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Interview no. 850

Perry Brown

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UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT EL PASO
ORAL HISTORY INSTITUTE

BIG BEND NATIONAL PARK ORAL HISTORY PROJECT, 1994

INTERVIEWEE/ADDRESS: Perry Brown, 607 East June, Alpine, Tx.
79830. Phone: 915-837-5238.

INTERVIEW BY: John R. Moore

DATE: March 23, 1994, at Alpine, Tx.

LENGTH OF INTERVIEW/LANGUAGE: 1 hour, 15 minutes/English

SUMMARY: Brown was superintendent of Big Bend National Park from 1962 until he retired from the National Park Service in 1967. Brown, a California native, began work for the National Park Service in the 1920s at Yosemite. He recalls meeting both Steven Mather and Horace Albright. Brown discusses his park service assignments at Yosemite, Grand Canyon, Mesa Verde, Mammoth Caves and Big Bend.

Under his superintendency at Big Bend, Rio Grande Village was completed, Chisos Basin accommodations were improved and additional Park Service employee housing was constructed at Panther Junction. Brown offers detail about Lady Bird Johnson's visit to the park in the 1960s, while she was First Lady, and the rescue of a Boy Scout troop stranded on the Rio Grande. He offers opinions on park service policy, personnel and park management during his career and since his retirement, and he discusses his perspective on the issue of preservation versus use.