

Interview with
JOHN JENSEN

March 11, 1969

**VOICES OF REMEMBRANCE FOUNDATION
ORAL HISTORY COLLECTION**

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JOHN JENSEN

Content Warning: Contains words that are inherently offensive, insensitive and harmful.

John Jensen was interviewed on March 11, 1969 in Mesquite, Nevada by Fielding H. Harris, a representative of Voices of Remembrance Foundation. He related his personal history of living in various parts of Utah, Mexico, Arizona and Nevada.

FH: What is your full name?

JJ: [My name is] John Jensen.

FH: [What is] your birth date?

JJ: [I was born] January 18, 1888. I have to figure it out! [Laughter] [Correct birth year is 1887.]

FH: That makes you eighty-one years old last January. Where were you born?

JJ: I was born in Sanpete County, Utah.

FH: Which town?

JJ: [It was] in Fountain Green.

FH: What was your father's name?

JJ: [His name was] John Christian Jensen. [Hans Christian Christensen Jensen]

FH: What was your mother's [full] name?

JJ: It was Jensen too. [Her name was] Bodil Margarethe (Andersen) Jensen.

FH: Do you remember some of the [events] that happened to you when you were a [young] boy?

JJ: The only thing I can remember is when we went to Mexico after father died [in 1888]. I cannot remember him, [but] I can remember when we [moved] to Mexico. My mother married Nephi Johnson in the Manti Temple [in 1889]. We went to [Colonia] Juarez [Chihuahua] Mexico.

FH: Is this where the colony was?

JJ: Yes. We stayed there about three years. Daddy Johnson tried to plant everything. We had one of the best orchards there was in [the] whole valley when we left there.

FH: That was a good climate for growing things.

JJ: We had a beautiful orchard. We stayed there awhile and then decided to come back. I can remember some [events when] we were in Mexico. We lived on the side of the [Bavispe] River. I remember the [children] and the frogs tooting at night. There were lots of water turtles in the river. I remember hearing them jump off the trees into the water. We used to [see] that.

Then we came back to Johnson [Kane County] Utah, fourteen miles east of Kanab [Kane County, Utah]. We stayed there about a year and then moved over to Fredonia, Arizona. We stayed there three or four years, then we came down here in [1895].

FH: [Did] you come from Fredonia down to Mesquite?

JJ: Yes, down to [the] Virgin Valley [in Nevada]. I have been here ever since. I never did move out of here.

FH: Do you like it here?

JJ: It has been home.

FH: Did you come out of Mexico before the insurrection? [The Mexican Revolution was in 1910.]

JJ: Yes, we [came] out just ahead of that.

FH: You were fortunate.

JJ: We were just lucky. My stepdaddy had all kinds of offers. [President Porfino] Diaz was the ruler. Dad could [speak the] Indian and Mexican [languages]. He learned those languages. He [Diaz] wanted him to come up and offered him all kinds of [things] to run a big ranch that he had there. In those times, they [had] people working for them and they would peon them [use them as unskilled labor]. They would get them in debt to them and they would not let them off. Daddy said, "No, I am afraid you will get me peoned and I never could get away." He [Diaz] promised that he would not, but dad would not take it.

FH: Better not to take the chance.

JJ: We moved out of there just before that trouble started.

FH: I think that was a real blessing to you.

JJ: I will say it was.

FH: Was all this moving around hard on your [education]?

JJ: Yes, it was. It kept us jumping! [Laughter]

FH: Did you get much [education] in that first [years]?

JJ: No.

FH: How far were you able to go in school?

JJ: I went to sixth or seventh grade, I guess. I started school in Fredonia. I went there a year or two and then we moved down here. Our [education] was mighty limited when we came here. There were only seven families in Mesquite when we [moved here], so the school was [quite] limited.

FH: Were the classes all in one room?

JJ: [They were] all in one little room [and] we sat around a table. [Laughter]

FH: Did you have a good teacher?

JJ: She was as good as we could get at that time. She was alright. Aunt Reen Hardy was our first teacher. We used to have our ups and downs. Not [bragging] on myself, but that was one thing I never did have any trouble with. We got along fine. As far as I went [in school], I never did have any run-ins. They used to say, "You are the pet." I never tried to be the pet. I did what I ought to do.

FH: Was your [education] worthwhile?

JJ: You bet. I wish I had gone on, but I did not.

FH: Do you remember any other teachers?

JJ: Aunt Reen was our first [teacher]. An older lady, Marcie Cox, originated from St. George [Washington County, Utah]. She lives here. She was my next teacher. The next one was Belle McArthur [and] she came from St. George. She married a Bunker here so she taught school here.

FH: Did she stay here later?

JJ: Yes, she stayed here awhile. Then we [had a teacher], Frank Cox. He lived in Bunkerville [Nevada]. He was a Cox related to Coxes [who live] in St. George. We went from there on up the [grades with] different teachers.

FH: Were they all good teachers?

JJ: Yes, they were all good teachers. I do not remember who the last [teacher] was. John Wittwer was a teacher just after I quit school.

FH: Did you take some trips, during your growing-up years, up to Washington [City, Washington County, Utah] and Enterprise [Washington County, Utah] and around?

JJ: Yes.

FH: Tell about those trips.

JJ: We would thresh our grain here, put it in the wagon beds loose and take it up there to the mill and have it ground into flour. They took out their share of what we [had]. We [received] so many pounds of flour per hundred [pounds] and so many pounds of bran and so many pounds of shorts. [Those] were the different [grains]. We sacked [those grains] up and brought that home to feed ourselves, our pigs and [other animals] as far as it went. We always had a bunch of pigs that we [butchered] for our own use.

FH: How did you feed those pigs?

JJ: We would raise the pigs from little ones. We had 1,000 [pigs] and we would raise them. We would keep them in pens and feed them. I [went] into the [hog] business and we milked lots of cows. We shipped the cream and fed the pigs the skim milk and hay. We had hay feeders.

FH: Did you mix some grain with that?

JJ: We did not feed them very much grain, just a little bit.

FH: What about the bran and the shorts? Did you ever use any of that for them?

JJ: Yes. Sometimes we added some of the shorts, but most of that went to the pigs. The bran and the shorts went to the pigs.

FH: Did you have a special way of feeding them? Did you feed them very often?

JJ: We fed them three times a day.

FH: Is that what made them fat?

JJ: That is what made them fat. Some of them had side-meat three inches deep. But we cured it. We would kill them and cut the meat in slabs and then put it in a

barrel and put salt on it. We would salt cure it first. I do not remember how long it had to stay in there. It stayed in there so many days. The salt went into [the meat] and cured it. That is the way we cured the hams and the shoulders. I have cut into many a ham and shoulder and taken the bone out of the main part. Then we would cure the [rest].

FH: Did the thickness of the meat determine how long it had to stay in the salt?

JJ: Yes. It had to stay in there so [the salt went] through [the meat] good. After that, we took it out. It was not so much fat. We never tried to smoke the fat. We made a smokehouse and we would smoke [the] side-meat.

FH: Did you burn wood in [the smoke house]?

JJ: Yes, we burned black willow trees. That made the best taste. It put the flavor in it. You could not burn pine [or wood] like that because the taste would go into [the meat] and it was not [a] good [taste]. We had to be careful what kind of wood we burned in [the] smokehouse.

FH: I am sure that is going to be of interest to those who have never had anything to do with [curing pork]. Did you raise a lot of pigs?

JJ: Yes, we raised quite a bunch of pigs.

FH: How many cows did you milk?

JJ: We usually milked about five or six.

FH: [Did] you have all the milk and cream you wanted?

JJ: All the milk we needed. We shipped the cream and we fed the pigs the skim milk.

FH: Did you [grow] your own vegetables here?

JJ: We [grew] our own carrots, our own onions and [vegetables] like that. We [grew] early potatoes in the spring. You could not [grow] them to keep in the winter. So we went to Enterprise and up through that country [area] and bought our potatoes.

FH: Was this climate a little too hot in the summer to [grow] them?

JJ: [The ground] does not [grow] good potatoes.

FH: How long did it — take you to make a trip up to Washington [City] and Enterprise?

JJ: It took us around a week.

FH: Would you go in your wagon and bring back the flour?
JJ: We would put the horses on and away we would go. We used to get potatoes [in Enterprise and] I used to trade for onions. They [grew] big onions up there and we would trade pomegranates. We used to [grow] a lot of pomegranates here. There are none here now. They went out of the business [because] there was not much [demand] for them and they pulled them all [the trees] up.

FH: They make good jelly.

JJ: They make anything good and sweet. We used to take them up and trade them for potatoes. We used to haul rock salt up there from down here at St. Thomas [Nevada].

FH: Was there a rock salt mine here?

JJ: There is a salt mine down there now. The lake covered it up partly, but it is back below it now.

FH: Maybe this heavy runoff will bring it back up again.

JJ: Now they let it over the spill [ways and] do not let it fill back up.

FH: Did you have any accidents or sicknesses when you were a [young boy]?

JJ: I broke my arm when I was grown. I was a healthy [boy]. I do not know what happened to me about a year after I was married. Maybe it was not that long. I had a bad inwardly bleeding spell. I darn near kicked in for a year or two before I came out of it.

FH: Did you have internal hemorrhaging [that] could not [be] stopped?

JJ: Yes. It would bleed along and I would spit up. I almost bled to death. I would be careful not to exert myself. The way I did it, like a young husky [boy], I was young and did not have sense enough to know my strength. I over lifted. We used to take our wagon beds off when we wanted to load tools or something. That is how I did it by lifting my own wagon bed off and on.

FH: Has your life's occupation been farming and cattle?

JJ: Yes. That is all I have done all my life. I have worked out some in mines but not a lot.

FH: Did you get your training in this from your stepfather?

JJ: Yes. I rode right up the line.

FH: Was your activity in [The] Church [of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints] sparse in those earlier years?

JJ: When I was [very] young we went regularly. When I was in the ward, in the Sunday school, I went regularly.

FH: Were you ordained a deacon at an early age?

JJ: Yes. I was ordained a deacon when I was eight years old.

FH: Do you mean twelve years old?

JJ: Yes, twelve years old.

FH: You were baptized at eight [years of age]. Were you in the Deacon Quorum presidency?

JJ: Yes.

FH: Have you been active in the Priesthood through the years? Did you come up the line?

JJ: I usually took part in the lessons as they came along. I tried to keep up with some of them.

FH: Are you a high priest now?

JJ: Yes.

FH: You have come right up the line.

JJ: Up to the top, they say that is where you go.

FH: That is right! What do you know about your father? Have you been told anything?

JJ: My daddy came from the old country, Aarhuse, Denmark. That was their home town. His occupation over there was fishing. My mother's occupation there was taking care of butter and cheese at a dairy. She worked in a cheese factory. As young as she was, she was an overseer [in] a big cheese factory.

FH: How old were they when they came to America? Were they full grown? Were they married?

JJ: I cannot tell you exactly. They were married [in Denmark about 1863] and had four [children] before they came here. They went first to Fountain Green in Sanpete County, Utah.

FH: Did your father die [soon] after you were born?

JJ: Yes, I was six months old. [He died in June 1888.]

FH: Can you remember your mother?

JJ: Yes, mother was a hard worker. She took care of us [children]. She was a good cook. She could cook anything and make it good. I used to tell a story on her. [Laughter] This is when we were first in St. George. The big [church leaders] used to come down to St. George. Daddy [Johnson] was quite involved with the church leaders. He was right up there with them. He knew Brigham Young and all the rest of them [on] down. He grew up with one of the presidents, the one that used to wear long white whiskers.

FH: [Was that] Lorenzo Snow?

JJ: Lorenzo Snow, yes. They were boys together. He grew up with him. In the early days, my stepfather, Nephi Johnson, was an Indian scout. He said if he had known it, Brigham Young would have had him marry an Indian squaw. When they had that war with the Indians, dad could talk to [the chief] just like he talked to himself. He [became] quite stuck on him. The old Indian wanted dad, we always called him dad, to marry one of his daughters. [Laughter] Daddy said, "No, I am not going to marry an Indian until the leaders of the church set the pattern. If they marry them, then I will think about it." After Brigham Young found that out, he said, "If I had known that, we would have had you marry her." [Laughter] "You could stop that Walker War." Chief Walker was the [leader].

[Chief Cologrow Ignacio Ouray Walkara (Wakara or Walker) was a Native American leader of a Ute Timpanogo band. In 1849 he invited Brigham Young to send Mormon colonists to Sanpete Valley, Utah. A measles epidemic broke out. In 1850 Walkara allowed himself to be baptized into the Latter-day Saint religion. However, relations with Mormon settlers deteriorated rapidly. These pressures, the measles epidemics and the rise of competing bands of Shoshone raiders ultimately led to a brief conflict known as the Walker War. Some historical accounts attribute the outbreak of the war to Walkara's failure to acquire a Mormon wife. It is more likely that the war began with a July 1853 confrontation with settlers in Springville in Utah Valley which resulted in the death of several Indians.]

JJ: That is the way [the story] went. He used to be a scout. He used to tell us all these stories. He brought immigrants from Salt Lake [City, Salt Lake County all the way] down to Las Vegas [Nevada]. He took two or three different trains down through [there] as the leader.

FH: How many children did your mother and father have?

JJ: They had seven [children].

FH: Did your mother have some [children] with [her second husband]?

JJ: [She had] one daughter, [Bodil Margaret Johnson]

FH: Could you tell the names of those eight?

[TAPE RECORDER TURNED OFF]

FH: Start with the oldest one and come down the line.

JJ: [Johanne] "Hannah" [Jensen] is the oldest daughter. Sophia [Jensen] is the second one. Josephine [Jensen] was third. "Chris" [Christian Jensen], the boy, was the fourth. Knute [Jensen] was the fifth and I, [John Jensen] was the sixth. [Bodil Margaret Johnson] "Maggie" is the seventh [child], [but] she is from Nephi Johnson.

FH: How many of them have lived to a mature age?

JJ: All [seven] of them.

FH: Have they scattered all over the country?

JJ: Their descendants are [scattered]. Sophia, my second sister, is the only one that is alive and "Maggie" over here. She is my youngest sister.

FH: Is she still living here close by?

JJ: Yes. She lives right across [the street].

FH: Did you have a lot of faith in God? Did you have prayers often in your home?

JJ: We tried to have prayers every morning before our meal. We said the blessing on our meals regularly. At night we usually had prayer before we went to bed. We made that kind of a regular [routine]. Sometimes we missed and sometimes we were scattered out so we could not have them.

FH: Did your family believe strongly in prayer?

JJ: Yes. That is one thing daddy always did. We had prayers. My wife's family was prayerful people.

FH: Has this been a way of life for you?

JJ: Yes.

FH: What did you do growing up to have fun? Did you have a lot of fun?

JJ: We thought we [did]! [Laughter] We used to go to dances. About every Friday night we had a dance. When we were not [a] very big [town] here in Mesquite we would go to Bunkerville. We would dance there and then we would drive our horse home. We would go in the wagons. We would have three or four ring seats on the wagon. One would furnish the team and the other a wagon. That is the way we used to go to all of the sports [events]. We used to compete back and forth with Bunkerville [folks] in horse races, foot races and baseball [games]. That was our recreation.

FH: Did you have a special [event] during the holidays?

JJ: The holidays were special times to compete with one another. During the year, we would play Bunkerville and they would come over and play us on Saturday afternoons.

FH: Was this ball games, foot races and horse races?

JJ: Ball games, sports and everything. We never had fast horses. We could watch them longer [because] they ran slower! [Laughter] We had as much fun watching the slow horses. We used to have a lot of fun. We even had pulling matches — teams of horses pulling.

FH: People in those days took a lot of pride in good teams.

JJ: That used to be my specialty.

FH: Have you had some good teams?

JJ: Yes, some of the best. The same way when we used to ride on the range. I rode the best [horse].

FH: Did you ever catch wild horses in this area?

JJ: Not very many. I never used to chase them very much. There were a few around, but I never chased wild horses.

FH: Were they good horses?

JJ: The horses that were here were darn good horses [after] we broke them. I used to use some of them for saddle horses.

FH: Were they kind of tough-footed?

JJ: They were tough all over. They were [very] sturdy little fellows. They were not too big, but they were [very] sturdy. I said, "I would not pull my saddle off and put it on any horse in the bunch." You talk to the old-timers up in St. George and around [who] used to ride. They used to ride down here, especially Guy Hafen and a few of those people in Santa Clara [Washington County, Utah]. I was up there awhile back and talking to Gray Leavitt. I did not know he was around much. I knew his dad before him. He said, "I can remember you on those horses you used to ride."

FH: Does Gray Leavitt live in Santa Clara?

JJ: Yes, he lives in Santa Clara. We used to have great old times. They used to come down here lots and ride in the spring of the year. We used to have great times then. The old [Virgin] River used to run like it did this year.

FH: Did it run wild?

JJ: Pretty wild! They would gather cattle over on the other side [that] they took up. They had to swim to take them across the [Virgin] River. They were coming down the river one day with a bunch of them and the river was booming. They swam across above and they came down along the side of the river. Some of the cattle decided they were not going down the side. They were going to go across. So they got in the river and they were going down through. I told some of the Clary [Santa Clara fellows], Paul Hafen and Rex Frei and a bunch of them, "Go out there and head them back." [One] said, "The sons-of-a-gun can go to hell as far as I am concerned. I am not going out there." [Laughter]

FH: That is no place to be: out in the middle of that river when she is running wild!

JJ: I was used to it. I would just kick the old mare. I rode a Bristol Bay mare and I kicked her off in. I had been in the river enough. We used to practice in these confounded rivers. As long as you keep your horse's head going downstream and [do] not try to go up, you were alright as long as you kept going with it swimming.

FH: I would have thought you would have to turn them up.

JJ: If you turn them up they will upside you, tip you upside down. I jumped that old mare off and took down along the side of them and herded them back in. [Laughter] We used to have a great old time [with] the old cattle going up and down this way. They had to swim and the poor horse had to swim. I have seen some of them get tipped over turned upstream. I thought there was one up at Beaver Dam [Arizona] and it was running swift. Jim Walker was riding a good horse, but he turned her upstream and that water hit and over she went and down he went, too. He came pawing out. She came out, too.

FH: Is Jim Walker a relative of Brady Walker?

JJ: Yes.

FH: What is the other boy's name?

JJ: [His name is] Brent [Walker].

FH: Is he related to [the] one you are talking about?

JJ: Yes.

FH: How were they related?

JJ: Jim was their uncle.

FH: I am well acquainted with Brady. When you were a young fellow did you enjoy music?

JJ: Yes, I like music, but I never could play [an instrument].

FH: [Did] you enjoy listening to it?

JJ: I do now. I sure enjoy good music.

FH: That is a lot of company for you now.

JJ: I will say it is. Going to dances like that — now-a-days, they do not dance anymore. They just hop around [and] do not dance to a tune. I went up there a few times.

[END OF RECORDING ONE.]

FH: Did you used to do square dancing?

JJ: We used to square dance, waltz, do [the] two-step, schottische and horky's four and all kinds of reels. We had all kinds of dances.

FH: You really had a lot of fun.

JJ: Those old quadrilles had callers. We would really go to town — the bunch [who] knew how to dance quadrille well.

FH: Wouldn't it be wonderful if we could teach the youngsters some of that?

JJ: I told some of them it would be the best thing under the sun for these [children] if they would learn to dance quadrilles. I think we were more acquainted with one another. Now they go to the dance [and] if you go there without a partner you are just on the side — that is all. They just dance with one [person].

FH: [Did] you used to dance with all the girls?

JJ: We would dance every one. If we came there with a girl we danced with her when we first went in and then we danced with some [others] and came back and danced with her again. We danced with all the girls in the house. The same way they did, [the girls] danced with all the boys. They would trade. We used to have these spat waltzes. We would get [to] waltzing and one spat and then we would quit. Then we would go over and take another partner. We used to have a lot of fun. I told them, “You [young people] do not know how to have fun.”

FH: Have you done a little reading through the years?

JJ: Well, some.

FH: Was your reading limited by the way of life you had to lead?

JJ: We did not have time to read.

FH: Were you mostly in the outdoors?

JJ: [Nearly] all the time. When we would get home here at night we were usually tired and wanted to go to bed.

FH: Tell about your courtship and marriage.

JJ: [Laughter] She grew up here with us. She was four years younger than I was. I never used to look at her. I was looking at the other [girls]. There used to be a lot of girls. I had different girls I took [out] a little, but not a heck of a lot. I did not run around very steady. I changed back and forth. I had some mighty good girl [friends] here. I started to go with my wife.

FH: What was her name?

JJ: [Her name is Abgeal] Christina Abbott. She was about seventeen years old when I started to go with her. I went with her a year or so.

FH: Did you meet her in church or a dance?

JJ: We grew up in the same neighborhood. We went to Sunday school and meetings and would see one another. We just grew up together.

FH: Then you finally started dating her?

JJ: Yes. I thought: that is the gal for me. So I started dating her and that is the way [it] went.

FH: Did it take you very long to decide she was the right one?

JJ: I went with her about a year and a half, I guess. William E. Abbott was her daddy and he was the bishop. I had to be a good boy to go with the bishop's daughter. We got along fine.

FH: Where did you marry her?

JJ: I married her [on November 24, 1909] in the St. George Temple.

FH: Where was your first home?

JJ: It was here in Arizona just across the line about a mile above town.

FH: [That is] not far from here.

JJ: No, right close. I stayed there awhile. I sold what I had there [and] daddy Johnson had a place. I sold what I had to my brother and then moved down here. I bought this place where I am now. It was a little place cleaned off before the Indian camp. Then I traded around and finally [obtained] twenty acres down below here, over this way a little further. I kept that awhile and finally I traded [and] located this and bartered around. I [had] quite a little farm.

FH: How many acres did you [have]?

JJ: I [had] up to forty acres. That was a good farm in those days.

FH: Was this mostly irrigated ground?

JJ: It was all irrigated ground.

FH: That is quite a bit to take care of.

JJ: A lot of it [was] in sand knolls when I got it, but I leveled it down and it was irrigated ground.

FH: [Did] you have to break it down and make it [like] you wanted?

JJ: That is right. This place here [was] about an acre and the rest of it was just big mesquite [trees] and sand knolls from here over to by the highway going down and around. It took quite awhile to dig them out.

FH: Have you seen a lot of changes here?

JJ: When this road was first along here, when we first came here, the mesquite was only up there to that first wash, just this side of the grocery store. That was the end of town. There was nothing this side of there, but then we kept [growing] until we [are] down here. This was the main highway, across here and down across the [Virgin] River before we had any bridges, this was the main road right down here and out across the river.

FH: Have there been quite a few changes?

JJ: Yes. Bishop Abbott prophesied when he came here that there was going to be a mile of paved road through Mesquite. A paved road was between sand knolls on both sides down through there. They laughed [about] pavement and said there was no such thing as that, but it happened. It is there now. [Laughter]

FH: Did you build a home on it?

JJ: Yes. I had a small lumber home first. Then we built this one.

FH: Did you start having your family here?

JJ: Yes. Most of our family was raised here.

FH: How many children were there?

JJ: [We had] fourteen [children] altogether.

FH: Can you name them?

JJ: The first one we named Vivian [Jensen].

FH: What has happened to Vivian?

JJ: Vivian was a nice baby. He lived about a year and a half. We took him to the doctor, back and forth. I do not know what he had, but he died.

The next one was John Lavon ["Von" Jensen]. He was my next boy. Lavon went to school here until he passed out [graduated] as high as he could go here. Then he took flying lessons. He went to California and took flying lessons. He learned to be a flyer, an airplane mechanic. He went to San Diego [California] first and stayed there quite awhile. I do not know how many years. He graduated from there and went up to Oakland, California. He worked there for twenty years. He retired, [received] his pension and he is still going. He is touring the whole darn world now, going here and there and everywhere.

FH: Did he marry?

JJ: He married when he was young and his wife died in childbirth. He raised one boy. Then he went [for] quite a few years and he married another girl from Sacramento [California]. He had one boy and a girl from her. They got along [quite well] for awhile. "Von" was a studious [fellow]. He did not like to run around to big parties. She was the other way about and they just fussed. Finally, they quit [divorced]. They [were] in a mix-up [and] he just went off. About a year and a half ago he married another woman. [His] oldest boy joined some medical outfit and has been over there in Okinawa and all through there, [but] not in [World] War [II]. He is working for a company. He went over there and married one of those girls over there. She is cute [and] about so high. [Laughter] He has two [children], a little girl and a boy. I have not heard from him for awhile. He was supposed to have been back in the United States. He said he was not going back over there anymore. I have lost track of him.

FH: That is two of them. What about the third [child]?

JJ: The third one is Myrtle [(Jensen)] Reber. She was here a few minutes before you came. She lives here in Mesquite. She married Ralston Reber. He was talking to me over the telephone a few minutes before you came.

The next one is Gussie [Jensen]. She lives in Las Vegas. She is married to Reed Wittwer from Clary. He runs the Wittwer Motel down [in Las Vegas]. The Wittwers are well hooked up. He has a motel, the eating house and a little of everything. He is trying to retire. [They] have only one girl in their family.

Derald [Jensen] is next. Derald is [living] in Redding, California. He has been there for quite a few years. He is a highway patrolman there. He was in the city cop business and graduated. Anyway, he is a highway patrolman up there in Shingletown, California, just above Redding a little ways. He has a wife and two [young children]. [The] wife he married had a boy so they have three children.

FH: That is five. Who is the next one?

JJ: The next one is Milburn [Jensen] He lives down the street here. He is the third house from here down on the right side. He has a bunch of [children], one girl and six boys, I think. The oldest one has been on a [LDS] mission and has come back. He is in [Las] Vegas now. He is taking training down there for some textile business. [Another] boy is up in Reno [Nevada] going to school. The others are all home. Their girl, Christine, married a Reber from Littlefield [Arizona]. Louis [Reber's] brother's child.

Then we have Bodil [Jensen], my daughter. She married [David] "Dave" [Ammon] Bundy. He is one of the old timers. His dad went to Mexico and they ran all over the country [area] and landed out here on the [Arizona] Strip.

FH: What was his father's name?

JJ: His name was Roy Bundy. He was crippled up and died a year or two ago. His mother lives in St. George.

FH: Was [he] the husband of Doretta [(Iverson) Bundy]?

JJ: Yes. The next one is Gertrude [Jensen]. She lives in Gunlock [Washington County, Utah]. She married Guy [Wilson] Bowler. They have [ten children] — three girls and [seven] boys. The oldest boy is on a [LDS] mission in Africa. He will be home the latter part of this month.

The next one is Omer, I guess. He lives here in town. He married a girl [named Zona, who was] originally from Hurricane [Washington County] Utah. They have one girl and three boys.

Then Nephi, that is the little feller who was here, is my baby boy. My baby girl died in Logan [Cache County, Utah]. She married a [man] from Logan. She died up there a year or two ago. She had three little boys. Laberta [Jensen] we called her. She was the baby [and] the last one.

FH: Are you proud of your family?

JJ: Yes. I forgot Altis [Jensen]. He lives here in town. He was up here the other night.

FH: Were there some of the babies [who] died?

JJ: Yes.

FH: How many did you lose?

JJ: We lost [two] boys. We lost Vivian and Andrew.

FH: Has your life here been active?

JJ: I always had plenty to do. [Laughter]

FH: You have not only been busy with church duties and coming up through the priesthood and all the things that are required, but you have done some civic activities, too. What were some of your civic activities?

JJ: I have been in [almost] everything that has come along.

FH: Was there an irrigation company?

JJ: I bought the first [water]. We used to elect our water ditch boards. They were elected by the stockholders. I was on the board. I did not happen to be the big chairman, but I was one of the board [members] for years. I used to run the men who worked on the ditch [and] the dam. We had to keep track [and] I kept tab on every man's work, what he did, which day and date, and prices. Then I went from there. When the town board was organized, I was the chairman of the board for years. We [received] funds from [Clark County, Nevada] then. When we started, we had \$3,000.00. We [received] our percentage from the taxes for upkeep of the town that was in our precinct.

FH: Is this the way you were able to develop the [town]?

JJ: Yes. That is what there was in there when I [started] and I went down there to the commissioners. I used to go in and talk to them like I am talking to you. I said, "We have to have more money up there. We cannot do anything with what we have." "What do you want?" I said, "I want a raise of a couple of thousand dollars." "What are you going to do with it?" I said, "We have dozens of places to put [it]. I will guarantee we will not throw any of it away." I used to [tease] the commissioners quite a lot. One of them said, "We will just give you half of that." I said, "No, you will not. By damn, I do not want half of it. I want it all."

FH: Did they give it to you?

JJ: When they finally decided, the chairman of the board said, "We can give you only so much," [It was about] some \$900.00. He said, "I cannot give you that unless you let it out on the contract." I said, "We will not have any contract. I will cut her under \$10.00 and \$990.00." He laughed [and] said, "Okay, by damn, we will give it to you." [Laughter] We had money in other funds. This is when I wanted to clean up the streets. We never had any streets up here. Our streets were all sand knolls and we had to level them up.

FH: Did you build the streets?

JJ: We built the streets. That is where we used our money and straightened up the washes.

FH: You have done a lot toward the development of this community.

JJ: I sure have been digging in, but they do not give me any credit for that. You know, when we first built our dam up here they did not give me any credit for that. I was on the board and they had to send somebody upstate to Reno to get the State [of Nevada] to approve our dam and talk to the big bosses. Darrel Evans was our soil conservation [person]. I went with him up there. We presented it to the state [people] and told them what we wanted. We wanted them to send some engineers down here and design us a dam. We were [very] tired of building brush dams. By golly, they listened to me. I had Evans take a bunch of pictures of the

dam before we left [showing] the way it was torn out. They looked at it. We had to play the slides the third time before it sank on them. Finally, the big man said, “Is that is an irrigation dam?” I said, “Sure it is. What did you think it was?” “We thought it was a reservoir.” “Hell no, it is not a reservoir. It goes over the top of it when it comes to the head of the ditch.” [Laughter] We [received] the money and put [the dam] in.

FH: It was a good thing somebody had the gumption to go after it and apply for it.

JJ: If you talk to them around here, none of them [will] give me any credit for that. They designed the dam, came here and put it in. We told them it could not be a dam [inaudible] and they designed one and it stayed.

FH: Did this improve your irrigation?

JJ: In the summertime when the floods came was when we would lose our crops. The water went out of the ditch and we would go up there and dike that water in the summer. The crops would dry up and we did not get our hay. When we had a permanent dam in there then we had water.

FH: It changed the whole picture. Did you have a lot to do with the development of culinary water here?

JJ: I was on the first culinary [water] board. We kept telling the state — they did not want to do anything [so] I got after the state when I was up there. I wanted them to come down and drive a test well down here to see what [water] we could get [from] underneath. They came down and drove a test well and they struck water. Then they were going to pull the pipe. They could not pull it. [Laughter] So they had to leave it in.

FH: Did you get some good water?

JJ: We got [water] and after that we decided that was not big enough. We had to have water.

FH: Did you get some water out of that test well?

JJ: Some water came out of it. It showed there was water down under there. We went up the country a ways and [hired] a drilling outfit to drill in here. I was the one [who] was with him. You might think I am tooting my own horn, but this is the truth.

FH: No, no, this is history and it needs to be told.

JJ: I went over there with him. I have forgotten his name that was running the well rig. He went down about 200 feet. I did not happen to go over there when he first

hit it, but he hit something solid down there and he was pounding. He had struck some water. He was getting down level with the [Virgin] River. He said, "We have water." I did not think there was enough there. He hit this thing. I went over there. He said, "I hit something down in there and I cannot pound through." I said, "Did you sample it? Did you get any of it out?" He said, "Yes. It is sand rock." It was solid sand. He pounded away. I said, "I will be over there this afternoon. You keep pounding. I believe, when we get through, that maybe we will get something else. We will get through it, anyway." He pounded and pounded and finally he broke through. When he got through it, his drill just went like that. It was soft underneath, just gravel. He said, "I got through her."

FH: Was there water there?

JJ: [There was] water galore. He threw the pump on there. He started pumping it. I said, "Let us pump that at least twenty-four hours to see what kind of a mess we have." When it first started it was rily and muddy. We pumped it out and let it run down the canyon. Finally, it sucked all of that around and finally it was clear. I could not believe then that it was anything but Virgin [River] water. But I was curious enough that I sent two different samples of that water up to state [Reno] to see whether it was good water or not. I thought it would be virgin water. It was not. He said, "That is the purest water we have had anywhere." It [went] down into [a different] strata of water. That is what we have been using now for a long time.

FH: Have they put other wells in?

JJ: We drove one. It was not quite big enough so they dug another one. We have plenty of water. Yes, we have good water.

FH: You have been [very] active in all kinds of civic affairs. Have you been active in your church work through the years? Have you been going to church regularly?

JJ: Well, pretty regularly. When I was in the Sunday school I made the point, if there was any chance, I was there every Sunday. Later years, since my leg [was] banged up I have not been a very good church attender.

FH: How did you hurt your leg?

JJ: I was operated on up there and a blood clot hit in my blood stream and they cut it off. First, I was operated on for piles. Then I had ulcers [in my] stomach and they cut in there and that is what raised [inaudible]. I was getting along pretty good and the circulation hit and a clot [was] in my blood stream. They had to take my leg off in order to get it out.

FH: How many years [ago was this]?

JJ: It has been about five or six years since they cut [my leg] off.

FH: [Does] that make it rough to get around?

JJ: It sure does. I will tell you, it is bad [hard] to get around.

FH: I think you have had a marvelous life of experience. Would you take a moment here and give counsel and advice to your descendants, even those yet to come?

JJ: I can tell them how they ought to live, not tell them the way I live. [Laughter] The parents, I have quite a bunch of parents, are to set a good example for the children from top to bottom. When you tell them something, tell them so they understand what you mean. Not, “You can do this and do that,” and then let them go off and do something else. Mean what you tell them [and] you mean for them to do it. Do not monkey around. There is too much of that going on. The [children who] run cars tell them, “Now listen, you can take the car, but do not let me catch you running races or running all over the country [area]. You go up there to wherever you are going and come back and behave yourselves.” That causes a lot of trouble. It needs to be controlled. Home is a mighty good place to start that. Teach them [with] no foolishness about it. That would be my advice to all of them — all of us, for that matter.

FH: Do you have a testimony of the gospel?

JJ: I certainly have. If I did not have it I do not know what I would do. That is what we all do. I am not like some of them who get up and swear this and that and the other —

[END OF RECORDING TWO.]

JJ: — and come out and do something else. No, I believe Mormonism is true. I have followed it all the way through. My stepdaddy was eight years old when the Prophet Joseph Smith was killed. He told all the stories. I [heard] it first hand, not secondhand. Ups and downs and all this and that and the other. If God did not appear and Jesus Christ did not appear to Joseph Smith, what in the world happened? I just think there is nothing to it. All ups and downs.

FH: Can you say you know this is the true church?

JJ: That is it, I guess.

[END OF RECORDING THREE. END OF INTERVIEW.]