

WORKING IN THE DWP AQUEDUCT DIVISION

LLOYD S. PHILLIPS

Interviewed by Dick Nelson

One of a series of oral histories covering the growth and development of the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power as seen by the participants - its employees.

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Biographical Notes

Lloyd S. Phillips

Born in Bishop, California, May 9, 1918.

Parents: Mark E. and Lucy A. (Birmingham) Phillips.

Two sisters and a twin brother.

Married: September 12, 1947 to Florence M. Barlow, at Carson City, Nevada.

Children: Two children, three grandchildren.

WWII Army service, Pacific, February, 1942 to October, 1945.

Joined DWP November 15, 1945 as Aqueduct and Reservoir Keeper, Aqueduct Division.

Retired November 30, 1979 as Water Dispatcher, Aqueduct Division.

This is to certify that I have reviewed this transcript and attest that it is true and accurate. Also, by my witnessed signature below, I grant the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power, or its designee(s), sole right to use this material in any way, and for any purpose, it deems appropriate.

Lloyd S. Phillips
Lloyd S. Phillips OCT. 27-91 date

Florence M. Phillips 11-20-91
witness date

524 So. Barlow Bishop Ca.
witness address

TAPE NUMBER: 1, SIDE ONE

LLOYD S. PHILLIPS

GIVEN THURSDAY, AUGUST 21, 1991

AT

HIS HOME IN BISHOP, CALIFORNIA

THE INTERVIEWER IS DICK NELSON

NELSON: Lloyd why don't you tell us about where you were born, growing up, school, family, etc.

PHILLIPS: I was born out of Bishop about seven or eight miles on May 9, 1918. I went to school at Bishop Elementary in Bishop

until I was in the second grade and then we moved to Manzanar and I went to school in Manzanar one year and then moved back to Bishop and continued the elementary school in Bishop until the sixth grade and then we moved to Laws, California and I went to school there and graduated and then came back into Bishop High School and graduated from there in 1936.

NELSON: What did your father do, Lloyd?

PHILLIPS: My father went to work for the Department in 1925 and we moved to Independence and then from there to Manzanar and he worked as a laborer at that time and then we moved back to Bishop and he worked with the Department of Water and Power at different jobs and then later was graduated to an Aqueduct and Reservoir Keeper. He retired in 1954.

NELSON: What was at Manzanar when you lived there?

PHILLIPS: It was a little town. There was a store, a school, quite a few people lived there. I can't be real sure how many children was going to school, but it seems to me there was about 30 - 35 in the classes.

NELSON: Where was that school located?

PHILLIPS: Right in close to the town there, right in Manzanar.

NELSON: So you were able to walk to school early?

PHILLIPS: We walked to school. It wasn't too far. I don't think there was any buses there at that time.

NELSON: And your dad was working out of Manzanar or that's just where you were living?

PHILLIPS: Between Independence and Manzanar wherever they, he was working at that time.

NELSON: How many brothers and sisters did you have?

PHILLIPS: I have a twin brother who died in a 1949 accident, an older sister, and a younger sister.

NELSON: Were they all born in the Owens Valley?

PHILLIPS: Except my oldest sister. My oldest sister was born in Arkansas and then came here when she was about two or three years old.

NELSON: What was your father doing in Arkansas?

PHILLIPS: He farmed and then he decided to leave the farm and move to California and the Owens Valley is where he wound up and lived here for the rest of his life.

NELSON: What drew him to the Owens Valley?

PHILLIPS: I believe he had a few friends here and decided to visit them at that time and then liked it so well that he stayed here.

NELSON: You graduated from high school here in the Valley?

PHILLIPS: Yes, Bishop.

NELSON: How many kids were in your graduating class?

PHILLIPS: There was, I believe we had one of the larger graduating classes which was about 38 I believe, or 40. Not any more than that.

NELSON: Have a number of those people stayed in the Valley?

PHILLIPS: A few, not too many, but there are a few of us left here.

NELSON: Did your dad ever talk to you about his experiences working for the Department in the 1920's and 1930's or during his career?

PHILLIPS: No. He did not. I was small at the time. I can remember when we were down there in Manzanar, but other than that I was only eight or nine years old at the time.

NELSON: Were the orchards still producing at that time?

PHILLIPS: Yes, they were. They had a place there that was in Manzanar and I believe when they picked some of the fruit, they put them in the buildings that were there and then later moved them out.

NELSON: So you graduated from high school. What did you do then?

PHILLIPS: I drove a truck for mining, hauling ore to the mill and later I started to work on some cattle ranches here then I started driving trucks again and that's when my service in the Army began.

NELSON: What kind of ore and what mine were you driving from?

PHILLIPS: I hauled ore from the Rossi mine and one out of Nevada and was hauling tungsten.

NELSON: Where was the Rossi mine located?

PHILLIPS: Just the lower end of Sunland here. Probably a couple, three miles from here. Had pretty good grade tungsten at the time and then later we run out.

NELSON: What type of trucks were you driving?

PHILLIPS: They were dump trucks, not real big, probably in the 2 1/2 - 3 1/2 ton was all.

NELSON: Were they relatively easy to drive?

PHILLIPS: Yes they drove although they had no power steering at that time, but we managed.

NELSON: How did you qualify as a driver? Was this on the job training or you moved your way through or you were picked?

PHILLIPS: I asked to take the job as a driver and was accepted and I drove for the one person, which was the owner, only at that time I had a single hauling truck and I made as many trips as I could during the day.

NELSON: What was the mileage from the mine to the mill roughly?

PHILLIPS: Probably from the Rossi mine to the mill would be about maybe four miles, but the one in Nevada was about 80 - 90 miles. I could make sometimes two trips and if I left the mine in Nevada that morning and get back, I could make another one, but if I didn't I would have to leave the next day.

NELSON: Do you recall how much money you made at that job?

PHILLIPS: No I can't, I couldn't tell you. It was equivalent to some of your jobs that was here.

NELSON: Did you have any experiences driving around here? Trucks were in pretty good repair or did you have flats or breakdowns or?

PHILLIPS: No. I was fortunate. I never had to change a tire. I did have to put chains on. When I drove out of Nevada coming into California in the late fall, early winter, and then they would shut the mine down at that time and then they never did reopen it because it was not very productive.

NELSON: The roads were not paved, or were they at that time?

PHILLIPS: Yes, they were paved.

NELSON: They were?

PHILLIPS: Yes, they had been paved for several years. When I lived in Sunland, the road on Sunland to Bishop was not paved, it was all dirt road.

NELSON: Where is Sunland?

PHILLIPS: That's where your orchards were that produced most of your fruit.

NELSON: Where is that located now?

PHILLIPS: It would be about on Sunland Road. It isn't too far out of Bishop, probably a couple of miles and then all your orchards were scattered different places through there and they had quite a bit of fruit at the time if the frost didn't damage the trees.

NELSON: Any of those orchards exist today?

PHILLIPS: No.

NELSON: I guess as you said, they were all susceptible to frost, if there was an abnormal, early frost that greatly affected the crop for that year.

PHILLIPS: Yes.

NELSON: How did you get in the service? Were you drafted or did you enlist?

PHILLIPS: I was drafted just after Pearl Harbor and I went in on February. I think it was around the 21st of February and eight weeks of training here in the States and then I was shipped over to the Hawaiian Islands at that time.

NELSON: You got your notice to report, you reported here or somewhere in Los Angeles or at some other location?

PHILLIPS: Bakersfield.

NELSON: How did you get there?

PHILLIPS: I was working out of Bakersfield at the time and my family sent a letter over to me by a friend that was coming over and then I only had the next day to report in to Bakersfield. We were working about 15 or 20 miles out of Bakersfield and we were building air strips which would be for the airplanes right after the war started and then I had my notice accepted. I left Bakersfield, came back to Bishop and about three weeks I reported in at San Pedro.

NELSON: Fort Mac Arthur?

PHILLIPS: Fort Mac Arthur, and then moved from Fort Mac Arthur to Camp Callan, which was a new place fairly close to LaJolla, and stayed there eight weeks and then we were shipped out.

NELSON: On a boat?

PHILLIPS: Yes.

NELSON: You went to the Hawaiian Islands and then where did you go during WWII?

PHILLIPS: I stayed on the island of Oahu. We had those anti-aircraft guns and was defending the harbor and the guns which we were on were not very mobile so we were not shipped out. Some of our people went on different islands and were later in some of the battles. We stayed right at Pearl Harbor and then I was sent back here on furlough and when I got to Angel Island I found I had enough points to be discharged, which I was right after I came toI can't remember the name of the place I was discharged now. It was pretty close to Sacramento and then I came home and then later went to work for the Department.

NELSON: When you came home, you came back to your parents home here in Bishop?

PHILLIPS: Yes. I lived with them for about a year, year and a half and then married my wife, Florence.

NELSON: Had you known Florence here? Did you grow up together?

PHILLIPS: Yes. She was three years behind me in high school and I knew her and her friends and then after I came home, we kind of got together with other friends of hers and mine and then we decided to get married.

NELSON: You were married in Carson City, Nevada. Did you elope or did everyone know about it?

PHILLIPS: It was not eloping. We decided that we didn't care much for a big wedding, so I said, "Let's go to Nevada." So we were married in Carson City and had two or three friends of ours go with us and we came back home then later had moved from that place, we were living in town and then we moved to another place, a Department house and then later we built this house that we live in now on South Barlow.

NELSON: How did you get the job with the Department?

PHILLIPS: The construction and maintenance foreman, at that time, asked my dad if I was interested in having the job that a fellow was going to leave, an older fellow, and if I was, to come talk to him. Which I did and I went to work a couple of weeks after I had talked to him because he said I'd better take a few weeks off being as I'd just got out of the service, so it didn't work out for me to be laying around Bishop here, so I went to work.

NELSON: Was that a permanent position at that time or did it then become permanent later? Did you take the exams at that point or was that a little later?

PHILLIPS: I worked probably about a year without the examinations because at that time the examination came up and when it did, I

took the examination in Los Angeles and then went back and was interviewed and waited for a call which one would be here in Bishop, which I was in hopes that I would make it, which I did. Then I took the call for the one in Bishop. I believe there was one in Crowley Lake at that time too.

NELSON: You mean there was a possibility that the only opening might have been somewhere outside of the Valley?

PHILLIPS: No. There would be an opening here in Bishop, but I would have to pass it high enough for them to reach me which I believe I was number two.

NELSON: And what was the classification?

PHILLIPS: It was Aqueduct Reservoir Keeper.

NELSON: Do you recall what the test was? Was there any sort of a performance type part of the test or was it all a written test or was it an interview or a little bit of each?

PHILLIPS: It was all written. I think there was an interview too, I can't recall for sure, but I know it was all a written test. There was no performance or anything.

NELSON: Do you remember how much money that job started at?

PHILLIPS: My first payday was \$7.50 because I went on the closing date of the payroll and I thought, "If that's all the money I'm going to make from the time I started to work, I'd better quit." So then I found out that that was on the last day for their payroll.

NELSON: So you got a day's pay. Where did you go to work then? What was your location?

PHILLIPS: In Bishop.

NELSON: Working out of the Bishop yard?

PHILLIPS: Yes.

NELSON: What were your duties, generally.

PHILLIPS: Well, at that time we were spreading lots of water. Most of the canals, in fact, all of the canals were running and we would have to check the pipes, keep them clean, see that the water was going through, which would average probably a good 75, 80 to 100 miles a day. You couldn't make that much without too much trouble with your pipes and stuff being with debris and weeds.

NELSON: What do you mean by spreading?

PHILLIPS: When they have good years, the aqueduct would not carry the extra water so the excess water was turned in the canals and was spread on vacant ground through the Bishop area and down towards Big Pine.

NELSON: Was this only spread on City property?

PHILLIPS: All on City property.

NELSON: And then it would percolate into the ground water?

PHILLIPS: Yes, they did not want too much water going into the river because that would build up the amount of water in their aqueduct which could only carry so much.

NELSON: So the main job, the main duties there were just keeping those spreading pipes clean, clear and making sure that that water was being spread and there were no obstacles to it being spread?

PHILLIPS: Yes, if not, your pipes and stuff plugged up too many of them and your canal would spill over and maybe break the canal.

NELSON: What was the size of the crew you were on?

PHILLIPS: Two.

NELSON: Just two guys and a pick-up truck type of thing?

PHILLIPS: Sometimes we would separate, sometimes together.

NELSON: Who was your first boss?

PHILLIPS: J.K. MacIver.

NELSON: Was he a relation to Merdo MacIver, the reservoir keeper down in Antelope Valley for years and years?

PHILLIPS: I don't know. They were an old family here.

NELSON: He would be a senior?

PHILLIPS: I believe at that time he was a general foreman which there weren't too many at that time. Then later I think he became a construction and maintenance foreman.

NELSON: What was your daily schedule there? You'd go into work at or be at work at what time?

PHILLIPS: I believe it was around 7:00 a.m.

NELSON: You'd roll from the yard at 7:00 or you'd have meetings, or how did you get your work assignments?

PHILLIPS: The work usually would be to check the canals and if there was any other duties that the foreman wanted us to do, he would tell us.

NELSON: This was in late 1945, early 1946?

PHILLIPS: Yes.

NELSON: Who was in charge of the aqueduct up there at that time? Do you remember?

PHILLIPS: Frank Crater.

NELSON: Was he called an aqueduct engineer at that time?

PHILLIPS: He would be District Engineer.

NELSON: Did you have occasion to work with him at all?

PHILLIPS: No, I saw him when he would come to Bishop, which he worked out of the Independence office down there.

NELSON: How long did you work at that particular job with the spreading?

PHILLIPS: We did that until they put the second barrel in and then the only water that they'd spread would have been in 1969

when we had all of the snow and runoff. And from that time on, we spread no water.

NELSON: So you did this spreading from 1947 to 1970, when second barrel came into operation and increased the capacity of the aqueduct going down to L.A.?

PHILLIPS: Yes, that is correct.

NELSON: Well you probably went through quite a few co-workers and bosses during that time too.

PHILLIPS: Yes, I think there was about seven or eight district engineers and about three bosses and then later when I received the job of dispatcher, I worked under the engineering and had a new boss there. I did not work out of construction.

NELSON: Up to that time did you always work out of Independence?

PHILLIPS: Always in Bishop.

NELSON: You say you were associated with eight Northern District engineers during that period of time? Do any of them stand out in your mind as fellows that you liked as role models or that impressed you greatly?

PHILLIPS: Yes, I think Jim Wickser was one of the easiest to work with and in the Valley was well liked by the public. I think he would be my choice of all the engineers.

NELSON: What about the more immediate bosses, the foreman and the people that you worked for, were there any there who stood out and you maybe tried to model your career after?

PHILLIPS: No, they did their job and I tried to do mine.

NELSON: So in 1969 that was quite a heavy year for snow and precipitation and there was talk about the possibility of heavy flooding in Bishop when the spring run off came or if there'd be an unusual hot spell, were you involved in any of the precautions taken to prevent flooding in Bishop?

PHILLIPS: Yes, but luckily they were handled very good and we had hardly any trouble as far as flooding anybody or damage and runoff was constant but not real fast like a real early runoff. it gradually worked out real good, luckily.

NELSON: What were the precautions that were taken? Were they basically sandbagging and making sure that diversion ditches were clean and things like that?

PHILLIPS: Yes, and then they knew they were going to have to spread water so they did some extra work on some ponds and so

forth down on the places that would be a good spot to hold water back out of the river.

NELSON: When you came back to Bishop in late 1945, was the relocation camp still in operation down in Manzanar with the Japanese-Americans in it?

PHILLIPS: I'm not real sure. It wasn't too long after if it was, that they were let out of the camps.

NELSON: Did the Department people socialize among themselves quite a bit. I've heard of the Department picnics that were held here in the Owens Valley, were you involved in any of them?

PHILLIPS: They had some yearly. About once a year they'd have a picnic up the valley, like Lone Pine, Independence, Big Pine and Bishop and that went on for some years and then it finally quit and they didn't have any any more and socializing with some of your Department friends was if you were friends with them, why you would visit with them, but not a lot of them you didn't social with. You had your own friends and they had their friends.

NELSON: There have been stories that have surfaced over the years about the animosity that the natives in the Owens Valley hold toward the City. Did you find relations strained between old time residence or residence and yourself as a DWP employee or as a resident of Bishop?

PHILLIPS: Not too many. There were a few, but not as many as people would think. Seems to be more now than there was at that time.

NELSON: Why do you think that's so?

PHILLIPS: Well I don't know. The County EIR and all of those things going on.

NELSON: And I guess there's more people who have moved into the county.

PHILLIPS: That's true and people here that moves in have listened to other people that hate the Department, so they hate them too.

NELSON: The DWP is a big target.

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LLOYD S. PHILLIPS

NELSON: Lloyd you had mentioned that there had been eight district engineers up here, can you recall who those men were?

PHILLIPS: The first one I went to work under was Frank Crater, next one was Sid Pratt, then Horace Dewitt, R. V. Phillips, Paul Lane, Ron McCoy, Duane Georgeson, Jim Wickser.

NELSON: And you worked during the tenure of all of them? Did they have different operating styles? Did you notice from your view or were they all about the same as far as your contact with them?

PHILLIPS: Pretty close to the same. Some were a little different, but not so much that it made big changes in the area.

NELSON: None of them were real long-time residents of the Owens Valley, they all came up from the city didn't they? I don't know about Pratt.

PHILLIPS: I'm not too sure, but I think they were mostly from out of the valley and they didn't stay too long. I believe like Jim Wickser and a couple of the others stayed ten years which was quite a while for a district engineer here.

NELSON: Up around 1970 you say that the water spreading operations were diminished considerably anyway, what were you doing at that time then if you weren't spreading water?

PHILLIPS: We had irrigation water and different canals and we would have to take care of those.

NELSON: What does that mean, irrigation water?

PHILLIPS: To the lessee's. They have so much ground that they would irrigate and then later the acreage was dropped and they were allocated to five acre feet for the season on irrigation water.

NELSON: Was this regardless of the crop that they put in or did this depend on what they were planning?

PHILLIPS: It was all just plain five acre feet.

NELSON: Is that based on alfalfa?

PHILLIPS: Alfalfa, permanent pasture fields or whatever they had planted.

NELSON: What's a permanent pasture field?

PHILLIPS: Different kinds of grass like clover, fescue.

NELSON: Would this be mowed or basically, would be handled like alfalfa?

PHILLIPS: No. Usually it was pasture only.

NELSON: You said the lessee's. Am I correct in assuming that a lessee would lease some land from the City of Los Angeles and the City would also provide a quantity of water sometimes to go with that land for these purposes?

PHILLIPS: Yes.

NELSON: And so during the course of a season or a year or whatever the measure was that lessee then would be able to have pumped or have delivered to him or her that amount of water for the land that he had leased?

PHILLIPS: Yes, only during the irrigation season, which would be around April to probably around in September, your growing season is only during the summer, early fall.

NELSON: What is grown up here? Is it primarily alfalfa?

PHILLIPS: Mostly alfalfa.

NELSON: In a good year, how many cuttings would someone expect?

PHILLIPS: Usually four cuttings and then possibly your fifth one if your weather is not too bad. In the early fall.

NELSON: How does that compare with say, down on a lower elevation? Four to five? What could you expect say in the San Joaquin Valley or the Imperial Valley?

PHILLIPS: I don't really know, but they should be able to get at least six to eight cuttings I would say. I've never had the experience or knowledge of that down there, but I know your growing season down there is quite a bit longer than it is here because of your altitude and your colder weather.

NELSON: Is there anything else grown here in any quantity besides alfalfa? Is there any kind of farming that's done?

PHILLIPS: No. Mostly your ranchers that we have in the area here is mostly alfalfa or a pasture where they run cattle. Like this one fellow that has quite a bit of acreage in Bishop and then Round Valley uses all pasture.

NELSON: In delivering this water to the lessees, would this be brought in by water by canal or is it pumped from the underground or how?

PHILLIPS: Mostly from the river and your creeks and if the water table is, or droughts like we are right now, there is some pumping that goes to help the rancher.

NELSON: So in this work that you were doing on working with the lessees, was that basically you alone or were you in a truck, or a couple of you or how did that work?

PHILLIPS: No, I was by myself. I had no one except the engineer that I worked under that would go with me at times and we would look at different fields or people that we would talk to on ranches and so forth, but I was always by myself most of the time unless I went with some of the construction people to look at some work that we would have done on canals or ditches or so forth.

NELSON: Were you given, then, every day or weekly, were you given a schedule of what work was to be done or how did you get your work or schedule your work?

PHILLIPS: No, I didn't have any schedule. I knew what I had to do and where I was going to go that day or what ranchers I was going to check with or their grounds and very seldom was ever told

by my boss unless there was something he definitely wanted checked. Other than that I was purely on my own.

NELSON: Who was your boss at that time?

PHILLIPS: Russell Rawson at that time.

NELSON: Now had you become the water dispatcher at that point?

PHILLIPS: Yes.

NELSON: Okay, can you relate to circumstances of you becoming water dispatcher and what that means?

PHILLIPS: The work that I was doing as a water keeper was a lot of extra work that I did I guess, that I took upon myself to do it and under Lane's time as a district engineer, he was told by some of his foreman and so forth that they should do something about this man and then later he gave me the promotion of a water dispatcher.

NELSON: Basically as water dispatcher you kept the records on lessees or you were basically the field man to turn on and off water?

PHILLIPS: I would have the ranchers and people that had water to the irrigation, most of the time would call me at the office and

then I would schedule them and tell them when it would be available and when it would be turned on and then they would tell me or the aqueduct and reservoir keeper when they wanted the water off. That was one of the things that I did.

I would be in the office twice a day, but other than that I was out in the field a lot. I checked different fields and how they were irrigating and things like that.

NELSON: Did some of these ranchers require water once a day, once a week, once a month?

PHILLIPS: It's usually set on a scale of probably so many days without water. They would let their fields go especially after they were put on the allotment. They would hold back as long as they could without hurting their fields and then irrigate it as fast as they could and then have it shut off to save as much as they could to get through the season.

NELSON: You mean allotment for the year then they were just given a certain amount of water?

PHILLIPS: Yes. I said before was five acre feet for the fields that came under irrigation and then they would go so many days and then they would want their water, but usually once you set up your schedule, it would just about fall at the time that each one wanted at their time.

NELSON: You say allotment, in earlier times before the allotment, the Department lessee's during that period they didn't have an allotment, they could use as much water as they wanted?

PHILLIPS: That's about right. Yes, they had so much acreage to irrigate and then they would irrigate that which sometimes would take a little extra water than the ground called for, maybe they would "fudge" so instead of 40 acres maybe try to irrigate 50 acres. So then as the water allotment came in, they could take and use water on the irrigated land and if they used too much or let it go too long, then they would be out at the end of the season and wouldn't have enough water to irrigate with.

NELSON: About when did that allotment system start? Was it during your time?

PHILLIPS: Yes, it was around the time that I first became the dispatcher and I worked under the engineer. At that time my first boss was Frank Milner and I can't truthfully say what year it was.

NELSON: These lessees, they would lease this parcel of land from the Department for their agricultural purposes, would they have to come back every year or every five years and bid again to become the lessee?

PHILLIPS: No, usually the rancher wanted to sell out and the person that he was selling to would continue with the same

irrigation water the same as the other rancher did. Some of the ones that we have here go clear back to their fathers and so forth. They're really old timers that are still in the ranching business.

NELSON: So basically once you got the lease on the land and the water, you pretty well had it.

PHILLIPS: Dick that's true. There would be some ranchers had been here for years and then it doesn't change hands too often so your usual ranchers would be approximately the same each year when it came to their watering and so forth, but their leases were never -- very seldom was changed. I believe that they did have so many years it would be they would have to renew it, but it was never taken away from any of them.

NELSON: In your work as a Water Dispatcher, you continued to work out of Bishop?

PHILLIPS: Yes, I've always worked in Bishop.

NELSON: Who, basically in the office there, did you have your most dealings with? Who did you work with the closest?

PHILLIPS: Now you mean with my boss?

NELSON: With your boss or other sections. Which other sections did you deal with more than others?

PHILLIPS: I worked with my boss whatever we had. Usually I know about what we had to do. Then in the construction people, if we needed irrigation boxes or different devices, then I would work with a C & M foreman and their foreman.

NELSON: They would give you what you needed?

PHILLIPS: Well they did the work and usually I had no trouble with them because they knew they would have to do it or if we needed it real bad, they would try to get it as fast as they could, but usually it worked out real good for both of us.

NELSON: You worked as water dispatcher until the time of your retirement?

PHILLIPS: Yes.

NELSON: Who has that job now?

PHILLIPS: They interviewed some of the aqueduct and reservoir keepers and one of the older water keepers was then given the job and then the job now is, I guess you would say it's about completely done away with. They have let it go and they work under construction. They do not work out of engineering any more.

NELSON: When you took the job over, that's when it moved into the engineering?

PHILLIPS: Yes.

NELSON: And that's when you worked with Russ Rawson?

PHILLIPS: Frank Miller was the first one and they wanted me to work with him because he was what they called a ranch land agent at that time and he had all the lessees and they put me under him and then when he retired, Russ Rawson came here when Paul Lane was still here and then I worked underneath him.

NELSON: Do you find working with the lessees are all pretty reasonable or is it difficult to work with some of them?

PHILLIPS: We had mostly good ones. They were easy to work with. The smaller ones were the little 40, 50, 60 acre ranchers or thought they were ranchers, they sometimes were a little worse than the big ranchers, but all in all, I had very little trouble with any of the lessees.

NELSON: Do you still see them around town, I guess, some of them now and then?

PHILLIPS: Yes, I see quite a few of the ranchers and people that I worked and had dealings with.

NELSON: What made you retire when you did, Lloyd?

PHILLIPS: I had 34 years and I thought that it was about time. I really didn't get mad or anything to make me retire, I just thought it was time to let myself do what I wanted to do rather than have to go every day to the office and go out in the field and work.

NELSON: Have you been able to do any traveling and things like that since you retired?

PHILLIPS: We travelled some, not too much. I bought a place in Idaho that we went up every year and looked at and then I sold it three years ago and we went back two years and this year we did not go back. Then my daughter lives over on the coast. We go over there and really not too much traveling right at the present time. I like to fish and hunt.

NELSON: How many children did you have?

PHILLIPS: I have two, a boy and a girl.

NELSON: Do they live locally here?

PHILLIPS: My boy lives here real close to us and my daughter lives over on the coast just out of San Luis Obispo.

NELSON: In summing up your 34 years of service with the Department of Water and Power, how would you sum it up?

PHILLIPS: Well usually the way you'd sum it, I think, would be that when I first started to work I knew I was going to work for somebody so I decided to work for the Department and as time went on, the job what I liked. I definitely was outdoors most of the time and then later when I got the promotion, it gave me more money and I like the job because I was practically on my own and I dealt with a lot of people that I knew, ranchers and so forth, and I enjoyed my job.

So that would be...I would never transfer to other towns or communities because I wanted to stay in the Owens Valley which I never had to worry I guess.

NELSON: So the experience has been positive?

PHILLIPS: Yes.

NELSON: No regrets.

PHILLIPS: I could have probably made more money at some other jobs maybe, but like I say, money isn't everything if you're not satisfied.

NELSON: And the Department was a pretty good place to work for?

PHILLIPS: I though so. They had good benefits. There's a lot worse people to work for than the Department, I think.

NELSON: Well Lloyd, I want to thank you very much for giving your time to have this interview and I thank you very much.

PHILLIPS: My pleasure.