

Norman Hull and Paul Lemon
Zion National Park Oral History Project
28 September 1989

Norman Hull: We're at Zion's National Park and this is the 28th of September, 1989. I'm Norman Hull from Hooper, Utah, and I came here in the CCC's on the 28th of July 1934. And it's warm today, but it was hot that day. When we came, there was one camp here, and there was a lot of weeds and rattlesnakes. They did have a crew in there—maybe you was there; I don't know—that partially cleaned it up, but we had to finish cleaning it up. And there was rattlesnakes here and a lot of weeds, but it wasn't only just a day or two—there was two hundred and fifty of us, so even if we'd cleared just a stick a piece away, it didn't take long. And so we settled in, and the first job I was on—and the foreman was named Bill Miller, and he's from Washington, and I was here eight months, and he was my foreman the whole time.

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Carolyn Hinton: Were there very many tourists there?

Norman Hull: Yeah, there was quite a few people that would come there and go up to the Narrows, but it was 118. It got as high as a hundred and eighteen degrees right in that box canyon, and I didn't wear a shirt. Every once in a while, my skin would peel off like a snake, I guess. I'd shed, it was that hot. That isn't good for you, though, but [it's] a wonder I don't have more skin cancer than I got. But we finished that, and then we started—I think they tried several crews—on making these crib piers down, like he said, on the river turns because they was a road, and they'd come into the highway, even, and they picked Bill's crew, and we made cribs all the way down this river, and they was sixteen feet wide at the bottom, and I think they was about ten feet tall and three feet at the top, and we'd make it all level, and these guys or somebody'd haul them from the rock quarry and we'd nail them right up.

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Hull: And then when it'd get better weather, we'd build a big campground right here and rock fireplaces.

Hinton: Over here at the canyon . . . visitor center.

Hull: Right here just south of And we spent several months there. We'd run clear down almost, well, it was all in *here*. I might say for entertainment, I played baseball, and the reason I quit is because one of the foremans [sic] had me a job, he said, pitching baseball for baseball at Provo, and I was looking for a job. So I got out in eight months, and then they wouldn't give me a job. But I played a lot of horseshoes, and I hiked on every one of these mountains.

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Hinton: Didn't have a canteen with you?

Hull: I drank out of horse tracks along the side of the river. We'd had shots for TB, and so
[Chuckles] But I had a lot of fun and really enjoyed it. But we didn't—that's when you can have fun without any money.

Hinton: What do you think that the CCCs did for you?

Hull: It helped to build me to associate with other kids, see—to see all different kinds of kids. I think it's good to meet a lot of different—from all different areas. I think it's great. And it taught me how to enjoy life and do things without a lot of money, and so I never was too much for education. I come from a family of twelve—six brothers older than me, I'm the youngest boy—but I always liked to work. But even at that, I don't think I've been too much of a failure. I got married, I got eleven kids and forty grandkids and three great grandkids, and I've never been on welfare. I still farm in Hooper about fifty-seven acres.

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Hull: I'll tell you, I'd had a tooth broke off when I was eight years old, and they said they couldn't fix it then. When I was here and I was eighteen, there was a dentist come in here. He said he'd had a nervous breakdown or something—not too old a guy—he put gold in that tooth, capped it, you know, fixed all my teeth, and I think it was four and a half he charged me. And I took two months for me to pay it up. You couldn't even talk to a dentist now for I don't know.

Hinton: So both of you'd say CCC camps were good experience for boys and would recommend something like that today?

Hull: I don't think that it'd hurt any kid of any walk of life, boy. I think it'd be good for anyone.

Hull: I've talked to several men up there [who] said they thought the CCCs done more than any organization they ever had for the youth. They really did. Of course, you can't measure by money, but I mean they really done something.

Hinton: Building character.

Lemon: You bet.

Hull: They built things too. They—all over the United States, there's every place where the CCCs have been 'cause I talked to a lot of men, you know, from Arkansas, all over, the things they done. I know they built that bird refuge and dikes, and they saved Willard, Utah. It used to flood all the time, and they went up in the mountains and built flood controls so the water could come down, and they built it so the water would come down one area. It used to flood. I went up to Willard when there was mud all over the highway, and they fixed it so it doesn't now.