

Interview with
WILLIAM MALIN COX

September 5, 1968

**VOICES OF REMEMBRANCE FOUNDATION
ORAL HISTORY COLLECTION**

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WILLIAM MALIN COX

William Malin Cox was interviewed on September 5, 1968 in St. George, Washington County, Utah by Fielding H. Harris, a representative of the Voices of Remembrance Foundation. He related his personal history of living in various parts of Utah, Wyoming and Nevada.

FH: Would you please give your full name?

WC: [My name is] William Malin Cox.

FH: What is your birth date?

WC: [I was born] October 21, 1896.

FH: [Where were you] born?

WC: [I was born in] Lehi [Utah County] Utah.

FH: [What was] your father's name?

WC: [His name was] William Snow Cox.

FH: [What was] mother's [full] name?

WC: [Her name was] Lizzie Cannon (Gardner) [Cox].

FH: [Was her name] Lizzie or Elizabeth?

WC: [Her name was] Lizzie.

FH: [Can] you recall something from your early childhood?

WC: My mother died when I was two years old. I have no recollection of her, but I do remember when Grandma Gardner [Leonora (Cannon) Gardner] brought me down to Pine Valley and Grass Valley [Washington County, Utah]. Sometimes we lived at one [place] and sometimes the other. I still remember the experiences I had at that age.

FH: [Did] your father have much to do with your [upbringing]?

WC: I have no recollection of my mother and I would not have [recognized] my father if I had met him on the street. If I was going to his place or he was coming to mine, I would know him when I saw him. A year or two after mother died, he

married another woman and our paths separated then. [We] never got back together.

FH: How old were you?

WC: I [was] somewhere around four years old. I think I ate one meal in his house. My stepmother was always nice, the few times I saw her, but I never did live in their home. I grew up, as a boy, primarily in Pine Valley

FH: What was your grandmother's name?

WC: [Her name was] Leonora (Cannon) Gardner.

FH: [Did] she bring you to Pine Valley?

WC: She brought me to Pine Valley. She was [my] mother's mother. When mother died, she brought me to Pine Valley and raised me from then on. She had one daughter at home at that time, Aunt Rhoda [Ann Gardner]. Two of her boys [George and David] had already married. They moved to Nevada when they settled the White River Valley and made [the] two towns of Lund and Preston [Nevada]. The boys took their cattle and moved there. Later, their youngest boy [Angus] joined them. He didn't find what he wanted there, [so] a little later [he moved] to Wyoming as The Church [of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints] colonized the Shoshone River Valley in the Big Horn Basin [of Northern Wyoming].

[My] aunt Rhoda [Ann], who was home at that time, married Fred Harrison of Pinto [Washington County, Utah]. They also left to colonize. At that time, I was eleven years old. From then on, grandmother and I lived together. She had a few cattle and we always had a milk cow or two. It was my responsibility to milk the cows and take care of them. The cows ran on the hill in the summer [because] we had no pasture for them. After the cows were taken from the hills, we turned the calves in the street. In the evening we would gather the calves and shut them up before the cows came back or the cows would take the calves back to the mountain and not come home.

FH: What [education] did you get?

WC: I started the first year of school in St. George. We left Grass Valley in November and I [entered] school considerably late. I think it was the second year that the Woodward School Building was [being] used. My grandmother and aunt came and wintered here and I went to school. Then I went to school in Pine Valley up and through the fifth grade. Grandmother went to Wyoming to visit her children and took me with her. We went on the railroad through Butte, Montana and over the [Continental] Divide and down to Billings [Montana] and over into Wyoming. I spent the winter there when I was in the sixth grade. It was a rather cold winter

— the thermometer went down to 40° [below] several times. The Shoshone River froze solid two feet thick with ice and they used it for a road. Roads were scarce in that country [so] they used it for a road. Uncle Fred had a cistern on his farm which he filled with ice in the winter. [He] piped it into the house and used it for culinary water because there was no water piped in. I helped him a lot that winter. We would take a four-horse outfit on a hayrack and drive right on the river and saw [up] all the ice that those horses could pull. They were sharpe shod [and] loaded onto the wagon. It was interesting to watch those horses. [We would] pick up the lines, speak to them and they would all begin to stomp their feet and set their shoes in the ice. Then they would start out and go with the load. I helped fill his cistern with ice. For quite a long time it was necessary that I drive the cows two and one-half miles to the field in the morning and get back in time for school. When school was out, [I would] walk back the two and one-half miles and bring them back in.

FC: How much [education] did you get?

WC: I went to the sixth grade in Wyoming and the seventh grade in Nevada. [I went] back to Utah [for] the eighth grade. [I] graduated from the eighth grade in Pine Valley. I [took] a year off and then went to high school one year.

FC: Where did you go to high school?

WC: [I went] here in Dixie. It was just a year or two after the St. George Academy [began]. [It] finally [became] Dixie College when I came down and went one year. It wasn't possible to come back to school anymore.

FC: [Do] you [have any] recollection [of] an accident you had?

WC: The first summer, grandmother owned [a] farm in Grass Valley, but we came to Pine Valley to winter. [The areas] are only six miles apart. That summer [she] was washing and, as usual, had a number-three washtub on the stove to boil water and the clothes. After they took the clothes out, they lifted it off the stove. I accidentally fell backwards into that tub of water. They got my clothes off as quick as they could, but I lay on my face for eleven weeks. It happened that there was a doctor in that [area] on vacation. They got a hold of him and he told them that I probably couldn't hope to live.

FC: [Were] you burned all over?

WC: I have scars as big as my two hands, three or four of them on my back, at the present time from that burn. [It] was all summer before I could really get around. [It] was eleven weeks before I could even turn over on my side. [It] was all summer before I could get up and move a little. I didn't grow and develop physically as I should have; in fact, I was seventeen [years old] before I weighed 100 pounds. I didn't know that [it] was too much of a handicap. [I could] run

with the country boys. Anything I couldn't fight my way out of, I could talk my way out of. Being small, I was able to ride colts and break them. I was old enough to know what I was doing and light enough that I didn't bother the colts. I can remember helping put the crops in when I was only big enough to walk behind the harrow and drive a gentle team. I worked for two bits [\$.25] a day. From the time I was twelve [years old] my grandmother had a home and just a few cows. That was all we had. She explained to me that her responsibility and mine was to make our living as we went along and [that] I had to shoulder my share of responsibility and make a living.

FC: Necessity was the mother of invention.

WC: I didn't know that I was having a hard time. As I look back on it now, some of it seemed a little bit rough, but at the time I didn't notice. The two years I was in elementary school, I was janitor of the schoolhouse which meant I got up in the morning, milked and tended the cows and calves and fed them. [I had to] be at the schoolhouse to start the fire in Pine Valley so the building would be warm when the [students] began to come at 9:00 [a.m.]. In the winter I spent a lot of recesses chopping wood and packing it in, because it was a wood stove and it took a lot of wood to keep it warm.

FC: Was the temperature [fairly] low there?

WC: The snow was deep and the temperature was frequently low. My responsibility was to cut the wood, pack it in, fire the stove and keep the room warm. The next year I graduated from the eighth grade [and] I didn't go to school. I worked and the next year I came down here [to St. George]. My grandmother and I moved down [to] Uncle David [Henry] Cannon, grandmother's brother. [He said] she could have a room in his home rent free if she wanted to bring me [so I could] go to school. We cooked on the porch most of the time, but we had one big room in the house [where] we lived. I went to school and worked whenever I could find any work to do and we got along. We had a few cattle in Nevada, and when spring came, I saw that I didn't have enough money to get by. We only had \$150.00 when we came down to start. My uncle [David] sent me enough money to finish my [education] that year, [but] I wasn't able to go back to school again.

FC: [Who were] some of your school teachers? Are there any of those you would like to [name]?

WC: Clarence Chanell was my teacher in Nevada when I was in the seventh grade. He had discipline problems and most of those boys quit school and went to work on the farms and cow range before they graduated. Some of them were practically grown. [Clarence] and the [students] had ring fights there in the room, a time or two that winter, while I was there. I didn't get mixed up in any of them, but he had considerable trouble. There were twenty-two [students] in the room when I

[was] there late in October. Only three of us [were in class] when school [let] out in the spring. The rest of them had quit school and gone to work.

FC: My goodness, was it tough on them? [Laughter]

WC: One of the school teachers [that] I remember very well was George Gardner. He had a knack of making the [students] want to work. Robert Gardner, who lives here in St. George, [is] a retired professor [who] went through UAC [Utah Agricultural College, Logan, Cache County, Utah] then worked for the Colorado Agricultural [College]. He graduated [and] the [United States] Government sent him to two or three places, including three years in Turkey as [an] advisor to the [Turkish] Government. He taught me in school one year. Metta Morris was [my teacher when] I graduated.

FC: How do you spell that name?

WC: [It is spelled] M-E-T-T-A. She had all eight grades in the room and had some difficulty with the eighth grade students because some of the problems were about as hard for her to handle as us. We were a bunch of [youngsters] who wanted to graduate [so] we went ahead and studied; if she couldn't give us the answers, we studied and learned them [ourselves].

FC: [Did] you enjoy school?

WC: I liked to go to school. I liked the companionship of the [students]. I always [received] good grades. It wasn't particularly hard for me to get my lessons and I really enjoyed school.

FC: Did you work your way through [school]? You had plenty of work to do.

WC: I had this advantage that if we got up against it, several of [the] men in town would give me a sack of flour [or] anything we needed. [They would] permit me to work when they had work for me. Sure, at times, they created jobs just to give me a chance to earn my living.

FC: That was good.

WC: I was about fourteen [years old] the first time that I went on a roundup. The year before, I went over and rode part of the summer for Uncle "Jode" [Joseph] Burgess [on] the Monument Ranch [Mountain Meadows]. The next spring I went on the roundup. They had a horse to break and one of the other men was breaking him. I was supposed to be too little to do anything like that, but in the afternoon I saw the man [who] was riding him [with] two other men as our purchased cattle converged [with our other] cattle. He dared me to get on that horse. I accepted the dare, we changed saddles and I got on him. Towards night, when the boss came along and saw me riding that horse, he immediately ordered me to get off

and lead the horse to camp. I refused to do it and expected I would be canned when I got to camp, but I wasn't going to get off. [I] rode him to camp without any trouble and while I got a scotch blessing when I got there, I didn't get canned!

FC: [Did] you become a proficient breaker of horses?

WC: From that time [on] I started riding colts on through until I was well into my sixties; I broke horses [as] kind of as a sideline.

FC: Did you actually ride them to break them or did you handle them to break them?

WC: Primarily, [I] rode them. Some of them we tied up and broke them to lead and started from right there. Some of them had been handled before. I had a knack [for] riding horses that would even kill [throw] the owners off without [the horse] throwing me off. I never knew why. I could get on a horse that was supposed to be mean and he would walk right off with me and never offer to buck. I saw that he did what I wanted him to [do]. It wasn't because I pampered him too much, but he just wouldn't do it. I could pick up a horse's hind feet and shoe him [who] wouldn't let any other man in the company pick them up. I never knew why that was, but I could do it. I had that knack of getting along with horses. I never got hurt on a bad horse. I [have been] thrown and broke up on a lot of them, but [it was] always after I thought I had them gentle enough and I got careless. As long as I [had] a bad [horse] and knew he was a bad one, I never [was] hurt.

FC: How many horses do you think you have broken?

WC: I don't have the slightest idea. I would say that a hundred would be a good estimate for [all] of my life, mine and the neighbors [horses] and anyone else who wanted one broken.

FC: Was that [very] hard on you?

WC: No, not very often. I use to get shook up occasionally. I never was a top rider. I used to get thrown off quite a lot, but [it] never seemed to hurt me any. I [can] say this: I never had a horse throw me that I didn't dare [but get] right back up and get on him.

FC: It didn't really scare you?

WC: For some reason I just wasn't scared.

FC: That is really wonderful. [Did] you take a trip in your earlier life?

WC: We went out to Wyoming. To go there, we went to Salt Lake [City, Salt County, Utah] and changed trains. [We] went to Idaho and changed trains, went to Butte, Montana and changed trains again. [Then we] went over the Continental Divide

and down to Billings, changed trains again and went from there into northern Wyoming. [It was a] 1,600 miles trip.

FC: [That was a] roundabout way to get there.

WC: Yes, it was the only way we could get there on the train. I spent the winter there and in the spring we came back by train the same way. One of my vivid memories is that, after we got over the Continental Divide and started down the other way, [was to see where] the year before they had had a huge forest fire in there. Miles and miles and miles of timber were burned black.

FC: [Inaudible]

WC: The following year, grandmother had two [sons] out in Nevada and we decided to go out and spend the winter with them. We hired [Nathaniel] "Nat" Gardner to take us out there in the wagon. We [spent] five days going out in the wagon.

FC: That is a [fairly] good trip itself.

WC: I walked a lot of the time, not because there wasn't room in the wagon, but because it was boring to just sit there so I got out and walked. I had a .22 [rifle] and carried it along. [I] was going to supply meat for our camp, but wasn't very successful.

FC: [Was there] not much to shoot?

WC: I didn't have very much luck, got a few rabbits is all. When my uncles went out to Pike River with their cattle, whenever I could save a few dollars I sent them out [money] and asked them to buy me heifer calves. I began to acquire a small herd of cattle out there. They told me that, [as] long as I stayed home and took care of grandmother and looked after her, they would run my cattle free of charge. I came back to Utah again and went the last year of elementary school in Utah, the eighth grade]. [I] graduated, [received] a certificate, took off a year and then went to high school in St. George one year.

FC: This year that you mentioned [you were] in school in Utah, where in Utah was that?

WC: [That was] in Pine Valley. I wasn't able to go to school anymore. Grandmother was made postmistress the next year in Pine Valley. She was postmistress until she died in 1924. Uncle "Nat" Gardner decided to sell out in Pine Valley and go to Cedar City. He had a little thirty-acre farm, some farm machinery [and] a home. He offered to sell it to me on time if I could pay him \$1,000.00 down. I wrote to my uncles in Nevada and asked them to sell what cattle I had and send me the money. They sent me the \$1,000.00 I needed and I paid it down on the farm.

FC: Where was the farm located?

WC: [It is] in Pine Valley. I owned it until I had rheumatic fever, well into the 1960s. [I] couldn't work any more [so] I sold it. [When] I still had it, I added considerably to it. I was nineteen [years old] when I bought the farm and began to acquire a few cattle there. Grandma had a few and I started to work myself into being a cattle man. [I] had me a little farm to run and began to do lots of riding with the cowboys for wages and any other work I could find to do. But when I began to acquire cattle, I could run my cattle with the bunch if I would work. Sometimes I didn't draw very high wages, but I took care of my cattle and drew some wages. I acquired a few cattle and got to thinking I was quite a cowboy.

FC: Was this training you were getting actually preparing you for a life occupation?

WC: I never had any desire to be anything but a cowboy and a farmer.

FC: How [did] you happen to meet your first wife?

WC: I broke horses quite a little and, at roundup time, I nearly always had some. A rancher by the name of Hyrum Jacobson, who lived six miles below Pine Valley on a ranch, had a horse he wanted someone to break. Nobody seemed very interested in doing it. The horse had a bad reputation for being mean to handle. He asked me if I would take him on a roundup with me and break him. I told him I would try to do it, but I was going [on the roundup] for Gardners. [I] found when I was ready to leave that "Rass" [Erastus Snow Gardner] had two horses for me to take to break. I had to have a gentle one and three was all I could take so I didn't go and get that horse. When the roundup was over and we came back to the corral on the forest reserve, he came down to the corral. He wanted to know why I didn't come and get the horse when I said I would. I told him that Gardner had two [horses] for me to take and, since they were the [fellows] I was riding for, I had to take them. He said, "If you're not scared of that horse, why not come down and get him." I said, "I will come down and look at him and decide what I want to do about it." The following Tuesday I got on my horse and rode down to the ranch to look at [the horse]. We caught him and tied him up. He had been handled some and broke to lead, [but] never been ridden.

He started to show me the ranch, took me here and there. He had a ranch he was developing [and] he took me down [to] the orchard. There under the cherry tree were his two daughters; they had been picking cherries. The oldest one [Christena Jacobson] was sixteen [years old]. She was tall, slim and red-headed. [The girls were] in the fashion of cutting hair then. She had braids of hair down her back that she could sit on and I thought that she was about the prettiest thing I had ever seen. When he went on to show me something else and look back for me to come, I was back with the girls. He waited and I didn't come and so he went to the house. I spent an hour or so with them and asked that girl for a date. She knew I had come down to see about riding that horse. She said, "I will give

you a date for Sunday if you will ride that horse down to see me.” I said. “I will be here Sunday afternoon at 4:00 on that horse.” She said. “I will be here to receive you.” Sunday at 4:00 [p. m.] I was there on the horse and we had a nice visit. I said, “I will be here next Sunday.” Next Sunday I was there and it got to where Sundays were too important. [Inaudible] That was June 17, [1918] when I rode down there.

FH: How far was it down there?

WC: It was six miles. I went into the [United States] Army on September 5, [1918]. Before I left, I told her that when I came out we would get married. She was perfectly willing to wait for me. When I [was discharged], it was the following spring and we were married April 15, [1919].

[William Malin and Christena “Tena” (Jacobson) Cox were married by Malin’s uncle, Temple President David Henry Cannon on April 15, 1919 in the St. George Temple, Washington County, Utah.]

[TAPE RECORDER TURNED OFF]

FC: [Where did] you set up your home life with your new bride?

WC: My father-in-law [Hyrum Christian Jacobson] opposed our marriage quite strenuously and wouldn’t give his consent [because] she was underage. Should I put it crudely and say I courted my mother-in-law [Louisa (Hunt) Jacobson] until she agreed that she would go to St. George with me and sign the papers so I could marry the girl. In the meantime, [her father] had fallen ill and had gone to St. George to be under the doctor’s care. He had hired a man to be on the ranch. I brought a team and buggy [to] pick up my mother-in-law and my expected —

[END OF RECORDING ONE.]

WC: — bride and a neighbor woman who wanted to go to St. George. We went to the courthouse and got the marriage license. I had [it] safely in my pocket and then I went down to tell my intended father-in-law my intentions. He was setting up and I said, “I’m going to take “Tina” to the [St. George] Temple tomorrow and marry her.” He never said yes or no. He never opened his head. He didn’t object, he didn’t say alright, he didn’t say anything. I sat there a little while and then got up and walked off. The next morning we were married. When we came out of the temple, we went down to her grandmothers; the family was giving us a little dinner. There were none of my people there. When the dinner was over I got up, walked out on the back porch and sat down on the steps to think it over. He got up and followed me out, came and sat by me and I thought: now I am going to get a-going-over. He said, “What are you going to do?” I said, “I am going back to Pine Valley and finish [getting] in my crops.” He said, “I don’t hardly want the girl to go to Pine Valley.” I said, “The girl is mine now and you have nothing to

say about it.” He said, “I have to have someone run my ranch. I am sick and can’t run it. Instead of taking her and going to Pine Valley, why don’t you come to the ranch and work for me?” I said, “I have my farm up there and I don’t like to leave it and come and work for wages, but I’ll talk it over with “Tina” and let you know what we decide.” She was of the opinion that we better stay there and run the ranch [because] her father was ill.

So I rented my place and moved down there June 1, [1919] and took over the ranch to run it working for wages. He died before my stint was up. I told him if I came I would have to have a ten-month job. He died before the ten months was up. They paid me \$50.00 a month [and] boarded me and my wife. When the ten months were up, I leased the ranch and cattle from my mother-in-law and ran it three years more. By that time, the other girl was old enough to marry, but her brother wanted to come and take the ranch over. We wanted to leave and go back to Pine Valley. While my mother-in-law was always grand to me and my sister-in-law was just like a sister, I never saw a house that was big enough to hold two families. I got fed up living with my in-laws, so we decided to go home. Her brother came and took it over, but didn’t even stay until he got in the crops. He left and a couple of St. George boys leased it. They took it over and ran it part of the summer. The other girl married and the boy she married bought the Cox boys off and they came back to St. George. I went back to Pine Valley and ran my place up there.

FC: How big a place did you have in Pine Valley?

WC: When I went back I had about thirty acres. I had about ninety [acres] when I finally sold it.

FC: Did you like the ranch and enjoy [that] life?

WC: I loved it! I told my wife when I had to sell it [that] she would have [to] wash a sheet for me [to] shed tears in when I let it go. I bought a neighbor’s cattle and permit just a few years before I took sick. They said, “You are old enough to retire.” I said, “I will never be old enough to retire”. I came down with rheumatic fever in January of 1963. The doctor told me that I would never be able to work again. He said, “You will get up and around, you won’t have to stay in bed, but you will never be able to work again. You will never run your place again.” I had a neighbor who wanted it, so I sold my ranch and cattle to Levi Snow.

FC: Let’s follow through with that; tell what happened.

WC: I had a [small] bunch of cattle and was running them on [United States] Forest Service [land] in the summer and turning them down [out] on the desert in the winter. [I was growing] hay to feed what needed to be fed. [I was growing] some grain and working, but we were having difficulty with the forest officers. They had started [a] program of cutting the livestock off from the forest [land]. They

began to cut our permits. We began to fight and yowl with them. I said to my wife, "Life isn't worth being mad all the time." I sold my cattle and bought me a bunch of dairy cows, a little bunch of pure-bred sheep and brought them to the place.

A year after I had married [Christena], she had a premature baby. We lost it and were never able to raise any family. Just the two of us lived up there on the ranch. She could ride a horse just like I could [and] could drive a team just as good as I could. In fact, when it was time to mark off the grain, she came and did it because she could drive straighter than I could. We lived as close together as a man and his wife could. She cut the field and worked with me and I helped her with the housework.

FC: Whatever happened to your grandmother during this time?

WC: In 1924 she fell sick, developed peritonitis and died. I was assistant postmaster at the time, lived right close to her, and took over [the job] when she died in 1924. I was appointed postmaster shortly after that and [continued] until after I lost my wife in 1938.

FC: How many years were you the postmaster?

WC: [It was for] about fifteen years. It helped my business after I sold my cattle and got my dairy cows. I had a bunch of jersey cows and milked them by hand. [I] separated the milk by hand and shipped the cream to Salt Lake [City by] parcel post. My salary in the post office [provided] the stamps I was able to cancel, so I bought the stamps with one hand from the post office and cancelled them with the other. [I] got the money back that it cost me to ship the cream up there and it made it [a] profitable venture. I fed the separated milk to pigs or calves — which ever one looked like would bring me the most money, raised and butchered them and brought them down here to St. George and sold them to the butcher shop. We made a nice easy living and we stayed right there for about sixteen years. We lived in Pine Valley and seldom left it. During that time, I was a member of the water board. In fact, I was a member of the Pine Valley Irrigation Board for forty years and still am. I was also an officer in the Pine Valley Cattlemen's Association most of that time. I held nearly all the [offices] from director up to president and back to secretary.

FC: Were you also president of the Washington County Cattlemen's Association?

WC: That was a little later, yes.

FC: [Were you] president of the Washington County Farm Bureau?

WC: [Yes.] In 1938 I had to lie back most of the summer. [The] doctor told me to go to Cedar [City] and have my teeth pulled [to] see if that wouldn't help. I went

over there and he pulled twenty-three teeth and I drove back to Pine Valley. That was the first of January. In the meantime, I bought another farm; in fact, two more, and added to what I had to make me about eighty acres to farm. I took it over in February 1930 and watched the bottom drop out of everything. I had mortgaged the farm I had for the money to pay down on that one and mortgaged that one for the rest of the payments on that. For the next two or three years it was touch and go whether I would make a go of it or go broke, but I got a job with the [United States] Forest Service. For two years I worked for the Forest Service, milked my cows before and after work [and] ran the farm part of the time in the day and part of the time at night. I had a good, big team, and I knew how to handle them, knew how to drive them. I helped build roads, he was improving the roads some and all the work was horse work then. He put me on as a teamster because I had a good team and knew how to handle them. I could run a pack team which I did for him. I knew how to build roads.

FC: When you said you did it for him, who is him?

WC: The forest ranger, [Joseph Benjamin] “Ben” Swapp. I worked for the Forest Service under the direction of “Ben” Swapp. I pulled the road plows when they were building the road. We had a small grader that four horses pulled and when [he] ran the grader I drove the horses. Beckstrum handled the controls on the grader. I knew how to run a string of pack horses. He was doing some range improvement and had a crew of men in the hills. I packed their supplies to them all the time, moved their camp from here to there, packed water tanks that were ten feet long and weighed 250 pounds by horseback, packed cedar posts, packed the frames for building the troughs at the head of the water troughs [and] twenty-foot lengths of two-inch pipe that I took in the hills for them. I got so I could pack it and handle almost anything.

FH: Sounds like it!

WC: The money I [received] from there enabled me to meet my payments. By the time the CCC’s [Civilian Conservation Corps] came in 1932, they took over most of the work. I was out, but I had made my payments up to that time and things began to look just a little bit better. My expenses weren’t too high and I paid myself out. We paid out the last of the money and I had a truck load of cattle I was going to feed out and sell in the spring. We would use that money to improve our home.

I went over in January and had my teeth pulled. About the first of February [1938], her sister [Partha] in St. George had a baby. They couldn’t get any help and she [went] to St. George to help take care of her until she could get out of bed and get on her feet again. [My wife] took sick and they sent for me. She seemed to have a bad case of the flu. I went over to my neighbor to see if he could take care of my chores for me for awhile. He said, “Yes, I will do them. When will you be back?” I said, “I don’t know, whenever she gets so I can bring her home.

We will be back in a few days.” I went to St. George and, when I got down there, I suggested to the doctor that she go to the hospital. He agreed with me for two reasons. He said “With that little baby here [inaudible]. I hate to take her out and move her while she has the flu and the condition she is in, but I believe it is a good gamble to take.” I said, “I will put her in the car and heat it with the car heater.” He said, “I will go down and have her room ready. In about an hour you bring her down.” I put her in the car and took her down.

The next day she was worse. He said, “I need a consultation on this woman. I need another doctor.” I said, “Get the McGregor doctors and I will call Cedar City and have Doctor Macfarlane come down.” He said, “If I can have the McGregor doctors, I don’t think we will need Macfarlane.” So I called them in the case. The next morning I found myself coming down with the flu. When I got down there, he said, “You [don’t have] the flu, you have acute appendicitis. She [doesn’t] have the flu either. She has, as near as I can tell [inaudible]. I have never seen a case of it in the west before. I saw a lot of it when I was in Chicago [Illinois] doing my intern work down around the stockyards, but I have never seen a case of it in the west.”

FC: I have never heard of it before.

WC: He put me in bed and packed me in ice so he wouldn’t have to operate on me. In the afternoon he and [Dr.] L. W. [Lorenzo Watson] McGregor came in to look at me. McGregor said, “We can’t wait a minute. We have waited too long. You get your patient ready and I will go prepare the operating room. We will have to put him on the [operating] table right now. We can’t wait a minute.” The doctor proceeded to get me ready and told me before I went in that my wife would be dead.

FC: That was [very] rough to go into an operation with that kind of knowledge.

WC: She died while I was under the anesthetic. That was an unpleasant experience. [Emotional] [Christena “Tena” (Jacobson) Cox died February 11, 1938.]

FC: I should say.

WC: They had a funeral here in St. George; then they took her to Pine Valley and buried her. I was in the hospital seventeen days.

FC: Did they get the appendix before [it] broke?

WC: It hadn’t ruptured, but the nurse in charge told me afterward that Dr. [Wilford J.] Reichman who was the doctor in charge of the case, went to his office after the operation and sat down and started to cry. She said, “What is the matter?” He said, “Mrs. Cox will die tonight and I am afraid he will too.” [Emotional] Somehow I didn’t. I was there seventeen days before they released me from the

hospital. I went to a cousin of my wife's by the name of Philena Hall and her husband, [Orsen]. They had come to Pine Valley, both of them in ill health with a bunch of [children] and lived in a house that I had up there. [They needed] to get out of the heat and the next summer [they] came back again. They didn't always live in my house, but for years they lived in Pine Valley and they came and went in my home. Their [children] were just about like my [children], they learned to ride my horses and he finally got a chance to rent a farm. He used my horses, farm machinery and anything he needed.

When I got out of the hospital, she took me home and took care of me until February [1939]. When we moved to Pine Valley, we moved into my home and she kept the home. The family lived there and helped me with my farm work. They had a farm rented, using my machinery, and I wasn't able to do any very heavy work. She took care of me and I got by. The doctor told me I wasn't to ride a horse for a year, but when it [came] roundup time, towards June, I [was] well enough that I told him that I was going on the roundup. He said, "Don't brand any stock or ride any bad horses. Buy you a wide leather belt and wear it all the time. You have made a marvelous comeback in your health at the present time."

My neighbor had a horse [and] every spring I took him on the roundup because he wouldn't let his owner ride him until after I had ridden him for awhile. I took him, another kind of bad [horse] and a gentle horse and went on the roundup. [I] got along just fine. They put false teeth in my mouth the first of June, they [had been] pulled in January, and the infection had cleared up by then. They put glasses on me. [The] last of June I had heat exhaustion and collapsed. [I] collapsed again in July and in August and wasn't able to do any more work. That fall I went to the Veterans [Administration] Hospital in Salt Lake [City] and put a hitch [some time] in there while I was trying to get back on my feet. I had [inaudible] germs coming on my eyes, they operated on those and tied them down for me and fixed them.

FC: You are talking about the Veterans [Administration] Hospital and we [have not] mentioned [your] military service.

WC: [We did mention] that when I went into military service I was engaged to this girl.

FC: How much military service did you do?

WC: I went in September [1918] and came out the last of February in 1919.

FC: So you were in at the end of [World] War [I].

WC: [World War I] ended November [11, 1918] and my outfit, the Sixteenth Infantry Brigade was in training. They told us afterwards that we would have been on the way overseas in less than a month. We were trained and ready to go. I belonged

to a machine gun outfit and, boy, we were going over there and chase that Kaiser [Wilhelm II] right down the main street of Berlin [Germany] and we didn't mean maybe! You had never seen a sicker looking bunch in your life as when [the war] ended and we could go over [there]!

FC: [Was it] probably a blessing in disguise though?

WC: I was transferred to the [United States Army] Presidio [in] San Francisco, California from Camp Kearney where I trained in southern California. I was still there when some of the boys began to come home. I changed my mind so quick, that it skidded when I looked at those boys who had been in that fight. I was very happy that I didn't have to go over there.

FC: Go back to the [Veterans Administration] hospital again.

WC: I came out of the hospital. In the meantime, I had rented Henry Jacobsen's cattle and was running them on shares, getting a share of the calves for taking care of them. I had been put in the bishopric. When my wife died, I knew I wasn't going to be staying home much. I wondered what I could do. I stayed there most of that summer. Most of [the time] I spent away from the house either in the field or packing the salt for the cattlemen. I packed seven tons of salt that summer on pack horses out on the range and scattered it for them. I decided I was going to leave. I couldn't winter there so I went to the bishop's meeting as second counselor with the idea of suggesting to the bishop that I would like to go on a [LDS] mission if they would send me. Before I made the suggestion in the meeting, he and the other counselor suggested to me that I should go on a mission. I said, "The minds of great men run in the same channel and that is just what I came up to ask. If you could recommend me for a mission, but I can't go, neither my health nor my business conditions are so I can leave until late in the fall." I came out of the veteran's hospital and gathered the Jacobson cattle so I could turn them back to him. They sent my name in for a mission and I said I would be ready to go by the middle of November. I would have the cattle gathered [by] then so I could turn over. I kept my Jersey cows, but I sold all the other cattle that I had and turned the Jacobson cattle back to him and expected a call on a mission.

[The call] came the last of November, but it told me that I wasn't to report until the first of January. Mr. Hall, who I mentioned before, Orsen and Philena as I called them, Mr. Hall and his wife, who had taken care of me, were going to run my ranch and dairy herd while I was gone. The Pine Valley [cowboys] cooperated in wintering the cattle down there on the range. Each man had to do a certain amount of winter riding to take care of them according to the amount of cattle he had in the herd. He was also taking over the Jacobson cattle that I had leased from him. He was going to lease them and run them too. He had two practically grown boys to help him. I told him if he could arrange for his time to ride in December that I would go out and do his winter riding for him. It would

get me away from home and out in the hills where I liked to be anyway. So I went out there and rode during December. My testimonial [farewell meeting] was to be held, I think, December 28th. They came out and got me and brought me in. I went to my testimonial and the next day I went to Pine Valley and put my [things] away that I wanted to [keep].

The following morning I headed out for Salt Lake [City] and went to the mission home the first day of January to [prepare for] a mission. In the meantime, Philena's sister, LaVerne [(Pickett) DeSwan], a divorcee with three little girls, who I was also quite well acquainted with, came to Pine Valley to visit Philena occasionally. I found it a very pleasant pastime to visit with her. Before I went on my mission, there was an understanding with her that when I came back we would maybe continue this courtship. I was gone two years and three months.

FC: Where did you go?

WC: I spent eighteen months in [the] Eastern Missouri [Mission] and then they shipped me to [the] Western Kansas [Mission]. My mission was supposed to be up the first day of January, and I was acting as branch president in Dodge City [Kansas]. I was like the salesman with sticky fly-paper. I was all wrapped up in my work!

FC: [Laughter] Who was your mission president?

WC: [It was] John F. Bowman, former mayor of Salt Lake City. I wrote and told him I didn't have anything calling me home until it was time to put in the crop in the spring. I was paying my own expenses and had money enough to stay awhile longer and would appreciate another six weeks if he would let me stay because I was working with a group of Mennonites down in Kansas. I was getting them interested and I didn't want to leave. He wrote back and said he would happy for me to stay another six weeks. When that was up, he wrote me a letter and said he had no one to replace me as branch president in Dodge City and would appreciate it if I could stay another six weeks. I wrote back and said I will stay as long as you want me. I was released from my mission the first of April in 1941 and came home.

FC: Was that early enough to get your crops going?

WC: Yes. After corresponding with Laverne for better than two years, when I came home I suggested that we commit matrimony. She had three little girls, [Norlene] twelve [years old], [Renee] ten [years old], and [Dorothy] eight [years old]. She said, "What about the [girls]?" I said, "I want them worse than I do you." She saw to it that I never forgot that statement when it was expensive to keep them over in the school when [we] had all three of them in there. She said, "You asked for it." And I said, "I am glad to have [the expense]."

When I came back, I took over the place again and started milking my cows. We were married in May [10, 1941]. She was [elected] as the [Washington] County Recorder at the courthouse. I took the little girls and went to Pine Valley and she came up weekends when she could spare the time. When fall came and school started, she brought the girls down to go to school and went on working at the courthouse. I stayed up there and milked the cows, washed the buckets and separator and lived alone that winter and took care of [the farm]. Long before spring I knew that wasn't for me to live up there alone. When the next fall came, I brought hay down here and brought the cows down and milked them here. They paid for the hay they ate, but they didn't leave anything to pay me for milking them and to take care of the wear and tear on their tits while I did it. So in the spring I sold it. With what money I could rake up, I bought [Henry] Jacobson's ranch and cattle. He had died in the meantime and his widow threw them on the market for sale. I bid and bought them.

[William Malin and LaVerne (Pickett) DeSwan Cox had three children: Christena born in 1942, Douglas Malin born in 1944 and Carma Rae born in 1947.]

FC: Where was this located?

WC: [This was] in Pine Valley [and] just added to the ranch I had there. I bought his cattle and permit and went back into the cattle business. For the next five years I ran the ranch in Pine Valley in the summer and my wife and [children] came down here in the winter [while] I went on the desert with the cattle and rode. I built me a feed-yard out there, bailed my hay in Pine Valley, hauled it out and found that my calves —

[END OF RECORDING TWO.]

WC: — I will be the representative until the first of January and then my term will be up. I will be out of that and most everything [else].

[TAPE RECORDER TURNED OFF]

FC: I would like you to give counsel to those who [will] come after you.

WC: I would like to say this about the church. The church made me. I didn't have a great deal of education, except what I [received] in the church. They taught me how to conduct a meeting, they taught me how to stand on my feet and talk, they taught me how to organize and handle [a meeting]. Being a bishop, I learned a lot of things and it enabled me after that to do the things in civilian life that I did. The fact that I made a good success of being Farm Bureau President. [Being] President of Washington County Cattlemen enabled me to be elected to the [Utah] Legislature.

I have had a very strong testimony for a long time. I believed on my grandmother's testimony at first, but later on I had one of my own. Let me say this, the way to happiness, the way to progression, and the way to lead a good life, is to follow the teachings of the church. Make the [*Holy*] *Bible* your guide, be honest [and] help your neighbor. Joseph Smith said this statement when they asked him what a good Latter-day Saint was; he said: he is first a good husband and father, he is second a good neighbor and he is third, a good member in his community. I have tried to guide my life by that. After I went to the temple a few times and recognized what the vows of consecration meant, I have never refused a call of my church. Whatever they asked of me to do, I did. I have never refused a donation to my church. When I could contribute, I did it. I believe I have lived about as happy a life as the average man.

I have no fears today. We are living in perilous times, but I know that God has control of things. While He might decree that we should go through strenuous trials as the prophet said we will, I believe I can truthfully say with David "that though He should slay me, yet would I trust Him." The only way to true happiness is to "love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, with all thy soul, and with all thy might. And the second is like unto it, thou shall love thy neighbor as thyself" to quote from the Twenty-fourth chapter of Matthew. While I can't say that I have made any great strides, nor made any great success in my life, or been outstanding in any way, I have raised a family. I have led a happy life. I have known very little fear in my life, and I believe it is because of the testimony I have that I know that Jesus is the Christ. I know that He is the Son of our Father in Heaven that He —

[END OF RECORDING THREE. END OF INTERVIEW.]