

Interview with  
Dolores “Dolly” Gillette

An Oral History conducted and edited by  
Robert D. McCracken

Nye County Town History Project  
Nye County, Nevada  
Tonopah  
1987

COPYRIGHT 1990  
Nye County Town History Project  
Nye County Commissioners  
Tonopah, Nevada  
89049



Dolores "Dolly" Gillette  
circa 1985

## CONTENTS

Preface

Acknowledgments

Introduction

### CHAPTER ONE

The family ranch in the Grapevines, and gathering pine nuts there; Indians leave Beatty when the T&T departs.

### CHAPTER TWO

Work at Janda Ribbons; raising a family; views on the nuclear waste repository; putting children through college.

## PREFACE

The Nye County Town History Project (NCTHP) engages in interviewing people who can provide firsthand descriptions of the individuals, events, and places that give history its substance. The products of this research are the tapes of the interviews and their transcriptions.

In themselves, oral history interviews are not history. However, they often contain valuable primary source material, as useful in the process of historiography as the written sources to which historians have customarily turned. Verifying the accuracy of all of the statements made in the course of an interview would require more time and money than the NCTHP's operating budget permits. The program can vouch that the statements were made, but it cannot attest that they are free of error. Accordingly, oral histories should be read with the same prudence that the reader exercises when consulting government records, newspaper accounts, diaries, and other sources of historical information.

It is the policy of the NCTHP to produce transcripts that are as close to verbatim as possible, but some alteration of the text is generally both unavoidable and desirable. When human speech is captured in print the result can be a morass of tangled syntax, false starts, and incomplete sentences, sometimes verging on incoherency. The type font contains no symbols for the physical gestures and the diverse vocal modulations that are integral parts of communication through speech. Experience shows that totally verbatim transcripts are often largely unreadable and therefore a waste of the resources expended in their production. While keeping alterations to a minimum the NCTHP will,

- a. generally delete false starts, redundancies and the uhs, ahs and other noises with which speech is often sprinkled;
- b. occasionally compress language that would be confusing to the read reader in unaltered form;
- c. rarely shift a portion of a transcript to place it in its proper context;
- d. enclose in [brackets] explanatory information or words that were not uttered but have been added to render the text intelligible; and
- e. make every effort to correctly spell the names of all individuals and places, recognizing that an occasional word may be misspelled because no authoritative source on its correct spelling was found.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

As project director, I would like to express my deep appreciation to those who participated in the Nye County Town History Project (NCTHP). It was an honor and a privilege to have the opportunity to obtain oral histories from so many wonderful individuals. I was welcomed into many homes--in many cases as a stranger--and was allowed to share in the recollection of local history. In a number of cases I had the opportunity to interview Nye County residents whom I have known and admired since I was a teenager; these experiences were especially gratifying. I thank the residents throughout Nye County and southern Nevada--too numerous to mention by name--who provided assistance, information, and photographs. They helped make the successful completion of this project possible.

Appreciation goes to Chairman Joe S. Garcia, Jr., Robert N. "Bobby" Revert, and Patricia S. Mankins, the Nye County commissioners who initiated this project. Mr. Garcia and Mr. Revert, in particular, showed deep interest and unyielding support for the project from its inception. Thanks also go to current commissioners Richard L. Carver and Barbara J. Raper, who have since joined Mr. Revert on the board and who have continued the project with enthusiastic support. Stephen T. Bradhurst, Jr., planning consultant for Nye County, gave unwavering support and advocacy of the project within Nye County and before the State of Nevada Nuclear Waste Project Office and the United States Department of Energy; both entities provided funds for this project. Thanks are also extended to Mr. Bradhurst for his advice and input regarding the conduct of the research and for constantly serving as a sounding board when methodological problems were worked out. This project would never have become a reality without the enthusiastic support of the Nye County commissioners and Mr. Bradhurst.

Jean Charney served as administrative assistant, editor, indexer, and typist throughout the project; her services have been indispensable. Louise Terrell provided considerable assistance in transcribing many of the oral histories; Barbara Douglass also transcribed a number of interviews. Transcribing, typing, editing, and indexing were provided at various times by Alice Levine, Jodie Hanson, Mike Green, and Cynthia Tremblay. Jared Charney contributed essential word processing skills. Maire Hayes, Michelle Starika, Anita Coryell, Michelle Welsh, Lindsay Schumacher, and Jodie Hanson shouldered the herculean task of proofreading the oral histories. Gretchen Loeffler and Bambi McCracken assisted in numerous secretarial and clerical duties. Phillip Earl of the Nevada Historical Society contributed valuable support and criticism throughout the project, and Tom King at the Oral History Program of the University of Nevada at Reno served as a consulting oral historian. Much deserved thanks are extended to all these persons.

All material for the NCTHP was prepared with the support of the U.S. Department of Energy, Grant No. DE-FG08-89NV10820. However, any opinions, findings, conclusions, or recommendations expressed herein are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the views of DOE.

--Robert D. McCracken  
Tonopah, Nevada- June 1990

## INTRODUCTION

Historians generally consider the year 1890 as the end of the American frontier. By then, most of the western United States had been settled, ranches and farms developed, communities established, and roads and railroads constructed. The mining boomtowns, based on the lure of overnight riches from newly developed lodes, were but a memory.

Although Nevada was granted statehood in 1864, examination of any map of the state from the late 1800s shows that while much of the state was mapped and its geographical features named, a vast region--stretching from Belmont south to the Las Vegas meadows, comprising most of Nye County--remained largely unsettled and unmapped. In 1890 most of southcentral Nevada remained very much a frontier, and it continued to be for at least another twenty years.

The great mining booms at Tonopah (1900), Goldfield (1902), and Rhyolite (1904) represent the last major flowering of what might be called the Old West in the United States. Consequently, southcentral Nevada, notably Nye County, remains close to the American frontier; closer, perhaps, than any other region of the American West. In a real sense, a significant part of the frontier can still be found in southcentral Nevada. It exists in the attitudes, values, lifestyles, and memories of area residents. The frontier-like character of the area also is visible in the relatively undisturbed quality of the natural environment, most of it essentially untouched by human hands.

A survey of written sources on southcentral Nevada's history reveals same material from the boomtown period from 1900 to about 1915, but very little on the area after around 1920. The volume of available sources varies from town to town: A fair amount of literature, for instance, can be found covering Tonopah's first two decades of existence, and the town has had a newspaper continuously since its first year. In contrast, relatively little is known about the early days of Gabbs, Round Mountain, Manhattan, Beatty, Amargosa Valley, and Pahrump. Gabbs's only newspaper was published intermittently between 1974 and 1976. Round Mountain's only newspaper, the Round Mountain Nugget, was published between 1906 and 1910. Manhattan had newspaper coverage for most of the years between 1906 and 1922. Amargosa Valley has never had a newspaper; Beatty's independent paper folded in 1912. Pahrump's first newspaper did not appear until 1971. All six communities received only spotty coverage in the newspapers of other communities after their own papers folded, although Beatty was served by the Beatty Bulletin, which was published as a supplement to the Goldfield News between 1947 and 1956. Consequently, most information on the history of southcentral Nevada after 1920 is stored in the memories of individuals who are still living.

Aware of Nye County's close ties to our nation's frontier past, and recognizing that few written sources on local history are available, especially after about 1920, the Nye County Commissioners initiated the Nye County Town History Project (NCTHP). The NCTHP represents an effort to systematically collect and preserve information on the history of Nye County. The centerpiece of the NCTHP is a large set of interviews conducted with individuals who had knowledge of local history. Each interview was recorded, transcribed, and then edited

lightly to preserve the language and speech patterns of those interviewed. All oral history interviews have been printed on acid-free paper and bound and archived in Nye County libraries, Special Collections in the James R. Dickinson Library at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas, and at other archival sites located throughout Nevada. The interviews vary in length and detail, but together they form a never-before-available composite picture of each community's life and development. The collection of interviews for each community can be compared to a bouquet: Each flower in the bouquet is unique--some are large, others are small--yet each adds to the total image. In sum, the interviews provide a composite view of community and county history, revealing the flow of life and events for a part of Nevada that has heretofore been largely neglected by historians.

Collection of the oral histories has been accompanied by the assembling of a set of photographs depicting each community's history. These pictures have been obtained from participants in the oral history interviews and other present and past Nye County residents. In all, more than 700 photos have been collected and carefully identified. Complete sets of the photographs have been archived along with the oral histories.

On the basis of the oral interviews as well as existing written sources, histories have been prepared for the major communities in Nye County. These histories also have been archived.

The town history project is one component of a Nye County program to determine the socioeconomic impacts of a federal proposal to build and operate a nuclear waste repository in southcentral Nye County. The repository, which would be located inside a mountain (Yucca Mountain), would be the nation's first, and possibly only, permanent disposal site for high-level radioactive waste. The Nye County Board of County Commissioners initiated the NCTHP in 1987 in order to collect information on the origin, history, traditions, and quality of life of Nye County communities that may be impacted by a repository. If the repository is constructed, it will remain a source of interest for hundreds, possibly thousands, of years to come, and future generations will likely want to know more about the people who once resided near the site. In the event that government policy changes and a high-level nuclear waste repository is not constructed in Nye County, material compiled by the NCHP will remain for the use and enjoyment of all.

--R.D.M.



Robert McCracken interviewing Dolly Gillette at her home in Beatty, Nevada April 7, 1987

## CHAPTER ONE

RM: Dolly, could you tell me when you were born, and who your parents were?

DG: I was born January 16, 1930. My parents were Caesar and Mary Strozzi.

RM: Were they from the Beatty area?

DG: No, my father was from Switzerland and my mother was a native Nevadan.

RM: Was she a Shoshoni?

DG: Yes; a full-blooded Shoshoni.

RM: What brought your father to this country?

DG: Oh, gold mining. [chuckles]

RM: When did he care here?

DG: In 1900.

RM: Where did he mine?

DG: They lived in Rhyolite for awhile and mined around there.

RM: Did he care here as a young man?

DG: Yes.

RM: And where else did he mine?

DG: We have a mine up at the rim of Death Valley - up by the ranch in the Grapevines.

RM: You still - was it his mine?

DG: It belongs to us, yes.

RM: Was your mother born in the area?

DG: Well, her birth certificate says in the Grapevines, which could mean any place in those days, you know. [chuckles]

RM: Dolly, tell me a little bit about the Shoshoni community. And what was the group that

your mother was in called?

DG: Well, it was never really any group until just - oh, about 15 to 20 years ago. We're known as the Western Shoshoni Te'moak Band.

RM: Where is their territory?

DG: Our territory - Western Shoshoni territory - is from clear up in Elko on down through here, and we take in part of Death Valley, and Lone Pine . .

RM: Where's the Te'moak Band? Where is their area?

DG: We're based in Elko.

RM: Was your mother originally from Elko?

DG: No, that's where they put the office.

RM: Where do most of them live?

DG: Well, there's a lot of than spread all through here. We don't have any reservations around here. We never lived on a reservation.

RM: Are there many Te'moak Band people living in the Beatty area?

DG: Just me and a cousin; that's it.

RM: Where did you spend your early years?

DG: In Beatty, and my father homesteaded a ranch up in the Grapevines on the Nevada side. We used to spend our summers there. The spring where we got all our water was called Briar Spring.

RM: Is there a road into there?

DG: Yes, well . .

RM: Do you still have the ranch?

DG: It's part of the Park Service now.

RM: When was he there?

DG: Gosh, that I couldn't . . . It was before '30, so it must've been in the '20s.

RM: And how long did you live there?

DG: I lived there until I was 18. [laughs] I'm the youngest, so . .

RM: How many brothers and sisters do you have?

DG: There were 7 of us in the family.

RM: Did you live on the homestead your whole youth, then?

DG: Yes.

RM: Where did you go to school?

DG: Well, we lived down here in the winter.

RM: Did you live in the Indian community in Beatty?

DG: No, we lived here. And there were tracks there, and they had their homes on the other side.

RM: When did you go to school here?

DG: '36 to '48.

RM: There were a fair number of Indian children in the school, weren't there?

DG: Oh, there were quite a few, yes.

RM: And they came from families who lived here in town in this little community over here?

DG: Yes, well, I guess you could say it was a community. [chuckles]

RM: You wouldn't call it a community?

DG: No, I wouldn't, because they didn't live there all the time, either. A lot of them - in the summers - went over to Lone Pine and through there.

RM: Oh, I see. Were they Shoshoni, too?

DG: Yes.

RM: Were they Te'moak Band people too, most of them?

DG: A lot of than were Death Valley Shoshoni, too.

RM: Do you consider yourself related to Death Valley Shoshoni, too?

DG: Oh, yes, we're all Shoshoni. But to be recognized - to get something going down there for them on a reservation - that's what they're doing.

RM: Is there any movement of your band to do that? Get their little reservation?

DG: Well, they've got reservations up north there - Duckwater, and all those.

RM: OK. So you have rights to go there if you want, huh?

DG: Yes.

RM: Yes. How many Indian families were living here at the time?

DG: Oh, let's see. Probably 15 or 20.

RM: Were there any Paiutes with them or were they all Shoshoni?

DG: I believe there were some Paiutes.

RM: Las Vegas, maybe?

DG: No, Pahrump.

RM: What happened to the community?

DG: They all went their ways. Most of them went to Death Valley and then over in Lone Pine and Bishop.

RM: And the Lone Pine, would they be Shoshoni?

DG: There are some Shoshoni there, and the same with Bishop.

RM: Why did they live here at the time?

DG: Well, at the time there was the railroad, and there was work. And most of them worked WPA here.

RM: And then when the WPA ended, they . . .

DG: Just went their different ways, yes.

RM: Were there any Navajos, or . . .?

DG: No, they never got here.

RM: Did you live down here as a small child, too, in the winter? When your brothers and sisters would've been going to school?

DG: Oh, yes; we moved down here.

RM: When did you go up to the ranch?

DG: Well, we went out the first of May. You see, we never went the whole school term. [chuckles]

RM: So about the first of May you'd head up to the ranch?

DG: Yes, because we'd have to get in crops. Then we wouldn't come back until the middle or last part of October.

RM: Could you tell me about life on the ranch? What was it like? Did you have a house there?

DG: Yes.

RM: Did your father build it?

DG: Yes.

RM: And is it still there?

DG: It was the last time I was there.

RM: How many rooms does it have?

DG: Well, we didn't have too much rooms.

RM: What crops did he raise?

DG: Corn, but mostly he raised fruit - apples, pears, peaches. Then vegetables . . .

RM: Did he plant the trees?

DG: Yes.

RM: Are they still there?

DG: Just very few.

RM: Did he set up an irrigation system or something, or was it naturally wet?

DG: No; we had to irrigate from the spring.

RM: Did you use the vegetables yourself or did you sell them?

DG: No; we used them for our own. We had cattle too, and they just grazed in the hills. They moved down to the lower valleys when we moved down here.

RM: And then you'd go round them up after the winter?

DG: Yes.

RM: Did you live a pretty isolated life there, or did you get together with other families very often?

DG: Well, pine nut picking time we had a lot of families come up. [chuckles]

RM: Are pine nuts a big item, still, in your diet?

DG: Oh, I wish I had some. [laughs]

RM: What are some of the ways that you prepared pine nuts?

DG: Well, they roasted than, mostly. While they were still in the cone. That's the first thing. And then after you get some of that over with, you wait until they all open up and start falling on the ground. Then you pick them.

RM: And then how do you prepare them?

DG: Well, you roast them. You eat them like you do peanuts; take them out of the shell. My mother used to make a gravy out of it, but I never stuck around and watched. [laughs]

RM: Were pine nuts a major item in your family's diet, then?

DG: Yes; everybody loved them, you know.

RM: Were the winters cold up there?

DG: Oh, yes. My dad stayed there. He'd come down to see us from time to time and we'd go up to see him.

RM: How did you get back and forth?

DG: Oh, we had a truck.

RM: Did you? Did he do any other thing besides work his farm? Like, did he work in the mines sometimes or anything?

DG: He worked with WPA too.

RM: What were some of the WPA projects around here?

DG: I imagine it was roads.

RM: What was it like going to school here?

DG: We had 2 rooms, and then they moved the building up for a high school. One room had the first to the fourth grade, and the other room had fifth to the eighth grade.

RM: Then you went to high school.

DG: Yes.

RM: Was there any discrimination or anything? How did the Indians fit in to the community?

DG: I don't ever remember any discrimination.

RM; So you lived this way until you were 18 - here part of the year, and up at the farm part of the year?

DG: Yes.

RM: What happened when you were 18?

DG: Got married.

RM: Did you marry somebody from town?

DG: Yes.

RM: What was the town like, then? Could you describe it?

DG: Oh, well, there still wasn't too much here. The best place to work was up at the Crowell's mine. They had hired quite a few people; kept people going.

RM: What other mines were going then?

DG: That's probably the only one that really keeps going. The others come and go.

RM: Do you remember the railroad?

DG: Very distinctly. I can remember the big depot we had over there, and waiting for the train to come in. [laughs] That was the big thing to see.

RM: So people would go down just to see it coming in.

DG: Oh, yes.

RM: Yes. What other kinds of things did young people do here for entertainment?

DG: Well, we'd have a movie once a week at the old town hall up there where the sheriff's office is now.

RM: Was that a big thing for the kids?

DG: Oh, yes.

RM: Was there a drug store or anything where the kids would gather?

DG: Well, they had a little shop where kids could go in.

RM: Do you remember what it was called?

DG: I can't remember what it was called. That was about it; there wasn't that much.

RM: Were there electric lights in town at that time?

DG: The Reverts had big motors up here that people could tie into.

RM: So you got married. And then did you stay here in town?

DG: We stayed here a while, and then we moved to Vegas for years.

RM: Did you marry an Indian or an Anglo?

DG: An Anglo.

RM: Was he from the local area?

DG: Yes, he had grown up and gone to school here, too.

RM: And so you stayed here awhile. What did he do?

DG: He worked for Crowell. Then he got on as a surveyor at the Test Site- when that came along. And that's when we moved to Vegas.

RM: What was his name?

DG: Marcus Looney. Then I moved back to Beatty in '59 or '60.



RM: '59 or '60. And then have you been here since then, or have you moved anywhere else?

DG: Oh, yes. [laughs]

RM: How has Beatty changed through the years, especially as far as the Indians who were living here are concerned?

DG: They didn't last too long with all those Indians living here. That was about the end of it. We were the only ones that were still here.

RM: What kind of houses did they live in when they lived here?

DG: Oh, they just threw up any old thing.

RM: Do you ever see anybody from that community?

DG: Oh, yes. Some of the ones that I grew up with from down in Death Valley come up here quite often.

RM: So with the end of WPA they dispersed. And then there weren't any Indians living in Beatty?

DG: Probably not in the winter. That's when the people in Death Valley would move up here - for the summer. Because it's too hot down there.

RM: Where do the Death Valley people go in the summer now?

DG: I don't know. I think most of them stay there, now. They have the air conditioning now, and quite a few of them work the year round, there.

[the recorder is turned off for a while]

DG: My oldest sister lives in Schurz. And they're like encyclopedias. [laughs] Because they grew up - they lived in Rhyolite when they were small - with my parents.

RM: When did your father pass away?

DG: In '53.

RM: Did he always stay in the area?

DG: Yes.

RM: Where did he spend his last years?

DG: He was sick quite a bit so they spent them here in town.

RM: How about your mom?

DG: She spent her time here, too.

RM: When did she pass away?

DG: '63.

RM: What did you do for health care in those days?

DG: Oh, we had a school nurse. And the doctor came every so often to the school. That's where everybody got their shots, and that was about it.

RM: What did the older people do?

DG: I think Tonopah is where most of them went.

RM: How did you like school?

DG: Oh, I liked school. You got to come in and see different people.

RM: What kind of community activities were there when you were a kid?

DG: Oh, Christmas, and . . . just the holidays. And they had some dances at the town hall.

RM: Who were the community leaders then?

DG: I think one of them was the school principal. His name was Ert Moore. He seemed to have been in a lot of things and started people in a lot of things.

RM: Tell me about the pine nut gathering. Did somebody own the pine nuts?

DG: No; nobody owned pine nuts. You gathered what you wanted.

RM: Would they also have any kind of religious ceremonies?

DG: Oh, you do when you're doing your pine nuts, but I really don't know how to explain it.

RM: Was it a real special time for everybody?

DG: Oh, yes.

RM: Would they pick, and then have a ceremony, or . . . ?

DG: Well, this was when they were roasting them, and they were still in the cones. And usually they were kind of relatives who came to our place. And everybody would pick and then they took the brush and made a basket or nest thing and took the pine nuts while they're still in the cone and green and spread them all in there . .

RM: How big was the basket?

DG: Oh, it depends on how many pine nuts you had. It was huge. It was just built out on the ground. And then . . . I don't know what they did, but they did a little ceremony before they even lit the fire. Then they'd light the bowl. And that would roast them.

RM: What was the ceremony designed to do?

DG: Oh, just to thank them and to . . . keep on doing the good things, I guess.

RM: Where did people live while they were picking?

DG: They just camped out, They would stay about 2 months.

RM: How did you store the pine nuts?

DG: Most of them were stored in sacks.

PM: Would you get hundreds of pounds?

DG: Well, it takes a lot to make a hundred pounds. [laughs] They're awfully small.

RM: Did your father always participate?

DG: If he wasn't busy.

RM: What did you think when they took out the railroad?

DG: That it sure took a lot of work away.

RM: Yes. Did the town fall back?

DG: I think it did, yes.

## CHAPTER TWO

RM: When did you start at the ribbon factory, Dolly?

DG: I started there about in '72. I think it's been there for almost 20 years. I've only been there - this'll be 15 years

RM: What kinds of jobs do you do there?

DG: Everything. [chuckles] Mostly I work in shipping; I do all the packaging of the ribbons and shipping them out. Then when I'm through with that I go and help in assembly and wherever; I do most anything.

RM: How many people were there when you started?

DG: Probably 15.

RM: So she was working a lot of employees clear back in '72.

DG: Oh, yes.

RM: Let's give the name of the factory, who owns it, and what it produces.

DG: It's called Janda Ribbons, and it's run by Bombo (Ted) and Jane Cottonwood. He's my cousin. We make show ribbons, and we do whatever else comes in, like ribbons for sport events and so forth, and then we have trophies and plaques. And now Jane's into silk screening. Jackets and shirts and . . . And we ship all over the country.

RM: Do you ship overseas?

DG: One year we did a big Show they have in Poland. It had to be all typed in Polish. [chuckles] Oh, that was fun. [laughter]

RM: Do you work 40 hours a week?

DG: Oh, yes. Have to. Got a son in college and still one girl in high school. [chuckles]

RM: How many children do you have?

DG: I have 12.

RM: You've raised 12 children. Wow. How have you managed that? That's a remarkable . .

DG: I don't know. [laughter]

RM: Where are your children now?

DG: All of them except for the 2 live in Las Vegas.

RM: Do you get to see them quite a bit?

DG: Oh, yes. An awful lot.

RM: Are most of them married?

DG: Most of them are single.

RM: How old's the oldest?

DG: She's 36.

RM: How many boys and how many girls?

DG: Eight girls and four boys. My oldest, Sherry, has owned her own TV repair shop for about 16 years and she has 3 daughters. And then the next oldest is Patty. She's the assistant administrator at the Torrey Pines Convalescent Center. And she has 2 children - a boy and a girl. And the next is Judy. She's worked for Center for about 10 years, and she has 2 little boys. And then next is Vickie. She is the (what would you call her?) activities director - at the Torrey Pines Convalescent Center also. And she has one little boy. And then my oldest son Mark is a carpet layer. And he has 2 boys. And then my daughter Theresa works as an auditor out at the Westward Ho Motel and Casino. She's unmarried. And then there are Glen and Kevin - they both work with their brother Mark, laying carpet.

RM: Are they by any chance twins?

DG: No. They could be, because they're only 11 months apart [chuckles] and everybody's always thought they were twins. Next is Kay Anne - she's a hairdresser, and she works in Vegas. She's unmarried also. And Remy is a clerk at Mervyn's. And Ronnie is the one who's going to college in Loyola Marymount University in California. This is his second year. And Cindy, who's the youngest, is a junior in high school.

[tape is turned off for a while]

RM: And the Indians in the community in town would always come back to the same little house they built over there?

DG: Oh, yes.

RM: So it was their house, and nobody came in and claimed it. What did they do about water?

DG: There was a pipeline; I think it was for the railroad. And it was on their side, you know,

so they would just go there and get the water.

RM: Would they have outhouses?

DG: I think everybody in Beatty did. [laughs]

RM: You say you see some of these people from time to time?

DG: There are not too many old ones left, anymore. A lot of them moved to Fish Lake and up through there, so I don't see them. The few I do see are the ones from Death Valley.

RM: Do they kind of stick to their own area?

DG: Yes.

RM: The ribbon factory is a big thing in this town, isn't it?

DG: Yes.

RM: How many people are working there now?

DG: I'd say about 25.

RM: Twenty-five people.

DC: Yes.

RM: So it's probably the biggest employer in town. I'll bet there are more people working there than on the Test Site, huh?

DG: No. [laughs] Well, from here, probably.

RM: I mean, yes, from Beatty. Do you take vacations?

DG: Oh, if I can. Sometimes I can't even get out of that place for a day.

RM: Because you're so busy?

DG: Yes.

RM: Are you one of the longest employees there?

DG: I am the longest.

RM: Is it mostly women who work there?

DC: All women. I don't think a man could come in there and hold his own. [laughter] I don't think he could stand some of them. They would give him such a bad time. He'd probably be embarrassed most of the time by the way they talk.

RM: Anything else that you want to tell us about how the town has grown and changed?

DG: The town has more going on now and the schools are different. When I was going to school, it was from 9:00 to 4:00, and that was it - there were no sports or anything else. Now my kids - I get them interested in the sports program, and whatever else they've got, just to keep them busy so they won't have time to get in trouble. [laughs]

RM: Do kids tend to get in trouble in town?

DG: No, I don't think so. I raised half my kids in Vegas and the younger half went to school up here. And it's no different. Kids who went to school down there got involved in all sorts of things . .

RM: How do you feel about Vegas as compared to Beatty?

DG: Oh, I like Vegas.

RM: Do you go down quite a bit?

DG: Oh, yes.

RM: But you live here. Why?

DG: Because when I got divorced it was just cheaper to get by.

RM: Any other things, Dolly, about your own background or . .

DG: Well, we were raised totally different from the other Indians. We weren't allowed to do a lot of things that they were allowed to do. You would say our parents were rather strict.

RM: Was it your father, or was it your mother?

DG: Oh Mother, mostly. [chuckles]

RM: What are some of the things that you weren't allowed to do?

DG: Well, we never did get into much trouble.

RM: Did the other Indian kids get in trouble?

DG: Yes, they'd like to drink, and stuff like that. We weren't allowed to mingle with them that much.

RM: Did you go to church?

DG: Oh, yes; we went to church.

RM: Was your mother a Christian, or was she traditional?

DG: She was traditional.

RM: Were most of the Indians that lived in town traditional?

DG: Yes.

RM: Was drinking a problem in the Indian community?

DG: Yes. I would say drinking was a big problem with the Indians in those days. I think it's always been a problem for Indians if they let it.

RM.: Do you speak Shoshoni?

DG: Oh, yes. I don't know if I could speak it very well now; I haven't had anybody to speak to. [laughs] When my brother was still here, my son Ronnie would ask us all kinds of words. He was making a dictionary.

RM: Do you have any contact with your relatives in the band?

DG: Oh, yes. I'm not sure if I even have any aunts and uncles left. The ones I did know and was close to are gone.

RM: Do you feel that you know much about traditional culture?

DG: Well, some. I sure should've learned how to make baskets, but I didn't. I was too busy running the hills. [laughter] My mother always made a lot of them. Being the youngest, they never made you do these things.

RM: Were there Indians living at Rhyolite?

DG: I never heard that, but I imagine there were.

RM: Any of the other towns around here that came and went? For instance, a lot of Indians built Scotty's Castle, didn't they?

DG: Yes, that was part of where they traveled - in through there.

RM: Were there any other projects that they often worked on? Like Scotty's Castle and the WPA?



DG: And the mining and the railroad.

RM: What kind of jobs did they have on the railroad?

DG: Probably maintenance - I don't know. And when it was being built, they probably worked on that.

[tape is turned off for a while]

RM: Dolly, tell us about the land situation, and what you think the Department of Energy should be doing.

DG: Well, I think the Department of Energy, since they've already got the Test Site in such a mess that nobody can ever do anything with it anyway - that would probably be a good place for their dump site. But I think what they should do is consider the Shoshoni Indians. After all, it is their land. We should be getting some revenue off of there, instead of Nye County.

RM: Do you think that most Shoshonis feel this way?

DG: I'm sure they do, because we've been in negotiation with the U.S. government for years and years.

RM: And - what has happened?

DG: Oh, nothing, really. There have been no payoffs, or anything like that.

RM: But your position is that your people were here before there . .

DG: Well, that was land that was granted to them. That's Shoshoni land.

RM: You mean, this land was granted by treaty?

DG: Yes; that's treaty land. All of this land from Elko on down through here.

RM: Do you know the name of the treaty?

DG: Well, let me show you a book on that.

[tape is turned off for a while]

RM: Well, how else do you feel about the whole repository and the land issue, as regarding the Indians'

DG: Well, I really do believe we need that Test Site for the good of all people. For our own safety, and to keep up with the rest of the world. And I think that that would be a good place for

that repository.

[tape is turned off for a while]

RM: What did you want to say, Dolly, about Indian kids?

DG: I've heard for years and years that Indian kids can go to school, that the government will pay for it. But when my son started going to school . . . Well, I had a daughter that started UNLV too. And this idea that they can go to school and the government will pay it is not true.

RM: Your kids haven't gotten any help?

DG: They've gotten help - very little. All right, my son's going to Loyola Marymount, which is a real high-priced school. All right, now: the only way we could get any help was to go through the Te'moak Tribe. And the first year all he got was \$1,000. And so of course we had to go Pell Grant and all these other things. Well, we finally got him in there. The first year we had to take out a student loan - of \$2,500. Which is going to be tough for him to pay back. And he got \$1,000 first semester, and they gave him \$1,000 the next semester from the tribe. That's all they gave - \$2,000. Here it is, \$5,000 a semester.

RM: For just for the tuition? Does that include room board?

DG: Yes, he rooms right there and has his meals.

RM: Why doesn't he go to UNLV?

DG: Because he liked the liberal arts program that this school had, and UNLV's just wasn't . . . And this last year - well, it's really a struggle don't make that much money, myself, to keep him there. But we have managed, and that's the way it is, I guess.

RM: Well, that's really - it's a remarkable achievement to raise as many children as you have, in today's world.

DG: Oh, they've all been good students. Like I told [chuckles] my youngest daughter: it costs me more to send her to school now - in :clothing - than it did when I had them all home. [laughter] And now she belongs to the Close-up Program here, which is taking a trip to Washington, D.C., for a week. So that has . .

RM: You've got to come up with some more

DG: Yes.