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Earl Jackson
February 28, 1973

Interview conducted by S. Herbert Evison
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26 Aug 82

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1910

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ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW
OF
EARL JACKSON

INTERVIEWED BY S. HERBERT EVISON

February 28, 1973

Tape Number 163

FINAL

(Tape #163 – Sides 1 & 2)

TYPED BY: Bertha M. Braithwaite

October 7, 1981

[START OF INTERVIEW]

Herbert Evison: This is the last day of February 1973. I'm Herb Evison and today I am in Gila Pueblo, in Six Shooter Canyon on the outskirts of Globe, Arizona. And with me is an old and greatly admired friend of many years, Earl Jackson, whom I taped a little bit more than ten years ago. At that time, Earl was still employed by the National Park Service, but he was also serving as executive secretary of Southwestern Monuments Association. Is that term correct for the old organization?

Earl Jackson: Yes.

Herbert Evison: In the intervening years, the scope of the work of that association has been greatly expanded to include one or more national parks and its new name is—

Earl Jackson: Southwest Parks and Monuments Association.

Herbert Evison: Yes. Now, Earl, before we go into that – and I suspect most of this tape will be devoted to the current concerns of the Association – as I've told you, I want to get a thumbnail biography on the records, so tell me when and where you were born, and something about the family you were born into.

Earl Jackson: I was born while still a small boy, in 1910, in Raton, New Mexico, at which time my Daddy was a fireman on the Santa Fe Railroad. I was the older of two children in our family, both boys.

Earl Jackson: My father first worked for the National Park Service in about 1922, when Frank Pinkley, who was then in charge of all of the national monuments in the Southwest, used to come by every summer to check on the condition of the ruins in various areas, and he would hire local people to fill the part-time salaried positions in charge of those areas. My Dad was a homesteader, living a mile south of Montezuma Castle, and so he was employed as custodian, at ten dollars a month, to take care of the place.

Earl Jackson: Later, of course, this was made a permanent position, and Dad remained as fulltime custodian.

Herbert Evison: At something more than ten dollars a month.

Earl Jackson: Oh, he drew the magnificent salary of \$1860 a year. And he remained custodian there until 1938. As far as background in the family is

concerned, my father only went through the eighth grade. My mother went through the ninth grade in Georgia, and that was as far as she went. But between the two of them, they had a high respect for education.

Earl Jackson: When they got settled at Montezuma Castle and built the first house there that they lived in – there was no government house – as their oldest boy I helped them build it.

Earl Jackson: After I was a young man, I took archeology at the University of Arizona, and got a master's degree in it.

Herbert Evison: In what year?

Earl Jackson: In 1933.

Herbert Evison: Oh, yes, a wonderful year to be starting out in the world.

Earl Jackson: So, I was one of these Depression kids. We all were broke. I got a job under CWA, supervising the archeological excavation of a ruin just 100 yards west of Montezuma Castle. Shortly after that, I entered Civil Service and became custodian of Bandelier National Monument at the age of 25.

Herbert Evison: Now, at what stage in your career did you meet a girl named Betty? What was the rest of her name?

Earl Jackson: Her name was Betty Morris and she was a school marm at a girls' school over near Bishop's Lodge, north of Santa Fe. She took some of the girls out to see the ruins and she met the young ranger, the custodian, that was me. And so that was it.

Herbert Evison: When did you get married?

Earl Jackson: We got married in August of 1935, less than six months after we had met. And it was a wonderful place, but I got TB and almost died, and we had to leave. We went to the low country and I recovered, and my Dad told Frank Pinkley, his boss, that he was ready to retire as custodian of Montezuma Castle if the boss would consider putting me in his old job, because it was at a low altitude where the climate was supposed to be good for my health.

Earl Jackson: So, Dad retired and Frank Pinkley moved me down to Montezuma Castle.

Herbert Evison: Now, I think we're getting into stuff that we covered rather at length ten years ago.

Earl Jackson: I think so.

Herbert Evison: Let's finish up this domestic story, though. You had some children. Give me the line on them.

- Earl Jackson: I have two sons, one was born in 1938, the other was born in 1940. They're both married; the oldest boy is in the newspaper business in Hemet, California. He has a son and daughter.
- Earl Jackson: The younger son has two daughters and a son, and lives in Orinda, California. And he gave up a Foreign Service career to take up training in elementary school teaching. That is what he is training for. And that's the family – five grandchildren, two boys, both happily married.
- Herbert Evison: As a grandfather, you're reasonably well supplied with grandchildren. Now, I hope you get to see them once-in-a-while.
- Earl Jackson: Yes, we're very much attached, very fortunate. And here in Globe I retired from the National Park Service in 1966. I liked the Service. I didn't know anything but Park Service, but I decided to retire; and as you've heard before, it was less than a day afterwards that I was invited to take this job. I had already been partially responsible for this position as a part of my job as a park naturalist. But Dan Beard, my old friend and boss, suggested that I go on a salary basis working for the association. And I did.
- Herbert Evison: So, you've been in a salaried position with respect to this association since 1966. Now, when you started that, was this still the Southwestern Monuments Association?
- Earl Jackson: Yes. And I started on a halftime salary basis. It was later increased, because the job kept increasing in size, up to where I now can work as much as three-quarters of the time if I need to.
- Herbert Evison: Yes. Now, let's get some current statistics about the association on the record. I'm going back, of course, to get a lot more, but the association now serves – how many parks and how many monuments?
- Earl Jackson: We serve 37 National Park Service areas, of which 36 are really live outlets. The 37th is technically an outlet, but is not yet offering anything for sale. We serve those 36 areas where we have retail outlets in areas all the way from national historic sites, national memorials, national parks, Platt National Park to Lake Mead National Recreational Area. We serve areas all the way from Oklahoma to Pinnacles, almost to the California coast, and from Golden Spike in Northern Utah all the way south to Mexico. So, we serve areas in seven states and under three regional directors.
- Herbert Evison: Do you get along well with all three?
- Earl Jackson: As far as I know, they're all friendly. They all seem like real nice people.
- Herbert Evison: Yes. Well, you really expected that, of course.

- Earl Jackson: They're wonderful people and they're on our board of directors. And that is part of the reason we were advised to change our name so as more fittingly to reflect what we actually were. Because in the beginning, we only served the national monuments and now we serve any kind of a Park Service area that wants our attention. Of course, as with the Eastern National Park and Monument Association, not only do we serve these outlets, but, of course, we serve any needs that the regional offices have or any state office that wants our help; or if Washington wants our help, or if Harpers Ferry wants our help, they get it, too.
- Herbert Evison: Yes. Since I am technically attached to Harpers Ferry, I would be interested – can you think of an instance in which your association has been of service to the Harpers Ferry Center?
- Earl Jackson: Yes, sir. We very happily loaned them \$5,000 to help start their bookstore there.
- Herbert Evison: But Harpers Ferry isn't one of your constituents.
- Earl Jackson: Oh, no, no, not officially. But as you know, all cooperating associations, if they've got any money, will loan it interest-free to the others.
- Herbert Evison: Yes.
- Earl Jackson: And so, when Jim Murfin wanted to start a National Park Service bookstore at Harpers Ferry, we were only one of several areas that did loan money to help get it going.
- Herbert Evison: I'm interested to know if you can think of any specific services to the Regional Offices, just for an example or two.
- Earl Jackson: Well, usually, a Regional Office request is for one of its areas. But occasionally, some odd happenstance will occur, such as came up a number of years ago at Glen Canyon. There was a large Congressional party that was flown in by helicopter to inspect the area, and the superintendent in charge felt that he would be a very poor superintendent if he didn't arrange for box lunches for them. They had to eat; they couldn't just be flown out there and left on a mountaintop with nothing to eat. So, he footed the bill; and when he submitted the bill to the government, the General Accounting Office wouldn't pay it.
- Earl Jackson: They said, can you help us, Earl? And I said, sure. It was such a small thing – a couple of hundred dollars, maybe less – but it was one of those oddball type requests which was clearly a valuable thing but there was no way in the world the government could have paid it. That's a small one. If I had a little more time, I could think of other specific ways in which we have helped.

- Earl Jackson: Well, let me illustrate. The National Park Service state office for Arizona last year asked for and received \$1,000 from us for aid in helping the state of Arizona put on the centennial part of the National Park Service observance. In other words, our state office in Phoenix cooperated with various state agencies to get those things done. And part of that \$1,000 was spent for a photographic contest. That was just one of the several things that they spent part of it for.
- Earl Jackson: Interestingly, just a month ago, they sent me back \$300 of it. They only used \$700. But still, it was \$700 worth of help that we gave them. And we are now – we have recently offered to provide funds for a film library at the Arizona state headquarters, because usually, the Park Service has insufficient funds for these purposes. We get so many requests from many areas for education or movie films that help put forth the park idea, that we suggested to one of the field people that the matter be taken up at the Phoenix office level. I've already talked with the people in Phoenix, and they're heartily in favor of it. And they are simply working up a carefully restricted list of – well, you might say, must items that they need. And when they get the list made out, why, we'll simply write out a check for whatever they need to buy these films.
- Herbert Evison: This raises a question. I have been in touch, over the years, fairly closely with Herb Kahler in the operations of the Eastern National Park and Monument Association. I know that he, as the executive, had authority, without having to consult anybody, to commit up to a certain amount of money.
- Herbert Evison: From that up to another certain amount of money, I think he had to check with his executive committee. And certain major items had to go before the board, either by circularizing the board or putting them up to the board at one of their two or three meetings. Do you have such an arrangement as that?
- Earl Jackson: Yes, only our arrangement is a great deal different. Herb and I are very good friends; we both operate big businesses and yet we operate them almost as differently as it is possible to conceive and still attain the same ideals of service. For one thing, I am a voting member of our Board of Directors. The board meets once a year, and they pass on major items. But on donations up to \$1,000, I have authority to make them. The only requirement is that whoever is making the request demonstrate to me that it is a bona fide National Park Service need. Now, this is a lot of authority; but I think that this is the reason why they select people like Kahler and myself for positions like this, because we've spent our entire lives in the Service, we're thoroughly indoctrinated and we're not likely to take foolish liberties.

- Earl Jackson: All right, so I can spend up to \$1,000 within five minutes, if I know it is a bona fide area need. If there is a question or I think the board might not approve of it, then, of course, I telephone or write the chairman of the board, and if he feels that it's a serious enough problem, he will have me refer it to the members of the board by mail or by phone, and then ratify their decision at our annual meeting.
- Earl Jackson: But in the vast majority of cases, it is matters that I have the authority to handle myself, up to \$1,000. And on trail guides, publishing trail guides, new ones or reprints, I have the authority to do that. I have the authority to do reprints of any books that we publish. But for any new book, I'd have to have the board's consent, unless it's just a trail guide. For any book – a brand new book – a new flower book or new book of any import – the board of directors has to grant the authority to me to publish it and they are very rigid in their requirement that I check with the best available authorities to assure accuracy of the book. And this a very proper control. I'm glad they insist on it.
- Herbert Evison: I suspect in your case it isn't very much needed, because I can't imagine you bringing out something scientific, or archeological, or what have you, without making darn sure that it's accurate.
- Earl Jackson: Well, I'm awfully glad to be able to pass the buck on some of these things, Herb. But it is a real privilege to have this \$1,000 authority, because it gives quick service when it's needed.
- Earl Jackson: Now, of course, to this extent, I do the same thing that Herb Kahler does. I try to get the people to give me budget estimates of the major things they are likely to need during the year. And then I take the major items that are beyond my authority to handle and present them to the board.
- Herbert Evison: That's your program.
- Earl Jackson: Yes. And so, to that extent, we operate the same way. But, of course, Herb Kahler operates with his areas issuing their own purchase orders. We have highly centralized authority right here. Every purchase order is issued out of this office and they're all serially numbered, so we've got all that control, you see.
- Earl Jackson: The only money that you have in the field areas is the \$50 petty cash fund, and a \$50 change fund. But as you see, by being able to get \$1,000 within five minutes if they need it, by phone, any disadvantage, it seems to me, is fairly overcome.
- Herbert Evison: Yes, I most certainly think so.
- Earl Jackson: So, his way has its advantages, and mine has its.

- Herbert Evison: Now, I never thought about that particularly, but it seems to me, on the basis of this discussion, that to expect 60 or 70 different people to handle and properly account for funds is expecting a good deal. Whereas, I know that long before I left the Park Service, you were hiring an accountant and keeping very strictly audited and controlled books on everything that you did.
- Herbert Evison: Do you feel that I'm correct on that? Doesn't it seem to you – for instance, here's a park naturalist, he has a hundred other duties. And I should think that it would be very easy for him to get behind in keeping his accounts, even with the best of intentions.
- Earl Jackson: I agree with you. Of course, I think it's an advantage to have our system. It's a funny thing; ours is such an enormous nation, and our folkways, our mores, are so different across this nation, that I'm not any more qualified to pass on the adequacy of Herb's method of operation in detail than he would be to pass on all the details of how we operate.
- Earl Jackson: Somehow, we get the desired results, but we reach it in a different way. And a lot of the people we serve prefer our method and a lot of them prefer theirs. And I just don't know how to say which is the best, and I wouldn't pretend to pose one off the other.
- Herbert Evison: In any case, neither of you has been put in jail.
- Earl Jackson: The point is that we're both doing a good job and we're good friends, and I hate to see him retiring. But he is leaving in May.
- Herbert Evison: Do you know Charlie Marshall?
- Earl Jackson: Yes. We had a real good visit back in St. Louis about three months back, when we had a national meeting of executive secretaries there. And I got to meet Charlie Marshall. I had heard of him before, but spent a number of hours talking with him and Herb. So, we understand each other's philosophies pretty well.
- Herbert Evison: The big tycoons of the group met together, huh?
- Earl Jackson: I'm no tycoon, but I've got a job I love.
- Herbert Evison: Yes. Well, now, – oh, this is wonderful. And I want to go into the inception of the connection with Hubbell Trading Post and something about how that developed, how you operate, what your results have been. But I don't want to get off the other work of the association prematurely. If you have anything else that you'd like to offer on here, I hope you'll do it.
- Earl Jackson: May I assume that you're going to edit these tapes?

- Herbert Evison: Yes. You are going to edit yours first, then it comes to me for a final editing. And I can assure you that I won't add or take away anything of importance without consulting you about it. I am the final editor.
- Earl Jackson: Sure. Well, I have something I want to discuss, but I think I'd rather discuss it with you tonight over a good drink before, supper, if you don't mind.
- Herbert Evison: That's fine.
- Earl Jackson: I will mention the Hubbell thing, if you want me to now, then.
- Herbert Evison: Yes. I'm interested in knowing right from the beginning. Who had the idea?
- Earl Jackson: I don't know whether young John Cook was the first one to have the idea, or whether it was out of Washington. But I know that John Cook pushed the idea very vigorously and deserves a lot of credit for what was worked out.
- Earl Jackson: He wanted Hubbell Trading Post, once it became a national historic site, to remain an active, live post and not just an arrested moment in time like the museum is.
- Herbert Evison: Living history.
- Earl Jackson: Living history, and he was afraid that if a private interest got hold of it, it would change. He was afraid that – well, for instance, take Fred Harvey at Grand Canyon, a very good outfit; we get along fine with them. Fred Harvey was interested in buying the inventory of Hubbell's. But Cook was afraid that if Fred Harvey or some other concessioner were to get the property there the National Park Service would no longer have the completeness of control that it needed to assure the validity of this living history feature.
- Earl Jackson: So he did not want a big concessioner to get it, he wanted somebody they could more completely control, like us. He went to bat for it in several different cases, and went all the way to the top. He succeeded in getting it done the way he wanted. We were given the responsibility for handling it, so we had to dig up \$35,000 with which to buy the inventory and get the business going – keep it going, that is.
- Earl Jackson: And so, we had to borrow some money. We signed a note with Mrs. Hubbell. We paid it off several years ago, so it's all clear now. And we carried Hubbell as an indebtedness for several years before it got all that it owed us paid off.

- Earl Jackson: It functions like our other agencies, except that it is such a big thing we hired a trader-manager who completely runs it. We retain the payroll down here at headquarters. We write the checks; he phones in his payroll, but he has far more latitude in operation of the post than any of our other agents, because, after all, he has spent over 50 years running a trading post. He talks the language like a native, and we felt that it would be the height of stupidity to tie an able man with a lot of strictures about operation when we didn't know a tenth as much on operating a trading post as he did.
- Earl Jackson: So again, working through John Cook, we got the best man we could find and offered him the job, and he took it – Mr. Bill Young.
- Herbert Evison: Well, you say he's been doing this for 50 years.
- Earl Jackson: In other places on the reservation.
- Herbert Evison: Yes. But that means he's no spring chicken.
- Earl Jackson: Well, he's over 70 years old.
- Herbert Evison: Are you training up a successor? Or is he?
- Earl Jackson: The position of his replacement is going to be up for grabs. We will have to accept the best qualified person available. At the present time, his son is the assistant trader-manager, and there is a very-often-honored tradition on the reservation among trading families of these things going on down through the same family.
- Earl Jackson: The Navajo people get used to a trader and they kind of like to deal with the same family. Well, John Young, the younger – he's not 40 yet – has a wife and three children. He's the assistant trader-manager, and he would like to become the manager when his father retires. The only thing I can say at this point is this: If I remain in this position, he will get a fair chance, certainly a fair consideration.
- Earl Jackson: But we will have to consider the field. And we will have to discuss this with the superintendent of the area, and with the general superintendent of the Navajo Lands Group, and probably with the regional director as well, because I'm not going to risk such an extremely important position as that without getting concurrence of all of these people.
- Herbert Evison: No. Well, you say that's run as a typical Navajo reservation trading post.
- Earl Jackson: Yes, sir.
- Herbert Evison: I would suppose that that means you have introduced no innovations. Or if you introduced any innovation, it would be only after a lot of prayer and thought.

- Earl Jackson: Well, our innovative thinking involves principally furnishing soda pop and stuff like that, and trying to keep it as much undercover as possible. Not that we're ashamed of the fact that we have it, but it does not look as much a part of the trading post of Lorenzo Hubbell's time to have a big Coke machine out there in the middle of the floor.
- Earl Jackson: So, although we have the Coke machine available, it is mostly concealed. We have a great big refrigerator. Lorenzo Hubbell would have given his eyeteeth for it. We have to have a refrigerator; we have to be able to store foods. But it takes awfully good landscape and other architectural planning to make these things fit in with this old building. And I think you would approve of the way it is working out.
- Herbert Evison: I'm sure I would. Anything else that you want to offer on that? I'd like to know – you speak of it as a big operation, the biggest individual thing, I guess, that you're concerned with, dollars and cents wise.
- Earl Jackson: It is by far the largest one of our agencies.
- Herbert Evison: Yes.
- Earl Jackson: Dollars and cents wise, and staffwise, too. We have four permanent employees there, and about a dozen part-time employees, all on our payroll.
- Herbert Evison: Yes. Now, is that seasonally in the case of the part-time employees?
- Earl Jackson: Seasonals, yes. But we have four permanent employees – the trader-manager, the assistant, and then two clerks, one of them a bookkeeper. They do their posting of their ledger up there, but they send all this stuff down to our bookkeeper, who keeps their books right here and gets the balances to work out.
- Earl Jackson: And we still get an independent audit every year, by a professional auditor, who goes out and audits their books.
- Herbert Evison: The account that they keep, is it any more actually than a journal, showing what they sold or what they bought, or what do they record?
- Earl Jackson: Well, that's just about what it amounts to – a set of journals. They record everything that they sell, and they list it. That's the only way that we can do the bookkeeping for them here. And they do their own inventorying and they keep separate accountability on the stuff they handle in the “bullpen,” which is their general trading area, and on the stuff that they handle in their rug and jewelry rooms.
- Earl Jackson: And yet, they're all part of the same operation, basically. I don't know if I'm giving you the answer you want, but that's the way it is. Our

bookkeeper here has to be satisfied that these things are all balancing out properly. And we have to know regularly how much they are holding in the way of cash reserves and how much they've got on hand of everything.

Earl Jackson: Between the monthly report that comes in from them and the annual CPA audit, we've got excellent control over what happens. Incidentally, we are all heavily bonded. The trader-manager is under a \$25,000 bond and his assistant is under a \$15,000 bond. I'm under a \$25,000 bond, as is Mrs. McNew and our bookkeeper. For every agency of ours, whether it's Hubbell or one of the other park areas, we carry a fidelity bond for the superintendent of the area.

Earl Jackson: Actually, I sometimes wonder what the value of this bond is, but at least the director can honestly say, if he's ever confronted by Congress, that we are bonded everywhere. In other words, they have taken all the precautions that they need to take; not only have we got all this fidelity bond – this blanket fidelity bond coverage – but we've got professional audits that are done at specified intervals according to the size of the operation at all of our areas.

Earl Jackson: So not only do we have a trained staff in here to do the bookkeeping, but we've got the professionals from outside who come in and do it, and our headquarters operation here is audited every year by an outsider.

Herbert Evison: And these outsiders are people who do National Park Service audit jobs, too, or are they quite independent of that?

Earl Jackson: Well, this is a completely independent public accountant in Globe. He's been doing it for many years. We found that we were not completely contented with the accounting that he was doing for us for a while, because he did not wish to do as much traveling as was necessary to see what was going on in all of our areas.

Earl Jackson: And so all he would do would be our headquarters audit, which he did and still does. But in the last year and a half, he has been going out and visiting a number of our field areas. He selects the ones that he goes to each year and he goes out with a letter of introduction from me – carries it with him – and does his own independent audit out there. And because he's able to do that at his own timing, he is now able to make a certification which is completely acceptable to the National Park Service. So, we have a very thorough bill of health, audit-wise.

Herbert Evison: Now, getting back again to Hubbell, what does that gross in the course of a year, approximately?

Earl Jackson: The combined operation was a little over three quarters of a million last year, gross. Hubbell's was between \$350,000 and \$400,000.

Herbert Evison: That's big business.

Earl Jackson: That's big business, yes.

Herbert Evison: I think it's wonderful.

Earl Jackson: Now, I would have to check. This is one of the reasons why you might want me to edit it a little bit, because I can look at our records and give you an exact figure, if you want it.

Herbert Evison: That isn't necessary for this.

Earl Jackson: With the possible exception of the Jamestown glassworks, I can't think of another more successful living demonstration in our whole nation than Hubbell's. Not only are they operating a live post, but they hire weavers to come and weave rugs right there in the building, all summer long. And people just love it.

Herbert Evison: I bet they do. I marvel that you're able to find them.

Earl Jackson: This man who talks Navajo for the last 50 years finds them. But he's not going to be able to do this forever. I saw him yesterday morning, though. He's just looking fine, after two months vacation.

Herbert Evison: This is the man Young?

Earl Jackson: Bill Young, yes.

Herbert Evison: Now, I take it that this is the period of the year when your staff is limited over there, largely to your four permanents.

Earl Jackson: Largely, yes. They have some pickup seasonal help, but it's primarily the four permanents there. It's getting to where they do a fair amount of business all year around. You remember when you and I were young in the Park Service? They had summer and winter areas?

Herbert Evison: Yes.

Earl Jackson: Well, they're less and less that way now. So many of them, this is the same way up there. And Canyon de Chelly National Monument gets over 300,000 visitors a year. That's really unbelievable.

Herbert Evison: I suspect when I first went in there, which was in 1948, they got about 5,000 in here.

Earl Jackson: Not over ten or fifteen, anyway.

Herbert Evison: Yes. Well, I'm a little at a loss to know what else to ask you. What I've gotten so far certainly makes a wonderful supplement to what I got ten years ago. There's still a lot of tape, and I'd be glad to have you put on that

anything that occurs to you, that has any relevance at all in your job or to the National Park Service.

Earl Jackson: Well, all right. I would like to say this. I think some of this will probably come out, because it's personal. But I have found that with the growth of the organization, it is necessary for me to spend more and more time attending National Park Service conferences in order to keep abreast of what is happening.

Earl Jackson: And it is with great satisfaction that I find that I seem to be as welcome at a superintendents' conference, for instance, as I was ten years ago or 20 years ago, when I was a superintendent. It's also very gratifying to know that people know me all over the United States, everywhere I go there are friendly faces. And they are interested in what we're doing; they seem to respect what we're trying to do. It is a thoroughly enriching experience to go to these meetings.

Earl Jackson: I would like, however, to see the Park Service make more thorough use of us. For the first time in our history, in the last couple of years, we are what you might call comparatively prosperous. We used to always go in the red every winter, business became so flat. We're not in the red anymore. We are actually accumulating some money.

Earl Jackson: Well, we're accumulating some of it against the Bicentennial Exposition that will be coming up in '76. But I wish I knew some way to get the National Park Service to release more of its publications program to us to take care of. There is some hesitancy that seems to exist mostly back at Harpers Ferry. Don't get me wrong, there's a lot of fine people there. But the Park Service doesn't have the money to get out all the publications that are needed. And yet, if it has anything that is already partially done, that has already had some work done on it, they don't like to turn it over to us to do, although they're perfectly willing to let us take on the publication, say, of a brand new handbook for an area.

Earl Jackson: But brand new handbooks for Park Service areas, as much as they are needed, are very slow coming off, because they do not have enough people who are qualified and available to write these handbooks. Once they are written, they don't have the money to publish them back there, and yet they have been involved in the preparation enough so that they hesitate to release them.

Earl Jackson: I wish that it were possible – and I hope I live long enough to see it happen – that the Park Service will be able freely to turn over any kind of a publications project that it wants to to us, with the assurance that we'll go ahead and turn out a competent job, because they will have the control.

- Earl Jackson: I'm perfectly happy for the Park Service to have all the control it wants, at every step in the preparation of a book. And yet, on the other hand, I have published enough books that I know how to get one published! I know how to negotiate with printers, and although I may lack some of the expertise of some of the people who have been doing it all their lives, I feel that it is more to the benefit of the National Park System to get out a lot of good books rather than just a few top notches.
- Earl Jackson: And this is where I wish they would use us a little more, because we are accumulating some money that could be used that way. I'm hopeful they will. I've written to our new director and told him how badly we need to have him attend one of our meetings, and give us his feeling as soon as he has any wishes about what direction our energies should go. But I made it very clear to him that I would like to see us used more on printing.
- Herbert Evison: Yes. Now, I have not been abreast of your publishing program during the past few years. I would like to get on the record here something about a few of them that you may be particularly proud of. I knew that my son was going to go to Saguaro. He had a copy of the updated, revised and greatly improved handbook for Saguaro National Monument. Now, I don't know whether the Association was connected with that or not.
- Earl Jackson: That is a masterpiece. As far as I know, the government gets all the credit for it. I wish that I could produce as fine a book as that at a popular price. But we have not attempted to do a handbook in full color yet. I would be perfectly willing to try it and the first chance I get I'm liable to tackle it.
- Earl Jackson: But this will be something the board will decide on because, again, they have to approve a handbook. This is something that I am rather proud of. I wrote this at the request of the board of directors, and it is "Your National Park System in the Southwest."
- Herbert Evison: Now, I saw the earlier edition of it. It came out when?
- Earl Jackson: It came out about four years ago. This is the second edition and it's enlarged and improved.
- Herbert Evison: Well, of course, you really went to town on color on this.
- Earl Jackson: It's all color. We also publish these – several color books on flowers.
- Herbert Evison: Yes. And I notice that you continue to get out a better-looking and revised form, the book that Natt Dodge produced many years ago, "Poisonous Dwellers of the Desert."
- Earl Jackson: Oh, yes. I have to remember that I'm talking to a real pro on this publishing business. You know all the mistakes that I make and—

Herbert Evison: Not too much, not too much anymore. But I happened to be around when the first edition of this came out. I notice this is a master copy that you've handed me, and I take it that you wanted 25,000 of them in March 1972, and also that it is the 13th printing, revised. You could almost stay in business on this, couldn't you?

Earl Jackson: This is our all-time best seller.

Herbert Evison: It was the right book for the right place at the right time, Earl.

Earl Jackson: Now, of course, we put out some potboilers. I can't do any bragging about them, and yet, I'm not ashamed of them, either. These things for Lake Mead – the only trouble is, people don't spend money for books at Lake Mead. They go out there to ride boats and have parties and they're not very much interested in cultural experiences.

Herbert Evison: No. Well, you won't go broke on these.

Earl Jackson: No, they do the job. We're making them available, and we sell these at 50 cents a copy.

Herbert Evison: Well, I'll tell you what I have in my hand, a boating guide to Lake Mohave; the other is the Lake Mead National Recreation Area Auto Tour Guide. And I can tell you that they are books about which I would find it very hard to offer any adverse criticism. The illustrations are good; on the whole they seem to be very well printed. You have a good typeface, you get the feel of a substantial publication. And, I tell you, getting that out at 50 cents a copy is an accomplishment in itself.

Earl Jackson: Well, all we do is paperbacks. But we have about three dozen trail guides in the 15-to-25-cent bracket that we keep in print all the time. And, of course, they are one of the most important services that we do for the government. We keep their prices low because they're so basic to interpretation.

Earl Jackson: But we don't make the usual book dealers percentage on those little trail guides that you use free while you're there and buy if you take them with you. Lots of them get carried off, lots of them get worn out, and so there's quite a bit that has to be written off.

Herbert Evison: Yes. Now, as I told you, we were down at Tumacácori yesterday, and the man at the desk handed a sales booklet to my wife to take around with her. I was otherwise occupied so I didn't even see it. But I take it that it was one of yours.

Earl Jackson: I did not design this one, but I paid for it. Bill Brown, formerly the regional historian at Sante Fe – and he's back in Sante Fe again now, in a somewhat comparable position – Bill Brown designed that in cooperation

with a very good designer, K.C. Dooven, from whom we buy a lot of our better books.

Herbert Evison: This is really a swell book; really a wonderful book. And, of course, I was interested in having it pointed out to me that it was in both English and Spanish, because I talked to the man at the desk and commented on the fact that we have been down in that marvelous Museum of Anthropology in Mexico City, and my gripe was that in spite of all of the Anglos – the thousands of Anglos – who get in there every year, very little stuff is in English. All of their labels are in Spanish.

Herbert Evison: And I wondered why the labels in the museum were still in English. Well, he said, he had a project for making that all bilingual. And, of course, this was a wonderful kind of a start. I think you have reason to be tremendously proud of your publications. And I am pretty critical, frankly.

Earl Jackson: Well, I think you should be. You not only know this business thoroughly, but you have been affiliated with the Park Service long enough, you've got a right to be critical; you should be. And you know me well enough that I will accept criticism from you gladly, when you can give me something constructive and I know you won't hesitate to.

Herbert Evison: No, I wouldn't. But I just don't. I think your publications are very outstanding. And I hope you're proud of them, because you have every reason to be.

Earl Jackson: One of the things that amuses me a little bit, sadly, is the situation with regard to "Flowers of the Southwest Desert," and "Flowers of the Southwest Mesas" and "Flowers of the Southwest Mountains." That triad of flower identification books, which were put out by Dale King, written by different people, became famous as the best available flower keys for the layman – at least, I think they were the best – in the Southwest.

Earl Jackson: I still think they're the best for identification because of the excellent drawings. But people don't buy them nearly as well now, since the color flower books have come out.

Earl Jackson: I am trying something with this one which – I don't know whether it'll do me any good or not. I am putting a centerfold full-color insert of about a dozen flowers, and giving it a wrap-around cover, four-color photographs. And I hope it'll make it sell better because I hate to see such wonderful books not selling like they should, just because we've got those color flower pictures.

Herbert Evison: Yes, kind of a Cinderella of the group.

Earl Jackson: You never can tell what is going to happen with a book. And to our great pleasure, we have at last reached the point where one of our technical books is being reprinted. You see, we spend a lot of money on technical books. We don't make anything on them because they sell so slowly. But we published a technical book on Chaco Canyon several years ago, written by Gordon Vivian and Tom Matthews and Bryant Bannister. We are now having a reprint job done on it; and I am told that we are going to be asked very shortly to reprint, as I said a little earlier, a popular book on the history of Tumacácori, a handbook that I wrote years and years ago.

Herbert Evison: Tumacácori's Yesterdays.

Earl Jackson: Yes. So those things – it's all fascinating and it's all wonderful. I hope that we're going to be given more and more books to publish for the National Park Service.

Herbert Evison: Well, Earl, I think maybe we've covered the waterfront. We've covered a lot of things, greatly to my enjoyment and satisfaction.

Earl Jackson: Well, it's been a real pleasure to chat with you.

Herbert Evison: Well, with that, I'll just say thank you, and we'll call it a day on that.

[END OF INTERVIEW]