

Interview with
ERNEST WILLIAM CARDON

October 26, 1968

**VOICES OF REMEMBRANCE FOUNDATION
ORAL HISTORY COLLECTION**

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ERNEST WILLIAM CARDON

Ernest William Cardon was interviewed on October 26, 1968 in St. George, Washington County, Utah by Fielding H. Harris, a representative of Voices of Remembrance Foundation. He related his personal history of living in various parts of Utah, Idaho and Nevada. His wife, Esther Minerva (Swapp) Page Cardon, also participated.

FH: Would you please give your [full] name?

EC: [My name is] Ernest William Cardon. [Known also as William Ernest Cardon.]

FH: [What is] your birth date?

EC: [I was born] May 24, 1892.

FH: [Where were] you born?

EC: [I was born in] Ogden [Weber County] Utah.

FH: What was your father's name?

EC: [His name was] John D. Cardon.

FH: Does the 'D' stand for a name?

EC: [It stands for] David.

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

EC: [Her name was] Elizabeth (Neeser) [Cardon].

FH: [Can you] recall some of the [events] in your early life, some of your early childhood memories?

EC: I had a very happy life as a child. The first thing that I remember that was so outstanding is the wicker buggy that I was placed in at night. I had croup so bad mother was worried about me and she used to put this wicker buggy close to her bed. She could hear me when I could not breathe [and] would get some coal oil and sugar and give [it to] me. I soon grew out of [the croup] and was able to go out and play in the evenings after I [was] about ten years [old]. I had a very happy wonderful life.

We had many friends. Father had a ten-acre field. It was [planted] in fruits and vegetables. He would leave us boys home to prepare the load for the next day.

While we would be preparing the load, our friends would come down through our field to the swimming pond, which was in our lower field. Of course, we would have to go and have a swim with them. There I learned to swim very well. All three boys learned to swim in this old swimming pond. I guess there were hundreds of boys that learned to swim there.

One incident happened there. One boy thought he could swim, but when he went out so far there was a drop off [and] he went down. The other boys did not see him. They did not miss him until he came up again. He took hold of [them] and they pulled him to shore and put him on [a] blanket and pumped the water out of him. It took some time to get this done. He finally came to. We were very happy to see him alive again.

FH: Were you kind of scared at first?

EC: We were all afraid. We did not know what to do. We all gathered around and helped him.

We also had a cherry orchard right on the bank of this pond. The pond was about ten feet lower than the cherry orchard, because it was on a kind of a hill. We used to spend a lot of time there with our friends when the fruit was ripe. Dad never [would] say anything about us bringing our friends there for cherries, or apples, or plums or peaches. We were always welcome with our friends.

After I [was] older, I got so I did not care much for the place [where] we lived. I had a friend [who] went out to Idaho. I said, "Father, let's go out and take up 320 acres of dry farm. It would be [better] than the ten acres you have here." He said, "If you get the outfit, we will go out." I went to one of my friends and got a white top [buggy]. [From] another friend I got a horse. I had my pony. We hooked them up and out we went.

It was a very rough time to do [that] because of the fact that father was not well. I was just a [youngster] and [had] never been out like that before. We went out and met our friend out there. He took us up into what was juniper country [in Idaho]. That was about fifty miles the other side of Snowville [Box Elder County, Utah] in the northwest.

FH: This was quite a long trip you took.

EC: It was. It was over 100 miles each way, about 125 [miles and] with a team it was quite an undertaking. I was so thrilled to get out into the wilds, because I had been cooped up too long. [Laughter] We located the place because father's friends took us up there. We were the first ones to file north of the cedar belt in that section of land, which was three miles square. No, it was more than that. It was the juniper country.

We had filed [for] the first place there. Our place was just like the map of Utah, laid in a very rich part of the country where this stream of water [from] the Jones Spring [Utah] came down to where our place went in.

We started to build. First, we went out and got cedar posts and one pine pole to go across from one end of the cedar, from one end of the dugout to the other, which was about twenty feet. We laid these cedar posts up on the ridges and down to the ground and made kind of a vee out of it. My mother and father lived one winter [there] to prove up on the place, which was a very big task to ask older people to do. But they did, and we proved up on the place. I plowed eighty acres. Our first crop was 1,300 bushels of wheat, the most beautiful Turkey Red wheat. We have pictures of the stacks that produced that amount of grain.

We were very happy there, but the squirrels came in one year. They would eat big patches out of the crops. It was [very] hard to head [the grain]. Because some places there would not be a thing and other places would be good, right in the same field. We [were] discouraged after this first crop and our second crop discouraged us.

My uncle [Al Neeser] had traded his ranch in Inkom, Idaho for my mother's home. This was mother's brother. My brother, "Roy" [John Royal Cardon], [who] was on the dry farm, and I loaded all of our belongings into our wagons and took our cows and horses and moved to Inkom. [It] took us three full days, but we finally [arrived] there with all our stock. It was very beautiful at Inkom. It was right on the lower end of Marsh Creek [Idaho]. There was [inaudible] down to the meadows. When you were mowing the meadow lands, you could not see the team that was ahead of you on the opposite side of that native grass of Inkom; it was so high. Yet, the stock would eat it just like it was timothy hay. This was the most beautiful place. We had a very fine two years there. It was going into the third year when my uncle [Al Neeser] found that he had made a mistake. He came and threw enticements at my folks. They finally traded back [and] mother came back to her home. We boys went our way.

FH: Did you have some [education] along the way? Where did you get your [education]?

EC: [I went to] Weber Academy [Ogden, Weber County, Utah]. I was only there about half a year. I did not care for school. My folks were kind to me, you might say, lenient with me. I told them I would go to Idaho if they would let me out of school. That is why they let me [stop going to school]. Where was I?

FH: Your uncle decided he had made a mistake.

EC: We had to [leave] then. There were three of us boys [and] we each took our stock and went [on] our way. I shipped my stock back to Ogden [so] that I might be with my mother and father and help them there to reclaim their place. I had a very

fine team. It was about the only thing I [received from] the Inkom deal. I went to work in the gravel pit on Seventh Street in the northern part of Ogden. I worked there until November and then the company shipped [some of] us out to Nevada. The company opened a pit out there for [materials for] grading of roads in Nevada. I worked there until just before Christmas of that year. I shipped my horses back. I had to get a place for my family and what I had in the line of farming [equipment — grain drill plow and a harrow]. I rented a place in Warren [Weber County] Utah that was about ten miles west of Ogden along the Southern Pacific [Railroad] line. That is where my family grew up and was educated. They drove the car into Ogden High School to finish their education.

FH: Were you active in [The] Church [of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints] all through those years?

EC: Yes, there never was a place that I failed to have my recommendation and labored in the ward. At Warren, I no more than [arrived] there than I went to church. This place I went to in Warren was on the north line between Warren and West Warren. I did well on this place, very well, good beets. The lady I rented the place [from] was so happy with me. She hated to see me go. I decided I wanted to buy a place. I could not raise the money she wanted for this place. But right next to me on the south was a place of eighty acres, mostly pasture land. It was [owned by] a widow woman and she wanted to sell. I went over and talked to her [and] she was very pleased with me. She said if I could raise \$500.00 I could get her place. I raised the money with my crop and [by] selling some stock. I gave her the \$500.00. We moved over on this place that was just south of us. It was just eighty acres. Mostly it was pasture, but it was good pasture.

FH: Who are “we” when you say we moved there?

EC: [It was] my family, my wife and children.

FH: Now then, we are going to stop at this point and go back. I want you to tell when you [received] your [LDS] mission call. Where [were] you?

EC: I [received] my mission call [when I was living in] Black Pine [Idaho].

FH: Tell about [your] call and what happened when you [received it]. We will come back to West Warren after awhile.

EC: We were living at Black Pine then. We had to go from Juniper [Idaho] to the Black Pine Ward, because Juniper did not have a ward at [that] time. We would drive every Sunday up to the ward. That was about five to six miles. We had a very fine ward there. Everyone seemed to love to come to Sunday school and meetings. We would go to Sunday school, have [a] meeting and then [would] go home.

I met this young lady, Eva [Elizabeth] Wadsworth there. She lived on the same road as I lived on, but a little further [out]. I [became] acquainted with her. She was a very lovely girl, so kind and considerate, so pleasing about anything that happened. We decided to get married. We went up to the bishop to get a recommendation. He had spoken to me about going on a [LDS] mission, but I had not been able to give him an answer. Then he asked me about my mission. I said, "Maybe I could go after I [was] married, if that would be alright with my wife?" She said that would be alright.

My uncle, who lived in Ogden just a few houses from my folks, decided to put up a store out there in Black Pine. That was the first store to be put up. He freighted his merchandise from Kelton [Box Elder County, Utah] to Black Pine, which was about thirty-five or forty miles.

When I [received] my call on the mission, we wanted to get married before I left. The bishop said that is alright. "You get married before you go. That is the proper thing." We prepared to go on my mission. That was in December. wasn't it?

ESC: You were married in December. It was about the ninth, I believe; I am not sure.

[Ernest William and Eva Elizabeth (Wadsworth) Cardon were married December 2, 1914 in Salt Lake City, Salt Lake County, Utah.]

We [moved] to Ogden about the first of September. I prepared to go on the mission [and] the wife [was] to go back home with her mother. It took every penny I had and the ward gave me to get me to Denver, Colorado. I left her without anything, only to go back with her folks [James Orson and Carrie G. (Williams) Wadsworth], which she did. My wife went to work for my aunt in the store. She was a clerk there all the time I was on my mission.

FH: [Did] you leave in 1923?

ESC: That is about right.

EC: Yes

FH: Were you twenty-one years old?

EC: Yes, while I was on —.

ESC: Why don't you give the date when you were married?

EC: [We were] married December 2, [1914]. We visited with our folks in Hooper [Weber County, Utah]. She was a Hooper girl. [We] went down and visited with all our folks in Hooper before I left on a mission. That parting was not so hard on me, but it was very hard on the wife. She was just a young girl and she loved me

so. She said she would just get along with anything if I would go fill my mission, [so] I went. [Emotional] She said she wrote me every week, but I only [received] a letter once in awhile. In fact, there were only three or four letters I [received] while I was out there. I could not stay [in] Denver. It was too high for me [and] I [was] terribly sick. President Herrick said he would send me to a lower climate. He sent me to Grand Junction, Colorado, which was [a] lower altitude.

FH: Is this is John L. Herrick, your mission president?

EC: Yes, John L. was the [mission] president. I don't [know] if it was because I did not eat like I should [have], three meals [a] day. We elders tried to get along on two meals a day. I thought I was doing fine, but my stomach [was very] bad. It [was] so bad I could not hold anything on it. Elder Roberts, who was from Cache Valley [Cache County, Utah] was an elder there. J. J. Roberts said, "Brother Cardon, I am going to send you home. I do not care what they say, you go home and we will fix it up after." So I went back home, which was only a short distance from Grand Junction to Ogden. I was under the doctor's care for a full year. I went once a day and he would pump my stomach for awhile. After I [was] home and sent word to my wife, my wife came down. She took care of me at mother's home [and] we lived there.

FH: Were your folks living back in Ogden?

EC: Yes, in the same old home. They had taken the home back. I helped mother. My uncle had left her a \$2,000.00 indebtedness on the home. He had gambled and lost everything and still wanted his home back. We were happy to give him his home back because mother wanted to [come] back home from Inkom. The exchange was made. I hired another team of horses and went to work in the gravel pit in Nevada. I made enough there so I could take my wife and family and go [live by] ourselves.

[TAPE RECORDER TURNED OFF]

FH: You moved to [live by] yourselves in West Warren with your wife and family. Now tell me how much family you had by this time.

ESC: [It would be up to Carrie, daddy [her husband].

EC: [We had] William, Darrell and Blaine [Cardon].

ESC: [And] Carrie?

EC: Carrie was born at West Warren?

ESC: No, she was born when you went over to Warren.

EC: Oh, yes.

FH: Was Carrie born at West Warren?

EC: Yes, [she was born] at West Warren. [Carrie Cardon was born in Rupert, Idaho.]

FH: What did you do to make a living when you went to West Warren?

EC: I had my cows that gave us a check each fifteen days [from the] Weber Central [Dairy]. We lived there, skimped through. Our folks helped us quite a bit with fruit. We did not have any fruit on the Warren place. I had a good four-horse team [that] I worked on a scraper. The place that I bought [from a Tracey] was [very] unlevel. Through my work I made a fine place out of it. I also bought some land up on the river, the lower end of the Weber River, which was about four miles from my home. I improved that and added on a little more land every year. It was a place that had been owned by a native family of West Warren. They divided it up. There were ten in the family and this piece of land was divided in ten strips [that] ran from the road east to the river on the west side of the Weber River. I first bought one place and fixed it up, was able to mortgage it and buy another one. After I got it, I bought [a] twenty-five acre piece, which was [very] unlevel, but was still very good land.

Just before this, I went in partners with a neighbor, [Jim Marriott], in a thrashing machine. By this time, he and I had quit thrashing. I took the tractor and he took the thrashing machine. That is the way we divided it. I used the tractor to level the river land. I made some beautiful land out of it and it was [a very] good farm. Then I decided to sell and quit farming and [move] into Ogden. I put my land up for sale. It sold immediately and [we] bought a home on Porter Avenue.

ESC: That is right, Porter Avenue.

EC: What was the number?

ESC: [It was] just a block and [a] half off [of] Washington Boulevard and Thirtieth [Street in Ogden].

EC: It was [2968] Thirtieth [Street] and Porter [Avenue]. Soon after we moved —

ESC: You moved there in March.

EC: — there in March, my wife took sick.

ESC: She had her stroke in September and died on [September] 25, [1943].

FH: Before this, [were] other children born out in West Warren?

ESC: Yes.

EC: Yes.

ESC: They were born in Ogden [and] lived in West Warren.

FH: [Did] you have one child, named [Don who] died in infancy?

EC: Yes, he died in infancy.

FH: Was it a little girl?

EC: No, a boy.

[Leslie Don Cardon was born February 9, 1929 in Ogden, Weber County, Utah and died October 9, 1929.]

FH: [Did] your wife [become] sick soon after you settled in Ogden?

EC: Yes, I figured that I had worked hard enough. I would take my wife, myself and the family and live in Ogden and I could work there. While I was in West Warren, I took a job driving [the] school bus from West Warren to West Weber, which is just a short distance of about five miles. They moved the West Warren School out and that was the only way —.

[TAPE RECORDER TURNED OFF]

FH: While you were driving [the] school bus, you had other children born there. What were their names?

EC: [Their names were] Carrie, Marie, [Leslie] Don and my youngest son, John [Dee Cardon].

ESC: There is seven years between Marie and John. [Leslie] Don was in between.

EC: Driving [the] school bus [put] me in with [the] Weber County High School. I and my partner were together in the first bus I drove from West Warren to West Weber. Superintendent [Keith] Walquist wrote me a letter asking me to come in; [that] he wanted to see me. He asked me if I would like to drive the route right to Weber County High School. I told him I thought I could. I wanted to take that upon myself and not have any partners in it. I took [the] job of driving the school bus from West Warren to Weber County High School, picking up children [along] the way through as it went through the different districts. I drove that for, how many years, mother?

ESC: You did not drive from West Warren, but you drove [the school bus] for nineteen years.

EC: I worked for the high school for nineteen years. I moved into Ogden and took other routes.

[END OF RECORDING ONE.]

EC: [I] drove from where they did not have a driver and in the summer season which was fruit picking [time]. I would go out to Washington Terrace [Weber County, Utah] and pick up the children [who] wanted to pick cherries, peaches and apples. I would take them out to north Ogden or Pleasant View [Weber County, Utah], whichever town had ordered the [fruit pickers]. I drove them back and forth.

While we were picking fruit one day on the Cragun farm in Pleasant View, there came a call on the telephone that I was needed at home. I could not imagine what it would be. I gathered the children [and] said, "Come, I will take you home because I [received] a [telephone] call." I took them home to Washington Terrace and then [went to my] home.

When I [arrived], I found that my wife had had a stroke. [Emotional] She lay on the floor because there was no one there [who] could lift her back on the bed. We immediately called the doctor. He came and examined her and said she had a stroke [and that] we had better rush her right to the hospital. [Emotional] They took her to the hospital. I wanted to be with her [so] I went up to the hospital. They would not let me go into the room, but I insisted and finally I went in to see her. She was unconscious on the bed. [Emotional]

[TAPE RECORDER TURNED OFF]

FH: After the first stroke and she was in the hospital, did you decide to take her home for a while? Or [was it to] take her home to see if everything would be alright [there]?

EC: Yes, we brought her home and she seemed to be getting along very well. I went back to supervise the fruit picking with the children. One day while we were picking out at Cragun Farm in Pleasant View, there was a telephone call that I was needed at home. I asked the children if they would come and get in the bus [and] I took them to Washington Terrace and [I went] back home.

FH: Did she have a second stroke after you had her home?

EC: Yes, the doctor called me into the other room. He told me, "I want to kind of prepare you." [Emotional] He said while she is coming out of this stroke very well, it did not mean she is going to be over it, because he said it does repeat. I was so happy to know there was a chance for her. [Emotional]

FH: Did she start to recover?

EC: Yes, she knew me [and] her eyes were so much better.

ESC: She knew him, but could not talk to him.

EC: I stayed with her at the hospital. One evening a nurse came to me in the waiting room. She took me by the arm [and] said, “Mr. Cardon, I want you to come with me.” [Emotional] She took me to where Eva was and she had passed away. [Emotional] It was an awful shock. [Emotional]

FH: Sure, but this sounds like it was quite an easy way to go.

EC: Very [easy].

FH: She did not have to linger on a long time like some people do [who] have a stroke.

EC: I was so thankful to my Heavenly Father for this blessing. [Emotional] I cannot express the joy and the happiness that was entered deep into my heart to know that the Lord had accepted her and that I was willing to accept it from the Lord. [Emotional]

FH: It is great when people have faith to understand these things and accept what is going on.

EC: I still stayed down at the farm and took care of my work with the church. The people were so kind to me and gave me every comfort that they possibly could. I really thanked them for it.

[TAPE RECORDER TURNED OFF]

FH: As I recall, we have missed a part [of your life] that you ought to tell [about]. That is while you were back [in] Inkom, Idaho. You received a call to the Priesthood. Do you want to tell about that?

EC: While I was at Inkom, I worked in the ward there. While I lived out of Inkom some distance up Marsh Creek, I never stopped going to church because I loved it. While there, I was called into the bishopric.

FH: Did you [go] over to Rockland, Idaho for a conference?

EC: Yes, our conference that year was held at Rockland, the [inaudible] Stake Conference was held at Rockland. [Melvin J.] Ballard was there. I remember him so well. We had a wonderful conference. I was called to work with Bishop Tate as his first counselor.

ESC: Be sure to put in [that this was] Apostle [Melvin J.] Ballard.

- FH: Was Elder Ballard the one [who] ordained you a High Priest?
- EC: Brother Ballard ordained me a High Priest at Rockland [during] that conference. I went into the bishopric there. Oh, I loved those people. [Emotional]
- FH: [Did] you have a good time there?
- EC: One of the most outstanding times of my life. [Emotional]
- FH: How many years were you in the bishopric? Do you remember?
- EC: Well, not too long because my uncle [Al Neeser] who traded places with my mother (traded the ranch for her home) had gambled in Ogden. He was a professional gambler in Pocatello [Idaho]. He thought he could do well there in Ogden, but he could not. [Gambling] just took everything from him. One morning I was in the barn harnessing the horses to go put up the hay. He came and put a gun to my ribs and said, "Young man, I want you to come with me." I said, "Sure, where do you want to go?" He said, "We will go in the field here about a half mile below the house." Along Marsh Creek was a narrow strip of acreage. We walked down to the hay stack. He said, "I am going to kill you if you do not get your mother to trade back places. I have run out of everything. I have lost everything and I want this place back." I said, "Uncle Al, I cannot do that. I cannot help you." He said, "You can. It is either your life or you talk to your mother about it."

[Al Neeser held the gun to Ernest's head for three full days.

— Added during editing by Evelyn K. Cardon, daughter-in-law.]

We went back up to the house. I got mother outside and talked to her. Mother was the one that did all of the business. Father did not do [any]. Mother said, "If that is the case, Ernest, let us go to Pocatello." Mother's sister [Rosemary Neeser], who was my uncle's sister, lived at Pocatello. This was a family affair. We went down there and spent all that night trying to fix things up. My aunt told mother, "There is no use trying to make it with Al. You better give him back his ranch. That is the only way it will ever be settled." So mother did. She said, "We will give you back the ranch and you give us back the home."

After we got the home back, I chartered a [railroad] boxcar. We loaded four head of horses and five head of cows and our furniture in this car. Father went down with me [and] we pulled into Second Street [in Ogden]. There is a [railroad] spur that comes from the Oregon Shortline [Railroad] tracks up to Five Points. They pulled us there. We had to jump the cows out of the car at night [to take] them back home. Mother got her home back. But it was really a loss to the folks. I took my team and worked that fall in the gravel pit.

ESC: That part he has already told.

FH: This is the part you told before. Was [it] about 1943 when your wife died?

EC: Yes.

[Eva Elizabeth (Wadsworth) Cardon died September 25, 1943 in Ogden, Weber County, Utah.]

FH: Were you still driving the school bus? Did you [continue] driving the school bus after she died?

EC: Yes, I decided I had the farms clear [and] I just turned them over, rented, to someone else. If the boys wanted them, I gave them first chance. If they did not, I wanted [to] quit that kind of work. My [son-in-laws] parents [Richard and Pearl Urry] had a home [on] 2829 Porter Avenue. They offered to trade it to me for a portion of land out in Warren, which I did. I moved into Ogden into the Twenty-sixth Ward. I really enjoyed working with the brethren in the Twenty-sixth Ward.

On one occasion [as] we left the church, I was introduced to [Esther Minerva (Swapp)] Page, whom I thought was a very lovely lady. We soon [were] acquainted. In talking over our pasts and enjoying each other's company, this [friendship] grew on for some time.

[TAPE RECORDER TURNED OFF]

EC: After about one year of our friendship, we thought it was best if we married and enjoyed one another's company in life, which we did. We married to give John [Dee] and Carrie [Cardon] a mother and her children a father, which we were very happy to do. [Marie Cardon was attending Utah State University in Logan, Cache County, Utah.]

[Ernest William and Esther Minerva (Swapp) Page Cardon were married September 29, 1944 in Salt Lake City, Salt Lake County, Utah.]

This marriage has been happy and joyful. At first, I thought there was only one I could really love and cherish, but I found that there is more than one in this life. [Emotional] It did not take any love or joy from my first wife, it just added to that. Since our marriage, we have really enjoyed being together enjoying companionship, our church work, and everything that goes along with the work of the Lord has been our enjoyment.

FH: Did you spend about fifteen years together in that ward?

EC: Yes, that is about the time, fifteen years.

FH: What happened in church activities while you were in that ward?

EC: I really enjoyed my labors in the Twenty-sixth Ward. It was so much more convenient. Other wards I had lived in were outlying wards, four or five miles from church, but this ward was right next to us. This church house was right next to us. We really enjoyed it. I was called to [do] considerable work there, both in the senior Aaronic work and in bringing some [members] into the higher Priesthood. I spent my evenings with these brethren and won them over, which gave me [great] joy.

FH: [Did] you have about seven years of this [kind of] work in that ward?

EC: Yes, about seven years. I brought several fine men into activity and into [the] higher Priesthood than they were when I met them.

FH: Were you also the Sunday School superintendent while you were there?

ESC: [He was] in the superintendencey as first counselor.

EC: Yes, I labored as first counselor in the superintendencey in the Twenty-sixth Ward.

FH: Were you also in [the] High Council there?

EC: Yes, I was in the High Council in the stake.

ESC: [He served] with Mayor Wright.

EC: With Brother [William] DeMik.

ESC: And [with] President [Dale] Browning

EC: President Browning labored with those brethren, [who were] very inspiring men. They helped me as I tried to help them.

FH: This was a time when you were able to enjoy life and you did not have the hard work of farming and team work. You worked in something else [you] need [to] tell about. Did you work in the manual arts department of the high school here?

EC: Yes, I got into the high school through driving [the] bus. I first drove [the] bus from West Warren to West Weber which was under contract to me and my partner in the threshing machine. He drove one week and I drove one week. I found that I did not care for that partnership. I sold my partnership in the threshing machine to him [and] I took the school [route]. The superintendent of schools, Mr. [Keith] Walquist, called [me] in one time. He said, "Cardon, I would like to get you. I think you are the man I [should] get to bring the elementary school [students] right on through and pick up the high school students as you

come in and leave your bus here in Ogden.” I did [that]. I took a contract to drive the West Warren students to West Weber and pick up the high school students in both places and come on through to West Ogden and bring them all right to the high school.

FH: How did you happen to get into the manual arts work [at] the school?

EC: I worked first in the bus department during the year, replacing seats where the students [had] cut the leather. I would take [the covers] off and put new ones on [and do] general work on the buses.

FH: [Were you doing] maintenance work on the buses?

EC: [I did] maintenance work on the buses. After I had worked there for some time, Mr. [Parley A.] Bates asked me if I would like to take a department. I told him I would. He said, “You figure out how you can run this department in the high school so that the wood work, the leather work and the farm mechanics can work through your department. All the materials [will be] bought right out of your department.”

I [came up] with a plan to put my department right in the center, so that the four doors could open up into my department. That is, the students could come to my department through them. I had a wonderful department there. It really built up fast. I was able to order from wholesale houses and get all kinds of leather that ran into hundreds of dollars a month, all kinds of wood, all the materials for the blacksmith department and the plastics. I had a department there that turned in better than \$700.00 per month. It sounds like a bank, but we did [it]. I got everything those students wanted. The teachers came to me and said, “Cardon, we are going to start such and such work. Get the materials for them.” I would go into Ogden and order it out from Cross [Western Store], Reeds [Leather Store] or the [Wheelwright Lumber] yard or a lot [from] out of Salt Lake [City]. Anywhere I could get [materials], I would order it.

We built up a wonderful business there. The superintendent came to me and said, “Mr. Cardon, you are making too much money out there. You must be charging too big a price.” I said, “I will show you what percentage I am working on, which was 25%.” He said, “You ought to have that. I never thought you would run such a business as this.” I had everything the students wanted. No matter what they wanted, I had a teacher come to me and tell me, I would get it for them. I had the finest boys there to help me. I had two boys for every class. The way I would work it, I would get a student to come in. I would ask if they rode the school bus. If he said he drove a car, I would say I do not think I can use you. A boy that drove a car was not dependable day after day. I picked boys [who] had fewer companions to chase around with, to chase back and forth to town. I [found] some reliable boys, boys [who] I could put my trust in. I did not have one boy that worked with me all that time [who] let me down. I had that [much] confidence in

- them, and they placed it into me. I always talked to them. If they rode the bus, they were my students. If they drove a car — that was the first thing I asked them. I did not let boys come into my department [who] drove a car, because I knew they were not coming to school every day.
- FH: Did you continue this for about nineteen years?
- EC: Yes, I worked for nineteen years for the school.
- FH: What did the school do for you at the closing of this [department]?
- EC: They sure made me feel good. The teachers gave me a banquet that I will never forget.
- ESC: [They] gave you a beautiful book.
- EC: [They] presented me with gifts. I will never forget their kindness. To know that through my experience [of] handling students, the success I had in that department. I was called in one day by the superintendent who said I was making too much money out there.
- FH: You were just too successful. They could not believe it.
- EC: They sure could not.
- ESC: [Inaudible]
- FH: How long did you drive [the] bus?
- EC: I drove [the] bus for nineteen years.
- FH: Did you have any accidents?
- EC: I never had one accident or one complaint about an unruly bus, because I put the students on the bus with good behavior. I drove buses at night for [the] athletic [teams] from North Cache [Cache County, Utah] to Spanish Fork [Utah County, Utah]. Every trip that was made, my bus made it. My bus was the only bus that stayed at the high school. For that reason, I could pick them up anytime and bring them home. I was right home when I put my bus up [away].
- FH: You [have] had a lot of things happen that proved your worth.
- EC: It made me so happy to think [of] all things, I was questioned a lot about using the money and where it went, [for] lumber and [materials]. I used to buy loads of planks so that the boys would have lumber that would cost them half as much a foot as they could buy it at the lumberyard.

FH: [Did] they have to buy it a piece at a time?

EC: Yes.

FH: During these years, did you have a good life at home?

EC: [We had a] perfect life at home.

ESC: The two girls [are] gone, [but they] were at home the whole time until they [were] married.

FH: [Were] the children growing up during these years and getting married?

EC: Yes, all [of them] married, except John [Dee], while I was on the bus [route] and working for the school. I could have worked with the school as long as [I] could hold a job, but I decided I [had] worked there long enough. I wanted a rest from [the] heavy work of keeping tabs of all the materials sold there.

[TAPE RECORDER TURNED OFF]

EC: In 1957, I decided I had worked long enough [at the] school. My wife's health was not well and I decided to take her back to her early childhood home [in] Overton, Nevada. So we sold out.

[END OF RECORDING TWO.]

EC: We moved to Overton, Nevada, in the fall of 1957. I bought a house that had been put up to the square. Not anything else [had been] done to it, just the walls [were] up. I bought four lots so we would have enough room to move around on.

[TAPE RECORDER TURNED OFF]

EC: I sure was lucky fixing up this house in Overton. Mom [my wife] thought it could not be fixed, but I said, "Let's go over to Las Vegas, Nevada and see what we can find." We went over to Las Vegas and I passed a tin shop. I said, "Mother, there is the place we are going to get the materials to fix our house with." I went in and said, "How much is your galvanized tin per foot?" They told me. I said, "Could I get you to strip a piece two inches wide so I could use it that way?" He said, "Why buy it? These cans around here are filled with that kind of material."

ESC: Tell about the purpose of the material if you are going —.

EC: I said, "How much is this material?" He said you can have as much as [you] want of it. I thanked him for it and went out to the car to tell my mom [wife] about it. I said, "It is going to be the thing, mother. I can get those pieces ten feet long. That

is just what we need to put those boxes in to steady then down so we can put a roof on it.”

ESC: They were ammunition boxes built up to the square with ammunition boxes. You can [get] the picture from there.

EC: These ammunition boxes were laid one on top of another; [I] staggered them so they would not be on the same row.

FH: [Was it] like laying up bricks?

EC: Yes, just the same as laying up bricks. The fellow said. “You can pick up all you want. Take all of it you want.” I went through the barrels and picked up these strips of galvanized material. I was the happiest man that ever was. I had a truck load of that material. I went back to the house. I [made] it perfectly straight in all ways, based it and tacked it down and then put these strips up and down the sides, cross ways and everyway so it held it perfectly. After I [had] it good, then we put the roof on. Then [I] fixed the inside, the rooms, fixed it all up.

[TAPE RECORDER TURNED OFF]

EC: We finished our house all up and [had] it ready to live in the following spring. We moved in and started to live in Overton. While at Overton, I raised some stock and butchered at the butcher shop, which helped us out very much. We had a fine life [in] Overton. No winters, no snow. It was a new life for me altogether. I really enjoyed it.

While at Overton, my wife’s health [became] poorly. She had to [have] an operation. We came over to St. George, Washington County, Utah to see a doctor about it. He told us she would have to go to the hospital and be operated [on] for phlebitis in her legs, which surprised us very much. Nevertheless, there was only one thing to do, that was to get mother somewhere [so] she could get this attention.

While going back to Overton, I said, “Mother, what is the use of us living over here? Let’s buy a home in St. George where we will be right by the hospital.” So we did. We bought a home and moved over here. She went in [for] the operation for her legs, which was very strenuous.

There is one incident I would like to mention. [It happened] while she was there [for] the second surgery [and] grieved me very deeply. [Emotional] One night I went before the Lord, way into the morning, pleading for her life. [Emotional] I said this: “Father, you took my partner away. Do not be too harsh on me; let me have this dear [one] so we can go through life together in our declining years.” The next morning the telephone rang and I [answered it]. She said, “Daddy [her husband], you can come over and get me this morning.” I just could not believe it.

You do not know how happy I was. I went over and brought her home. I was [very] happy and thanked the Lord for it. I am still grateful for that blessing.
[Emotional]

FH: He really answered your prayer right away.

EC: He sure did. While mother was in the hospital, I was working on the Second Ward chapel that was being built. I have often said I started right from the bottom and I worked on [up to] the shingles on the top. I did quite a bit of work there.

FH: [Did you put in] about 178 hours?

ESC: He did more than that [inaudible].

EC: It was really pleasant work. I enjoyed every minute of it. I did my very best. When I threw out the bottom foundation, it was just all I could do to throw a shovel full up over the top. There was so much piled up there. I would have to get up every now and then and push it back so I would have room to throw it up. But I loved every minute of it. I enjoyed it because I was able to — where we are now?

FH: [Did] you [think] some of that work gave credit to the Eighth Ward instead of the Second Ward?

EC: They thought I belonged to the Eighth Ward. [My work credit] all went to the Eighth Ward. It was practically all done before we found [out]. It went to the Eighth Ward.

FH: [Did] they get it straightened out?

EC: Yes, they straightened it out.

FH: Not only did you work on the chapel, but I can tell by the looks of your home [that] you have put a lot of work into it.

ESC: He worked at the [St. George] Temple too. He has worked many, many hours at the temple.

FH: Did [you do] ordinance work at the temple?

EC: Yes, I did ordinance work at the temple. I thought that while my wife was in the hospital, I should put forth every effort that I possibly could to the Lord. My wife kind of felt a little neglected, but I told her: it isn't that I do not pray for you every night and morning, but I am just so enthralled in the work in the church [that] I want to get enough hours, so it will amount to something. Which I did and I was very happy to do it.

After she came [home from] the hospital, we sold our home and bought another one on Fourth West [Street]. This is where we are living now. I heard this home was for sale. I came over and looked at it. I went back and said, "Mother, I found the home we can really enjoy." I said, "I hope you will [like it], because [we have] a chance to sell this home and we will buy this other home."

It cost us \$700.00 to make the exchange because they were both through the farm loan [program]. He told me that. I said, "I can make that up." But I found that in your old age, it was a hard job to make \$700.00 besides your living [expenses]. [Laughter] At any rate, we are here on Fourth West [Street] in our home [and] we really love it and enjoy it. We have done a lot of work on it because it was [not] insulated enough. Now it is a real home and we enjoy it.

ESC: Tell about your stroke.

[TAPE RECORDER TURNED OFF]

EC: While living here in our home, my neighbor [went] to Salt Lake [City] and was going to sell his property here. He asked if I would take care of it while he was away. I did. The watering was kind of hard because [of] the fact that proper furrows [were not put through the garden.] I had to [make them] with my own shovel, and by hand, to make these ditches, so I could water all these trees.

FH: [Was it] a little too much hard work for you?

EC: It was too much for me. I was getting too old, but I did not realize it. I [was] through watering and started home, which was on the property, but it was some distance from the house.

FH: Had you been irrigating in the middle of the night?

EC: Yes, [it was] after I had been irrigating [that] I came home.

FH: [Did] you fall over there?

EC: Yes, I stumbled and fell because there was no light. It was dark and rough. When I [came] home, I told the wife and laid down on the floor for a while to rest before going to bed. When I awoke, I did not know where I was. My mind had left me. I found out after [that] it was a stroke I had had, but the Lord has been good to me. He helped me through this. I [have] regained considerable strength of mind and body since. I have no regrets now of performing this labor and helping a neighbor in this manner.

FH: Are you limited some though in [what] you can and would like to do?

EC: Oh yes, I am limited as you can see. My mind is not too active, but it is enough so I can thank my Heavenly Father for this blessing. Now, at the age of seventy-six, I should be satisfied that I can do as much as I can.

FH: Your home is so comfortable and lovely. You do have things nice here to take care of your needs.

EC: My wife has always been a wonderful homemaker. When I first went to her home, when I first met her, I said, "Oh, it is a wonderful house. Your ability to keep such a nice home with the little [one] you have. I only wish I could keep my home as well." I soon found out my home was kept well because she did it for me.

FH: If you could do it, it would be fine for you to leave counsel for your descendants. What would you like to tell them? Would you like to bear your testimony to them?

EC: I would like to bear my testimony to my children and grandchildren and all [of my descendants]. My testimony is God lives and that Jesus is the Christ and that this church, which is called The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, is the only true church on the earth. If you will adhere to its teachings and follow through, you will have the happiest [and most] joyful life regardless of what difficulties you come up with. There will always be an avenue of honesty and truth to get through on. Always be prayerful. Every morning and every night thank your Heavenly Father for the day and for the night that you are here on the earth to perform a great mission; a mission of life that will follow you through in the eternities. Do not be afraid to do what is asked of you and do it whole heartedly, joyfully and happily. When you get through, thank your Heavenly Father that you were able to perform it as well as you did. I say this to you: be faithful children [and] always remember your Heavenly Father.

[END OF RECORDING THREE. END OF INTERVIEW.]

[When Esther Minerva (Swapp) Page Cardon passed away on March 14, 1973 in St. George, Washington County, Utah, William Ernest Cardon came to live with John Dee Cardon, his youngest son and family, in Colorado Springs, Colorado. He lived with us about nine months and then we put him in a care center in Ogden, Utah where his two older children, Darrell and Carrie lived. William Ernest Cardon died January 1975 in Ogden, Weber County, Utah.

— Added during editing by Evelyn K. Cardon, daughter-in-law.]