

**RNNR\_56**

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TRANSCRIPT OF INTERVIEW

Interview with Mr. Joseph Flynn, retired Diamond Valley rancher.

Interview conducted August 23, 1978, at Mr. Flynn's residence in Elko, Nevada, by Zane S. Miles, attorney at law.

Q. Mr. Flynn, when I talked to your wife earlier on the telephone I told her that we're trying to determine the history of the wells on your old ranch in Diamond Valley, particularly when they were drilled and used, because the present owners are having some problems regarding water rights. Can you remember when those wells were drilled?

A. I should be able to tell within a couple of years. Those wells were drilled on private land and I didn't get any permit for them. I didn't think I had to get a permit to drill or use water on my own land. Those four little wells were all drilled in one summer in the late 'Forties or early 'Fifties. I turned all the papers over to the man I sold it to.

Q. Do you remember the name of the man who drilled those wells?

A. No, I don't. Angelo Floria owned a ranch further south and did a lot of drilling. So I had that driller come up to my place and put in three or four holes with six-inch casing. Two or three flowed artesian but not a lot. They were all about 100 feet deep. I couldn't get deep well pumps down a six-inch casing because it's too small. So I put centrifugal pumps on two of them and they would draw down about 18 feet and hold there. That's all a centrifugal pump will draw at that elevation.

Q. Can you pin the time down any closer?

A. Well, I broke my hip in 'Fifty-three, and the wells were drilled three or four years before that. In 'Fifty-seven my hip went bad, and that's when I sold out. Those wells were artesian, but not enough for serious irrigation. They had to be pumped. I talked to the driller about putting down a 12-inch casing, but the driller doubted that the expense of a big well and deep well pump was justified. He just about scared me out of putting in a big hole. After that sometimes I wished I had gone ahead. This was about the time all that drilling started in the South end of Diamond Valley.

Q. How much did you irrigate from those wells with the centrifugal pumps?

A. Oh, I irrigated six, eight, ten acres maybe, a small patch.

Q. Has any other irrigation ever been done on that ranch?

A. There is a big spring hole on that land. In the early Nineteen Hundreds the man that owned it before we got it went to the side of the spring and he sank a big well eight or ten feet. He put a 25 horsepower gas pump on it. He could pump right steady with that six-inch centrifugal pump.

Q. Just when was that?

A. It was sometime between 1900 and 1910. His name was Robert Bailey. When he dug out that well by the side of the spring

there was enough water to water livestock from the spring. What he did was dig the well and put the pump on top of the ground.

Q. How long was that system in use?

A. It was there when my father bought the ranch around 1915. We used it some, but we did not use that well during a lot of the 40 years we had the place.

Q. How much did that well produce?

A. Robert Bailey who dug it had the pumping gallonage figured out, but I just don't remember now what it was. It was pretty good flow. That 25 horsepower pump would not pump it dry. When the pump was going it would throw a head of water about to that . . . about 12 to 14 feet into the air out of a six-inch pipe.

Q. Did Bailey use the water for irrigation as well as for livestock?

A. Sure he used it for irrigation, to raise hay. He irrigated 10 or 15 acres for hay. A lot of it was experimental. He liked to experiment. He could pump steady.

Q. How was the well used after the Flynn's bought the ranch?

A. After my father bought the ranch he loaned the engine to miners up by Eureka and they wrecked it. So the thing . . . after that the well wasn't used. That well caved in that Bailey dug and was pumping out of. After I sold to George Smiraldo\* they put a raft out on the big hole of water and floated a pump that they got from a rancher up by Halleck who had used it to pump out of the river. But the dike around the hole, oh, 30 or 40 feet, cracked and that all caved in.

Q. How big was this "hole" you are talking about.?

A. Oh, about 100 feet or a little better across. It's just a round hole.

Q. This was spring fed?

A. It's just a big spring nothing else. It's a pond that's 70 or 80 feet deep.

Q. This was surface water, then?

A. It was surface water. The pond would rise so it would flow out across the fence a little and we would pump it down to keep it from flowing. Put the little centrifugal pumps on the little wells, they would draw down the pond level a little. Smiraldo's float pump wouldn't lower the pond any further than Bailey's 25-horse pump did.

The following questions were posed to Mr. Flynn during a follow-up interview on August \_\_\_\_\_, 1978, also conducted by Mr. Miles:

Q. Is it your opinion, then, that all the wells were doing was drawing water out of the pond?

Q. And it's for certain that Mr. Bailey was using water from the spring for irrigation and livestock between 1900 and 1910?

Q. Do you know just when Mr. Bailey started using that spring or pond water?

Q. But you believe it was about 1900?

Q. And you continued to use that water from time to time during the entire 42 years you and your family owned the ranch?

CERTIFICATION

August \_\_, 1978

I certify that I posed the questions abovewritten to Mr. Joseph Flynn on the dates above stated, and made notes of his responses thereto, and transcribed those notes and instructed my secretary to type same, and this document is an accurate record of my conversations with Mr. Flynn.

ZANE S. MILES, Elko, Nevada

Subscribed and sworn to before me this \_\_\_\_ day of August, 1978.

NOTARY PUBLIC

CERTIFICATION

August \_\_, 1978

I certify that I have read the above answers to questions posed to me by Mr. Zane S. Miles, and that the answers are as best I recollect having given them, and in those instances where the language abovewritten is not my language I adopt it as my language and the answers as my answers. I hereby affirm that my answers are the truth to the best of my knowledge, as if I had been placed under oath at the time I made the answer thereto.

JOSEPH FLYNN, Elko, Nevada

Subscribed and sworn to before me this \_\_\_\_ day of August, 1978.

NOTARY PUBLIC