists who shot either McKinley or Cleveland, I've forgotten which. It was also the home of the Paterson colt. And of course Albert [Allen] Ginsberg, the far out poet. And maybe a claim to fame for Paterson, New Jersey, was the

fact that I was born there (laughter). Whether that means a damn thing or not I don't know.

But I went through the grade school and Paterson High School and for a short time worked for the Erie Railroad in New York City in the demurrage department and left it for a higher paying job with the Public Service Corporation of New Jersey as secretary to the district manager.

JOINS THE ARMY

The war came along and when I reached the age of 21 I went into the Army and was in the Army until 1922, as I intended to become a professional soldier. However, Congress had other ideas, they cut the appropriation for the Army, which meant that many of the men in my grade were advised that as of June 30, 1922, they would be separated from the Service.

MOVES TO NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

Upon hearing that news, three of us who were then stationed at Third Corps Area Headquarters in Baltimore, Maryland, took the examination for the National Park Service and the three of us passed. I had my choice of going to Arizona or to Yosemite and chose the Grand Canyon and Arizona because to me that was still frontier. I reported for duty in Washington in order that I could enter the Service there and the Government would then pay my transportation (laughter) to Arizona -- which was done. I was at the Grand Canyon for a period of almost 10 years when I left it and when into the Indian Service and was stationed in Santa Fe, New Mexico, from 1932 until 1934. In August of 1934, I received an Air Mail Special Delivery letter from the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, John Collier, transferring me to California as Assistant to Roy Nash who was the Regional Coordinator. I stayed with Roy Nash until 1935 when he

assumed the superintendency of the Sacramento Indian Agency. I went with him as his field aide and was in the Indian Service until 1947 when again Congress came along and said you haven't got a job because "you don't got no money!" At that time, the Shasta Dam had been built and because of the building of the Shasta Dam the Secretary of the Interior was permitted to take Indian allotments that would be covered by the waters of the dam — impounded behind the dam. And for which the Indian owners were to be reimbursed. My counter number in the Bureau of Reclamation at that time was John Smithwick and every week I would call John and ask him when I was going to get the money for my Indians and this went on for quite some time. And at the time we received information that because of a cut in Indian Bureau appropriations, every civil service

employee in the Bureau was notified that their job was over as of June 30 of 1947.

MOVES TO BUREAU OF RECLAMATION

But my negotiations with John Smithwick had been going on for several months and late in June of 1947 when I called John to enquire about getting payment for the allotments that had been taken, he informed me that the vouchers were being prepared and the checks would be received within a few days. At that time, off the cuff, I said to John, do you need a right-of-way agent? And John said "yes I do," and I replied "I mean a damn good right-of-way agent." And John's reply was "I hope to hell you're serious because I am!" And I said to John "hang onto your hat, I'm coming over to see you." I went over to John's office and we talked and then he took me and introduced me to Joe Leach who was the Chief Land Officer of the Bureau in this region. And we talked and

Leach asked me about my background and I told him, and then he asked if I was afraid of working overtime. And I told him that if I went with the Bureau of Reclamation, I was taking with me over 4,000 hours of overtime. Between 1941 and 1946, the [war] year period, I did not take one single day leave of absence for sick leave or annual leave. In addition to that, an Indian agent's job in the field required all sorts of hours because our (laughter) Indian people weren't much concerned with time. After talking with Joe Leach he turned to John and he said, "Well, if you want him, take him down to personnel." He took me down, I was introduced to Osburn who was the head of personnel, we talked for awhile, and I signed up the papers to go to work for the Bureau at a three¹-grade promotion in pay. So that leaving the Indian Service and

1. Interviewee notes this was a two-grade promotion.

going to the Bureau of Reclamation financially was the best thing I'd ever done in my life.

This all happened on a Wednesday, and the next morning I reported to the Bureau of Reclamation to study their methods and read some of the appraisal reports and the Bureau's method of acquiring property when one of the clerks in the Land Office came to me and told me that there was a telephone call for me from Portland. Portland was the Regional Office for the Indian Bureau, and this was a call from the Assistant Regional Director Charley Graves saying that he was coming down to see me on Sunday. I would like to say that when I signed up with the Bureau of Reclamation, I wrote a three-page letter to Walter Woehlke who was a friend of mine and the Associate Commissioner of Indian Affairs telling him exactly how I felt about the Indian Bureau and the manner in which they had handled the letters that went out to

Civil Service employees saying that they were going to be separated from the Service as of June 30. And I told him then that I was going to work for the Bureau of Reclamation at a three[two]-grade promotion in pay. The following Sunday, Charley Graves and the then head of the personnel department from the Chicago office of the Indian Bureau came to Sacramento where I was living then and tried to convince me that I ought to go back to the Indian Bureau because I was to be placed in charge of land for the entire State of California that was administered by the Indian Bureau. And I turned them down. So I went to work for the Bureau of Reclamation as a right-of-way agent and stayed with it until I retired in May 1960.

Storey: So you were with Reclamation, then, 13 years?

Harrison: Thirteen years. I would've stayed longer with Reclamation — I didn't want to retire until I was

65, but my wife pointed out to me that I was working for \$6 a month which would've been the difference between my annual pay and take home pay in my annuity. So I decided to retire, I wasn't a \$6-a-month worker.

Storey: Let's go back if we may to what you were doing with the predecessor of the Bureau of Indian Affairs.

Harrison: The Park Service?

Storey: No, with BIA. The Indian . . .

Harrison: Oh. I was the field aide to the superin[tendant]. . . first as the Assistant to the Regional Coordinator, Roy Nash, who later became superintendent of the Sacramento Indian Agency. And I was his field aide, as a field aide I guess I had to be a jack of all trades. In the first place, I was his representative in the field. In the second

place, I had charge of land within the Bureau of Indian Affairs in our agency which extended from Kern County in the south to the Oregon line in the north, excluding Mono and Alpine Counties on the east side of the Sierra. And the four counties in the northwest corner, which meant that I traveled not only all over the State of California but even into Oregon and into Nevada in my duties as Head of the Land Division.

Storey: And what were you doing as Head of the Land Division?

Harrison: Well, I had to supervise the leasing of lands. I also was head of the probate, I had to probate estates and so on; take care of heirship problems.

Storey: Uh huh, so when a tribe or an individual wanted to lease their property for some reason . . .

Harrison: I had to lease it. I was the leasing officer, because all of this land was held in trust.

Storey: Okay. So BIA was considered the owner?
(Harrison: Oh yeah. The Government was . . .)
Or the trustee?

Harrison: The trustee, yes. Not alone that, but as a field aide I had to attend all of the council meetings of the various groups that were organized under the provisions of the Wheeler-Howard Act, which was known as the Indian Reorganization Act. And it was those duties, and settling family affairs, and things of that sort, and traveling around to all of the reservations and *rancherias*—of which there were 125 in our jurisdiction. Kept me busy.

Storey: There were 125 groups?

Harrison: Yes.

Storey: Now which was the group that was affected by Shasta?

Harrison: There were no tribes as such that were affected by Shasta. There were individual allottees that were affected by Shasta.

Storey: And how many were there?

Harrison: I don't recall offhand how many there were. We had over 1,500 allotments on the Public Domain and those were Public Domain allotments.

Storey: Could you explain what that means?

Harrison: Well a Public Domain allotment was an allotment that was made to an Indian, anywhere from 80 to 160 acres that were held in trust for him by the United States Government.

Storey: Out of the public lands?

Harrison: Out of the public lands, (Storey: But not within the reservation) but not within the reservation.

Storey: How did they go about obtaining rights to an allotment like that outside a reservation?

Harrison: They applied for them.

Storey: Okay, then why were they entitled to receive an allotment like that?

Harrison: Because they were an Indian.

Storey: So each Indian in each tribe . . .

Harrison: . . . If he wanted to. But these were unallotted Indians who were not allotted on reservations.

Storey: Okay, so they had to be Indian. Did it matter which tribe?

Harrison: No.

Storey: They had — and the reservation lands were used up, am I hearing this correctly?

Harrison: Well, many of these Indians didn't live on reservation lands.

Storey: Uh huh. But they had to be a tribal member?

Harrison: They had to be an Indian, yes.

Storey: Well, there are a lot of people who claim to be Indians who aren't tribal members.

Harrison: Well they could be enrolled on the tribe but not living on a reservation.

Storey: Okay, and they were entitled to a certain amount of land by because of the fact that they were an enrollee?

Harrison: That's right.

Storey: And so if there wasn't land on the reservation they could request land elsewhere?

Harrison: Yes.

Storey: Okay, up to what . . .

Harrison: . . . They may never have lived on the reservation. But yet they were enrolled with a tribe and then were entitled if they wished to take up an allotment on Public Domain.

Storey: When would these allotments have taken place?

Harrison: Oh, way back when . . . many, many years.

Storey: So these are things that they had inherited maybe?
Or were they the original allottee, do you happen
to know?

Harrison: In many cases, it was inherited.

Storey: Okay, and you don't have any idea how many
were involved at Shasta?

Harrison: No, I don't recall at this time.

Storey: But there were more than just a couple, I take it.

Harrison: Oh, there were more — you betcha there were
more than a couple.

Storey: Maybe more than 10 or 15?

Harrison: More than 10 or 15. Maybe 25 or 30. (Storey:
Okay.) At least.

Storey: And part of BIA's trust responsibility was to make
sure . . .

Harrison: . . . Was to see that they got their money.

Storey: . . . Fair payment for the . . .

Harrison: . . . After appraisal by Bureau of Reclamation appraisers.

Storey: Uh huh. Did you ever have to argue with the Bureau of Reclamation about what a fair price was?

Harrison: No.

Storey: Were the Indians coming in and talking to you about this issue a lot?

Harrison: Oh, when I'd be out in the field, "when am I gonna get my money?" So when I'd get back to the office from the field, I'd call John Smithwick and say, "when am I gonna get my money"?

Storey: Uh huh. How do you spell John's last name, do you know?

Harrison: S-M-I-T-H-W-I-C-K.

Storey: Smithwick, okay. Now do you happen to remember any of the individual Indians who were involved?

Harrison: No, I do not. I do not. But I know they all got paid eventually.

Storey: Were there any arguments about the value of the property that you remember?

Harrison: None that ever came to my attention.

Storey: Okay. That's interesting. And this was land behind Shasta that was going to be flooded?

Harrison: Yes.

Storey: You mentioned in your discussion that you were an Indian agent.

Harrison: Well that's what we — those who worked in the field were called. The Indians called us agents.

Storey: Oh, I see.

Harrison: Not like the old Indian agent that you read about back in the '80's and '90's. As a matter of fact, when I was living in Ukiah in Mendocino County, there was an old Pomo Indian by the name of Calpella Pete and he always called me "Agent Boy."

Storey: Agent Boy.

Harrison: Agent Boy.

Storey: B-O-Y. (Harrison: B-O-Y.) Did you keep an inventory of the lands for which you were responsible?

Harrison: Oh yes.

Storey: That must have been a fairly complicated process.

Harrison: It was, especially when you found heirs to an 80-acre allotment on the Public Domain that was leased for 10 cents an acre because it was up in the lava beds and you couldn't raise anything on

it with a barrel of whiskey and a six-shooter. Leased for 10 cents an acre, and there were so many heirs to that 80 acres that each heir from the lease money was entitled to less than one penny.

Storey: That's a lot of heirs, yeah!

Harrison: And those were what we known as the "Winnebago allotments" that were made for Winnebago Indians back in the Middle West² who couldn't be allotted back there, so allotments were given to them in northern California. And we had to administer them.

Storey: So allotments were not — they didn't get to pick the public land they wanted?

Harrison: No, (laughter) of course not.

Storey: Who decided that?

2. This was corrected from middle East to middle West by the interviewee.

Harrison: Don't ask me, I wasn't in the Indian Bureau then (laughter). That was done many, many, many years ago. But we got rid of them, we got authority from the Commissioner of Indian Affairs to sell them at public auction.

Storey: And then what did — you distributed the money to the allottees as it were?

Harrison: Yeah (laughing).

Storey: So I gather this became fairly complicated in terms of keeping track of who owned what.

Harrison: Not alone that, but it cost more to administer them than they were worth. That's why we got permission to sell them.

Storey: What other kinds of activities did you do as the Manager of Lands for the [Sacramento] Indian agency?

Harrison: Well I told you, attending all these council meetings that'll begin late at night and last till the early hours of the morning. And as Roy Nash used to say, "we took care of them from the womb to the tomb."

Storey: Well, when you went over to Reclamation did that give . . .

Harrison: . . . That was a vacation!

Storey: (laughter) Did that give you a different perspective on what BIA was trying to do?

Harrison: No, my perspective hadn't changed.

Storey: Did you happen to have to deal with the Shasta claims then?

Harrison: What do you mean, the Shasta claims?

Storey: Well, the payment on the Shasta properties.

Harrison: No, because after I — those payments were made almost immediately after I'd left the Service and went to Reclamation.

Storey: Were you flattered that BIA wanted you to come back and take over all of the lands of California?

Harrison: You bet I was. And as a matter of fact, Mr. Woehlke flew out from Chicago for that meeting on Sunday, and then, of course, it came to me as to why Graves had called from Portland because as soon, I'm sure, as soon as Walter Woehlke got my letter, he called Graves in Portland and probably said "Get down there and see if you can get him to change his mind." And the giveaway of the whole thing was when Graves and the man from personnel and Walter Woehlke showed up in my house he asked Graves, "Did you get him (meaning me) to change his mind. And Graves

said, "No I didn't, I couldn't," and Walter said "well did you offer him as much as the Bureau is going to pay him." And Graves gave the whole thing away, he says, "you didn't authorize me to." But I'd made up my mind that twice I got fired: once from the Army, and once from the Indian Bureau, and I wasn't going to put up with it again.

Storey: How long had you been in Lands with the Indian Bureau?

Harrison: From 1935 until '47.

Storey: So you had 12 years of experience with land (Harrison: With land. Yeah, yeah.) issues . . . keeping track of inventories, sales, leases . . .

Harrison: . . . In other words, I had a plat book, that I had made up myself and I wish I had taken it with me, but I left, of every allotment on the Public Domain in our jurisdiction together with the

heirships, the ownership's standing, the name of every heir to every one of those pieces of land so that I could tell at a moment's glance where that land was and who the owners were. And their degree of ownership — the interest that they had in that property.

Storey: Was all of this complicated by the fact that different tribes had different customs about property rights and so on?

Harrison: No, what their customs were weren't considered. It's what our regulations said the custom had to be.

Storey: In terms of inheritance and that sort of thing.

Harrison: Yeah. Yes.

Storey: Okay, well then you went over to Reclamation in '47.

Harrison: And that was an entirely different new experience; because here I had to negotiate for land.

Storey: In order to purchase it? (Harrison: Yeah.) Or obtain rights-of-way or . . . ?

Harrison: Rights-of-way, either outright purchase, or easements, or . . .

Storey: How many other folks did you work with in that office?

Harrison: Well of course there was clerical staff. Joe Leach was the head of the Land Department, he had Smithwick, Mary Mulcahey, Jim Stewart, and Goodwin, his assistants, and then there were appraisers and right-of-way agents. There was a fairly large staff, I'd say 20 people.

Storey: And you were one of the right-of-way agents . . .

Harrison: . . . I was one of the right-of-way agents.

Storey: So what's the difference between a right-of-way agent and an appraiser?

Harrison: The appraiser went out and appraised the property, after which he prepared an appraisal report together with photographs. Then those appraisal reports were turned over to the right-of-way agents to study and who then had to contact the land owners and to negotiate for either outright purchase or grant easements or whatever . . . the rights could be acquired by the Bureau of Reclamation and the Central Valley Project.

Storey: Did you for instance, say you had an appraisal, did you always offer the appraised value?

Harrison: Always. When we appeared at the owner's place of business or residence to acquire property that he owned, I had in my hand a deed in which the appraised amount was set forth. There was no

negotiating, in other words if the appraisal was \$10,000, I didn't offer him \$7,500. And let me tell you, that was the difference between the way we handled the land owners and the way the State of California handled land owners because with the State of California, at least in the Highway Department, and of that I have personal knowledge, there was a lot of bad feeling for the simple reason that the State's negotiators, right-of-way agents, for a \$10,000 piece of property would offer Mr. Smith \$7,500.

Storey: Mm-hmm. This is a hypothetical Mr. Smith.

Harrison: Yeah, and for the same type of property, living down the road a half mile was Mr. Brown, whose appraisal was \$10,000. And Mr. Brown was a tough guy, and he refused to accept \$7,500, so the final negotiation we'll say was \$9,000. And then

Mr. Brown and Mr. Smith compared notes. And what do you think that did?

Storey: A lot of bad feelings, I imagine.

Harrison: We didn't do it that way, we offered Mr. Smith the appraised amount that was in that appraisal report.

Now, it was up to the right-of-way agent . . .

END OF SIDE 1, TAPE 1.

BEGINNING SIDE 2, TAPE 1.

Harrison: So the points upon which the appraiser based his figure were covered. For instance, I went out on a piece of property where the appraisal report said that there were four wells. I found a well that was covered with weeds, the appraiser didn't know anything about it. There was a cover over the well and weeds had grown up all around it. When I came back to the office after talking with the owner and he thought that the appraisal wasn't high enough because there were five wells on the

property and I knew damn well that the appraisal report said four, I said well let's go — I'd like to count those wells. And he took me out in the field and we walked around and one time we stopped there, we were talking. I said, "Where's the fifth well"? He says, "You're standing on it." Well I came back to the office, pointed [this] out to the appraiser, he changed his appraisal, I took the papers back, and they were signed.

I had exactly the same thing happen in another instance where the appraisal had been made in the winter, in rolling country, and it had rained — this is the rainy season in California, and there were water all over the place in all these hollows. And when I called on the owner of the land, he pointed out that the property that he would sell to the Government had the only spring in that area that — where you had water all year round. Well

when I found that out I went back to the appraiser and I said, "Did you know that there was a spring on that property"? He says "No, there was water all over the place." Well that appraisal was changed and I had no trouble getting the property, so that was one of the duties of an appraiser.

Then of course you had to be very careful with whom you worked, you'd be working out say in an irrigation district where you were getting grant easements for the laterals and you'd get to know the people because you called on them quite frequently and you'd have one man say, "Have you called on so and so yet?" "No." "Oh, he's tough." I usually found out that the ones that were tough were easy to get along with, the ones that they said "Oh you'll have no trouble with him," they were tough.

But I enjoyed the work, as a matter of fact, here is one of my efficiency reports, "Right of away, agent Harrison

is always willing to do any job large or small that is assigned to him and he goes about it without required supervision. Very tactful in dealing with recalcitrant land owners." They always gave me the tough ones, and I've had some tough ones!

I had one tough one — his land had been condemned and he had received a letter from the Department of Justice saying that he could draw down 80 percent of the appraised value of the property because the appraised value — the money had been deposited in the registry of the court . . . Condemnation and he never applied for it. And they couldn't get him to reply, so they called on the Regional Office to send somebody up to talk to this man — he was up in Shasta County. It had to do with the canal, nothing to do with the dam, and so I was sent up to see this gentleman. Drove up to the ranch house, and he wasn't home. And I had introduced myself to his wife, of

course, and told her why I was there and while we were talking she looked down the road she says, "Well he's just driven up to the mail box." So I excused myself and got in my car and drove down and parked right behind him. He was facing this way, and I parked right behind him. Now he heard me drive up there, I got out of the car and I walked over to him and he was sitting there looking at this mail — never looked at me just looking at his mail, and I introduced myself to him and he just grunted, and for some reason or another I had a hunch. He started to put his mail down and as he did, I got in my car and moved forward and he backed right up, if I hadn't moved he'd have run into me. So I let him go back to the house, I drove into the district office and Alexander was in charge of the survey part — it was a survey office, he was the engineer in charge of the survey crew. And I told him, "I've just had a very unpleasant experience." And he

and the whole crew started laughing, and I said "What the hell are you laughing at"? And he said — and he mentioned the man's name and I said yes and I said "What happened?" And then he told me and I understood why this man was hostile, and I didn't blame him one damn bit. I would've been also. He came back from town and saw a surveying crew on his property. He climbed the fence, and went over to the chief of the party and asked him what they were doing there and was told in so many words it was none of his damn business, they were doing United States Government work. So he made it his business. He went back to the pickup truck and came back with a pipe wrench and ran them off. That's why he didn't want to have anything to do with the Government. Well I left — stayed away for about a week, then I went back. And this time he was at home, and he invited me into his little cubby hole of his office, we sat down. We

started talking, and I talked about everything, about, except the land. And then I finally got around, "Did you get a letter from the Department of Justice"? "Yeah." "What did you do with it"? So he reached in his desk and pulled out the letter and there written in bold pencil, you may have to bleep this, he had written "shove it up your ass." Well, before we left I told him I would get him his check and I did. And I took it up to him. [We parted friends.]³

I had another case up in Shasta County, and this had to do with the dam, and that was from a man who operated gravel pits and things of that sort. I got him to sign whatever papers they were — I've forgotten now and he told me to take them back to Sacramento and he said, "you tell the people down there to frame it because that's

3. Addition by interviewee.

the first time I ever signed anything for the Government."

I (laughter) had some good ones.

Storey: How did you get the previous man to start talking to you?

Harrison: Mr. So-and-So?

Storey: Yeah.

Harrison: I don't know, I just talked to him. I'll tell you something else. As a right-of-way agent, I never wore a white shirt and a tie and a jacket. I went out in the field just as they were dressed. See, in other words, I wasn't a "city slicker." I never threatened them. I didn't have to; because I knew if they didn't negotiate, there was always Condemnation, and I never threatened them with Condemnation. They would say to me "what's going to happen if I don't sign it"? And then it was never a threat, I didn't say "we're going to

condemn you," I would explain the process and what HE had to do and what his rights were, and so on, and what WE would have to do and how the whole thing would work. I got along — I never had any trouble with any of them, with any of the people with whom I worked.

Storey: You never had somebody who said "no, my property's worth more than this, I know it's worth more than this."

Harrison: Oh yes, then I'd try to find out why. See I would get them talking, "well why do you think it's" . . . course they never saw the appraisal report, I would never show them the appraisal report, "but why do you think it's worth more?" And our appraisals were fair. I remember the Berryessa Valley where we built the Berryessa Dam, I bought most of the land for that project. There

was one rancher that, oh, he just raised hell to the point where the San Francisco Examiner had a full page of his story. Family had been there for generations and the Government was only going to give them so much and (laughter) so on, and he had to get his own appraiser. And his own appraiser came in with a figure less than ours! Well, he damn near broke his wrist signing documents.

Storey: Now if I'm getting the picture correctly, you were the person who contacted the land owners and engaged in the negotiations for the purchase of the property. The appraiser didn't do anything of that. Did you have situations where they just, what happened when you had to go to appraisal — I mean to Condemnation?

Harrison: We would turn it over to the Department of Justice and they would file an order for immediate take. In other words as soon as the court signed that order, the property was ours. However, the judge would always ask whether, if you got immediate possession, would the land owner be disaccommodated, would there be some hardship or whatever. If it meant moving or things of that sort, then there would be a stay, but if we presented it to the court that no hardship would be entailed, then we got an order for immediate possession and as soon as he signed that order, it was the Government's property.

Storey: But you still had to pay for it.

Harrison: Oh, yes.

Storey: So then, how was that payment determined?

Harrison: Then it would go to trial. It'd go to the court to be tried before a jury, and then that jury could do one of several things: it could determine that the appraisal was fair, it could determine that the appraisal was too low, and it could determine that the appraisal was too high. So you had those choices, but one of the most difficult things, I think, was in explaining to the land owner was the Act of 1889⁴ as I recall that was retroactive to 1887. You've never heard of it I'll bet.

Storey: No, I haven't.

4. Editor's note. Mr. Harrison misstated the date of this Act. It is commonly known as the Canal Act (26 Stat. 391; 43 U.S.C. § 945) of August 30, 1890. The relevant portion of the Act reads "In all patents for lands hereafter taken up under any of the land laws of the United States or on entries or claims validated by this act, west of the one hundredth meridian, it shall be expressed that there is reserved from the lands in said patent described, a right of way thereon for ditches or canals constructed by the authority of the Unites States."

In addition, after Mr. Harrison retired the Act was amended in an Act of September 2, 1964, (78 Stat. 808) to provide for compensation for canals and ditches begun after January 1, 1961.

Harrison: This provided for a right-of-way for canals or ditches built by the United States without setting forth the width of the right-of-way on any lands filed on since 1877.

Storey: So any public lands, now you said '87 a moment ago . . .

Harrison: I said the Act was 1889, retroactive to 1887, so that any public lands filed on from 1887 on were subject to a right-of-way by the United States Government and that Act did not set forth the width of that right-of-way, and for the Friant-Kern Canal, we were taking 400-foot rights-of-way.

Storey: Then were you having to provide compensation?

Harrison: No!

Storey: That was the whole point of the Act, you got the right-of-way without compensation.

Harrison: Not alone that, but the right-of-way department of the Regional Office in Sacramento, that's the land division. had a hell of a fight with the attorneys who didn't want to pay for improvements that were on that right-of-way because they were part of the land. And our argument was, "God damn it, from the standpoint of public relations, let's pay 'em for it." And we won.

Storey: So you did pay for improvements?

Harrison: For improvements.

Storey: Say the land had been leveled, for instance. Would there be compensation because it had been leveled, which is an expensive process?

Harrison: No.

Storey: Just if there were buildings, in other words, or structures. Okay. And for instance did you ever

relocate buildings or something like that for people?

Harrison: No.

Storey: You just tore them down and compensated them for the building.

Harrison: Yeah, buildings, or trees, or orchards, or vines, whatever. (Interruption re security guard.) . . . It required — now whether the law required or whether it was our own regulations, it required that the owner be notified in writing and, of course, this is what you ran into, "I've got a policy of title insurance (tapping on desk), it says all of that property is mine." Well, I'd call on an owner either with a letter or he'd already received it, or it had been served by a United States Marshal, so that he knew all about it. "Do you have your policy of title insurance here"? "No, it's in the

safety deposit box." "Well, I would suggest that you go to your bank and get your policy of title insurance. Do you have an attorney? Well, take it to your attorney and if that policy of title insurance says 'as of such and certain date the above described property is insured in the name of _____, subject to the Act of 1889.' Your attorney will explain to you what the Act of 1889 is. Now if you don't have an attorney and your policy of title insurance has that language, I'll tell you what the Act of 1889 is" and I would explain it to him. Now, I says, "if that 'subject to' is not there and you don't have an attorney, I would suggest that you get an attorney because you have a suit against the title insurance company for not picking up that cloud."

Now, that's the way I talked to the people I called on — I was their friend, I wasn't their antagonist. And they would say, "Well if I go to Condemnation, what do I have to do"? I said, "Well first you have to get an attorney." I says, "then second either you or the attorney will have to hire a licensed appraiser, not the man who sells real estate on the corner but a man who is a professional appraiser, and he will come out and appraise the property. And then the Government and you and your attorney will appear in court and present all of your information, and all of the Government's information will be presented to a jury. And THEY will decide whether this is a fair price or not." But I said, "In the meantime, 80 per cent of what we have appraised your property at you can draw down, and it will not prejudice your case in any way and you might just as well make use of that money as not, it's

yours. You're going to get it in any event." So I always parted on good terms with these people.

Storey: What did you respond when they said "well why can't I take a 100 percent"?

Harrison: Well, always 20 percent is sort of — maybe the case will go against you and you've already drawn down money you're not entitled to! I had an answer.

Storey: Did you ever have that happen where the jury said "no, it's worth less."

Harrison: I don't recall because I never attended any condemnation cases. I was never called.

Storey: Oh, you never had to serve as a witness or anything.

Harrison: No, no, and usually you are but I was never called. These cases — I'd say that most of them

if not all of them were settled before it even went to trial.

Storey: Now what kind of authority did you have to negotiate with the people? Did you have any authority to say, raise the price?

Harrison: No, oh no, oh no, I had no authority to change the conditions that were set forth in the deed. I could discuss things with the owner, and if there were certain things that he wanted or objected to I would note it, come back to the office from my field trip, and discuss it with my people, and they would discuss it with the land people. And if they thought there should be a change, the papers were changed and I took them back.

Storey: But you were an intermediary in the negotiations in other words.

Harrison: That's right. That's right.

Storey: And Reclamation could, for instance, say "well in order to save trouble and time and everything, we'll give them another couple thousand" or something . . .

Harrison: Well let me, let me give you a case in point: it was a very wealthy and very large land owner down in Tulare County, and we were taking a lot of land from him for the Friant-Kern Canal. Now we were taking 400-foot rights-of-way and when it came to severance damage which — another factor that the appraisers always allowed in making the appraisals, if a piece of land was severed which meant that you had to go around like this to get to this piece . . .

Storey: You couldn't go directly back and forth the way you previously had been able to . . .

Harrison: They'd made allowances for that in the appraisal, raised the price. Well, this guy insisted on bridges . . .

Storey: Over the canal to connect the property . . .

Harrison: And I forget, there were seven or eight bridges. He had a lot of property and boy, that was fought over and over and over again as to whether you give them severance or whether you give them to — and finally it was decided to build the bridges and I think the bridges were to cost \$8,000 apiece. They were just bridges for farm equipment, and after he had agreed to accept the bridges, then he said he'll take the money — the cost of the bridges. Now whether the cost of the bridges amounted to the amount of severance I don't remember — that was negotiated between the

attorneys, but he took the cash instead of the bridges!

Storey: Interesting. Do you remember his name by chance?

Harrison: Yes I do and I'm not going to repeat it!

Storey: You mean it isn't part of the records?

Harrison: Not part of — not as far as I'm concerned.

Storey: That's fine, it doesn't matter.

Harrison: Oh here's another one, of course you know to paraphrase the Bible, "if thou dost not blow thine own horn, Gabriel should not blow it for thee." You've never heard that one.

Storey: No, not exactly.

Harrison: That's according to Harrison's version [of the] King James [Bible]. All of the rating elements marked satisfactory on the front of this form are close to the excellent point, "this employee is a

very hard and conscientious worker and his general attitude and method of dealing with those he interviews is a credit to the Government." I'm proud of that.

Storey: Another performance appraisal, yeah.

Harrison: These are all good ones, they're all good.

Storey: Yeah, you only kept the good ones, is that the way it worked?

Harrison: Yeah, I threw the bad ones away (both laughing); I had some funny experiences, oh, a lot of nice experiences. I remember when I was working on the Trinity Project up in Trinity County. Now we were buying land there for those parcels of land that we acquired for the dam and the reservoir we knew had mineral value (tapping on desk): gold! We were not paying one penny for it. What do you think about that?

Storey: Well, I'm going to ask you why we were doing it that way.

Harrison: That is the question you're supposed to ask! At that time, gold was valued at \$35 an ounce and our mining engineers that figured that it took \$41 an ounce to take it out of the ground. And when you have a situation like that, you don't got no gold.

Storey: There's no appraised value.

Harrison: No appraised value. Well, there was one man up there, whose name I have forgotten, so even if you ask me his name I in all honesty couldn't give it to you, thought our appraisal was too low. And I had called on him several times and I just wasn't getting to first base with him. I went back again, this goes over a period of a number of weeks, see, I'm spending most of the time in the field. I'm

home every maybe every other weekend. So this time I roll up to his house, and here is a County car sitting in front of the place. So I walk over and introduce myself and who am I talking to but a man out of the County Assessor's office, and we get to comparing notes and I find out that he is there because this man (laughter) claims he has appraised his property too high for tax purposes. But the man's not home, so the two of us decide to wait, and I guess we wait there about an hour or more when the owner drives up and here he sees a Government car with Federal plates, a County car with County plates, a right-of-way agent from the Bureau of Reclamation, . . .

Storey: . . . And a tax assessor.

Harrison: And a tax assessor. You know what the outcome of that visit was, don't you?

Storey: Well, why don't you tell us just so it's on the record?

Harrison: I had no trouble getting him to sign the papers!

Storey: That's interesting.

Harrison: We had another case down in Tulare County, again where we were taking grant easements, because we were putting in this system for the Ivanhoe Irrigation District, which meant that there were lateral lines. We were not paying for the easement because the cost then would have been added if we were paying — the cost of the easements would've added to the cost of the distribution system that the owners eventually would have had to pay for.

Storey: Right.

Harrison: So we were taking grant easements which meant that they could use the land over which the pipes

were, but couldn't build any permanent structure

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END OF SIDE 2, TAPE 1.

BEGINNING OF SIDE 1, TAPE 2.

This is Brit Storey, interviewing Michael Harrison on November 18, 1993. This is tape two.

Storey: The pipes were underground so they couldn't build on top of the pipeline that was carrying the water.

Harrison Buildings and things of that sort.

Storey: And did you have to pay for those, too?

Harrison: No, no, they were grant easements.

Storey: And so a grant easement is — they give you an easement and the benefit that they receive is having the water transported.

Harrison: That's right.

Storey: So that they avoid the repayment obligation.

Harrison: That's right, now what we did pay for — if there were, say, orange trees, citrus, and they grow citrus and vines, grapes, in Tulare County if there were trees and vines there, we would pay for the trees and vines that we took. If there was a crop that was set on the trees or vines, we would pay for the crop, although it hadn't ripened, based on "X number of years" packing house records. Do you follow me?

Storey: Yeah. I think so.

Harrison: Well at this particular time when we working in the Ivanhoe Irrigation District, many of the ranchers were pulling their trees which are citrus, or olives, and vines in order to put in a fast-growing crop. Now the — this particular land owner the line was to come down, we'll say, on the east side of his property which faced the

county road. So he was going to pull his vines and trees to put in this fast-growing crop. Now he had been given a plat by the engineers showing what part of his property was to carry this grant easement so he pulled everything except the vines and trees that were within the easement, see. So when we came along to put in the line, we would reimburse him for the vines and the trees, plus a crop if it was set. Well just before we got — a couple of miles before we got to his property, the engineers changed the alignment and moved to the other side of the road which was on somebody else's property. He came to us (laughter) and wanted us to pay for the vines and trees he hadn't pulled!

Storey: Mm-hmm, even though you didn't even ask for the easement finally.

Harrison: He didn't get the easement, no, the easement wasn't a . . . we said no, we had nothing to do with that, that's yours! Then I had one other case — I must've had an obstinate streak in me, because I like this man very very much, he was a nice man to deal with, but we had to get a grant easement for him. And I had called on him, there was no trouble in our relationship to each other, but he said "Mr. Harrison" he says, "you're going to have to condemn me, you're going to have to take this to Condemnation because I'm not going to sign that easement." I said "okay." After I'd called on him oh at least a half a dozen times, I had to be up in the Fresno Office, the District Office, and I asked them there if they had a profile of the county lines roads in that area. And they said "sure" and they produced it, and to my amazement

saw that the county had an easement for road purposes of something like 60 feet. Now the paved road in front of his house was just about half again as wide as this room.

Storey: Which would be say maybe 20 - 25 feet?

Harrison: Yeah, the other half, and I knew that pavement was just about that size. But here the profile showed that the county already had an easement of 60 feet. So I called on my friend, I had my briefcase with me. We sat on the veranda, we talked about everything in the world, I never mentioned "easement." And I said "Mr. W, can you point out the center line of this road"? He said "sure." So the two of us got down off the pavement and he started at one end of the pavement, went the whole length of the pavement, and then came back and said "here's the center

line." And I said, "Mr. W, I have some information for you that you can check if you'll go into Visalia" which was the county seat "and go to the County Clerk's office." I says, "the County has a right-of-way for an easement of 60 feet. Now all we were going to take from you was one row of trees and two rows of vines, and pay you for it. If the County ever wishes to exercise its right, they're going to take four rows of trees and eight rows of vines and not pay you a cent because you have encroached on their property." "Mr. Harrison, are you telling me . . ." "You want to go into Visalia with me, my car's right there, we'll drive right in, and you can see the map yourself." He says, "Do you have those papers?" "Mr. W, the last time I was here, you told me that, finally — so I've turned them over to the lawyers

up there, but I'm going back this weekend and I'll try to stop it." I had the damn papers in my briefcase. I could have taken them out then, he could've signed them then. So when I came back the following Monday, he was the first one I called on as I remember. That was a big success, he gave a big sigh of relief!

Storey: It's interesting the kinds of things you get into in these kinds of issues. Very legalistic and very specialized so that the people you were dealing with often didn't understand a lot about what was going on.

Harrison: Well for instance, we had a case in Berryessa Valley again, where we built the Berryessa Dam. As I said I think I bought all of the land for that project, both for the dam and the reservoir. There was a piece of property there that had passed

through ownership after ownership after ownership, and finally it came into the ownership of this particular person and when we got the preliminary title report, it showed that a previous owner — the property had been in the name of a previous owner and his wife. And when he died the estate was not probated, and she sold the property to the present owner -- when the husband's name had not been removed from the title. Which meant that the present owner had to bring a quiet title suit to clear the title so we could pay him; because we would not pay until every cloud had been removed, and it was up to the owner to remove the clouds.

Now another instance that I ran into on several occasions was the preliminary title report which showed that there was an outstanding note of X

number of thousands of dollars. Now invariably, when I negotiated a deed, [I was asked] "when am I going to get my money"? Well I would have a pretty good idea from what the preliminary title report showed as to whether it was a clear title, and I always had a copy of it. And if it was a clear title I'd say well it'd just be a matter of weeks until they could put the thing through the mill but if there's a cloud on the title, that cloud has to be removed. So when the owner would say "when am I going to get paid," I'd have to point out that the preliminary title report showed that there was an outstanding note of X number of thousands of dollars. Well, he'd explode, "well hell I paid that off X number of years ago, I've got a stack of canceled checks." "Yeah but you never had that note after you paid it off or mortgage you never had it recorded. Now you've got to get down to

the county court house and record it and once it's recorded, it'll be cleared from your title and you'll get your money." Ran into that as I say several times, so you had to sort of be what we used to call in the army a "guard house lawyer," you had to know a little something about the law.

Storey: So what kinds of things did you acquire property for? You've mentioned canals, you've mentioned for dams I believe at Shasta and Trinity. Anything else?

Harrison: Flooding easements, I came into the Bureau of Reclamation long after Folsom Dam was built and yet I acquired flooding easements for Folsom.

Storey: Below Folsom?

Harrison: Below Folsom, yeah, and above.

Storey: And we would pay for an easement of that sort?

Harrison: Oh, yeah, oh and I also acquired easements for the high powerlines that came down from Shasta.

Storey: For the transmission lines.

Harrison: For the transmissions lines, sure.

Storey: Uh huh, and we would pay for that?

Harrison: Oh yeah.

Storey: A one-time charge? A one-time payment?

Harrison: Yeah, I know for some of those flooding easements we paid 80 percent of the fee value of the property.

Storey: And why is that? Why is that notable maybe I should say.

Harrison: Well because if the land was worth \$100 an acre, we paid \$80 an acre for it, and maybe it might never be flooded.

Storey: Mmm-hmm, but we have the right to flood it.

Harrison: But we have the right to flood it, which would then prevent any suits being brought against the Government.

Storey: Uh huh, and who decided what lands we needed to acquire?

Harrison: Well that was all done in the engineering department, I guess.

Storey: So somebody would come into the lands — was this a branch or a division or whatever, do you remember? A section?

Harrison: A section I guess, wouldn't the Bureau divide it into sections, engineering, land, legal, and so on?

Storey: Probably divisions but I, you know without looking, I can't . . .

Harrison: You see, I've been out of the Federal Government now since 1960, and you new guys have come up

with all sorts of crazy ideas like planners who make it miserable for the guys in the field.

Storey: But somebody would come in and say to the Lands people we need to acquire a flood easement for this property and then the appraiser would start up work. . .

Harrison But they would also present us with the engineering data: the plats, descriptions of the land they needed, and the map, everything. Then the papers for the acquisition would be prepared in our department, Land Division, and then the appraiser would go out and appraise the property. He would come back and take photographs and do the things necessary to make an appraisal, like within the radius of 5 miles of the take, find comparable sales and so on, check the County records, check with the title company records to

gain all the information that he needed to make a proper appraisal. If what we acquire here is the same type of property, same conditions prevail, everything is here that these prices must be comparable and so on. And then that appraisal report together with the photographs and all of the data and the maps and everything is then turned over to the right-of-way agent and he studies that appraisal report. Then he goes out and looks at the property and then goes talks to the owner.

Storey: And acquires it. Can we take a little break now?

Harrison: What's the matter, have I worn you out? [Pause in tape]. One more efficiency rating, this is the last one that I got. "Michael Harrison is ending a long career of devoted and efficient service to the Department of the Interior. His performance on his job has been very good in all elements and

perhaps deserves the Excellent Summary Rating, were it not for the administrative requirement to restrict the number of such ratings."

Storey: Yes, that's a continuing problem at the Bureau of Reclamation. You know they have the Denver Office which is supposed to be a group of highly skilled professionals but they want to give quotas on who can get good ratings and all that kind of thing. You want to take a break now for lunch, is that right?

Harrison: Well, let's go on till — we still have about 10 minutes.

Storey: Okay. I'm interested in talking about different areas of where you worked, for instance Berryessa, did you work only on the Central Valley Project? Or did you work on all of the Projects in this region?

Harrison: Well, all of the Projects in this region I understood was considered the Central Valley Project.

Storey: Well for instance there's Truckee-Carson, which is . . .

Harrison: No, no, no. Berryessa, Folsom, Shasta, Friant, the dam at Friant, Friant-Kern Canal, and the transmission lines, Cachuma, Santa Barbara. Those are the ones.

Storey: Okay, yeah, I'd like to talk about them more. For instance, I think at Berryessa, I believe I'm correct in thinking there was a small community that was flooded out by the waters.

Harrison: Winters was the little village.

Storey: Yeah. And I'd like to talk about whether communities like that presented special problems

to a right-of-way agent that weren't presented by rural lands, for instance, and those kinds of things.

Harrison: Not that I recall. I found that wherever I worked the people as a general rule were pretty much the same. My reaction was that people were people and if you treated them in a decent manner, they reciprocated. They treated you the same way. I never — I think one of the reasons was I never went, in the first place, as I told you whenever I was in the field, I dressed just the way those people were dressed. Well of course when I had to go to San Francisco, I wore a blue jacket and gray slacks but out in the field I wore high-top boots, I wore khaki pants, I wore a wool shirt, and a Levi jumper probably. So they felt that they were talking to a peer, to an equal, and I found no

difference in working with people in the northern part of the State or south of here.

Storey: Did you have any problems about, let's see how should I put this, becoming swept up in the emotional aspect of people losing property, that had been their home for a long time or anything like that? Did you run into that?

Harrison: Not too much, however, I do remember one instance on the Trinity Project, where an elderly couple, oh goodness they must have been in their late 70's, lived on a mining claim in the — I don't like to say a shack, it was maybe a step or two above what we consider a shack. There was no value there at all, either in the land on which they were or the home in which they lived, so that the appraised value was as I recall just a couple of thousand dollars. And what in the hell was an

elderly couple going to do with a couple of thousand dollars when they had to give that up?

That is one instance where I was bothered, but neither the appraiser nor I nor anyone else could do anything about it. We had to have that land.

Storey: But you didn't run across this too often.

Harrison: No.

Storey: What about like in Winters, this community under Berryessa. Was there a lot of sort of sentiment about the town and that [kind] of thing?

Harrison: Not that I recall. I don't know because I didn't have anything to do with the people in town. Now if you could find anybody that worked for Barney Bellport who was the engineer in charge then, who worked — and he had his office right there in Winters, if you could talk to anybody out of that office, they certainly should be in a

position to tell you what the attitudes of the local folk were to the Bureau of Reclamation.

Storey: Well, who acquired that town then?

Harrison: No, the town is still there and it's grown, it's flourished.

Storey: Oh, well, I'm thinking of a community that I believe was flooded.

Harrison: They would have floods occasionally when Putah Creek ran.

Storey: No, I mean flooded by the dam, by the reservoir behind it.

Harrison: Oh, that was Berryessa Valley, I didn't . . . I thought you were talking about the town of Winters. Well, there wasn't a town in the Berryessa Valley: there were scattered ranch houses, there was a post office, and a grocery store and with it was a filling station, and the

people who owned, the Postmaster, oh I've forgotten their names, but they picked up and relocated in Fairfield. But they had a general store, grocery store, filling station, and a post office. They didn't like the idea, I know they didn't . . . as a matter of fact, the Postmaster told me that "when that goddam dam was built, all this'll be'll be a mud flat." Well as I recall the first year, there were 80 foot of water where the post office was.

Storey: Were there any other little communities like that that you purchased during your years with Reclamation that you remember?

Harrison: No.

Storey: Okay, well, why don't we take a break now and then come back and talk a little later about some

of the other areas where you worked besides Berryessa and Ivanhoe? [pause in tape].

Storey: Well we're resuming the interview at about 1:15 on November 18 again. I was wondering if you could tell me about some of the other areas where you worked besides Trinity and Berryessa, for instance.

Harrison: Well I worked on Whiskeytown, Folsom, Cachuma, and the transmission lines.

Storey: Typically, when you went to work on these would you be the only person for the Project or would you be working in coordination with others, or how did that work?

Harrison: Well, all the right-of-way agents worked independently of each other. Nobody — I never called on anyone to help me in the negotiation -- I never called anyone, they never called me to

help with negotiation. We worked independently of each other.

Storey: How many right-of-way people were there?

Harrison: I think at the most there weren't more than four or five of us working at one time.

Storey: And for whom did you work?

Harrison: First for John Smithwick, and when he retired for Jim Stewart. But they were both under the Regional Land Officer, Joe Leach.

Storey: And Joe Leach was there the entire time you were there?

Harrison: Yes, yes.

Storey: Who were the Regional Directors that were there while you there?

Harrison: Pardon my ignorance, but I don't recall the name of any of them.

Storey: Oh, okay. Do you remember any of them — anything that they did or anything?

Harrison: No I don't . . . I believe I served under at least three.

Storey: And you traveled a lot.

Harrison: Constantly.

Storey: Did they provide you with a Government car or a Government truck or something?

Harrison: Sir, we didn't drive trucks, we drove sedans. Four-door sedans, and my preference was always for the Chevy's, rather than the Fords.

Storey: Uh huh, and how often did they change the cars?

Harrison: Never! The car was assigned to you and it was up to you to see that it was properly gassed and oiled and repaired and so on.

Storey: And so you came in '47, wasn't it? (Harrison: '47.) You drove the same car until you retired?

Harrison: Just about. No, I had different Chevy's.

Storey: And there was a car pool here in Sacramento that assigned those.

Harrison: Yes, there was.

Storey: Did you bring the car back for servicing there?

Harrison: Well if we were in the field and it needed servicing, it was done in the field, but most often when we'd bring it home and put it into the pool, it was taken care of then.

Storey: Okay, and you mentioned earlier that you came back about every other weekend, and that was it. So this was a LOT of travel.

Harrison: Oh yes.

Storey: How was per diem handled in those days?

Harrison: Well at the end of the month you made out a voucher, travel voucher, and you were paid your per diem that way, you got a check for it.

Storey: Seems like this was as much travel as you did with the Indian Bureau.

Harrison: Yes, only with the Indian Bureau I'd be in the field longer than 2 weeks and every other weekend. As a matter of fact, for instance, between 1936 and 1939, I spent 22 months in Washington on a special detail for the Commissioner of Indian Affairs.

Storey: What were you doing on that special detail?

Harrison: I had uncovered some information on the Hoepa Reservation that I transmitted to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs and in the publication of that information in "Indians at Work" which was the in-house organ of the Indian Bureau, he was sued for \$250,000 libel by an ex-Congregational minister by the name of Collett and it was on the reason for that libel suit that I

was called back to Washington to assist the three attorneys who were defending the libel suit against the Commissioner. It resulted in one of the three attorneys and I taking 125 depositions in California, for instance, which meant spending months back in Washington, then coming to California traveling . . .

END OF SIDE 1, TAPE 2
BEGINNING OF SIDE 2, TAPE 2

Storey: . . . for Reclamation, did you ever have to work down in the Delta area? Was there anything going on down there from the CVP.

Harrison: Not that I recall.

Storey: But you worked the north end of the valley, you worked the south end of the valley, (Harrison: Yes.) so you weren't assigned a specific area to work in. (Harrison: No. No.) They would just

send you wherever they happened to need you at the moment?

Harrison: That's right. As a matter of fact in one instance for a right-of-way for which we had to have a deed, the owner of the property lived up in Canada and I suggested that I might go up there but was told that, "We'll handle it by mail," which I think was a very bad decision.

Storey: Why was that?

Harrison: Hell, I wanted to go to Canada!

Storey: Oh, okay, it was a nice scenic area, huh?

Harrison: Certainly!

Storey: Do you happen to remember what your first salary with the Federal Government was? After the Army I mean.

Harrison: \$1,320 a year.

Storey: \$1,320 a year. Do you mind my asking what your salary when you retired was?

Harrison: Close to \$8,000.

Storey: About 8, they do change — times do change. When you got the three[two]-grade increase, and moved over to Reclamation, do you remember what your starting salary at Reclamation was?

Harrison: (Drumming fingers on desk.) I think it was close to \$4,000. I'm guessing.

Storey: Yeah, okay. The um . . .

Harrison: Thank God for COLAS!

Storey: Cost of living allowances? Yeah, they keep you competitive, I guess. Well, can you think of anything I should have asked you?

Harrison: Yeah, you should have asked me what I had for dinner last night. You just about asked me everything else!

Storey: No, no. How about the Retirees Organization here in town, do you know any of the people who are active in that?

Harrison: I know several retirees but I don't know who is active in it.

Storey: Okay, yeah the office downtown can help me.

Harrison: They should have that information. I know the person from whom I get an announcement every year for their annual get-together of the retirees from the Bureau is a Miss Rinehart but I can't give you her address or telephone number. You can get that from the local office.

Storey: Sure, sure, okay. What have you done since you retired?

Harrison: Busier now than I ever was.

Storey: Uh huh. In what way?

Harrison: Well I — 70 some odd years ago I started collecting material, literature, on the history and development of the Trans-Mississippi West, plus Indian arts and crafts and non-Indian art of the West. And over the years, I've made contributions to the Laboratory of Anthropology in Santa Fe: for instance I gave them a collection of Southwest baskets, 126 baskets, as a gift, plus other Indian crafts and materials, and to the Southwest Museum in southern California I have gifted Navajo textiles, photographs that were taken by people like Timothy O'Sullivan, and photographs that I had taken of Indians both in the Southwest and California, plus my Navajo silver collection of over 200 pieces, plus 22 oil paintings, water colors, and etchings of the Southwest by people like Joseph H. Sharp, Louis

Sharp, Frank Sauerwein, Lon McGargee, and others, and although I've stopped collecting things like Navajo jewelry, I still collect books on the Trans-Mississippi West and paintings and things of that sort. Eventually, all of it will go to the University of California at Davis as part of the Margaret B. Harrison and Michael Harrison Western Research Center. As of now, it is an adjunct library of the university.

Storey: Well, let me ask you if the tapes and transcripts from this interview can be used by Reclamation researchers and non-Reclamation researchers interested in Reclamation history.

Harrison: Certainly.

Storey: Good. I appreciate it. Thank you.

END OF SIDE 2, TAPE 2.

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ORAL HISTORY PROGRAM GUIDELINES:
BUREAU OF RECLAMATION

Effective Date: October 13, 1994

**COOPERATIVE PROGRAM WITH THE
NATIONAL ARCHIVES AND RECORDS
ADMINISTRATION (NARA)**

The Bureau of Reclamation conducts its oral history program cooperatively with NARA because Reclamation wishes to permanently protect the data obtained through implementation of its oral history program, facilitate research in Reclamation's history, and assure permanent access of Reclamation and researchers to the data resulting from implementation of its oral history program. This cooperative program permits Reclamation to: use and distribute unrestricted oral history materials; use and distribute restricted oral history materials after the restrictions end; and, close interviews to public access and researcher access through restrictions contained in a donor's deed of gift accepted by the Archivist of the United States. The program is governed by a Memorandum of Understanding between the Bureau of Reclamation and the National Archives and Records Administration. These Oral History Program Guidelines of the Bureau of Reclamation fulfill one condition of that agreement and are required to be followed.

OBJECTIVES OF THE ORAL HISTORY PROGRAM

The ideal sought in Bureau of Reclamation oral history transcripts is to retain information understood today which

may not be clearly understood, or will be lost entirely, in the future; yet, still retain facts and opinions, speech patterns, inflections, characteristics, and flavor of speech. This shall be done through preservation of oral history interviews: on cassette tapes and in printed transcriptions.

ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEWS DONE OUTSIDE THE DENVER OFFICE

Oral history interviews done outside the Denver Office should conform to the guidance in this document to assure that the resulting tapes and transcripts will be accepted by the National Archives and Records Administration for permanent storage and retention. Even if that is not done, copies of tapes and transcripts should be provided to the Oral History program in the Denver Office.

CONDUCT OF INTERVIEWS

Preparation for Interviews

Effective interviews are dependent upon proper preparation in advance. A brief telephone conversation with the prospective interviewee should provide basic background about where the interviewee worked at Reclamation and types of responsibility. Using that information, basic research into the offices involved and relevant projects may be conducted.

It is always a good idea to have a list of questions ready in advance of the interview. These should contain both general and specific questions about Reclamation and

the interviewee's special areas of expertise and responsibility.

Obtaining Deed of Gift

Signature of the interviewee on the approved deed of gift should be obtained before the interview--with the understanding that clauses limiting access to all or part of the interview may be added after the interview if the interviewee deems it necessary.

The interviewer will also sign the deed of gift as a simple acknowledgement of conduct of the interview.

Objective of the Interview

ALWAYS REMEMBER THAT, WHILE WE ALSO WANT GENERAL BACKGROUND ABOUT THE PERSON BEING INTERVIEWED, THE OBJECTIVE(S) OF THE INTERVIEW IS:

TO PRESERVE INFORMATION ABOUT THE BUREAU OF RECLAMATION, ITS PROJECTS, THE COMMUNITIES ON ITS PROJECTS, AND PERCEPTIONS OF BOTH INSIDERS AND OUTSIDERS ABOUT THE BUREAU OF RECLAMATION.

Conduct of the Interview (Including Opening and Closing Statements on Tape)

Introducing the Interview

Before Taping Begins

Before beginning the interview discuss:

the general nature of what is going to happen,

the deed of gift and request signature of it,

point out that the interviewee may at any time state that they don't wish to discuss the topic proposed,

state that in addition to information strictly about the Bureau of Reclamation you want general family, education, biographical outline and other information about the interviewee,

Explain that the interview will be transcribed and then transmitted to the interviewee for review for accuracy and correct spellings. The interviewee will then be asked to initial each page of the interview.

Beginning the Interview on Tape

Open the interview with a statement which includes the following information:

Names of interviewer and interviewee.
Any pertinent information such as: farmer
on _____ Project, or, electrician at

Hoover Dam, or, operator at
Minidoka Dam, or, watermaster of
the Northern Colorado Water
Conservancy District, etc..

Location

Date

Time

Point out to the interviewee that the
conversation is being recorded and
ask permission to record the
conversation.

Conduct of the Interview on Tape

Try to avoid questions which can be answered with
yes and no. Instead ask for descriptions, explanations of
events or working conditions or relationships with the
community, etc.

Responses that include hand motions need
supplemental work by the interviewer. When a person says
"Oh, it was about this high" [and holds a hand about 2½
feet above the floor] -- we have no record of the meaning of
what was said. The interviewer must integrate words into
the tape to provide the necessary meaning, e.g., "Oh, about
2½ feet high, then?"

Just Before Ending the Interview

Before closing an interview, ask the interviewee
whether (s)he wishes to add anything, recount an
interesting story, or express any perspectives on
Reclamation that were not already covered.

Ending the Interview

In spite of the signed deed of gift, each interview should end with a question such as this:

May we quote from and otherwise use the information in this interview for purposes of research and quotation? And may we also provide it to researchers interested in Reclamation and its history for purposes of research and quotation?

The end of the interview should be a brief restatement, ON TAPE, as to the identity of interviewer and interviewee, time, date, and location.

PREPARATION OF TRANSCRIPTS⁵

Use of Computers

For editorial and other reasons it is necessary to use an IBM compatible computer using WordPerfect 5.1 or a later version for transcription of Bureau of Reclamation oral history interviews.

Objectives

Transcription and editing of oral history interviews by the Bureau of Reclamation shall be carried out in accordance with this guidance.

5. Much of this material is developed from Shirley E. Stephenson, *Editing and Indexing: Guidelines for Oral History* (Fullerton: California State University, 1978 (Second Printing with revisions - 1983).

Transcription shall be done only with very limited editing. The basic objective is a verbatim transcript of the interview.

The Parts of the Final Transcript

The following will normally be the outline of a completed transcript, and when transmitted to the interviewee for review the transcript will be as nearly complete as possible:

- ◆ Title Page with suggested bibliographic citation form on the back of the page near the bottom. The title page should include the information and be laid out as shown in Appendix 1.
- ◆ Table of Contents -- use the table of contents function of WordPerfect to do this.
- ◆ An "Introduction" to the transcript with background material on the interviewee and interview, and including:
 - Discussion of the time, location, date, and circumstances of the interview.
 - Listing of each Bureau of Reclamation employee or contractor involved in the interviewing, transcribing, editing, and indexing of the interview.
- ◆ Copy of the signed and dated "Statement of Donation" for the interview.

- ◆ The transcript of the interview.
- ◆ Appendices, including:
 - A copy of the Bureau of Reclamation's "oral history program guidelines".
 - A list of donated photographs (including copies made at Reclamation expense which were only loaned) and/or documents -- if any provided by the interviewee/donor.
 - Copies of any photographs and/or documents.
- ◆ Index to the transcript -- use the indexing function of WordPerfect to do this.

Page Layout of Transcripts

Begin the first page of the transcript with the heading "Oral History Interview of _____."

Single space the heading on the first page. Double space the transcript itself.

Insert a centered footer which will include the page number to begin after the first page of the transcript in this format (8 pt. Times Roman font):

Name of Interviewee
Bureau of Reclamation Oral History Program
Date of Interview
Page Ctrl-B

The transcript, if it falls naturally into distinct segments may have headings for each segment inserted in the transcript.

To indicate the speaker use the last name of the person followed by a colon on the left margin of the page, e.g.:

Wilson: Would you tell me about your
 educational experience?

Smythesville: I was educated, first, at a one- room
 school house in Wittsendburg, . . .

After the name of the speaker indent as needed to line up the left edge of the text for all speakers. For instance do not do the following:

Babb: Would you tell me about your educational
 experience?

Smythesville: I was educated, first, at a one- room
 school house in Wittsendburg, . . .

Instead, indent twice after Babb and once after Smythesville for this effect:

Babb: Would you tell me about your
 educational experience?

Smythesville: I was educated, first, at a one- room
 school house in Wittsendburg, . . .

Indicating paragraphs in transcripts should follow the following rules:

Immediately after the name of the speaker do not tab at the beginning of the paragraph. For all subsequent paragraphs tab the beginning of the paragraph and do not insert extra spaces. For instance:

Witt: Well, I went to grade school at South Wittsburg, junior high school at West Wittsburg, and High School at South Inglewood.

On the other hand, my older sister went to grade school at South Wittsburg, and then attended West Wittsburg Junior High School before going off to finishing school in Basel, Switzerland.

Then I went to college at . . .

Indicating the Beginning and end of Tapes

Indicate the beginning and end of each side of tapes in the transcript. Place this notation on the left margin lined up with names. Do not indicate the beginning of the first tape -- simply begin the transcript. For instance (note single spacing):

END OF SIDE 1, TAPE 1.
BEGINNING OF SIDE 2, TAPE 1.

Smith: There was no indication that we . . .

If interviews/sessions on more than one date occurred then use the following format:

END OF SIDE 2, TAPE 2. SEPTEMBER 15, 1993.
BEGINNING OF SIDE 1, TAPE 1. OCTOBER 22,
1993.

Smith: There was no indication that we . . .

In such cases, place that date at the end of all indications of tape changes in order to help quickly orient readers/researchers:

END OF SIDE 2, TAPE 1. SEPTEMBER 15, 1993.
BEGINNING OF SIDE 1, TAPE 2. SEPTEMBER
15, 1993.

Smith: There was no indication that we . . .

Editorial Conventions

Transcription shall be done only with very limited editing -- punctuation designed to clarify meaning must be provided; only false starts and redundant oral sounds shall be edited out of the transcript with no indication they have been removed; interruptions to the interview or situations when the conversation wanders from the topic may be indicated in brackets and not included; to the extent possible full identification of individuals and geographic place names shall be provided.

Punctuation Conventions

Punctuation is the best tool for the transcriber and editor to provide clarity, understandability, and readability. Do not rearrange sentences or words to do this. Punctuation must simply reflect the original meaning and the original arrangement of thoughts.

Quotation marks.

Do not use quotes around the words of the interviewee as spoken to the interviewer. Use quotes around words which are presented by the interviewee as quotes of another person, e.g., -- then he said to me "Well, if you want it that way you can go ahead and do it."

Place commas and periods inside quotation marks -- regardless of whether the punctuation belongs to the quotation or the sentence as a whole.

Place colons and semicolons outside quotation marks.

Question marks and exclamation marks are placed inside or outside the quotation marks dependent upon whether or not they belong to the quotation or to the sentence as a whole.

PARENTHESES ARE USED TO INDICATE THINGS WHICH ARE ON THE TAPE. When laughter or other expressive sounds occur indicate them in parentheses =(). Indicate only what is on the tape with parentheses =().

ALSO USE PARENTHESES to include brief interjections in a discussion. For instance:

Smith: At that time we were assigned to special duty as concrete inspectors for the construction of the dam. We found that the quantity of ice mixed with the concrete was insufficient to reduce the temperature properly, (Jones: Yes.) and we had to work that issue out with the contractor. That only took a day, but it was rather tense because the contractor had to shut down the [concrete] batch plant while we worked it out. (Jones: Um-hmm.). The contractor was particularly concerned that she wouldn't fall behind schedule, and . . .

BRACKETS ARE USED TO INDICATE SUPPLEMENTAL EDITORIAL INFORMATION SUCH AS INTERPOLATIONS, EXPLANATIONS, AND CORRECTIONS PROVIDED BY THE EDITOR WHICH WAS NOT ON THE ORIGINAL TAPE -- place it in brackets =[]

FOOTNOTES:

May be used to provide supplemental editorial information. This would generally be done for researched information added to clarify and supplement the interview while brackets would provide brief information intended to clarify what was said.

Footnotes must be attributed to indicate who added the material. If the editor made the addition, the footnote should be followed by: (Ed.) If the addition was made by the interviewee, the footnote should be followed by the initials of the interviewee in parentheses.

Footnotes should be printed at the bottom of the page on which they appear in the final transcript rather than at the end of the entire transcript or of a section of it. The following conventions should be used (using WordPerfect set these conventions in the options to footnotes at the beginning of the transcript):

The footnote number in the text shall be superscript.

The footnote(s) shall be separated from the text on the page with a line from margin to margin of the page.

The footnote number in the footnote shall be on the left margin with the beginning of text one tab in from the note.

The footnote number in the note shall be full-size and shall sit on the same

line as the text, i.e., it will not be superscript.

Ellipses are used to indicate pauses in the conversation.

For pauses in the middle of sentences always type them as three dots separated by spaces from one another and the preceding word -- thus . . .

For pauses which become the end of sentences or even incomplete thoughts, always type them as four dots separated by spaces from one another and the preceding word -- thus

Use of dashes.

Double dashes (--)⁶ are used to show an abrupt change of thought in a sentence. For purposes of Reclamation's transcripts each double dash will be preceded and followed by a space. For example:

Our house at the dam had a living room, dining room, kitchen, and three bedrooms -- now it's been moved over on "N" Street here in town.

Single dashes (-) are used in inclusive or continuing series of numbers or dates (e.g., 23-26 or 1945-1948; to indicate words spelled out by the

6. Technically double dashes (--) are known as "em" dashes and single dashes (-) are known as "en" dashes.

interviewee (e.g., L-A-N-I-D-O); for compound words (e.g., twenty-one).

Use of italics:

Use the italics font on the computer to indicate italics.⁷

Italics are used:

For titles: books, plays, newspapers⁸, periodicals, journals, long poems, musical productions, paintings, films; the names of ships, trains, and aircraft.

For foreign words not yet anglicized.⁹

Abbreviations:

Under normal circumstances abbreviations should not be used since one does not speak in abbreviations and the objective is a verbatim transcript. The following abbreviations are

7. If a typewriter is being used for some reason, a single underline of the word indicates it is italicized.

8. The official title of the newspaper that appears on the masthead is what should be italicized. Consult *Ayer's Directory of Newspapers and Periodicals* for the official title.

9. Dictionaries are useful here. A useful reference is Marjorie E. Skillin, Robert M. Gay, et. al., *Words Into Type* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1974).

generally acceptable: Mr., Messrs., Mrs., Ms., Dr., Jr., Sr., Ph.D., M.A., B.C., A.D., a.m., and p.m..

Do not use U. S. Postal Service abbreviations for names of states. Spell them out.

Acronyms:

Acronyms are capitalized without periods inserted after each letter, e.g., BR, NASA, NPS.

Normally the first use of an acronym should be followed by the words for which that acronym stands in brackets, e.g., BR [Bureau of Reclamation]; SOP [standard operating procedure].

If an interviewee uses the acronym B-O-R for Reclamation, type it BoR [BOR is the acronym for the Bureau of Outdoor Recreation, a now defunct Federal agency].

Hyphens:

Do not use hyphens except in compound words. Turn the hyphenation default in the computer program off.

Margins:

Set the margins in the computer at one inch -- top, bottom, and sides.

Justification:

Set the justification at left justify only. Do not use the "full" justification setting.

Grammatical Conventions

Use contractions in the transcript when they appear on the tape, e.g., they's, it's, etc..

Do not correct the interviewee's grammar.

For consistent colloquial pronunciations of words use the proper spelling instead of a phonetic spelling, e.g., them and not "em." But, equally, do not change the words, e.g., "yeah" is a word and should not be changed to "yes."

Numbers:

Generally exact numbers of two or fewer digits should be spelled out and numbers with more than two digits should be expressed in numerals.

Dates and parts of a book are expressed in numerals.

Do abbreviate dates when the century was not included in the taped discussion (e.g., '41 and not 1941)

When referring to dates you may use numerals and an "s" -- type 1940s instead of Nineteen Forties, or type '40s for the term forties. Do not use an apostrophe unless the term is possessive [as in -- The 50's autos often had huge tail fins]..

Spelling Conventions

Use the first (preferred) spelling in a standard dictionary when transcribing. American English conventions are preferred over British English conventions in most instances (.e.g, interviewing a Briton might result in use of British English spellings).

Table of Contents

Interviews on different dates and major sections of the manuscript shall be marked with the table of contents function of the WordPerfect 5.1 program. Interviews of different dates shall be labelled at Level 1. Major sections within each interview shall be labelled at Level 2.

Indexing

All proper names, project names, feature names, locations, and major topics of discussion shall be indexed using the WordPerfect 5.1 indexing function. Items in the text will be cross-indexed as necessary to assure ease of finding them.

Review of Transcript by Interviewee

After transcription and initial editing, the transcript will be forwarded to the interviewee for review, comment if necessary, correction of names and place names, etc. The interviewee will be asked to initial each page of the interview if it is acceptable as is.

If the interviewee requests changes, additions, or deletions to the transcript, each request will be considered

on its merits. The transcript will then be corrected as necessary and returned for final review and initialling by the interviewee.

Changes to Transcripts at the Request of Interviewees

Additions to transcripts requested by interviewees will be made in footnotes at the appropriate location in the text with the initials of the interviewee in parentheses at the end of the addition.

Deletions to transcripts at the request of interviewees should be made with care and only after consultation with and approval by the Senior Historian of the Bureau of Reclamation.

Editorial changes to transcripts for the purposes of making the text more formal and grammatical, e.g., more like a formal written style rather than spoken style, shall be discussed with and approved by the Senior Historian of the Bureau of Reclamation. It is the policy of Reclamation, where possible and appropriate, to retain the flavor and style of the spoken interview.

Preparation of Record Copy of Transcript and Other Materials for Transmittal to NARA

The record copy of the transcript prepared for transmittal to the National Archives and Records Administration will be on quality, non-acid paper with a high cotton content, preferably 100 percent cotton. The record copy will be unbound, but Reclamation's copies will generally be bound in a standardized hard cover format.

Transcripts of 100 pages, or fewer, will be printed on one side of the paper. Transcripts of more than 100 pages will be printed on both sides of the paper.

The record copy of the transcript and other copies shall normally be printed in Times Roman font at the 12 point size.

SUGGESTED INTERVIEW CITATION FORM FOR RESEARCHERS

A suggested bibliographic citation should be placed near the bottom of the page on the back of the title page of each oral history interview. The following is the format and punctuation for the citation:

Suggested Bibliographic Citation:

Last name, First and middle name or initial (of interviewee). ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW. Transcript of tape-recorded Bureau of Reclamation Oral History Interview conducted by ___(name of interviewer)___, ___(relationship of interviewer to Reclamation)___, ___(date of interview - be precise)___, at ___(location of interview).
Transcription by ___(name of transcriber or transcription service)___ . Edited by ___(name of editor[s])___ . Repository for the record copy of the interview

transcript is the National Archives
and Records Administration in
College Park, Maryland.

**THIS SET OF GUIDELINES SHALL BE PLACED AT
THE END OR BEGINNING OF EACH INTERVIEW
TO PROVIDE INFORMATION ON THE
PRINCIPLES USED IN DEVELOPMENT OF THE
TRANSCRIPT.**

ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW
Name of Interviewee
Name of Reclamation Project
(if limited to only one - otherwise blank)

Date of Interview
Location of Interview

◆◆◆◆◆◆◆◆

Interview Conducted by:
Name
Title
Organizational Unit

◆◆◆◆◆◆◆◆

Oral History Program
Bureau of Reclamation