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An
Oral History
Interview
with
Lillian Morrison

1996

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Lillian Morrison, 1995
[photo courtesy of Lillian Morrison]

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Photographs

following page

1. Lillian Morrison, 1995.....	frontispiece
2. Lillian Morrison [3 portraits, ca. 1909-1926].....	1
3. Baldwin Family portrait, 1934.....	2
4. Baldwin Family farm [3 views, ca. 1910s and 1934].....	8
5. Lloyd and Lillian Morrison's 25th wedding anniversary [1953].....	13
6. Babcock & Wilcox Company plant near Hoover Dam [ca. 1933-34].....	25
7. Boulder Canyon Project Federal Reservation gate, 1932.....	27
8. Boulder City [aerial view, 1934].....	27
9. Don Morrison [two portraits, 1935 and ca. 1947].....	28
10. Avenue M, Boulder City, 1932-33 [3 views].....	38
11. Lloyd Morrison and Paul Webb's basketball team, 1942.....	40
12. Grace Community Church, 1945.....	43
13. Parson Tom Stevenson and his Sunday School class, 1932.....	43
14. Manix & Vaughn's Department Store, 1932.....	60
15. Ida Browder, 1960.....	62
16. Franklin Roosevelt at Hoover Dam, September 30, 1935 [2 views].....	67
17. Tourist convoy at Hoover Dam, 1941.....	70
18. Employee badge checking station at Hoover Dam, 1942.....	71
19. Porter Womack homes in Boulder City, 1942 and ca. 1945.....	76
20. Lillian Morrison at work at Hoover Dam, ca. 1950s.....	79
21. Lillian Morrison, ca. 1947-48.....	81
22. Bureau of Reclamation's city staff, 1956.....	86
23. Lillian Morrison at work for the National Park Service, ca. 1965 and 1968.....	91
24. Boulder City staff of the National Park Service, 1965.....	94
25. Lloyd and Lillian Morrison, ca. 1991.....	97

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1996
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Boulder City Library
Oral History Project Interview
with
Lillian Morrison

conducted by
Dennis McBride
February 5 and 10,
and
July 29,
1996

This is Dennis McBride and I'm with Lillian Morrison in her home at 616 Avenue I, Boulder City. Today is Monday, February 5 [1996], and I'm starting an oral history interview with a lady I find very interesting. And I think she's got a lot of very interesting and important things to tell me about Boulder City history and Hoover Dam.

But first I want to know about your background—if you can tell me when you were born and where you were born.

I was born on an Iowa farm in Tama County, November 9, 1908. And I lived on a farm all of my life except two years before I came out here. And, of course, I've been in Boulder City ever since 1935, really. February 1935.

Did you have a very large family: brothers and sisters?

I had three brothers and no sisters. And I have lost all of my brothers. Even my youngest brother.



grades went in that. And sometimes
were never less than that during the
and sometimes there were (students numbering) in the 30s,
depending on as the families moved in and out of the area.

Lillian Maude Baldwin [Morrison]

Top: a babe-in-arms, ca. 1909-10

Left: 11 years old in 1919

Right: 1926

[photos courtesy of Lillian Morrison]

What were their names?

My oldest brother was Charles, and he was just 15 months older than I. My next brother was 3-1/2 years younger, and his name was Donovan, which I named my son. And we have never called him that. We call him Don. And my youngest brother was Dick. It's not a nickname. My grandmother's name was Mary Emily Dick, and my dad named [my youngest brother] Dick, for his mother.

What were your mother's and father's names?

My dad's name Ernest Baldwin, and my mother's name was Edna Rebbeke.¹

That's an interesting name.

She came out there into the rural area from Toledo, Iowa. She came out to teach school in the district where my grandfather was the director of schools. After he'd interviewed Mother, he said at the dinner table that night—of course, Mother wasn't there—he said, "I interviewed a young lady today and *some fella* should take pity on her and change her name." And my dad did! [laughs]

We lived on the farm eight miles from Grundy Center, Iowa where, eventually, I went to high school. There I met It's a small town. It was only 1800 [people]. We knew everyone and that was the place we'd always gone to church, so it wasn't a case of me *meeting* Lloyd later. It was a case of just always knowing the family. I didn't necessarily know Lloyd, but I knew the family and I was the chum of his youngest sister, Genevieve.

I'd been attending a country school all except three years of my elementary school education.

When you say a country school, how is that different from a city school?

Oh! It was a one-room school, all eight grades were in that. And sometimes there were 16 children in school. There were never less than that during the years I went. And sometimes there were [students numbering] in the 20s, depending on as the families moved in and out of the area.



**Baldwin Family
1934**

standing, l-r: Donovan [1912-1985]; Charles [1906-1992]; Lillian [b. 1908]
seated, l-r: father, Ernest [1883-1959]; Dick [1921-1993]; mother, Edna
[1884-1976]

[photo courtesy of Lillian Morrison]

Was there just one teacher for all those students?

Just one teacher. And she was the janitor. She had to get there early in the winter time. Of course, everything is consolidated back there now. No more country schools. But country schools are not as bad as they sound. You hear the same thing taught for eight years and it's got to get in your head.

So she didn't teach different courses, different subjects for each grade?

No. She taught them for each grade, but you're sitting there hearing that. Eight years you hear that. Well, I didn't hear eight years because there was a short time we lived in town and I went to a town school there.

But my dad lived on the farm where he was born and he died on the farm where he was born.

What kind of farm was it? What did he raise?

Everything. You see, we had, maybe five milk cows and we sold the milk that we didn't use. And Dad raised ... they called them bacon hogs. They're Hampshire hogs. [He raised them] for Rath Packing Company in Waterloo, Iowa. They contracted with Dad for his hogs. And then we put up our own hay, and we used a binder. We didn't even *combine* back in those days.

What's the difference between a binder and a combine?

Well, a binder The machine cut and tied [the grain] in shocks. And it would just dump the bundles off as they went around and around the field. And then you'd have men shocking, because they [the shocks] had to be weather proof. They had to shed rain. And then the threshing crew would come around and thresh out the grain, and you'd haul the grain to a bin or a crib, whichever, and the straw would just go out in a pile and you'd use that for bedding for the animals.

Now, they go out there [to the fields] and they cut it and thresh it and haul just the grain into town.

They leave the straw?

No, they bale it. They go out with another machine and bale it.

But now the combine does *all* of that. We had a binder. When Lloyd and I left there in '34, we were still using horses and binders. Cutting the grain and shocking it and *then* threshing it. Well, now, of course, every farmer, if he doesn't have a combine himself, has a neighbor that has one who'd like to do the work to pay for his machine!

Do you know what a hayrack is? The farmers had what they called threshing crews, and that would be six farmers or more [who] would go together and they would buy a threshing machine, a small one. And then when everybody was through and had [all the grain] shocked, all the neighbors in the crew would come over to your house and they'd have their hayracks and a man called a pitcher. He would throw [the grain] up to a man [who] would load this hay rack. There's a knack to loading a hay rack. If they didn't load it evenly, the darned thing would tip over because, you see, the hayrack was much wider than the runners of the wheels. The hay rack was much wider. The men would pitch the bundles of grain into the machine, and there would be a guy there with a grain wagon catching the grain, and the straw would go out someplace else.

Then it was a great cooperative effort among all the farmers?

Oh, yes, it was. Even the women had to cooperate because no woman could get a meal for that many men. The farmer usually got along with one hired man and occasionally the women had help in the house, like when their children were little. She was called the *hired girl*. So there would be one girl to help Mother, [because] maybe you were getting a meal for 20 men, you see.

Did your mother have a hired girl?

Yes. My mother almost always had a hired girl. [Mother] wasn't very well—we kids wore her out, I guess. Besides that, Mother was a *town* girl. Why Dad married a town girl, you wonder, and took her out there in the country when she didn't know anything about it. It wasn't easy for a girl who was raised in the city. Well, it wasn't a city, [it was] a small town. She wasn't used to taking care of the chickens and doing a garden and raising her kids [all] at the same time.

So the women would come in, like, two of the neighbor ladies would come in the day the threshers were at our house because they had to serve [a morning] lunch and a noon meal, and an afternoon lunch and an *evening* meal. The [men got] that because they came in from four or five miles around. But they changed that. The last I remember they discontinued the morning lunch and they had dinner, and an afternoon lunch, and then the men went home as they finished. Like the first man in with the hayrack full of grain to thresh would be through an hour and a half before the last fellow, so he might as well go home. So it wasn't quite so hard for the women.

What kind of food did they serve? And did they serve it in the house or did they have a place outside?

They served it in the house. They put benches outside with buckets of water so men could clean up a little bit before they would come in. They always wanted Mother to serve Swiss steak. They had favorites. Like, some women did well with one dish, [some women with another]. I remember the men'd say, "If we go to Baldwins, we're gonna have Swiss steak." She'd bake her pies—very seldom [did she bake them] the day before. Almost always she got up at four o'clock and prepared the food. Pie would be your dessert. Coleslaw was a big thing during that season of the year because everybody had fresh cabbage. I remember everyone *always* served coleslaw. And potatoes and gravy.

Did she have a wood stove or an electric stove?

She had wood. Occasionally we had coal, but almost always we had wood. In the summertime it was miserable because it made the house so awful hot. A lot of the farms—my grandfather's farm, the one we lived on after the grandparents died—had what they called a summer kitchen. And it had a big range, we called 'em, wood range. And Mother prepared the meals out there, so the house didn't get hot. But the meal was *served* in the house.

The summer kitchen was a separate building?

Yes, a separate building.

When they were doing all the harvesting, the threshing and binding, were you involved in that? Did you ever get out there to help them?

The boys did. I was kept busy in the house. That was one of the times Mother got me instead of Dad. *[laughs]* But the boys did. For instance, they would be pitchers out in the field because there was always a little bit of risk for them and the boys started in quite young doing that. You had to throw *[the bundles of grain]* quite high. They loaded those hay racks quite high. So the boys did that.

I had to help in haying. Putting up hay was a miserable job.

How do you put up hay? What does that mean?

Well, every farm had a big barn, and the top of the barn was the hayloft. Usually there was a driveway through the center of the barn *[motions on the tabletop]*. They would pull the wagon, full of hay—and that was another job: bucking the hay loader out in the field. It was a machine that raked it up off of the *[ground]*, and it went up like a conveyor and dropped on the hayrack. And the guy whose wagon it was would put that *[hay]* around the shape of the wagon *[motions laying hay]* till it got as high as he wanted. Then they took it into the barn, pulled in to the driveway. And my dad used a harpoon. Some hayforks had two tines. Dad used a single harpoon. *[He'd push it down into the hay]*, then when he pulled the little latch the *[fork]* would catch the hay.

And then it was a pulley system. When Dad would give the signal, we would pull *[the line]*, and the hay would go up, hit the track up above, and it would go to whichever side of the barn Dad was loading. When it got to the *[hayloft]*, the fella up above had it dumped at the most convenient place. He'd yell, and Dad would jerk the rope and those little gadgets *[on the harpoon]* would come up and the load would fall.

Was it like a gantry crane that would move through the barn?

Oh, yes. It was on a track. That's right. And since the driveway was in the middle it had to be so that Dad could direct it wherever he wanted it to go. Now, I had to drive on the hay fork. I didn't like that at all because I always had the worst *[horse]* team. *[laughs]* The worst team was given to the person because that's all those horses had to do, was to pull that one hay fork load up.

When you say the worst team, what do you mean by worst?

Oh, I mean the old spavined² horses that really should be retired. Dad figured they'd earned a rest. He had stock in the pastures that were too old, just because he was chicken-hearted. He didn't make glue out of them or anything. [laughs]

And then if the boys were in the field, Dad would come in and say to Mother, "I'd like to use Lillian for awhile." And Mother'd say, "All right."

One of the days Dad came in and said, "We're going to mark and ring the pigs." Now, instead of a farmer separating his herd into the breeding stock and the ones they were gonna market, they would let them all run together. Not only that, Dad was very particular, since he was raising pigs for Rath Packing Company, to get good stock. So instead of trying to divide 'em out into pastures, he had a system of marking the sows so he could run 'em all together. So he came in and got me and took me out into the barn. We ran them into the stall, a box stall where we could shut the gate. The smaller area made it easier to catch the pigs. And we would get them in there. And Dad had an iron ring for the nose of the pig. You'd get it into the pig's mouth—he'd stand perfectly still because it hurt him to move. Then dad would put the ring in the pig's nose. That's to keep him from digging out [of the pen]. They're great diggers, pigs are. It didn't hurt them. And then he gave me a shingle about so wide [measures about six inches] and a strange knife that had a blade about that long [measures about two inches] and was sharp every which way. That was for me to use for the marking so he could tell which sows he was keeping. And I was to put the shingle under the pig's ear and stick that knife through it just that far in, just 3/4 of an inch in and give it a little jerk. There's no nerve or blood or anything in a pig's ears if you stick the knife in the right place.

So it didn't hurt the pig?

Well, I hurt it before the day was over! Oh, the barn was just bloody around there and I knew I was doing something wrong. I don't know how many we did that to. Maybe 25. And at the dinner table that night—supper, it was supper on the farm—Dad said, "Well, we've got some sows out there with three ears." So then he told that I was getting wobbly—you know, that was bothering me! I don't know how old I was, maybe 12. And he said, "Lillian was getting so she'd put the

shingle there and she'd stab and sometimes she'd cut the ear almost [off]." [laughs] Surely that hurt them. I'd cut across the one vein. And of course, I had blood all over everything! I wore coveralls when I helped my dad, and Mother said, "Well, why didn't you send her to the house?"

And Dad said, "I *had* to get the job done." [laughs]

I was supposed to just nick the ear. Because, you see, as it would heal it would spread just a little bit. And if it had been done properly the nick wouldn't have been any bigger than that [*measures a half inch*]. Well, some of 'em had three ears by the time I got through.

Even after I came out here, if I went home in the summer, I drove the tractor that the binder was hitched to—Dad had a tractor by then. But I was *raised* on the farm. It wasn't as if you took some girl out of Boulder City and took her there to do the work.

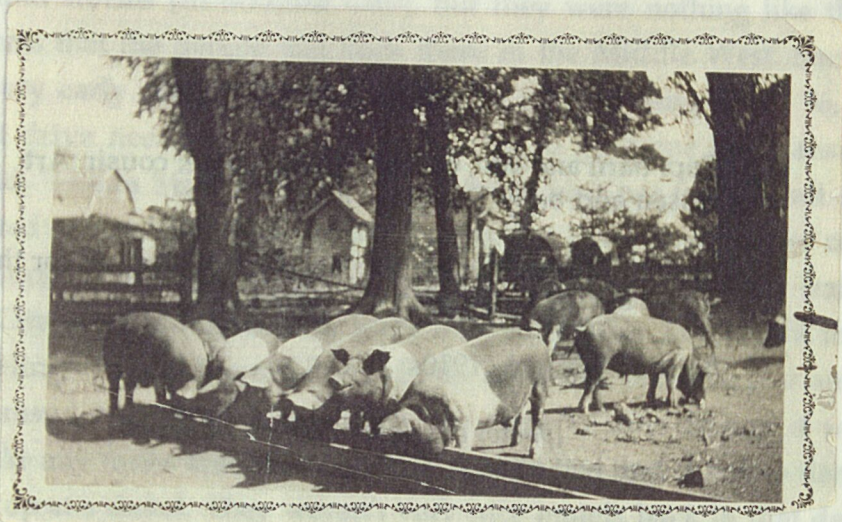
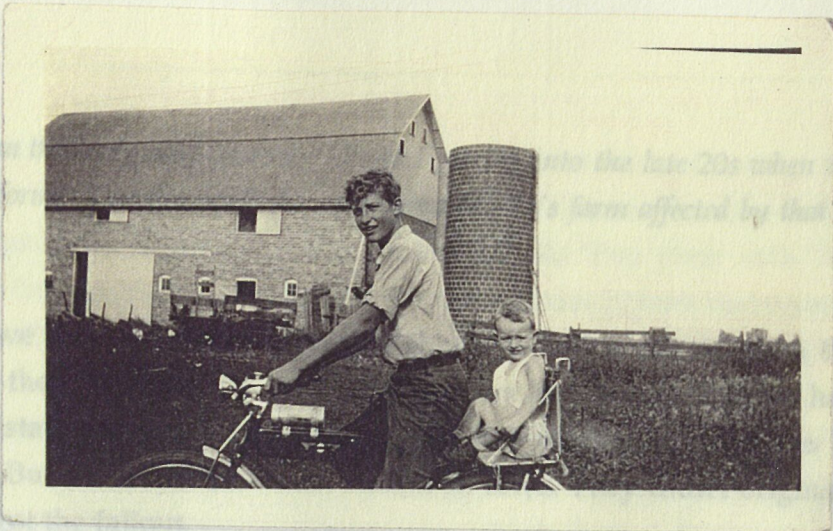
Was your father's farm prosperous?

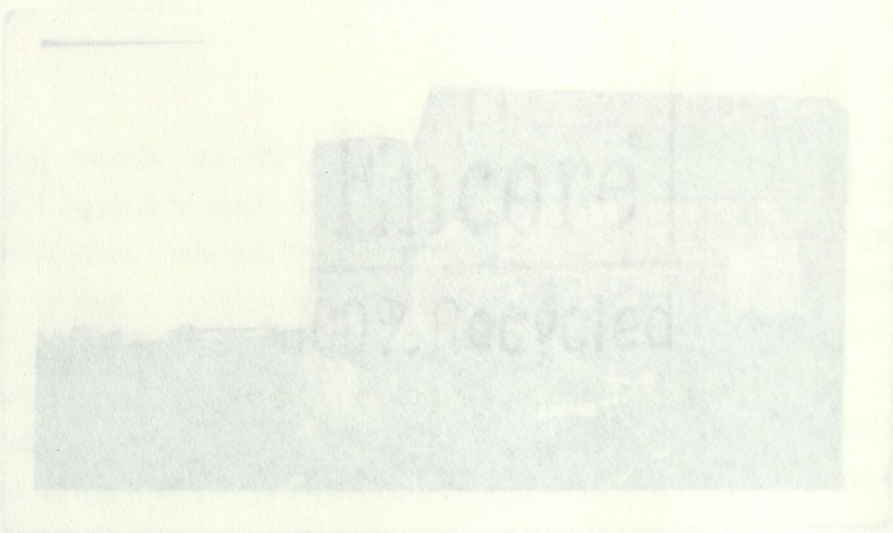
We had *wonderful* land. His subsoil, you know. Some places in the low lands he had 18 inches. He had like 12 to 14 inches of black Iowa soil. It would do, like, 200 bushels of corn to the acre. You see, my grandfather had a lot of land because he homesteaded. There was no high school [then], so Grandfather sent Dad to Ames, Iowa [where there] was an agricultural school. In six years you got high school *and* college. Well, after Dad had been there like two years, he was 18 years old, he went home and he was my grandfather's manager for all these farms. At age 19 he took that on.

Do you remember how many farms or how many acres [your grandfather] owned?

No, I don't remember. There were five farms and some unimproved land. An unimproved 80 is what Lloyd has there now. Lloyd's estate, Lloyd's father's estate, when it was divided up, Lloyd and his sister were assigned one 160.³ Genevieve wanted the house because her husband was a farmer, so she took the land with the house on it. And Lloyd has what we call [an] unimproved 80. And then you don't have any buildings to keep up, any fences to put up, anything. So that's what's back there now.

So Grandfather had, maybe 1200 acres. I'm not sure.





Baldwin Farm, Iowa

Top: barn and silo, ca. 1934 [on the bike: cousin Art Jensen and baby Don Morrison]

Center: Hampshire hogs Ernest Baldwin raised for the Rath Packing Company, ca. 1910s-20s

Bottom: hayrack, 1910s

[photos courtesy of Lillian Morrison]



As time went on, I'm thinking about into the 20s and getting into the late 20s when the Dust Bowl started forming in the Midwest—was your family's farm affected by that at all?

The only effect we had was these huge dust clouds would come up from the Kansas area. And they would settle. And after that we had weeds that we had never seen in the state of Iowa before. Maybe not just weeds, but all types of that kind of thing. But we didn't have dust storms in Iowa. They didn't originate in Iowa—we just got the fallout.

Now, we had sand storms [in Boulder City], but they were nothing like the choking dust storms that the people had back there in the Middle West. Some time during our very early years out here [in Boulder City], during '35 or '36, a lady who did not drive needed a driver. She wanted to go home [to] Kansas City. Someone said, "Lillian Morrison goes back there to visit her folks." And so [this lady] contacted me and we made arrangements that I would drive her car for her, take [my son] Don, and go back to Kansas City. She would pay my train fair from Kansas City up to Marshalltown, Iowa where my folks would pick me up. We were traveling through Kansas. It was in the afternoon between two and three o'clock, because I remember it was much too early to stop driving if we were trying to make any miles that day. But the air got so bad and it got so dark that we [had] to stop at a motel. They weren't very nice motels back in that day as I remember it, but they were adequate. We were going to spend the night there and then hope that it was going to be clear in the morning so that we could go on. Don was just four or five or six years old, right in that age, and he went to sleep quite readily. But I was worried about the dust. We were *gritty*. Our *teeth* were gritty. [The dust] just sifted in every place that it could. It just covered everything. I was worried [about Don] inhaling this. So I took a damp cloth and lay it over his face. To show you how dead tired he was, it didn't disturb him in the least. He slept right through it. I would keep checking to be sure [the cloth] was still in place or dampening it again. Where his nostrils were, it got black with the dirt and the dust. I can remember nothing about when I went to bed what I did, except that I breathed through a wet cloth while I was awake. In the morning, it was clear and we were able to go on.

Your farm went on producing rather well all through the Depression?

Lloyd and I went broke. We got married in '28 and we went to farming. We had to borrow from the bank, and you just signed a note. Then when the banks went broke they just told the young farmers like Lloyd, "Pay your note." Of course, you had to have a crop. We didn't, so we went broke. It took us 10 years to get out of debt after we came out here, and we only owed \$3000. Can you imagine?

See, we started up just at the wrong time. '29 is when we started. And by '31 and '32 the banks were going broke and closing. They actually closed. One interesting thing about that. My dad had money in a bank there, I don't know if it was savings or not. And Lloyd owed that bank. That was where we had borrowed our money. So my dad went to that bank and said, "I would like you to take my money that's in the bank and put it against Morrison's loan."

They said, "We can't do that."

Well, he didn't know why they couldn't, but they *didn't* do it. We owed them \$3000, it's true. But my dad got 10¢ on the dollar out of that bank with the money he had. Dad didn't lose any land during the Depression, but he turned off the electricity and we went right back to living rather primitively. The farm went on producing excellent crops—they just didn't bring anything on the market.

Let me back up just a little bit. Tell me how it was that you first started getting romantically involved with Lloyd. Do you remember dating and dancing?

He wouldn't dance. I was on the high school basketball team and Lloyd was very interested in athletics. After he graduated from high school he went into the farming business with his dad. See, we all went to the same high school: my brothers and Lloyd's brothers and sisters all went to the same high school, but Lloyd was out [of school] before I ever got to high school. He was farming with his dad, so when all the girls his age, you know, went off to school or went teaching or got jobs someplace, he started chasing the high school [girls] around, and I was one of them! I think I was about 15-1/2 or 16 when Lloyd started paying attention to me. He played on an organized ball team back there then, and that's about all we did, go to sports activities. I went to teacher's college and Lloyd gave me a diamond ring and when I came home, my dad said, "Does that ring mean business?"

I said, "Yes."

He said, "Then you're through [with] school. I've got three boys to educate." And back in those days it was the *man* that made the living. It wasn't like it is now. Now you wouldn't *think* of stopping a girl. But Dad had three sons. We definitely knew Charles was going to farm because that's what he wanted to do. But the other two boys didn't want to and Dad had them to educate. So I finished the term and went home. I had foolishly promised Mother that I wouldn't run off and get married or anything like that.

Did you resent your father saying you were done with school?

No, that was the way it was back then.

So it didn't even occur to you to question?

No. Huh-uh. No. We didn't get married for about eight months after that because I had promised Mother that I would stay home awhile before I was married. I was an only girl and my mother was kind of a baby about me, and so I was going to fulfill that promise that I'd made to my mother. Dad didn't get any education because he'd made this deal with Grandfather. But every one of Dad's sisters—and he had six—received a college education.

That was rather unusual for those days.

Two of them got married and used very little of [their education]. But two of them *never* married, and I can't remember what happened to them. And Dad was the only son, and, of course, Grandfather wanted him there as his manager. So, no there wasn't a bit of resentment [in my case] because I wasn't going to use an education. You see, Lloyd was seven years older than I and he was ready to get married and settle down. And I think [my] folks resented that, too, that I was going with a fellow that much older than I. For a high school kid to go with somebody in their 20s is too much difference and maybe they saw the handwriting on the wall more than I did, you see. So that's the way it was.

You never thought twice about marrying Lloyd before you married him?

I think I thought twice a *couple* of times. [laughs] I was just a starry-eyed kid. I fell in love with him long before he did with me. He was engaged to another girl when he started going with me. I shed many a tear [over that]. I just fell in love. And I knew he was a farmer and I was a farm kid. I was raised on a farm. It's true that at least 70% of the kids in the high school were farm kids. Maybe a bigger percentage than that. So most of my girlfriends were farmer's daughters. But with a town of only 1800, you see, and farms of 160 acres, you had an awful lot of farms around there. And every foot of the land in Iowa around there was farmed.

Were there rivers nearby?

Well, the Iowa River wasn't very far away. And the Des Moines River, of course, was 70 miles away. See, we don't have any irrigation in Iowa. It's all rainfall. So, of course, our farm had what we called a creek through it, and when the water was high, it was a good place to go wading and we used to even try to swim in the thing.

Did you keep a reservoir or did you strictly depend on the rainfall?

No. We depended on the rainfall.

That's what I find interesting about that period, then, of the Dust Bowl. That you continued having decent rainfall.

We never had, in the part of Iowa I lived in as far as I know, they never had what you call a *complete* failure. Sometimes we would only get 3/4 of a crop if we were hailed out. They used to worry about the rainfall, come to think about it. But we used to have tornadoes and cyclones, thunderstorms. Iowa really is a terrible climate. It's wonderful for the crops: corn wants all of that stuff. But people don't.

Did your mother at all prepare you for marriage as far as sex, as far as what a marriage was, what was expected of a wife by a husband?

You see, this was back in the 20s. I graduated from high school in 1926, so it would have been in those years '25 to '28 or so. And we just didn't *talk* about those things.

Did you have an inkling?

Sure! I tell ya, you can't live on a farm [without] knowing all about reproduction in animals. And you grew up being aware of that. I can't even explain why that didn't affect a person more. But it didn't. You just automatically ... I'm sure that we didn't know the mechanics of the thing, of reproduction in humans, I'm sure we didn't. Lloyd had been in love with this girl and he told me that he would be sure that I wouldn't have any more children than I wanted. He told me all of these things before [we married]. I just trusted him. I wondered afterward why in the dickens I *did*. [laughs]

There are not a lot of children in our family. Lloyd's twin brother only has two. One of my brothers has one and the other one has two. And the third [brother] has two. So there aren't a lot of children in the family. I can't even remember of not knowing [about sex].

So you weren't surprised after you were married?

No. Well, that's not quite right. Marriage has *got* to be a little bit of a shock. But I wasn't frightened or unhappy or embarrassed. I wasn't anything. In the first place, I was in love. [Mother and I] talked about it afterwards, after [I] was grown. And Mother said, "Well, Lillian, you said" And then she told me something I'd said about sex life. And I said, "Well, I *lied*." If my mother ever came close to asking me a question, I would give her an answer. But it wasn't always the truth. And after I was older I could tell her why. I wasn't ready to answer that question to her. I can't even remember what it was now, but I remember how shocked she was the first time I said to her, "Well, I *lied*."

What was your wedding date?

August 29 in 1928. It was between haying and harvest, you know, corn-picking, not the harvest of the small grain. And [Lloyd's] father said We were going to get married *after* the season, like in the wintertime. And he said, "If you

kids want to get married, you can have some time off now." And so Lloyd came down to the farm and told me, so I went in the house and I told Mother, "Lloyd and I are going to get married in three weeks." [laughs] Well, that kind of three weeks. You can't get invitations out or anything in three weeks. It ended that



Lloyd and Lillian Morrison celebrating their 25th wedding anniversary at the Flamingo Hotel in Las Vegas on August 29, 1953. Seated across from them are son Don and his school chum, Ed Moromoto.

[photo courtesy of Lillian Morrison]

I've never lived in a house that wasn't broken down when I went to New Orleans. Charles, my oldest son, was building a house for his new family. The new house had about one square of these square foot houses that you've seen. That's what it was. Two bedrooms upstairs and one bedroom downstairs. And they usually you had the corner of the house built over the kitchen, or the kitchen was underneath a corner of the house because you had a pump-out there that pumped out water. But you installed, you carried, the hard water in that you were going to drink. But you

kids want to get married, you can have some time off now." And so Lloyd came down to the farm and told me, so I went in the house and I told Mother, "Lloyd and I are going to get married in three weeks." [laughs] Well, that kind of threw her. You can't get invitations out or anything [in three weeks]. It ended that I had to *write* hand-written invitations to the few people that we were going to invite to the house. I was married on the farm at home. And then Lloyd and I took six weeks and went on a honeymoon and went to the Black Hills and Salt Lake and Reno and San Francisco and Los Angeles.

That's quite a long honeymoon.

Yes. Six weeks we were gone. And I got homesick and cried. He thought that was an *awful* let-down for him! [laughs] That I would cry on my honeymoon.

And then farmers always move. I don't know what they do now. But moving day was March 1. If a farmer was going to change from this farm to that farm he moved and the other fellow moved and the guy *ahead* of you moved. Everybody moved on March 1.

They switched farms?

Like if a farmer retired or died or something, that farm would be for rent. So maybe there was no one moving off except the family that lived in the house, but there would be this moving. And so Lloyd and I were going to have a place to live in March. We got home in October or something like that. We just lived at my folks until March 1, and then we went onto one of my dad's farms.

What kind of house was it you lived in when you and Lloyd moved onto the farm?

I've never lived in a house that wasn't modern. Even when I lived in Iowa. Now Charles, my oldest brother, was born in a little shack while Dad was *building* a house for his new family. The new house had about nine rooms. One of these square farm houses that you've seen? That's what it was. Four bedrooms upstairs and one bedroom downstairs. And then usually you had the corner of the house built over the cistern, or the cistern was underneath a corner of the house because you had a pump out there that pumped soft water. But you bucketed, you carried, the hard water in that you were going to drink. But you

used soft water, and any pipes that went to the bathroom were usually rain water. We called it rain water.

How did you make the water soft?

Oh, it was *rain* water. It was rain water. The cisterns—every house had eaves and spouts, rain gutters, they were about this big around, 3-1/2 inches. And [the water] would run down and run into the system that ran into the cistern. And if you had rain like they did in Iowa, you never ran out of water. I can't ever remember. I remember of us having to slack off and be careful because the cistern was getting low and we'd watch the clouds to see if it was going to rain. But that's what it was, rain water. Lovely, soft rain water.

So the water that came out of the ground was the hard water?

Yes.

And what did you use the hard water for?

Drinking. Cooking. We watered the garden with it.

Washing clothes?

No. Mother always had soft water for that. That's awful, to have to wash clothes in hard water.

We had a bucket and we'd bring that bucket in full [from the well]. We had a dipper that held about a cup and a half. Oh, it'd make you shudder to think what we did! We would dip in there and take a drink, and you weren't allowed, if you didn't drink all of it, to put the water back in the bucket. You had to go throw it in the sink. But that dipper, you let it float on the top, and the next guy that came along, he just dipped in. And you think about that—but nobody died [from germs].

And it was *good* water, you know. A drilled well. The well down on the home place—my grandfather's farm—was a dug well. And dug wells are really not as good, as *safe*, healthwise, as a drilled well. And they're all drilled now. No dug wells.

Why is a dug well not as safe as a drilled well?

Well, in the first place, [dug wells are] about this big around at the top [measures about four feet] and you just have a wooden platform over the top. It's just not as sanitary.

In your house, did you have electricity?

We had some kind of gas. It wasn't propane. Acetylene. It was called acetylene and I don't know how it worked. But we had funny little light fixtures around. During the war, the First World War, we had electricity by that time.

By the way, the electricity was farm-owned. The farmers that lived south of town got together and they built an electric line from the source of power in Grundy Center, Iowa, 8 miles down along the road. My dad's farm was the last one on that road. I wondered if he had to pay more to get on it. Just a little bunch of farmers out there, and what times they had. Storms, you know. It was a Joe Magee outfit.

This was during the First World War?

That was during the First World War. And before they had that, Dad was the only one that had this acetylene stuff. Grandfather had kerosene lamps. And we had kerosene stoves back in those days, too, instead of gas. Smelly. Smelly cooking!

Did they have a place to keep the kerosene [on the stove], like a reservoir?

Well, there were little tanks on each stove. You had, we called it the cob house, because you also kept the cobs that you were going to start the fire with. But we had a storage place about ten or twelve [feet from the house] with a breezeway in between. And here is where we kept that kind of stuff stored. Dad had a supply of both kerosene and gasoline in 50-gallon drums that he stored away from the house.

How did the kerosene stove work?

The burners then were about this far below [*measures about seven inches*]. There was like a chimney that went up and the heat came out it above, and then the burner, like we have, that was on the top. We lit 'em down below, and it would kind of *shhhhhht!* when it would light, you know, travel around [the burner].

In the house that you and Lloyd had when you first got married, did you have electricity?

Yes. I never lived in a house that didn't have electricity.

So you had a hot water heater?

Oh, yes. It was in the corner of the kitchen, but it wasn't encased like ours [are today]. If you touched it, it was *hot*. And then the pipes ran upstairs to the bathroom, and out to the sink.

Did it hold much hot water? Could you take a good, long shower?

Oh, yes. Well, you didn't have showers. You had a bathtub. The first showers we had on the farm, when showers came in, there was a place in the basement, and Dad piped it himself. A farmer can do *anything*. He's a plumber and a carpenter. He's the whole works. And so [Dad] put in [that shower]. And then they just got one of these great big It looked like the head you have on a [watering can]. There was no pressure to it. It was gravity, you see. And we all, we kids, just as soon as Dad [built it], we'd take our towels and run clear from the second floor all the way down to the basement to take a shower because that gettin' in the tub, that was old stuff then. The last time I visited my brother on his farm, he has all the modern things, but down in the basement in the corner he's got a shower, because when they come in [from the field] they are *so dirty!* They're full of chaff if they're working in small grain. Their clothes are dirty. So they go to the basement, take their clothes off, take a [shower] down there. So when Lloyd and I visited back there, why, I just took my towel and ran up to the house and went down into the basement and took my shower.

How did you set up housekeeping [when you married]? Did you have furniture and dishes?

Oh, that's another thing. We could look back after we'd gone broke and see the mistakes we'd made. We went to Waterloo and bought furniture for five rooms: a bedroom, living room, dining room, kitchen, *two* bedrooms, because during busy season you had to provide sleeping quarters for hired men. We bought that. And then by the time we went broke three years later, that furniture wasn't worth a dime.

You had bought it all on credit?

No, Lloyd *paid* for that. Otherwise they would have repossessed it.

But you couldn't get out of it what you'd paid for it?

We were still using it [after we lost the farm]. In fact, we used a part of it until I came out [to Boulder City]. I had to go home [to my folks] after [my son] Don was born. Don was born the 20th of [January, 1932]. Well, the farmers were getting ready [to move]. There was going to be only one more month then before all the moving was going to [go on]. They sold our equipment. They sold everything Lloyd had. We didn't have anything to farm with.

The bank?

The banks took it to what they call a Market Day Sale.

That's going a little bit ahead. I want to get to that in a little while. After you got settled in your house and you were all set up, what sort of plans did you have for getting your life underway?

I don't think I *had* any. I was 19. I think I was still a kid. I worked right along with Lloyd. I picked corn with him. I was still having a good time. He was still playing ball.

You had your own farm at the same time, too?

Oh, yes, but we didn't have very much. But the last year, what really did us in [was that] we moved onto a farm that had a huge house. We moved over there and had to buy more stock and more machinery.

When was this?

This was '30 and '31.

Is that when Lloyd borrowed money from the bank?

No, he borrowed the money when we originally started up in '29. An interesting side note. Don was born the 20th of January [1932, and] the bank went closed the week Don was born. And Lloyd wouldn't even come up to the hospital and tell me. He was *stricken!* It hit him—all the young farmers were hit by that because the bankers weren't letting on that they were going closed. One thing Lloyd *did* do when they said they were going to sell us out, Lloyd took our nicest team of horses and drove them down about 25 miles and sold 'em and paid for Don at the hospital.

Before the bank could get them.

Before the bank could take 'em. I mean that's about as crooked as we got! [laughs]

When the stock market crashed in 1929⁴

We were not prepared for that to hit the banks. The shock.

I tell you, I think I was such a kid that I wasn't worried about it. I do remember we had a banker that committed suicide when that happened. And that affected us because the [banker's son] was in my class in school. You see, that was way back in '26, so that's when things started to happen. But that didn't mean anything until after it was over. And then we saw that he *knew* that bank was in trouble.

As time went on after the Crash in October, November, December, and then 1930 came around, were things starting to get very tight and very scary for you?

No, they didn't because that's when we moved to that bigger farm. We had no *idea* what was ahead of us. You see, what the bank was doing. Lloyd had to have more horses. We were horse farmers then, no tractor. Lloyd had to buy another team of horses. The bank loaned him the money, let him sign the note.

And the bank knew there was trouble?

Yeah. I think that's why Dad was so bitter. He had money that they settled later [for] 10¢ on the dollar, but they wouldn't let him pay off Lloyd's note. And they held that to us. And did you know that a note is good for ten years? Bankruptcy was a disgrace. Dad said, "I would advise you to take it, Lloyd. I would advise you to take out bankruptcy." He knew a lot more about it than we did. So we went to a bankrupt[cy] lawyer in Waterloo and he asked, "How much cash [do you have]? *Right now*, how much cash do you have?" And Lloyd says, "We have \$45." The lawyer listed the stuff we had, and, of course, he knew what the stuff was worth. And so he said, "I'm not going to charge you for this call. And I'm going to give you some advice. You've indicated that you're gonna pay your debts."

"Well, yes," we said. "We are."

He said, "When you get ready to pay your debts, don't pay *anything* for five years. *Anything*. And when you get ready to pay your debts, don't take \$100 and spread it to three different people. You wait until you have enough to pay off one whole obligation, and then that guy can't touch you. But if you spread it to three people, it extends *everyone* for that five years again. So you wait until you can pay everyone off." It took us 10 years.

What happened when the bank called in your note?

They didn't even let us have what we call a farm sale where all the neighbors come in to your farm and they bid on the stuff. They didn't let us do that. They took it up to what they call a Market Day Sale, up into town at the feed shed up there, and they sold [Lloyd's] stuff there. Cattle, cows, milk cows that we'd paid \$126 for—I remember that one because when the bank sold it, it got \$26 for it.

Do you remember the day that the bank came to take all of this stuff away?

No, and I'll tell you why. Don was born the 20th. The bank came out and told Lloyd that sometime during that week [they were going to take everything]. I was so involved with my baby that *that* went completely over my head. It didn't touch me. Lloyd and my dad are the ones that did all of the business, and they kept that from me. I knew that we were losing it, but I had my baby. Until I came out here [in 1935] I'll bet I didn't realize what that meant to my folks. And I had a brother and his wife that [lost everything] at the same time.

If the bank had not failed and called in its note ...

Oh, we'd probably still be struggling on that farm. All of our married life after we came out here, Lloyd said, "Boy, weren't we lucky." His twin brother was farming with his father, and they struggled through the Depression, and Floyd [Lloyd's brother] struggled all of his life because he just never did have the opportunity [Lloyd had]. And do you know that they are dependent on their children?

The Crash, the Depression, losing your farm really was a blessing?

It was. It really was.

Your child, Don, was born January 20, 1932.

That was right when the bank closed us. The same week.

So you brought the child home to what?

Well, I was taken to my folks, to my childhood home. I wasn't well. I must have been a real ninny because I just let people take over. I did just exactly what I was told. I went home. I didn't even go back over to [our] house and help clear out [our] stuff. You see, that place was rented. We had rented that farm for the coming year. We had lived there one year and then the bank closed us out and we didn't have anything to farm with. So what Lloyd did was, he just hired [himself] out by the day. Just like we always hired a hired man? That's what Lloyd was for those three years that we lived in Iowa.

Did you have neighbors who lost everything like [you did]?

Several of the people our age. No, not necessarily people our age. It was people who had just started farming. They had nothing back of 'em at all, no money at all. Everything they had was the crop in the field. The coming crop.

For those three years, then [after you lost the farm], you lived with your parents, or did you get a place of your own?

No, no. My folks had a very nice house and they finished off a room in the basement for a kitchen for Lloyd and myself. And then we had a large bedroom up on the second floor, so I had a little ways to go to run back and forth. And I had to go through Mother's kitchen to get to the stairs. And that was home, anyway, to me. And Mother, she was *delighted* to have that baby there. I look back on that and I can't believe that I wasn't more appreciative for what my folks did.

You were so young, though.

No. We were married in '28 and Don wasn't born until '32, so I was 23. I should have been getting some sense by that time, but I didn't.

Was this very difficult on Lloyd? He'd been ready to become a farmer and independent, and suddenly he was a hired man living with his in-laws.

Lloyd was the most happy-go-lucky fellow that there was. And he always looked on the bright side. "Well, we've got each other. We've got the baby." Or, "We're not hungry." You know, it was always *up*. He was *always* up. I began to realize, "We can't go on like this. We've got to do something about this." And Mother was afraid I was going into a nervous breakdown.

It all happened at the same time. We got a letter from a man in Chicago that we knew, that we had met in Chicago, and he had gone to Boulder Dam. So he wrote to my cousin and he said, "Tell Lloyd that if he comes to Nevada, I think he can get a job." So right then we started getting in high gear, because Mother,

as much as she wanted to keep me there, she realized I was going to get sick if we didn't become independent.

Is that what it was that was bothering you so much?

But you see, I wasn't even *aware* that that was bothering me. But it was. Subconsciously, I know I thought, "I've got a husband and a baby and I'm right back where I started." That's what went over and over [in my mind].

No sense of moving forward?

No. Not only that. In the meantime we were having liens served on us. A fellow came down there—we owed on a horse, one horse we paid \$75 for. And we owed on that and he came down there. But he came onto my dad's farm and he wanted to talk to Lloyd Morrison. And Dad said, "If you want to talk to Lloyd Morrison, you'll have to do it sometime off of my farm because you're *not* going to come on to my farm and bother these kids. They haven't a crying dime! And if you're going to get blood out of a turnip, you're not going to do it through me." And so Dad was kind of a buffer for us. And I didn't know *that* stuff until it was all over.

When the bank sold all of your things, that didn't satisfy the debts you owed?

Oh, no. After they were all through we still owed \$3000. And I think they got something like \$1200 is all. So maybe we owed \$3300 or something.

Were you able to make any payments on your debts in those three years after [the farm sale]?

No. No, because Dad kept a record. When it was all through, the first time we went home [again] after we'd been out here [in Boulder City], he said, "I thought you kids would be interested to know how much I paid in cash to you kids." I could have chickens and I could have a garden [with my folks], and Dad gave us a half a hog, butchered, you know. He said, "I paid you in *cash* \$29 a month." In those years that we lived there. Dad would say to Lloyd, as soon as he got through with Lloyd, he'd say, "Hire out to anybody." But you see, we weren't

paying rent there or anything. Families just had to help their young people. There just wasn't any other way young people could survive, you see.

Doesn't that sound a little bit like today?

Well, it does. You know, Don was a Depression baby. He doesn't think that that could happen again. He just doesn't.

We hope.

I think it would be much worse [than it was then] because I think the *country* would go broke.

See, family is the big thing in this story because I didn't even know that it was my family that was keeping me going. I had some growing up to do evidently. And Lloyd never quite *did* grow up! He always looked on the bright side. He always thought somehow it would come out [OK]. What would have happened to me if he'd have been as pessimistic about it as I? I think I'd have probably kicked him out. But back in those days you stuck together through thick and thin, and you *did*.

But then when we came out here, my! Life really began to We didn't even have a car.

Before we come out here, there's one more question I want to ask you that's very personal. You mentioned earlier that Lloyd had promised you that he would see that you wouldn't have any more children than you wanted. During those three years, you only had one child.

Another thing he promised me [was that] we wouldn't have children right away. And we didn't have. And then after we had Don we were in such terrible financial straits, that he said, "Well, no more children."

How did you keep from having any more children?

I think it was luck with us as I look back on it because, did you ever hear of the rhythm system? Well we practiced that and I just don't believe that works. I just think that we lucked out.

He didn't use any precautions?

No. Huh-uh.

You got the letter from your friend in Chicago and he said come out [to Boulder City]. Did you and Lloyd talk it over?

One of Lloyd's brother-in-laws really encouraged us and Lloyd said, "I can't get out there. I have no way to get out there." And [his brother-in-law] said, "I'll loan you the bus fare." So he loaned Lloyd \$65 and that was just before corn-picking was finished, so Lloyd finished working for my dad. And then he came out here on a bus. And he thought, when we first started talking about it, Boulder, to us, meant Colorado. Boulder City didn't mean a thing. So we thought for a long time when we were talking about this [that] he was only going as far as Colorado, which is just half as far as what it turned out to be.

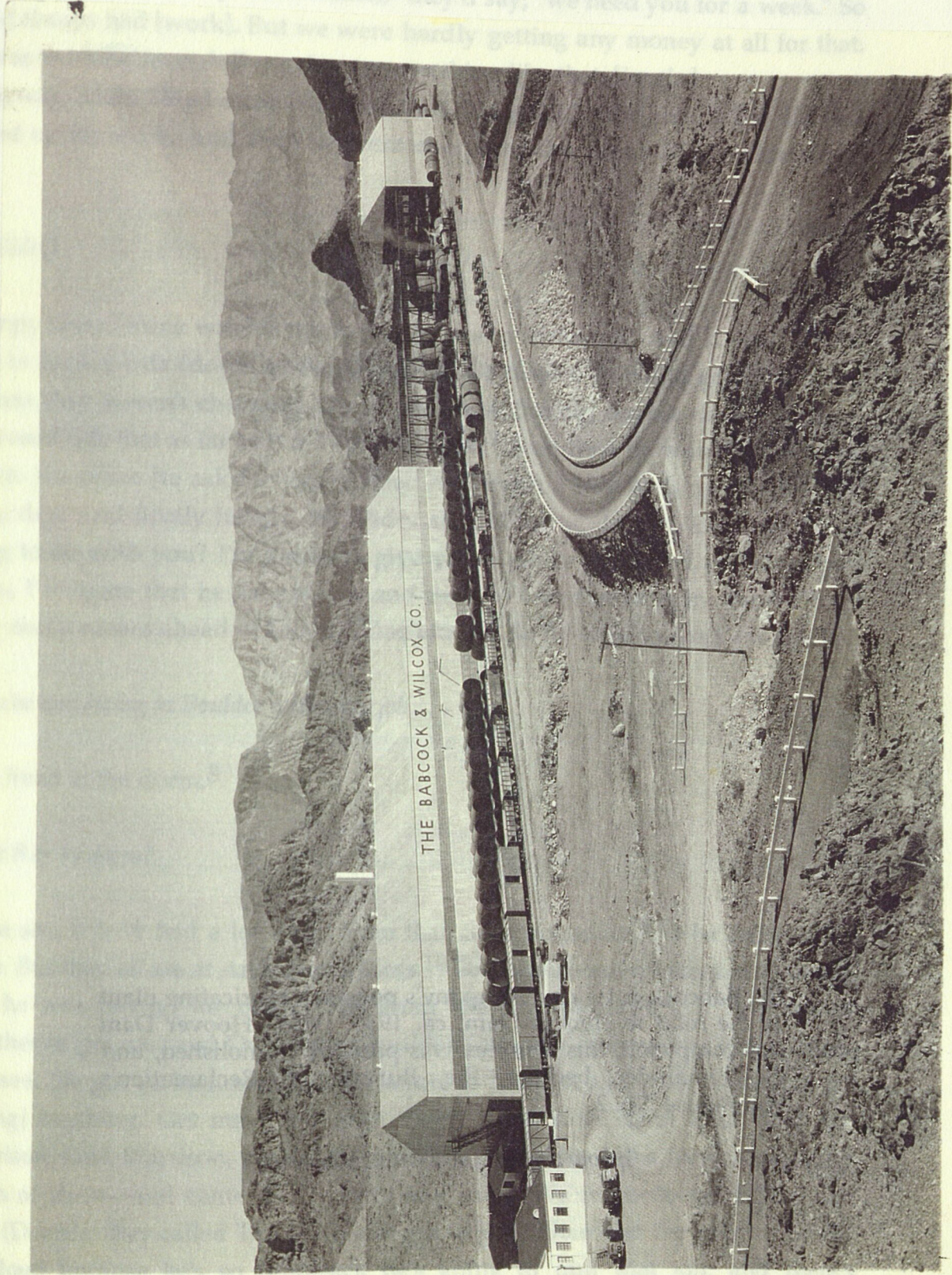
You didn't realize it was Boulder City, Nevada?

No. Until sometime after when we got to really looking up where Boulder Dam was being built, then we found out.

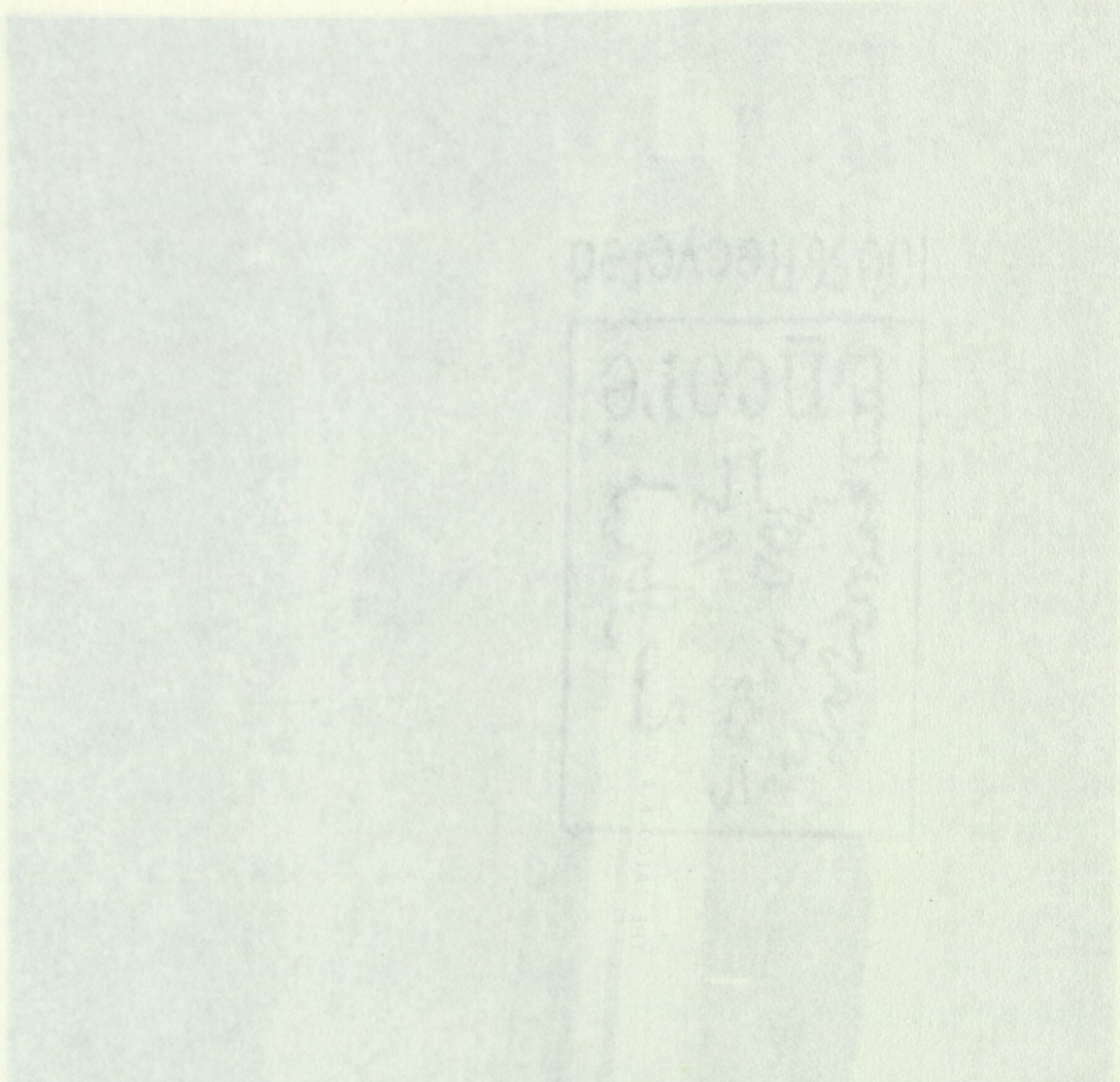
So he came out here and slept in Neils' bed at night. Neil was working graveyard for B & W.⁵

Who was Neil?

He's the man from Chicago who was out here that wrote to us. Nielsen was his last name. Lloyd slept in his bed while he [Neil] worked, and that's the way he helped Lloyd. We didn't owe him any money. And then he and his brothers went on to California. There were three or four of 'em and they went into a trucking business themselves. Lloyd was here from the first of November, last of October [1934] until the first of February [1935] alone. You see, a farmer is independent. Even if you are renting the land, you are independent. You are the boss of that unit. And so Lloyd didn't know how to get a job. He'd always been in demand back there. He was the farmer's son, so in those three years [1932 - 1935] he was in demand from the farmers around. "As soon as Ernest is through



... (Dad was my dad's name), "Boy'd say, 'we need you for a week.' So
... (work), but we were hardly getting any money at all for that.



The Babcock & Wilcox Company's penstock fabricating plant on the road to Hoover Dam, ca. 1933. When Hoover Dam was completed, this complex was partially demolished, and the remainder became the Bureau of Reclamation's Warehouse No. 2.

[photo courtesy of Dennis McBride]

with you (Ernest was my dad's name)," they'd say, "we need you for a week." So Lloyd always had [work]. But we were hardly getting any money at all for that. He was working for a dollar a day or something like that. [laughs]

Anyway, when Lloyd came out here, he went just like the rest of 'em did and signed up for work. And then he went everyday and pestered Mr. Sides for a job.

Mr. Sides?

Jumpy Sides I think was his name. Jumpy was a nickname. And [Lloyd] would have to hook a ride [down to the dam site]. Of course, he could get on any bus because they weren't checking 'em in and out—the big double decker things.⁶ He would ride that as far as B & W down there.⁷ And then he would get off and go into the office [to ask for work], then he'd catch a ride back up. He did that every day. And finally Jumpy, Mr. Sides said, "Shorty, do you know what I'm going to do with you? I'm going to give you a job to get rid of ya." And, you know, I imagine that he *did* get sick and tired of Lloyd coming in. Maybe there were many names ahead of Lloyd, I don't know. So he went to work for B & W.

When he was living in Boulder without a job ...

He lived in the dorm.⁸

In the B & W dorm?

You see, B & W had a lot fewer men than Six Companies,⁹ so he had a room there. But they all ate at Anderson's Mess.¹⁰ So [Lloyd] had a badge, and he ate, and he was paying for board and room. But he was trying to get money together to get me [and Don out to Boulder City]. He was getting 50¢ an hour, you see. He got so homesick that he wrote to his dad and said, "Get me a job [doing] *anything*. Get me a job back there. I just can't stand this." And Mr. Morrison, Dad Morrison, came down to our place—my folks lived eight miles south of them—and came down there and said, "We've got to get Lillian and Don (Donnie, they called 'im) We've got to get Lillian and the baby out there to Lloyd because he's so homesick he's going to quit that job, and there's nothing back here for him. *Nothing!*" So they told me they were going to send

me out here. So they wrote to Lloyd and said, "We'll get Lillian out there." I can't remember anything about the time element between the time they told Lloyd and when I finally did get there. But Father Morrison bought my train ticket. And, of course, he was just as hard up as the rest of 'em. He wasn't losing any land or anything like that. And when they gave me the money to buy the ticket, they said, "Now, you can take your time to repay this." And I was so mad, I had a notion not to go! I thought it was a *gift!* Then we had that to pay. But Lloyd had already paid the brother-in-law his \$65. That's another thing. \$65 doesn't sound like *anything*.

Tell me about your train ride out here. You were by yourself, with the child, coming all the way across the country.

Yes, but my mother always said about me from the time I was little, "Those who know nothing fear nothing." Because I was a fearless child. [Coming across the country alone] didn't impress me at all that that was doing anything special.

Did you come out straight through with a Pullman, or did you stop in towns along the way and sleep in hotels?

No. I came all the way and I sat up all the way.

How long did it take?

Two days and two nights, and then a half of one or the other, I can't remember. I got into Vegas. I had bought a ticket clear through to Boulder City not knowing that I was going to have to get off in Las Vegas and get on a bus.

They had a gate out here [on the outskirts of Boulder City]—I'm sure they've told you about the gate where they stopped everybody.¹¹ So when they stopped [the bus] they came back through there and talked to me and I said my husband is in Boulder City.

"Well, does he have a job?"

"Yes."

So they gave me a pass in. That's how I got into the town.



**Boulder Canyon Project Federal Reservation Gate
May 8, 1932**

"They had a gate out here where they stopped everybody. So when they stopped [the bus] they came back through and talked to me and I said my husband was in Boulder City.

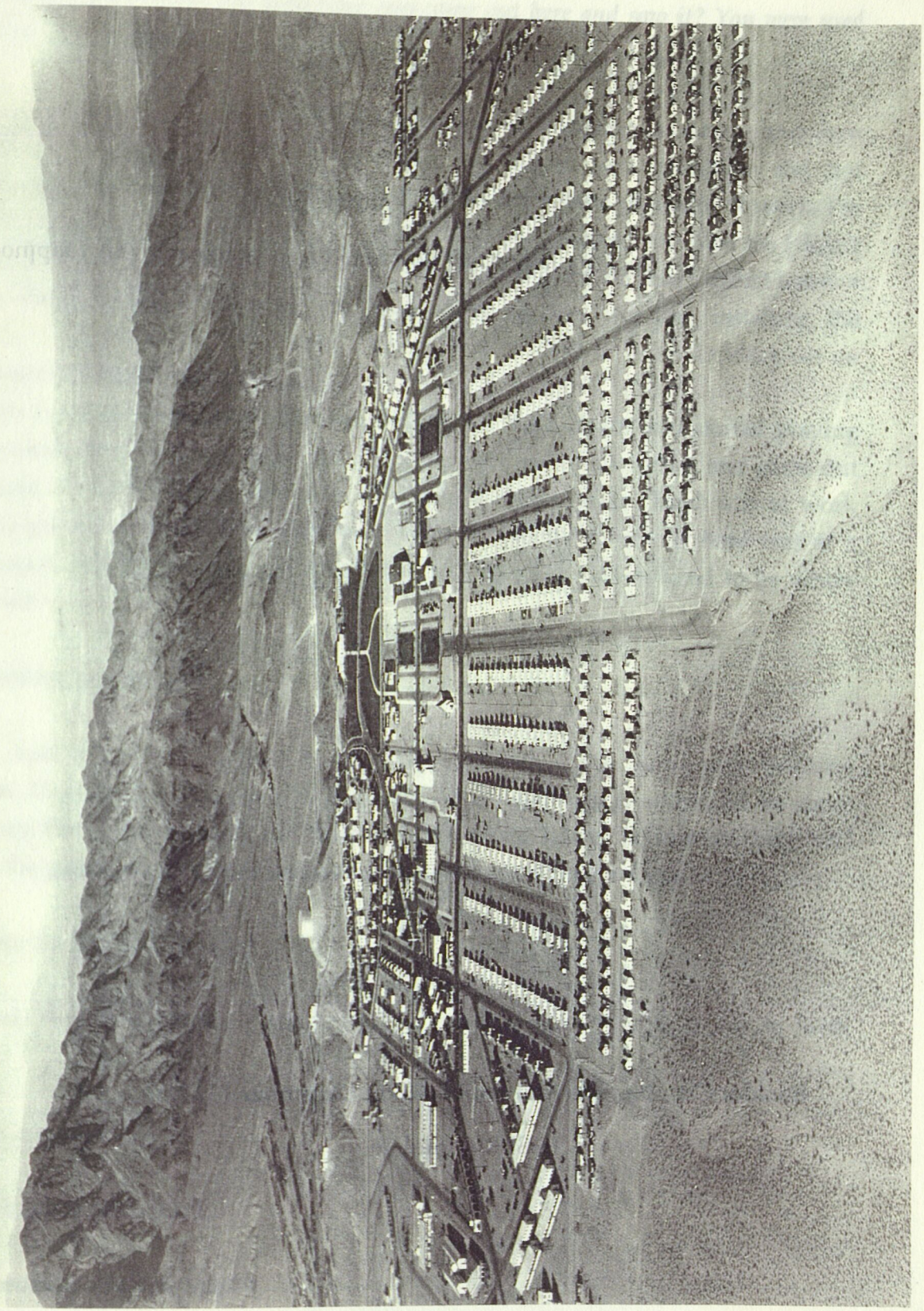
'Well, does he have a job?' "

'Yes. "

So they have me a pass in. That's how I got into the town." [p. 27]

[USBR photo]

Восток



[USBR photo]

Boulder City, Nevada as it appeared on December 13, 1934

Boulder City, Nevada as it appeared on December 13, 1934

[USBR photo]

What did you think about this land when you came out here and saw it? You were used to Iowa where it's green.

What puzzled me was that Lloyd wrote and he said that it was desert, and then he said something about the mountain. And desert and mountain did not compute to me. And then he said, "I'm standing on a little platform at work. I'm 200 feet up inside of the mountain." And that just bewildered me. You see I didn't know a thing about [his work]. I knew about Grand Canyon, but I didn't know a thing about building dams or anything. And he was working installing the [penstock] pipes, and he was operating a broach. And he was standing up on that putting in those [penstocks].¹²

When I got out here, Don was thrilled. He sat right down and started playing in the sand. And he had a snowsuit on. I came out of cold weather and came out here and it was so warm that day. I [wore] a heavy coat. Lloyd was at work when I got here. The fellow that had gotten Lloyd to come out here was at a restaurant, and he saw me get off of the bus. The bus station used to be where the museum is [now].

*The Terminal Building.*¹³

Yes. And he saw me. 'Course he knew I was coming, too, so he was watching for me, Lloyd had asked him to because Lloyd had to go to work. So he came right up there and he took me down to the place where *he* was staying. And that's the place where Lloyd had been staying before he got a job.

Was that the B & W dormitory?

Lloyd, the week before I got here, had moved into a house down on Sixth Street.

A Six Companies house?

No. It was just a shack.

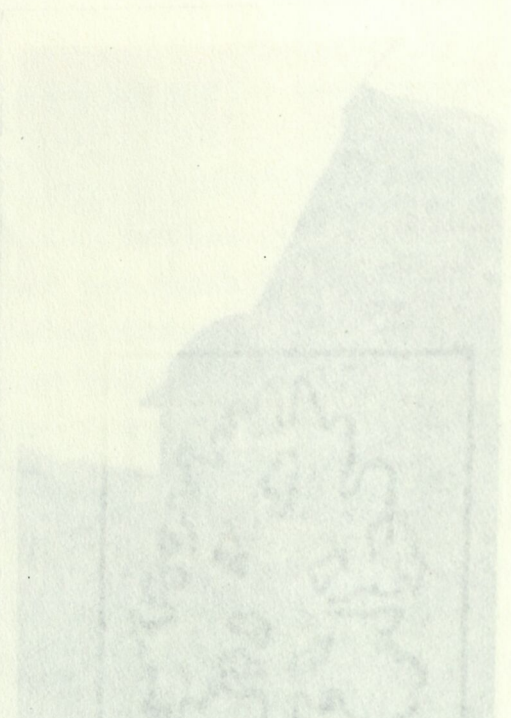
Just somebody's private shack?



Bottom, left: Lloyd Morrison, Don Morrison, Lillian Morrison, ca. 1947



... I found a ... were going to ... out renting. See,

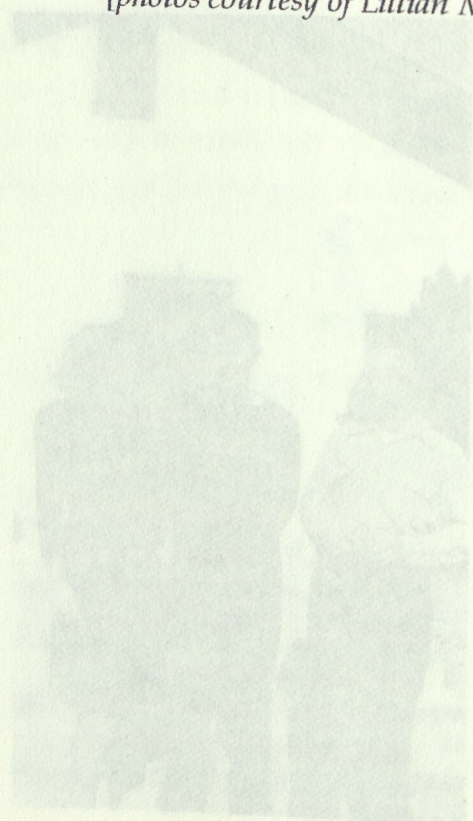


Don Morrison

Top: at the Sixth Street "shack," Boulder City, 1935

Bottom, l-r: Lloyd Morrison, Don Morrison, Lillian Morrison, ca. 1947

[photos courtesy of Lillian Morrison]



Yes. We didn't get into a Six Companies house till Lloyd finished working for B & W and was working for Six Companies, then we were assigned a one-room house down on New Mexico [Street]. But that was some time later.

But this fellow took me to the house where he was staying. And that lady was a dear lady. She was so good to me for several weeks at first while I got used to things around here. And when Lloyd came in from work—he was on day shift—he knew I was going to be at that house. He stepped in the back door and I went out to greet him. Don was playing on the floor and he absolutely *ignored* his dad. And I said, "Well, Don do you know who that is?"

And he said, "That's Uncle Daddy." See, that's what he called Floyd [Morrison] because they were twin brothers. And [Don] wasn't even three when Lloyd left, so right away he transferred his affection to his Uncle Floyd because [Floyd] looked just like his dad to him. So when he saw his dad out here, pooh! that's nothing new. I just left him. [*laughs*]

We didn't have a car or anything, so we walked every place we went.

Tell me about the shack that he moved you into.

The people who owned it were named Scissom and they lived in one side of it. And I don't know what they had over [in their side]. And it was a cold-water shack. And in between the two apartments was a cold water shower. And then there was a breezeway, for want of a better word for it, a gap, and there was just a little square building out there, and Mrs. Scissom's brother lived out there. And there was no hot water in it at all. Lloyd was working for B & W—that was a greasy job, you know—and when he came in from work I would have every kettle that I had, which wasn't many, full of hot water, and I'd get the wash tub in and Lloyd'd take his bath there in the kitchen. Because he had to have hot water to get that grease off. I can't remember how long that lasted.

But we had to sleep three [to a bed]. We had to sleep with Don, and it was only a three-quarter bed. It was a cot and the sides sort of pulled up.

Like a day bed?

Yes, sort of thing. And so I started looking for a place for us to live. I found a place for us up here on Utah [Street]. So I told Mrs. Scissom we were going to move. She said, "Why?" I hadn't complained. I knew nothing about renting. See,

this was my first experience. I knew *nothing* about renting, you know, that you could go and say, "I've got to have thus and so."

She said, "Why didn't you tell me? We'll get a baby bed for you." So I went [up to Utah Street] and got my down payment back—I'd had to pay some ahead on the place I was holding till we moved. And so we stayed [with the Scissoms] until Lloyd was through at B & W and went to work for Six Companies and we were assigned a one-room house on New Mexico.

How long did he work for B & W before he finished?

Just a matter of months.

And then how did he get on with Six Companies?

He just went and applied for work and he went on as just a laborer puddling cement and that sort of thing. Anything. You see, we were really green because we had never [had to] ask for a job. We didn't know anything about construction. We didn't know how the jobs went and we didn't want to move on. Men were already leaving here and going to Shasta as they finished up [Hoover Dam]. There was a hundred feet of the dam yet to go when Lloyd got here. That was in November [1934]. But the intake towers had to be built, and they hadn't started on the power plant. But, of course, B & W was about through. The pipes were in.

Reminiscing like this makes you realize that you wish that you had logged it. But I didn't.

What I want to know, too—tell me about how you kept house: where you washed your clothes, did you sweep, did you mop the floors? How did you take care of the baby? Ordinary things that a person does day-to-day.

See, the house where we lived wasn't any bigger than from here over there [motions toward the opposite wall, about 12 feet] divided in two. A tiny kitchen and a room and then the rest of it was porch. So I didn't have [much]. I mean, I could clean the house in 15 minutes. I mopped the floor with just a rag, a mop rag.

Was it just a rough wood floor?

It had linoleum on it. And the furniture—we had orange crates for a dressing table, you know, to store our things in. And I came out in a trunk, so I *did* have that. And I only brought two plates. Because I was coming in a trunk, I brought very few things.

Do you know Steve Chubbs?¹⁴

Yes.

It's a good thing I wasn't aware of it. I suppose I was proud. I don't know. Or I didn't *know* that I was poor. I don't think I *knew* I was destitute. But I went to Grace Church¹⁵ and Miss Ayers was Steve's foster mother. I went to church right away, and, of course, they asked questions and they came down, called on me. They saw where I lived. We had to sit on the bed. We had two chairs out in the kitchen, so there was the bed and these two chairs. That's the only place we had to sit, and those ladies from the church came down to call on me. Well, pretty soon, a week or two afterward, here came this young man, Steve Chubbs, with a box yai big and it was full of dishes. Anything, like two mismatched plates and some cups and some pans. And they gave that to me. And I thought that was nice. I didn't realize that I was destitute. Because at home [in Iowa] I had sets of dishes given me for wedding presents and all the linens and all those things. So I wasn't poor [in my mind]. I was just poor out here by the standard of people who had jobs. And I tell you, I kept some of those things for *years* just because Miss Ayers did that for me.

In that neighborhood that you lived in, were there other people living like you, destitute?

Well, you see, I didn't know. The people who had come here late had thrown up these shacks. Of course, people have fixed those places up [in later years]. You hardly recognize anything when you go down M Street now because it was a dirt road and there was no sidewalk. And there was nothing back of it. That was the desert, back of us. And so I didn't know what my neighbors had. I didn't have the least idea what they had. I thought I was just as good as anybody else. Maybe that was good for me, I don't know. And Lloyd, you know, after he got a job *he* didn't worry.

How did you wash your clothes in this place? Did you have a machine? Frank Jensen—
Did you know Frank Jensen?

Mrs. Scissom had a machine sitting out in the backyard. I must have had to heat water and carry it out there, and then rinse in cold water. But after we moved away from there ... I had a coaster wagon, and by that time Don had a tricycle. I got a forked branch off of a tree—because he was just a little guy and it was all uphill—and I would put that [branch] on the axle and I would push him up the hill—he could go like the dickins after he got on level ground—and then I had the clothes basket in this coaster wagon. And there was a lady up here on one of the corners like F or G [and Wyoming Street], one of those over there, that rented her washing machine. So I went up there and the hot water would be furnished. And I did my laundry and then I loaded it up and went [home]. By that time we lived on Avenue I in a Six Company house and I had a clothes line and I would put the clothes out.¹⁶ I did that for ... We graduated into a two-room house someplace along the way, and that was just down here three or four houses, right on this street, so I've lived on I Street twice.

Do you remember what the lady charged you for her machine?

Seems to me like it was 25¢ a load and I always had three loads. I paid 75¢ to do my laundry. And she was paying for her machine with that. So when we bought that shack on M Street, we had to get a washing machine. That's the way I paid [for it]. I stole some of *her* ideas because people still wanted to rent washing machines. But I can't remember what I charged.

The job Lloyd had for Six Companies—was that when he was injured?

Yes. ... didn't make any arrangements except mentally. We knew that I would go home. I tell you, Lloyd was not one to worry. He just knew I was taken care of.

Tell me about that. How'd it happen? What happened? ... didn't think anything was ever going to happen to him. Well, it didn't mean, he tried to be fit,²² but he just

He was working in the wheel pit. That's down underneath a [power] unit. And they had slots for part of the machinery. They were about 2-1/2 feet wide and 6 feet deep, and I don't know how long. And Lloyd was backing up carrying something, and he fell into that [pit]. And there was a pile of cement down there—you know how they throw cement that isn't used? And that struck him

in the back. Six feet down. It was the stopping that hurt him. And Frank Jensen—
did you know Frank Jensen?¹⁷

Doc?

Doc. Doc was down there and he didn't tell me right away, but he said, "We brought the stretcher down and put the hooks in from the crane"—they brought the crane down—"Put the hooks in, and I looked up and nobody had secured the hooks, hadn't tied it. I watched that go up" They took [Lloyd] to Six Companies Hospital, which is where the nunnery is now,¹⁸ and a man came down to the house—it was one of the rangers.¹⁹ And he said, "I have a message for you. Your husband is in the hospital up here and you can go see him this afternoon if you want to." I thought My, what kind of hard-hearted *wives* do they have around here? [*laughs*] So, of course, I was frightened. And I went up there. He was in there about a week, and then he had to be on compensation because it didn't break through into the [spinal] cord, but two of [his vertebrae] cracked, just a fracture. Fractured back is what it was.

So I took in two boarders.

When he was hurt, did you ever consider during that time what you would have done, you and Don, if [Lloyd had] been hurt too severely to work, or if he'd been killed?

If he'd have been killed, we already knew—the folks knew it was dangerous work—I would have gone right back to Iowa.

So you discussed it and made arrangements.

We hadn't made any arrangements except mentally. We knew that I would go home. I tell you, Lloyd was not one to worry. He just *knew* I was taken care of. He just didn't worry about [things like that]. He didn't think anything was ever going to happen to him. Well, it didn't. I mean, he lived to be 91.²⁰ But he just *knew* that everything was going to be all right. *I'm* the worry wart. But yes, we thought about that. We had to talk about it. We had to talk about what will we do if one of us dies out here. If I went, he would have to take the child and go home because [Don] had to have someone to take care of him.

When Lloyd was hurt we just were going to get along on what we had, so I took in [boarders]. It bought our groceries. You see, compensation paid Well, I think the rent was \$24 a month or \$16 a month or something for these little houses that we lived in, Six Company houses. Besides, he was hurt working for Six Company, and I can't remember anything about the arrangement about that except that they paid him compensation. It was [\$70] a month.

For the period that he was laid up?

Yes.

Did they give a lump sum?

You always have to sue.

You did have to sue, then?

You have to go to court. You have to get a lawyer and you have to present x-rays and all the stuff, you know, and that's what Lloyd did. He was injured in Arizona so that involved going down to someplace in Arizona, I don't remember where. I wish I could think the time element a little better, but I can't remember how long that was. He was off work many months, and finally this lawyer told him, "Get a settlement." So whatever the procedure is, that's what Lloyd did. He settled for a thousand dollars.

Let's talk a little bit more detail about that. If you had not decided to sue—and this was your decision?

Yes.

But the Six Companies would have essentially written him off otherwise?

Yes. I tell you, there was an awful lot of misery in that [respect] when the dam was built. An awful lot. And we evidently got a good lawyer. Of course, a thousand dollars then While the suit was still going on the Government

needed a night watchman, so Lloyd took the job because he wouldn't have to forfeit any of the evidence he had piled up about this broken back.

So he could go on with his lawsuit [while working]?

Yes.

But the Six Companies didn't throw you out of the house while he was laid up, did they?

No, but we had to pay rent.

While he was laid up, you had to have something to live on.

During that time Lloyd was only making \$70 a month—even back in those days it was a bit difficult for three people to live on \$70 a month. So we took in one roomer and one boarder. Two men. The one man came just for the meals. And what they paid us bought our groceries. I got a dollar a day for the man who just ate there, and a dollar and a quarter for the other fellow.

Where was this Six Companies house you lived in?

It was two houses down here [from 616 Avenue I]. This was just full of Six Company houses, and we lived there. 632 or something like that, Avenue I.

There were stories that often the Six Companies would say a person didn't die on the job or get injured on the job?

Or they would *move* them from one side to wherever they had to pay the least [compensation]. That was done. Lloyd was aware of that. But he was injured in Arizona so he had to go through the Arizona Whatever the legal office is for that sort of thing.

And the Nevada one as well?

No, he didn't have to go through Nevada because he was injured in [Arizona].

We lived in this house even after we started to work for the Government, but we paid [rent to] Six Company. As the job was winding down, Six Companies, who had hundreds of these little houses, one- and two-bedroom houses in the area, were getting ready to move them out as they emptied. There were many, many, dozens and dozens of empty houses in Boulder City at this time. So [the officials] came by one day and said, "We're gonna move your house out in two days."²¹ So Lloyd had to hunt up a place for us to go, and we moved into a B & W apartment over on B Street.

This was when the Six Companies had finished their work?

Yes.

Tell me about what happened then.

And so B & W You know the apartments on B Street?²²

Yes.

Lloyd went over there and rented an apartment. And one of our tenants moved along with us. He rented the porch over there. We were on the bottom floor. And so we moved in there, and that was the year that Don started to school, so that would be [*pauses to calculate*] about [1936 or '37]. Maybe we only lived there a short time, but it seemed forever to me. Lloyd by that time had gotten into being an electrician's helper. Did you know Lloyd?

I didn't know him, but I remember seeing him often at the 31ers meetings.²³

He was *easy* to like. People liked him. They wanted to help him, you know, if he was in trouble. Like, for instance, when we moved from one house to another, the fellows from the warehouse just came over and moved us. And things like that. He was well-liked. I cannot remember the chain of events or the time, but I have a picture of Don on his first day of school, and he was standing in front of that apartment over there [on Avenue B]. And then that summer I took Don and went back to Iowa for a visit. My folks always saw to it that they got to see this grandchild. Maybe they wanted to see me, too. But anyway. While

I was gone, Lloyd bought that shack on M Street for \$220 because the guy [who owned it] got a job in Shasta²⁴ and he wanted to just get *outta* here. He said to Lloyd, "How much money do you have?"

Lloyd says, "I've only got \$220."

He says, "I'll take it!"

So we got that house on M Street. Well, he wrote to me and told me he'd moved to M Street. I said, "I'm *not* going to" You know, that was the *slums*,²⁵ the wrong side of the track back in those days.

M Street? Why?

Because everybody who lived there was either very poor or Well, that was it. They just didn't have anything. They weren't anything on the job. They weren't a supervisor or an electrician or a tradesman of any kind. M Street wasn't paved. It didn't have a sidewalk. It was just out in the desert, is what it was.

But I got homesick and so I came back [to Boulder City]. And in the meantime [Lloyd] had built on the back of that, he had built a sleeping porch. Quite a good size. At least we got a double bed in it and a chest of drawers and Don's cot. The living room was only about 12 x 14. And there was a small kitchen. I cooked with a Westinghouse electric oven and a two-burner electric stove. We did have a nice electric Norge refrigerator, and that is a story in itself. That's the way we lived for four years. It was a very, very small place. But it was *three* apartments. So we rented the one in the back for \$10 and the one on the north of us for \$15, and then *we* lived in one. So that's when we began to get ahead. The address is 633 Avenue M, and the rock wall that Lloyd built to hold the lawn up is still standing out there.

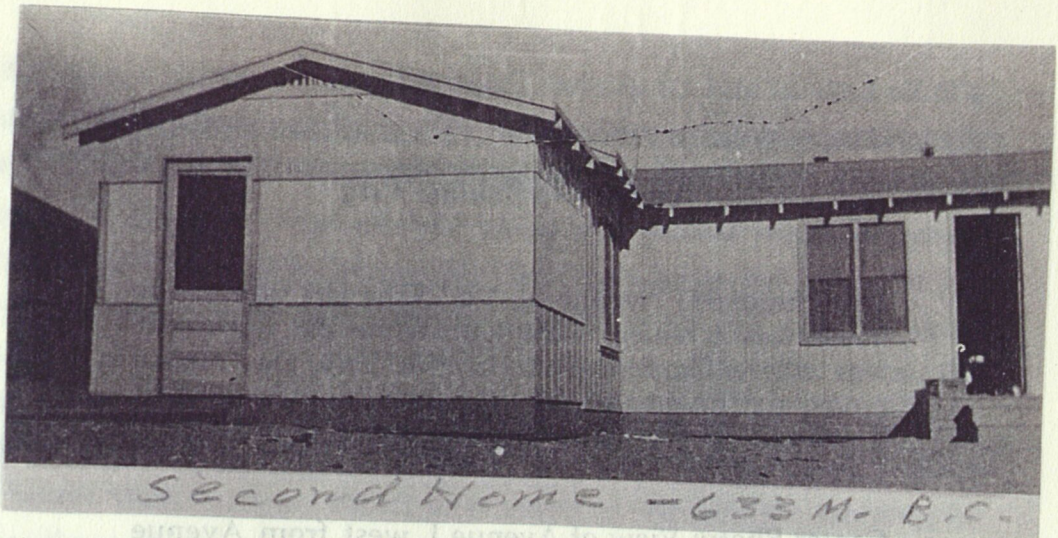
The M Street house was very interesting. Three families lived there and we had a common wash house. We had purchased a fairly decent washing machine. I can't remember whether we bought it second-hand or not. The water [tank] that furnished all three places wasn't insulated at all. It was just a galvanized tank [no] more than ten inches in diameter. It was a small tank. But one hot water tank full would make a wash for the lady who needed the real hot water for baby things. [This tank] was fired, heated by a little wood stove out in this, maybe 7 x 7 little wash house that was built on the back of the house. The fire box was so small. It seemed to me like it was less than twenty-four inches long. We gathered wood

[and] Lloyd had a saw horse and a saw out in the backyard [where] he would cut the wood up. And we furnished that for our ladies to have out there. Every lady built her own fire. She had her wash day and [each of us] had to observe [the] other people's wash days. We were not to draw any hot water out of that tap on the days that they were assigned for their washes. And then usually in the afternoons, if somebody else had to wash, they could. All they had to do was go around and knock on doors and say, "I'm going to build a fire to do some washing." By and large everyone was very kind to one another [about wash days].

The lady in the back had a baby and she had to have *real* hot water. And she began to complain to me that the other tenant was stealing her hot water. And so I went and spoke to the other tenant and told her that she couldn't do that. But she continued, and, of course, I continued to get the complaints. [This] was my first experience with being a land lady [and] I didn't know my rights so I went up to see the city manager, Mr. Ely, and I told him my problem. And he said if there was an apartment in town comparable to [the one we rented them] then I could give them two weeks notice and they had to be out. And so I gave them two weeks notice to get out, and the day that the two weeks was up there hadn't been a bit of movement over there. And I had already rented the apartment. So I told them that and the man got real irate at me and said, "All this row over a little hot water!" I told him that he could go talk to Mr. Ely and find out exactly what his rights [as a tenant] were, and I gave him the address of the apartment where he could move. And he got his neighbors and friends to help and they were out of there in a matter of hours!

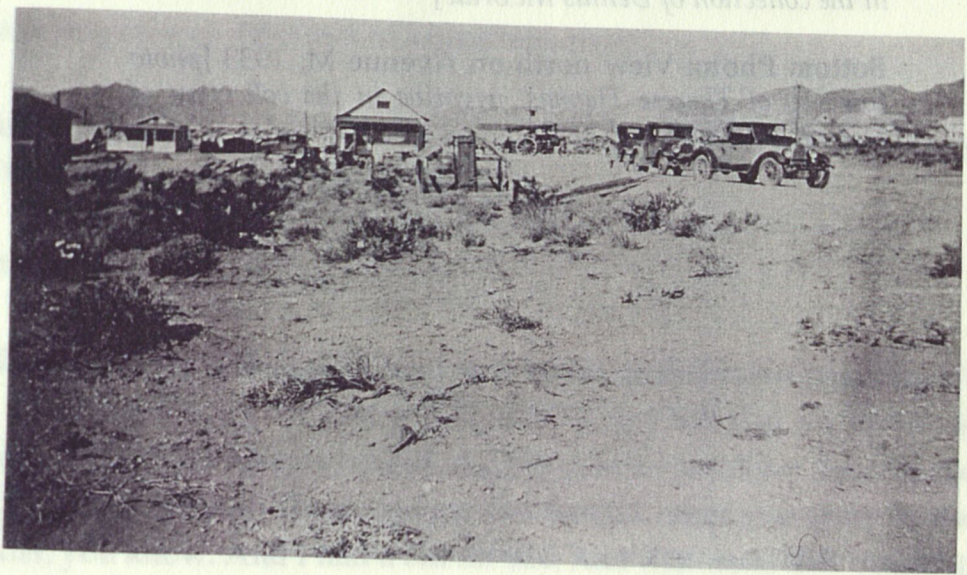
Another story that [I] have about experience with tenants [on Avenue M] is that the neighbor next door to us had a cat that just yowled at night. Our renter in the back was fed up with this. We were awake and we heard his door quietly open. And then we heard a gun shot. And then we heard something falling down through the tree and *thud* on the ground. And then we heard the door quietly close.

Something [else] very interesting back then [on M Street]. We talk about morality now, but this is something that happened back in the thirties. There was a group in town that had what they called a Key Club. They would throw all their keys into a pile and then every man would pick a key, and then that's the lady he went home with. And in this instance, the lady didn't care for the man she got, so she went home. And [her husband] got in about two o'clock and tried



Second Home - 633 M. B.C.

Central Front view of Avenue J west from Avenue
 M. ca. 1932-33 (photo courtesy of Teddy Fenton; negative
 in the collection of Dennis McGrath)



Avenue M, Boulder City

Top Photo: 633 Avenue M, 1933 [The left side of the house was a rented apartment, while the right side was where the Morrisons lived. There was also a rented apartment and the notorious laundry room at the back of the house. (*photo courtesy of Therese Thomas; negative in the collection of Dennis McBride*)]

Center Photo: View of Avenue L west from Avenue M, ca. 1932-33 [*photo courtesy of Teddy Fenton; negative in the collection of Dennis McBride*]

Bottom Photo: View north on Avenue M, 1933 [*photo courtesy of Therese Thomas; negative in the collection of Dennis McBride*]

to get into the house. He kept calling his wife's name to let him in. And all of a sudden you heard this thud out there. She had thrown a hammer at him! He grabbed her and threw her down on the ground. The reason we knew this is because they lived next door to us and we sat up and peeked out of the raised canvas on our porch and were watching this little show go on out there. He got her spread-eagled down there and held her. She had a tin can with the sharp edge up and in the other hand she still had this hammer. He said, "Now, I'm going to let you up and let's go in the house and talk about this." But when he jumped [up] he *ran* down toward the street. She threw the hammer and it hit the side of our house. Well, then we didn't hear anything until in the morning he drove up the alley and came and quietly asked her to let him in.

Had you been paying on your debts back in Iowa all this time?

No. We didn't pay anything until five years Had we been here five years by then? I don't know how the years stack up.

Not quite yet.

All right. Then it wasn't that time when I was home. But the next year when I went home to see the folks, I went in and I paid the first bill that we owed—it was only \$24. The chickens had gotten sick the last year we lived out there on the King place, and I had gone in the drugstore and bought what you pour in the chickens' water, you know. And I had a bill for \$24. And that man, that druggist, had *never* been unkind to us. He'd been nothing but friendly to us all the time, and I said to Lloyd, "George is the one we're gonna pay first." And we did. And from then on we were able [to pay]. You see, at the [grain] elevator [Lloyd] owed \$200 and some, and that was a big bill. Because he'd get ground feed that last year that we lived there. And my dad was a director down there at the elevator, and he didn't like [us owing] that. So he said, "They are going to settle so much on the dollar at the elevator. How about if I pay Lloyd's bill and then you kids pay me when you can?" So he paid that off, and then I just insisted Dad was going to be among the first ones that we paid. So that's the way we did it.

The priority list was actually according to the way people had treated us. They repossessed our car right off of the street for a repair bill of like \$32, and my dad had to come up and bail us out of that. There was a lot of stuff back in those days

to *crush* a person's self esteem, and that just about did it [to us]. I had to call my folks up and have 'em come after me. I'd taken Don in to the doctor, he was just an infant. So Dad paid the [car repairman], off. Dad, nor any of my brothers ever went to that guy again, because he did that. He went around and repossessed several cars. And then if their families didn't help them out like my dad, they lost the car. For little or nothing.

What was the first car you bought when you were in Boulder City?

For three years we didn't have one, then we paid \$700 and something for the least Plymouth that there was, a two-door Plymouth. And I went to Chicago and on to Detroit and took factory delivery, drove it out here. We drove that Plymouth for ten, eleven years because we got stuck with it during the war and we couldn't get a new car!

It was brand new, then, you bought?

Oh, yes, it was new.

Do you remember what year that was?

'37.

Friends that you had here after you were settled down here—did you have a circle of friends?

We didn't socialize at all because in the first place we had no clothes that you'd want [to socialize in], and we were so glad just to be together that at first it didn't make any difference. My friends I made at the church. Lloyd was working shift work so he didn't get involved in anything until summer came, and then he was into ball again. He played ball for years out here. He managed a team for Mr. Manix²⁶ and one for Paul Webb.²⁷ One was basketball and one was softball.

Actually my life was at the church.

What did you and Lloyd do for



**Basketball team sponsored by Paul Webb's Boulder Builders Supply
1942**

**standing, l-r: Murray Maughan; Chet Tyree; Bringhurst; Royer
kneeling, l-r: Agricola; Lloyd Morrison [coach/manager]; Red Lansford;
Art Werden**

*[photo courtesy of Lillian Morrison;
negative in the collection of Dennis McBride]*

Fun?

Yes.

Earl Brothers²⁸ always had a Saturday night show and he had a drawing and you'd go up there [to the Boulder Theatre] and you'd see everybody that you knew. And the lake had started to fill and we had friends who knew that we didn't have transportation and they'd take us to the lake. And the lake was rising everyday, so when you'd go swimming, why, maybe there'd be sagebrush just under the water. Those were good days.

But our social life was at the church, actually. We went to potlucks and we were quite heavily involved there.

Which church was this?

Grace. Grace Community.

How did the Grace Community Church differ from the other churches in town?

I always have said there were seven different denominations. There was a missionary project in southern California someplace that in these needy places [like Boulder City] helped them to establish a church. They helped establish this church, and there were seven different denominations that worshipped there. And Parson Tom²⁹—we didn't even know what denomination he was until he was killed, and then his brother came out and preached his funeral service, so then we knew.

Did they have to give different services for different denominations?

No. [Parson Tom] honored all types of baptism. There was a baptistery there, so the Baptists could be immersed, and there was sprinkling and pouring and whatever else there was. Dedication of children. I tell you, it was great the way people got along in their church. Everybody knew that they were different, or could be different from the fellow sitting next to him, so you didn't ever push their button.

What kind of activities went on at the church that you'd attend? You mentioned the potlucks. Were there organizations and committees that did community work?

I don't know whether they did community work or not. The church almost *was* the community. You see, the Episcopalians were here. The Mormons, the Catholics, and Grace Church. Now that's the four big ones that were here to begin with. For instance, I'm a Baptist, so when we established the Baptist Church, we went to it. I go to Bethany Baptist now and have for years.

When we lived on M Street, down at the church one day You know, you're not supposed to invite people to secret organizations. They are supposed to ask to join you. But I worked down [at the church] with the ladies, and one of the ladies said, "Lillian, you'd make a good Eastern Star." And I said, "I *am* an Eastern Star."

And they said, "You've been in town this long, you're an Eastern Star, and nobody knows it?"

And I said, "I didn't know what kind of people *you* were."

So I affiliated. I had demitted back [in Iowa] because I couldn't afford to pay the dues.³⁰ So the rule is you pay one year's dues and then you can be back in. So I joined Eastern Star. Lloyd could go with me to the social events, so that became a part of our social life.

And he didn't join the Masons until we were living on M Street and one of the Did you know Corty Cooper?³¹

Cortez? Yeah.

Corty was a plumber and the town was 10 years old and everybody had to bring their electrical, their foundation, and their roofing up to some type of standard that Boulder City set in order to get your lease renewed.³² You see, we paid ground rent. We did not pay taxes. We could not own [the lot]. We could own the lumber that was on it, but we couldn't own [the land]. So Corty came out and said something to Lloyd, and Lloyd came in and said, "Hey, Corty thinks I'm a Mason. I'm so afraid he'll say something to me he shouldn't."

I said, "Why don't you get up there and petition 'em, then?" [laughs] So Lloyd petitioned them and he was accepted. And *that* became our social life.

Back to the [Grace Community] Church, then. Do you remember the Christian Endeavor group?

Yes.

What were they for?

Those kids did have a social life sponsored by the church. I think they had parties and maybe they had potlucks, too. Those same groups, when we went up to Mt. Charleston, when the church would go up there like for one weekend in the summertime for a spiritual time, they would go. And then we would have our groups and there would always be some spiritual lessons. Grace Church was a wonderful, wonderful church because it brought people of all denominations together, it brought all ages together.

Do you remember Young Matrons?

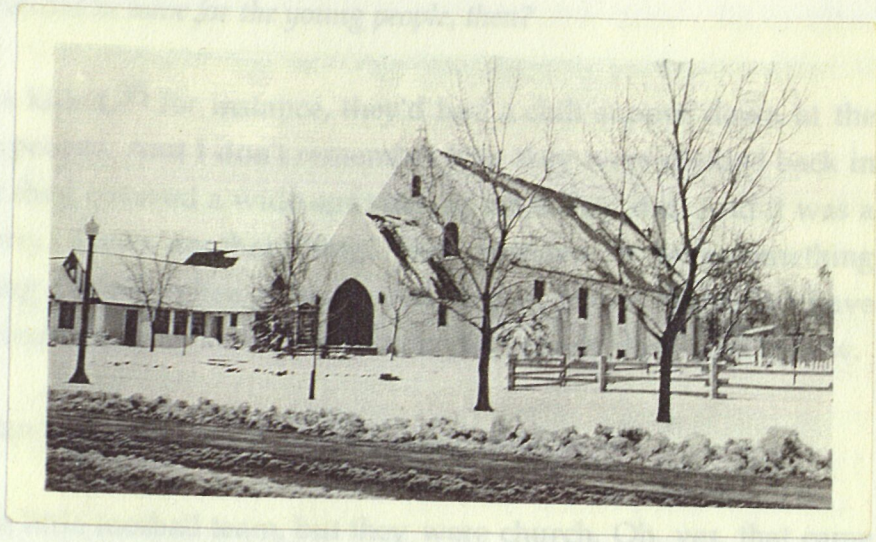
Yes, but I did not belong to that. Lloyd and I had been invited to the Senior Sunday School Class before anyone invited me to the Young Matrons, and I felt obligated to stick. Mary Eaton,³³ for instance, and Rose Lawson³⁴ and those were [Young Matrons].

I want to talk about Parson Tom. What kind of sermons did he [deliver]? Was he a dynamic speaker, or was he understated and quiet?

Actually, his sermons weren't as good as his life and what he did for everybody that he was around. I thought his ministry ... if there was any weak point, it was what he presented from the pulpit, and not the life he lived. Maybe it was the receiver, maybe it was me. But I had come from a church that had a *very* dynamic speaker back there in Iowa, and perhaps that was the reason, see [I didn't think much of Parson Tom's sermons]. I used to study my next Sunday school lesson instead of listening, which is an *awful* thing to say!

You mean during his sermons?

Yes. Uh, huh.



The children. And [Lloyd] had little baseball team, little
And then we liked a lot. One of the buses that was very
to the top of Red Mountain out here. 36 There was a trail. And
the boys that were his friends. Lloyd





Grace Community Church

Top: In the snow on January 20, 1945
[photo courtesy of Teddy Fenton]

Bottom: Parson Tom Stevenson [extreme right with
eyeglasses] and his Sunday School classes, February 7,
1932

[photo courtesy of Dennis McBride]

What kind of activities did he have for the young people, then?

The night he was killed,³⁵ for instance, they'd had a chili supper down at the church, the young people. And I don't remember how they were divided back in that time, whether they covered a wide age span or what they did. And it was a Christmas Eve party. That's another thing. They planned to have something doing for the young people when they needed it, you know. We didn't have trouble with our young people back then. But maybe nobody did, I don't know.

Was there not very much around Boulder City for young people to do?

Well, Lloyd had a little football team, but they were church. Oh, yes, that came out of the church, now. The athletics. And [Lloyd] had little baseball team, little boys playing baseball. And then we hiked a lot. One of the hikes that was very popular was going to the top of Red Mountain out here.³⁶ There was a trail. And Don and the boys on M Street, two of the boys that were his friends, they'd say, "We're going out and bake potatoes in the desert. We're going to eat out in the desert tonight." Well, I wasn't afraid of the desert. I didn't have sense enough to be afraid of the desert. And so they'd go out and they'd be gone a short time, and they'd come back in. I'd say, "Did you have your picnic? Why, Don, the potatoes didn't have time to get cooked." He says, "Well, they were *hot*." [laughs]

And parents—we took our kids every place we went back in those days.

You told me your son Don had a gang of kids he ran around with?

That was on M Street. I was quite careful of the children Don played with out there because I only knew two or three families. I'm rather judgmental in this, but I didn't want Don playing with those children. But you can't stop children from playing, I found out. At least, I found out too late. And there was [one] little boy turned out to be a firebug, which I was not aware of at the time, and Don learned a little about matches at that time, too. But [the kids] would go away from M Street on in toward town. All these empty houses. Oh, they looked wonderful to those kids. They knew nothing about what was going to happen to those houses. And they went around breaking windows. I can't recall exactly whether Don let the cat out of the bag and told us what they had been doing. But

we all were in trouble. Other parents were in trouble. Admitting it, like Don did, and then *we* admitting it, I think we were in more trouble than a lot of other people out there. It was just one of the things that [made us] unhappy about M Street.

And you also told a story about Don's not coming home from school one day when you lived over on Avenue M.

Back in those days you could start a child to kindergarten if he was going to be five by the middle of January. Well, that means Don was just 4-and-a-half when I started him to school—which was a mistake. And Bobby Weed, whose father [Wilbur Weed]³⁷ was the government landscape architect here in Boulder City, was in the same class with Don. I was ironing and Don hadn't come home and I thought, "Oh, [I'm] gonna have trouble with him. He stopped to play with someone." But it got to be two o'clock and he still wasn't home and he was out [of school] at 11:30. I was getting a little bit irate about it. [Mrs. Weed] came to the door and she was in tears. She said, "I hope Bobby is here because this is the last mother of the kindergarten group that Bobby is in for me to contact." I said, "No, Don hasn't come home." And she said, "Bobby hasn't, either." I said, "Well, maybe they're together." And so we notified the rangers at once. The CCC camp was in town at that time and they brought two truckloads of CCC boys.³⁸ Mrs. Weed and I stood there and listened to the description of our boys read out and the instructions given to the CCC boys. They were given instructions to look under every house because of obstructions that could catch the little boys and to look in all the empty houses. Those of us who remember Six Company houses know that they were two steps up off of the ground. And when [the CCC boys] were through [searching Boulder City] they were to scatter out over the desert and start looking. Well, they finished [searching] the houses about 4:30. It was late in the afternoon [and] I was getting frantic about it getting dark. We didn't have a car [but] friends had come along and picked me up and we were driving out in the DWP³⁹ section of town. A ranger car came up and Jack Weiler,⁴⁰ one of the old rangers, just held Don up so I could see him. We stopped and got the children into our car and Lloyd took Don into the front seat—someone else was driving—and Lloyd said, "Don, get back there with your mother!" I said, "I don't want him back here. He's going to have to be punished for this, and I'm thinking about what we're going to do about it." We took 'im home—I don't remember

what the poor child had to suffer. But when he was crying, one of the things he said in his sobbing—I remembered it for days afterwards—he said, "But we had such a *good time*." It was pathetic. He came home from kindergarten the next day and he said, "Bobby's folks didn't do anything to him. And he wanted me to go down there and play with him again. I told 'im that I couldn't go again." And so that ended Don's going [around with Bobby Weed]. But Don felt abused to think that Bobby was gonna get to go [again], and *he* wasn't.

[They had gone] down to play on the trains, down where McKeeversville is. Lakeview.⁴¹ There used to be many [railroad] tracks and there were locomotives down there. They played in those. They were just covered with grease when they got home. They had had a ball. And they walked back up the hill [and] that's where the rangers saw them when they picked 'em up. They saw these little figures coming back up the hill. I kept talking about when Don was lost, [but] Don told me over and over, "Mother, we *weren't* lost. We knew where we were." It was my first experience of having a lost child.

We bought a suede jacket for Lloyd and then a miniature one just like it for Don. That was the jacket he had on that day when he went [to play on the trains]. They got warm as they were going down the hill, and he and Bobby took their jackets and sweaters off and buried 'em out there going over Water T[ank] Hill, first Water T[ank] Hill. Don and Lloyd went out there [later] and they hunted in every rabbit hole out there, [but] never found the jackets.

Back to Parson Tom. What do you remember about the night he was killed?

We were at the theater. And as I said, Earl Brothers always had a party for us up there. And when we came out that night, Leo Dunbar⁴² was standing there and he said, "Lloyd, go down to the church"—Lloyd was a church officer at the time—"Go down to the church. We've had a tragedy down there. I'm gonna catch the men as they come out." You could find almost everybody you needed at the [theater]. Parson Tom was killed—you see, it would be about, like, 8 o'clock. I don't know. It was dark. It was when the show got out, 9 o'clock. And he'd been killed prior to that time. So Lloyd went right down there and Don and I went on down. It was Saturday night, they had to locate the coroner. They hadn't found him. It was going to be delayed. So the officers from the church, when they got them down there, stood back 12 or 15 feet from the body because it laid out there about the width of a car from the curb. I'm not sure about that.

But the men, officers of the church, just stood there all that time. And so Don and I came on home, and Lloyd was sometime later. I think they said it was two hours before they were able to contact the coroner, and then he had to get out here [from Las Vegas]. And the man's name [who killed Parson Tom] was Lewis.

Charles Lewis.

Yes. He had been drinking I understand. The story we heard at the time was that [Parson Tom] was struck down by a drunk driver.

My, Parson Tom was a big man, physically. He said to Lloyd, "Come over here. I want to show you something." So Lloyd went over, went in the house with him, and he said, "Come out here, come out in the kitchen." And Lloyd went out there in the kitchen, and [Parson Tom's] sink was just *black* with ants! When Lloyd came home, he said, "Parson Tom isn't a very good housekeeper." We all loved him.

His house, the parsonage—where did it stand?

There's a duplex facing Wyoming⁴³ and there is a house that has been ... I think Ken and Marge Swallow once lived in it, I'm not sure. The next house. Did you know every lot on the corner had no buildings on it when Boulder City was built? None. Then people [bought] 'em, you know, because it was an ideal building place.⁴⁴ So that duplex is built there, and [the parsonage] would be where the second lot is now. The first Six Company house [on that block]. That is on D Street, isn't it? That was the parsonage.

He was a bachelor, you know.

How did Boulder City react to his being killed?

Of course, the church was just stunned. As I remember, the whole town reacted just like we did. Because he wasn't just the preacher. He was well-liked by the entire community. And since so many denominations worshipped, [he] covered a great span of Boulder City.

Did they have his funeral here?

His brother came and preached his funeral. I've forgotten whether [Parson Tom] was a Congregationalist or a Presbyterian or what he was, but we didn't know what he was until his funeral. They told us [then].

See, anybody killed at the dam—there were men killed after Lloyd and I were here. In fact, there was a man killed down there when I was working down there. He was an engineer and he went down there at night to look over something he had done that day. In the daytime there had been a walkway across the wheel pit. And he went there and it wasn't well enough lit and he stepped off in there and was killed. He was the last man that was killed on the dam. I've forgotten what his name was.⁴⁵

Anyway, it was a huge funeral. Everyone in town went.

Who did they have take over for him?

I thought Winston Trevor came next.

Do you remember him very well, this Winston Trevor?

Oh, yes. He was an intimate friend of ours. The last two years he was here he said ministers shouldn't get [involved in] small social groups. He said that was wrong. But he belonged to our supper club. Up until just two or three years ago I always corresponded with him at Christmas time. But after Lloyd got sick I got kind of careless. Winston and Lois. Lois is in good health. Winston isn't in such good health.

Now, he was just the opposite of what Parson Tom was. He was dynamic in the pulpit. We wouldn't go to sleep in his sermon. But I thought Parson Tom was kind of the shepherd type: quiet. He was a great man.

I can't remember that Winston had the rapport with the kids like Parson Tom did. And what's more important, you know?

You mentioned that when you first got to town and for quite awhile after that you went to the Grace Community Church. But your religion is what?

I'm Baptist.

There wasn't a Baptist church then?

No.

Which [kind of] Baptist are you?

Well, I'm an Independent Baptist. Southern is the big Baptist church, and I'm not a Southern Baptist. Every church I've gone to has been an Independent Baptist church.

What's the difference?

Well, the difference is in doctrine. For instance, we don't have closed communion. Anyone who has accepted Christ can take communion. It's the Lord's table. And some Southern Baptists, you can't take communion unless you're a member of that *particular* church. That's one of the things. It's mostly in doctrine that they differ.

What about in belief? In terms of social issues.

Oh. Oh, yeah, Baptists are You know, no cards, no gambling, no divorce. No, no, no!

These are Southern Baptists?

I came out of a church just like that. But that's what the *church* says. But the individual If you can't worship with people who differ on some of these things that aren't quite clear in the Bible itself, then you better just go off by yourself. Because you've got to give a little. Hard-shelled Baptists don't give an inch. And I am *not* a hard-shelled Baptist. I think I told you the other day. Someone said, "What kind of a church is this?"

"Oh, we're just not mad at *anybody!*" I said. And that's just about the way it is. [We're] a nice, friendly Baptist church.

Boulder City has two Baptist churches.

The one down here on B Street is a Southern.⁴⁶ And I went to that when they first organized, while I was still going to Grace. I went down there to see, since it was a Baptist church. Closed communion. That item alone. I wouldn't have had to hear any other thing about it. But if you can't take communion with other believers, then, to me, I'm not going to be with that group.

So you stayed on with Grace Community?

Until this little In fact, this [Independent Baptist] church had been in existence for quite awhile before I went to it.⁴⁷

That's the Bethany?

Bethany Baptist.

Bethany Baptist hasn't always had its own building.

No. We bought that from the Lutherans.

Which building are you in now?

We're out on Wyoming.⁴⁸ The [Bethany] Baptists were using the Church of God building, or they were using another building down here. It was organized by about six families that left Grace Church because of doctrine.

Do you remember about when that was that these six formed the church?

No, I don't know. I'll tell you who was here—Guy Holliday. But he was here for so many years. It was when Guy was here that I couldn't go [anymore] because the doctrine he was preaching I couldn't go for. I have been a Bible student all my life, and I couldn't go [to Grace Community anymore]. And instead of kicking up a row in the church, Lloyd and I [just left]. We were gone six months from that church before someone says, "I haven't seen you in church for a long time." [laughs] I thought, Well, boy you haven't *missed* me because I've been gone six months. And then we went out to Henderson to a Baptist church

out there. And then the Bethany group bought this church [in Boulder City at 210 Wyoming Street]. Fincher was the name of the pastor when I first went.

When the Southern Baptists in Boulder City built their church down on Avenue B, had they been attending Grace Community Church, too?

Some of them had. Like Bob Parker⁴⁹ went to Grace Church. You see, I don't know who's down there now. The years have gone by.

Have the Southern Baptists and the Independent [Baptists] grown further apart or closer?

Actually, they're just like they've been all my life. They've just been separate entities. Now, when I had to leave [Grace Church] ... I loved Grace Church. I taught Sunday school there, I worked hard, Lloyd helped roof it. We were just a part of it. And then I just couldn't go along with the things Guy [Holliday] believed, and it made me unhappy. And I tell you, there's nothing as unhappy as being torn out of your church. If that sort of thing means a lot to you, and it *did* to me. So I was really upset for months. And then I settled down out there [at Bethany Baptist]. But I attended that church 8 years before I joined.

What was it that you disagreed with Guy Holliday about?

I don't think he believed at that time—I don't know what he believes now—in the divinity of Christ. And I *do*. Easter was the thing that really teed me off. Whether he doubted the resurrection of Christ or not, but what he used to make his point was, "If somebody said that somebody had risen from the dead, everybody would get hysterical. And that 's exactly what happened then." And you know, I just didn't believe that. And so if I couldn't take it, instead of stirring up anything in the church, I just got out.

Was that the only point basically that you [disagreed with]?

No. The virgin birth. [Holliday's beliefs about] the miraculous things about Christ really bothered me more than anything because if you take the divinity of Christ away from him, to *me*, I don't have anything left then. I don't know what

[Holliday] had left, but I didn't want to go talk to him about it because he had studied and verbally he would be able to just knock me over, you see. And I wasn't going to subject myself to that because I knew what I believed. Well, *one* man got up. He was a winter visitor. People actually got up and walked out of [Holliday's sermons]. But this man got up and walked out [*laughs,*] and he turned around and shook his fist at Guy! [*laughs*] But I had left before that, but things got pretty bad. Guy was very popular.

There was a schism in the church [in 1990] where the church split and part of it went off somewhere else?

I know what that was. It's very difficult for a community church to get a pastor. And the predominant group was Methodist. So they wanted to make it a Methodist church. Well, the old timers, like Mary Eaton, are not Methodists. And yet she still goes to Grace Church. If you belong to a church, your church pays \$3 to the denomination head, wherever it is. Now, the Baptists are independent [and] we don't do that. We don't have to send any money off to Chicago or anyplace else. But the Methodists have a headquarters someplace. And this church [Grace Community] has to pay \$3—well, I picked [that figure] out of the air. I don't know what they pay, \$2, \$3—a head for every registered Methodist they have. They have to send \$3. Of course, those people at Grace Church who were *not* Methodists objected to that. I remember now that that's the problem they had. So they allowed—a grandfather law or something—they allowed a certain group to maintain their independence and still be members of Grace Community Church. So it's [now] Grace Methodist I don't know what they've done about the name, but it *is* a Methodist church now, and they have Methodist pastors.

And Methodist services?

Yes. They got a majority of Methodists in there and they could swing the vote.

The choice of a pastor seemed to be the point of immediate contention.

Yes. When this missionary group down in Southern California—7 churches—put Grace Community Church up here, any pastor out of any one of those

churches who would come up here was only let go for 7 years from his denomination, then he had to get back into it. Because he was *non-denominational* [for those 7 years]. Or inter-denominational, I don't know the difference.

Would Parson Tom have had to leave Boulder City at the end of his ...

Seven years. Yes.

And he died before then.

Yes. He was killed.

Then he would have been leaving Boulder City anyway.

Yes. Just as Winston Trevor did. Well, Rev. [Harold] Eymann came in there, and he was taken into the service. He went in as a chaplain. So there was Parson Tom, Harold Eymann, and Winston Trevor. That was the first three that were here. Then [Earl] Fox was in there.⁵⁰

Let's talk briefly about the heat and the cold out here. You'd never felt heat like this, had you, back in Iowa? Or had you?

Well, the heat in the Iowa is worse than it is out here because it's like 95° temperature, 95% humidity. And you just couldn't sleep. But when we first came out [to Boulder City], you just become acclimated. And I came in February, and Lloyd had come in November, so we just drifted into the next season. I remember the way we had—and I can't remember what we did in any other quarters that we lived ... Remember water bags that are made out of burlap, real coarse?⁵¹ You soak them in water first, then you fill 'em full of water, and you hang 'em where there's a draft, and that's just right to drink. That was our drinking water, because the water that came out of the tap, you could wash your dishes in.

It was that hot?

Yes. The pipes were so near the surface, you know. If the wind blew a little while, why, pretty soon some of them were exposed. When we lived down here on I Street we had a cold spell and the pipes froze. Then when they thawed out, you had geysers out around town!

One thing I neglected to ask, when you were living in the shack on Sixth Street, when you first came—did you have an indoor or an outdoor toilet?

We had just the toilet. We had to use that with the neighbors, too, come to think about it. There was a cold water shower and a toilet in a little space between the two flats, apartments. They *had* to have sewers.

You mentioned how you kept your drinking water cool, but how did you keep yourselves cool in the summer?

Well, you undressed. I lived in shorts. My mother was just *shocked* when she found out I was living in shorts out here! If you're living in the desert, the shade is cool to you. 100° or 105° is not too hot. At night, it cools down enough. And another thing. All you had to do was put something wet on. Perle Garrett.⁵² You remember Perle Garrett? She got pneumonia, and this was way back in the beginning. It's one of the first stories I heard out here: "Don't do what Perle Garrett did!" She took some wet bath towels and hung them over herself, and then she stood in front of the fan, and she just *chilled* herself. They said that's why she got pneumonia. Well, I don't know, but it's a story that they have told. [laughs] And one time [in later years] with these boating people we went with, we went up to Temple Bar⁵³ with the car and trailed the boat, and we put in up there. So when we came home, I remember that we all got our bath towels soaking wet and wrapped up in those and got in the car and drove home, because the car wasn't air conditioned. And we were comfortable all the way home. So you did that sort of thing. For instance, Don—I don't think he ever complained about being hot at night. We slept on sleeping porches.

When Lloyd was working shift work and he was working graveyard and had to sleep [during hot days] ...

He put a wet sheet over him[self]. And when that would dry, I wouldn't disturb him until he was automatically disturbed by the heat, and then we would just wet the sheet down again. They didn't get very good rest. At least, the graveyard fellas didn't.

We had become somewhat acclimated, but it was [still] awfully hot. Back in those days men were building boxes out of plywood and putting a Wagner 16-inch fan in it. Making a hole in their house and putting excelsior in between chicken wire and a hose around the top dripping water through it, and blowing a gale through your house. And that was our air conditioning when we lived on M Street. That was our *first* air conditioning, because we had none in the four other places we'd lived in Boulder City.

In the winter when it was very cold, how did you keep warm?

We had a little tin stove about yay big [measures about 24 inches high] and we just put wood in it and closed the house up. See, we were young, too. I wouldn't be able to stand to live like that now, I don't suppose. [laughs] We've gotten used to all the good things in life now.

Your houses were just bare wood walls.

They were just two-by-fours, and then on each side was this sheet rock, or whatever they call it. Plaster board. That's what divided the rooms in the Six Company houses.

Were they very tightly-built, or did the wind whistle through?

Oh, pretty much. But in our place on M Street, we could see daylight out under our front door! I had pneumonia when we lived on M Street, and Dr. D. M., when he found out that I was in the house, keeping it hot in the daytime, and then going out and sleeping on the sleeping porch at night, he said I was heading for suicide! You're supposed to keep [a] constant [temperature], and there was no such thing unless you slept within the house. I was living in a warm place, and going out and sleeping in a cold one.

*Was that Dr. D. M. MacCornack?*⁵⁴

Yes.

Do you remember any of the other doctors in town?

Dr. [James] French, later.⁵⁵ He was in business with [MacCornack], wasn't he? You know, Dr. D. M. came when we lived on M Street, because when I had pneumonia he came out there to see me. If we came to [616 Avenue I] in May of '42, it had to be sometime between '37 and '42.

*Do you remember Dr. Wheelwright, who was a dentist?*⁵⁶

Oh, yes. Don't you remember he had a whole row of They called 'em the Wheelwright Apartments?⁵⁷

What kind of dentist was he?

He didn't wash his hands. [*laughs*] It worried me. I liked Wheelwright, and his wife Leah I liked *real* well. But I can't remember that they had kids. Everything has improved so much [so] you can't judge Dr. Wheelwright, or even the work he did, by what they do now.

*I have a list of people here you may or may not have known, and I want to ask you about them. Sims Ely?*⁵⁸

He was the city manager here. The business dealing we had with him was that we wanted to get into a government house, so we were on a list. By that time Lloyd was a government employee. So after about 8 months I went up to the office, and I said, "Mr. Ely, I'm interested in knowing how far up the list our name has moved."

"Oh," he said, "you're not *on* the list. Nobody can own a house in Boulder City and have a government house."

You would have had to sell the house you had?

Well, we could have *cheated*. I could have put [that house] in my dad's name. There were ways around that [rule] I heard about afterwards—put [the house] in someone else's name, is what I was told. Is what we should have done.

Lloyd was sleeping graveyard, [when we lived] down on New Mexico Street, and a ranger came down and said, "Mr. Morrison, Mr. Ely wants to see you." Lloyd got up and put his clothes on, went up there and went in the office, and he said, "You wanted to see me?"

"Yes," [Ely] said. "Why aren't you taking care of your family?"

And Lloyd said, "I'm taking care of 'em. We're eating. Got a roof over our heads."

And Ely said, "What's your name?"

"Lloyd Morrison."

"Oh, I want *Richardson*."

So Lloyd went back [home] and went to bed! [*laughs*] Now, Lloyd didn't hold that against [Ely] at all, but I was just furious! Why didn't [the ranger] ask when he came in, "Are you Richardson?" ?

Mr. Ely's son⁵⁹ was here several years ago, and we were at dinner or someplace, and Lloyd said to Mr. Ely, Jr., "I want to tell you a story about your dad." So he told him that one. And the younger man said, "Sounds like my dad!"

I think we probably required that, to be fair to [Sims Ely]. But he was kind of a little Hitler.

And I find it surprising that he could, from his office, just demand to see somebody in town and they had to go up.

Lloyd *wouldn't* have said, "Tell him to jump in the lake." The thing of it was, I think we were afraid of Mr. Ely. When Lloyd was called up there I couldn't *imagine* what Lloyd would have done. *Somebody* *someplace* had to turn someone in and say, "That Richardson is not supplying food for his children.", or something like that. I think that [incident] was a legitimate thing, [but] Ely just was a bumbler. He had no tact at all.

Did you know Earl Brothers?

Yes. I knew him well. Evidently he had problems, but I didn't know [that] then. He was hale fellow, well-met. You just couldn't help but like him. And he was so good to the people of Boulder City.

What makes you think he had bad characteristics?

In the last place, he committed suicide. And he had a bad marriage, evidently. Now, whether that was Gladys's or his fault, who knows? But he was the kind of a fellow that everybody liked and certainly the women liked him. I really liked Earl.

Did you know Gladys?

Yes. She was in Eastern Star and so I knew her quite well.

What kind of woman was Gladys? I know nothing about her except that they divorced.

She was kind of a snob. I just stayed out of her way. I avoided people I thought might put me down, and she was one of the people I felt, you know, "I'm not going to get too close to her. She doesn't keep her friends." And that's an awful bad sign.

What did she look like?

She was a large woman. His second wife [Louise], you know, is such a cute woman, such a nice woman. They [Gladys and Louise] couldn't be two more different people. I don't know why Earl committed suicide. He had Louise and his kids were grown, just about. I believe they were grown. Julie and Denise. I shouldn't say anything about Gladys. She wasn't somebody I cared for. I liked Earl so much better than I did her. I think she thought she was Mrs. Boulder City, for one thing. Maybe she was. [laughs]

I'd like to talk about that period right in between the end of construction of Hoover Dam and before the Second World War, that period when people started leaving [because] the job was over. What was it like in that period watching the town's population decline, and people disappear that you'd become friends with?

As I remember, the first group to leave were B & W, the piping company, because they got through first. The town's population started to go down as they finished. Of course, the work was going on all the time for the intake towers and the power plant. The gates were put down ...⁶⁰ The lake started to rise—that would be an easier way to say it—in February of 1935. I got here the month [that started]. It made an impression on me because I didn't even know what they were talking about. That group of people then left, but even though Lloyd worked for that company, I did not know those people. The government people started to come in—*more* government people, because [some] were here from the beginning. And the Department of Water and Power from Los Angeles that the government engaged to operate the units [generators] were beginning to come. You see, as each unit was completed and they put it on the line, that brought a few families.

In your general life during that period, where did you buy your clothes? Or did you buy your clothes?

No, I didn't. I didn't have any money. I made cotton dresses, actually sewed them by hand.

You didn't have a sewing machine?

No. Not until about '37.

Where did you buy the fabric to make your clothes?

Oh, in Las Vegas. See, there was a Penney's store there and Sears.

You didn't do much shopping of that nature in Boulder City?

There was a dress shop right there next to Garrett's.⁶¹ What few *nice* clothes I got, I bought there [later]. And, then, of course, it wasn't long until Corene and Leonard Atkison had the Desertwear there.⁶² And I shopped there. They had nice things.

What about groceries?

Manix's grocery store.⁶³ It had an entrance on B Street. Manix's store went through from B Street over to a section that came up to the Nevada Highway, and it was quite large. The meat market was back in that [area], and the fresh vegetables were back by the back door. Then he had a men's department, and there was a dry good department, and he had a little dress shop.

What sells in a dry goods shop?

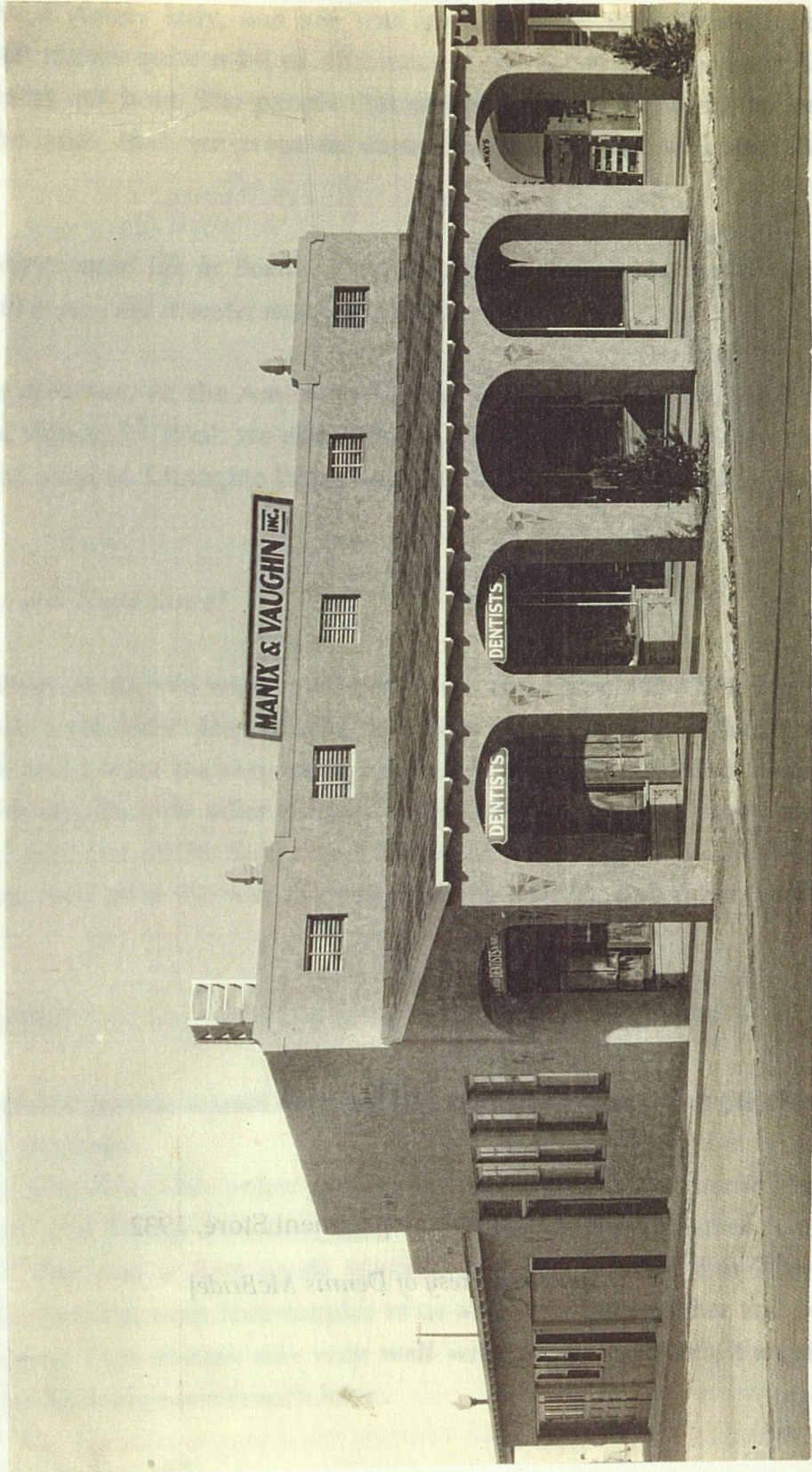
Oh, yardage and needles and threads, all the little stuff you need for sewing. Anything except the things that were already made.

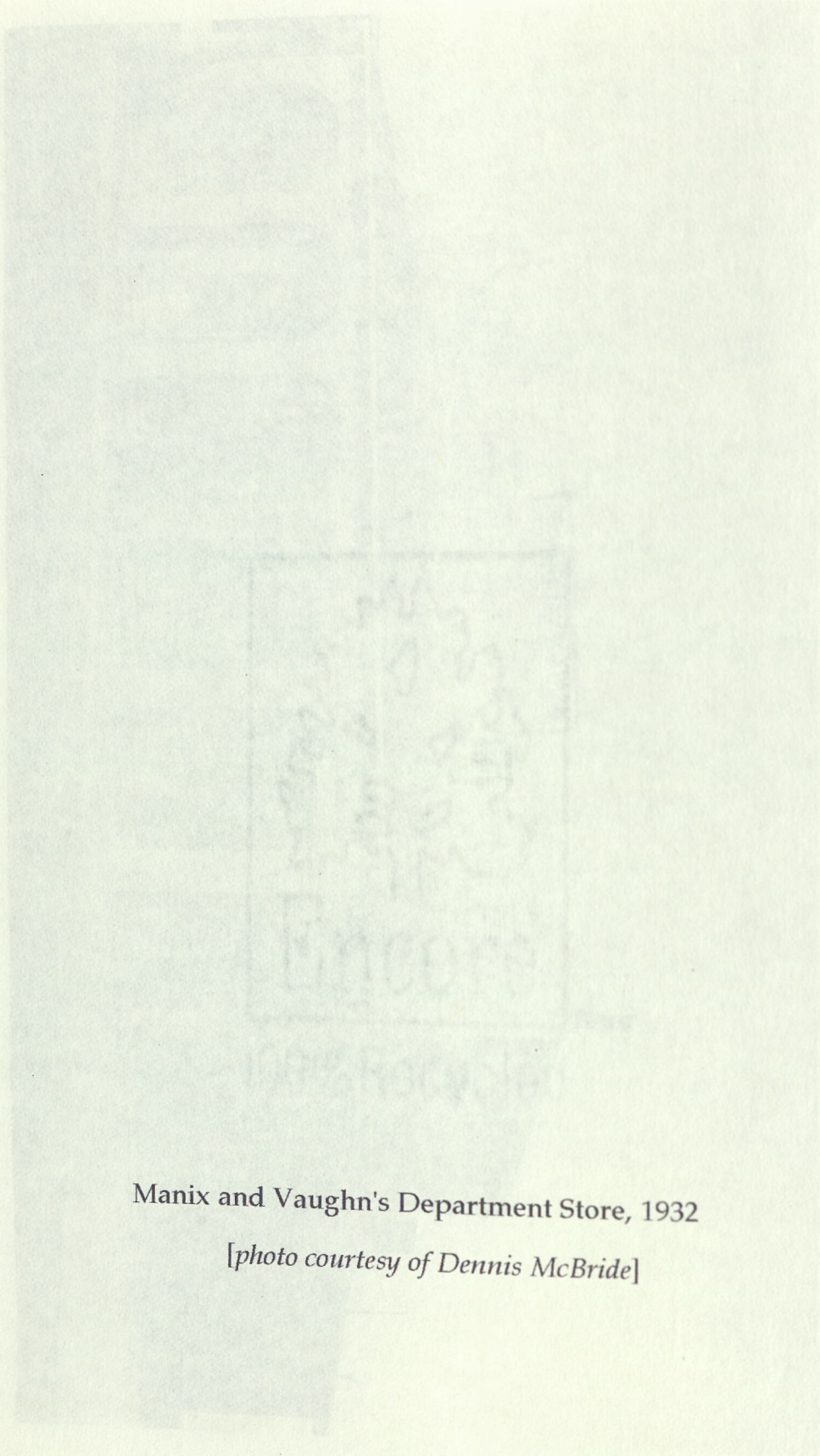
Did you find that the produce or the meat was of particularly good quality there, compared to someplace else like Central Market,⁶⁴ maybe?

I had never lived where I had to buy everything. We put things in the cellar at home, [when] I lived on a farm. So when I came to Nevada and had to buy everything, it was *wonderful!* I didn't have to dig the vegetables out of the ground or anything like that. And I really enjoyed going shopping. And I did shop at the Manix store. When we first came out here, we were living from payday to payday. Mr. Manix was a great fellow. Lloyd went up and talked to him. We were to charge all the two weeks [between paydays] and cash our checks [at Manix's], settle up the bill, and then we started charging again. So gradually, I sneaked a little bit of money out until *finally* I had enough to do for those two weeks. I think it took me almost two months to get to the place [that] when Mr. Manix cashed our check, we got the *whole thing* back! That's one of the reasons I think Mr. Manix was great. He helped people. And we were just kids. And it was all new life to us, too.

I can't remember shopping at Central Market until it moved. You know, it used to be on Wyoming. I thought it was just a fruit and vegetable stand. It was almost [all] opened in the front. The Stubbs family, Glade Stubbs and his dad, operated that for years.

Did you remember Mrs. Manix? Katherine?





Manix and Vaughn's Department Store, 1932

[photo courtesy of Dennis McBride]

She was quite a stately lady, and she was friendly. They went to a different church and that makes quite a bit of difference in the social life, my social life when I first came out here. The people that we got to know the best, the very best, were the ones that we went to church with, and the Manixes were Catholics.

Generally speaking, social life in Boulder City, during that little period we're talking about, '36 to '40 or so—did it center mostly around churches?

It did for me, you see. At the American Legion hall, where the Park Service is now, they had dances.⁶⁵ Well, we didn't dance, but that was a very lively place every weekend. And so I imagine [that] for a lot of people, that was their social life.

Why didn't you and Lloyd dance?

He didn't dance at all. We went to a high school that didn't have dancing, for one thing. And so we didn't learn during our high school years. And Lloyd was very short. He and I were the very same height. He didn't like to dance because there would always be girls taller than he. And so when I married him, I knew that [dancing] was one of the things that we were not going to do. However, later on, it was even after the war that we used the officer's club down here on New Mexico?

Camp Williston?⁶⁶

Yes. We used that for our square dancing. We did square dance. But the church kept us pretty involved.

I don't know when our little poker group got going. Jim and Marguerite Manix were in it, Ken and Marge Swallow, and do you remember a teacher named Reva Bunker? She was a first grade teacher, and she married Jim Manix's brother-in-law. So there were four couples of us and we'd get together and play penny ante poker. That doesn't mix very well with going to church, though. I didn't start playing bridge until much later.

Did you know Ida Browder?⁶⁷

I knew her but she wasn't very friendly with me. We got into it over a school board election one time. Some other person quoted me, and [Mrs. Browder] came down to see me. I lived out there in that place on M Street. She had her driver bring her down there—she had big car. I knew what she was coming for because word travels fast [in Boulder City]. They said, "Mrs. Browder is mad at you!"

She was supporting a Bureau of Power and Light⁶⁸ man who was running for the school board and I was supporting somebody else. I've even forgotten the name of the man I was supporting. And she came down there—she had a girl with her, sent [the girl] up to the door and she said, "Mrs. Browder is out here and she would like to speak to you."

And I said, "Is she coming in?"

"No. Would you please come out here?"

I said, "No. If she wants to talk to me, she will come in here and I will direct the course of the conversation." Is just exactly what I said to her. Well, of course, she drove away. And then she threatened to get Lloyd's job. It was one of these little rows that take place in a small town. The people who rented from us in the little apartment [next door] were supporting [Mrs. Browder's] candidate, so they passed the word to me that Mrs. Browder said she was gonna get Lloyd's job. And that frightened me because we hadn't been here long enough to get any money together, and I thought, "If I have to go back to Iowa and depend on my folks any more, I'll just not be able to stand it."

So I went to see Leo Dunbar and I told him that I was in trouble and if there was anything I could do. I said, "Lloyd is just kind of laughing it off, but I'm just petrified."

And Leo said, "She just can't hurt you at all."

So that was the first civic endeavor that I got involved in at all. And I never supported a candidate out loud [again]. It wasn't pleasant.

[Mrs. Browder] wasn't always pleasant to everyone.

How was Ida Browder regarded around town? Was she well-liked or feared?

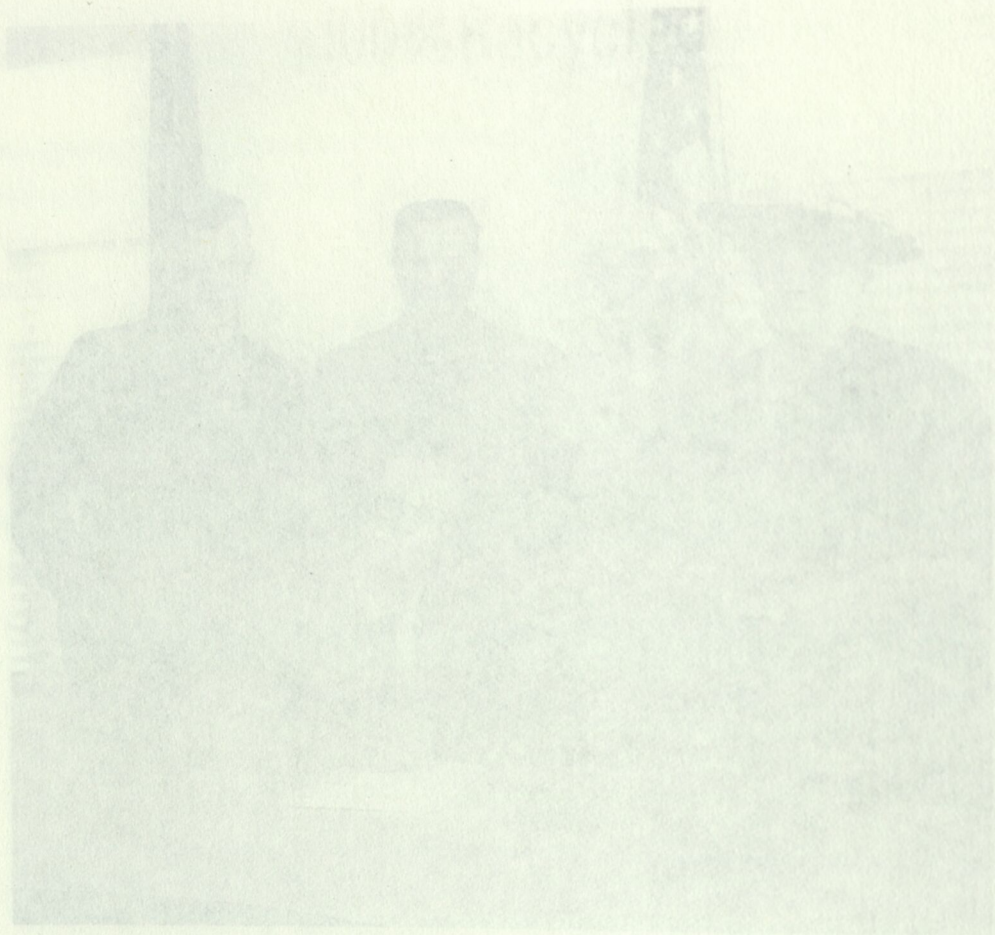
That's the word. She was a bossy woman, you know. I don't know how well she was liked. I didn't like her. And the reason I didn't like her was because she



Ida Browder
March 1, 1960

The occasion is the signing of the first quitclaim deed for a commercial lot [550 Nevada Highway] after Boulder City's incorporation. Boulder's first mayor, Bob Broadbent, is seated. The others, left to right, are Ida Browder; Elton Garrett; Bob Glinski [president of the Boulder City Chamber of Commerce]; and an unidentified man.

[Cliff Segerblom photo]



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The occasion is the signing of the first quitclaim deed for a commercial lot [550 Nevada Highway] after Boulder City's incorporation. Boulder's first mayor, Bob Broadbent, is seated. The others, left to right, are Ida Browder; Elton Garrett; Bob Glinski [president of the Boulder City Chamber of Commerce]; and an unidentified man.

[Cliff Segerblom photo]

was so officious. She came out [to my house] as if she had a right to call me out to her car and talk to her. And I wasn't about to do it.

She sounds a little to me like Sims Ely.

Maybe *they* were friends.

There's some places I wanted to talk to you about. The Green Hut Cafe.

The Julians ran it as I remember. Both Mr. and Mrs. Julian worked in the restaurant. It was a nice place.⁶⁹

Do you remember the Reservation Grill?⁷⁰

Yes. It was where the hardware store is next to the filling station. As I remember it was all counter. It was *that* small. But we didn't eat out much. I was slow at breaking away from the type of life I'd had. We lived on a farm [and] we did *not* eat out.

You really had to change your lifestyle completely when you came out here, didn't you?

Yes. It was a shock to me. Another thing—medical care. I'd known the doctors who took care of me, took care of my family. I had *known* them from childhood. Then to come out here, that's another shock I had. Going to a doctor that I didn't know. We didn't have a hospital here, and Six Companies wouldn't take care of us. We had to go to a small hospital on Seventh Street in Las Vegas. There were doctors who had offices here [in Boulder City]. Dr. [John] McDaniel is the one I went to. He owned a house on G Street, and it has been torn down. The Mormon Church was on the corner, then Dr. McDaniel's house was next, and then there were a little bunch of maybe five Wheelwright Apartments on that street. And then facing Wyoming there was another group of 'em.⁷¹

Can you characterize Dr. McDaniel? Did you think he was a very caring doctor?

Oh, I did. I liked him very much. And then he went in to Vegas. In 1941 I had pneumonia and Lloyd said, "There's a new doctor in town. I think I'll call him

because he makes house calls." And it was Dr. [D. M. MacCormack]. So I had Dr. MacCormack clear from then till he retired. Then I had Dr. French for a short time.

Do you remember if Dr. MacCormack had a brother?

Oh, yes.

One was D. M. and one was E. A.

Yes.

Were they both the same kind of doctor, or different?

Well, Dr. E. A. was a character. Dr. D. M. was the kind of doctor you'd *want*. You *loved* Dr. D. M. Dr. E. A. was cocky. D. M. was very quiet and unassuming. Don had an emergency appendectomy. And in the bed next to him was another patient and E. A. and D. M. both came in while I was visiting Don. I didn't speak to them because they were busy. To show you how E. A. impressed people, Don took ahold of my shirt and pulled me down real close to him and said, "Mother, Dr. E. A. spoke to you and you didn't speak to him." [Don] had already got it through the hospital gossip that [Dr. E. A.] was the cock of the walk up there, and he *was*. He really was. So as they went out of the door I spoke to them then. And he was a hands-on man, E. A., on the women. He put his arm around me and he said, "I know you like D. M. better than you like me, but you better like *me* because I'm going to be around here awhile." But D. M. was my doctor. I had to have surgery, and I knew that E. A. was the surgeon. So I said to D. M., "You're going to be there, aren't you?"

E. A. was a wonderful surgeon, though. There wasn't anything the matter with him except his personality.

I don't remember when E. A. left [Boulder City], but D. M. didn't leave even after he retired. One of the reasons he [finally] left town was because a doctor cannot retire in a small town. The people won't let him alone. And so they moved back to Albuquerque. Gretchen, D. M.'s wife—they came here for her health. And the children graduated from Boulder High. She was an arthritic

cripple and she still had it almost as bad here, so I think they decided the change in climate didn't do her any good.

Did you know Paul Webb?

Paul Webb was another great fella. Lloyd was very interested in athletics, and Paul Webb, being a merchant here, also was interested in it. So Lloyd managed a basketball team for him. I mean, [Webb] furnished the suits and paid the expenses. If a player was injured, he paid the doctor bill. He was a great civic [leader]. His wife outlived him a long time.

There's another story. We had just an ice [box], and you know all you did back in those days was put a pipe from the ice [box] down through the floor and just let the ice melt and run out underneath your house. It dried instantly, you see. So the ants found that [pipe]. I opened my ice box and it was just alive with ants! Everybody [else] had electric refrigerators. So we went out to Paul Webb's and told him what had happened. He sold something called a Norge, a beautiful machine. He said, "How much money do you have?"

We said we had \$23.

And [Paul] said, "OK. I will take the \$20 for a down payment. You can have the \$3 to get you over till payday and then you pay me \$10 month until it's paid for." But that was the sort of helping both the Manixes and Paul Webb gave us financially.

Did Paul Webb have a store that sold these things?

Oh, yes. At the lumber company, at the lumber yard,⁷² as well as at the Uptown Hardware Store.

You mentioned you knew Dusty Rhodes.⁷³ Who was he?

He was a post master. That's a first recollection I have of him. You see, being that this was a government town, for the size of the town, the mail was heavy. Post masters used to come from *any* walk of life and become a post master.

But I was involved with his wife. I was an officer at Eastern Star and so was she. It was during the years just prior to the war, in the late '30s.

What was her name?

Elda. Elda Rhodes. And she didn't die too many years ago. Time goes so fast. They moved up north, to the northern part of the state. Elda outlived him many years.

Tell me about Eastern Star.

It's the sister organization to the Masonic Lodge, and the Masonic Lodge does do benevolent things. But Eastern Star isn't a service organization to the extent the Elks are, but it's not strictly social [either].

Where did you meet?

Down at the end of M Street there was a hill. It's been knocked down a little bit. And up on that hill was a house, a building about the size or a little larger than one of the Six Company homes. And it was called the Masonic Lodge. It had a road that went around it—the parking was *terrible*. We met in that until this Masonic Lodge was built.⁷⁴

What was it built from?

It was just a wooden building.

The reservation gate that you had to come through when you first came to Boulder City ...

The fellas that had to stand guard there, in time they knew every car. You'd almost just slow up to go through and get back into town. After you had lived here awhile.

Did you know Jane Cooke and Eliza Carter who published Boulder City's first newspaper?⁷⁵

They were sisters-in-law. Carter was killed down at [the dam]. He stepped out in front of something—a truck or the train or something at the dam—and was killed. [I think Jane] Cooke was a Carter, that was her brother.⁷⁶

Tell me what you remember about them and their work.

Well, first [the newspaper] came out on a sheet of paper [motions]. It was typed and they just ran it off on a mime[ograph]. And it was *great!* We *all* wanted that paper. It couldn't have been more than a page or two to begin with. But, of course, she'd have her little ads in there, too. Hand-drawn, some of 'em. And then, of course, it just grew a little bit. You see, I knew both of those ladies from the church. They were active in the Grace Community Church. They worked so hard and were so civic-minded, those two women.

Did you get down to see Roosevelt dedicate the dam?⁷⁷

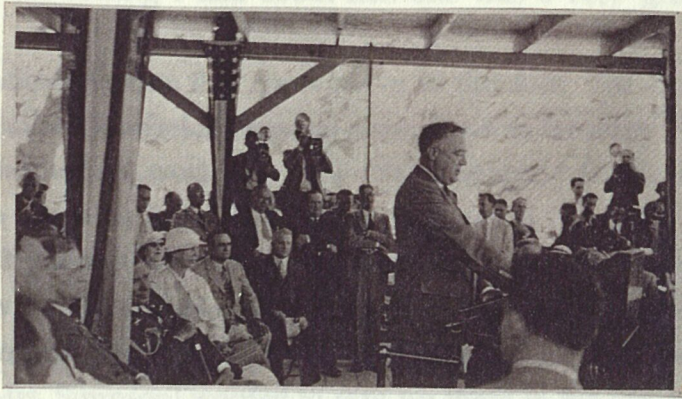
No, I didn't, because Don was a toddler. But Roosevelt came up Utah Street, the motorcade, top down, and stopped up there in front of the Ad Building.⁷⁸ I did not know until that time how crippled he was. I didn't know it at all. I was shocked. He was well-protected.

What did you see that made you realize [he was crippled]?

He wanted to stand up in the car while he talked to the mothers and children, and somebody had to help him. We were invited to come up there and see the President, and that's what we did. It was like a picnic when we went up there. He was jovial, you know, and we'd seen pictures of him so much. But then to see the man was paralyzed from his waist down. Now they have an army go with the President, but [then] there were a few cars. I remember nothing about the security, yet there had to be men standing around.

Was he coming back from the dedication or going down to it?

They had not had it yet. You see [President and Mrs. Roosevelt] were so prominent in the news, always in the media, that you had the feeling of knowing



Hoover Dam Dedication September 30, 1935

Top: Franklin Roosevelt delivers his dedication speech on the crest of Hoover Dam [photo courtesy of the University of Nevada, Las Vegas library's Special Collections Department (Manis Collection #0995)].

Bottom: The Roosevelts arrive at Hoover Dam for the dedication [photo courtesy of the University of Nevada, Las Vegas library's Special Collections Department (Manis Collection #0994)].

these people, and that's the feeling I had about her. She was a very gracious woman.

I'll tell you another gracious woman that came down to the dam. The Duke of Windsor and his wife [Wallace Warfield Simpson] came down to the dam.⁷⁹ [Bill] Getts⁸⁰ was a ranger, and he had worked for the Wally Simpson family in the East on security. And so when he knew she was coming down there, he made himself known to her. She didn't want to go through the dam. And they had those corgies [dogs] or whatever it was that the Prince of Wales had. He wasn't the Prince of Wales [anymore]. He was the Duke of Windsor. They had to have the windows down so [Mrs. Simpson] wanted to stay up there in the car. So she was asking about things at the dam, and Getts, you know, he was *happy* to talk. I don't know how the conversation went, but she was so surprised that there were women working at the dam. Well, there were only about four of us at that time. So he called down there and said, "You girls come on up and meet the Duchess of Windsor. She's up here on top of the dam." Well, so, three of us went up and met her. She [was] a very gracious person. I didn't have any time for her until then. But she was so nice to us and so interested in what we did. For instance she asked me what I did and I told her I worked in the blueprint room. I thought she'd understand that. [*laughs*] I worked for the engineers in their blueprint room. And then Moller, Winnie Moller, worked down there, and Ethel Baker. The three of us went up to the top of the dam and visited with [the Duchess of Windsor]. A very nice lady. I actually got to talk her. Ross Salter was the head of the guide force at the Ad Building, and Ross always brought the VIPs down [from Boulder City] himself from the Ad Building. He was off guiding the Prince of Wales.

*Do you remember when the Civilian Conservation Corps was in town?*⁸¹

The reason I know anything about them at all is because Chet played on one of Lloyd's [ball teams]. Chet was just a real young fellow, Chet Tyree,⁸² and he played on Paul Webb's basketball team. So I got to know him. And in knowing him, we knew what he was doing. He was building rock walls. He was a CCC boy. And then he got a job here and just stayed.

*Do you remember December 7, 1941?*⁸³

Yes. [wistfully]

Tell me about where you were that day.

Lloyd wasn't working Sundays. That was before he was on the guide force. We by that time had a car—we'd bought our first car in '37. I had fixed a picnic lunch and we took our dog and Don and we went down the river—I can't remember where we crossed. We made the loop and came [home] from Kingman. We got home just as it was getting dark. I turned the radio on and I heard this stuff they were [announcing] and I couldn't understand a thing that had happened, you know. We'd been gone all day. So gradually we found out that we'd been attacked. So we went to the neighbors and said, "Do you know what's going on?" And they're the ones that told us that we had been attacked. 'Course, they'd been getting that stuff all day long. I was shocked. It was almost unbelievable. In the first place, I didn't know where Pearl Harbor was. You remember the song, "Goodbye dear, I'll be back in a year?" It came out because the fellas were called up the previous year just in case [of war]. I had two cousins [who had been drafted then]. I thought of them. One of those cousins was killed on Christmas Day in a blackout. He was taking his superior officer on a motorcycle in a blackout and he was following in a caravan and the truck ahead of him stopped. James hit the truck and his body saved the officer's life. James was killed.

We had blackouts here. We were living on M Street and I remember whoever was on duty—and they would be volunteers—came down. And our lights were on. I suppose we had the radio going so loud we couldn't hear [the blackout siren]. And there was a knock on the door and [he says], "There's a blackout on. *Lights out, please!*" Each street had its own [blackout officer].

And the dam, Lloyd said was blacker than a stack of black cats down there when there was a blackout. They blacked out the windows on the dam.

Painted them out?

Yes. That's the way I remember it. Lloyd said it was very, very black down there. You'd step outside and it was just black. You know, an aircraft came in one time, unidentified aircraft, and we were told about that. That's when the

blackouts were in town. There were very few. Very few total blackouts. Unless there was an unidentified plane, Boulder City was not [totally] blacked out.

Do you remember rationing?

We had stamps. We had to go up to the city offices to get our stamps. The stamps were dated so you couldn't use one ahead of time, but you *could* use an old one. Gasoline is what was *really* rationed. You could only get just a few gallons. You were suspicious of people that drove too much, drove a lot.

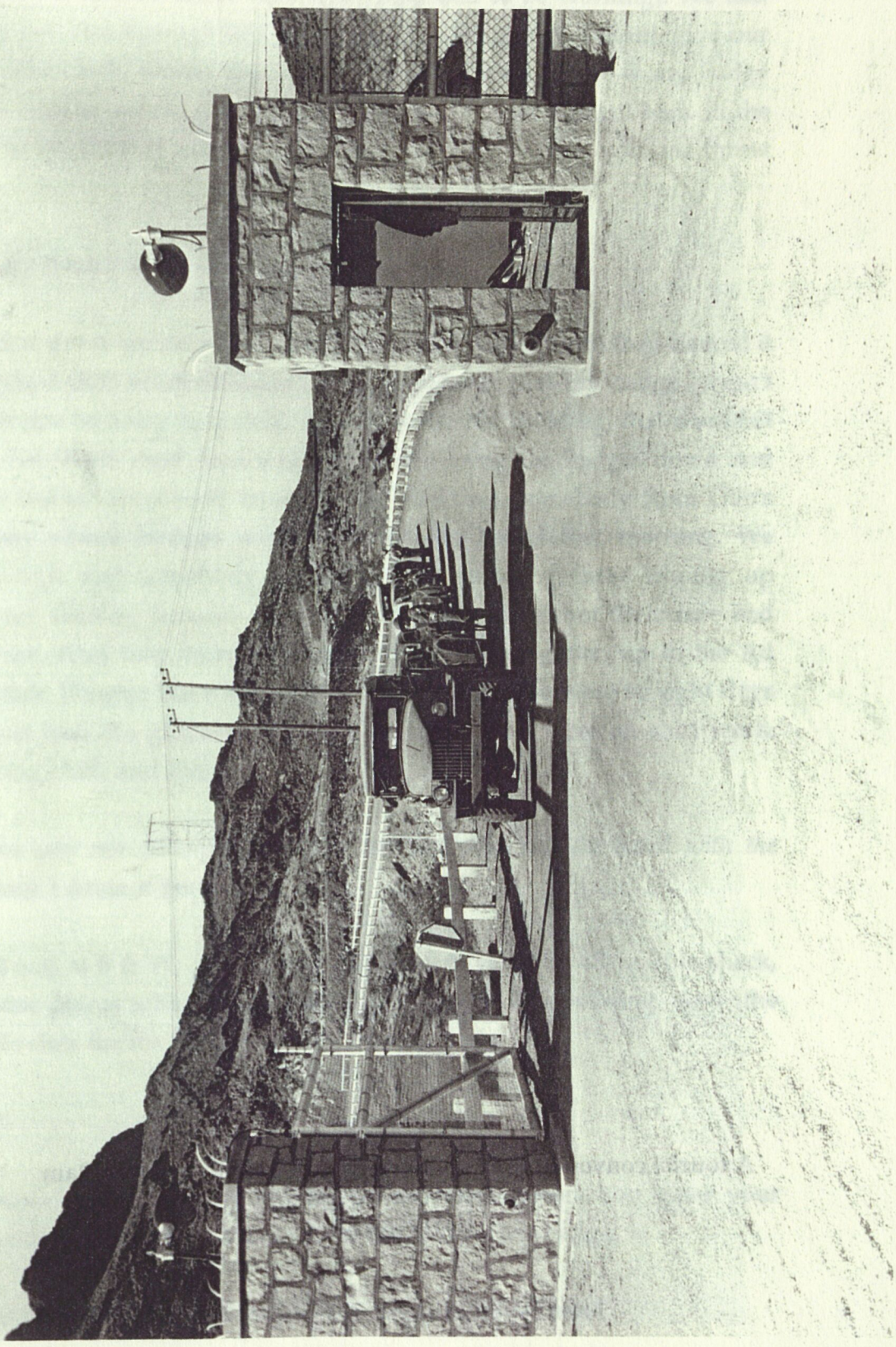
*They closed the dam down. Do you remember that?*⁸⁴

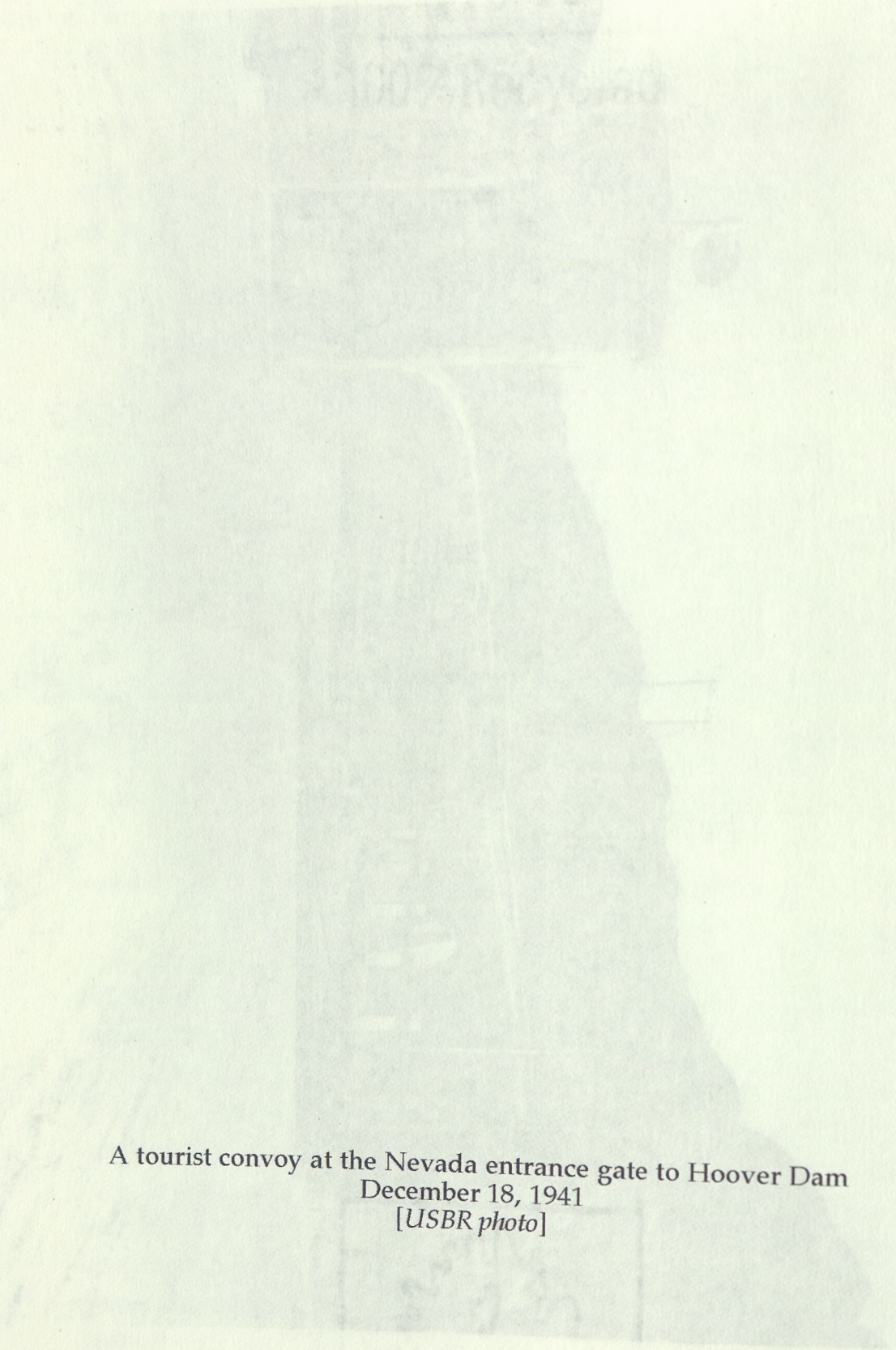
That happened December 7. Then I called a friend of mine and asked her what was going on because her husband was on duty at the dam as a guide that day. She said, "Cliff hasn't come home yet because they can't leave. Something has to be done about security down there." He put in a day shift and he worked on through until he was relieved. They stopped traffic across the dam right away as I remember it. And they opened [in 1945] just as suddenly. Lloyd was working down there then and Washington just telephoned and said, "Open the dam." And there were no guides, you know. The fact that Lloyd had worked through several phases of building the dam, they just put him on as a guide because he could at least *talk* to the people. There was nothing formal about it at first.

You worked down there [during the war] didn't you? What was the security procedure you went through when you went down to work everyday?

When we went down [to work] we got out of the main channel of [traffic] because we were going to go right on through as soon as they checked everybody's [badge]. The tourists came down, but they didn't get out here in this little bypass that the government workers were going through. They had to wait until so many cars were there. And then the Camp Williston soldiers took them across. You could have your windows rolled down a little bit.

They kept our badges [at the gate]. If our badge wasn't there on the board, we just had to wait until the administration building got it straightened up and got a badge down there for us. They were very careful that everyone who was going to work that day had a badge. We were told when our shift was. Otto [Littler]





A tourist convoy at the Nevada entrance gate to Hoover Dam
December 18, 1941
[USBR photo]

had it all worked out and he knew who was [supposed to be working]. We had to get out of the car, run through this cattle run [into the guard station], give our [number], and [the clerk] would check it against the board to see if my badge was there. And then he would give me my badge and I would go get back in the car and go [on to the dam to work]. And when you went home, you just threw the badges in.

What if your badge wasn't there [when you came through]?

Then you didn't get to go [to work]. You stayed and waited until they cleared it up. I never worked shift work so I don't ever remember that my badge [wasn't there]. It would just be a slip by a clerk, see, up at the Ad Building, that wouldn't get the badge out there. And then a ranger would bring the badges down and put 'em on the board. Somebody from the Ad Building, somebody from Otto's office would say whose badges were to be on the board that morning. We would go through and somebody would just be standing there leaning up against the fence waiting because their badge wasn't there, but their ride had gone on, you see. And they were waiting until word had gotten up to the Ad Building and back. [laughs] But it wouldn't be the people who were straight days that would have had the glitches. It would be those who were on shift work: graveyard, swing shift, and days.

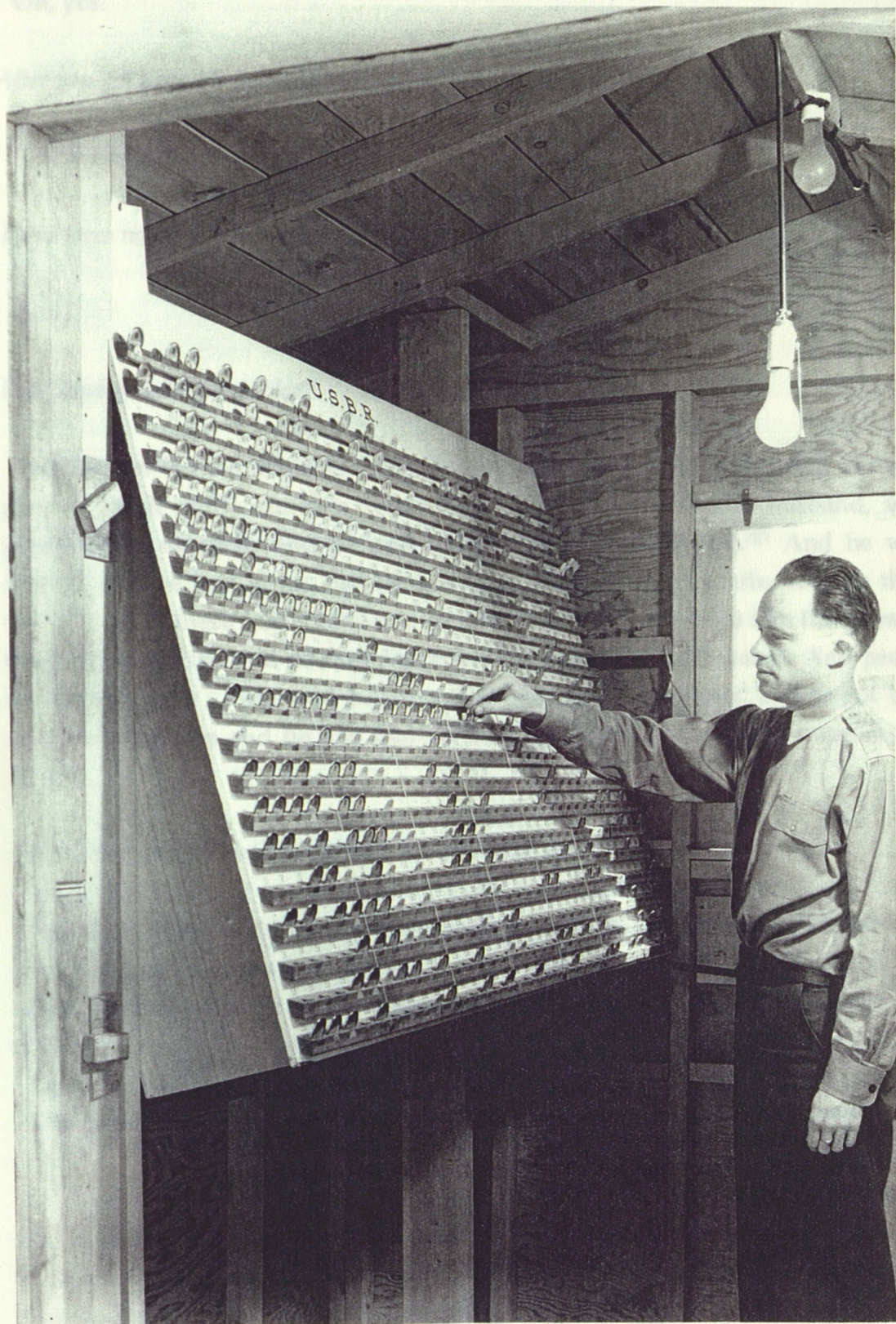
This place where you ran through the cattle run and they had the board with the badges—that wasn't down at the dam?

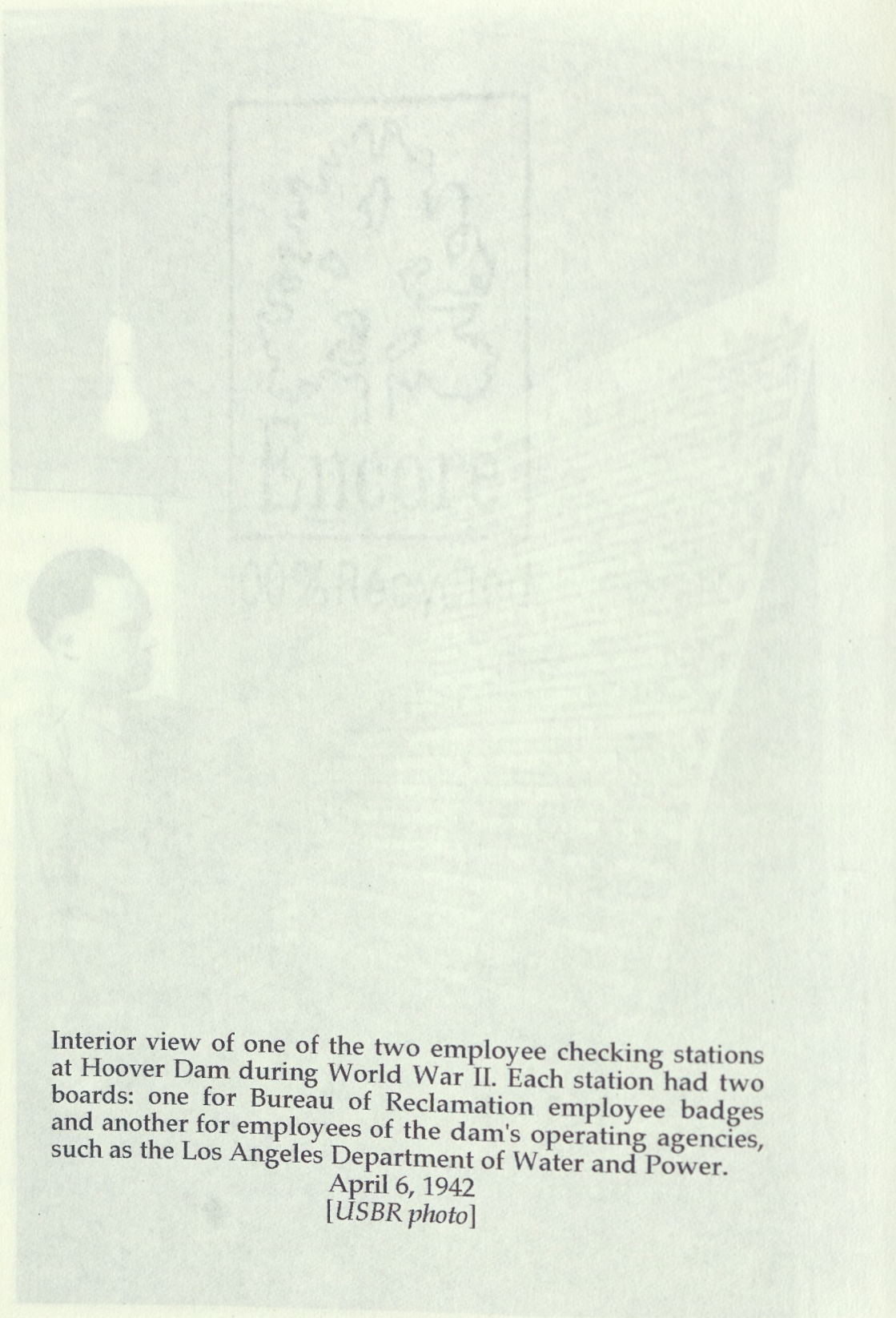
No, no. That was at B & W, out there in the road. It was just like a little shack, like one of those places where they make keys. Just a little building. And [the clerk] had little slots for the badges [on the board].

Alphabetically?

No, numerical. He could hunt up a number a lot faster. You gave your number, you called your number in. I had a number on my badge.

And you had to remember what that number was so you could tell him?





Interior view of one of the two employee checking stations at Hoover Dam during World War II. Each station had two boards: one for Bureau of Reclamation employee badges and another for employees of the dam's operating agencies, such as the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power.

April 6, 1942
[USBR photo]

Oh, yes.

After you got through that and you got down to the dam itself ...

You were in then.

There were no more security checks then?

No.

Did Lloyd go into the service?

No. He was too old. He was in his early thirties [when war broke out]. He was given a [high draft] number. Now, Paul Wilson, that's Ketch's husband, was given a low number, and he and Lloyd were the same age.⁸⁵ And he was drafted. And he had to go. But he was back home in four months because they couldn't cut it, these guys that were up into their 30s couldn't go like the guys in their 20s, early 20s. And so Paul was a service man and Lloyd wasn't. And pretty soon Lloyd got a ..., not a 4-F because they have other categories, and he got one of those categories and he had that all through the war. So he never was in the service.

Tell me how you got your job at the dam, and what job it was.

I was working for Mr. Manix. Somebody got sick up there and the girl that was working in the dry goods department—she was a close friend of mine—and she called me and said, "I haven't got anyone. Everybody's sick. I haven't got anybody up here to work."

I said, "I never sold a thing in my life."

She said, "Come up here. Just to be talking to people while I'm waiting on the others."

So I went up there. After the emergency was over, Mr. Manix asked me to stay. And it was in the fall. As the weather got colder, it was a cement floor, the front door wasn't very tight—I got rheumatism terribly just from being cold in there all the time. So I said, "I'm just going to have to stop."

So I was still working there and Lloyd came home one night and said, "Otto Littler⁸⁶ wants to know if you'd like to go to work."

"Doing what?"

"Well," Lloyd says, "I don't know. Whatever people do down there." [Otto] was head of the warehouse department and there were three warehouses: one in town, the B & W down there [near the dam], and the one on the sixth floor of the power plant. So Lloyd told me that and he said, "You're to go up and talk to Otto." So I went up to the administration building because my time was up with Mr. Manix then, and Otto put me to work the very next day. And if you went out of town, in other words, if you worked either at B & W or at the power plant, you got a grade, one grade higher.⁸⁷ That meant *nothing* to me. I thought it was the war effort I was supporting. [*laughs*] I was given the usual stuff, you know, and told what to do.

What year are we talking about now?

It must have been '43, the last part of '43. I said, "Otto, what am I going to have to do?"

He said, "Oh, they'll teach you. You don't have to worry about that. We've got to have somebody down there issuing material."

So I went down [to the dam] and [the warehouse] was on the sixth floor. It's where only small equipment was brought. We had a big trap door, maybe as big as this area of the room, 12 [feet] x 12 [feet] or something like that. Down on the third floor, the material would be brought in there, and then it was hooked on to a lift and lifted to the sixth floor. And we unloaded it and put it away in bins, or if it was larger equipment, in the back. The first, front, part of the warehouse was like nuts and bolts, screws, and all that kind of stuff. Little hardware stuff. Just bin after bin of that stuff. The men came up on the outside—we opened a window every morning, a large window, maybe 4 [feet] x 10 [feet], something like that. And the men would come out there and they were supposed to have a slip from their foreman for what they had to pick up. I-bolts or whatever. I mean, I've even forgotten the stuff we gave out down there. And we would issue it, and they had to sign for it. And then that, of course, fit in with our inventories. We had to keep our inventories up. It was sort of a cold place to work. I can remember I bought the first pants suit I ever had to wear down there because it was cold down there. Bert Wadsworth⁸⁸ was my first boss

down there at Warehouse No. 3. And a Mrs. Fisher from Las Vegas—her husband, I don't know what he did [at the dam] but he was driving out every day. And he was on day shift, he wasn't on shift work, so that meant he wasn't an operator of any kind.⁸⁹ So they came out together. She put in for a job [in the warehouse] and she got it. And there were three women down there when I first went down there. Mrs. Fisher and myself in the warehouse, and Huber was her last name, was in the time office. And that was the three women that were down at the dam.

Of course, when Region 3 came in here, then Mr. Hudlow⁹⁰ and his crew were sent down [to the dam] and they made offices, nice offices in the windowed section part of the power plant.

Is that where the warehouse had been?

No. The warehouse *always* was on the sixth floor. When we stepped out of [the warehouse] we'd step into the corridor, and then we could step right across into the office over there where the windows at the dam were.

There were a lot of black soldiers stationed at Camp Williston [in Boulder City] and people fussed about it. Do you remember that?

Yes. I just remember that it was [a fuss].⁹¹ I was raised in Iowa without any race prejudice. I mean, black and white, what difference, you know? We'd see them around town, but I didn't have any sense of fear or dread or anything. There were people [who made an issue of it]. A Southerner would really have raised Cain. Like, I was working down [at the dam] when the first black engineer came to work down there. Sonny Wallace from Carolina. I don't know his first name. They called him Sonny. Pulsipher, Red [Dean] Pulsipher⁹² was working in the cable room which was right outside of my blueprint room, and the lunch room was over in another section. I had to walk through the cable room to get back to my room from lunch. I came through there and Pulsipher was lying under one of those things working up in there and I said to him, "Why don't you get a *white* man's job?" And I walked into the room and there was Sonny working at a blueprint. And lots of things, like a nigger toe was a Brazil nut? There were expressions that I had [used] that meant *nothing* to me until I

was up against it down there. So I went in and I went over to Sonny and I said, "Did you hear what I just said?"

He said, "No, I didn't."

I said, "Well I'm going to tell you. Dean Pulsipher is out there under that cable cabinet and I asked 'im why he didn't get a white man's job. And I walked in here and I saw you and that's the first time that that expression meant anything to me when I had the two side by side. I wouldn't say anything"

He said, "Lil, I *know* when people are trying to offend me, and I know that you never would." But I wanted to clear that up right away. And I tell you, I cleaned my language up fast on color remarks like that. There were two or three others, but I've forgotten them now because you just don't use 'em anymore. [laughs] Like Nig, you now, the big row that was over Nig.⁹³ You see, the fact that that dog was named Nig had never meant anything to me until they'd made an issue of it. And then I thought, "Why, he's Nig because of the Negroes. Because he was black." It took me awhile to be careful of what I said.

When I went to work I only went to work because it was a war effort. I went to work without any training because I was a farmer's wife, and farmers' wives didn't work except in the home. And so when I went to work down there, I was totally out of my depth and I had to be taught everything. That's what Otto told me: "We'll train you on the job."

Were you ever nervous about it?

No. I'll tell you, I just wasn't that kind of a person. [laughs] I was told I could do it. It wasn't that tough a job, mentally. I had to index things, but the indexing came in on a printed sheet and then when the material came in I just checked it. There wasn't anything really tough about it.

Do you remember if there was ever a shortage of any material that you had to deal with in the warehouse?

There would always have been plenty at [warehouse] No. 3 if there was plenty at all because No. 1 was the distribution warehouse and it was here in Boulder City. And the big stuff came in to B & W because it came in on railroad cars.

Along that old railroad?⁹⁴

Yes.

What did you mean that warehouse No. 1 was the distribution warehouse?

See, the train came in up there, and the warehousemen up there had to know which material was headed for No. 3 because he kept a certain amount [of material] there at No. 1 because Boulder City was still a government town. And they had absolutely different things [in warehouse No. 1]. They had sinks. They had all the things that had to do with Government housing up at that warehouse. And [warehouse] No. 2 had really the big stuff. And then No. 3 had the smaller stuff that had to do with the dam.

Right after the war was declared there was a housing shortage in Boulder City. Do you remember much about that?

Well, yes, because that's when the Government let Womack⁹⁵ come in and that's when we got our house.

Tell me about Womack and how you got this house.

We couldn't get a Government house after we had bought that shack on M Street [so] we lived [there] for four years. There was a housing list at that time, a government housing list and we had put our names on that when Lloyd went to work for the Federal government. And so after we'd lived in M Street for some time I went up to Mr. Ely and said, "How far up the list have we gone?"

He said, "Oh. When you bought a house your name was removed from the list because you cannot live in a Government house and own property in Boulder City." That was the rule then. So we were looking for a chance to get into better housing. So when we heard that there were 48 houses that were going to be built on H, I, and K Street in Boulder City, in the 600 block—that's the only place they were going to be built—we could go and sign up for them. As I remember, we signed up with the contractor. Over across [the street] here, they weren't going to build a house on that lot. Every contractor has a shack, and that's where his shack was. So we came over and looked at the plat of the area, picked out the floor plan that we wanted and found out where that was. We wanted to be as



...the man in it if we paid it off we could get 1 for a lot less money we had to pay the amount of interest to pay. I said, "We're going to get around and pay that off." And we paid it off in 5 years. We cut every corner we could and it wasn't pleasant because we lived on a budget. And a





Porter Womack Homes, Boulder City, Nevada

Top: The Morrisons' home at 616 Avenue I, ca. 1945 [*photo courtesy of Lillian Morrison; negative in the collection of Dennis McBride*]

Bottom: Womack homes under construction along Avenues H and I, January 1942 [*photo courtesy of Dennis McBride*]

near that corner as possible, so we were the fifth house down. And we signed up for it then, and that's how we got the house.

How much did the house cost you?

\$4000.

Did you have to put money down on it?

It was FHA.⁹⁶ All I can remember is this big long sheet, folded up, that had every payment for 20 years—that was when it was[a] 20 [-year loan] instead of 30. 20 years. And I looked at the principle and the interest, and then, of course, the total, and the number of years it went. And this little house was going to cost within \$500 *double* the price on it! If we paid it off we could get t for a lot less because we didn't have this column of interest to pay. I said, "We're going to get to work and pay that off." And we paid it off in 5 years. We cut every corner there was to cut and it wasn't pleasant because we lived on a budget. And a budget doesn't make for happy family life, I can tell you that. Lloyd would get so irked. He'd say, "Let's go to the show." I'd say, "Well there isn't any money in Entertainment." We had a section [of the budget] called Entertainment, and every payday I put a certain amount of money there. It's gone, and oh! he would just go *on!* And then sometimes he would rob it. He'd say, "We're gonna go anyway." Well, then maybe it'd take me months to [catch it up]. The ground rent was going to come due quarterly. We paid ground rent here long after we moved in, till '62.⁹⁷

What happened to the houses that were here before [Womack built]?

They just moved them out.

So this wasn't unimproved land that Womack built on?

They improved it, like they put in sidewalks—I don't remember we had sidewalks at all when it was Six Companies. And of course, the pipes they had for the [Six Companies] houses were not underground very far, so all of that

was part of what the contractor had to do. The sewer and the water, so it was dug up pretty good.

How long was it before you could actually move in to the house?

They went up fast, but I can't remember how long it was.

Did you keep your house on M Street when you moved in here?

No, we sold it [for money to buy] furniture. We had to have carpeting, shades. We were just moving into a bare house.

Were you still renting to people [in the M Street house]?

Yes. That was one of the reasons we could sell it [so easily]. We had two tenants out there. Leroy Burt⁹⁸ was living out there in the north side when we first moved in there. And they had their two girls. And Elmo [Burt] was Leroy's brother, married to a woman named Zella. They rented the back. I had Burts all around me.

You started out working at the dam in warehouse No. 3. How long did you stay there?

I was there just a matter of months, like 8 or 10 months because the men were being drafted so fast. The receiving clerk, the man who did all the office work as material came in The foremen would bring the information in from the field to the warehouse that these certain things had been received, and then we had a form to make out for receiving. Paul Dexter was my boss [then]. He was immediately under Otto Littler. He came down to the warehouse one day and he said, "I'm going to take you up to No. 2 warehouse." That was B & W. I said, "I'm happy here."

He said, "I have to go down to the clerk's office in the machine shop and I'll pick you up."

I said, "I don't want to go." You see, this was the first job I'd ever had and I didn't know I was being insubordinate [refusing the transfer], but I really was. I was perfectly happy down [at the dam]. I couldn't imagine. I was going to be the only girl up there at B & W. So he said, "You be ready to go."

"What about my work here?"

"It'll be taken care of."

And that was *that*.

So I went up [to No. 2 warehouse] and I worked there until the end of the war.

The boss when I first went to work at the dam was Bert Wadsworth. He was married to Flossie, who, over the years, ended up as Mrs. Lloyd Hudlow. Bert was total disability when he came home from overseas, and the marriage just crumbled then. But he was *great* to work for. My years there, my months, or whatever it was, were enjoyable. Then when I was at the Warehouse No. 2 as Receiving Clerk, I had ... Johnson was his name. He didn't stick around long after the war. Maybe he was drafted, too. I know Paul Dexter was. I mean, the men just *disappeared*. And there was another woman sent down there and she had to work out in the warehouse itself. I don't even know what she did out there.

Out in which warehouse?

No. 2. I was the first [woman] that went there. And the men went to war, and there was pretty soon another woman. She wasn't fat at all, she was a *big* woman and she was able to move things around.

In the brief time that you were the only woman working in the B & W warehouse, was it difficult around the men? Did they make remarks?

Oh, no. If there was any harassment I thought back over an incident that happened at the dam. A man who had lived next door to us when we lived on B Street knew me, and I think he thought [that] because I had gone to work where there was nobody but men, that I was a loose woman. I don't know what he thought. But he followed me back into the stacks one time. I was going back to get some material, and he *touched* me. I can't remember whether he just took ahold of me or what he did, but, of course, I was strong then. I don't know what I thought, but I told him, "Don't you *ever* touch me again." And I told my supervisor, and there was nothing ever made of it. And that fella didn't lose his job, but he *never* came to the warehouse for material again. So the foreman knew about it and he wasn't ever sent up there [again]. Now that was harassment, wasn't it?



Lillian Morrison working near the tailrace at Hoover Dam during a test ca. 1950s

[photo courtesy of Lillian Morrison]

Yes.

Do you remember if there was any kind of arrangement in Boulder City for doctors to

But you see, I didn't know that [then]. And nobody else did [either]. The fellows used to kid. I ate lunch with the warehouse bunch, the guys that ran the trucks. Because we had a lunch room up there and there was an oven and we could toast our sandwiches, and there was a sink to wash up. There were about 8 of us that ate together down there. That was when I was in the dam. And everybody was friendly, *and* everybody was helpful. And I was very fond of those fellows. I got a feeling for those guys like a little family, you know. And I really liked them. Jimmy Bellor.⁹⁹ Did you know Jimmy Bellor? He was one of the truck drivers. You see, [my working in the dam] didn't last very long. But when I went to No. 2 warehouse, because I was still in the warehouse division, it was the same men, you see. I was seeing the same men. There was a family out ..., well, I shouldn't give their name because they had two boys [and] one of them *definitely* [whose] elevator didn't go to the top at all, for him. Holts. And Bert Holt was a laborer down at [the dam], but he had to be told everything to do, you see. And he came in the office and said that I hadn't given him his time right. And I said, "Oh, yes, I did. You work a straight 8-hour shift."

"No, you *didn't*."

I didn't know that I had made him angry. He went out and he threatened me, not to *me*, [but] to his boss out there, that he was going to *get* me! Now, he didn't mean in any harassment way. He was going to *squash* me! So the man came in—I should remember that fellow's name, too, nice big guy And he came in and he said, "Don't ever come out in the warehouse alone. Always have a man with you." Every morning I had to go out and check the amount of gasoline that was used. I had to keep track of the usage of the gasoline in the trucks. That was a part of my paperwork. And so every morning, the foreman would send one of the guys to walk out [with me], because I had to walk all the way through that warehouse out to the gasoline pump outside. But I wasn't a bit afraid. I couldn't get afraid about that, but the men *were*. But then they knew him because he would get mad at his brother and plow into him, you know, go after him. Junior [Holt]. We didn't ever call him anything but Junior. And his folks named him that. That was his name on the payroll. Junior Holt. Junior and Bert.

No, I wasn't harassed. I tell you, some women would be harassed, would consider it harassment, if [the men] just hung around the office, maybe. And, heavens, I enjoyed talking with them. I just didn't have that feeling about them.

Do you remember if there was any kind of arrangement in Boulder City for daycare for children of women who worked?

I think everybody looked after themselves. [My son] Don got home 15 minutes before I did because I rode up from the dam. And then I had to work at the dam every other Saturday during the war. That 15 minutes Don was not to leave the house until he had made contact with me. He wasn't to go play. He was just to be here. And that's the way we worked it. Then after we made contact, talked about our day, he went on with his playing. But on Saturday, Mildred Kine—[her son] Joe [Kine, Jr.] was in Don's class—I paid her a dollar a day [to look after Don]. Can you imagine? A dollar a day and [Don] got his lunch! And he went over and he played all day with [Joe] Junior. They were just kids, you know. Ten years old. That was babysitting for me, child care, or whatever.

There were three women in 1944 who were put on the ranger force down at the dam. I wonder if you knew them: Mable Painter, Jessie Shelton, and Thelma Craig.

I remember Jessie Shelton. She was our telephone operator. They got one of these [Womack] houses. And there were two boys in that family. And I can't remember when Mr. Shelton died, but she was a widow the longest time that I knew her. She was a kind of a healthy, hefty woman, a little heavy-set. I thought she was a telephone operator before the war.¹⁰⁰

How long did you work at the B & W warehouse?

Till the end of the war. But you see, I can't remember what month, or even what year, for that matter, because it would depend on when the fellow was discharged [from the military] that came back.

But you stayed on working for the government?

Oh, yes. You see, some of the men who had gone to war didn't come back here. Maybe had the opportunity for a better job or something. And if their wife was working at the power plant [she left, too]. I was sent down there into the



Lillian Morrison portrait by Cliff Segerblom
ca. 1947-48

[photo courtesy of Lillian Morrison]

time office for some wife that was leaving town with her husband. Then I worked with that until—you know how they move people up. There was an opportunity for me to get a grade raise if I would come uptown. So I came up and worked there until the year the city was taken out of Reclamation.¹⁰¹ All the costs of operation of Boulder City were in with the general costs of [running] the dam. And I was one that was sent down to what is now the senior center. I was sent down there and I did the rentals and ... I can't remember what else I did.

Let's talk about that for a bit. You mentioned a little bit earlier about paying ground rent. What was the arrangement between property holders, or house holders, and the government as far as paying ground lease?

We had to pay a ground lease and we got a bill like you get a utility bill now, from the Federal government. But I can't remember what office it came out of. We only paid \$4 a month to live here.

Was it a monthly bill?

No. Quarterly. We got a quarterly bill. You know, a lot of people won't live on leased land. But that didn't mean anything to me because I was so glad to get a house, I didn't care whether I owned the land under it or not. But we did *not* own the land under it. [That] wasn't until '62.

What was the length of your lease?

99 years. We could have kept on [paying ground rent after incorporation]. I suppose pressure would have been put on us [by the city to buy the land]. I don't know anyone that took that way of going. We paid for [the land]. But anyone that didn't want to, could just keep right on paying [ground rent].

At the time the city was incorporated, you had the option of either maintaining your lease or buying the land?

Yes. We were one who bought our land. I can't remember if that changed later on and everyone had to buy their land, or not. I just think everybody did buy their land.

Would there have been an advantage from your perspective in maintaining your lease payments if you'd been allowed to, rather than buying the land? At the time.

You see, I don't know what that would have [done] to [having] sidewalks or streets. [After we bought the land] we paid taxes, county taxes, on it.

Who else moved down with you from the Reclamation offices to the city offices?

Mr. Corbin was hired, through Washington, to come out here and be the city manager.¹⁰² Mr. Boynton was one that was there.¹⁰³ Mr. Anderson was one [of the city/government officials], because he lived in one of the brick houses. I don't know what he did up at the Ad Building before he was sent down here to run this office. We had a city clerk that we hadn't had [before].

The period you're talking about now was, I think, 1951¹⁰⁴ when they separated the operation of the city from the dam. Up until that point, what we'd call city personnel now were government personnel and worked for the Bureau, and you were one of them?

Yes.

But at that point there was order issued that separated the work forces?

They separated the work forces, but we *still* got government [pay]checks. Because the government was the one that wanted to find out how much it cost to operate Boulder City.

So that was what your job was?

My job was Of course, there was electricity, water. We had a girl doing [that] billing. Marge Likens Heaton was in charge of the Utility Office. That's where I worked. Utilities. Ross Salter's wife, Lucille Salter, was the cashier, and there was four of us that worked in there. The city clerk was across the hall. Mr. Corbin's office—his secretary was Janice Ranum and she has died since then, Bud Ranum's wife. Bud was there.

See, my check just kept on coming, and I gradually found out that I was working for a separate little unit. But my job was actually the house rent, and there were all the government houses. And there were problems you know: the stove wouldn't work and whatnot. And there was repair work on houses, and all of that was a part of my job. The housing cost-keeping.

Just the government housing?

Yes.

If I understand this, really what they did was change the location of your work and they sort of changed your title, but you were still working for the Department of the Interior.

Yes. The Department of the Interior said, "We're going to turn loose of Boulder City. But we've got to find out how much it's going to cost to *operate* Boulder City to see if they can do it themselves." So they set us aside and that went on for, what, 6 years? 8 years?

So the purpose was just to figure out how much it was gonna cost, because up to that time they just had never separated the costs and really didn't know?

No. And then they gave us Boulder City, you know.

Then, when Boulder City [was incorporated] we no longer had jobs! Then the bumping took place.

Bumping?

The little guy at the bottom [of the job ladder] got knocked off because somebody was going to come down from the [newly-incorporated] city and take that job because they had seniority. I didn't know anything about this, and I found out how unhappy some people were. I was down there working at the dam [again] before I realized the reason my boss didn't like me is because *his* girl got bumped! [laughed] I had no idea.

Did the city then hire their own?

Then the city hired their own.

And so you were still a government employee, but with no job?

Because I had worked for the government for many years by that time, since the beginning of the war, I had bumping privileges. And that's why I kept [a] job. It was Louella Cowen I bumped. I had no idea—I was just in this machine that was turning and I took the job at the dam and went down there. My paychecks kept coming from the government just the same as they did before, [so] it didn't mean anything to me.

You didn't have a choice of who to bump?

No. They just told me. "You're being transferred to the dam," is what they said to me. And I tell you, some of the girls that were bumped and had to go to the dam But, you see, I had had such a happy time down there. I liked it. So going back to the dam, that was no problem for me.

I'd like to talk a little bit more in detail about the work you were doing when you were in charge of the rents down in the Municipal Building.

There were a lot of government houses: Denver [Street]; Colorado [Street]; B Street, because that's where the firemen lived;¹⁰⁵ Utah, all down; and Arizona [Street]. Those were all government houses. Park Street and Arizona goes way out to M Street. And there were some others: I Street right here, the top two houses. And the houses on this side of I, that triangle, all was government houses.

You're sitting in your office. What's your job? What are you doing?

Well, every two weeks I had to send in to the payroll the deduction for the rent for each house. It wasn't like all houses of this floor plan are \$35 a month. Those people have a government stove and government space heater. The next house has a government space heater *only*. So I had to be careful that I sent in the right deduction from that person's pay check. See, it was payroll deduction. The rent was taken out of their pay.

And each house, essentially, had a different rent?

Well, there were a lot of them that were alike, but alphabetically they weren't going to turn out the same. [laughs] I had them all alphabetically arranged according to the employee's name.

Did you also have to keep track of when equipment was moved around? A new stove, a new heater?

Well, you see, the warehouse did the moving and the warehouse would bring me a work order that said, "Delete the stove from so-and-so." Then if it was moved to another house there was *another* slip come in. The stove, all the equipment always went into the shop for clean-up and repair before it was moved to another house. The equipment was taken care of by the government.

That must have driven you crazy, keeping track.

No, because sometimes there wouldn't be a move. Sometimes it would be the very same as the previous time. But I'd have my little stack of papers there. Or, I wouldn't have any. My card [for each person] had to reflect exactly what the time office [said]. So if a stove went off, I had to change my card, take that stove off and change the figure [that person was charged for rent]. And I would go through and flip those [cards] and run my totals. The card was all totaled. That was work I did during the pay period. So when I got ready to run my tape to balance with the time office, I just flipped each one, you see, and took the total off of that.

These little slips that came to you from the warehouse

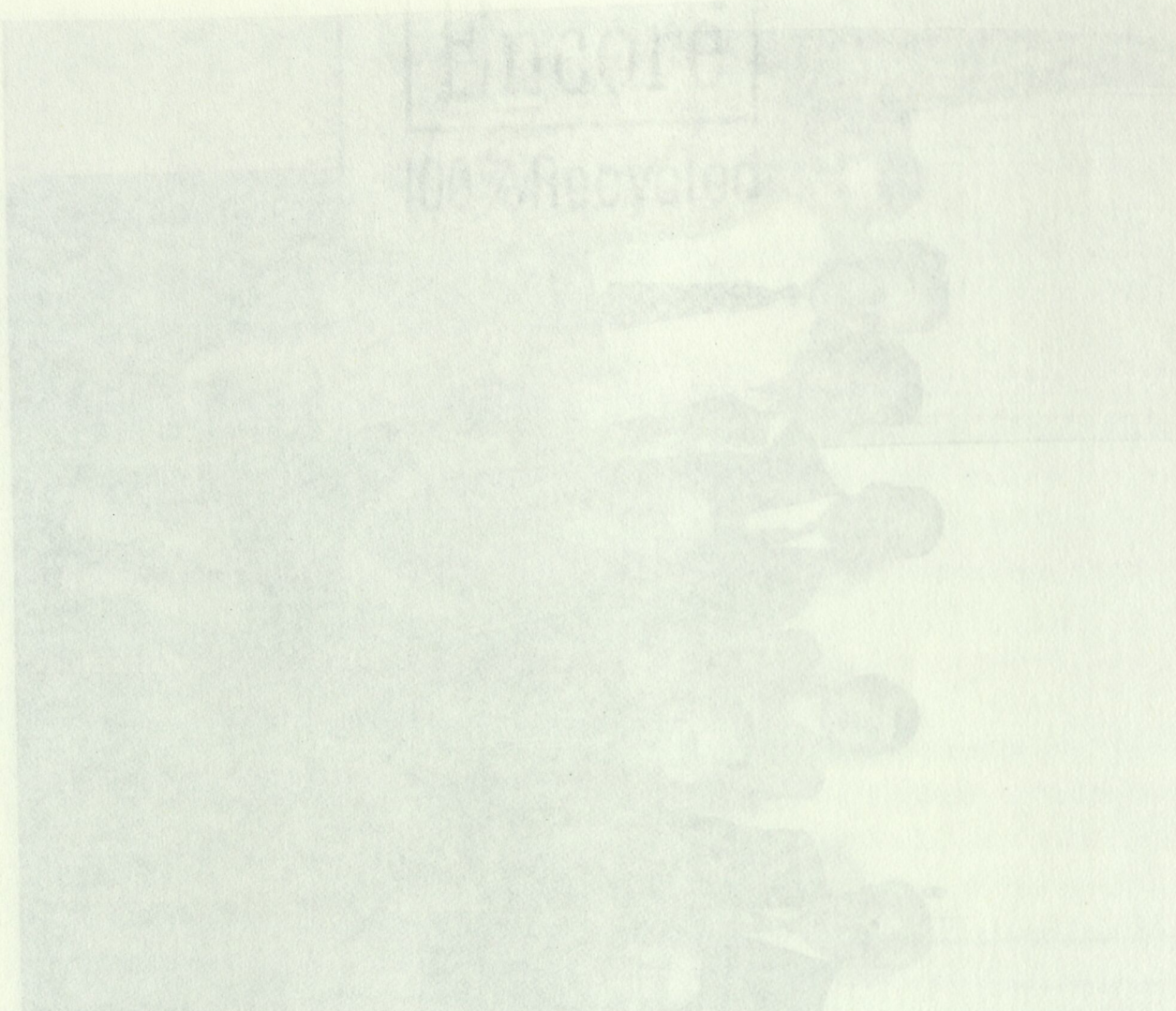
Work orders.

Did they come every day?

Oh, no. They had to get them to me a few days before I had to have the slip up to the time office, so maybe they brought them in at the end of each day.



negative in the collection of Dennis McFarland



Bureau of Reclamation's city staff
November 20, 1956

back row, l-r: Marge Heaton; Paul Mercer
[accounting]; Laverne Thomas;
Hal Corbin [city manager]; Janis
Ranum; Mr. Anderson; Lucille
Salter; Orville "Bud" Ranum;
Lillian Morrison
front row, l-r: Marjorie Zickafoose; Asa Gray
Boynton; Betty Klinger Smith

*[photo courtesy of Lillian Morrison;
negative in the collection of Dennis McBride]*

Did they handle everything right here in Boulder City at the Ad Building, the payroll and everything? It didn't have to go through somewhere else like Denver or Washington?

No, it didn't. When I was at the dam, all of our stuff came to the Ad Building. All of our stuff.

In Boulder City during that period, say, from '51 when they sort of separated your group to do their work, up until they did incorporate, it was a very difficult time in Boulder City because people were at each other about whether to incorporate or not.

Well, yes. In the first place we hardly understood what was going on. That was the trouble, you see. The government is famous for not keeping the person involved informed.

Is that what you felt?

Yes. We felt like we didn't know what was going to happen next.

Did you favor incorporation or did you not favor incorporation of the town?

We did *not* favor incorporation unless we could have local option.

What does local option mean?

Local option means that we wanted to keep out gambling and prostitution. Liquor was already in by the glass or something.¹⁰⁶ And we wanted local option so we could keep gambling out of Boulder City.

Aren't we the only town in Nevada [where gambling is illegal]?

Yes. And that's why we sent Bruce Eaton to Washington, DC. To present our side of it.¹⁰⁷

When you say we, who is we?

We is the city. Our town meetings and all.

Were there factions who did want incorporation?

We didn't oppose incorporation. We opposed incorporation *without local option*, you see. That's what we were battling for, local option.

Was there the possibility that you wouldn't get local option?

Yes. We were really worried for awhile. That would have meant Boulder City would be open to gambling.

Were there people in town who wanted it open to gambling?

Oh, yes. I don't remember who they were. One of the people now [who want gambling] is the guy who owns that Big 8 out there.¹⁰⁸ He built that hotel, *motel*, and he's got some big rooms upstairs [reserved for gambling]. Oh, Mary Eaton was so We went out there for lunch one day and the man was so glad to see us. That was when [the motel] was brand new. He wanted us to see [the gambling rooms]. He took us up to see and said, "This will be one of our gambling rooms." Mary says, "You're talking to the *wrong people!*"

We're going have to fight that always. And there will come a time when the balance will be in their favor. But we stall it as long as we can.

Tell me about after you bumped and went back to the dam. What was your job then?

Then I was working for engineers in the [blue]print room. When a certain piece of equipment or phase of the power plant or anything had to be altered, they would come up then, and we would go and get the original blueprint out. Thousands of them down there. I had a great big machine to run off copies. And I'd run off copies of these blueprints for as many as The foreman wouldn't want all of his men crowding around one [copy], so maybe I'd make 5 or maybe just 2, something like that. Every morning I took care of all the orders that were on my desk that the foremen had come up in the morning and laid down there. I would go in [and make copies]. And my work in the other room where I

indexed the various things—I had to do the indexing for that department, too—would depend on how much work was being done around the power plant. Because some days I'd be more than half a day in there on that big machine running off those copies.

Then you must have been there when they put in that last generator.

Yes. N-8.¹⁰⁹

Do you remember watching that generator go in?

Yes. We were allowed to go into the hard hat area. If you remember, there's a narrow balcony that runs down the side [of the power plant]. We were allowed to go and stand on that. Then you were up out of the work area, and could look down on it. We had to get permission and we had to wear hard hats, too. And you could only go if you got your work done at your desk. But it was relaxed down there because the public wasn't seeing you. Now, I'm a fast worker, and I had to learn to slow up, to gage myself to somebody else in the room not because their work overlapped mine, but because I wouldn't be doing a darned thing, and they'd still be working. But that's typical when you're getting public money of any kind. You have *got* to look busy whether you are or not. I mean whether you could have finished the work faster or not. So if the work was done, we could go down and observe. I didn't go down very many times because I didn't know what they were doing anyway.

You didn't stay on with the Bureau very long after that, did you? You said you'd gone to work for the Park Service?

'69 is when I [retired]. Count back 5 years. That's when I left Reclamation [for the Park Service].

1964?

Yes.

Did you retire from Reclamation?

I retired from Park Service because it's another government agency. They just transferred me to Park Service.

What made you want to change from the Bureau to the Park Service?

I had gone down [to the dam] and my boss didn't like me, and I didn't know that at first. And I'm a *real* friendly person. [laughs] Also, I am a little too independent to work for the government. I was insubordinate, I suppose. I did my work and everything, but he didn't like me, so I reciprocated. I didn't care for him, either. So Dorothy McCullough said to me, "Park Service is putting on uniformed personnel and an information clerk in headquarters." And Mr. [Richey], the Superintendent of the Park Service asked her if she knew anyone who would fit. This sounds ridiculous. It had to be somebody that could wear a uniform. They had to pass the other stuff, too, but they *had* to be able to wear a uniform. So a person that was 50 pounds overweight wouldn't be eligible, you see. So [Dorothy] said, "Why don't you put in for it?" So I said, "OK, I will."

First I tied it up with Park Service so I knew I had a job, [then] I went to my boss and said, "I would like to transfer to Park Service."

He said, "I won't release you."

I said, "You don't like me anyway. [laughs] Why won't you release me?"

"I don't want to break another girl in."

"Well, you didn't want to break me in, either, and the work went on just the same." I argued with him, but that didn't do a bit of good. He just said he would not release me. Well, I didn't quite know what I was going to do, so I went to Everett Blanchard. He worked in the same department. He was an engineer, and he was enough of a personal friend that I asked him [about the matter]. And he knew. Everybody knew that my boss and I were at sword points all the time down there. So I told [Blanchard], and he said, "Don't go to him. Go to Hudlow." He was Project Manager.

So I went to Mr. Hudlow, but he didn't want to let me go, either. They don't like *any* changes. You see, it isn't because you're such a super person, worker, it's just that they don't like to have to put *themselves* out when a new person comes in. [Hudlow] said, "But if you get the job, we'll let you go."

What were some of the qualifications you had to fit for this Park Service job?

I had to be able to meet the public. I had to be able to operate the Park Service radio. And that I had to learn. In other words, you had to be *able* to learn. I'm sure there was a personality check because you *had* to be able to meet the public.

Who was it that interviewed you for the job?

Charles Richey.¹¹⁰ I got the job, and a man from Denver came down and measured me for the uniform. He asked me if I could wear high heels. At the dam, of course, I always wore low heels. And I said I could. So [Richey] wanted me to wear high heels—he was that kind of a guy, you know. He looked the girls over. He was very frank: high heels make a girl's legs look better. And the length of the uniform was just to my knees at that time.

Was it a skirt uniform?

There was a skirt and white blouse with the insignia, and rolled sleeves because I took my Eisenhower jacket—it was a fitted jacket—I took that off when I got [to work]. On the street in the winter time I had to wear my hat—they had these little trench caps. [My uniform] was the same color as the [park] rangers' [forest green], made out of the same material. And in the summer time I didn't have to wear the jacket or the hat or the gloves. And I could leave my high-heeled shoes [at headquarters] when I walked on the street. Someone said, "Don't you get bored wearing the same outfit?"

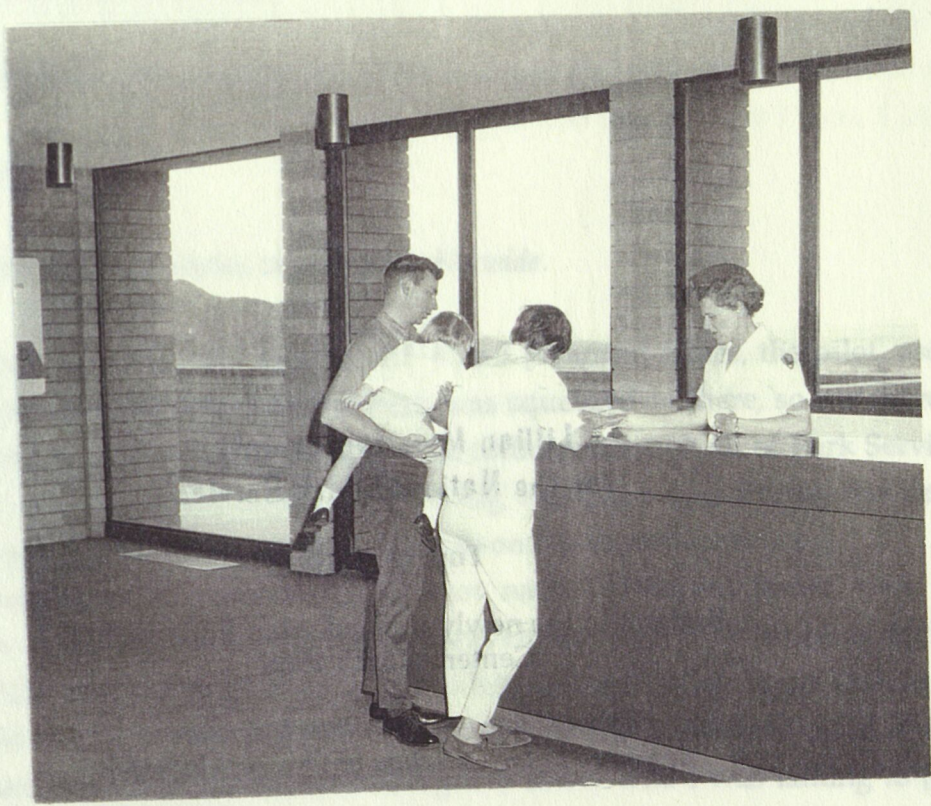
I said, "Gosh, it solves the dress problem!" Besides that, *they* paid for it. You had a uniform allowance. That's what it was.

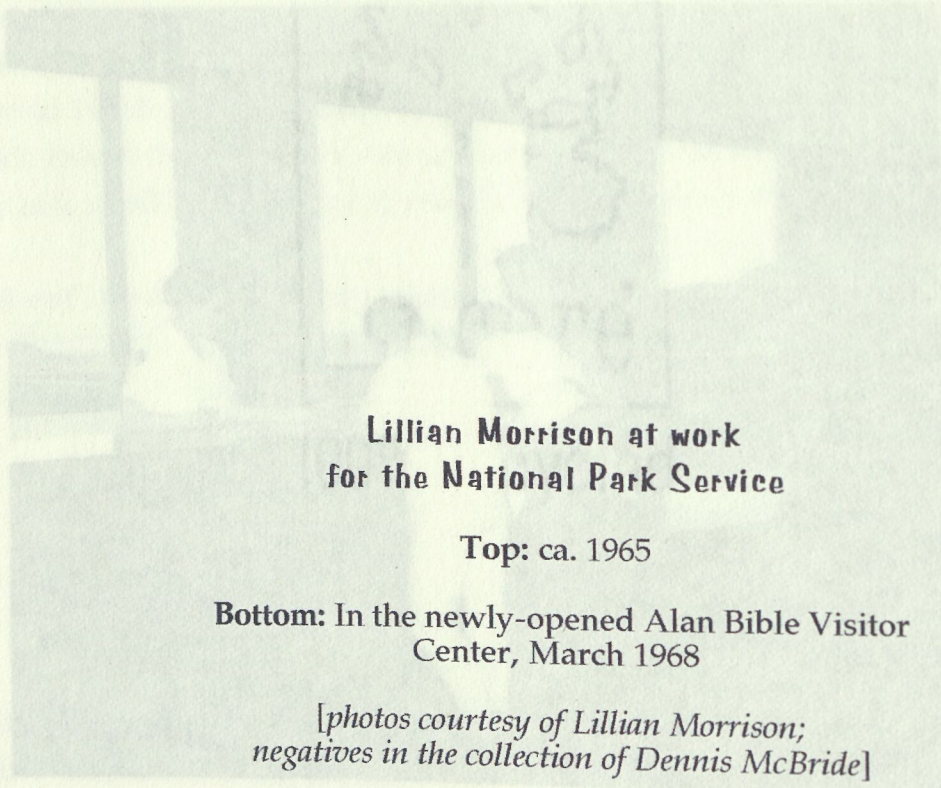
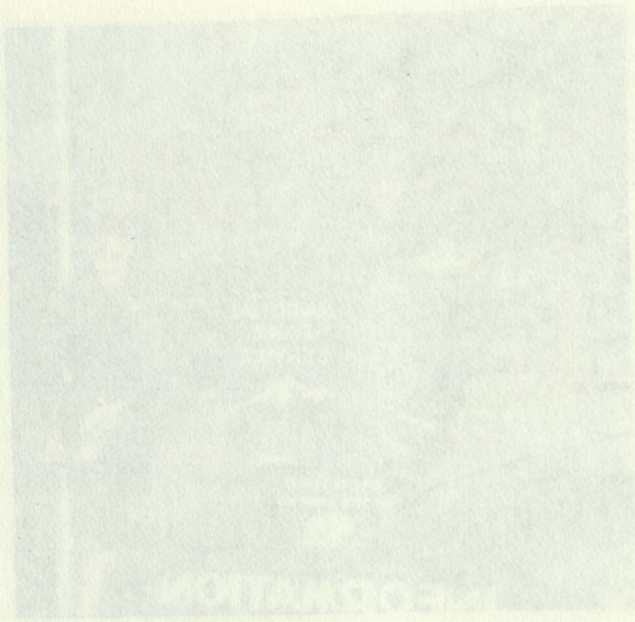
Did you have to pay for having it cleaned yourself or did they do that?

No, I think I did.

What did your job involve?

I had like a booth, and in there was my desk and the booth opened into the rangers' office.¹¹¹ The chief Park Service ranger's secretary was in the office back of me, and then the chief ranger was next. Then over just off my office was





**Lillian Morrison at work
for the National Park Service**

Top: ca. 1965

**Bottom: In the newly-opened Alan Bible Visitor
Center, March 1968**

*[photos courtesy of Lillian Morrison;
negatives in the collection of Dennis McBride]*

the radio room. And then I could hear the radio. I had what we called round-up every morning. I called Temple Bar, Willow Beach, Katherine's Landing (which is Mohave), and Boulder Beach. And Echo Bay.

You call them for what?

For a report. What ever transpired during the shift or during the night or anything, they had to give me [the information]: the number of visitors they'd had. Every morning I took that report because the chief ranger wanted that. Then if I were interrupted, I'd just ask them to stand by, because I was manning the information desk out front. But that early in the morning, it was seldom that I was interrupted.

What hours did you work?

I worked 8 [am] to 1 [pm] and 2 to 5. 8 hours. I had to work through everybody else's lunch because someone had to be there on account of the radio. And it was opened to the public.

What was your title?

Receptionist.

But as a receptionist, your duties were remarkably wide.

And another thing. We had an aircraft¹¹² and [Warren] James, the pilot, used the radio room for his office. His little desk was squeezed in there, so we shared the office. Somebody had to be there [for the radio], although all of Park Service knew it shut down at five o'clock. So anything that happened during the time that the fellows were on duty at night came in on the morning report.

[H. J.] Hoogerwerf. Do you recognize that name? [Warren] James went to work for one of the big airlines as a pilot [and Hoogerwerf took his place at the Park Service]. Hoogie we called 'im. I had to take an orientation flight with him. I'd been here since the Year One, so I knew where all the stations were, but I went with him and took this orientation flight to know who I was talking to [on the radio].

Did they have landing strips at all of these places?

Yes. They didn't have to be very long because our plane was small. Mr. Richey and Warren James used to fly down to one of the offices in California, I remember. It wasn't a big plane, though. It was small.

What kind of questions did you used to get from the public?

Well, a lot of it was information about our campgrounds, you see. People coming in wanting campground information. We had all of our nature books and everything there. A lot of it was people wanting to know what is of interest in this area. And some of 'em wanted to know about the big stuff—the dam and the lake itself. And some people wanted [to know about] flowers and the horticultural stuff around here.

Did you have a gift shop?

We didn't have a gift shop. There was a rack with these [books] on and there was a price on every one of them. And I had to keep that supplied. And that's all I had in there to sell. There were no souvenirs in the office where I was. I sold only the books.

Were you the cashier as well?

Yes. I can't even remember though having a cash drawer. I must have had a small amount of change. It wasn't as if I sold one every day, either. It was very slow selling those things. Any information the Park Service gives out now down at Alan Bible,¹¹³ I gave out [at headquarters at that time]. That was the only information desk that we had. And Alan Bible, by the way, was built during those years that I was working for Park Service.

Do you remember it going up?

Oh, yes. And Reclamation made *so much fun* of it. And our architect, they had a young man come in from Denver. And I said, "You know, my husband works

for Reclamation and they just razz me all the time about that awful place we're building." He said, "Listen, that's gonna fit right into the landscape." And look how it did! But they ruined it this last year when they cut everything down. It fit in down there.

What was the Bureau's complaint about it?

Oh, they wanted to razz us because they thought it was going to be an ugly structure and all that.

You know, I don't know who ran the information before I was up there. That was a new created office when I took it. They have developed it since. The naturalists were in the office right across from me, and some people would come in and want to talk to a naturalist. That's another job I had: just being sure people who came in got into the right office. And it wasn't really too busy. It was a kind of a slow job. I had to run the flag up every morning. Get it down if it started to rain.

Did you have a museum of any sort? A place for displays of local wildlife or artifacts?

In the naturalists' office, I remember a rock display. I don't remember anything about plants.

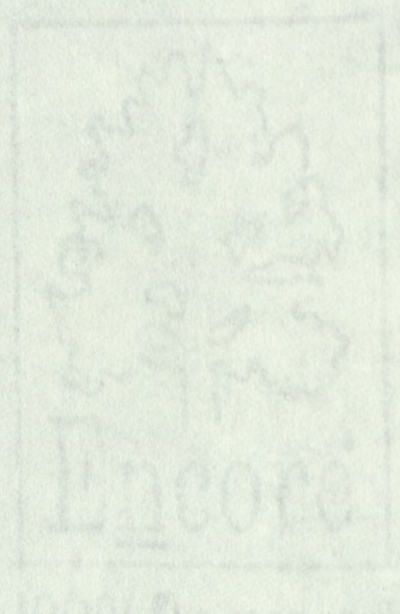
Was that open for the public to look at?

You know, there *was* a glass display cabinet out [in the lobby] and a naturalist would change that once in awhile. It was rocks. The naturalists were the ones who gave the lectures in the campgrounds. I can't remember when they started taking nature walks. But to me, there wasn't much here where people would enjoy walking. But there are things they do now they didn't do when I was there. It was kind of new and they were working into this thing.

Do you remember what kind of information you gave about the campgrounds?

Oh, yes. In the first place, I'd tell them how to get there. If they wanted hook-ups, they had to go to the man who ran the concession down there. And from then on, the business was out of our hands. But if they wanted to go to the





Lillian Morrison and the staff of the National Park
Service in Boulder City, 1965

*[photo courtesy of Lillian Morrison;
negative in the collection of Dennis McBride]*

campground, this is the information I gave them: "Just go down there and pick a site that you want. There are restrooms down there." And I just gave 'em the information and told them about the programs that were going to be in the campground.

When you say concession, what does that mean?

For instance, when Lloyd and I traveled, if we went to a Park Service place, we wanted [utility] hook-ups. We didn't want to go into a campground. So we'd go to the concessionaire and we'd pay him the \$8 or \$10 or \$12 or it got to be \$16 a night to park in *his* concession. And whatever arrangement he had with the government, whatever percentage he had to pay the government [he paid]. He had to furnish water, power, and sewer hook-ups for you.

Were there two separate campgrounds [at Lake Mead]? Park Service and concessionaire's campgrounds?

Yes, but they're side-by-side down there. That is *here*. I don't know what they are in other places.

The Park Service side didn't have the hook-ups?

Doesn't have hook-ups. The water would be at certain places, you see. You couldn't put your hose on it, for example, because someone else in the campground would be wanting to use it, too.

How long did you work for the Park Service?

Five years. I retired from the Park Service.

How much government work did you put in altogether between [Park Service and the Bureau of Reclamation]?

Twenty-five years.

OK, let's wrap it up.

I hope you can make sense out of [all] this.

Oh, you'd be surprised what I can do with a computer! What do you do with your time now?

Well, Lloyd's been dead a little over two years, and I read, read, read, like hours a day. I do all my own work [around the house]. So far. And in the summertime that involves mowing the lawn twice a week. [laughs] I go to church and I go to Bible study and that sort of thing. But I'm not a worker like I used to be at Grace Church. I volunteer now at the hospital. In May I started that. And since I don't have anyone at home, I will work any shift except the 10 [am] to 2 [pm] because I don't want to have to get up in the morning and hurry around. So I sometimes am asked to work, and I *will* work, 5 [pm] till 8 [pm]. We close at 8. But normally I work from 2 till 5.

What is it that you do down there?

I work in the gift shop. I have to have an orientation if I'm going to work on the floor, because you don't touch a patient or do anything like that, but you do things *for* them, and you have to know what you can do. But they haven't asked me to do that. [The gift shop] is a boring job. Yesterday [for instance] I sold \$3.40 worth of candy to staff. See, nobody came in. I take a book.

What takes *most* of my time—every day at 11 o'clock I trot up to the senior center, we play cards for an hour, they serve us dinner, then I come home. Get home about 1 o'clock. So there's two hours out of every day that I'm gone from home.

Do you have lots of friends up there that you've known since you came to Boulder City?

Say, that's an *amazing* thing. Very few. Rose Lawson. But they sit six at a table. Of the women at my table, I'm the only local.

Where do the others come from?

Now, Lee Stevens, who is a close friend of mine, I met at the church. They came up here to retire 18 years ago. Her husband died 2 years before Lloyd did, and so when I went through that illness with Lloyd, Lee was fresh out of it, you know, herself, and she just took me under her wing. And we are *very* close friends now. And we go shopping together. But she's not an old-timer. The old-timers that I associate with, and we get together once a month for lunch, are Lydia Littler, Mary Eaton, Violet Tracht, Madelaine Garrett, and Pat Swartz. I don't know whether you knew the Swartzes or not. There were two [Swartz] brothers here for a long time. And Maureen Swartz.¹¹⁴

You know, when you take the heart right out of the middle of the day, and it takes awhile to put my face on, and things like that

Do you have much faith that Boulder City is going to be able to maintain the quality of life that it has for most of the time you've been here?

No—just because I'm afraid of that other faction. I'm afraid it's just going to gradually get just like Henderson.¹¹⁵ But I don't think that'll be in my time. I don't think they'll get gambling in here [in my life]. And you know [*bends close*], we'd just have honky-tonks. They wouldn't have those nice hotels [here]. We can't compete with Vegas. I don't know what people are thinking of.

I haven't got anything else to ask, but I'm grateful you've been so patient with me.

I was telling somebody about this, and I said, "But I'm so *wordy*." [*laughs*] And they said, "What's he gonna do with this?"

And I said, "I haven't any idea."

"Well, then, you're a *fool*!" [*laughs*]

No. I tell you—I love to reminisce. I *really* love to reminisce.

END



Lloyd and Lillian Morrison
ca. 1991

[photo courtesy of Lillian Morrison]

Notes

1. The dates for Mrs. Morrison's family are as follows: father Ernest Baldwin [1883-1959]; mother Edna Rebbeke Baldwin [1884-1976]; brothers Charles [1906-1992]; Donovan [1912-1985]; and Dick [1921-1993].
2. Spavin is a disease horses develop in their hock joint which results in swelling and lameness.
3. A 160 is one-fourth of a section, which is 640 acres.
4. The Stock Market Crash was a financial panic which began on Thursday, October 24, 1929 in the United States when British interest rates were raised. English stockholders began a wholesale unloading of American stocks, which sparked panic selling among American stockholders. Stock prices plummeted that Thursday, Friday, the following Monday, and on Tuesday, October 29, which became known as Black Tuesday. A slow market collapse and economic deflation continued until by March 1933 the value of all stocks listed on the New York Stock Exchange was less than one-fifth their value on October 1, 1929. Preceded by other economic, political, and social developments throughout the 1920s, but immediately precipitated by the stock market crash in 1929, America's Great Depression lasted from 1930 until the United States' entry into World War II in 1941.
5. In July 1932 the Babcock & Wilcox Company were awarded the contract to manufacture and install the penstock pipes at Hoover Dam. Their manufacturing plant and annealing furnaces were located north of Black Canyon on the dam highway, opposite the entrance to the lower portal road. B & W, as they were called, completed the penstock job on August 15, 1936.
6. The Big Bertha personnel transport buses had two decks capable of hauling up to 100 workers to the dam site. They were built in Boulder City by the Six Companies.
7. See note 5.
8. The Six Companies dormitories for unmarried workers stood in the vicinity of what's now New Mexico Street, Fifth Street, Birch and Cherry Streets, Avenue A, and the Nevada Highway. All but three of the dormitories were demolished when construction of Hoover Dam was finished in 1935-36. The remaining three were bought in 1935 by the Civilian Conservation Corps which established the Boulder City Twin Camps there. These dormitories were demolished in 1945 to make way for private residential development.

The Babcock & Wilcox Company dormitory stood on what is now the southeast corner of New Mexico Street and Avenue A.

9. The Six Companies was the consortium which built Hoover Dam and much of Boulder City as its workers' camp.
10. The Anderson Brothers Mess Hall fed the men who built Hoover Dam. The first meal was served in August 1931, the last on December 31, 1935. The mess hall, together with most of the buildings constructed by the Six Companies, was demolished in 1936.
11. On August 10, 1931, responding to a labor strike on the Hoover Dam Project, the Bureau of Reclamation established a gate at the entrance to the Boulder Canyon Project Federal Reservation near Railroad Pass. Anyone wishing to enter Boulder City had to stop at the gate for questioning, and could not enter without being issued a pass. The gate was taken down on March 16, 1936.
12. The penstocks are the huge pipes that carry Lake Mead water from the intake towers down through the dam and into the power house where it spins the turbine runners in the power generators. A *broach* is a boring tool for making, shaping, or enlarging holes. As a verb, *to broach* means to bore a hole.
13. Frank Gottwals' Terminal Building occupied the triangular block between Arizona Street, Hotel Plaza, and the Boulder Highway. Opened in March 1932, the building took its name from the government order requiring all passenger buses and freight trucks coming into Boulder City stop there. The Terminal Building was demolished in November 1941. For a more detailed history of the Terminal Building and block, see "Boulder City's Terminal Building: Frank Gottwals' Vanished Dream," by Dennis McBride in the *Boulder City Bulletin*, December 2, 1994, pp. 1, 4, and 12; and January 13, 1995, p. 8.
14. Steve Chubbs came to work on Hoover Dam on Labor Day 1931. When he retired in 1986, he was the last of the Hoover Dam workers who came in 1931 to leave the Boulder Canyon Project. The Boulder City Library Oral History Project conducted an interview with Chubbs on August 14, 1985. For more biographical information, see "Stephen Chubbs: 48 years at Hoover Dam," *Las Vegas Review-Journal Nevadan*, October 5, 1980, 26J; "Builder Steve Chubbs Still Stands Guard," *Las Vegas Review-Journal*, February 14, 1982, 1D; "Last Man on Hoover Dam Project," *Las Vegas SunDay Magazine*, April 11, 1982, p. 5; and "Stephen Chubbs: Dam's Symbol of Durability," *Las Vegas Review-Journal*, July 20, 1982, 1A.
15. The Grace Community Church is regarded as Boulder City's first organized services, although it was not the first church built. Services were held in a tent at Ragtown as early as October 1931 when Parson Tom Stevenson arrived from California to establish the church. The original church building

in Boulder City was built in 1932-33, and the first services were held there on January 29, 1933. For more information on the Grace Community Church, see *In the Beginning: A History of Boulder City, Nevada* by Dennis McBride [Boulder City, NV: Boulder City/Hoover Dam Museum, 1992], pp. 60-62; *Early Churches Influenced Boulder City Life* by Bill Williams [unpublished typescript, 1983 (1996)], pp. 3-5; and *Grace Community Church: Golden Anniversary Festival, 1933 - 1983* [Boulder City, NV: Grace Community Church, 1983].

16. From the time she joined her husband in February 1935 until 1937, Mrs. Morrison and her family lived in Six Companies houses on Hopi Place [which then was the easternmost block of Sixth Street]; New Mexico Street; Avenue I; an apartment in the Babcock & Wilcox Apartments on Avenue B; and a privately-built house on Avenue M.
17. Frank "Doc" Jensen [May 18, 1904 - April 1, 1978] was a medic during Hoover Dam construction. His diaries are preserved in the University of Nevada, Las Vegas library's Special Collections Department. For biographical information, see " 'Doc' Jensen Got His Title Delivering a Baby," by Teddy Fenton in the *Boulder City News*, April 13, 1978, p. 30. Also see "Boulder's Builders: Frank 'Doc' Jensen," in the *Las Vegas Review-Journal*, August 8, 1948, 5B:1-2.
18. The Six Companies hospital at the intersection of Park Street, Arizona Street, and Avenue I opened on November 15, 1931. It was closed briefly in 1935-36 when Hoover Dam was completed, and in 1937 was remodeled to accommodate offices and museums for the National Park Service. The building was operated by the government as a hospital again from 1943, and taken over by Boulder City in 1954. When a new hospital opened on Adams Boulevard on December 8, 1973, the old one was abandoned. The Episcopalian Sisters of Charity bought the old hospital in 1976 and have run it as the Wellspring Retreat House and convent. The building was named to the National Register of Historic Places on April 1, 1982.
19. Because Boulder City was a federal reservation, the police force acted under the aegis of the federal government and were known as rangers. It wasn't until Boulder City was incorporated in 1960 that the ranger force became a municipal police force.
20. Lloyd Morrison's dates are May 30, 1902 - November 30, 1993.
21. Boulder City was supposed to have been largely abandoned at the end of dam construction, so one clause in the construction contract the Six Companies had with the government required the company to tear down all the buildings it had built and return the land to desert. Accordingly, in 1936 the company demolished the Boulder City Company Store, the workers' recreation hall, most of its dormitories, the administrative office building, and many of the houses built for workers and their families. However, many of the men who had planned to leave Boulder City when construction was finished instead found jobs with the Bureau of Reclamation on the Boulder

Canyon Project and stayed. During the period when Six Companies was tearing down the houses it had built, many workers and their families, such as Lloyd and Lillian Morrison, were ordered to vacate their homes so the company could demolish them. Responding to protests from the people they were displacing and to requests by the government, the Six Companies quit tearing down its worker' homes and instead sold them. In the area today known as the Avenues, most of these houses still stand—considerably remodeled—along Avenues B, C, D, California Avenue, F, and the west side of G. Other Six Companies buildings were sold to the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power [the houses on Ash Street and the Executive Lodge on Nob Hill]; the National Park Service [the Six Companies machine shop in Hemenway Valley]; and the Civilian Conservation Corps [three dormitories, demolished in 1945, in the area bounded by the Nevada Highway, New Mexico Street, Avenue B, and Fifth Street].

22. The Babcock & Wilcox Company [see note 5] built a number of residential properties in Boulder City. A dormitory for unmarried workers stood on the southeast corner of New Mexico Street and Avenue A [1933]; twelve cottages on the block bound by California Avenue, Colorado Street, and Hotel Plaza [1933; the current site of Boulder City's post office, the homes here were auctioned and moved in 1986-87]; an executive lodge at No. 2 Hillside Drive [1933; demolished ca. 1989-92]; and the apartment buildings Mrs. Morrison describes which still stand along the west side of the 600 block of Avenue B and the east side of Avenue A [1934].
23. The 31ers originally were a social organization of Boulder City pioneers, men and women who came to southern Nevada in 1931 or earlier to begin construction of Hoover Dam and Boulder City. The group held its first meeting in the Boulder Dam Hotel dining room in May 1956, and has sponsored annual banquets ever since. As time has passed, however, and there are fewer and fewer of the original 31ers left, membership has been opened to include descendents of the 31ers and people who have lived in Boulder City for 31 years or longer.
24. Completed in 1944-45, Shasta Dam stands in northern California's Central Valley, within the Whiskeytown-Shasta-Trinity National Recreation Area. Shasta Dam, together with Parker, Imperial, and Grand Coulee, were some of the construction projects workers moved on to when Hoover Dam was finished.
25. Boulder City originally was not going to allow any private housing, and this was so until 1932. When it was clear that neither the government nor the construction companies were able to keep up with the demand for housing, the Bureau of Reclamation reserved two streets on the east side of town where private houses could be built: Avenues L and M. Despite efforts to regulate the quality of private housing in Boulder City [see "Requirements for Home Building in Boulder City are Revealed," *Las Vegas Evening Review-Journal*, February 18, 1932, 4:1-2], Avenue M early earned its reputation as one of Boulder City's slums [the other slum was in McKeeverville, now

- known as the Lakeview Addition, on Boulder City's western outskirts; see "Concerning Houses and Shacks," *Boulder City News*, August 13, 1940, 1:1].
26. The Manix and Vaughn Department Store opened at what is now 541 Nevada Highway in April 1932. J. C. Manix died on August 16, 1948, and the store closed in 1959.
 27. Paul S. "Jim" Webb was a southern California building contractor who to came to Boulder City in 1931. Having established the Boulder City Builders Supply on the eastern outskirts of Boulder City late in 1931, Webb built many of the city's most important and characteristic buildings: the Boulder Dam Hotel [1933-35]; the Uptown Hardware Store and Apartments [1939]; the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power headquarters [1940]; St. Rose Dominican Hospital in Henderson, Nevada [1941]; several homes and duplexes along the south side of Wyoming Street, and on Avenues G and H [1941-42]; a series of frame duplexes on New Mexico Street and Fifth Street [1942]; and the National Park Service headquarters [1952]. Webb died on October 4, 1956 in a Los Angeles veteran's hospital. For more on Webb and his business interests in Boulder City see *Midnight on Arizona Street: The Secret Life of the Boulder Dam Hotel* by Dennis McBride [Boulder City, NV: Boulder City / Hoover Dam Museum, 1993].
 28. Earl Brothers was a Boulder City businessman and entrepreneur. Brothers owned and operated at various times in his career the Boulder Theatre, the Visitor's Bureau, the Victory Theater in Henderson, Nevada, and commercial and tourist facilities at Willow Beach and at Page, Arizona. He died in Boulder City on June 2, 1967.
 29. Parson Tom Stevenson came to Boulder City on October 1, 1931 to minister to the Grace Community Church. He was run down and killed in front of the church on Wyoming Street on Christmas Eve 1937. See the *Las Vegas Evening Review-Journal* of December 27, 1937: "Sorrowing Community Gathers, Pays Last Respects to Pastor" (1:3-4 and 3:6); "Inquest Being Held in Parson Tom's Death" (1:2 and 2:4-5); and "Goodbye to Parson Tom" (6:1-2).
 30. To *demit* means to resign a commission, office, or membership in an organization.
 31. Cortez Thomas Cooper died in Prescott, Arizona on October 7, 1970, and was buried in the Boulder City Cemetery on October 12, 1970. For biographical information on Cooper see "Boulder's Builders: Cortez Cooper," in the *Las Vegas Review-Journal*, October 24, 1948, 4B:1-2.
 32. Boulder City manager Sims Ely on August 30, 1939 issued a public announcement that all the leases in Boulder City were going to expire on June 30, 1941. The announcement outlined certain requirements leaseholders needed to meet in order to have their leases renewed for another 10 years. Among the stipulations were the requirement that unimproved, derelict, or run-down properties had to be repaired and/or improved.

33. The Boulder City Library Oral History Project conducted an interview with Mary Eaton on November 15, 1986.
34. The Boulder City Library Oral History Project taped an interview with Mrs. Lawson on July 26, 1974. For more biographical information, see "Lawson to Celebrate 95th Birthday," in the *Boulder City News*, April 11, 1996, p. 6A.
35. See note 29 above.
36. The Red Mountain Hiking Trail was built by enrollees of Boulder City's CCC Company 573 in 1937-38. This trail was built entirely by hand, reinforced with native rock, provided with drainage culverts and was made three feet wide to accommodate horses. The trail also accommodated the desert big horn sheep who live in the River Mountains. About halfway up the mountain, the trail passes through a forest of miniature desert fir trees, none of them over three feet tall. The trail ends on the east peak of Red Mountain, 3,650 feet above sea level. The trail has been repaired and was re-dedicated on March 10, 1990. For more information, see *Hard Work and Far From Home: The Civilian Conservation Corps at Lake Mead, Nevada* by Dennis McBride [Boulder City, NV: Boulder Images, 1995], pp. 31-32.
37. Wilbur W. Weed was the architect hired by the Bureau of Reclamation to design and plant Boulder City's lush landscaping. Weed, who, arrived in Boulder City on December 10, 1931 was the author of "Plant Behavior in Drought," *Reclamation Era* [November 1937], pp. 260-263.
38. Boulder City was home to two companies of the Civilian Conservation Corps: Companies 2536 and 573. Co. 2536 arrived in Boulder City on November 10, 1935 and Co. 573 arrived on January 15, 1936. The companies occupied abandoned Six Companies dormitories nos. 6, 7, and 8. These buildings were located on the blocks which today are bounded by New Mexico Street, Avenue B, Fifth Street, and the Nevada Highway. Avenue A bisects this site. Co. 573 was disbanded November 20, 1941, while Co. 2536 was disbanded by the end of June 1942.
39. The DWP part of town refers to the residential sections built by the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power in the years between completion of Hoover Dam and the start of World War II. This includes Cherry and Birch Streets, Railroad Avenue, the western end of Arizona Street, and Ash Street, where the Department of Water and Power bought the former Six Companies executive homes. In 1939-40 the Department built its administrative office building on the corner of Nevada Highway and Ash Street, formerly the site of the Six Company store.
40. For more information on Jack Weiler [December 7, 1899 - May 8, 1974] see "John R. 'Jack' Weiler Dies Suddenly Here," in the *Boulder City News*, May 16, 1974, 1:2-4 and 2:5-6.

41. McKeeverville was a squatter's settlement west of Boulder City which grew up around the Bureau of Reclamation's Government Camp No. 1 [established in August 1930]. The settlement was named for Michael C. McKeever, the government's mess hall cook. For more on the history of McKeeverville, now known as the Lakeview Addition, see *In the Beginning: A History of Boulder City, Nevada* by Dennis McBride [Boulder City, Nevada: Boulder City/Hoover Dam Museum, 1992], pp. 8-9. The railroad area to which Mrs. Morrison refers were the switching yards at the Six Companies machine shop just south of the McKeeverville settlement. This building still stands and is known colloquially as the "Safety First" building because the message "Safety First" is painted across the upper windows. Constructed in mid-1931, the building now is a warehouse for the National Park Service.
42. The Boulder City Library Oral History Project conducted interviews with Leo Dunbar, Sr. [February 6, 1894 - July 31, 1992] on May 28, 1985 and June 16, 1986. For more biographical information, see "Meritorious Service Award Marks Leo Dunbar's Goodbye," in the *Boulder City News*, January 31, 1963, 7:1-5.
43. The duplex Mrs. Morrison speaks of is 1145 and 1149 Wyoming Street. The house just behind it that served as the Grace Community Church parsonage is 603 Avenue D.
44. In Boulder City's original plans, the Wyoming Street end of the Avenues blocks were reserved for resident parking: people were required to park here and then walk down the street to their houses to avoid cluttering the narrow streets with automobiles. This rule was enforced only half-heartedly, and just before World War II, the government leased these lots to the Boulder City Development Company [owned by Paul S. "Jim Webb (see note 27) and others] which built duplexes on them.
45. This man was Henry Delle, and he died on September 1, 1944. See "Death of Henry Delle, by Fall in Power House, Said Accident by Jury," in the *Boulder City News*, September 2, 1944, p. 1.
46. Boulder City's First Baptist Church, organized on May 13, 1951, stands at 850 Avenue B.
47. Bethany Baptist Church was incorporated on January 9, 1962.
48. The Bethany Baptist Church now stands at 210 Wyoming Street. This building originally belonged to the Prince of Peace Lutheran congregation, and was built in 1963-64.
49. Thomas R. "Bob" Parker [September 28, 1913 - February 27, 1994] was interviewed by the Boulder City Library Oral History Project on June 2, 1986 and November 9, 1986.

50. Harold Eymann [a Congregationalist] presided over the Grace Community Church from May 1938 until July 1942; Winston Trevor [Methodist] officiated 1942 - 1949; and Earl Fox [Presbyterian] presided from September 1953 through December 1960.
51. Desert water bags were made from a burlap material, the rather open weave of which swelled shut when the bag was filled with water. The bags were hung up outside, or hung over the grill of an automobile while traveling, and the water inside stayed cool through evaporation.
52. Perle H. Garrett [April 27, 1905 - December 31, 1984] has a memorial bulletin board named in her honor on the wall outside the Nevada Drugstore at 1220 Arizona Street. The Boulder City Library Oral History Project conducted an interview with Mrs. Garrett on March 2, 1975.
53. Temple Bar is a resort facility 50 miles from Boulder City on the Arizona Side of the upper reaches of Lake Mead. The site takes its name from a huge mesa which rises out of the lake several hundred feet offshore. A portion of this mesa collapsed into the lake during the unusually high water period of 1983.
54. Dr. D. M. MacCornack, who lived at No. 4 Hillside Drive, came to Boulder City in 1941. He and his brother, E. A. MacCornack built the professional offices at 1100 Arizona Street in 1942 as the Boulder Clinic, which at that time was the only operating medical facility in Boulder City. Dr. James French [see note 50] joined the Boulder Clinic in 1950. Dr. D. M. retired to Albuquerque, New Mexico in 1967. [See "Boulderites Regretfully Tell Dr. D. M. Goodbye," *Boulder City News*, February 23, 1967, 1:2-8 (photo); and "Parties Express Thanks to D. M.," *Boulder City News*, March 2, 1967, 4:1-3.]
55. Dr. James French [July 26, 1912 - July 16, 1972] served as the first mayor of Henderson, Nevada after that town was incorporated in 1954; was a Boulder City Councilman and mayor; and was Chief of Staff at the Boulder City Hospital, 1955-57. For more biographical information, see French's obituary in the *Boulder City News*, July 20, 1972, p. 1.
56. Dr. Frank Wheelwright was Boulder City's first dentist, opening his office in the Terminal Building [see note 13] on March 2, 1932. For biographical information on Wheelwright, see "Boulder's Builders: Frank 'Doc' Wheelwright," *Las Vegas Review-Journal*, February 8, 1948, 8:1-2.
57. Dr. Frank Wheelwright [see note 56] built several apartments along Wyoming Street near Avenue H and on Avenue G facing Coronado Plaza in the 1930s. The New Life Foundation bought the property in 1986 and demolished it to make way for a parking lot and utility buildings.
58. Sims Ely [1862 - 1954] was Boulder City's manager from October 3, 1931 until he retired on April 16, 1941.

59. Northcutt Ely [b. September 14, 1903] is an internationally acclaimed attorney. He served as executive assistant to the Secretary of the Interior from 1929 till 1933 and represented the government in negotiation of the Hoover Dam water and power contracts.
60. The gate was lowered on Diversion Tunnel No. 4 at Hoover Dam at 9:45 am, February 1, 1935, and from that moment Lake Mead began filling.
61. The dress shop Mrs. Morrison is referring to opened on October 10, 1942 at 552 Nevada Highway as Evelyn's, known later as the Shoshone Style Shoppe [and still later as Maryemma's when it moved into a new building at 1129 Arizona Street in 1946]. 552 to 558 Nevada Highway is the Browder Building, built by Ida Browder who opened Boulder City's first restaurant. This building is still owned by the Browder family. The address between the restaurant and the dress shop, 554 Nevada Highway, was the real estate office of Elton Garrett [November 8, 1902 - April 19, 1992], one of Boulder City's greatest pioneers. Garrett first arrived in Las Vegas in January 1929. A journalist, he worked for the *Las Vegas Age*, the *Las Vegas Evening Review-Journal*, and was editor of the *Boulder City Journal*. He was vice-principal of the Boulder City schools in 1933-37, and principal in 1938-1942. He was instrumental in founding most of Boulder City's civic institutions, worked for the establishment of the University of Nevada, Las Vegas, and was a prominent real estate broker. The *Elton and Madelaine Garrett Papers* are deposited in the Special Collections Department of the University of Nevada, Las Vegas library, and Boulder City Library Oral History Project conducted an interview with Garrett on November 10-11, 1986.
62. Leonard and Corene Atkison opened the Desertwear dress shop at 528 Nevada Highway in March 1942. Atkison build a new building at 1325 Arizona Street and opened Desertwear and the Nava Hopi Gift Shop there on July 30, 1946. Suffering from manic-depression, Leonard shot himself to death in the back yard of the family's home at 1028 Wyoming Street on January 1, 1969. His wife, Corene, choked to death on a piece of meat at home on August 10, 1969.
63. Refer to note 26.
64. The Central Fruit Market opened at 1212 Wyoming Street in the spring of 1932. In 1948 the business moved to 1101 Arizona Street where it stands today as Central Market.
65. Boulder City's American Legion Hall, built on the corner of Wyoming Street and the Nevada Highway in 1931-32, was one of Boulder City's social centers. Aside from housing the American Legion Post 31, weekly dances were held in the building. During World War II and until 1949 it served as an auxiliary school, then was moved to Pittman in 1950. The National Park Service headquarters for the Lake Mead National Recreation Area was built on this site in 1952.

66. Camp Williston, originally known as Camp Sibert [the name was changed on September 30, 1942], on the southern outskirts of Boulder City, was occupied on April 11, 1941. A training facility for military police, Camp Williston was abandoned on April 30, 1944.
67. Ida Browder [January 10, 1889 - January 11, 1961] is another of Boulder City's most famous founders. Known as Ma Browder, she opened Browder's Lunch, Boulder City's first restaurant, in December 1931 in what came to be known as the Browder Building on the Nevada Highway [see note 61]. For more biographical information, see "Mrs. Browder First Businesswoman in Boulder City," in the *Las Vegas Evening Review-Journal*, June 7, 1941, section 2, 8:1, and "City's First Business Lady is Heart Victim," by Elton Garrett in the *Boulder City News*, January 19, 1961, 1:3-5.
68. The Bureau of Power and Light is another name for the Los Angeles Department of Water Power which, together with Southern California Edison, operated the power house at Hoover Dam.
69. The Green Hut Cafe opened at 512 Nevada Highway on April 23, 1932. The Julians to whom Mrs. Morrison refers are the Harold Julians who bought the Green Hut near the end of 1945. The restaurant is known today as the 50's Diner. For a more detailed history of the Green Hut, refer to "From Dining Room to Diner: Boulder City's Green Hut Cafe," by Dennis McBride in the *Boulder City Bulletin*, August 12, 1994 [pp. 1 and 10], and August 26, 1994 [pp. 1 and 9].
70. Opened originally in March 1932 as the Bar-B-Q near the corner of Wyoming Street and the Nevada Highway, this cafe reopened as the Reservation Grill on April 5, 1933. J. C. Manix [see note 26] bought the place in January 1939 and closed it. At the time of this interview the building still stands, considerably altered, and is part of the Ace Shopper Stopper hardware store at 541 Nevada Highway.
71. The hospital Mrs. Morrison speaks of was the Las Vegas Hospital and Clinic which opened on December 27, 1931 at 201 North Eighth Street. Boulder City's first Mormon church was a small frame chapel moved up from Sixth and Carson Streets in Las Vegas in July 1932 to the east side of Coronado Plaza at the intersection of Avenue G, Utah Street, and Arizona Street. Dr. John McDaniel's home stood next to the Mormon Church, and next to that stood the Wheelwright Apartment complex [see note 57]. After a new Mormon church was built on the corner of Fifth Street and Avenue G, the original church building was moved back to Las Vegas on September 14, 1963 to Eastern Avenue where it serves today as St. Luke's Episcopal. Dr. McDaniel's house and the Wheelwright Apartments, by then called the Home Apartments, were demolished in 1987. The Las Vegas Hospital and Clinic building became a \$45 a week flop house known as the Oslo, and then burned in an arson fire on February 12, 1988.
72. See note 27.

73. For biographical information on Dusty Rhodes, see "Boulder's Builders" in the *Las Vegas Review-Journal*, February 29, 1948, 7:2.
74. Boulder City's Masonic Lodge was organized in November 1931, and their first building was a white, wood-frame structure on a hill southeast of town near the bottom of Utah Street, built in mid-1932. The Masons built a new brick building at 901 Arizona Street in 1948-49, the grand opening of which was held on February 22, 1950.
75. Boulder City's first locally-produced legitimate newspaper was the *Boulder City Daily Reminder*, written and edited by Thomas Kaufman and Allen O'Hara. The first issue appeared June 21, 1938. Sisters-in-law Jane Cooke and Eliza Carter took over production of the *Reminder* in August 1938 and produced it until Bob Carter [no relation] bought the paper in December 1941 and changed the name to the *Boulder City News*. Eliza Carter [b. November 29, 1891] died of a cerebral hemorrhage on February 12, 1946, and Boulder City's Sundial Park is dedicated in her memory. Jane Cooke was the owner of Maryemma's Dress Shop which opened at 1129 Arizona Street on January 12, 1946.
76. Eliza Carter's husband, Samuel Louis Carter, was run over and killed by a train at Hoover Dam on May 26, 1934. [See "Six Companies Worker Killed," *Las Vegas Evening Review-Journal*, May 28, 1934, 3:1.]
77. Franklin Roosevelt dedicated Hoover Dam on September 30, 1935.
78. The Bureau of Reclamation's Administration Building, on a hill at the north end of Boulder City, was occupied in February 1932.
79. The Duke and Duchess of Windsor visited Las Vegas and Hoover Dam in March 1959.
80. Boulder City Ranger Bill Getts [January 30, 1897 - March 28, 1969] was one of Boulder City's most notable characters. For more colorful information on Getts, see the Boulder City Library Oral History Project interviews with Floyd Jenne and Lee Tilman. Also see "Captain Bill Getts Ends Career," by Elton Garrett, *Boulder City News*, April 3, 1969, 1:4-6.
81. See note 38.
82. Chester Keith Tyree [b. ca. 1917] came to Boulder City in 1937 to establish an insurance business. He worked briefly for the National Park Service, ran a service station, and was one of Boulder City's first real estate agents. He was elected Justice of the Peace for Nelson Township three times, and ran unsuccessfully for the Nevada State Assembly, District 1 against Thomas Godbey in 1957, losing by 100 votes. He was one of the first presidents of the Boulder City Jaycees, president in 1952 of the Chamber of Commerce, and was elected to the Advisory Council, the 1950s precursor to Boulder City's

city council. He was charged guilty of a reckless driving offense in 1963 and resigned his Justice of the Peace position.

83. Pearl Harbor Day, the day the Japanese bombed the American naval base at Pearl Harbor, Hawaii.
84. The afternoon of Pearl Harbor Day, when the last tourist exited the tour at 5:00 pm, the government shut Hoover Dam down to civilian access. It was not opened again for tourists until September 2, 1945.
85. For information on Victor Paul Wilson [April 13, 1901 - July 30, 1968] and Amalette C. "Ketch" Wilson [September 16, 1902 - April 1, 1981], see "Boulder's Builders," *Las Vegas Review-Journal*, March 21, 1948, 7:1-2.
86. Otto Littler [April 17, 1906 - March 2, 1963] came to work at Hoover Dam in 1931. In 1944 he was made Assistant Regional Director of the Lower Colorado Region 3, Bureau of Reclamation.
87. The GS system rates government positions on the basis of required education and responsibility. Within each GS grade there are a number of levels through which an employee must rise before he can advance to the next grade. The higher the grade, the higher the salary and perks.
88. For biographical information on Bert Wadsworth, see "Boulder's Builders" in the *Las Vegas Review-Journal*, September 19, 1948, 10:1-2.
89. By operator, Mrs. Morrison means employees who were responsible for actually operating the equipment at Hoover Dam. Operators were present at the dam 24 hours a day, whereas office workers, clerical help, administrators, etc. worked regular 8-hour day shifts.
90. Grant Hudlow [August 6, 1907 - June 15, 1987] came to work as a surveyor on Hoover Dam in 1933. He was made Assistant Director of Power in 1948, and in 1954 was promoted to Boulder Canyon Project Manager at Hoover Dam, a position he held until his retirement in 1963. For biographical information on Hudlow, see "Hudlow Retires," in the *Boulder City News*, February 7, 1963, 3:3 and his obituary in the *Boulder City News*, June 18, 1987, p. 9.
91. Anti-black racism was routinely part of Boulder City's life from the time of Hoover Dam construction when only white American citizens were hired to work on the project or allowed to live in Boulder City. When Camp Williston was established in Boulder City in April 1941 [see note 61], the troops stationed there were black. Boulder City was not pleased, and the black soldiers were often accused of lawlessness and hooliganism [for instance, see "High School Couple Threatened, Robbed" (by black soldiers), *Boulder City News*, May 29, 1942, 1:2; "Tourists Molested; Two (black) Soldiers Held," *Boulder City News*, June 5, 1942, 1:2; and "Coordinators to Drive for USO Building Here" (many Boulder citizens refused to contribute to a USO fund

because there were black soldiers stationed at Camp Williston), *Boulder City News*, June 5, 1942, 1:3]. The black troops were moved out before the end of 1942. For more on racism in Boulder City, see "Among the Lotus Eaters: Class and Caste in Boulder City," in the *Las Vegas Review-Journal's Nevadan Today*, February 12, 1989, p. 10CC+; and the Boulder City Library Oral History Project interview with Floyd Jenne.

92. Dean Pulsipher [March 29, 1910 - October 24, 1993] was interviewed by the Boulder City Library Oral History Project on August 19, 1986.
93. Nig [b. ca. March 1932 - d. February 21, 1941] was a black mongrel adopted by the workers of Hoover Dam as their mascot. Nig was given free run of the project and became one of the great characters of dam construction. Nig was killed when a truck backed over him and he was buried on the spot under a concrete marker which had "NIG" scratched into it. In 1978 the Bureau of Reclamation installed a plaque on the cliff just above the grave which read, "Nig: The Dog That Adopted a Dam." Within a few months Clarence Kailin, a visitor from Madison, Wisconsin, took exception to the plaque's racist overtones and complained to his congressman, who in turn complained to the Bureau of Reclamation. The Bureau removed the plaque in 1979 and replaced it with another which did not give Nig's name. Removing the old plaque became an international *cause célèbre* and letters poured into the Bureau and to the *Boulder City News* from around the world in support of retaining the old plaque. It was never replaced, however, and in May 1996 the Bureau even covered over Nig's grave marker, effectively erasing the dog's character and image from memory.
94. This is the U. S. Construction Railroad built by the Lewis Construction from the switchyards at Boulder City to Black Canyon to facilitate Hoover Dam construction. The railroad was completed during the first week of September, 1931.
95. Building contractor Porter Womack built several dozen homes in Boulder City in the area of Avenues H and I in late 1941 and in 1942 for the Defense Homes Corporation. The Morrison home at 616 Avenue I is mentioned in "Five Land-Lease Assignments Now on Womack Houses" in the *Boulder City News*, April 29, 1942, 1:2.
96. The controversy Mrs. Morrison speaks of arose when private homeowners in Boulder City who wanted to purchase homes were at first refused FHA financing. Because all the land in Boulder City was owned by the government and private homeowners could only *lease* it, the FHA was reluctant to finance home purchases. However, the FHA did relent and agreed to help finance these homeowners. See "FHA Loans" in the *Boulder City News*, October 25, 1940, 1:2, and "No Bottlenecks in Housing Plan" in the *Las Vegas Evening Review-Journal*, November 26, 1941, 1:1-2 and 2:5.
97. Because Boulder City was owned by the government, residents had to lease their lots and make quarterly lease payments to the Bureau of Reclamation.

After the city was incorporated in 1960, residents were allowed to buy their residential and/or business lots.

98. Melvin LeRoy Burt [September 18, 1910 - August 27, 1995] shared an interview with Joe Kine and Tommy Nelson for the Boulder City Library Oral History Project on July 3, 1986.
99. A biography of Jim Bellor may be found in "Boulder's Builders," *Las Vegas Review-Journal*, August 1, 1948, 6:1-2.
100. Jessie Shelton [October 12, 1900 - December 26, 1968] first came to Boulder City with her husband in 1931. From 1945 until she retired in 1953, Jessie worked as one of Boulder City's telephone operators. For biographical information see "Boulder's Builders: Jessie Shelton," *Las Vegas Review-Journal*, August 22, 1948, 7:1-2, and "Jessie Shelton Buried Saturday," *Boulder City News*, January 2, 1969, 1:4-5.
101. The process of Boulder City's incorporation from federal control commenced with the separation study of Boulder City known as the *Reining Report* [released June 15, 1950], and was completed with incorporation ceremonies held on January 4, 1960. Dr. Henry J. Reining, a professor of public administration and political science from the University of Southern California was hired by the government to conduct a series of hearings in Boulder City on incorporation, the first of which was held on November 5, 1949. The Boulder City Library Oral History Project conducted an interview with Dr. Reining on April 10, 1985. For more on the story of Boulder City's incorporation see "Dragged Into Democracy," in the *Las Vegas Review-Journal's Nevadan Today*, September 11, 1988 [p. 6+] and September 18, 1988 [p. 6BBB+]
102. Hal Corbin [February 11, 1905 - May 11, 1970] in 1952 was hired by the Bureau of Reclamation as city manager to oversee Boulder City's incorporation process. For biographical information on Corbin, see a series of articles which profiled him when he first came to Boulder City [*Boulder City News*, April 24, 1952, 1:1-4+; May 1, 1952, 1:6-7+; and May 8, 1952, 1:1-2+]; and "Funeral Today at Palm Chapel for Former City Manager," in the *Boulder City News*, May 14, 1970, 1:7-8.
103. Asa Gray Boynton [October 25, 1887 - October 17, 1962] came to Boulder City in July 1931. He designed the Boulder City Auto Court and store on the eastern edge of town for owners Bill Goodrich and Clarence Watson, and then went to work for the Bureau of Reclamation as assistant to Wilbur Weed, the town's landscape architect. In 1939 Boynton became assistant to Sims Ely, Boulder City's manager [see note 58]. When Ely retired in 1941, the position of city manager was abolished and Boynton became the administrative officer in charge of city management. For biographical profiles and photographs of Boynton see "Beloved Gray Boynton Retires After Grand Career," *Boulder City News*, October 24, 1957, 1:1-3+; and "Gray Boynton Dies ... ," *Boulder City News*, October 18, 1962, 1:1-8.

104. While the *Reining Report* [see note 101] advised a slow and careful process of separating Boulder City from Federal control before actual incorporation, the government could hardly wait. The *Reining Report* was issued on June 15, 1950, and on July 27, 1950, Secretary of the Interior Oscar Chapman issued Department of Interior Order No. 2650 officially separating the operation of Boulder City from the Boulder Canyon Project.
105. Boulder City's firefighters lived in the 400 block of Avenue B which ran behind the fire station/ government garage between Arizona and Colorado Streets. The Wells Fargo Bank now occupies the site of the fire station at 412 Nevada Highway. For more detailed information on Boulder City's firemen, refer to the Boulder City Library Oral History Project interview with Lee Tilman.
106. Boulder City was owned and operated by the Bureau of Reclamation from 1931, when it was built, until 1960 when the town was incorporated. Sale, consumption, and, in the earliest days, possession alone of hard liquor was against the law. Boulder citizens had to leave town if they wanted to buy liquor, and Railroad Pass was the closest place for that. Boulder City remained dry for nine years after incorporation. Sale and consumption of hard liquor was finally legalized in 1969.
107. Bruce Eaton [December 20, 1904 - September 27, 1985], more than any other person in Boulder City, is responsible for ensuring that deed restrictions prohibiting sale of liquor [see note 101], gambling, and prostitution were included when Boulder City was incorporated in 1960. Eaton came to Boulder City in 1932 and worked for the Six Companies during construction, then for the Bureau of Reclamation afterward. Fittingly, he died at a dedication ceremony during Hoover Dam's 50th anniversary celebrations. The Boulder City Library Oral History Project conducted an interview with Eaton on March 6, 1985, and there is an untranscribed oral history interview with Eaton deposited in the University of Nevada, Las Vegas library's Special Collections Department. For more on Bruce Eaton, see "A Tribute to Bruce Eaton from Teddy," by Teddy Fenton, in the *Boulder City News*, October 3, 1985, p. 6.
108. This is Mario Caruso. The motel in question was formerly the Vale Motel, now the Super 8.
109. The N-8 generator at Hoover Dam went on line on December 1, 1961.
110. Charles Richey replaced George Bagglely as superintendent of the Lake Mead National Recreation Area in September 1954. He retired from the National Park Service in February 1969.
111. The "booth" Mrs. Morrison describes was a counter and an open arch in the southwest wall of the Park Service headquarters building lobby. This arch has since been closed.

- 112. This search-and-rescue plane was a Cessna 182.
- 113. Named for Nevada Senator Alan Bible [November 20, 1909 - September 12, 1988] in 1976, the National Park Service visitors center at the entrance to the Lake Mead National Recreation Area opened in March 1968.
- 114. Walter Swartz [July 30, 1914 - October 24, 1965] was an early Boulder City businessman who at one time operated a Colorado River ferry with Murl Emery and James Cashman. For biographical information on Walter Swartz see "Boulder's Builders," *Las Vegas Review-Journal*, April 11, 1948, 9:7-8; and his obituary in the *Boulder City News*, October 28, 1965, 2:4-5.
- 115. Basic Magnesium, Inc. [BMI], owned by Cleveland industrialist Howard Eells, built a plant to produce magnesium for the American military during World War II when European supplies were disrupted. Ground was broken for the plant in September 1941 in the desert between Las Vegas and Boulder City, and the first magnesium was produced in October 1942. The plant ceased production in November 1944. The town of Henderson, originally known as Basic or Townsite, is today a sprawling city whose boundaries reach all the way to Boulder City and to the Lake Mead National Recreation Area. Las Vegas and Henderson together comprise a huge metropolitan area within the Las Vegas Valley whose population exceeds one million people. At the time of this interview, Las Vegas/Henderson is the fastest-growing metropolitan area in the United States.

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Index

- Alan Bible Visitors Center [Lake Mead], 93-94, 113n113. [*photo follows p. 91*]
- American Legion Hall [Boulder City], 61, 106n65.
- Anderson Brothers Mess Hall [Boulder City], 26, 99n10.
- animals: raising and butchering hogs, 3, 7-8 [*photo follows p. 8*]; horses as work teams, 6-7. *See also* Nig.
- Atkison, Leonard and Corene, 59, 106n62.
- Ayers, Miss, 31.
- Babcock and Wilcox Company, 25, 98n5; penstocks, 28, 99n11; apartments on Avenue B, 36, 101n22. [*photo follows p. 25*]
- Baggley, George, 112n110.
- Baker, Ethel: working at Hoover Dam, 68.
- Baldwin, Charles [brother], 2, 98n1. [*photo follows p. 2*]
- Baldwin, Dick [brother], 2, 98n1. [*photo follows p. 2*]
- Baldwin, Donovan [brother], 2, 98n1. [*photo follows p. 2*]
- Baldwin, Edna, 2, 98n1; role as a farmer's wife, 4-5; and daughter's sex education, 12-13. [*photo follows p. 2*]
- Baldwin, Ernest [father], 2, 98n1; as a farmer, 3-4, 8-9; helping Lloyd and Lillian during the Depression, 18-24. [*photo follows p. 2*]
- Baptists. *See* Bethany Baptist Church. *See* First Baptist Church.
- Bellor, Jim, 80, 111n99.
- Bethany Baptist Church [Boulder City], 42, 49-52 *passim*, 104n47-48.
- Bible, Alan: Lake Mead visitors center named for, 93-94, 113n113.
- Big Bertha [transports], 26, 98n6.
- blacks: in Boulder City and Hoover Dam, 74-75, 109n91. *See also* Nig.
- Blanchard, Everett, 90.
- Boulder Canyon Project. *See* Hoover Dam.
- Boulder City, NV: 23; confused with Boulder, Colorado, 25; gate, 27, 66, 99n11 [*photo follows p. 27*]; houses, 28-32 [Sixth Street shack; *photo follows p. 28*], 31, 32, 35, 37-39, 55, 76, 78, 101n25 [Avenue M; *photos follow p. 38*], 36, 101n22 [Avenue B apartment]; 36, 100n21 [Avenue I], 42, 102n32 [leasing land], 56, 105n57 [Wheelwright Apartments], 76-78, 110n95-96, [Womack homes, 1941-42; *photos follow p. 76*]; Six Companies Hospital, 33, 100n18; tearing down temporary buildings after dam construction, 36, 100n21; Key Club, 38-39; and Sims Ely, 38, 56-58, 105n58, 106n59; social life, 40-41, 42, 61; kids breaking windows in abandoned Six Companies houses, 44-45; Civilian Conservation Corps in, 45-46, 68, 103n36, 103n38, 108n82; Los Angeles Department of Water and Power in, 45, 59, 103n39; McKeeverville, 46, 104n41; parking plans [1930s], 46, 104n44; heat, 53-55; cold, 55-56; depopulation after dam construction, 58-59; gambling in, 61, 87-88, 97; school board controversy [ca. 1939], 62; Masonic Lodge, 66, 108n74; in World War II, 68-76 *passim*, 109n83-84; racism in, 74-75, 109n91, 110n93; warehouse, 76, 86; incorporation of, 82-88, 111n101-03, 112n104; fires and firefighting, 85, 112n105; liquor, 87, 112n116. [1934 aerial photo follows p. 27] *See also* Williston, Camp
- Boulder City Builders Supply, 65, 102n27. [*photo follows p. 40*]
- Boulder City [Daily] Reminder [newspaper], 66-67, 108n75.
- Boulder City Development Company, 104n44.
- Boulder City Key Club. *See* Key Club.
- Boulder City Theatre, 41, 46, 102n28.
- Boulder Dam. *See* Hoover Dam.
- Boynton, Asa Gray, 83, 111n103. [*photo follows p. 86*]
- Brothers, Earl, 41, 46, 57-58, 102n28.
- Brothers, Gladys, 58.
- Brothers, Louise, 58.
- Browder, Ida, 61-63, 106n61, 107n67. [*photo follows p. 62*]
- Bunker, Reva, 61.
- Bureau of Power and Light. *See* Los Angeles Department of Water and Power.
- Burt Family: renting apartments at 633 Avenue M, 78, 111n98.
- Carter, Eliza, 66-67, 108n75-76.
- Carter, Samuel Louis, 67, 108n76.

- Caruso, Mario: and gambling at the Super 8 Motel, 88, 112n108.
- Catholics. *See* St. Andrew's Catholic Church.
- Central Market [Boulder City], 60-61, 106n64.
- children: activities for, 40, 44 [sports], 43, 44 [church], desert hikes, 44; Don Morrison lost in desert, 45-46; daycare, 81.
- Chubbs, Steve, 31, 99n14.
- Christian Endeavor group, 43.
- churches: Grace Community Church [Boulder City], 31, 41-44, 46-48, 50-53 *passim*, 99n15, 102n29, 104n43, 105n50 [photos follow p. 43]; Bethany Baptist, 42, 49-52 *passim*, 104n46-47; Episcopal, 42; Catholic, 42; Mormon, 42; Lutheran, 50, 104n48. *See also* New Life Foundation.
- Civilian Conservation Corps [Boulder City]: searching for Don Morrison and Robert Weed, 45-46, 103n36, 103n38; Chet Tyree in, 68, 108n82.
- clothing: in heat, 54; shops, 59, 106n61-62; buys first pants suit to work at Hoover Dam during World War II, 73; National Park Service uniform, 91 [photos follow pp. 91 and 94]. *See also* Desertwear. *See also* Evelyn's. *See also* Maryemma's. *See also* Shoshone Style Shoppe.
- cold: in Boulder City and keeping warm, 55-56.
- Cooke, Jane, 66-67, 108n75. *See also* Maryemma's.
- Cooper, Cortez Thomas, 42, 102n31.
- Corbin, Hal, 83, 111n102. [photo follows p. 86]
- Cowan, Louella, 85.
- Craig, Thelma, 81.
- crime: kids breaking windows in Boulder City houses, 44-45.
- Delle, Henry: death of at Hoover Dam [1944], 48, 104n45.
- dentists. *See* Wheelwright, Dr. Frank.
- Depression [1929-41]: Morrisons lose their farm and belongings, 9-10, 18-24; stock market crash, 19-20, 98n4; repaying debts, 39-40.
- desert water bags, 53, 105n51.
- Desertwear [dress shop, Boulder City], 59, 106n62.
- Dexter, Paul, 78.
- Dunbar, Leo, Sr., 46, 62, 104n42.
- Dustbowl [1930s], 9, 12.
- Eastern Star, 42, 65-66.
- Eaton, Bruce: and Boulder City incorporation, 87-88, 112n107.
- Eaton, Mary, 43, 88, 97, 103n33.
- education: country schools [1910s-20s], 2-3; education *vs* marriage for women, 10-11; school board controversy in Boulder City [ca. 1939], 62.
- Ely, Northcutt, 57, 106n59.
- Ely, Sims, 38, 56-58, 63, 76, 105n58, 106n59, 111n103.
- Episcopals. *See* St. Christopher's Episcopal Church.
- Evelyn's [dress shop, Boulder City], 59, 106n61.
- Eymann, Harold, 53, 105n50.
- FHA: refusal to finance homes in Boulder City, 77, 110n96.
- farms and farming: 1910s-20s, 3-9 [photos follow p. 8]; in the 1930s, 12, 14-18; losing farm during the Depression, 18-24.
- fires and firefighting: Boulder City, 85, 112n105.
- First Baptist Church [Boulder City], 49-52 *passim*, 104n46.
- Fox, Earl, 53, 105n50.
- French, Dr. James, 56, 64, 105n54-55.
- gambling: in Boulder City, 61, 87-88, 97; in Henderson, Nevada, 97.
- Garrett, Elton, 106n61. [photo follows p. 62]
- Garrett, Madelaine, 97.
- Garrett, Perle: catching pneumonia trying to keep cool in summer heat, 54, 105n52.
- Getts, Bill, 68, 108n80.
- Gottwals, Frank, 99n13.
- Grace Community Church [Boulder City], 31, 41-44, 46-48, 49-53 *passim*, 99n15, 102n29, 104n43, 105n50. [photos follow p. 43]
- Green Hut Cafe [Boulder City], 63, 107n69.
- Grundy Center, IA, 2.
- heat: in Boulder City and keeping cool [1930s], 53-55.
- Heaton, Marge Likens, 83. [photo follows p. 86]
- Henderson, NV: 102n28, 113n115; poor quality of casinos in, 97.
- hogs: raising and butchering, 3, 7-8. [photo follows p. 8]
- Holliday, Guy, 50, 51-52.
- Holt, Bert, 80.
- Holt, Junior, 80.
- Home Apartments. *See* Wheelwright Apartments.
- Hoogerworf, H. J., 92.
- Hoover Dam: first heard of [1934], 22; penstocks, 28, 99n12; dedication, 67-68, 108n77; Duke and Duchess of Windsor visit [1959], 68, 108n79; women working

- at, 68, 78-82, 88-89; in World War II, 68-76 *passim*, 109n83-84 [photos follow pp. 70 and 71]; warehouses, 73-74, 75-76, 78-82; racism at, 74-75, 109n91, 110n93; sexual harassment at, 79-81; N-8 generator, 89, 112n109; 1931 strike, 99n11. *See also* Babcock and Wilcox Company. *See also* Delle, Henry. *See also* Lake Mead. *See also* Nig. *See also* Six Companies. *See also* U. S. Construction Railroad.
- horses: as work teams, 6-7.
- hospitals: Six Companies, 33, 63, 100n18; in Las Vegas, 63, 107n71; Boulder City Hospital gift shop, 96.
- houses: on Iowa farm, 14-18; Sixth Street shack in Boulder City [1935], 28-32 [photo follows p. 28]; Avenue B apartment, 36; Avenue M, 31, 32, 35, 37-39, 55, 76, 78, 101n25 [photos follow p. 38]; land leasing requirements, 42, 82, 102n32, 110n97; plumbing, 53-54, 77-78; Wheelwright Apartments, 56, 105n57; Womack homes [1941-42], 76-78, 110n95 [photos follow p. 76]; losing place on housing list after buying home, 76; difficulty financing, 77, 110n96; maintaining government homes during incorporation years [1950s], 83-88.
- Hudlow, Flossie, 79.
- Hudlow, Grant, 74, 79, 90, 109n90.
- incorporation [of Boulder City]: logistics of separation from government, 83-88, 111n101-103, 112n104.
- Independent Baptists. *See* Bethany Baptist Church.
- James, Warren, 92, 93.
- Jensen, Frank "Doc": 33, 100n17.
- Julian, Harold: owning the Green Hut Cafe in Boulder City, Nevada, 63, 107n69.
- Key Club [Boulder City], 38-39.
- Kine, Joe, Jr., 81.
- Kine, Mildred, 81.
- LDS. *See* Mormon Church.
- Lake Mead [AZ/NV]: filling, 59, 106n60; 91-95 *passim*. *See also* Alan Bible Visitors Center. *See also* Lake Mead National Recreation Area. *See also* National Park Service.
- Lake Mead National Recreation Area, 91-95 *passim*. *See also* Alan Bible Visitors Center. *See also* Lake Mead. *See also* National Park Service.
- Lakeview. *See* McKeeverville.
- laundry: in Sixth Street shack in Boulder City, 32; at Avenue M house, 37-38.
- law enforcement: in Boulder City, Nevada, 33, 100n19; kids breaking windows in abandoned houses, 44-45. *See also* Getts, Bill. *See also* reservation gate. *See also* Weiler, Jack.
- Lawson, Rose, 43, 96, 102n34.
- Lewis, Charles: runs over Parson Tom Stephenson, 47.
- Littler, Lydia, 97.
- Littler, Otto, 70, 73, 78, 109n86.
- Los Angeles Department of Water and Power: in Boulder City, 45, 59, 62, 102n27, 103n39.
- Lutherans. *See* Prince of Peace Lutheran Church.
- M [Avenue, Boulder City], 31, 32, 35, 37-39, 55, 101n25. [photos follow p. 38]
- MacCornack, Dr. D. M., 55-56, 64-65, 105n54.
- MacCornack, Dr. E. M., 64-65.
- Manix, Clarence. *See* Manix and Vaughn Department Store.
- Manix, Jim and Marguerite, 61.
- Manix, Katherine, 60-61.
- Manix and Vaughn Department Store [Boulder City], 40, 60-61, 102n26; working at, 72-73. [photo follows p. 60]
- Maryemma's [dress shop, Boulder City], 106n61, 108n75.
- Masonic Lodge [Boulder City], 66, 108n74.
- Masons, 42, 66, 108n74.
- McDaniel, Dr. John, 63-64, 107n71.
- McKeever, Michael C., 104n41.
- McKeeverville [Boulder City], 46, 101n25, 104n41.
- medical care: Lloyd Morrison injured at Hoover Dam, 32-36. *See also* French, Dr. James. *See also* hospitals. *See also* MacCornack, Dr. D. M. *See also* MacCornack, Dr. E. M. *See also* McDaniel, Dr. John. *See also* Wheelwright, Dr. Frank.
- Methodists. *See* Grace Community Church.
- Moller, Winnie: working at Hoover Dam, 68.
- Mormon Church [Boulder City], 42, 107n71.
- Morrison, Don [son]: birth of, 18, 21, 22, 24; arrival in Boulder City, 28-29; on desert picnic, 44; breaking windows in abandoned houses, 44-45; playing with Robert Weed, 45-46; daycare while mother was at work, 81. [photos follow pp. 8, 13, and 28]
- Morrison, Floyd [brother-in-law], 29.
- Morrison, Genevieve [sister-in-law], 8.
- Morrison, Lillian: on childhood and family, 1-10; on her education, 2-3, 10-11; on

farming, 3-9, 12, 14-18 [*photos follow p. 8*]; on the Dustbowl, 9, 12; on losing farm in the Depression, 9-10, 18-24; on meeting and marrying Lloyd Morrison, 10-12, 13-14; preparation for married life, 12-13; life with Lloyd [1928-34], 14-25; on decision to move to Boulder City, Nevada, 25-26; on Lloyd's first days in Boulder City, 25-27; arrival in Boulder City [February 1935], 26-28; on her homes in Boulder City, 28-32 [Sixth Street shack; *photo follows p. 28*], 36 [Avenue B apartment], 31, 32, 35, 37-39, 55, 76, 78 [Avenue M; *photos follow p. 38*], 36 [Avenue I], 76-78 [Womack homes, 1941-42; *photos follow p. 76*]; on Lloyd's work injury, 32-36; on the Boulder City Key Club, 38-39; on re-paying debts from Iowa, 39-40; on Sims Ely, 38, 56-58, 63, 76; their first automobile, 40; on Paul Webb, 40, 65; on socializing in Boulder City, 40-41, 42, 61; on Earl Brothers, 41, 46, 57-58; on Grace Community Church and Parson Tom Stevenson, 31, 41-44, 46-48, 49-53 *passim* [*photos follow p. 43*]; on Eastern Star, 42, 65-66; on Masons and the Masonic Lodge, 42, 66; on son, Don, getting into trouble, 44-46; on the death of Henry Delle, 48; on Baptist church, 48-52; on Lutherans, 50; on Guy Holliday and her personal religious beliefs, 50, 51-52; keeping cool in the heat, 53-55; on keeping warm in the cold, 55-56; on the doctors MacCornack, 55-56, 64-65; on Dr. James French, 56, 64; on Dr. Frank Wheelwright, 56; on Northcutt Ely, 57; on period between dam construction and World War II, 58-59; on clothes shopping, 59; on grocery shopping, 60-61; on gambling in Boulder City, 61, 87-88, 97; on Ida Browder, 61-63; on Green Hut Cafe and Reservation Grill, 63; on Dr. John McDaniel, 63-64; on Dusty and Elda Rhodes, 65-66; on Jane Cook and Eliza Carter, 66-67; on Franklin Roosevelt's paralysis, 67-68 [*photos follow p. 67*]; on the Duke and Duchess of Windsor's visit to Hoover Dam [1959], 68; on World War II in Boulder City and at Hoover Dam, 68-76 [*photos follow pp. 70 and 71*]; working at Hoover Dam, 70-76, 78-82, 88-89 [*photo follows p. 79*]; working at Manix Department Store, 72-73 [*photo follows p. 60*]; on racism in Boulder City and at Hoover Dam, 74-75; on sexual harassment in Hoover Dam job, 79-81; on daycare for working mothers, 81; working in city office during incorporation years [1950s], 83-88 [*photo follows p. 86*]; on working for

the National Park Service, 89-95 [*photos follow pp. 91 and 94*]; on life since retirement, 96-97. [*photos follow title page, pp. 1, 2, 13, 28, 79, 81, 86, 91, 94, 97*]

Morrison, Lloyd: father's estate, 8; meeting and marrying, 10-12, 13-14; life with Lillian [1928-34], 14-25; losing farm during the Depression and looking for other work, 18-24; character of, 22, 36; first hears of Hoover Dam, 22; decides to go to Boulder City, Nevada, 25; first days in Boulder City, 25-27; working for the Babcock and Wilcox Company, 26, 30; working for Six Companies, 30, 32-33; injury, 32-36; birth and death dates, 100n20; joining the Masons, 42; Ida Browder threatens his job, 62. [*photos follow pp. 13, 28, 40, and 97*]

National Park Service: administration building, 61, 102n27, 106n65; Lillian Morrison's career at, 89-95, 112n110-11, 113n112-13. [*photos follow pp. 91 and 94*] See also Alan Bible Visitors Center. See also Baggley, George. See also Lake Mead. See also Lake Mead National Recreation Area. See also Richey, Charles.

Nava Hopi Gift Shop [Boulder City], 106n61.

New Life Foundation, 105n57.

Nielsen, Nils: helps Lloyd Morrison get work at Hoover Dam, 25.

Nig: 75, 110n93.

Painter, Mable, 81.

Park Service. See National Park Service.

Parker, Thomas R. "Bob": 51, 104n49.

pigs. See hogs.

Prince of Peace Lutheran Church [Boulder City], 50, 104n48.

Pulsipher, Dean "Red", 74, 110n92.

racism: in Boulder City and at Hoover Dam, 74-75, 109n91. See also Nig.

Railroad Pass Hotel Casino [Henderson, NV], 112n106.

railroads: Six Companies switching yards in McKeeverville, 46, 104n41; U. S. Construction Railroad at Hoover Dam, 75-76, 109n94.

Ranum, Bud and Janice, 83. [*photo follows p. 86*]

Rath Packing Company, 3.

Rebbeke, Edna. See Baldwin, Edna.

Red Mountain Hiking Trail [Boulder City], 44, 103n36.

Reining, Dr. Henry J., 111n101, 112n104.

- reservation gate, 27, 66, 99n11. [*photo follows p. 27*]
- Reservation Grill [restaurant, Boulder City], 63, 107n70.
- restaurants and cafes. *See* Green Hut Cafe. *See* Reservation Grill.
- Rhodes, Dusty and Elda, 65-66, 108n73.
- Richey, Charles, 91, 93, 112n110.
- roads and streets: Avenue M [Boulder City], 31, 37-39; parking lots on blocks in the avenues, 47, 104n44.
- Roosevelt, Franklin: dedicates Hoover Dam, 67-68, 108n77. [*photos follow p. 67*]
- Salter, Lucille, 83. [*photo follows p. 86*]
- Salter, Ross, 68.
- schools: country [1910s-20s], 2-3; Boulder City school board controversy [ca. 1939], 62.
- Scissom Family, 29-30.
- sex: knowledge of, 12-13; birth control, 24-25; Boulder City Key Club, 38-39.
- Shasta Dam [CA], 37, 101n24.
- Shelton, Jessie, 81, 111n100.
- Shoshone Style Shop [dress shop, Boulder City], 106n61.
- Sides, "Jumpy": gives Lloyd Morrison his first job at Hoover Dam, 26.
- Six Companies, 26, 98n8, 99n9; hospital, 33, 100n18; and compensation for workers' injuries, 34-36; demolishing buildings after dam construction, 36, 100n21; McKeeverville switching yards, 46, 104n41.
- Southern Baptists. *See* First Baptist Church.
- sports: basketball and softball in Boulder City, 40. [*photo follows p. 40*]
- St. Andrew's Catholic Church [Boulder City], 42.
- St. Christopher's Episcopal Church [Boulder City], 42.
- Stevenson, Parson Tom, 41, 43-44, 102n29; death of, 46-48. [*photo follows p. 43*]
- Stevens, Lee, 97.
- Stubbs Family. *See* Central Market.
- Sun Dial Park [Boulder City], 108n75. *See* also Carter, Eliza.
- Super 8 Motel [Boulder City]: gambling in, 88, 112n108.
- Swallow, Ken and Marge, 61.
- swamp coolers: 1930s, 55.
- Swartz, Maureen, 97, 113n114.
- Swartz, Pat, 97, 113n114.
- Swartz, Walter, 97, 113n114.
- 31ers, 36, 101n23.
- Terminal Building [Boulder City], 28, 99n13.
- Tracht, Violet, 97.
- Trevor, Lois, 48.
- Trevor, Winston, 48, 53, 105n50.
- Tyree, Chet, 68, 108n82. [*photo follows p. 40*]
- U. S. Construction Railroad [Hoover Dam], 75-76, 110n94.
- Uptown Hardware Store [and Apartments, Boulder City], 65, 102n27.
- Vale Motel [Boulder City]. *See* Super 8 Motel.
- Wadsworth, Bert, 73-74, 79, 109n88.
- Wadsworth, Flossie. *See* Hudlow, Flossie.
- Wallace, Sonny, 74-75.
- Webb, Paul, 40, 65, 102n27. *See* also Boulder City Development Company.
- Weed, Robert "Bobby": 45-46.
- Weed, Wilbur, 45, 103n37.
- Weiler, Jack, 45, 103n40.
- Wheelwright, Dr. Frank, 56, 105n56-57.
- Wheelwright, Leah, 56.
- Wheelwright Apartments [Boulder City], 56, 105n57, 107n71.
- Williston, Camp, 61, 70, 107n66, 109n91.
- Wilson, Paul and Amalette "Ketch": 72, 109n85.
- Windsor, Duke and Duchess of: visit Hoover Dam [1959], 68, 108n79.
- Womack, Porter [land developer], 76-78, 110n95-96. [*photos follow p. 76*]
- women and women's issues: education *vs* marriage, 10-11; preparation for marriage [1920s], 12-13; women working at Hoover Dam, 68, 70-76, 78-82, 88-89; sexual harassment on Hoover Dam job, 79-81; first uniformed female employee for the National Park Service, 89-95. *See* also clothing. *See* also **houses** for housekeeping duties. *See* also **Key Club** for wife-swapping.
- World War II: Boulder City and Hoover Dam during, 68-76, 109n83-84. [*photos follow pp. 70 and 71*] *See* also Williston, Camp.
- Young Matrons Society [Boulder City], 43.

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